

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

The Literary Sources of William Wordsworth's Works

10 July 1793 to 10 June 1797

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Robert Paul Kelley, B.A. (The Open University)

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SUMMARY

Summary of Thesis submitted for Ph.D. degree

by Robert Paul Kelley

on

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Wordsworth's works between his departure from London on 10 July 1793 and the visit by Coleridge on 10 June 1797 are key documents in any discussion of the development of his poetry as they span the transition from Descriptive Sketches to Lyrical Ballads. Despite the key critical question of the originality of Lyrical Ballads, no exhaustive examination of Wordsworth's use of literary sources during this period has yet been undertaken.

In this thesis a pattern of sources for each poem written during the period 1793-1797 is established, especially Wordsworth's developing use of his own verse as a source. There are many literary sources that had not previously been discovered, and this necessitated a reassessment of the role of sources in Wordsworth's poetry generally. In particular, the importance of certain eighteenth-century authors and ideologies had been underrated as influences on Wordsworth's poetry.

An overview of Wordsworth's use of his sources shows significant changes during the period. In earlier poems they were incorporated into his poetry with little modification, but in later poems they were often radically transformed and complexly assimilated. Literary sources

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played a key role in the development of Wordsworth's works, critical theories, and world view. Finally, a brief examination of passages from The Prelude confirms the view that the importance of literary sources in Wordsworth's changing poetry and the workings of his poetic imagination was not confined to the period 1793-7.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ALB S.M. Parrish, The Art of the 'Lyrical Ballads' (Cambridge, Mass., 1973)
- ASP Adventures on Salisbury Plain
- Aubin R.A. Aubin, Topographical Poetry in XVIII-Century England (New York, 1966)
- Averill W. Wordsworth, An Evening Walk, ed. J. Averill (1984)
- B The Borderers
- Birdsall W. Wordsworth, Descriptive Sketches, ed. E. Birdsall (1984)
- BNYPL Bulletin of the New York Public Library
- CC The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1969-)
- CPW S.T. Coleridge, Poetical Works, ed. E.H. Coleridge (1973)
- DC MS. Dove Cottage manuscript (Wordsworth Library)
- DCP Dove Cottage Papers (Wordsworth Library)
- DS Descriptive Sketches
- EE V. Knox, Elegant Extracts . . . Poetry, 2nd ed. (n.d.)
- EW An Evening Walk
- EY Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years, 1787-1805, ed. E. de Selincourt, rev. C.L. Shaver, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1967)
- FQ The Faerie Queene
- HGSLC Hawkshead Grammar School Library
Catalogue
- IF Isabella Fenwick

- Hayden W. Wordsworth, The Poems, ed. J.O.
Hayden, 2 vols. (Harmondsworth, 1977)
- Jacobus M. Jacobus, Tradition and Experiment in Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads' (1798) (Oxford, 1976)
- JEGP Journal of English and Germanic Philology
- LB W. Wordsworth and S.T. Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads, ed. R.L. Brett and A.R. Jones (1968)
- A Letter A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff
- Lonsdale The Poems of Thomas Gray, William Collins, Oliver Goldsmith, ed. R. Lonsdale (1969)
- Mason W. Mason, Poems (York, 1771)
- Mayo R. Mayo, "The Contemporaneity of the Lyrical Ballads" as printed in A.R. Jones and W. Tydeman, eds., Wordsworth: 'Lyrical Ballads' (1979), pp. 79-126
- MLN Modern Language Notes
- MLR Modern Language Review
- Moorman M. Moorman, William Wordsworth: A Biography, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1957, 1965)
- M of H J. Wordsworth, The Music of Humanity (1969)
- N&Q Notes and Queries
- Osborn W. Wordsworth, The Borderers, ed. R. Osborn (1982)
- PL Paradise Lost
- PMLA Publications of the Modern Language Society of America

- Political Justice W. Godwin, Political Justice, ed. F.E.L. Priestley, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1946)
- PP Pinney Papers
- Prelude The Prelude (1805)
- Prose The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, ed. W.J.B. Owen and J.W. Smyser, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1974)
- PW The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Selincourt, rev. H. Darbishire, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1940-1958)
- RC The Ruined Cottage
- RCP W. Wordsworth, 'The Ruined Cottage' and 'The Pedlar', ed. J. Butler (Hassocks, 1979)
- Reed M.L. Reed, Wordsworth: The Chronology of the Early Years, 1770-1799 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967)
- RES Review of English Studies
- The Robbers J.C.F. von Schiller, The Robbers, trans. A.F. Tytler (1792)
- Sanftleben P. Sanftleben, Wordsworth's 'Borderers' und die Entwicklung der nationalen Tragödie in England im 18. Jhd. (Rostock, 1907)
- Sheats P.D. Sheats, The Making of Wordsworth's Poetry, 1785-1798 (Cambridge, Mass., 1973)
- SP Salisbury Plain
- SPP The Salisbury Plain Poems of William Wordsworth, ed. S. Gill (Hassocks, 1975)
- SR Studies in Romanticism

<u>TLS</u>	<u>The Times Literary Supplement</u>
<u>UTQ</u>	<u>University of Toronto Quarterly</u>
<u>VE</u>	<u>The Vale of Esthwaite</u>
<u>WC</u>	<u>The Wordsworth Circle</u>
WW	William Wordsworth

A note on the styling of quotations.

Punctuation at the end of quotations is omitted, except for full stops and colons. The editorial conventions for manuscripts are those of the Cornell Wordsworth series, though there has been no attempt to distinguish Wordsworth's hand from that of others that appear in the manuscripts, or to include the fine detail relating to erasures and overwriting.

INTRODUCTION

Thus far a scanty record is deduced
 Of what I owed to books in early life;
 Their later influence yet remains untold.
 (The Prelude, v, 630-2)

The period 10 July 1793 to 10 June 1797 is a key period in Wordsworth's development as it spans the period of transition between Descriptive Sketches and Lyrical Ballads. This transition was considered important by Wordsworth himself, as he relegated almost all of his poetry written before 1797 to 'Poems Written in Youth'. Wordsworth also saw the poetry of Lyrical Ballads (some of which was composed before 10 June 1797) as fundamentally different from much of the poetry of the time:

the following poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure.

(Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads) 1

He contrasted this attempt with "the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers". This idea that the poetry of Lyrical Ballads marked a radical change in the language used in English poetry has been accepted by most critics, despite Wordsworth's reference in the Advertisement to "those in modern times who have been the most successful in painting manners and passions" as poets whose styles were similar to his own. During the period 1793 to 1797 Wordsworth evolved a new set of poetic practices, but it can be shown that these evolved from elements inherent in his own poetry and in the literary heritage of the late eighteenth century. The relationship between Wordsworth's verse and the verse of "those in modern times" is much

closer than has been thought. This can be demonstrated by a detailed examination of his use of literary sources.

The critical background

Legouis' pioneering analysis of Wordsworth's poetry in The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-1798² has remained a highly influential account of this stage in the poet's development. There can be little doubt that Legouis was correct in his view that An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches are derivative poems in many ways, particularly in their diction. But his assumption that the poetry of Lyrical Ballads was innovatory in style and content was questioned by Mayo³ who tried to show that in content (if not treatment) Lyrical Ballads was not as radical as once asserted. Mayo argued that the subjects of Wordsworth's poems were common to the magazine poetry of the period, though he did not demonstrate that Wordsworth had read such poetry. There are, however, problems with accepting Mayo's general thesis. Mayo does not cite any close verbal correspondences, and therefore cannot suggest that Wordsworth was indebted to magazine poetry at any specific point. More significantly, most of the poems he cites were written after Wordsworth's, or bear little relationship to Wordsworth's verse.⁴ Perhaps because of this, Legouis' view that Lyrical Ballads was both innovatory and a revolutionary departure from Wordsworth's earlier poetry remains one that is widely accepted:

After the extreme artificiality of the late eighteenth-century mode that he practised, not without success, in 'An Evening Walk' and 'Descriptive Sketches', he

clearly felt the need to rebuild his whole poetic procedures from the most basic materials in order to express a radically altered attitude of thought and feeling Wordsworth's experiment was . . . to strip his poetry of embroideries and old mythologies of eighteenth-century convention and to walk naked. 5

In this view of Wordsworth as a revolutionary poet of the Yeatsian kind, the period 1793 to 1797 marks Wordsworth's growing rejection of eighteenth-century poetic conventions.

Critics have also assumed that Wordsworth was little influenced by other literature, an idea based, perhaps, on Wordsworth's own verse:

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife,
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music; on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.
(The Tables Turned, 9-12)

Many critics have accepted the seeming rejection of literary influence as an easy explanation of the revolutionary nature of Lyrical Ballads. Harper, one of the more perceptive early critics, even wrote that "few other great poets are so little indebted to books".⁶ Yet few critics have exhaustively examined Wordsworth's use of literary sources.

Several factors have limited critical examination of Wordsworth's use of sources 1793-7: critics' fixation on Wordsworth's supposed crisis, chronological complexities, and textual difficulties. All these problems have, in part, been lessened by recent scholarship. The period has often been regarded as a moral or psychological crisis in Wordsworth's life, and many critics had looked for biographical parallels in his works at the expense of more obvious literary sources. This tendency has been countered by the growing interest in the works of the period and their relationship to Wordsworth's later verse. The

extremely involved biographical and textual chronology has now been exhaustively examined in Mark Reed's Wordsworth: The Chronology of the Early Years, 1770-1799,⁷ and the works composed 1793-7 can now be accurately identified. Wordsworth left London about 10 July 1793 to journey to Salisbury Plain, and this was the basis for the poem of that name. On 10 June 1797 he had just completed reading to Coleridge The Borderers and The Ruined Cottage. During this period he had also made extensive revisions to An Evening Walk and Salisbury Plain (which became Adventures on Salisbury Plain), as well as writing a number of shorter poems. Accurate texts of most of these works have recently been published in the Cornell Wordsworth series. However, only Salisbury Plain, the revisions to An Evening Walk, and some minor poetry survive in versions that can be assigned to the period. The Ruined Cottage, The Borderers and Adventures on Salisbury Plain are preserved only in manuscripts that include later revisions. Nevertheless, the clarification of the chronology of the period and the availability of adequate texts have prepared the way for a more considered appraisal of possible literary influences.

There has already been some attempt to consider the relationship between Wordsworth's poetry and its literary context, though few accounts have dealt in depth with the poetry of 1793-7. M.H. Abrams has related Wordsworth's works to the wider cultural changes associated with Romanticism in the light of earlier religious works,⁸ and Wordsworth's editors and others have shed some light on the contemporary context of Lyrical Ballads. There are specific sources identified by Beatty, Sheats, Finch, Wordsworth's

editors, and others.⁹ These recent accounts of the wider literary contexts and specific sources have meant that the discussion of literary sources has come to be regarded as increasingly important. These accounts have, however, often failed to show the wide range of sources Wordsworth drew on, or to give detailed similarities to support assertions of indebtedness. An examination of Wordsworth's use of sources reveals the large number that have not been identified. These discoveries occasionally mean a reassessment of previous research: works by William Godwin, Joseph Fawcett and Goethe have all been cited as sources for some of Wordsworth's works,¹⁰ but closer examination casts doubt on these assertions. There is a need to particularize evidence of Wordsworth's use of sources in order to clarify these issues and to assess accurately the relationship that existed between Wordsworth's works and other literature.

The problem posed by Wordsworth's poetic development 1793-7 in relation to his sources is thus fairly simple: does the early poetry of Lyrical Ballads mark a radical change from An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches in terms of a rejection of an eighteenth-century literary heritage, especially its "poetic diction"? And, in more general terms, is the poetry of Lyrical Ballads radically different from the poetry of the day because of that rejection? These questions can, in part, be answered by an analysis of Wordsworth's sources and the identification of parallels between his work and other eighteenth-century literature. Such an analysis of sources strongly suggests the works of 1793-7 have clear literary sources though they are radical in political and social terms. This view

of Wordsworth's development acknowledges the vital influence of eighteenth-century literature and late eighteenth-century political radicalism on his works.

Some theoretical considerations

In order to consider the influence of literary sources on Wordsworth's works, it is useful to briefly define what is meant by a 'source'. The idea of 'source' implies a model of composition: the poet, consciously or unconsciously, draws upon works known to him or her. These works include printed and oral texts, and 'factual' as well as fictional texts. In this context, a 'source' is an indication of similarity of some kind with another earlier work. Other than overt allusion and a few specific cases, a source cannot be absolutely demonstrated. The case for a text being a source can be described on two levels: the type of similarity, and the degree of similarity. The types of similarity can exist in form and content, such as verbal echoes, motifs, or even similar cultural assumptions. The degree of similarity varies from allusion (where the source is quoted or referred to directly) to vague analogies. The degree of similarity has been indicated in this thesis by the use of different terms to describe similarities. 'Allusion' has been reserved for direct (often acknowledged) references, and a (definite) 'source' for a very close correspondence with a text known to Wordsworth. Clear similarities have been termed 'parallels', and vaguer or more general similarities, 'analogies'. The claim that Wordsworth's poetry was revolutionary means similarities

between his works and other literature are of importance (regardless of whether they are allusions or definite sources) because such similarities (and differences) help define the nature of that revolution.

Different models have been used to describe the relationship between an author's works and other literature, and these might loosely be divided into poet-based and text-based theories. Theories centred on the poet often suggest developmental patterns, for example arguing that poets in their early verse are largely imitative and later develop their own distinctive voice. One of the more detailed theoretical models of this type is set out in The Anxiety of Influence,¹¹ where Bloom suggests the importance of literary influence to the poet on a psychic level, and goes on to suggest the mechanisms within the poet (in largely Freudian terms) that account for the poet's use and abuse of literary models. Other theories tend to be text-based, and suggest the inter-related nature of literary discourse. Most studies of conventions and sources fall into this category, as does this thesis. A classic study of this kind is The Road to Xanadu where Lowes adopts the most extreme view that literature is in essence the creation of new patterns of old sources:

Yet the pieces that compose the pattern are not new. In the world of the shaping spirit, save for its patterns, there is nothing new that was not old. 12

More recently Formalists and Structuralists have tried to demonstrate that even these "patterns" are not new, though still emphasizing the similarities between texts. In a perceptive Structuralist commentary on Romanticism Scholes

offered an analysis of the revolution embodied in Lyrical Ballads:

Wordsworth, as a poet, faced the problem of worn-out forms, conventions degenerated into clichés, a whole poetic language which had itself hardened into a film of familiarity . . . in his own works he began to construct new poetical forms on the basis of models such as the ballad, which had been neglected as a low species of literature. (This raising of "low" forms is noted by the formalists as a typical method of poetic regeneration.) By bringing something almost Miltonic to the simple situations and the simple forms that he adopted, Wordsworth succeeded in making a new kind of poetry. 13

Although this analysis is fundamentally different from the more traditional model of Lowes in that it sees both the "pieces" and the "patterns" as old, both emphasize the significance of sources in the development of 'new' kinds of poetry.

Wordsworth's own view of his use of sources during the period 1793-7 is related to his theory of poetic language as expounded in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads. Wordsworth contrasted "poetic diction" with "the very language of men"¹⁴ implying the existence of 'dead' literary conventions of language. In such a theory, the worth of the poet's language can to some extent be gauged by its use of 'vital' language as opposed to a dependence upon outworn conventional usages. Such a theory would imply in particular that a study of Wordsworth's sources would show an avoidance of eighteenth-century poetic diction. On the other hand, in the Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth implied that his "style" was related to other literature:

It will perhaps appear to them, that wishing to avoid the prevalent fault of the day, the author has sometimes descended too low, and that many of his expressions are too familiar, and not of sufficient dignity. It is apprehended, that the more conversant the reader is with our elder writers, and with those in modern times who have been the

most successful in painting manners and passions, the fewer complaints of this kind will he have to make.

(Prose, i, p. 116)

It appears to be the case that Wordsworth's works are similar in some respects to "those in modern times" as well as "our elder writers", and it seems possible to identify some of the authors to whom Wordsworth refers. It also appears that Wordsworth's insistence on the "very language of men" may be evidenced in his use of 'factual' sources concerning the "middle and lower classes of society" and "Low and rustic life".¹⁵ Wordsworth also saw himself as creating a new kind of poetry within a historical context of changes in poetic taste and practice:

This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different aeras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example in the age of Catullus, Terence and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian, and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which by the act of writing in verse an Author in the present day makes to his Reader; but I am certain it will appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted.

(Prose, i, p. 122)

Wordsworth is not specific about his poetry being revolutionary in the sense of wholly original, or revolutionary in the sense of forwarding poetic values held by other poets though, at the time, not approved by the majority of readers. An analysis of his sources indicates the latter is the case. In many ways Wordsworth's own perceptions of his literary sources and the relationship between his poetry and contemporary literature are consistent with the pattern of his literary sources during the period 1793-7.

Wordsworth's Reading

Wordsworth's knowledge of printed texts offers some guide to his possible sources, as well as giving some indication of the nature of his literary training. A brief account of Wordsworth's reading before 1793 indicates he was widely read. No thorough account of his reading has yet been published, though some critics have described specific features of his knowledge of literature.¹⁶ There is little doubt that Wordsworth had considerable freedom in his reading from his earliest years, and his taste in reading was eclectic.

In his youth Wordsworth read from his father's good collection of books¹⁷ and was made to learn English poetry by heart.¹⁸ At Hawkshead Grammar School Wordsworth was noted for his enthusiasm for reading¹⁹ and the catalogue of the school Library gives some indication of the books Wordsworth might have come into contact with during his school years.²⁰ The influence of the school's literature teaching (from Taylor's "luminous and pertinent reflections on the poets of our time" to critics such as Scott) is evident in parallels in Wordsworth's early verse and elsewhere:²¹

Much of the Rural Imagery which our Country affords, has already been introduced in Poetry; but many obvious and pleasing appearances seem to have totally escaped notice. To describe these, is the business of the following Eclogues. 22

The moment was important in my poetical history; for I date from it my consciousness of the infinite variety of natural appearances which had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country, so far as I was acquainted with them: and I made

a resolution to supply in some degree the deficiency.
 (IF note to An Evening Walk) 23

At Hawkshead Wordsworth had also developed a taste for oral poetry.²⁴ Thus by the time he left for Cambridge in 1787 Wordsworth had had a considerable literary training.

At Cambridge and during his subsequent years of travel before 1793 Wordsworth read in an informal manner. As Schneider has shown the emphasis at Cambridge was on specified classics.²⁵ Wordsworth spent his time reading nothing but classical authors, according to my fancy, and Italian poetry.²⁶

In the years leading up to 1793, especially during his visits to France, Wordsworth read many political tracts and much contemporary literature as shown by the references to political works in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff²⁷ and to literature in An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches.²⁸ It is worth noting that in his poetry of 1793 Wordsworth adopted the eighteenth-century attitude to acknowledged allusion, referring frequently to other works both in the poems themselves and in his footnotes.

Wordsworth's early reading was in English, though in later years he read Latin, French and Italian works. Although he did not share Coleridge's passion for books, his reading was extensive, and the many requests for books and newspapers in his letters show his thirst for new literature first evidenced at Hawkshead continued till well beyond 1797. His sources in printed texts broadly reflect the pattern of his reading.

Methodology of thesis

In order to establish Wordsworth's use of literary

sources, previous research has been collated with original discoveries in order to present an account of the sources of each of the main poems of the period. The large number of new sources and parallels that have been discovered has meant any sources identified by previous critics are noted as such in the text, whilst original analysis accounts for all others. The main emphasis of this thesis is to offer as full an account of these sources as possible.

The poems of 1793-1797 have been grouped in chronological order. In general emphasis has been placed on completed poems rather than fragments or revisions, and on longer poems rather than shorter ones. Because many of the surviving manuscripts of works first completed within the period are likely to include the revisions of later years, the emphasis on verbal echoes and details within texts has been largely confined to manuscripts that definitely date within the period 1793-7. Given these general principles, the poetry of the period has been divided into six sections: Salisbury Plain (1793-4), An Evening Walk revisions (1794), Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795), minor poems (1793-7), The Borderers (1796-7), and The Ruined Cottage (1797). From the specific pattern of sources and parallels for each poem emerges a fuller pattern of Wordsworth's use of sources for the period as a whole.

For each work a similar approach is used in setting out the patterns of influence. An initial consideration is given to the text, making clear any limitations in manuscript evidence. A review of previous critical accounts is followed by an analysis of the work's relationship to Wordsworth's earlier poetry. Sources for major features of

form and content are dealt with before minor features or, finally, details of diction. Evidence demonstrating Wordsworth's knowledge of putative sources is given in footnotes. The general pattern of working from the broader aspects of the work to details is varied depending upon the peculiarities of the manuscript evidence or the special qualities of the work itself.

CHAPTER ONE

SALISBURY PLAIN

The longest and arguably the most important poem Wordsworth wrote during the period 1793 to 1797 was Salisbury Plain. The earliest extant version of the poem in DC MS. 10 was written before June 1794,¹ and some of the poem was obviously written after Wordsworth's visit to Salisbury Plain during the summer of 1793. Though much of Salisbury Plain can thus be assigned to the period immediately after the publication of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, it is not clear that the whole of Salisbury Plain was composed during this period. It is therefore necessary to consider the origins of the version of Salisbury Plain recorded in DC MS. 10 before discussing the sources of the poem.

Wordsworth's own comments on Salisbury Plain imply that there may have been an earlier version. In the Isabella Fenwick note to The Excursion he remarked:

the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in '93, opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the Female Vagrant
(PW, v, p.376)

though this seems to conflict with his other comment on the date of the poem:

Unwilling to be unnecessarily particular, I have assigned this poem to the dates 1793 and 1794; but in fact much of the 'Female Vagrant's' story was composed at least two years before.

(Prose, i, p. 330)

Gill remains neutral on the possibility of an earlier

version of the poem:

Around 1788, Wordsworth worked on a blank-verse description of a vagrant family, in DC MS. 7. It seems possible that in 1843, Wordsworth was remembering this work and confusing it with "The Female Vagrant" stanzas in Salisbury Plain. On the other hand, it is equally likely that these descriptive passages were worked into something like The Female Vagrant before 1793 in a lost manuscript and that this was incorporated into the larger poem.

(SPP, p.7)

The evidence is complex, but there probably was an earlier version of Salisbury Plain that included "much of the 'Female Vagrant's' story" and was not directly related to the fragments in DC MS. 7.

Gill suggests that the passages referring to a vagrant family in DC MS. 7 might be the earliest surviving source for Salisbury Plain. These passages describe a woman and her children lost in a storm and dying of exposure, and occur in DC MSS. 5-7 in a variety of forms. Reed notes that the passages in DC MSS. 6 and 7 contributed to An Evening Walk,² though the earliest draftings seem to be in DC MS. 5:

Unconscious of her woes another babe
Sat by & smiled delighted, for it held
A little glowworm in its gleaming hand
It toss'd it to and fro-

(DC MS. 5)

Though this fragment and those in DC MSS. 6 and 7 have parallels in subject and diction with some parts of Salisbury Plain, they can hardly be considered important sources for that poem. All the fragments seem closer to A Winter Piece and Thomson's Winter than Salisbury Plain.³ The vagrant mother and her children dying of exposure was a poetic commonplace of the day:

The pious mother doom'd to death,
Forsaken, wanders o'er the heath,
The bleak wind whistles round her head,
Her helpless orphans cry for bread;
Bereft of shelter, food, and friend,

She views the shades of night descend,
 And, stretch'd beneath th' inclement skies,
 Weeps o'er her tender babes, and dies.
 (EE, p.166)

Wordsworth would have been familiar with this tradition, and appears to have drawn on it in the composition of the fragments in DC MSS. 5-7. These fragments and Salisbury Plain may both have originated in the literary tradition of the destitute female vagrant, but Salisbury Plain's vagrant and her children do not freeze to death, and the treatment of the subject is strikingly different.

There are two separate factual sources for the female vagrant stories in Salisbury Plain and in DC MSS. 5-7. Wordsworth asserted that the woman's story in Salisbury Plain was "faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend". The other source is the death by exposure of a woman on Stainmore mentioned in DC MS. 9, though Wordsworth's account of the incident seems embroidered with local gossip.⁴ The two separate factual accounts of female vagrants known to Wordsworth also indicate that the DC MSS. 5-7 material was not directly related to Salisbury Plain.

Evidence for the existence of an earlier version of Salisbury Plain can be found in the description of the poem's setting which implies the early version was set on Stainmore Heath. Wordsworth's Advertisement to Guilt and Sorrow states that not all of Salisbury Plain was set on Salisbury Plain itself:

of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.
 (SPP, p.217)

In the manuscript version of the Advertisement he was more

specific: "two which need not be particularized", and these may be the Spittle upon Stainmore and the gibbet on the road that leads to Stainmore. These "local features"⁵ are consistent with an earlier version of Salisbury Plain being set on the road through Stainmore Heath, a location that seemed to have fascinated Wordsworth during this period as both The Borderers and a part of An Evening Walk revisions refer to it. Other details in Salisbury Plain may also refer to areas near or on Stainmore. The legend of the horse discovering a human head⁶ may be derived from the local legend of the Maiden Castle spectre. The Roman camp on the road through Stainmore may be the origin of the image:

Frequent upon the deep entrenched ground,
Strange marks of mighty arms of former days
(Salisbury Plain, 75-6)

A clear example of the double setting of the poem is the location of cities:

O'er Sarum's plain the traveller with a sigh
Measured each painful step, the distant spire
That fixed at every turn his backward eye
(Salisbury Plain, 38-40)

Here Salisbury cathedral spire is used as a landmark, much as it would be if the traveller were going north from Salisbury towards Stonehenge as Wordsworth did in 1793.⁷ Yet later in the poem

The city's distant spires ascend
Like flames which far and wide the west illumine
(Salisbury Plain, 394-5)

the location of the city is to the west (the direction Wordsworth's travellers would be going if they were travelling along the Stainmore Road) and the city may be Penrith, which is visible from Stainmore just before entering Brough.⁸ It would thus appear possible that an

earlier version of Salisbury Plain was set on Stainmore Heath.

The pattern of echoes from Wordsworth's other works also helps reinforce the argument for an earlier version of Salisbury Plain: verbal echoes from works written in 1791-2 are found in different parts of Salisbury Plain than those from later works. For example, some of the Gothic elements in Salisbury Plain have similarities with The Vale of Esthwaite. In The Vale of Esthwaite the lost minstrel's story is close to the opening of Salisbury Plain.⁹ Also the vision of "Gigantic Moors in-battle joined" in The Vale of Esthwaite becomes in Salisbury Plain a vision of "Gigantic beings ranged in dread array", just as the "hoar castle" becomes an "antique castle" with "Hoary and naked" walls.¹⁰ The sentimental morality of parts of Salisbury Plain also has parallels in Wordsworth's early verse:¹¹

And think that life is like this desert broad,
Where all the happiest find is but a shed
And a green spot 'mid wastes interminably spread.
(Salisbury Plain, 421-3)

for while the tempests blow,
And cold we tread this vale of woe,
So dearly shall man buy a shed
To hide but for an hour his head.
(VE, 450-3)

Oh! might we seek that humble shed
Which sheltered once my pilgrim head
(Septimi Gades, 13-4)

Gill shows that the "image of the transience of man's early life" in Salisbury Plain follows In Part from Moschus: Lament for Bion.¹² There are other close correspondences with images from earlier poetry:

Like swans, twin swans, that when on the sweet
brink
Of Derwent's stream the south winds hardly blow,
'Mid Derwent's water-lillies swell and sink

In union, rose her sister breasts of snow
 (Salisbury Plain, 208-11)

Then might her bosom soft and white
 Heave upon my swimming sight,
 As these two Swans together ride
 Upon the gently swelling tide...
 (Beauty and Moonlight, 31-34)

though both these passages follow Spenser.¹³ These parallels with earlier works occur in the parts of Salisbury Plain that contain the female vagrant's story and could have been set on Stainmore Heath.

On the other hand similarities to Wordsworth's later works, Descriptive Sketches and A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff, occur in the final lines of Salisbury Plain. The endings of both poems use similar images to express similar political concerns:

her virgin reign
 Begins, and Love and Truth compose her train
 (Descriptive Sketches, 784-5)

Unblessed by Justice and the kindly train
 Of Peace and Truth
 (Salisbury Plain, 443-4)

And dark Oppression builds her thick-ribb'd tow'rs
 (Descriptive Sketches, 795)

Th'Oppressor's dungeon from its deepest base;
 High o'er the towers of Pride
 (Salisbury Plain, 542-3)

Both poems express a similar attitude towards monarchy and oppression. These political concerns are also evident in general similarities between Salisbury Plain and A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff¹⁴ and, as Gill points out, both reflect "the radical and humanitarian opposition of the 1790s".¹⁵ The parallels with later works could imply that the prophetic voice that frames the narrative in Salisbury Plain was a later addition to an

earlier poem set on Stainmore.

If the above analysis is correct, the early version of Salisbury Plain might then be the story of a traveller on Stainmore who shelters in the Spittle, meets the female vagrant, and listens to her story. The poem would end with the travellers reaching the cottage on the other side of the heath and the moral reflections of stanza 47.¹⁶ Such an early version would have much in common with The Vale of Esthwaite: Gothic elements, rapidity of narration, and melancholy and simplistic moral reflections. It would, however, lack the political and social criticism of Salisbury Plain and Descriptive Sketches. This earlier version of Salisbury Plain, perhaps dated 1791-2, could have been a source for the version recorded in DC MS. 10, though the evidence for its existence is not conclusive. In any event the manuscript of 1793-4 is clearly a final copy, representing a polished version of the poem.

II

Salisbury Plain has not yet been placed in its literary context, nor has there been a thorough account of the sources of the poem. An accurate text was not published until 1970¹⁷ and this has had a pronounced effect on critical accounts of the poem. Earlier scholars had to use either The Female Vagrant or Guilt and Sorrow, neither of which is particularly close to Salisbury Plain, and Legouis and Harper wisely limited their accounts of the poem.¹⁸ More recently critics such as Mayo,¹⁹ Welsford, Jacobus,

Sheats, and Gill have discussed the poem, though relatively little has been written on Wordsworth's sources.²⁰ Gill's analysis of the literary origins of the poem is the most satisfactory account to date. He points out that Salisbury Plain has clear links with the immediate political context and A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff. He also examines the debt to Spenser. On the other hand Gill does not discuss the genre of poems similar to Salisbury Plain, or the general literary and philosophical background to the poem.²¹

Salisbury Plain is a synthesis of key elements in Wordsworth's early work, and a recognizable part of contemporary radical literature. Like Descriptive Sketches, the poem indicates Wordsworth's political and philosophical stance. Wordsworth's philosophy, as evidenced in Salisbury Plain, is based loosely on the natural philosophy of Lucretius and Bacon, and is not unlike that implied in Wordsworth's earliest poem:

Where, throned in gold, immortal Science reigns;
 Fair to the view is sacred Truth display'd,
 In all the majesty of light array'd,
 To teach, on rapid wings, the curious soul
 To roam from heaven to heaven, from pole to pole,
 From thence to search the mystic cause of things,
 And follow Nature to her secret springs
 (Lines Written as a School Exercise, 70-6)

In this poem the fundamental premises of much English radical literature are expressed. There is a faith in science and truth, and a belief that truth could be discovered through accurate observation. This model of knowledge is essentially binary, and against science and truth are placed superstition and credulous belief. This opposition is expressed through the imagery of light and darkness. The battle between truth and superstition is,

implicitly, intellectual and literary, and as in Milton's Areopagitica the victory of truth is linked to reformation in religion. Allied to these notions is a belief in the value of natural philosophy as a means of discovering absolute truths in nature (ideas which had received much support in Newton's work).²²

Why these ideas were part of radical ideologies throughout the period 1793-1797 is evident from their implied attitude to authority. Such ideas emphasized the individual's rational examination of ideologies from the scientific to the political and religious. Thus Dr. Price could look forward to an era in which

the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the dominion of priests giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience. ²³

The emphasis on individuals was also democratic in tendency. Moreover, in the aftermath of the American and French Revolutions, such ideas had been given a concrete expression in the constitutions of new governments. They also harked back to the English republican era and the religious ideas then current.²⁴

Such a model of knowledge gave great importance to didactic literature and polemical writing, and offered a cohesive vision of natural philosophy, religion, and politics. The transformation of the earlier version of Salisbury Plain into the version recorded in DC MS. 10 indicates how Wordsworth framed the more traditional elements of his earlier poem (the loco-descriptive, the pathetic narrative, and moral reflections) with the philosophic and the political. This frame not only extended the range of reference in the poem, but also indicated how

Wordsworth was intent on a similar kind of radical didacticism evident in the closing lines of Descriptive Sketches.

The form that Wordsworth used to give expression to these ideas was the Spenserian narrative, used by many writers of the later eighteenth century. Wordsworth's significant departure from this tradition, and from his earlier poetry, was the importance given to the dramatic monologue of the female vagrant: not only was the character of low status and allowed a first person narration, but her narration was not the simple humanitarian exemplum.

Wordsworth based his story on a real person's experiences:

All that relates to her sufferings as a sailor's wife in America, and her condition of mind during her voyage home, were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend who had been subjected to the same trials and affected in the same way.

(PW, i, p. 330)

Further, "faithfully" implies he took care to report her story accurately. This story was combined with a setting, Salisbury Plain, that had affected Wordsworth himself as a "traveller":

My rambles over many parts of Salisbury Plain put me, as mentioned in the preface, upon writing this poem.

(PW, i, p. 330)

Thus Wordsworth, in Salisbury Plain, had combined a report of a real person's experiences with his own to form the basis of the poem. The anti-war elements implicit in the female vagrant's story made the poem a very radical one for 1794 and, like Southey's Joan of Arc, the choice of a true story that to some extent demonstrated the evils of the country's current policy was a political act. In Salisbury

Plain these political implications were made explicit. The political and philosophic frame made the vagrant's story a demonstration of Wordsworth's democratic and anti-war ideas, fusing particular observation (the story) with Wordsworth's ideology. It is within this context of radical philosophy and literature of the late eighteenth century that Salisbury Plain can best be placed.

III

The Faerie Queene is the major source for Salisbury Plain and the diction, imagery, narrative technique, and theme of Wordsworth's poem all owe something to Spenser. Wordsworth was selective in his use of The Faerie Queene as a source, drawing most heavily from Book I. Wordsworth also rejected the allegorical in favour of the factual, and in this he followed eighteenth-century imitators of The Faerie Queene.

The most obvious similarities between the two poems are the Spenserian stanza itself, the diction, and imagery. Gill notes the use of Spenserian diction in Salisbury Plain ("outsent", "unwares", "Thrill'd", "finny flood", "forlorn", "self-consuming"), and there are other examples ("hollow wind", "hellish fiend", and "noysome").²⁵ There are images from The Faerie Queene in Salisbury Plain, and Gill identifies three descriptions of fear from Book I that Wordsworth follows closely,²⁶ for example:

That suddein cold did runne through euery vaine,
And stony horror all her senses fild
(The Faerie Queene, I, vi, 37, 2-3)

Cold stony horror all her senses bound.
(Salisbury Plain, 157)

Although not noted by Gill, one of the revisions to Salisbury Plain also loosely echoes Book I:

Long she thus traueiled through deserts wyde,
By which she thought her wandring knight shold
pas,
Yet neuer shew of liuing wight espyde
(The Faerie Queene, I, iii, 10, 1-3)

By thirst and hunger pressed he gazed around
espy
And scarce could any trace of man descry
(SPP, p.47)

It is indicative of Wordsworth's selective use of his source that Book I accounts for most of the minor echoes in Salisbury Plain.

Besides these minor echoes, there are more substantial debts to Spenser that have not been previously identified. Wordsworth, like Spenser, devoted whole stanzas to epic similes.²⁷ For example, Spenser's epic simile of the mariner:

Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
That long hath wandred in the Ocean wide,
Oft soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare,
And long time hauing tand his tawney hide
With blustring breath of heauen . . .
Soone as the port from farre he has espide,
His chearefull whistle merrily doth sound.
(The Faerie Queene, I, iii, 31, 1-5, 7-8)

seems to be echoed in Salisbury Plain:

The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,
And whistling called the wind that hardly curled
The silent seas. The pleasant thoughts of home
With tears his weather-beaten cheek impearled
(Salisbury Plain, 373-6)

where the "mariner", his whistle, his "weather-beaten cheek", and the function of both passages in evoking the emotional response of homecoming within a narrative, suggest the extent of the debt to Spenser. Another example



of an extended parallel between the poems is in the description of "What seems an antique castle" that

To hell's most cursed sprites the baleful place
Belongs, upreared by their magic power...
(Salisbury Plain, 84-5)

where a spectral voice warns, "Fly ere the fiends their prey unwares devour".²⁸ Spenser presents a similar warning concerning "that dreadfull place", the cave of Merlin, built by "Sprights":

But dare thou not, I charge, in any cace,
To enter into that same balefull Bowre,
For fear the cruell Feends should thee unwares
deuowre.
(The Faerie Queene, III, iii, 8, 7-9)

Not only are the subjects similar, but the warning is clearly echoed in Salisbury Plain. These extended parallels indicate Wordsworth's borrowings from Spenser were more than incidental verbal echoes.

Wordsworth acknowledged the special regard he had for Book I of The Faerie Queen, and the search for truth and the fight against error and superstition in Spenser's poem have parallels in Salisbury Plain. Gill argues that the interplay of the narrative and prophetic voices derives from Spenser.²⁹ These elements are united in the final stanza of Salisbury Plain where Wordsworth argues that reason can destroy error and superstition, and provide a solution to the suffering catalogued in the rest of the poem. As Gillcrist has shown,³⁰ this final stanza echoes Book I:

High o'er the towers of Pride undaunted rear
Resistless in your might the herculean mace
Of Reason; let foul Error's monster race
Dragged from their dens start at the light with
pain
And die; pursue your toils, till not a trace

Be left on earth of Superstition's reign
 (Salisbury Plain, 543-8)
 In The Faerie Queene "Errour" remained in her "den"

For light she hated as the deadly bale,
 Ay wont in desert darknesse to remaine
 (The Faerie Queene, I, i, 16, 7-8)

Gillcrist also notes Errour's "spawne" of "Deformed monsters" is echoed in "monster race".³¹ These allusions to Spenser evoke the crusade against error in Book I. Gillcrist's point that Wordsworth was "seriously preoccupied with some of Spenser's ideas"³² seems justified, and indicates an essential feature of Wordsworth's use of poetry as a source: he appears to be as deeply influenced by the imaginative articulation of ideas in poetry as by details of diction or technique.

In stanza, diction, imagery, and theme, Salisbury Plain is heavily dependent on The Faerie Queene. This pervasive debt demonstrates how Wordsworth drew on his sources on many different levels, from the occasional borrowed word or phrase, to the fundamental ideas of another work. The extent of Wordsworth's borrowing means Salisbury Plain evokes The Faerie Queene, giving Wordsworth's poem an implied seriousness of purpose and dignity.

Salisbury Plain also shows the influence of eighteenth-century Spenserian poems. There was a variety of such poems, from Thomson's Castle of Indolence with its Spenserian diction and allegory, to Shenstone's The Schoolmistress with its tale of everyday life.

Of these poems, Beattie's The Minstrel seems to have been the most important source for Salisbury Plain. Like Wordsworth's poem, The Minstrel is based on a 'true' story

of a shepherd's child, and combines prophetic and narrative voices. There are also specific echoes: Gill shows that the revised version of Salisbury Plain, 332-3 echoes The Minstrel:³³

The sun in view uplifts his orient head
He feels his friendly beam a vital influence shed.
(SPP, p.32 n.)

Is yonder wave the Sun's eternal bed?
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
And Spring shall soon her vital influence
shed
(The Minstrel, I, xxvi, 6-8)

More significantly, the reaction against political violence expressed in Salisbury Plain (a key change from Wordsworth's political stance in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff) follows The Minstrel:

Or whence but from the labours of the sage
Can poor benighted mortals gain the meed
Of happiness and virtue, how assuage
But by his gentle words their self-consuming rage?
(Salisbury Plain, 510-3)

When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
Deep-versed in man the philosophic sage
Prepares with lenient hand their frenzy to
assuage.
(The Minstrel, II, liv, 5-9)

The "sage" who can "assuage" the "rage" of the people, and the reference to "demagogues" might have seemed apt to Wordsworth given the situation in France. It is indicative of Wordsworth's interest in the ideas expressed in poetry that this change in political stance echoes Beattie rather than Godwin or another political author.

There are also echoes of Thomson's The Castle of Indolence in Salisbury Plain. Wordsworth compared his own experiences in the Alps to the Andes in DC MS. 2, and

then transferred the description to Salisbury Plain:

Lo! where the Sun exulting in his might
 In haste the fiery top of Andes scales
 And flings deep silent floods of purple light
 Down to the sea through long Peruvian vales,
 At once a thousand streams and gentle gales
 Start from their slumber breathing scent and song.
 (Salisbury Plain, 451-6)

He appears to have been influenced in the expression of this phenomenon by The Castle of Indolence:³⁴

As, when amid the lifeless summits proud
 Of Alpine cliffs, where to the gelid sky
 Snows piled on snows in wintry torpor lie,
 The rays divine of vernal Phoebus play,
 The awakened heaps, in streamlets from on high,
 Roused into action, lively leap away,
 Glad-warbling through the vales, in their new
 being gay...
 (The Castle of Indolence, II, lxiv, 3-9)

where the images of sleep and singing indicate the debt. Wordsworth's experiences are expressed in a consciously literary manner here, drawing upon Thomson's poem.

Salisbury Plain is part of the Spenserian tradition in many ways: in metre, diction, imagery, and theme it owes much to The Faerie Queene, and in minor points it follows eighteenth-century Spenserian poems. The Spenserian tradition is the literary medium through which Wordsworth chose to convey his political ideas, his experiences on Salisbury Plain, and the female vagrant's story.

IV

Salisbury Plain was also part of the humanitarian and political literature of its day. This political aspect is obvious in the prophetic voice that frames the poem, but even in the vagrant's story Wordsworth's social concerns are

evident. As the narrative section of the poem was probably written 1791-2, this indicates a significant continuity in Wordsworth's thought. However, the earlier version seems essentially humanitarian in outlook whereas Salisbury Plain itself is more obviously concerned with the immediate political context.

The female vagrant's story in Salisbury Plain appears to reflect the immediate political situation (the war with France), but it has similarities to a range of earlier protests against war. At the time of the unpopular and unsuccessful War of American Independence much anti-war literature was written. For example, Britannia's Lamentation on the Devastation War includes a description of the horrors of the American War broadly parallel to the female vagrant's in Salisbury Plain:

See the stately Towns a burning,
 Here the shouts and dismal cry,
 Mothers with their children mourning,
 While their fathers dead do lie.
 Here the roaring cannons thunder,
 See one Army run away,
 The other briskly push for plunder,
 In North America.

On the infant weeps the mother,
 My tender babe my breasts are dry,
 Your fathers kill'd I am starved with hunger,
 While the rest around do cry 35

Some authors later used descriptions of the American War as a vehicle to comment upon the war with France, for example Charlotte Smith in The Old Manor House. Smith's novel parallels the female vagrant's story where Orlando

began to perceive all the horrors and devastations of war. The country, lately so flourishing, and rising so rapidly into opulence, presented nothing but the ruins of houses, from whence their miserable inhabitants had either been

driven entirely, or murdered! 36

These observations on the American War are then linked to the war with France:

Those who have so loudly exclaimed against a whole nation struggling for its freedom, on account of the events of the past summer (events terrible enough, God knows!), are entreated to recollect how much the exploits of this expedition (even as related by our own historian) exceed any thing that happened on the 10th of August, the 2d of September, or at any one period of the execrated Revolution in France-

(The Old Manor House, p.360n.)

This seems to be what Wordsworth did in Salisbury Plain, for the original vagrant's story was only in part an anti-war poem. After the outbreak of war with France in 1793, Wordsworth placed his earlier narrative in a different context using the framing device of the prophetic voice. This made its political comment more radical, emphasizing the anti-war aspects of the vagrant's story.

The original version of the female vagrant's story emphasized humanitarian concerns rather than politics. In 1791 poems that pleaded for consideration for the poor or destitute were commonplace. Sharrock suggests that the vagrant's story follows Langhorne's The Country Justice, though there are equally good parallels in Shenstone, Elegy XVI, Bowles, Verses on the Benevolent Institution of the Philanthropic Society, Moss, The Beggar's Petition, and Dr. Roberts, The Poor Man's Prayer.³⁷ The first two poems deal with vagrants on desolate heaths: in Shenstone's poem the narrator hears the story of an insane woman whilst "On Sarum's plain", and in Bowles's poem the vagrants "Appear like spectres on the Wasted Heath".³⁸ The last two deal with eviction, a common theme:

Oppression trampled on his tresses grey:
His little range of water was denied;
Even to the bed where his old body lay
His all was seized; and weeping side by side
Turned out on the cold winds, alone we wandered
wide.

(Salisbury Plain, 257-61)

Our tyrant lord commands us from our home;
And arm'd with cruel law's coercive pow'r,
Bids me and mine o'er barren mountains roam.

(The Poor Man's Prayer, 42-4)

A little farm was my paternal lot,
Then like the lark I sprightly hail'd the morn;
But ah! oppression forc'd me from my cot

(The Beggar's Petition, 29-31: EE, p.154)

The use of the poor and vagrant as a vehicle for humanitarian comment was not new, and Goldsmith's The Deserted Village and The Traveller are probably the best contemporary examples of the genre.

In humanitarian poetry vagrants were used to make social comment, and in this respect the narrative section of Salisbury Plain was consonant with contemporary literary practices. The more radical and overtly political aspects of Salisbury Plain were a later development related to a more political tradition.

V

A detailed examination of the prophetic sections of Salisbury Plain that frame the female vagrant's story reveals the extent to which Wordsworth was immersed in the political controversies of the day and his debt to polemical literature.

There is ample evidence that Salisbury Plain embodies Wordsworth's response to the events of 1793. In 1793

Wordsworth had written:

a time of revolution is not the season of true Liberty. Alas! the obstinacy & perversion of men is such that she is too often obliged to borrow the very arms of despotism to overthrow him, and in order to reign in peace must establish herself by violence...

(A Letter: Prose, i, p.33)

but later, in Salisbury Plain, Wordsworth rejected the extreme political violence in France:

Insensate they who think, at Wisdom's porch
That Exile, Terror, Bonds, and Force may stand:
That Truth with human blood can feed her torch,
And Justice balance with her gory hand
Scales whose dire weights of human heads demand
A Nero's arm.

(Salisbury Plain, 514-9)

Although these lines could refer to repression in Britain, it is probable that they refer to France, particularly "Exile", "Terror", and "weights of human heads". The reference to "human heads" would have been appropriate at the time of the composition of Salisbury Plain because

between March 1793 and August 1794 . . . in each of the first seven months of that period about 500 death sentences were carried out. 39

It may be that Wordsworth, seeing how opposing political philosophies in France and England both used violent means (the Terror and war), rejected all such extreme violence. In Salisbury Plain both internal political violence and war itself are directly condemned, and this may well reflect Wordsworth's growing despair with the political violence of the period.

A detailed examination of the opening and closing sections of Salisbury Plain indicates close parallels with radical literature of the time. The opening of Salisbury Plain echoes one of the seminal works of the revolutionary

period, Rousseau's Discours sur L'Origine de L'Inégalité

Parmi les Hommes:

Hard is the life when naked and unhouzed
(Salisbury Plain, 1)

que la nudité, le défaut d'habitation

'mid deep forests
(Salisbury Plain, 3)

et couverte de forêts immenses

bears contending growl
And round his bed gaunt wolves in armies howl.
(Salisbury Plain, 8-9)

Mettez un ours ou un loup

Yet he is strong to suffer, and his mind
Encounters all his evils unsubdued;
For happier days since at the breast he pined
He never knew

(Salisbury Plain, 10-3)

Accoutumés dès l'enfance aux intempéries de l'air et à la
rigueur des saisons, exercés à la fatigue et forcés de
défendre nus et sans armes 40

Here Wordsworth's vision of primitive people contrasts with
the 'noble savage' of Descriptive Sketches, 520-5, and
shows the influence of Rousseau on his developing theories
of the basis of human suffering.

The final section of Salisbury Plain (ll. 424-549) is
written in the discourse of contemporary radical literature,
and this makes it extremely difficult to assign sources.
In particular, the assertion that Wordsworth was deeply
influenced by Godwin's Political Justice during the period
1793-1794 seems unjustified.⁴¹

The section opens with reflections on internal politics
and poverty, in a way which parallels A Letter to the Bishop
of Llandaff:

For proof, if man thou lovest, turn thy eye
On realms which least the cup of Misery taste.

as in Salisbury Plain where "No more the voice of jocund
toil resounds".⁴⁵ Other anti-imperialist poems show the
extent to which Wordsworth used a common diction and imagery
in Salisbury Plain:

When Avarice, shrouded in Religion's robe,
Sail'd to the West, and slaughter'd half the globe
(The Botanic Garden, I, ii, 415-6) 46

with him came the throng
Of Furies and grim Death by Avarice lashed along.
(Salisbury Plain, 458-9)

Another example can be found in the image of the
superstitious tyrant:

Oh that a slave who on his naked knees
Weeps tears of fear at Superstition's nod,
Should rise a monster Tyrant and o'er seas
And mountains stretch so far his cruel rod
To bruise meek nature in her lone abode...
(Salisbury Plain, 460-4)

which seems very close (in the first two lines) to a poem
published in the Morning Chronicle 17 June 1793:

For Superstition held her reign;
While Priests combined, a ready train
Her throne of ignorance to rear,
And rule her slaves by hope and fear:
Obsequious midst the trembling crowd,
Slaves of their arts, e'en monarchs bowed
(Mr. Armstrong, Ode for the Meeting of the
Friends to the Freedom of the Press, 9-14)

whilst the lines following recall Pope:

Th'Oppressor rul'd Tyrannick where he durst,
Stretch'd o'er the Poor, and Church, his Iron
Rod
(Windsor Forest, 74-5) 47

Even the image of the ruler's scepter bruising "meek nature"
had been used by William Blake:

the scepter, too heavy for mortal grasp,
No more
To be swayed by visible hand, nor in cruelty

bruise the mild flourishing mountains.
 (The French Revolution, 4-5) 48

There are marked similarities in subject and expression between the attack on imperialism in Salisbury Plain and other radical literature.

The final lines of Salisbury Plain (ll. 505-49) deal with some of the central ideas of the poem. The main metaphors are derived from The Faerie Queene,⁴⁹ and the role of the "sage" from The Minstrel. Gill shows the lines on war allude to Milton's On the Lord Gen. Fairfax at the siege of Colchester:⁵⁰

Say, rulers of the nations, from the sword
 Can ought but murder, pain, and tears proceed?
 Oh! what can war but endless war still breed?
 (Salisbury Plain, 507-9)

For what can Warr, but endless warr still breed,
 Till Truth, & Right from Violence be freed
 (On the Lord Gen. Fairfax, 10-11)

Again the rejection of violence echoes a poem, not a political tract. The final lines of Salisbury Plain make full use of such allusions to add authority to their pronouncements. These lines propose enlightenment through reason as a counter to Superstition and tyranny, an argument advocated by English Republicans and many political authors of Wordsworth's time:

Enlighten them, and you will elevate them . . . that gloomy and cruel superstition will be abolished which has hitherto gone under the name of Religion, and to the support of which civil government has been perverted . . . Every degree of illumination which we can communicate must do the greatest good. It helps to prepare the minds of men for the recovery of their rights, and hastens the overthrow of priestcraft and tyranny . . . They know that light is hostile to them, and therefore they labour to keep men in the dark . . . Remove the darkness in which they envelope the world, and their usurpations will be exposed, their power will be subverted, and the world emancipated.

(Richard Price, A Discourse on the Love of Our Country) 51

Wordsworth's plea in Salisbury Plain is also an expression of this central tenet of eighteenth-century radical ideology.

The prophetic voice that frames the female vagrant's story in Salisbury Plain derives in part from a range of radical writing, and reflects Wordsworth's concern with the crises of 1793. The analysis of the sources for this section of the poem indicates that Wordsworth read key political works such as Rousseau's, but was also influenced by a variety of polemical poetry. Salisbury Plain is firmly a part of the literature of the radical opposition of the period, though the most radical parts were probably written after the humanitarian account of the vagrant, transforming a humanitarian period piece into a radical indictment of society.

VI

And hark! the ringing harp I hear
 And lo! her druid sons appear.
 Why roll on me your glaring eyes?
 Why fix on me for sacrifice?

(The Vale of Esthwaite, 31-4)

Descriptive Sketches, like Salisbury Plain, has many allusions to polemical poetry and amongst these are two references to William Mason's verse play, Caractacus.⁵² Like many of the works alluded to in Descriptive Sketches, Caractacus extols the heroic defence of liberty, as exemplified in Mason's play by the Druids' resistance to the Romans. In Salisbury Plain Wordsworth used Caractacus as a

source, drawing on Mason's notes for his own research on Druids, and transforming Mason's defenders of freedom into superstitious rulers who combined human sacrifice and war.

Wordsworth's treatment of Druids in Salisbury Plain is related to his rejection of freedom (to be defended by violence if necessary) as the primary political value, and this change in his thinking can be seen as part of his response to the events of 1793-4. Before January 1793 (the date of publication of Descriptive Sketches) Mason's paeans to British freedom may have been acceptable to Wordsworth:

Well we know
The glorious meed of those exalted souls,
Who flame like thee for freedom
(Mason, p.190)

but in February 1793 England declared war on France, and Wordsworth's attitude to Britain rapidly changed. As Gill rightly argues, Druids may even have become for Wordsworth an emblem of Britain's rulers who, by declaring war, were sacrificing other men.⁵³ In the additions to Salisbury Plain Wordsworth made the connection between war and the Druids' human sacrifice explicit:

Exulting round the idol God of war
While the great flame by living captives fed
(SPP, p.112)

thus imaginatively transforming Mason's images of heroism:

The man that falls,
Falls hallow'd; falls a victim for the Gods;
For them and for their altars.
(Mason, p.190)

The benign religion of Caractacus becomes, in Salisbury Plain, a superstition that leads to suffering, just as false political ideologies in Wordsworth's own day had led

to the suffering described in Salisbury Plain, 460-549.

Salisbury Plain ends with a vision of the future where

not a trace
 Be left on earth of Superstition's reign,
 Save that eternal pile which frowns on Sarum's
 plain...
 (Salisbury Plain, 547-9)

fusing past and present (just as war and human sacrifice are fused) into a cohesive vision of human suffering arising from superstition in its widest sense.

Although there may be minor echoes of Caractacus in Salisbury Plain,⁵⁴ Wordsworth's presentation of Druids is the opposite of Mason's.⁵⁵ Nevertheless it is possible to trace the sources for Wordsworth's images of Druids back to Caractacus. Mason appended notes to Caractacus containing extracts "from antient authors", and Wordsworth used the references at the end of these extracts to compile a list under the heading Druids in DC MS. 12:

C. Comment.Lib.vi.
 Pliny's Natural History, l.xvi.c.44
 Drayton, Polyolbion Ninth Song
 Pliny's Nat. Hist.l.xxix.c.3
 Mona Antiqua, p.338
 Dion. Chrysostom
 Tac. Ann.l.xiv.c.29
 Thus Lucan . . . Phar. Lib.iii
 (Mason, pp.288-94)

C.Comment.Lib.6
 Plin.Nat.Hist: Lib. 16.c.44.-Lib.29.c.3
 Dray. PolyOlbion. Ninth Song-
 Mona. Antiqua 338
 Dion Chrysostom.-
 Tac. annals.L.14th.c.29.-
 Luc. Phar.L.3.-
 Ammianus Marcellinus Lib. 15th
 Procopius. Goth. Lib.4.-
 (SPP, p.35)

The references (save the last two in Wordsworth's list)⁵⁶ are the same, as is their order and degree of

detail. Wordsworth used the reference to Caesar's "Comment. Lib.6" in writing Salisbury Plain:

Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent; quibus succensis circumventi flamma exanimantur homines. 57

It is the sacrificial altar fed
With living men.

(Salisbury Plain, 184-5)

Though from huge wickers paled with circling fire
No longer horrid shrieks and dying cries
To ears of Daemon-Gods in peals aspire,
To Daemon-Gods a human sacrifice

(Salisbury Plain, 424-7)

Wordsworth used the notes to Caractacus as a source of information on Druids, and then used Caesar's description (perhaps the reference best suited to his purposes) as the basis of his account of Druids in Salisbury Plain.

Wordsworth's use of Caractacus shows how his changing political values caused him to alter his approach to Mason's play, as well as indicating something of the literary side of his methods of composition. It is also indicative of how Wordsworth took a factual matter (the Druids and Stonehenge), and transformed it to suit his poetic purposes.

VII

Salisbury Plain combines two settings, Stainmore and Salisbury Plain itself, and Wordsworth's treatment of these settings indicates he was influenced by contemporary topographical prose.

The original version of Salisbury Plain was set on the road through Stainmore. There were few travel books that described the entry to the Lake District via Stainmore

published before 1791, and William Hutchinson's An Excursion to the Lakes⁵⁸ was probably the best-known.

Hutchinson's description of his journey through Stainmore is close in tone and imagery to the beginning of Salisbury Plain:

As we advanced, a dreary prospect was extended to the eye . . . No habitation for mankind appears on either side, but all is wilderness and horrid waste, over which the wearied eye travels with anxiety.

(An Excursion, pp.10-1)

The conditions during Hutchinson's journey, and for Wordsworth's traveller, are alike:

As we travelled from hence for several miles, all around was one continued scene of melancholy . . . the wind sounded amongst the rocks . . . driving rain was seen

(An Excursion, p.15)

On as he passed more wild and more forlorn
And vacant the huge plain around him spread
(Salisbury Plain, 61-2)

No sound replies but winds that whistling near
Sweep the thin grass and passing, wildly plain
(Salisbury Plain, 52-3)

Three hours he wildered through the watery storm
(Salisbury Plain, 102)

There are also references to the same features on Stainmore.⁵⁹ Hutchinson's journey ends with a sudden change in scenery and mood:

Whilst we were thus engaged, unexpectedly the scene opened, and from such horrid wild, gave us a prospect as delightful as the other was disgusting.

Over a rugged and rocky foreground, we looked upon STAINMORE-DALE in front; her verdant meadows cheered the eye, her sweet sequestered cottages, her grassy plains, and little shades of sycamores, seemed enchanting, as their beauties were enchanced by the deformity from which they had escaped. . .

(An Excursion, p.16)

continuing the description in the manner of L'Allegro:

around which rich meadows drest in the brightest green and

fresh verdure after mowing, plots of ripening corn,
sparkling sheets of water seen through the trees which deck
their margins, the windings of each brook, little groves of
ash and sycamore

(An Excursion, p.18)

In the same way, the early version of Salisbury Plain
ended with a sudden change in scenery and mood:

But now from a hill summit down they look
Where through a narrow valley's pleasant scene
A wreath of vapour tracked a winding brook
Babbling through groves and lawns and meads of
green.

A smoking cottage peeped the trees between,
The woods resound the linnet's amorous lays,
And melancholy lowings intervene
Of scattered herds that in the meadows graze,
While through the furrowed grass the merry
milkmaid strays.

(Salisbury Plain, 406-14)

The similarities in subject and treatment indicate
Wordsworth's possible debt to Hutchinson, or at least his
adherence to some of the conventions of topographical
description.

Wordsworth drew on his own experiences on Salisbury
Plain in 1793 for the principal setting of Salisbury Plain.
Wordsworth's description of the plain is similar to William
Gilpin's in his Observations on the Western Parts of
England, and though Gilpin's book was not published until
1798, it is possible that Wordsworth read the manuscript.⁶⁰
However, the similarities in the descriptions do indicate
how Wordsworth was influenced in his approach to real
landscape by the topographical prose of the day. Gilpin
describes Salisbury Plain in detail, assuming, as does
Wordsworth, that Stonehenge was a Druid monument. Gilpin's
approach combines both description and historical
reflections, and at times is close to Wordsworth's poem:

Though Salisbury Plain in Druid times was probably a very busy scene, we now find it wholly uninhabited. Here and there we meet a flock of sheep, scattered over the side of some rising ground; and a shepherd with his dog, attending them; or perhaps we may descry some solitary waggon winding round a distant hill. But the only resident inhabitant of this vast waste is the bustard As the bustard leads his life in these unfrequented wilds, and studiously avoids the haunts of men, the appearance of any thing in motion, though at a considerable distance, alarms him.

(Observations on the Western Parts of England, p.88)

And scarce could any trace of man descry
(Salisbury Plain, 43)

And see the homeward shepherd dim appear
Far off
(Salisbury Plain, 50-1)

They looked and saw a lengthening road and wain
Descending a bare slope not far remote.
(Salisbury Plain, 343-4)

Save that the bustard of those limits bleak,
Shy tenant, seeing there a mortal wight
At that dread hour, outsent a mournful shriek
(Salisbury Plain, 68-70)

Gilpin also compares the Plain to the ocean, and refers to the "tumuli or barrows" that make the Plain "one vast cemetery" as does Wordsworth.⁶¹ It is possible that Wordsworth was directly influenced by Gilpin's description, but he was undoubtedly influenced by the approach to landscape in such contemporary writers.

An interesting feature of Wordsworth's use of topographical writing is that he did not seem to adopt a picturesque approach to landscape, nor the underlying idea of the distinction between Art and Nature so popular with many authors, notably Gilpin. Wordsworth did take from these writers an interest in specific localities, and in scenery not necessarily picturesque (perhaps 'sublime' or even 'horrid'). Topographical writers were often interested in the human interaction with landscape, recording their

thoughts and feelings or their more general reflections in response to a particular place, much as Wordsworth did in Salisbury Plain. The interaction between the observer and a landscape was central to much topographical writing, and it is this that seemed to have influenced Wordsworth most in the composition of Salisbury Plain.

VIII

There are also a number of similarities between the narrative section of Salisbury Plain and eighteenth-century topographical and pastoral poetry. The topographical journey poem was popular, and the inclusion of neolithic ruins or even Stonehenge itself was not uncommon.⁶² Other elements in Salisbury Plain, such as an embedded woman's narration, Gothic elements, and images of the lost pleasures of cottage life were also part of some of these poems.⁶³ Although Salisbury Plain had more emphasis on politics than was common, political reflections were a feature of many earlier poems.⁶⁴

Besides these general similarities at many points in the narrative section of the poem Wordsworth appears to have adopted specific eighteenth-century conventions. In some cases it is possible to suggest sources, but often the popularity of the conventions means that no definite links can be established. In the descriptions of visionary beings in Salisbury Plain Wordsworth drew on a small number of literary sources, whilst in his treatment of the traveller on the barren heath the range of similar descriptions implies Wordsworth did not use specific poems as sources.

"swain":

Or, throned on that dread circle's summit gray
Of mountains hung in air, their state unfold,
And like a thousand Gods mysterious council hold...
(Salisbury Plain, 178-80)

where Collins's image of "monarchs" that "on their twilight tombs aerial council hold" is echoed in Wordsworth's "throned . . . in air . . . mysterious council hold". The other visionary experience in Salisbury Plain derives from The Castle of Indolence. Just as in Wordsworth's poem an "old man" tells of

- Long bearded forms with wands uplifted shew
To vast assemblies, while each breath of night
Is hushed, the living fires that bright and slow
Rounding th'aetherial field in order go...
(Salisbury Plain, 191-4)

so in Thomson's poem a "shepherd of the Hebrid Isles" is described

(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
Or that aerial beings sometimes deign
To stand embodied to our sense plain)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phoebus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro
(The Castle of Indolence, I, xxx, 3-8)

Visions of this kind were often part of poems on particular localities, but the subject and echo ("vast assemblies" / "vast assembly") suggest Wordsworth was drawing upon Thomson. In his presentation of visionary beings Wordsworth drew heavily on a small number of sources, combining the portentous warrior visions in Shakespeare with the more tranquil apparitions of eighteenth-century poets.

The unnamed "traveller" who wanders through the storm in Salisbury Plain is a conventional figure. Celoria has pointed out a more specific parallel in Chatterton's Battle

of Hastings:⁶⁸

The hungrie traveller upon his waie
 Sees a huge desarte alle arounde hym spredde,
 The distaunte citie scantlie to be spedde,
 The curlynge force of smoke he sees in vayne,
 Tis too far distaunte, and hys onlie bedde
 Iwimpled in hys cloke ys on the playne,
 Whylste rattlynge thonder forrey oer his hedde,
 And raines come down to wette hys harde uncouthlie
 bedde.

(Battle of Hastings, 533-40)

where the Spenserian stanza, the traveller on the heath, and the image of the wet ground as a bed ("the wet cold ground must be his only bed": SP, 62) indicate the extent of the similarities. In general it is difficult to identify sources for these passages, for example

No shade was there, no meads of pleasant green,
 No brook to wet his lips or soothe his ear,
 Huge piles of corn-stack here and there were seen
 But thence no smoke upwreathed his sight to cheer
 (Salisbury Plain, 46-9)

is a largely conventional way of establishing barrenness by a series of negations:

a desert wild

Before them stretched, bare, comfortless, and
 vast;
 With gibbets, bones, and carcasses defiled.
 There nor trim field nor lively culture smiled;
 Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair:
 (Castle of Indolence, II, lxxvii, 2-6)

Such descriptions were commonplaces, as in The Heath by J.B. Farish and Ann Radcliffe's Salisbury Plains:⁶⁹

No tree, nor smiling green is on y^e ground;
 'Tis barren heath as far as sees the eye,
 And here & there
 (The Heath, 5-7)

There no forest leaves are seen,
 Yellow corn, nor meadow green,
 Glancing casement, grey-mossed roof,
 Rain and hail and tempest proof;
 Nor, peering o'er that dreary ground,
 Is spied along the horizon's bound

John Scott's Ode XIII, an anti-war poem echoed in Wordsworth's Andrew Jones, is also echoed in Salisbury Plain:

I hate that drum's discordant sound,
Parading round, and round, and round:
(Ode XIII, 1-2)

But soon with proud parade the noisy drum
Beat round to sweep the streets of want and pain.
(Salisbury Plain, 300-1)

Some echoes involve a more complex pattern of sources. Wordsworth's line "The crows in blackening eddies homeward borne" seems to follow Burns, The Cotter's Saturday Night, "The black'ning trains o' crows to their repose".⁷² The description of the bustard in Salisbury Plain follows Thomson's Winter:

And half upon the ground, with strange affright,
Forced hard against the wind a thick unwieldy
flight.
(Salisbury Plain, 71-2)

a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove...
(Winter, 140-2)

where the curious use of "thick" to describe flight is retained by Wordsworth. But the passage from Winter is also a source for Burns's line. Another example of interrelated sources can be found in the image:

Nor taper glimmered dim from sick man's room.
Along the moor no line of mournful light
From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed athwart the
night.
(Salisbury Plain, 115-7)

Gill compares this to a line from Pope: "Stars that shoot athwart the Night",⁷³ though it also has much in common with the diction and imagery of Blair's The Grave:

dark night,
 Dark as was chaos, ere the infant Sun
 Was roll'd together, or had tried his beams
 Athwart the gloom profound.- The sickly taper,
 By glimmering through thy low-brow'd misty vaults
 (The Grave, 13-7)

and Owen sees a parallel with Comus:⁷⁴

som gentle taper
 Though a rush Candle from the wicker hole
 Of som clay habitation visit us
 With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light
 (Comus, 337-40)

It seems possible Wordsworth was drawing upon a common poetic diction here. Such patterns of sources indicate the kind of borrowing current in eighteenth-century poetry and Wordsworth's similar practice.

Milton was possibly the most frequently imitated poet during the eighteenth century, and Salisbury Plain reflects this. Besides specific debts there are a number of parallels with Milton where the range of later imitations makes the attribution of sources impossible. The most obvious example is Wordsworth's description of Stainmore Vale which is part of the tradition of poems spawned by L'Allegro.⁷⁵ There are clear echoes of Milton in Salisbury Plain, though they are, at times, linked to those of another poet:

With wings which did the world of waves invest,
 The Spirit of God diffused through balmy air
 Quiet that might have healed, if aught could heal,
 Despair.
 (Salisbury Plain, 358-60)

This follows Paradise Lost:

on the watrie calme
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspred
 (Paradise Lost, vii, 234-5)

The lines in Salisbury Plain also recall Charlotte Smith's To Spring:

Thy sounds of harmony, thy balmy air,
 Have power to cure all sadness- but despair.
 (To Spring, 13-4) 76

This combination of sources can be contrasted with passages where the function as well as the diction derive from Milton. In Salisbury Plain the traveller, after hearing the greater part of the female vagrant's story, urges her

"Oh come," he said, "come after weary night
 So ruinous far other scene to view."
 So forth she came and eastward look'd. The sight
 O'er her moist eyes meek dawn of gladness threw
 That tinged with faint red smile her faded hue.
 Not lovelier did the morning star appear
 Parting the lucid mist and bathed in dew,
 The whilst her comrade to her pensive chear
 Tempered sweet words of hope and the lark warbled
 near.

(Salisbury Plain, 334-42)

This follows a passage in Paradise Regain'd where, also after a "night so foul", the morning comes:

And now the Sun with more effectual beams
 Had chear'd the face of Earth, and dry'd the wet
 From drooping plant, or drooping tree; the birds
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
 After a night of storm so ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn

(Paradise Regain'd, iv, 432-8)

where the echo ("after weary night / So ruinous"; "After a night of storm so ruinous") indicates that Wordsworth was following Milton in using a morning scene within an account of the trials of the central character to change the mood of the poem.

Thus, besides the more pervasive debt to Spenser and other authors, the diction and imagery of Salisbury Plain indicate the poem was written within the conventions of eighteenth-century poetry in which the use of a common diction and imagery, echoing, and allusion were the norm.

X

To summarize, Salisbury Plain shows evidence of two stages of composition. The first stage consisted of the narrative section of the poem set on Stainmore, and was largely within the traditions of humanitarian poetry and topographical writing. The later prophetic sections show the influence of more political writing and, like Descriptive Sketches, use direct allusions to these works. Salisbury Plain shows the imprint of many sources: Spenser, political and topographical writers, a wide range of poetry, common eighteenth-century motifs, and current poetic diction. This does not suggest that Wordsworth used the "gaudiness and inane phraseology" condemned in Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads: most of his debts were to poets like Milton and Spenser whose diction he never condemned, or from "those in modern times who have been most successful in painting manners and passions".⁷⁷ Nevertheless, in Salisbury Plain Wordsworth was working largely within the poetic conventions of his day.

Salisbury Plain is not a mere pastiche of conventional verse: Wordsworth's use of an extended dramatic monologue based on factual events and the radicalism of the poem set it apart from the poetry of the day. The poem is united by its didactic purpose and the pervasive Spenserian elements, and the prophetic voice generates a philosophical and political context for the vagrant's story that lifts Salisbury Plain above the humanitarian pathos piece. To view Salisbury Plain as no more than a product of various strands in topographical poetry and polemical writing is to

miss the poem's undoubted power (especially when seen in the context of the political and social events of 1793-4), and to ignore the way in which Wordsworth transformed much that he borrowed into a cohesive poetic statement. Equally, to undervalue the literary sources and allusions would be to deny the poem's rich poetic and political resonances.

Salisbury Plain is the story of the woman's sufferings, framed by the poet's didactic voice. The didactic voice explains that suffering results from the evils of superstition and tyranny. Against these evils are ranged reason and political reform. Here Wordsworth drew upon a central metaphor of the Augustan age, enlightenment, adding to it a radicalism that advocated major political reform. And indeed that radicalism is evident in the story of the woman herself, for Wordsworth was implicitly valuing the experiences of ordinary people by giving her a voice of her own within the poem. It is this final aspect of Salisbury Plain that was to prove crucial in the development of Wordsworth's treatment of the woman's story.

CHAPTER TWO

THE 1794 REVISIONS OF AN EVENING WALKAND DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

My Brother Kitt and I, while he was at Forncett, amused ourselves by analysing every Line and prepared a very bulky Criticism, which he was to transmit to William as soon as he should have [ad]ded to it the [remarks] of his Cambridge Friends.

(Dorothy Wordsworth to Jane Pollard,
16 February 1793: EY, p.89)

Whether or not Wordsworth actually received Dorothy's "bulky Criticism", by the end of the summer of 1794 he had revised An Evening Walk (1793) and Descriptive Sketches.¹ The revisions of Descriptive Sketches were minor, mostly short additions or corrections. On the other hand the new version of An Evening Walk (1794) was considerably longer and, despite not being finished, marks a noteworthy stage in the development of Wordsworth's poetry.

The text of An Evening Walk (1794) has only recently been published in an accurate form,² yet some passages have attracted a good deal of critical comment. Sheats is correct when he asserts that these passages "have been cited primarily as evidence of Wordsworth's early philosophy of nature", and "virtually no attention has been given to their style and theme".³ Although the examinations of An Evening Walk (1794) in Sheats and Averill differ in emphasis, both stress the value of appraising the poem as a whole. There are two fundamental points that arise in these analyses: the simplification of the style of the poem, and the increase in human elements. Equally important is the deft way Wordsworth modified his earlier poem, creating one of almost twice the original length through insertions (an indication of the paratactic qualities of An Evening

Walk).

An Evening Walk (1794) does include passages that directly address fundamental questions concerning the relationship between people and nature, and the qualities of matter itself. Given the wider context of Wordsworth's life-long interest in natural objects, it is not surprising that critics have seized upon these passages as indicating the kind of philosophy of nature Wordsworth held in 1794. However, the literary context of the poem is an equally important indicator of the origins and kind of philosophy of nature Wordsworth held in 1794.

II

There is no doubt that An Evening Walk (1794) and Descriptive Sketches belong to the tradition of loco-descriptive and topographical poetry and prose. Joseph Warton, writing about one of the seminal poems in this genre, Cooper Hill, described the underlying assumption behind much topographical writing:⁴

The descriptions of places, and images raised by the poet, are still tending to some hint, or leading into some recollection, upon moral life, or political institutions; much in the same manner as the real sight of such scenes and prospects is apt to give the mind a composed turn, and incline it to thoughts and contemplations that have a relation to the object.

(Aubin, p.38)

An Evening Walk (1794) also seems close to the topographical poetry admired by John Scott. Scott advocated "precision, simplicity, and dignity" in style, and adherence to the real and particular for:

Sentiments that have no foundation in fact, or in reason,

can have no merit.

(Critical Essays) 5

Behind such strictures lay the Enlightenment attitude to the natural world and natural philosophy: truth was a matter of accurate observation to be communicated without distortion:

Language, like light, is a medium; and the true philosophic stile, like light from a north-window, exhibits objects clearly, and distinctly, without soliciting attention to itself. 6

In this respect, the conventions of topographical poetry Wordsworth seems to have followed are consistent with his political theories in Salisbury Plain insofar as both were based on the Enlightenment metaphor for truth.

Within the broad convention of topographical poetry (and prose) there was a multitude of conventional elements and motifs. The structures of Wordsworth's poems follow conventional patterns: An Evening Walk uses the 'ideal day' structure, and Descriptive Sketches is a journey poem. In both poems Wordsworth interspersed reflections on a range of subjects within his descriptions of natural objects. Even the descriptions of nature in Wordsworth's poems were, at points, drawing upon the conventions of the genre. For example, in Descriptive Sketches (1793) Wordsworth describes Lake Como as a "pictur'd mirror, broad and blue",⁷ and in An Evening Walk (1794) describes a lake in similar terms:

And now the universal tides repose
And brightly blue the burnished mirror glows
(Averill, p. 209, edited)

Blest are those spirits tremblingly awake
To Nature's impulse like this living lake,
Whose mirrour makes the landscape's charms its own
With touches soft as those to Memory known;
While, exquisite of sense, the mighty mass

All vibrates to the lightest gales that pass.
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 191-6)

The image of water as a mirror "appears times without number in English local poetry"⁸ and the colour blue is, of course, often associated with it, even in topographical prose:

the lake opening directly at my feet, majestic in its calmness, clear and smooth as a blue mirror. ⁹

Another commonplace is "living lake", derived from Virgil's "vivique lacus".¹⁰ Even the description of the lake as "exquisite of sense" to "spirits tremblingly awake" because it responds "to the lightest gales" has parallels in topographical writing:

when the whole lake is tranquil, a gentle perturbation will arise in some distant part, from no apparent cause, from a breath of air, which nothing else can feel, and creeping softly on, communicate the tremulous shudder with exquisite sensibility it is tremblingly alive all over ¹¹

Whilst Wordsworth has gone beyond the conventions he inherited by linking the spirit sensitive to nature to the sensitivity of nature itself, there is little doubt that he drew upon some of the lake imagery of topographical writing in these passages.

In An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches and their revisions in 1794, Wordsworth worked within the conventions of topographical writing, and was largely faithful to the principles of the genre. He also made use of conventional motifs. The presentation of natural objects in An Evening Walk (1794) and Descriptive Sketches revisions of 1794 can usefully be considered in light of these conventions.

III

Although there is no debate over whether or not the poems of 1794 lie within the conventions of topographical writing, there has been considerable critical discussion over what relationship these poems have with other nature poetry, and with the philosophy of nature in the eighteenth century. Because of the importance of nature as a topic both in poetry and philosophy at the time, it is difficult to identify specific sources, though general similarities abound.

In natural philosophy the religious interest in nature combined with the growth in scientific investigation and philosophical speculation to make 'nature' one of the central concepts in academic debate in the eighteenth century. The poetry of nature, revived as a subject of serious poetry by Thomson, grew in importance during the century in a way that complemented the growth in topographical prose. Further, as Moore argued,¹² nature poetry was often influenced by natural philosophy, thus further adding to the complexities of trying to trace patterns of influence.

The eighteenth-century interest in nature in philosophy and religion resulted in a host of works in England and Europe. In England various religious works written in the early years of the century were followed by philosophical works considering the moral and spiritual influence of nature. On the Continent the Enlightenment authors, particularly the French authors, tended to examine nature in a less religious context, even using nature as a

basis for advocating atheism. In some ways parallel to these writings was the scientific natural philosophy that, following Bacon and others, sought to understand the universe through observation and experiment. As Piper has suggested, the authors of many of these works were associated with radical politics.¹³

Sheats usefully reviews the philosophical background to Wordsworth's poetry of nature, and makes the key points that Wordsworth's intention in his poetry of 1794 was not to present philosophic doctrine, and that the consistency of his statements on the philosophy of nature over the period 1790-1794 is more striking than any change.¹⁴ Attempts to relate An Evening Walk (1794) to particular philosophical influences have failed, so far, to demonstrate that Wordsworth was directly influenced by any one philosopher or philosophical system. Aspects of Wordsworth's philosophy of nature have been variously assigned to Gilpin, Hartley, Priestley, Alison, Darwin, Burke, Diderot, D'Holbach, Volney, 'Walking Stewart', and others.¹⁵ Piper has given the most thorough analysis of the possible sources for Wordsworth's philosophy, rightly stressing the links with radical politics and science, though his argument has distinct weaknesses.¹⁶ One of the central problems in suggesting any specific source for Wordsworth's philosophy of nature is the range of related theories current in 1790. For example, even the relatively unusual idea in An Evening Walk (1794) of living matter:

Sees sense, through Nature's rudest forms
betrayed,
Tremble obscure in fountain, rock, and shade
(An Evening Walk (1794), 129-30)

has parallels in medicine, science, and philosophy.¹⁷ Thus, despite the canvassing of many possible philosophical sources for Wordsworth's ideas, there seems too little specific evidence to justify an assertion that Wordsworth was an adherent of any single philosophical system.

The philosophy of nature had in the eighteenth century become a popular subject of poetry, and as Moore rightly suggests poetry was "a connecting link between the formal theorists and the later poets usually designated as romanticists".¹⁸ Critics have pointed out general similarities between Wordsworth's nature poetry and that of Thomson, Akenside, Cowper, Beattie and others.¹⁹ More specifically, it seems the imagery and underlying philosophy of nature in An Evening Walk (1794) follows such eighteenth-century nature poetry more closely than any philosophical works.

The importance of nature as a subject of poetry had its basis in the idea of God as creator. From this derived the ideas of nature as the language of God and the moral benefits of the sympathetic observation of nature. The expression of these ideas in eighteenth-century nature poetry became commonplace, as did the images used to convey them. Wordsworth's nature poetry used such commonplaces²⁰ as in Descriptive Sketches:

And oft, when pass'd that solemn vision by,
He holds with God himself communion high
(Descriptive Sketches, 550-1)

Thus the men
Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself
Hold converse

(Akenside, Pleasures of the Imagination, iii, 629-31)

although not all these commonplaces derived from the eighteenth century:

Blows not a Zephyr but it whispers joy
(Descriptive Sketches, 18)

which follows Milton ("The Windes . . . Whispering new joyes").²¹ The morally beneficial effects of observing natural objects were expressed through images of guarding, healing, and soothing:

Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.
(Descriptive Sketches, 490-1)

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy impart.
(The Minstrel, I, x, 1-2)

May never man thy peaceful glooms explore
Without a virtuous wish unfelt before.
-Sweet rill, farewell!
(An Evening Walk (1794), 141-3)

Nor may I, sweet stream,
From thy wild banks and still retreats depart,
Where now I meditate my casual theme,
Without some mild improvement on my heart.
Poured sad, yet pleasing!
(Bowles, Monody, Written at Matlock, 103-7) 22

The sympathetic response to nature was therefore important:

He views the Sun uplift his golden fire,
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's lyre
(Descriptive Sketches, 33-4)

Blest are those spirits tremblingly awake
To Nature's impulse like this living lake
(An Evening Walk (1794), 191-2)

It is interesting that both these passages follow Akenside,²³ but the subject was a commonplace. A related idea in An Evening Walk (1794) is "From love of Nature love of Virtue flows" which was also conventional ("virtue rose from nature").²⁴ The "secret power" of nature

mentioned in An Evening Walk (1794) and Descriptive Sketches (and the 1794 revisions of that poem) has a more specific source, Mason's Caractacus:

-And sure there is a secret Power that reigns
Here, where no trace of man the spot profanes
(Descriptive Sketches, 424-5)

But feels a seret power of strong controul
(Birdsall, p.171)

And while a secret power those forms endears
Their social accents never vainly hears.
(An Evening Walk (1794), 131-2)

Surely there is a hidden power, that reigns
'Mid the lone majesty of untam'd nature,
Controuling sober reason
(Mason, pp.159-60) 25

Descriptive Sketches and An Evening Walk (1794) had, therefore, clear parallels in thought and expression with eighteenth-century nature poetry.

Wordsworth's philosophy of nature, based on the Creator myth, and linking a sympathetic observation of nature with closeness to God and moral improvement, was consistent with eighteenth-century nature poetry. These ideas about nature tended to be associated with political radicalism,²⁶ if only because Deistic belief challenged the authority of the church, and this would add to their appeal to Wordsworth during this period. It should also be noted that Wordsworth's later philosophy of nature owed something to eighteenth-century poetry: the influence of nature on the developing mind of the poet in The Prelude has parallels in Akenside (and Beattie), and the preference of nature as a teacher (rather than books) in Expostulation and Reply and The Tables Turned has parallels in Cowper.²⁷ In the context of the revisions to An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches in 1794, the most important influence on Wordsworth's nature

poetry was Thomson.

IV

Wordsworth expressed the view in Essay, Supplementary to the Preface (1815) that Thomson was responsible for a resurgence of interest in the poetry of nature:

Now it is remarkable that, excerpting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchilsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the Paradise Lost and the Seasons does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination.

(Prose, iii, p.73) 28

though he felt Thomson had a "vicious style". Thomson himself declared his interest in the poetry of nature in his Preface to Winter:

I know no subject more elevating, more amusing; more ready to awake the poetical enthusiasm, the philosophical reflection, and the moral sentiment, than the works of Nature. 29

An Evening Walk (1794) reflects Thomson's imagery though not his style, and evidences that Wordsworth's admiration of The Seasons was based, in part, upon Thomson's distinctive treatment of nature.

The image of the poet beside a stream is a convention derived from classical models and, as Lonsdale points out in a different context,³⁰ was frequently adopted in eighteenth-century poetry. What is distinctive about Thomson's and Wordsworth's treatment of the scene is that it is not used to evoke a refuge from the world (characteristic of classical models and most eighteenth-century poetry), but

becomes a source of an almost mystical experience. An analysis of how the passage in An Evening Walk (1794) is constructed and relates to An Evening Walk (1793) shows the importance of the debt to Thomson. The passage in An Evening Walk (1794) (ll.83-108) expands the description of the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydale in An Evening Walk (1793) (ll.71-88). De Selincourt notes the physical description of the scene common to both versions of An Evening Walk seems to follow Thomson and Shakespeare:³¹

Sole light admitted here, a small cascade,
 Illumes with sparkling foam the impervious shade.
 Dark winds above the vists of the brook,
 And antique roots its bustling path o'erlook,
 Seen through the old arch of a secret bridge,
 Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its ridge
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 101-6)

Under an oak whose antique root peeps out
 Upon the brook that brawls along this wood!
 (As You Like It, II, i, 31-2)

There along the dale
 With woods o'erhung, and shagged with mossy rocks
 Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
 And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall
 Or gleam in lengthened vista through the trees
 (Spring, 909-13)

An Evening Walk (1794) expands on the original description in a passage that describes the effects of the scene:

Or through the mind, by magic influence
 Rapt into worlds beyond the reign of sense,
 Roll the bright train of never ending dreams
 That pass like rivers tinged with evening gleams
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 91-4)

in the same way as the description in Spring includes a transition from the scene to mental abstraction:

the plaint of rills,
 That, purling down amid the twisted roots
 Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
 On the soothed ear. From these abstracted oft,
 You wander through the philosophic world;
 Where in bright train continual wonders rise
 (Spring, 919-24)

A similar passage is also found in Autumn:

O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes;
 Inflames imagination; through the breast
 Infuses every tenderness; and far
 Beyond dim earth exults the swelling thought.
 (Autumn, 1010-3)

The experience of natural objects leading to "Worlds beyond the reign of sense" in An Evening Walk (1794) also echoes

Descriptive Sketches:

Like lighted tempests troubled transports roll;
 To viewless realms his Spirit towers amain,
 Beyond the senses and their little reign.
 (Descriptive Sketches, 547-9)

The experience was a key one in Wordsworth's later accounts of his childhood,³² but seems to owe a good deal to Thomson's The Seasons.

As both The Seasons and An Evening Walk (1794) describe natural objects within the conventions of topographical poetry it is not surprising to find that there are general similarities of approach. Both poems feature descriptions of natural objects interspersed with reflections on the relationship between such natural objects and the observer, the distinctive associations particular locations may have, and pathetic narratives. These similarities are shared with many other poems, but they extend to specific motifs and verbal echoes. Certain scenes are found in both poems: the twilight wood where "the virtuous rove", a desolate scene with plover and bittern, willows by the shore, and cattle standing in the water and thirsty horses.³³ There are also verbal echoes:

Gradual sinks the breeze

Into a perfect calm
 (Spring, 155-6)

Into a gradual calm the Zephyrs sink
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 171)

Perhaps most important is the fact that Wordsworth drew upon Thomson not just for incidental echoes or motifs, but for fundamental expressions of the relationship between the "mind of Man" and natural objects:

Or, by the vocal woods and waters lulled,
 And lost in lonely musing, in a dream
 Confused of careless solitude where mix
 Ten thousand wandering images of things,
 Soothe every gust of passion into peace-
 All but the swellings of the softened heart,
 That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind...
 (Spring, 460-6)

as in An Evening Walk (1794) "I bend o'er this half
 useless gate, / And muse on human being's various state",
 hearing the nearby stream and night sounds

-With thoughts that rise to this still hour
 confined,
 From images whose impulse wakes the mind,
 Yet not disturbs it
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 789-91)

Wordsworth seems to have drawn upon The Seasons for Thomson's observations of natural objects and their effects upon the observer rather than his stylistic devices, and this would be consonant with the assessment of Thomson in Essay, Supplementary to the Preface (1815).

Although Thomson was the most important single influence on An Evening Walk (1794), other eighteenth-century poems served as sources for parts of Wordsworth's poem. Besides the philosophy of nature discussed above, many of the descriptions in An Evening Walk (1794) are conventional. The description of

Hawkshead Grammar School's playground and the adjacent graveyard (ll. 35-52) draws upon the eighteenth-century mania for graveyard scenes, from Blair's The Grave to Gray's Elegy. Wordsworth's earliest version of the scene in The Vale of Esthwaite mentions Gray, and may indicate a debt to his Elegy.³⁴ The scene in An Evening Walk (1794) also draws on Measure for Measure:

Their sensible warm motion was allied
To the dull [earth]
(Averill, p.161, edited)

This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod
(Measure for Measure, III,i,121-2)

and employs the commonplace image of youth playing oblivious to the threat of death.³⁵ More generally, Wordsworth's paratactic descriptions of natural objects, such as in the evening walk itself or the description of the sounds heard at night, use conventional elements in a largely conventional manner.³⁶ Some of these elements have a considerable history, such as "swallow flocks that twittering pass" that follows Virgil's "garsula . . . hirundo" and later imitators.³⁷ In general, the descriptions in An Evening Walk (1794) closely follow the conventions of eighteenth-century nature poetry.

It is possible to indicate specific debts within these conventions. One of the most interesting indicates Wordsworth's adherence to the poetic strictures of John Scott. Wordsworth may have followed Scott in his admiration for a passage from Dyer's Grongar Hill:

From the dark sylvan roofs the restless spire
Inconstant glancing, seems ascending fire
(Birdsall, p.143)

We have now a scene almost unexceptionably picturesque and beautiful:

Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly towering in the skies!
Rushing from the woods the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires!
(Critical Essays) 38

There are also parallels, though less convincing, between Scott's poetry and An Evening Walk (1794).³⁹ Another example of a specific debt to another author is in Wordsworth's description of the good mind:

A Mind, that in a calm angelic mood
Of happy wisdom, meditating good,
Beholds, of all from her high powers required,
Much done, and much designed, and more desired;
Harmonious thoughts, a soul by Truth refined,
Entire affection for all human kind.
(An Evening Walk (1794), 119-24)

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good, which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
(The Traveller, 37-44)

Though the sentiment is common enough, Wordsworth is close to Goldsmith in his expression of the thought.

Wordsworth's debt to Thomson and the later eighteenth-century nature poets is evident throughout An Evening Walk (1794) not only in subject matter, but in his poem's motifs and diction. The close parallels that exist also indicate the importance of literary sources in Wordsworth's presentation of nature.

Explores the illimitable tracts of mind
 (Averill, p.163 , edited)

And, proud beyond all limits to aspire,
 Mounts through the fields of thought on wings of fire
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 209-10)

effringere ut arta
 naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret
 ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
 processit longe flammantia moenia mundi
 atque omne immensum peragravit mente animoque
 (De Rerum Natura, i, 70-4) 42

Although there were many eighteenth-century imitations of Lucretius, Wordsworth was drawing here directly from De Rerum Natura, especially in the image of the mind transversing the universe in thought and the praise of the scientific imagination. On the other hand, the inclusion of allusions to Lucretius in topographical poetry was commonplace, and at other points Wordsworth seems to be following Thomson:

those favoured souls, who, taught
 By active Fancy or by patient Thought,
 See common forms prolong the endless chain
 (An Evening Walk (1794), 203-5)

and, angel-winged,
 The heights of science and of virtue gains,
 Where all is calm and clear; with Nature round,
 Or in the starry regions or the abyss,
 To reason's and to fancy's eye displayed-
 The first up-tracing, from the dreary void,
 The chain of causes and effects to Him
 (Summer, 1740-6)

There is no evidence to suggest that in creating An Evening Walk (1794) Wordsworth merely interpolated earlier translations of classical authors, although this remains possible. What does seem clear is that he saw no objection, at that time, to the inclusion of classical imitations in

the bird is "a grim Condor" as it makes little sense in reference to a European eagle. It may be that Wordsworth derived his image from Helen Maria Williams's Peru:

Swift from your rocky steeps, ye condors* stray,
Wave your black plumes, and cleave th'aërial way;
Proud in terrific force, your wings expand,
Press the firm earth, and darken all the strand

*The condor is an inhabitant of the Andes. Its wings, when expanded, are said to be eighteen feet wide.

(Peru, i, 161-4 and note)

In any case, Wordsworth's description of the eagle in Descriptive Sketches (1794) owes more to literary sources than to any factual account.

In An Evening Walk (1794) Wordsworth displayed a combination of geographical and scientific knowledge, and expressed this knowledge through conventional imagery:

Spirit, who guid'st that orb and view'st from high
Thrones, towers, and fanes in blended ruin lie;
Roll to Peruvian vales thy gorgeous way;
See thine own temples mouldering in decay;
Roll on, till, hurled from thy bright throne
sublime,

Thyself confess the mighty arm of Time;
Thy star must perish, but triumphant Truth
Shall tend a brightening lamp in endless youth.

(An Evening Walk (1794), 333-40)

As Gill indicates, this is another example of Wordsworth's interest in Peru,⁴³ showing his knowledge of Peruvian sun worship. It uses the conventional imagery associated with the sun and time ("mighty arm" and ruins), as well as the image of "triumphant Truth" and its lamp that recalls the final stanza of Salisbury Plain. Perhaps most interesting is the recognition that the sun is a star and must eventually "perish" in the same sentence as the Ptolemaic "Roll on": a fusion of a modern scientific theory

with conventional literary expression.

In the same manner as The Seasons, the poems of 1794 include pathetic narratives. Just as Winter includes a description of a person freezing, so does An Evening Walk.⁴⁴ The description of a young girl mourning her dead lover is also consistent with the narratives in Thomson.⁴⁵ The Old Man of the Alps from Descriptive Sketches (1794) has a similar function, though it seems probable that its length prevented it from being included in the revised version of the poem.⁴⁶ The implication in each case is that the narratives are broadly factual, though their function within the poem is conventional.⁴⁷ All the narratives show evidence of the kind of sentimental exaggeration associated with topographical and ballad poetry, and with oral accounts of local events. Thus the young girl mourning her dead lover is "led by Sorrow" and expresses "anguish exquisite as vain", the body of the frozen woman is "by horror deck'd", and the daughter's death in The Old Man of the Alps is melodramatic.⁴⁸ In all three narratives people die in accidents. Wordsworth's narratives were of a kind popular in topographical poetry, and show that his approach to the 'factual' was deeply dependent upon literary conventions.

VII

An Evening Walk (1794) and Descriptive Sketches (1794) are largely consistent with the conventions of topographical poetry in content and expression. The influence of nature poets such as Thomson is easily demonstrated, and Wordsworth's philosophy of nature as

expressed in these poems (and indeed in later poems) owes a great deal to these poets. Like other eighteenth-century poets, Wordsworth drew on classical models at times. He also dealt with the 'factual' in a manner that suggests a standard of verisimilitude similar to that of topographical and ballad poetry.

The revisions of 1794 thus emerge as poems firmly rooted in their time, and indicate the continuity in Wordsworth's philosophy of nature rather than a radical departure. There is, however, an interesting omission: the active radical politics emphasized in Descriptive Sketches (1793) and Salisbury Plain are not apparent in the revisions of 1794, perhaps indicating the change in political perspective that is more obvious in Adventures on Salisbury Plain.

CHAPTER THREE

ADVENTURES ON SALISBURY PLAIN (1795)

But since I came to Racedown I have made alterations and additions so material as that it may be looked on almost as another work. Its object is partly to expose the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war as they affect individuals.

(Wordsworth to Francis Wrangham,
20 November 1795: EY, p.159)

The original version of Salisbury Plain was revised in 1795, and it is likely that by 20 November the new poem, Adventures on Salisbury Plain, was complete. The fundamental changes from the earlier poem were the inclusion of Gervas Matchan's story and the omission of the prophetic voice framing the female vagrant's story. On a close examination of all the evidence this first version of Adventures on Salisbury Plain appears not to have survived, and it is therefore necessary to examine carefully the textual evidence before coming to any conclusions about Wordsworth's use of sources for this poem.

II

Gill suggests that the only surviving manuscript of Adventures on Salisbury Plain (MS. 2) was probably copied after May 1799 and does not accurately represent the poem of 1795.¹ More specifically, he argues that the soldier and some parts related to Gothic Tale in MS. 2 are later additions, but concludes:

Although such evidence suggests that the 1795 poem is now lost to us, there is no doubt that substantially, if not in every detail, it has survived in the poem in MS.2, Adventures on Salisbury Plain.

(SPP, p.12)

Gill therefore based his reading text of Adventures on Salisbury Plain on MS. 2. The female vagrant's story is not included in MS. 2, and Gill substitutes in his reading text the 1798 version of the story from Lyrical Ballads (The Female Vagrant), rather than the shorter version from Salisbury Plain. Gill's reading text of Adventures on Salisbury Plain thus includes no work dated 1795, and doubts remain as to how close this reading text is to Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795). Jonathan Wordsworth has argued that MS. 2 represents a substantially different poem to that completed in 1795, and suggests that the female vagrant's story from Salisbury Plain is closer to the 1795 version of Adventures on Salisbury Plain than The Female Vagrant.² It is possible to describe Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) more precisely on the basis of the manuscript evidence that survives.

The earliest additions to Salisbury Plain³ show Wordsworth initially was interested in modifying references to Stonehenge, the psychology of the characters, and the opening descriptions of primitive man. In later additions he attempted to integrate the story of Gervas Matchan, but there is no firm indication of a major change in the poem's structure in these revisions. However, the note on the sailor's story in DC MS. 11 outlines a new end to the poem:

The Woman continues her story
 Her feelings and forlorn situation.
 Sympathy of the sailor
 and his benevolent exertions
 to console her [?distress] [?]
 still further exhibiting
 the sad choice to which
 he is exposed and his humanity

(SPP, p.306, edited)

This describes neither Salisbury Plain nor MS. 2. In Salisbury Plain the traveller does make "benevolent exertions to console", yet he is not a "sailor" and has no "sad choice". In MS. 2 the reverse occurs: after hearing the tale the sailor "sate and spake not", and it is the female vagrant who tries to console him.⁴ The remainder of the prose note describes a poem closer to MS. 2:

They arrive at Cottage-
 Where the woman leaves him-
 Ere she is gone far meets
 with an occurrence which
 induces her to
 seek him again
 [?] of cottgers wife
 of parish officers
 which afflicts the
 remorse
 [?] [?noble] resolve
 Salisbury
 over ages
 [?] of
 [?] [?many]
 [?p]rogress
 [?]inace
 [?]ciety
 [?]

(SPP, p. 306, edited)

Unlike MS. 2 there is no mention of the sailor's wife and her story, or a meeting with a family. The remaining words do, however, hint at the final stanzas of MS. 2: "cottgers" ("good cottagers" ASP, 708), the remorse of the sailor, and his final "resolve" to go to Salisbury. The prose note in DC MS. 11 shows how the transformation of the traveller of Salisbury Plain into Gervas Matchan had led to the writing of a new ending for the poem.

Manuscript evidence also indicates that Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) differs from Gill's reading text. The

manuscript draftings for Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) can be compared with Salisbury Plain and Gill's reading text:

The Sun unheeded sunk, while on a mound
 He stands beholding with astonished gaze,
 Frequent upon the deep entrenched ground,
 Strange marks of mighty arms of former days,
 Then looking up at distance he surveys
 What seems an antique castle spreading wide.
 Hoary and naked are its walls and raise
 Their brow sublime; while to those walls he hied
 A voice as from a tomb in hollow accents cried:
 (Salisbury Plain, 73-81)

more than before at ease
 Though weak more tranquil than before he found
 his eyes which [?where] it strays
 His mind more calm his eye [?whereer] it strays
 Marks nothing but the red suns setting [?round]
 ground
 Or on the plain strange marks from former days
 Left by and
 Work of gigantic arms he now surveys
 at length surveys
 What seems an antique castle spreading [?wide]
 Hoary and naked are its walls and raise
 [?towards]
 Their [?brow] sublime to those huge walls he hied
 Thinking
 Hoping that sheltered there he might abide
 (SPP, p.114, edited)

As doth befall to them whom frenzy fires,
 His soul, which in such anguish had been toss'd,
 Sank into deepest calm; for now retires
 Fear; a terrific dream in darkness lost
 The dire phantasma which his sense had cross'd.
 His mind was still as a deep evening stream;
 Nor, if accosted now, in thought engross'd,
 Moody, or inly-troubled, would he seem
 To traveller who might talk of any casual theme.

But all was cheerless to the horizon's bound;
 His weary eye- which, whereso'er it strays
 Marks nothing but the red sun setting round,
 Or on the earth strange lines, in former days
 Left by gigantic arms- at length surveys
 What seems an antique castle spreading wide;
 Hoary and naked are its walls and raise
 Their brow sublime: in shelter there to bide
 He ran; the pouring rain smoked thick as on he
 hied.

(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 127-144)

Much of the stanza from Salisbury Plain is incorporated

into the 1795 version, and retained in MS. 2. However, there are clear differences: the supernatural voice has been omitted by 1795, and the sailor's reaction to seeing the body hung in chains is implicit in both of the later versions. In plot and imagery the 1795 draftings are closer to MS. 2, though the extra stanza and extended psychological description in MS. 2 sets it apart from the earlier work. Such manuscript evidence suggests that Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) was intermediate between Salisbury Plain and MS. 2.

There is other evidence to indicate that much of MS. 2 was written after 1795: the length of time Wordsworth had to write the 1795 version of the poem, the relation to later events, and close parallels with works written after 20 November 1795.⁵ There is even some evidence to suggest how long the poem was in 1795: calculations on the inside back cover of DC MS. 11 indicate a 70 stanza version of the poem had been written or planned.⁶ Adventures on Salisbury Plain is 92 stanzas in Gill's reading text. MS. 2, without the sailor's wife and the story of the family, and with a version of the female vagrant's story similar to that in Salisbury Plain, would be about 70 stanzas. Perhaps this is an approximation to the poem as it stood in 1795.

It seems possible that the composition of Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) progressed as follows: slight modifications of Salisbury Plain, the transformation of the traveller into the sailor, a prose plan for the new ending of the poem (perhaps abandoning the prophetic voice), and the final drafting of a new poem of about 70 stanzas. This version of Adventures on Salisbury Plain would start

with the sailor's journey over the plain, seeing the gibbet, and his meeting with the female vagrant. Her story (in a version close to that in Salisbury Plain) and his attempt to console her, would follow. It would end with the scene at the cottage, the female vagrant's meeting "an occurrence" and returning, the sailor's "noble resolve" to surrender himself and, perhaps, some brief reflections on society. Unlike the revisions to An Evening Walk in 1794, the revisions of Salisbury Plain in 1795 were not a series of insertions, but involved a fundamental change in narrative technique, as well as balancing the vagrant's narration with the story of Gervas Matchan.

It would seem the 1795 version was considerably shorter than Gill's reading text, and verbally closer to Salisbury Plain. The emphasis on the dramatic tale in the 1795 version harks back to the earliest version of the female's story despite the greater complexity of the later poem. The inclusion of the sailor's story, however, broadens the social criticism of Salisbury Plain by linking criticism of penal law with an exploration of guilt that hints at the social origins of all crime, as well as the psychological consequences of it. Gill observes that the main differences between Salisbury Plain and Adventures on Salisbury Plain are the omission of the poet's "intrusive voice" and the new story of the sailor, and that, thematically, the later poem deepens the exploration of injustice.⁷ On the other hand, the new poem is not so overtly political as Salisbury Plain, nor does it suggest the necessity of destroying superstition in all its forms. Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) can be seen as an attempt to improve Salisbury Plain by the

omission of the directly didactic voice, and the creation of a new centre of interest to parallel the female vagrant's story.

III

Adventures on Salisbury Plain has only recently received much critical attention, partly because MS. 2 became available only with the publication of The Salisbury Plain Poems. Critical accounts of the poem as it stood in 1795 are often based on the assumption that either Guilt and Sorrow or MS. 2 are close to the 1795 version of the poem, and as this seems unlikely to be the case, these accounts are less useful than they otherwise might be. Gill's introduction to the poem and his fuller account in "Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest 1795-97"⁸ are the best commentaries on the poem's sources. Meyer, Jones, Bateson, Wordsworth, Hartman, Welsford and Sheats have all discussed the poem,⁹ but have commented mostly on its biographical implications. Sheats's account offers the most balanced version of Meyer's original thesis that the poem directly reflects Wordsworth's state of mind at the time of its composition, but is symptomatic of the tendency of even recent critics to examine the poem in biographical terms. Other than Gill's very useful comments, little has been written on the literary context of the poem.

The main new feature in Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) is the inclusion of the story of the murderer, Gervas Matchan. In the 1790's at least three elements coalesced to focus interest on the psychology of the criminal: the

political theories of writers such as Paine, the humanitarian response to the work of penal reformer John Howard, and Gothic novels and plays. Although Wordsworth knew Matchan's story first hand (and the story had a factual basis) it is useful to place Adventures on Salisbury Plain in the context of murder story literature. The murderer's story is, of course, a literary convention of exceptional age, and has a host of variations. In the later part of the eighteenth century the most popular form, and the one Wordsworth drew upon, was the literature of the condemned murderer, often purporting to be 'true accounts'. These were found in ballads, prose accounts, and orally transmitted stories. Wordsworth's murderer was a sub-species, the benevolent murderer, one who claimed to have done no wrong previously, and who was racked with guilt. The guilty conscience of the murderer was a standard feature of popular murder stories, as well as religious accounts.

There was a standard pattern for the benevolent murderer study: a fine young man, blessed with many good qualities, is led to commit murder. In many of these stories the guilty conscience of the murderer is revealed by his or her reaction to particular incidents.¹⁰ The focus of Wordsworth's poem was on the mental consequences for the protagonist, often the subject of earlier works¹¹ including Gessner's The Death of Abel:

The pale moon shed on them a feeble light through the trees, and melancholy silence reigned around. He cast on the dwelling his weeping eyes; he raised his hands to Heaven; he wrung them in speechless agony. Conscious guilt tore his now softened heart.

(The Death of Abel, pp. 174-5)

Godwin's Caleb Williams, Fawcett's Art of War, Southey's Wat Tyler, and Schiller's early dramas (The Robbers and Cabal and Love) are examples of the genre with which Wordsworth might have been familiar. The preface to the English edition of The Robbers gives an account of the central character of such a piece:

The hero of this piece, endowed by nature with the most generous feelings, animated by the highest sense of honour, and susceptible of the warmest affections of the heart, is driven by perfidy, and the supposed inhumanity of those most dear to him in life, into a state of confirmed misanthropy and despair. In this situation, he is hurried on to the perpetration of a series of crimes, which find, from their very magnitude and atrocity, a recommendation to his distempered mind.

(The Robbers, pp.xi-xii)

The benevolent murderer convention was used by Wordsworth, but a closer examination of Adventurers on Salisbury Plain (1795) suggests that he was probably not drawing on specific works within that convention.¹²

Given the popularity of the benevolent murderer genre and Wordsworth's knowledge of the Gervas Matchan story, the claims sometimes made for the influence of other works as a source for Wordsworth's poem seem less tenable: analogues they may be, but it is unlikely they were definite sources. Gill is right in suggesting that the incidental similarities between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Godwin's Caleb Williams are not very important.¹³ Gill goes on to suggest that the real parallel between the works is that both incorporate two truths: one, that human relationships survive at levels beyond law and custom, and two, that exclusion is the worst punishment for the criminal. The second point is fundamental to most murder stories, and the

first is not convincingly demonstrated in either text. Further, both points are central to The Robbers, and other links between Schiller's play and Adventures on Salisbury Plain suggest that Schiller's play provides equally good parallels.¹⁴

Like Caleb Williams, Fawcett's Art of War does have some parallels with Adventures on Salisbury Plain as Beatty was first to suggest.¹⁵ The only striking parallel is, however, the final scene where

The conscience-wither'd wretch a witness comes
Against himself; and gloomy refuge seeks
In the dire executioner, from one
More dire within¹⁶

as in Adventures on Salisbury Plain. The similarity seems less significant in light of the similar endings in Gervas Matchan's tale and The Robbers where Charles announces:

Hard by I have observed a wretch who labours by the day, an officer- He has eleven children.- To him who shall deliver up the Robber Moor, a high reward is now proclaimed.- He and his babes shall have it!

(The Robbers, pp.219-20)

Whilst the ending of Adventures on Salisbury Plain is closer to Fawcett's poem in this detail, there can be little doubt that the denouement was conventional. Further, Fawcett's poem approached murder from a viewpoint antithetical to Wordsworth's and Schiller's, and it is unlikely that it was a direct influence on Wordsworth's poem.

Wordsworth drew on the 'true' story of Gervas Matchan in the composition of Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795)¹⁷ and, though he did not follow it in every detail, the story is the main source for the new elements in the poem. The

story itself is a fairly typical example of the murderer's story. It is not clear whether Wordsworth read the story or if, like the female vagrant's, he heard it from another person, but the original source is likely to have been one of the written accounts of the murder. In any event, Wordsworth took from this story something of the sailor's background, the murder itself, the good character and remorse of the murderer, his voluntary confession, and the location of part of the story. Originally Wordsworth had also included one of the supernatural details of Gervas Matchan's story:

The stones rolled after him in train
And [?Entranced] down he fell upon the plain
(SPP, p.115)

Whilst Matchan's story was obviously the source for much of Adventures on Salisbury Plain, its similarities with many 'benevolent' murderer stories are apparent.

Wordsworth used the story of Matchan but simplified it, playing down the supernatural elements in the same way as he had in revising Salisbury Plain. By linking the poem to the female vagrant's story Wordsworth ingeniously links two stories of individual suffering due to war, stressing the psychological damage to both characters. Wordsworth's modification of the elements in Matchan's story to suit his purposes is deft, and his fidelity to Matchan's life in its essentials noteworthy: these are the real sufferings of a real person dramatized, much as he claimed for the story of the female vagrant.

Thus Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) has a benevolent murderer plot, but draws upon the popular

narratives of murderers for its immediate inspiration. This fusion of the literary, popular fiction, and the factual in Adventures on Salisbury Plain foreshadows Wordsworth's later works, as well as leading directly to the central plot of The Borderers.

IV

Thematically Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) has much in common with the radical writing of the day, and in particular with the works of poets Wordsworth met in Bristol just prior to the composition of the poem. Wordsworth's poem points to the physical and mental suffering inflicted by government, uniting an attack on the criminalization of its citizens with an anti-war poem.

Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) was written whilst the war with France had led to the worsening plight of the poor and government repression of dissent. The poem is, in part, a reflection of these political events. Wordsworth commented on the purposes of the poem:

Its object is partly to expose the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war as they affect individuals.
(EY, p.159)

The "vices of the penal law" are dramatized through the story of Gervas Matchan, and the "calamities of war" through the stories of both central characters. As in Salisbury Plain, the source of the individual's distress is government, and in this respect Adventures on Salisbury Plain is part of the wider radical opposition of the period.

The major addition to Salisbury Plain is the story of Gervas Matchan with its concern with penal law. The issue was a particularly important one at the time, with the attempts to pass the Gagging Acts of 1795 and the imprisonment of political dissenters. The issue of law was touched upon in Salisbury Plain, 519-22, but Gill argues that in Adventures on Salisbury Plain Wordsworth "drew on Godwin's much more sophisticated treatment of penal reform", citing the following passage in Political Justice:

A numerous class of mankind are held down in a state of abject penury, and are continually prompted by disappointment and distress to commit violence upon their more fortunate neighbours. 18

Godwin's argument, like much of Political Justice, derives from other radical writing. A similar argument can be found in Joseph Gerrald, A Convention the Only Means of Saving Us from Ruin:

If government claims the right of punishment, it necessarily incurs the duty of instruction. But of the thousands who fall victims to the rigour of your laws, how few have government taken the pains to instruct! . . . Governments, like the author of evil, first make the criminal, and then punish the crime. 19

Rights of Man seems a more likely source for the ideas on penal law in Wordsworth's poem, partly because of Paine's immense influence, and partly because it is echoed in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff. In Rights of Man Paine raises the same issues as Wordsworth:

When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the workhouse and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government Why is it, that scarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, amongst other things, of a wretchedness in their condition. 20

Paine's reversal of society's judgement of the criminal (seeing execution as a condemnation of society) is fundamental to Wordsworth's attack on penal law. Just as Paine points to the death of the poor in poverty and on the gallows, the central characters in Adventures on Salisbury Plain enact those fates. Thus the attack on penal law in Wordsworth's poem was consonant with attacks in the works of radical political theorists.

At first sight a link between penal law and war seems incongruous. In the works of the poets Wordsworth met in Bristol prior to the completion of the 1795 version of Adventures on Salisbury Plain, the subjects of murder and war were often joined. Cottle argued in his Preface to Poems (1795):

A CONVICTION that a detailed account of one murder, occurring either on the high-road, or on the field of battle, more interests the heart, and leaves on it a longer impression, than the general account of slaughtered thousands; occasioned the Author to introduce the Tale of Orlando and Henry in WAR A FRAGMENT; and while the reader sighs over the individual destruction, he should remember that War is but another name for destruction in the vast. 21

This argument is implicit in the description of the sailor as "Death's minister" (ASP, 84). Like Wordsworth, Coleridge also commented on the ironies implicit in the government's treatment of the poor:

And yet how often have the fierce Bigots of Despotism told me, that the Poor are not to be pitied, however great their necessities: for if they be out of employ, the KING wants men! - They may be shipped off to the Slaughter-house abroad, if they wish to escape a Prison at home! - Fools! to commit ROBBERIES, and get hung, when they might MURDER with impunity- yea, and have Sixpence a day into the bargain!

(CC, i, p.70)

where poverty, war, and murder are related in a way similar

concerns of the poem are those of works by Cottle, Southey, and Coleridge, and as Wordsworth met all three in 1795 it would seem possible that they had some influence on Wordsworth's conception of his poem.

V

As the 1795 version of Adventures on Salisbury Plain has been lost, it is not possible to identify specific sources with any certainty. The diction and imagery of Adventures on Salisbury Plain is less stilted than Salisbury Plain, and Wordsworth appears to have reduced the number of direct allusions to Spenser²⁵ and eliminated some of the Gothic elements in the earlier poem.

The revisions clearly dated 1795 indicate Wordsworth was influenced by contemporary poetry in the composition of his new poem. Wordsworth, in trying to convey the renewal of the sailor, wrote several versions of a description of his state of mind:

common cares
Might to his breast a second spring restore
(SPP, p.116)

common cares
Might to a second spring of joy restore
(SPP, p.117)

Here he is following Charlotte Smith, Written at the Close of Spring: "Ah! why has happiness- no second Spring?", and modifying the original allusion in Salisbury Plain.²⁶ In these draftings, unlike Salisbury Plain, Wordsworth shows that, even for a murderer, there does remain the chance of a second spring, and this reverses Smith's sentimental

reflections. Wordsworth also was directly influenced by J.B. Farish, The Heath, an influence he acknowledged in a footnote to Guilt and Sorrow, 81:

For then with scarce distinguishable clang
 In the cold wind a sound of irons rang
 He looked and saw on a bare gibbet nigh
 In moving chains a human body hang
 A hovering raven oft did round it fly
 A grave the was beneath which he could not descry
 (SPP, p. 116, edited)

Beside us stood the Murtherer's gibbet high,
 And hovering round it often did a Raven fly.

Eftsoons we heard the ghastly carcasse shake
 His iron chains; up-born upon ye blast,
 While with his weight ye rusty chain did creek,
 Oft swinging he did beat the gibbet mast.
 (The Heath, 8-13) 27

Besides the allusion, the sound of the chains and the movement of the body in the wind show the debt to Farish's poem, and there may be other points at which Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) followed The Heath.²⁸ From the few draftings which remain from the 1795 version, there is reason to think Wordsworth continued to use contemporary poetry as a source.

One of the details of Gervas Matchan's story that probably dates from 1795 shows how Wordsworth alluded to Paradise Lost.²⁹ The opening of Adventures on Salisbury Plain includes a description of Matchan's past, including the lines:

For years the work of carnage did not cease,
 And Death's worst aspect daily he survey'd
 Death's minister:
 (Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 82-4)

This echoes a passage in which Adam surveys war, a passage fully appropriate to the themes and purposes of Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795), and one that also links murder

and war:

so violence
 Proceeded, and Oppression, and Sword-Law
 Through all the Plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
 Lamenting turnd full sad; O what are these,
 Deaths Ministers, not Men, who thus deal Death
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply
 Ten thousandfould the sin of him who slew
 His Brother; for of whom such massacher
 Make they but of thir Brethren, men of men?
 (Paradise Lost, xi, 671-80)

The force of "Death's Minister" in Adventures on Salisbury Plain is greatly increased by an awareness of the allusion to this passage, and this suggests that the allusion is a deliberate part of Wordsworth's expression of his vision of Matchan's role in the navy.

Although little evidence remains as to the text of Adventures on Salisbury Plain in 1795, what evidence there is indicates that Wordsworth drew on a wide range of poetic sources to complement his use of the Gervas Matchan story.

VI

It would appear that MS. 2 does not represent a version of the poem particularly close to Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795). The 1795 version of the poem shows many contemporary influences: the benevolent murderer convention was popular at the time, the themes of the poem were adumbrated in the works of the poets Wordsworth met in Bristol in 1795, and the main source was a relatively recent story. Although Gervas Matchan's story is the basis of the new poem, the psychological consequences of murder are only a part of the poem as a whole. Concentrating on the murder

in Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) would obscure the social and political forces dramatized through the characters of the poem that show, as Wordsworth intended, "the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war as they affect individuals". Compared with Salisbury Plain, Adventures on Salisbury Plain tends to emphasize the individual, and displays the physical and mental consequences for individuals of political and social actions. In this way Wordsworth manages to deepen rather than dispel his social criticism by showing the range of consequences for individuals of a corrupt society. On the other hand Wordsworth seems in Adventures on Salisbury Plain to be turning away from proposing political solutions to the problems he highlights. Gill's assertion that Adventures on Salisbury Plain is "amongst the finest poetic memorials of radical opposition in the seventeen-nineties"³⁰ is probably the most accurate judgement of the poem's value to date.

Within Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795) lie the seeds of the most powerful works written during the period 1793-1797: The Borderers and The Ruined Cottage. After the completion of the 1795 version of the poem, it appears that the man's story and the woman's story became the basis of two different works: the man's story evolved into that of Mortimer in The Borderers, whilst elements in the vagrant's story were used for The Ruined Cottage. The female vagrant's narration was used, in a modified form, in Lyrical Ballads as The Female Vagrant. Adventures on Salisbury Plain marked another turning point in the period: from the revision of his longer poems (An Evening Walk and Salisbury Plain)

Wordsworth turned to the creation of new poems and the exploration of new forms.

CHAPTER FOUR

SHORTER POEMS

During the period 1793-1797 Wordsworth wrote a number of short poems, and by examining these it is often possible to indicate how he used sources and how his handling of certain forms developed. The poems can be grouped into sonnets and short lyrics, translations, ballads, inscriptions and the blank verse "Sketch".

Some of these poems were included in Lyrical Ballads (Written on the Thames Near Richmond, The Convict, Yew-Tree Lines and Old Man Travelling), and others adumbrate poems in that collection. The period also saw the development of Wordsworth's co-operation with other poets, notably his work with Coleridge which foreshadowed their cooperation to produce Lyrical Ballads. Finally, some features of Salisbury Plain (the ruin, a destitute mother, the natural world linked to social criticism, and overt moralizing) are reworked in these poems into new forms that later found a place in The Ruined Cottage. What emerges from the examination of the sources of these poems is the way in which Wordsworth's constant revisions (and new attempts at old themes) were the basis of his new poetic practices of the annus mirabilis of 1798. Wordsworth's literary imagination echoed his mania for revision: his genius was one that returned to the same material with untiring energy and persistence, gradually adding and transforming until a new poem was created. This process applied equally to his sources and his earlier poetry.

"When slow from pensive twilight's latest gleams"

Written in Very Early Youth

The date of these two poems is unclear, and Reed assigns them to any time before the end of the Racedown period, indicating that "before 1791 is more likely."¹ It is useful to consider their sources as this demonstrates how patterns of sources may help date Wordsworth's works.

"When slow from pensive twilight's latest gleams" is similar to the sonnets of Bowles and H.M. Williams. Sheats points to a parallel with Bowles's Written at Tinemouth, Northumberland, After a Tempestuous Voyage,² and the two poems are close in content and mood. However the reflective and sentimental twilight scene was an eighteenth-century commonplace:

Then let me walk the twilight meadows green,
Or breezy up-lands, near thick-branching elms,
While the still landscape soothes my soul to rest,
And every care subsides to calmest peace . . .
The solitude that all around becalms
The peaceful air, conspire[s] to wrap my soul
In musings mild, and nought the solemn scene
And the still silence breaks; but distant sounds
Of beating flocks³

As in most of these poems, in Wordsworth's sonnet twilight sounds are enumerated. Wordsworth's poem includes the allusion "O'er the dark mountain top descends the ray" which has been identified by Landon as a mis-quotation from H.M. Williams's Sonnet to Twilight ("When, o'er the mountain slow descends the ray").⁴ All of this suggests that Wordsworth's poem is close to the late eighteenth-century sentimental twilight piece.

More convincing as evidence to suggest an early date are the similarities with Wordsworth's early poems and prose. The poem has close parallels with An Evening Walk (1793), 301-82 where a twilight scene, the sound-scape, the effect on the observer, and the use of similar components all suggest close links, although similarities also exist with the later An Evening Walk (1794), 538-593. Other parallels with early work include the image of a cottage's light on a lake, the "deep the measured strokes rebound" which echoes "Deep hollow strokes are heard" (DC MS. 6), and the echo, noted by Hayden, of The Vale of Esthwaite:⁵

with many a sigh,
Heaves the full heart nor knows for whom, [n]or
why.
("When slow", 13-4)

The heart, when passed the Vision by,
Dissolves, nor knows for whom [n]or why.
(The Vale of Esthwaite, 129-30)

These similarities, whilst not conclusive, do reinforce the argument that the poem was written before 1791.

The first extant version of Written in Very Early Youth⁶ appears to belong to the same period, and is also a paratactic sonnet on an evening scene. Like "When slow from pensive twilight's latest gleams" it is part of a tradition of poems that focus on evening and night scenes combined with melancholy reflections. The components of the poem seem to derive from a number of sources. Landon notes parallels with A Nocturnal Reverie:

The kine obscurely seen before me lie
Round the dim horse that crops his later meal
(Written in . . . Youth, .3-4)

When the loos'd horse now, as his pasture leads,
Comes slowly grazing thro' th' adjoining meads,
Whose stealing pace, and lengthen'd shade we fear,

Till torn up forage in his teeth we hear:
 When nibbling sheep at large pursue their food,
 And unmolested kine re chew the cud

(A Nocturnal Reverie, 29-34) 7.

and with Shaw's Monody to the Memory of a Young Lady:

My friends restrain
 Those busy cares that must renew my pain
 Go near the [] plant quick shall it feel
 The fond officious touch and droop again.

(Written in . . . Youth, 11-14)

Forbear my fond officious friends, forbear
 To wound my ears with the sad tales you tell

(EE, p.235)

There seem parallels of this sort in other poems: for example, "And in the glimmering vale the last lights die" follows Gray's Elegy, "Now fades the glimmering landscape".⁸ These sources and parallels are similar in kind to those for "When slow from pensive twilight's latest gleams", and suggest that the poem was written before 1791.

Interesting connections exist between Written in Very Early Youth, another early fragment, and Tintern Abbey. De Selincourt noted an echo in Written in Very Early Youth from Comus:⁹

a timely slumber seems to steal
 O'er vale and mountain; now while ear and eye
 Alike are vacant, what strange harmony
 Home-felt and home-created seems to heal
 That grief for which my senses still supply
 Fresh food

(Written in Very Early Youth, 5-10)

Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
 And in sweet madness rob'd it of it self,
 But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss
 I never heard till now.

(Comus, 260-4)

The parallel with "Yet once again" is obvious:

Beloved Derwent, that peculiar voice
 Heard in the stillness of the evening air,

Half-heard and half created 10

There also seems an echo from Night Thoughts ("And half create the wondrous world they see") that is also echoed in Tintern Abbey:¹¹

of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,
And what perceive
(Tintern Abbey, 106-8)

These are all border states, originally twilight and night scenes, but later (as Jonathan Wordsworth has cogently argued)¹² to become a fundamental feature of Wordsworth's poetry.

"When slow from pensive twilight's latest gleams" and Written in Very Early Youth are conventional in form and content, but carry within them seeds of key features of Wordsworth's later verse: the interaction between the observer and the landscape, and the exploration of border states.

II: Later Sonnets and Short Lyrics

"In vain have Time and nature toiled to throw"

"When western clouds a deepening gloom display"

At the Isle of Wight

All three of these poems are preserved only as fragments.¹³ It is probable that they were all written in 1793,¹⁴ and their concern with the abuses of power would support this dating. All three appear to have been based on Wordsworth's own experiences in Wales and England in 1793.

In all these poems Wordsworth presents an object associated with political force (castles and the fleet) in contrast with natural objects. This politicizing of the landscape is similar to Salisbury Plain's, and there are also more literal links in the use of ruins and the implicit condemnation of war.

"In vain have Time and Nature toiled to throw" and "The western clouds a deepening gloom display" both describe the ruins of a castle, a common component in topographical poetry.¹⁵ There were also many poems about ruined castles such as Langhorne's Written Among the Ruins of Pontefract Castle, J.B. Farish's The Ruin- An Ode, and H.M. Williams's Part of an Irregular Fragment, Found in a Dark Passage of the Tower. Draftings in DC MS. 6 and The Vale of Estwaite, 200-267, concern ruined castles, and probably are Wordsworth's first attempts to deal with the subject. These early attempts seem quite close to Ogilvie's Ode to Time: occasioned by seeing the Ruins of an Old Castle.

The imagery of "In vain have Time and Nature toiled to throw" is conventional:

wild weeds and earth upon
~~The ivy mantle o'er~~ these moulder crumbled towers
 fuedal
 Again they rear the ~~haughty~~ head that lowers
 wretched [?roofed]
 Stern on the ~~half-ruined~~ huts that crouch below
 ("In vain", 2-4: DC MS. 11)

Sad to her view the baron's castle frown'd
 Bold from the steep, and aw'd the plains
 around

The ancient towers crown his brow,
 That cast an awful look below;
 Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps
 (Dyer, Grongar Hill, 71-3) 16

and, as Sheats notes, there is an echo from Gray's Elegy in "ivy mantle".¹⁷ The fragmentary final lines in Wordsworth's poem hint at an idealistic presentation of Freedom, as indicated in the contrast between the castle and "the Cottage" (l.6), and the references to "form divine" (l.9) and "her equal reign" (l.10). It seems likely that the poem is related to the final lines of Descriptive Sketches¹⁸ both in imagery and underlying political concerns. It can be seen that Wordsworth's poem is different from some conventional treatments such as Bowles's Bamborough Castle:

Ye holy Towers that shade the wave-worn steep,
 Long may ye rear your aged brows sublime,
 Though, hurrying silent by, relentless Time
 Assail you, and the winds of winter sweep
 Round your battlements

(Bamborough Castle, 1-5)

Although both poems use similar imagery, Wordsworth's has a radical theme, perhaps indicating his development from the sentimental sonnets of Williams and Bowles to more political poetry. It is interesting that Wordsworth's much later sonnet, Composed among the Ruins of a Castle in North Wales, owes something to "In vain have Time and Nature toiled to throw" but lacks its political theme.¹⁹

"The western clouds a deepening gloom display" also has a ruined castle as its central image, and has parallels with many of the 'ruin' poems discussed above. For example, it contains the conventional image of the cry of the dying or murdered:

What though yon towers perchance their voice have
 lent
 To fill the shriek that pierced the murderer's ear
 ("The western", 13-4: DC MS. 11)

Of moaning shrieks from yon haunted
(DC MS. 6)

Ye Towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed
(Gray, The Bard, 87-8)

upon the topmost tower,
And turns her ear to each expiring cry
(Bamborough Castle, 11-2)

The setting and tone of the poem are similar to Gothic narratives. Even the "deepening gloom" of Wordsworth's poem is conventional:

the pile which appeared to be sinking into ruins, and that which had withstood the ravages of time . . . The lofty battlements, thickly enwreathed with ivy, were half-demolished . . . The deepening gloom 20

It is the overtly political perspective of the poem that marks a change from more conventional reflections upon the power of time, and the use of the natural world as a foil to the injustices of society.

The biographical source of At the Isle of Wight is well-documented.²¹ Sheats points to the echo of the earlier sonnet "Sweet was the walk along the narrow lane" in the opening line ("How sweet to walk along the woody steep"). He also suggests a parallel exists with Bowles's At Tynemouth Priory, but this seems rather far-fetched as the opening of Charlotte Smith's Sonnet XL is closer to Wordsworth's poem, and the subject is in any case conventional. A distinctive feature of the poem is the use of images of natural objects responding to human destructiveness that, as Sheats suggests, has parallels in Descriptive Sketches:²²

But human vices have provok'd the rod
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.

(Descriptive Sketches, 486-7)

In At the Isle of Wight it is the ocean that is presented as reacting to the threat of war in much the same way as in H.M. Williams's An Ode on the Peace:

The star of life appears to set in blood,
And ocean shudders in offended mood,
Deepening with moral gloom his angry flood.
(At the Isle of Wight, 17-9)

The spirit of the ocean bears
In moans, along his western waves,
Afflicted nature's hopeless cares...
(An Ode on the Peace, ii, 2-4)

and "Deepening with moral gloom" uses an image similar to "When western clouds a deepening gloom display". Although At the Isle of Wight does not seem the departure from convention Sheats claims, it does mark a change from the sentimental presentation of nature in the earlier sonnets on twilight scenes discussed above.

These three poems are united by their political concerns, and the use of the contrast between natural and human objects to embody those concerns. In this respect they are similar to Descriptive Sketches and Salisbury Plain in that they continue the development of an ideological as well as emotional portrayal of the natural universe which was later evident in An Evening Walk (1794).

III: Translations

The Birth of Love

The Hour Bell

Ode to Blandusia

Imitation of Juvenal

Wordsworth's translations during this period are not clearly dated, except for The Hour Bell and the incomplete Imitation of Juvenal.²³ The other translations could have been composed in Wordsworth's college years or shortly after during his visit to France. The source for all these translations has been identified. In general Wordsworth's approach to translation is consonant with the eighteenth-century approach that encouraged literal translations (often as exercises), but also had developed the 'imitation' as a popular form.

Wordsworth's translations of French poems, The Birth of Love and The Hour Bell, have quite different sources, though both adopt a literal approach to translation. The earlier poem is a close translation of L'Education de l'Amour by Vicomte de Segur.²⁴ The poem, with its personifications and light-hearted treatment of love, is unlike Wordsworth's own poetry of the period. The humour of the poem makes it clear that the link with Annette Vallon, if any, must be qualified, though there does remain the possibility that the poem was translated whilst Wordsworth was in France. In his translation Wordsworth closely follows his original in both form and content. De Selincourt notes the echo of Gray's The Progress of Poetry in the only real divergence from the source:²⁵

Quelqu' une proposa l'ESPERANCE,
Et l'enfant s'en trouva fort bien.
(L'Education de l'Amour, 23-4)

a voice
Pronounced the name of HOPE:- The conscious child
Stretched forth his little arms and smil'd.
(The Birth of Love, 25-7)

the dauntless child
 Stretched forth his little arms and smiled.
 (The Progress of Poetry, 87-8)

The Birth of Love is almost an exercise in close literal translation, and as such it shows Wordsworth's deft handling of his source. In the same way, The Hour Bell Sounds closely follows its original, but the provenance of the poem is quite different. H.M. Williams, who also translated the poem in Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France,²⁶ indicated how the poem first was presented to the public (and, presumably, Wordsworth):

the victims of this cruel tyranny . . . were truly admirable. Many young persons, after receiving their act of accusation, composed verses written with a pencil at the table where they partook their last repast with their fellow prisoners. The following, written by a young man of twenty-four years of age, to his mistress, the night before his execution, are simple and affecting:
 (Letters, ii, p.40)

Wordsworth was obviously interested in the Terror, and the suggestion that it was a true record of the person's feelings in "simple and affecting" verse would appeal to the author of the Preface to Lyrical Ballads. The differences between the two translations indicate how Wordsworth was working from the original poem, rather than re-working H.M. Williams's Imitation:

Je n'ai point de laches désirs,
 Je ne fuirai point devant elle:
 (ll. 3-4)

The breast that honour arms, can brave
 The murd'rer's steel, th'untimely grave
 (Imitation, 3-4)

No cowardly desires have I,
 Nor will I shun his face appalling.
 (The Hour Bell, 3-4)

Thus, in his translations from French, Wordsworth kept close

to his original source. The two poems he chose to translate were, however, quite different, and The Birth of Love may well come from an earlier period. Certainly The Hour Bell is closer to the concerns of poems like Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Convict, and indicates Wordsworth's continued interest in the French Revolution.

Both Horace and Juvenal were popular sources for translations in the eighteenth century. In general translations of Horace's Odes were close to the original, as is Wordsworth's translation of Ode XIII. A number of Wordsworth's other translations from Latin poetry were written in his college days, and it may be that this poem is from the same period.²⁷ On the whole the poem follows Horace quite closely, and where similarities with other translations occur they do not appear very significant:

in loquacious play
Thy sprightly waters leap away.
(Beattie's translation, 15-16)

Whence thy loquacious waters leap away.
(Wordsworth's translation, 16)

On the other hand, Wordsworth's Imitation of Juvenal (Satire VIII) follows an accepted eighteenth-century approach to translating satires. The poem was Wordsworth's first work composed with another poet (Francis Wrangham), and though it was never completed, it adumbrates his later co-operation with Coleridge. Wordsworth appeared, at one time, to have worked directly with Wrangham on the poem: "to be finished by us separately as we can no longer labour at it jointly".²⁸ Like Johnson and Pope, Wordsworth chose modern examples to exemplify the themes of his classical source, and was careful to choose appropriate parallel

subjects. Tuckerman, in a useful analysis of Wordsworth's treatment of Juvenal,²⁹ demonstrates how carefully Wordsworth had chosen his modern parallels, particularly in the case of Cicero (Marvell) and Marius (Drake). Thematically the imitation follows Juvenal's analysis of the evils in society arising in part from the moral corruption of the aristocracy. Wordsworth adapts the thematic elements to contemporary problems, and in doing so touches upon issues raised in his own work from A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff to Adventures on Salisbury Plain. The attack on titles has clear parallels in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff. There is also an echo from the end of Salisbury Plain:

Let Ignorance o'er the monster swarms preside
(Imitation of Juvenal, 19)

let foul Error's monster race
(Salisbury Plain, 545)

Gill draws attention to the similarities between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Imitation of Juvenal, and comments on the relevance of the attack on informers. He also notes how "the country Justice" might refer to Langhorne's poem of the same name.³⁰ There are two incidental debts to other poetry identified by de Selincourt,³¹ as well as Southey's contribution of two lines (Imitation of Juvenal, 9-10). On the whole though, Imitation of Juvenal is heavily dependant upon its source, often following Juvenal closely, despite Wordsworth himself feeling his translation was, at times, "extremely paraphrastic".³²

During the period 1793-1797 Wordsworth's translations were close to their sources. Even in the case of Imitation

of Juvenal Wordsworth took particular care to be faithful to the spirit of the original. The only poem with a radically different method of composition was Imitation of Juvenal which was, apparently, a joint effort with Wrangham (with some help from Southey). Nevertheless Wordsworth's translations were based on a conservative (or respectful) treatment of his sources. In relation to his later verse, The Hour Bell is close to The Convict in subject, just as Ode to Blandusia is close to the inscriptions of 1795-7. The humour of The Birth of Love does not seem to reappear until some of the later poems in Lyrical Ballads, and the bitter satire of Imitation of Juvenal is, in many ways, closer to the tone of A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff. Thus these translations can be seen as consistent, for the most part, with the concerns and themes of Wordsworth's own verse.

IV: Ballads

The Convict

Address to the Ocean

The Three Graves

The dating of Wordsworth's ballads during this period is an extremely complex issue, but it seems that The Convict was written first, followed shortly by Address to the Ocean and The Three Graves.³³ Because of the importance of Lyrical Ballads much has been written on the use of the ballad by Wordsworth, though these three poems have not received much

attention.³⁴

Woof has successfully analysed the textual history of The Convict, indicating how it developed into the version included in Lyrical Ballads.³⁵ As Mayo argues, poems on prisons were common at the time, especially after the death of John Howard in 1790.³⁶ Wordsworth's interest was in the political aspects of imprisonment, and was as likely to be inspired by the imprisonment of Thelwall and others in England and the Girondists in France. This interest is shown in The Hour Bell Sounds, as well as in the longer poems of the period. Gill argues convincingly that the poem also shares many of the concerns of Adventures on Salisbury Plain and is a part of Wordsworth's growing interest in the psychology of guilt and crime.³⁷ Certainly The Convict does not focus on the conditions of imprisonment, but on the principle of imprisonment itself. In this respect it is different from the sentimental humanitarianism of the poems cited by Mayo.

Although the poem is now lost, the closest parallel to Wordsworth's poem may have been Southey's The Convict. The poem itself does not appear to have survived, and it is possible that Wordsworth took over the task Southey had himself contemplated:

The Convict, for which you asked, is not worth reading, I think sometime of rewriting it.

(Southey to G.C. Bedford: 27 May, 1795) 38

Although it is possible that Southey's poem was the basis of Wordsworth's, there is no direct evidence and it must remain an interesting conjecture.

Many commentators on Wordsworth have seen The Convict

as an exercise in Godwinism.³⁹ On the other hand, commentators on Godwin do not agree:

It is hard to believe that the influence of Godwin on Wordsworth is at all significant⁴⁰

In The Convict the only real evidence in favour of the thesis that the poem reflected Godwin's philosophy is the suggestion that the following lines refer to transportation:

My care, if the arm of the mighty were mine,
Would plant thee where yet thou might'st blossom
again.

(The Convict, 51-2)

This argument for Godwin's influence does not seem justified in view of the fact that Godwin did not support transportation.⁴¹

Colonization seems to be the most eligible of those expedients which have been stated, but it is attended with considerable difficulties . . . These difficulties are calculated to bring back the mind to the absolute injustice of coercion

(Political Justice, ii, p.392)

A more convincing source is Beccaria:

The intent of punishments, is not to torment a sensible being, nor to undo a crime already committed . . . Can the groans of a tortured wretch recall the time past, or reverse the crime he has committed? ⁴²

Beccaria's compassionate approach seems closer to Wordsworth's than Godwin's rather abstract theorizing. On balance there seems no convincing evidence to link The Convict with Godwin's work.

The descriptions of prison in the poem are largely commonplaces. Thus "the damp-dripping vault of disease" and the lightless prison cell,

the dungeons unfold:
I pause; and at length through the glimmering
grate

(The Convict, 10-11)

amongst Wordsworth's acquaintance, and both Southey and Coleridge made similar comments on the injustice of punishing individuals for crimes when the state perpetrated atrocities unpunished.⁴⁶ The development of the poem into the version found in Lyrical Ballads was marked by a change in emphasis from institutional injustice to the psychological consequences of crime. This change is broadly consistent with the change from the political perspective of Salisbury Plain to the moral and psychological perspective of Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Borderers. The poem, when printed in The Morning Post, was signed 'Mortimer', an indication that Wordsworth associated it with the protagonist of his play. The portrayal of the operations of a guilty conscience in the Lyrical Ballads version owes a good deal to traditional accounts in stories of murderers, and even classical sources:

And with stedfast dejection his eyes are intent
 On the fetters that link him to death.
 (The Convict, 15-6)

Yet my fancy has pierced to his heart, and
 pours
 More terrible images there.
 His bones are consumed, and his life-blood is
 dried,
 With wishes the past to undo;
 And his crime, through the pains that o'erwhelm
 him, descried,
 Still blackens and grows on his view.
 (The Convict, 19-24)

quae tamen etsi absunt, at mens sibi conscia
 factis
 praemetuens adhibet stimulos torretque flagellis,
 nec videt interea qui terminus esse malorum
 possit nec quae sit poenarum denique finis,
 atque eadem metuit magis haec ne in morte
 gravescant.
 (De Rerum Natura, iii, 1018-22)

The last line in the passage from The Convict may echo The Pleasures of the Imagination⁴⁷ but the pangs of a guilty

conscience were a long-established motif.

In subject and treatment The Convict draws upon conventional elements, though its theme in its earliest manuscript is radical. Changes in the poem brought it closer to the themes of later poetry: the psychology of crime and remorse.

Apparently composed between The Convict and The Three Graves, Address to the Ocean is Wordsworth's first use of dramatic monologue in a ballad. Wordsworth acknowledged his source by his allusion to Coleridge's The Complaint of Ninathóma (written in 1793). Both poems are dramatic utterances by women complaining to a storm on the shores of the sea, and both are in the same metre. Wordsworth's opening line alludes directly to Coleridge's poem:⁴⁸

'How long will ye round me be roaring',
Once terrible waves of the sea?
(Address to the Ocean, 1-2)

How long will ye round me be swelling,
O ye blue-tumbling waves of the sea?
(Complaint, 1-2)

There are significant differences between the poems. The most obvious is the debt to Ossian in Coleridge's poem which is absent in Wordsworth's. J.R. MacGillivray noted the naturalness of Wordsworth's poem in comparison with Coleridge's, especially its treatment of the ordinary rather than the mythical, and Parish comments on the "intense and swiftly-moving feeling on the part of the speaker".⁴⁹ Parish's comment seems to indicate how close the poem is to some of Lyrical Ballads, intended, as they were,

to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature.

(Prose, i, p.126)

It seems Wordsworth took Coleridge's poem as a starting point, but transformed many of its elements.

Wordsworth's poem is similar to other earlier verse, notably Gay's Song and Charlotte Smith's Elegy.⁵⁰ The situation in all three poems is the same: a woman on the shore complaining of the death of her lover. The opening line of Address to the Ocean ends "roaring" rather than Coleridge's "swelling", indicating the debt to Gay:

'Twas when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind;
A damsel lay deploring
(Song, 1-3: EE, p.627)

Other details may have come from 'complaints' by young women over the death of their lovers: Moore's Song could have supplied both Coleridge and Wordsworth with the 'How long' formula:

How long, my lov'd Colin, she cried,
How long must thy Lucy complain?
How long shall the grave my love hide?
How long ere it join us again?
(Song, 17-20: EE, p.627)

These similarities indicate the literary sources of Wordsworth's poem go beyond the debt to Coleridge.

Wordsworth's poem is one of a literary genre that, as Gay's and Moore's poems demonstrate, ante-dates Coleridge's poem. In the long term, the poem signals the beginnings of the co-operation between Wordsworth and Coleridge that was to lead to Lyrical Ballads.

The Three Graves was the next step towards Lyrical Ballads, although the project was never finished. Like The Ancyent Marinere the plan seemed to have been to compose the poem with Coleridge, though in this case the two poets

divided the story into sections and each was to complete their own. The story was supplied by Coleridge. Coleridge's account of the origins of the poem, though written much later, is illuminating:

a striking proof of the possible effect on the imagination, from an idea violently and suddenly impressed on it. I had been reading Bryan Edwards's account of the effects of the Oby witchcraft on the Negroes in the West Indies, and Hearne's deeply interesting anecdotes of similar workings on the imagination of the Copper Indians . . . and I conceived the design of shewing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning. 51

In order to illustrate this psychological process, Coleridge used "positive facts, and of no very distant date",⁵² and these constitute the primary source for the poem. The similarity with the method of choosing a subject for poems in Lyrical Ballads is obvious: the intent to demonstrate fundamental human qualities, the emphasis on the psychological states of those under great stress, and the use of 'factual' examples. A close parallel can be found in Goody Blake and Harry Gill, which also includes a 'curse'.⁵³

Another parallel exists in that Coleridge was influenced by Hearne, and Wordsworth drew upon Hearne as a source for Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman. Coleridge also described the presentation of the poem in terms that are similar to parts of Wordsworth's Preface:

The language was intended to be dramatic; that is, suited to the narrator; and the metre corresponds to the homeliness of the diction. 54

Coleridge's later assertion that "the P[reface arose from] the heads of our mutual Conversations" has been challenged,⁵⁵ but it seems as if some of the principles of

choice and treatment of subject in Lyrical Ballads were already in evidence during the composition of The Three Graves. Whether or not Coleridge's account is an accurate reflection of his part in the development of the poem is not clear, but it seems likely that the two poets developed The Three Graves in a similar manner to some of the Lyrical Ballads.

Parrish has satisfactorily demonstrated Wordsworth's authorship of part of The Three Graves⁵⁶ (though the existing text may have been modified by Coleridge), and drafts towards another part of the poem occur in DC MS. 11. The narrative ballad dealing with the kind of melodramatic events as described in The Three Graves was very popular, especially those based on 'fact'.⁵⁷ There were, of course, parallels to these ballads in prose accounts as well as local gossip, and the kind of story used in The Three Graves is similar to the story of Gervas Matchan used in Adventures on Salisbury Plain. Parrish argues that the poem, like The Idiot Boy, shows the influence of Bürger through Taylor's translation, Lass of Fair Wone, particularly in the narrative pattern of the poem.⁵⁸ There are also similarities in the return to the scene of the thorn (reminiscent of The Thorn) and toads, though these parallels are less convincing.⁵⁹

The influence of the traditional ballad (perhaps through Percy), and the later imitations such as Goldsmith's Edwin and Angelina and H.M. Williams's Edwin and Eltruda are clearly relevant to The Three Graves. Wordsworth's first ballad (A Ballad) seems to be very close in form and content to Fair Margaret and Sweet William in Percy and the later

version of the story, William and Margaret. Thus Jacobus's argument that Percy's influence on Wordsworth's ballads was after 1798 is incorrect.⁶⁰ Further, the DC MS. 11 draftings echo Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament, a poem in Percy extensively echoed in Wordsworth's The Mad Mother:

Quoth I sweet dame to see you weep
Doth breed me great annoy
(DC MS. 11)

Thy father breides me great annoy.
(Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament, 6) 61

The parallel with The Mad Mother in the DC MS. 11 fragments indicates another source:

And then she checked herself and wept
She was of nature wild
(DC MS. 11)

Her eyes are wild
(The Mad Mother, 1)

Her eyes were large and blue . . . a certain wild brightness which, at the first view, might have been mistaken for the wildness of great joy.

(Fragment III: Prose, i, p. 8)

Although Fragment III has, in turn, its own sources, and again is echoed in Salisbury Plain and The Borderers, the link with DC MS. 11 does show how these fragments are related to the distracted woman motif common to many of Wordsworth's poems in the period 1793-1797. In the context of the sources of The Three Graves, it is clear that Wordsworth was influenced by ballads such as those in Percy, as well as developing motifs from his earlier work.

The diction of The Three Graves and in the fragments in DC MS. 11 is that of traditional ballads. There is one direct allusion, noted by E.H. Coleridge:⁶²

The mother, more than mothers use,
Rejoiced when they were by;

And all the 'course of wooing' passed
Beneath the mother's eye.

(The Three Graves, i, 50-3)

And when I told thee he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou criest
'Indeed!'

(Othello, III, iii, 115-6)

The allusion can be seen as an indication of Wordsworth's interest in Othello at the time of the composition of The Borderers, though there remains the possibility that it was written by Coleridge.

If the description of the genesis of The Three Graves by Coleridge is broadly correct, then Wordsworth and Coleridge were, at this time, gradually developing the approach to ballad narratives embodied in Lyrical Ballads. An interest in psychological processes sparked off a search for an appropriate factual account (much as the interest in the abuses of penal law may have led to the use of Gervas Matchan's story in Adventures on Salisbury Plain). The choice of the form of the poem, and its "homeliness of diction" were consistent with the ballad traditions on which it drew. The use of the narrative ballad and a narrator, as well as direct speech, looks forward to other poems in Lyrical Ballads. Taking all three of the ballads written during the period (The Convict, Address to the Ocean, and The Three Graves) all three may have been co-operative efforts between Wordsworth and other poets, and it seems The Three Graves came closest to the methods of composition of the narrative ballads in Lyrical Ballads.

V: Inscriptions and Descriptions

Written on the Thames Near Richmond

Inscription for a Seat by the Pathway Side Ascending
Windy Brow

Inscription for a Seat by the Road-Side Halfway up a
Steep Hill Facing South

Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree

Old Man Travelling

Description of a Beggar

It can be argued that the poems grouped together here illustrate some of the key developments in Wordsworth's poetry 1794-7. On a superficial level they mark the transition to blank verse. More important, there are changes in the treatment of the moral injunction, old age, and nature, as well as a shift in emphasis from the general to the particular. The connections between the poems themselves also show how Wordsworth's use of his sources changed during the period.

The textual history of Written on the Thames Near Richmond is complex. There is the early draft of the poem (in DC MS.11), drafting towards the final stanza (in DC MS. 2), a fair copy in Cottle's MS. book (dated March 29, 1797), and the version printed in Lyrical Ballads.⁶³ Only the drafting in DC MS. 2 and the fair copy in Cottle's MS. book date from the period 1793-7.

Wordsworth created the version of the poem found in Cottle's MS. book by re-writing the first ten lines of the DC MS. 11 version, simultaneously simplifying the syntax, altering the rhyme scheme, and reducing the length to eight lines. This was used as an opening stanza, and linked to the eight-line stanza drafted in DC MS. 2 by the following

lines:

Such views the youthful bard allure,
 And, thoughtless of the following gloom,
 He deems their colours shall endure
 Till Peace go with him to the tomb.
 And such did once the *Poet bless
 Who, pouring her a later ditty,
 Could find no refuge from distress
 But in the milder grief of Pity.

(Written on the Thames, 9-16)

*Collins

2 his ode on the death of Thomson was one of his last compositions

The last four lines refer to Collins's poem and its evocation of "Pity". Line 10 is from the earlier version's tenth line:

thoughtless

The poet ~~had pass'd~~ of the following shad[es]
 (DC MS. 11)

This process of revision makes the location of the poem specific, though it is likely that the earlier version in DC MS. 11 referred to the Cam. Wordsworth's note makes clear the source of the additions to the DC MS.11 version of the poem, and as Jacobus has shown the title of the new poem comes from Collins's Advertisement to Ode Occasioned by the Death of Mr. Thomson:⁶⁴

The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames near Richmond.

De Selincourt points out the debt in the final stanza to Collins's Ode:⁶⁵

Remembrance! as we glide along
 For him suspend the dashing oar;
 And pray that never Child of Song
 May know his freezing sorrows more.
 How calm! how still! -the only sound
 The dripping of the oar suspended!

(Written on the Thames, 17-22)

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
 When Thames in summer wreaths is dressed,

And oft suspend the dashing oar
 To bid his gentle spirit rest!
 (Ode, 13-16)

Both poems are memorial verses to poets, a commonplace subject,⁶⁶ and both have the same setting and mood. The penultimate line, "-A moral darkness deepens round", recalls At the Isle of Wight, 19 ("Deepening with moral gloom his angry flood") but there is nothing to indicate any political or social comment. The poem concentrates on the role of the poet, and Collins's Ode is its major source. Written on the Thames Near Richmond is almost self-consciously literary in both subject and expression, perhaps marking Wordsworth's first poetic assertion of his place amongst the historical community of poets.

The three other inscriptions (Inscription for a Seat by the Pathway Side Ascending to Windy Brow, Inscription for a Seat by the Road-Side Halfway up a Steep Hill Facing South, and Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree) are closely connected, falling within the tradition of the votive inscription with the characteristic address to the onlooker ("Siste viator"). Hartman's useful discussion of the genre notes its great popularity in the eighteenth century, and he links it to the 'genius loci' motif.⁶⁷ In these three poems Wordsworth evolves a new approach to didactic moralizing, shifting his emphasis from generalizations to portraits of individuals.

Inscription for a Seat by the Pathway Side Ascending to Windy Brow (Windy Brow Inscription), written 1794, was later revised and became Inscription for a Seat by the Road-Side Halfway up a Steep Hill Facing South (Steep Hill

Inscription).⁶⁸ Such inscriptions for "seats" were commonplace.⁶⁹ Bowles's Pole-Vellum, Cornwall, for example, is similar to the Windy Brow Inscription in form (octosyllabic couplets) and subject:

So when some wanderer, who has lost
His heart's best treasure, who has crossed
In life bleak hills and passes rude,
Should gain this lovely solitude;
Delighted he may pause a while
(Pole-Vellum, Cornwall, 19-23)

There are incidental echoes of other poems in the Windy Brow Inscription,⁷⁰ but the main source is Michael's address to Adam in Paradise Lost:

ponder here
On the last resting place so near
To you. Tho' Time his prey yet spares,
Your fervid blood shall be as theirs;
Your motion light, your spirits high,
Shall turn to feeble, cold, and dry.
(Windy Brow Inscription, 7-12)

This is old age; but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will
change
To wither'd weak and gray; thy Senses then
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgoe,
To what thou hast, and for the Aire of youth
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reigne
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy Spirits down
(Paradise Lost, xi, 538-45)

Wordsworth used the popular inscription form and Milton's description of old age as his main sources.

Wordsworth revised the Windy Brow Inscription, developing it into a longer blank verse poem, though still retaining the echoes from Paradise Lost. The new poem, the Steep Hill Inscription, was written in blank verse, like the inscriptions of Akenside and Southey.⁷¹ Another blank verse inscription had been sent to Wordsworth in 1795:

I shall send you by this opportunity Luesdon Hill
 (PP: A. Pinney to Wordsworth,
 20 November 1795).

Like Lewesdon Hill, the Steep Hill Inscription is peopled with specific characters (rather than the generalizing "Ye" of the Windy Brow Inscription) who find rest amongst trees half-way up a steep hill. The characters introduced into the poem have their own sources, such as Langhorne's The Country Justice:

weary
 The ~~houseless~~-homeless vagrants of the earth
 (Steep Hill Inscription, 6:
 DC MS. 11)

The friendless, homeless object of despair;
 For the poor vagrant.
 (The Country Justice, i, 150-1)

A more extended example is the "rustic artisan":

poor
 Or if that man the rustic artisan
 Who laden with his implements of toil
 Returns at night to his far distant home
 And having plodded on through rain & mire
 His frame oerlaboured weak with feverish heat
 And chaffed & fretted by December's blasts
 (Steep Hill Inscription, 7-12:
 DC MS. 11)

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
 The short'ning winter-day is near a close . . .
 The toil-worn COTTER frae his labor goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
 Collects his spades, his mattocks and his hoes,
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
 And weary, o'er the muir, his course does hameward
 bend.
 (The Cotter's Saturday Night,
 10-11, 14-8)

Thus the Steep Hill Inscription was built up by the transformation of the Windy Brow Inscription into blank verse and the insertion of various figures often closely related to literary sources. However, Steep Hill

Inscription, 25 ("Cherish the wholesome sadness") reflects Wordsworth's changing vision of the purpose of tragic narrative and looks forward to his later verse.

The Steep Hill Inscription links specific characters to an admonitory poem on the moral improvement reflection on others' suffering can bring. Wordsworth's other blank verse poem for "a Seat", Yew-Tree Lines, is a further development in his handling of the inscription. Yew-Tree Lines deals with the story of a single character, and enacts the gradual effects of ordinary causes.

There have been numerous accounts of the origins of the Yew-Tree Lines, but the basic source is the story of the Rev. W. Brathwaite, a story familiar to Wordsworth.⁷² This provides the main character, the key events of his life, and fixes the location of the "seat" on the edge of Esthwaite. As in Salisbury Plain and Adventures on Salisbury Plain, Wordsworth used a factual account to act as an exemplum of his moral argument. This, and the form of the poem, had an important influence on the presentation of the story.

Wordsworth's use of the inscription genre changes from the Windy Brow Inscription to Yew-Tree Lines, but the traditional features of the form remain the same: a short poem related to a specific spot and admonitory reflections. Wordsworth had experimented with the inscription in part of Descriptive Sketches:

O give me not that eye of hard disdain
That view undimm'd Einsiedlen's wretched fane.
Mid muttering prayers all sounds of torment meet,
Dire clap of hands, distracted chafe of feet,
While loud and dull ascends the weeping cry,
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die.

(Descriptive Sketches, 654-9)

The passage continues with a description of the mountain scenery, the hope of the pilgrims, their "delusion", and the injunction:

If the sad grave of human ignorance bear
One flower of hope- Oh pass and leave it there.
(Descriptive Sketches, 660-1)

The setting of the passage is specific, and similar to that of the Windy Brow Inscription and Steep Hill Inscription:

Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accomodation of the pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain. Under these sheds the sentimental traveller and the philosopher may find interesting sources of meditation.
(Descriptive Sketches, footnote to line 671)

The line of development through these passages and the later inscriptions to Yew-Tree Lines is clear. But while Yew-Tree Lines has its origins in Wordsworth's earlier poetry, it also marks a departure in some respects: the 'melancholy man', gradual decay, and the narrative method all foreshadow The Ruined Cottage. As in The Ruined Cottage, it is a physical object that is the focus of the narration, and the admonitory tone of the Steep Hill Inscription, though still present, is distanced in Yew-Tree Lines by the implied narrator ("I well remember"), a device that is further developed in Margaret's story. Thus Yew-Tree Lines can be seen as part of a developing use of the inscription by Wordsworth.

Curiously there is some debate over the authorship of the final lines of the poem, and both Parrish and Jonathan Wordsworth argue that part of this final section is by Coleridge.⁷³ These arguments must be seen in the context of

DC MS. 11 where the drafting for at least lines 46-56 is evident. The initial impetus for the suggestion of Coleridge's authorship arose from verbal parallels in Coleridge's letters, as noted by de Selincourt:⁷⁴

how unwise it is to feel contempt for any thing- 75

he, who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used
(Yew-Tree Lines, 48-50)

As can be seen from the passage from Descriptive Sketches quoted above Wordsworth had already condemned "contempt" in a context broadly similar to Yew-Tree Lines, as well as in The Preface to The Borderers ("a mind fond of nourishing sentiments of contempt")⁷⁶ and the word appears in the draftings in DC MS. 11. Parrish and Jonathan Wordsworth doubt that Wordsworth would use "imagination" in the way he does in line 45,⁷⁷ but neglect to note Wordsworth's use of 'imagination' in the note to Descriptive Sketches or in The Preface to The Borderers.⁷⁸ On the whole it seems most likely that Yew-Tree Lines is entirely by Wordsworth, though this does not preclude some indirect influence by Coleridge.

The setting of Yew-Tree Lines is similar to Wordsworth's earlier inscriptions but the focus of the poem, like many classical inscriptions, is the central character and his life. The character, although based on a historical figure, has obvious parallels in literature. Jonathan Wordsworth points to the similarity with Rivers in The Borderers (and The Preface), and Jacobus discusses the genre and gives numerous examples, including Lloyd's Oswald, Warton's The Suicide, Beattie's The Minstrel, and Godwin's Caleb Williams.⁷⁹ Obviously not all of these suggestions

are equally telling: Wordsworth's figure voluntarily retires from the world when he does not meet with the success he had hoped for, and he is not evil but passive. Thus Rivers (in The Borderers), Falkland in Caleb Williams, Lloyd's and Warton's protagonists, and Edwin and the Sage in The Minstrel are all different from Wordsworth's character. The distinctive feature of Wordsworth's subject is his undramatic decay, and this is a feature of his factual source. Of the sources given above, the closest parallels are in The Minstrel and The Borderers. The opening stanza of The Minstrel describes in very general terms rejection by the world, ending

In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropp'd into the grave, unpitied and unknown?
(The Minstrel, i, 8-9)

The more important debt is to The Borderers and its Preface. The obvious parallel is with a man destroyed by pride, but there are interesting verbal echoes. Thus

Fixing his downward eye, he many an hour
A morbid pleasure nourished
(Yew-Tree Lines, 27-8)

besides recalling Mortimer's actions after learning of his deception, seems to echo the description of Rivers's "morbid state of mind". Other parallels link the two works: "his only monument" recalls "a monument / That may record my story", and "Far from all human dwelling" echoes "No human dwelling".⁸⁰ As Yew-Tree Lines was probably written shortly after the first draft of The Borderers, it is not surprising to find similarities in thought and expression, and both compositions draw upon the conventional portrayal of the misanthrope.

In Yew-Tree Lines Wordsworth contrasts the beneficent powers of nature with the melancholy man. Although the powers of nature are the subject of the revisions to An Evening Walk and many of the images Wordsworth uses are traditional, Jonathan Wordsworth sees an echo of Southey's Inscription for a Cavern that Overlooks the River Avon in Yew-Tree Lines:

Gaze Stranger here!
And let thy soften'd heart intensely feel
How good, how lovely, Nature!
(Inscription for a Cavern) 81

he then would gaze
On the more distant scene; how lovely 'tis
Thou seest, and he would gaze till it became
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
The beauty still more beauteous.
(Yew-Tree Lines, 30-4)

Though Southey's poem expresses a commonplace,⁸² there are similarities in expression in the two passages. The parallels with the revisions to An Evening Walk are more convincing. The images of lakes, for example, are close in thought and expression:

Yet if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.
(Yew-Tree Lines, 5-7) 83

Blest are those spirits tremblingly awake
To Nature's impulse like this living lake,
Whose mirrour makes the landscape's charms its own
With touches soft as those to Memory known;
While, exquisite of sense, the mighty mass
All vibrates to the lightest gales that pass.
(An Evening Walk(1794), 191-6)

The passage immediately following in An Evening Walk (1794) seems echoed elsewhere in Yew-Tree Lines:

those Beings to whose favoured minds
Warm from the labours of benevolence
(Yew-Tree Lines, 35-6 variant:
DC MS. 11)

those favoured souls, who, taught
 By active Fancy or Patient Thought,
 See common forms prolong the endless chain
 Of Joy and grief

(An Evening Walk (1794), 203-6)

In both the landscape is "an emblem",⁸⁴ and in An Evening Walk (1794) the "favoured souls" are sensitive to all nature in a way similar to the injunction in Yew-Tree Lines not to feel "contempt / For any living thing". Details in Yew-Tree Lines also indicate the similar approach to nature in the two poems.⁸⁵ It would seem that Yew-Tree Lines draws upon the ideas of nature already embodied in An Evening Walk (1794).

Yew-Tree Lines is part of a progression in Wordsworth's use of the inscription which is, in turn, related to his topographical poetry in An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches. It is also a development towards the implied narrator, and the fusion of the man-made object in decay with the psychic decay of the subject of the poem as in The Ruined Cottage and Michael.⁸⁶ During this period Wordsworth was moving away from the direct and generalized moralizing of the Windy Brow Inscription with its admonitory tone towards the dramatic techniques of Lyrical Ballads. These changes may relate to the fusion of elements in his own work: the dramatic techniques developed in The Borderers and his philosophy of nature from An Evening Walk (1794).

The dominance of character and psychological processes becomes evident in Description of a Beggar and Old Man Travelling, two poems that are best regarded as different versions of the same poem.⁸⁷ The genre of poems on this subject is loosely described by Mayo,⁸⁸ though he indicates

what can only be considered analogues rather than sources. Certainly the "envy" felt by the onlooker (Old Man Travelling, 14) is quite different from the patronizing and overtly sentimental contemporary magazine poetry. More substantial and direct sources can be found in Wordsworth's other works.

The figure of the old man or related figures appear in An Evening Walk, Salisbury Plain, Adventures on Salisbury Plain, The Borderers and other poems by Wordsworth during this period. The relationship between these poems can be seen in the image of walking "in pain": in An Evening Walk the poor woman is described as walking with "step of pain", an image that Wordsworth was to use in a variety of forms: "A thing resigned with pain", "Methinks I see her crawling on with pain", "The languid steps of age and pain",⁸⁹ and in Adventures on Salisbury Plain:

O'ertook an aged Man with feet half bare;
Propp'd on a trembling staff he crept with pain
(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 2-3)

In The Borderers Herbert is similarly on a journey to help his child, and also presented as admirable. This is close to Old Man Travelling, but the closest verbal parallel is with Mortimer's speech at the end of the play:

I will wander on
Living by mere intensity of thought,
A thing by pain and thought compelled to live
(The Borderers, V, iii, 271-3)

whereas the old man that "travels on" is

A man who does not move with pain, but moves
With thought
(Old Man Travelling, 6-7)

The development of the image embodies a growing admiration

for the qualities of the old, instead of the sentimental compassion that characterizes Wordsworth's earlier verse. It also indicates how in The Borderers 'pain' and 'thought' are united, and then 'pain' is eliminated in the version of the image in Old Man Travelling. The assertion of the strength and, implicitly, the value of the old man marks an important refinement of Wordsworth's philosophy of suffering and an extension of the social criticism of Adventures on Salisbury Plain because it combines such criticism with a refusal to adopt a sentimental or patronizing point of view in relation to the old man. Indeed, the earlier image ("moves with pain") is only included in the later poem to be rejected as a possible description. It is interesting that a passage on pain in Paradise Lost that is close to the diction of Old Man Travelling:

Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with
 pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of Mightiest. Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfect miserie, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturnes
 All patience. . . .

(Paradise Lost, vi, 457-64)

("with pain", "subdues", "perfect", "patience") is also- if a source- transformed in Wordsworth's poem. In any event, the reversal of the image of "pain", like the reversal of Horace's images in An Evening Walk (1794), show Wordsworth actively modifying his sources.

Of the various descriptions of the old in the earlier poems by Wordsworth, that in Adventures on Salisbury Plain (though the date of the surviving manuscript is not clear) may offer the most interesting indication of the

sources for Old Man Travelling:

A Traveller on the skirt of Sarum's Plain
O'ertook an aged Man with feet half bare;
Propp'd on a trembling staff he crept with pain
(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 1-3)

The passage goes on to describe the old man, who was a soldier. The Sailor helps him across the plain, eventually putting him on a coach, and the gratitude of the old soldier is described. This has similarities to a number of other sources, for example, The Beggar's Petition;

Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,
Whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door
(The Beggar's Petition, 1-2:
EE, p.154)

where, like the old man in Adventures on Salisbury Plain, the old man's tattered clothes and grey hair are also described.⁹⁰ The description of such old men was, however, a commonplace. Jonathan Wordsworth suggests a passage from The Man of Feeling is a source for The Old Cumberland Beggar,⁹¹ and it also appears to be a source for both Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Old Man Travelling. The passage from The Man of Feeling begins with Harley seeing

An old man, who from his dress seemed to have been a soldier
. . . a knapsack rested on a stone at his right hand, while
his staff⁹²

Mackenzie then remarks that the soldier was "one of those figures which Salvator would have drawn" (as in the "Sketch" of Old Man Travelling). Harley's sentimental reflections are similar to Wordsworth's Windy Brow Inscription and the social criticism of earlier poems:

"Thou art old," said he to himself; "but age has not brought thee rest for its infirmities; I fear those silver hairs have not found shelter from thy country, though that neck

has been bronzed in its service."
 (The Man of Feeling, p.125)

Jonathan Wordsworth's comment fixes upon a passage that has clear similarities with the mental processes identified in Old Man Travelling and Description of a Beggar:

He had that steady look of sorrow, which indicates that its owner has gazed upon his griefs till he has forgotten to lament them; yet not without those streaks of complacency which a good mind will sometimes throw into the countenance, through all the incumbent load of its depression.
 (The Man of Feeling, p.126)

a man by whom
 All effort seems forgotten one to whom
 Long patience has such mild composure given
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need.

(Description of a Beggar:
 DC MS. 13)

Although the idea is a commonplace, in context it shows how Wordsworth may have drawn upon the passage as a basis of his later poem. As in Adventures on Salisbury Plain, Harley helps the old man, offering to take his knapsack. Harley then hears the old man's story that includes press-ganging, and ends "I am going to end my days in the arms of my son".⁹³ The story of the old soldier in The Man of Feeling, whilst sentimental, does offer a source for both Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Old Man Travelling, and poems such as The Beggar's Petition may have contributed to Wordsworth's poems.

Many of the elements of Old Man Travelling are found in other poems. The part that nature plays in the creation of the old man's "tranquillity" is also evident in the 1800 version of Yew-Tree Lines and Description of a Beggar:

that time,
 When nature had subdued him to himself
 (Yew-Tree Lines (1800), 37-8)

of one by nature led

To peace// of one insensibly subdued
To settled quiet

(Description of a Beggar:
DC MS. 13)

The image of "insensibly subdued" has parallels in Akenside's Preface to Pleasures of the Imagination:

by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonise the imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similar taste 94

Other images in Old Man Travelling and Description of a Beggar have parallels elsewhere. For example, "bow-bent" was used by Milton and others.⁹⁵ The image of

The nails of cart or chariot wheel have left
Impress'd on the white road

(Description of a Beggar:
DC MS.13)

follows that in XVI (b):

The road's white surface fresh indented showed
The self-provided waggoner gone by
(XVI (b), 10-1) 96

Other sources are less clear.⁹⁷ An interesting point is that Wordsworth's presentation of old age as "Animal Tranquillity and Decay" is consistent with contemporary medical opinion: Darwin commented on old age "we gradually sink into decay" and "our bodies by long habit cease to obey the stimulus of the aliment, which should support us".⁹⁸

Taken as a whole, the inscriptions and Old Man Travelling show how Wordsworth's treatment of old age and death develops, as does his use of exemplary narrative. Equally, the admonitory tone of the early poems gives way to the implicit challenge to the reader in Old Man Travelling, and this revolution in attitude is similar to that in Resolution and Independence. The use of blank verse and a

shift from inscriptive verse to the "Sketch" do not really mark a radical innovation, but indicate the shift in emphasis from the general to particular, and from the rigid formality of the earlier inscriptions to the more open-ended form of Old Man Travelling, a transformation probably initiated by the composition of The Borderers.

VI

There are two main ways in which it is possible to categorize the developments in Wordsworth's shorter verse and his use of sources during this period. These developments can be seen in terms of Lyrical Ballads, or Wordsworth's longer blank verse works such as The Ruined Cottage.

In relation to Lyrical Ballads, the use of the ballad and blank verse narratives show how Wordsworth had moved towards the central forms of that volume. The use of some forms had other effects: the song and ballad seemed to have influenced Wordsworth towards using a simpler diction. The poems also have similiar techniques to poems in Lyrical Ballads: dramatic monologue, and a character as narrator (as in The Thorn). The subjects of the poems became more concerned with character and psychology, recording feelings when the character was agitated by the fundamental passions. The pressures on characters in many of these poems are from social and political causes (poverty, deprivation, war), against which are set the ministrations of the natural world. The fusion of such ideological concerns (as in Salisbury Plain or At the Isle of Wight) and natural philosophy (as in

An Evening Walk (1794)) in Old Man Travelling indicates how Wordsworth's philosophy became integrated in a way in evidence elsewhere in Lyrical Ballads. The illustrations of this philosophy were, in later poems, drawn from the ordinary events of 'real' life rather than the melodramatic events foregrounded in some earlier verse. The intent to deal with stories that were, on some level, 'true' is evident from Wordsworth's use of factual sources. All of these changes were related to Wordsworth's re-working of his sources, both his earlier verse and the works of others. The influence of sources is clearly seen in his use of allusion: Written on the Thames Near Richmond, Address to the Ocean, The Three Graves, and Imitation of Juvenal all include direct debts to other authors. Wordsworth also worked with Wrangham, Southey, and Coleridge on a range of poems, and the co-operation with Coleridge to produce The Three Graves is similar to the plan for The Ancyent Marinere. Not all aspects of the other poems in Lyrical Ballads have clear antecedents in the poetry of this period: the gentle humour of some poems in that collection seems to have little place, though an exception might be found in The Birth of Love.

The number and importance of the sources for the poems written in this period and included in Lyrical Ballads indicate that they are not radical innovations in form, subject, imagery or diction any more than is the vagrant's narrative in Salisbury Plain, included in Lyrical Ballads in a modified form as The Female Vagrant. Wordsworth drew on a wide range of sources in the composition of these poems: Latin poetry, Milton, eighteenth-century poetry of nature,

the poetry of Wordsworth's acquaintance, political poetry and prose, and ballads (both traditional and contemporary). Although Wordsworth drew heavily on his sources, they are not merely pastiche: rather they are a powerful fusion of many disparate elements, including literature, philosophy, politics, and actual events.

Some of the poems of the period point towards The Ruined Cottage. In "In vain have Time and nature toiled to throw" and "When western clouds a deepening gloom display" the imagery of ruins is linked to ideological concerns. In the ballads there is the exploration of the psychology of suffering and the introduction of the narrator figure. Many of these features are united in the inscriptions, especially Yew-Tree Lines: the theme of death, the psychological processes of slow decay, and the link between the particular spot and the mental state of the character all foreshadow The Ruined Cottage.

In these shorter poems certain aspects of Wordsworth's use of sources can be clearly seen. Perhaps the most important of these is Wordsworth's mania for re-working his own verse. The patterns of inter-relatedness can become extremely complex: the female vagrant and the use of "pain" to describe walking are examples of the types and imagery that seem to permeate Wordsworth's poetry. This in turn suggests that Wordsworth's literary imagination operated in part through the gradual transformation of his poetry through constant revision. This would imply that Wordsworth's revisions, rather than an unhelpful obsession, were the re-creative means by which he developed many of the poems in Lyrical Ballads.

Partly through these shorter poems Wordsworth created a new set of poetic practices modelled in part on other poetry, and drawing upon his own earlier verse. Wordsworth experimented with an increasing range of forms, narrative techniques and poetic diction at the same time as evolving a more cohesive world picture. These are the 'experiments' of Lyrical Ballads, the product of many years' labour rather than the spontaneous outburst of an annus mirabilis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BORDERERS

The Borderers is Wordsworth's longest work during the period 1793-1797. It is also his only play and as such it has attracted a good deal of critical attention. The Borderers draws together many of the earlier concerns and archetypes within Wordsworth's works, and thus acts as a kind of watershed for his poetry before Lyrical Ballads. The play can also be seen as contributing to later developments in Wordsworth's verse.

Osborn has identified three texts of The Borderers: the fragmentary Ur-Borderers, the early version (and the Preface), and the late version of 1842.¹ The Ur-Borderers and the Preface are the only texts that definitely date before 10 June 1797. It is therefore not possible to use verbal parallels from the first complete manuscript of the play as sole evidence of Wordsworth's sources before that date. However, with the possible exceptions of Act III, scene iv and Act IV, scene i, it is reasonable to suppose that the early version is fairly close to the text Coleridge heard in June 1797.²

Starting with the comments of Legouis and de Selincourt,³ the sources of The Borderers have received considerable critical attention. Legouis stressed the influence of Godwin, but this view has been challenged by a host of later critics, particularly Grob.⁴ De Selincourt's suggestions about the nature of Shakespeare's influence on the play have been taken up by Smith, but challenged by Owen,⁵ whilst other sources have been oddly neglected.⁶ There is little doubt that The Borderers does rely heavily

on its sources, but the fixation on Godwin and Shakespeare is a distortion and simplification of a complex pattern of influences.

II

In order to clarify the sources for the play it is necessary to review the debts to Wordsworth's earlier works. There are thematic parallels with many of his earlier poems, as well as similarities in characters and setting. In some ways The Borderers unites many disparate elements in Wordsworth's verse, from Gothic elements to his philosophy of nature.

In his introduction to the play Osborn points to the debts both in theme and content to earlier work, specifically pointing to the psychology of guilt, and the castle and demented woman.⁷ It is possible to amplify these suggestions, and see the concern with the aetiology of injustice as a central concern of Salisbury Plain, Adventures on Salisbury Plain, and The Borderers. In all three works (as well as related minor poems) images of hunger, distress, and injustice abound and are the basis of political and social comments. These comments are developed in The Borderers using components from Wordsworth's earlier verse: the barren heath, the ruined castle, the destitute woman, the helpless old man, and the demented woman.⁸ There is also a significant progression in Wordsworth's treatment of injustice: in Salisbury Plain, it is society that causes suffering, but in Adventures on Salisbury Plain the sailor is, in part, guilty himself. In The Borderers crime and

suffering come from within people: society is not seen as the sole origin of these evils. Thus in Salisbury Plain society creates suffering, in Adventures on Salisbury Plain, crime, but in The Borderers, "The world is poisoned at the heart",⁹ and this is exemplified in Rivers. Against this, and drawing on material in An Evening Walk, The Borderers occasionally shows the beneficent effect of natural objects, though the relationship between people and nature remains complex. However, as the foil to the metaphysical reasonings of Rivers, the "pleasant face of Nature" (I, i, 119) does offer a surer guide to moral action, and the inclemency of the heath and storm does not hide the positive value of natural objects and the role they have in the development of the mind:

What mighty objects do impress their forms
 To build up this our intellectual being
 (The Borderers, IV, ii, 134-5)

In the more comprehensive function of natural objects within the moral universe, The Borderers represents a change from the assertion of the central value of reason in Salisbury Plain. The Borderers also emphasizes the value of natural affections over analytical reasoning. Behind both these changes can be seen a shift from a political perspective to a psychological and moral perspective on the questions of suffering and injustice so forcibly raised in Salisbury Plain. Yet the underlying concern with this area of human experience remains constant from Salisbury Plain through Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Borderers to The Ruined Cottage.

The Borderers also contains a host of minor elements

from earlier works. Osborn suggests that the play has its origins in A Tale (prose Fragment III), and the comparison of a castle in a storm with an eagle.¹⁰ Similar characters and imagery occur in The Vale of Esthwaite and DC MSS. 5-7. Whether or not these are considered important sources, there is little doubt that The Borderers draws on details from Wordsworth's earliest verse.

Wordsworth's earliest surviving poem asserts the value of sympathetic reactions to the suffering of others,¹¹ and the objects of such sympathy in his early verse are often women. The psychological consequences of suffering are also part of these poems, as they are in The Borderers. A Tale includes one such woman of a type common in other works such as Home's Douglas:¹²

Her eyes were large and blue; and from the wrinkles of her face (which, from their fineness, seemed rather the wrinkles of Sorrow than of Years) it was easy to see they had been acquainted with weeping; yet had not perpetual tears been able to extinguish a certain wild brightness which, at the first view, might have been mistaken for the wildness of great joy. But it was far different- it too plainly indicated she was not in her true and perfect mind.
(Prose, i, p.8)

The parallel with the early Churchyard Scene (not included in The Borderers) is, as Osborn notes, striking:¹³

wrinkles that might seem
Wrinkles of sorrow rather than of years
Had traced his temples with religious touch;
Acquainted though his eyes appear with weeping
Nor tears nor sorrow have subdued their lustre.
Bright lights break out at times about their orbs
That speak the wildness of great joy: perhaps
He is not in his true and perfect mind.
(Churchyard Scene, 5-12)

There are also shared sources for the Churchyard Scene and A Tale in King Lear and the Bible.¹⁴ This example clearly shows how Wordsworth incorporated elements from his earlier

work on the psychology of suffering into drafts towards The Borderers.¹⁵

Another example of this process can be found in the story of the beggar woman in The Borderers, particularly in I, iii, 24-55. This passage shows the influence of draftings in DC MSS. 5-7 describing the widow and her children freezing to death, and (as Osborn suggests)¹⁶ the related passage in An Evening Walk:

Regardless of her grief another babe
A glowworm in [?its] gleaming hand
He touch'd it with his finger- While his face
Was bright with laughter, wildly did he talk
With the pale fire; & toss'd it to and fro
(DC MS. 6 , edited)

Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,
By pointing to a shooting star on high:
(EW, 259-60)

My poor babe
Was crying, as I thought, crying for bread
When I had none to give him, whereupon
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand
Which pleased him so that he was hushed at once
(The Borderers, I, iii, 25-9)

The beggar woman's story in The Borderers also shows the influence of XVI (a) as Gill notes:¹⁷

That as I floundered on, disheartened sore
With the rough element and pelting shower,
I saw safe sheltered by the viewless furze
The tiny glowworm, lowliest child of earth,
From his green lodge with undiminished light
Shine through the rain, and strange comparison
Of Envy linked with pity touched my heart
And such reproach of heavenly ordonnance
As shall not need forgiveness.
(XVI (a), 28-35)

-but two nights gone
The darkness overtook me, wind and rain
Beat hard upon my head- and yet I saw
A glow-worm through the covert of the furze
Shine [] as if nothing ailed the sky
At which I half-accused the God in heaven-
(The Borderers, I, iii, 49-54)

These are not merely parallels of subject and treatment, but show Wordsworth actively reworking earlier material into his play.

Elsewhere in The Borderers there are stories of deranged women which have parallels in earlier work and, as Osborn notes, in other eighteenth-century verse.¹⁸ Osborn shows how the description of the abandoned mother that pre-figures The Thorn contains elements from Wordsworth's very early works:

And oft the live-long day she sat
And word would never speak.
(A Ballad, 15-6)

And oft she roam'd at dark midnight
Among the silent graves
(A Ballad, 25-6)

By frequent feet the grass around
His grave shall all be worn away,
Yet never human foot be found
On the green turf-hill o'er his clay.
(Dirge, 29-32)

no one ever heard her voice.
But every night at the first stroke of twelve
She quits her house, and in the neighbouring
church-yard
Upon the self same spot, in rain or storm,
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and one,
She paces round and round, still round and round,
And in the church-yard sod her feet have worn
A hollow ring
(The Borderers, I, iii, 15-22)

There are also other debts to earlier work in these descriptions,¹⁹ though they fall within a popular convention of the portrayal of insanity caused by suffering.

The major characters in The Borderers, Rivers and Mortimer, are clearly related to the presentation of derangement discussed above because both are driven to temporary insanity. The parallels with Adventures on Salisbury Plain are also significant. The essential

parallel between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Borderers lies in the story of the murderer: in both a good character is corrupted and murders an innocent person. Detailed parallels between the works are less important,²⁰ though both are set on heaths and peopled with destitute and disturbed characters. Osborn sees a link between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and Rivers's description of his mental journey, but the source is clearly De Rerum Natura:²¹

I seemed a being who had passed alone
 Beyond the visible barriers of the world
 And travelled into things to come.
 (The Borderers, IV, ii, 143-5)

effringere ut arta
 naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret.
 ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
 processit longe flammantia moenia mundi
 atque omne immensum peragravit mente animoque
 (De Rerum Natura, i, 70-4)

Although close verbal links between The Borderers and Adventures on Salisbury Plain are few, details of plot, such as both murderers giving themselves up to justice, are not uncommon. Most importantly, the psychological consequences for the murderers are explored in some depth, including the derangement caused by a guilty conscience.

Thus many of the characters in The Borderers embody the exploration of the psychology of suffering apparent in a range of Wordsworth's earlier works. Though these characters are based on a complex pattern of sources it does not obscure the power with which they are, at times, presented, nor their contribution to the exploration of human psychology in the play. It is perhaps significant that many of Wordsworth's later poems that describe

unusual mental states such as those in Lyrical Ballads and even The Prelude should draw upon material first presented in The Borderers.²²

The setting of The Borderers and some details of the plot are clearly related to some of Wordsworth's earlier verse, particularly Gothic Tale. It is possible that Gothic Tale and XVI (a) represent an abortive attempt to separate the tales of the sailor and the female vagrant in Adventures of Salisbury Plain,²³ but in any event, both poems seem to have contributed something to the setting of the play.

Gothic Tale is, as de Selincourt's title suggests, in the Gothic manner, and is similar to many Gothic works in its setting and plot.²⁴ The setting of part of The Borderers is the same as in Gothic Tale, and the characters in the poem also have clear similarities with those in Wordsworth's play. The close relationship between The Borderers, II, iii and Gothic Tale is documented by Osborn.²⁵ Some of the parallels are particularly close:

Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder
Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing force.
"This is the time," said he, "when guilt may
shudder . . ."
(The Borderers, II, iii, 67-9)

The thunder-stroke
Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing force;
And as the sulphurous bolt of terror broke
The blind man shuddered to life's inmost source
(Gothic Tale, 91-4)

There are further similarities between the two works: in both the setting is a ruined castle's dungeon where a young man is tempted to kill an old blind man. In both the intervention of a natural object (thunder and a star)

prevents the murder. There are other shared elements: galloping horsemen, an alpine plank, and a dog, as well as a number of verbal echoes that Osborn perceptively identifies. Many of these shared Gothic elements have parallels in other Gothic works,²⁶ but the evidence Osborn amasses conclusively demonstrates that Wordsworth drew upon Gothic Tale in the composition of The Borderers.

There are also elements in the setting of the play which have parallels in Wordsworth's earlier works. The Borderers is, like the early version of Salisbury Plain and parts of An Evening Walk (1794), set on Stainmore Heath.²⁷ The Borderers setting also recalls that of XVI (a):

'Tis a bleak road across the heath at evening.
(The Borderers, III, v, 172)

The road extended o'er a heath
Weary and bleak:
(XVI (a), 1-2)

Osborn even suggests the two cottagers "who live on the edge of the heath" are like the cottagers in Adventures on Salisbury Plain, and "act as chorus to the denouement".²⁸ The barren heath of The Borderers is to be found in many of Wordsworth's earlier works from Salisbury Plain onwards, and some of the methods of evoking its desolation are common to a number of his poems. Thus in the Ur-Borderers the traveller on the heath remarks "my voice has called incessantly but in vain", just as in Salisbury Plain and Adventures on Salisbury Plain the traveller "sends a feeble shout- in vain".²⁹ In combination with the ruined castle, the heath setting of The Borderers is another reminder of the coherence of Wordsworth's works during the period 1793-7.

The close parallels that exist between parts of The Borderers and Wordsworth's earlier verse are most clearly evident in the presentation of disturbed characters, especially destitute women. Of these works, Adventures on Salisbury Plain comes closest to the central issues of The Borderers: guilt, ratiocination, and the inherent moral qualities of people. Details of setting and plot, particularly those that might be considered Gothic, show the influence of Gothic Tale, whilst another key element drawn from earlier work is the setting of the play upon a barren heath.

III

As to the scene & period of action little more was required for my purpose than the absence of established Law & Government- so that the Agents might be at liberty to act on their own impulses. Nevertheless I do remember that having a wish to colour the manners in some degree from local history...

(Isabella Fenwick note:
Osborn, p. 814)

Wordsworth's comments on The Borderers, although made in 1843, indicate he had chosen a specific topographical and historical setting for his play. This setting was also related to the immediate historical context of the play: the development of the French Revolution and Wordsworth's growing doubts about the basis of the ideology informing the revolution.

The area that Wordsworth chose for the setting of The Borderers was the area around Penrith and Stainmore that had been the setting for the early version of Salisbury Plain and part of An Evening Walk (1794). Marijane Osborn recently examined the evidence in the play indicating

specific localities, and concluded:

With the exception of the picturesque Rosslyn details, every place described as the scene of on-stage action exists somewhere in the Penrith-Stainmore landscape. 30

Although some of her arguments are doubtful,³¹ her conclusion seems justified. There are a number of fairly specific references to localities in the Penrith-Stainmore area in The Borderers, such as the cottage which seems to be modelled on Julian's Bower.³² Perhaps more important is the derivation of the name and character of Herbert from St. Herbert of Derwentwater, which is indirectly evidenced in the play itself:³³

Soon after, the good abbot of Saint Cuthbert's
Supplied my helplessness with food and raiment
(The Borderers, I, i, 167-8)

The most convincing patterns of association with real locations in the play are between Clifford's castle and Brougham castle, and the "convent" and the Spittle upon Stainmore.³⁴ Given these indications that the play was set in the Penrith-Stainmore area, Marijane Osborn convincingly argues it was unlikely that Wordsworth intended the area should be recognized by the reader.³⁵ The unity of Wordsworth's works 1793-7 is partly demonstrated by this recurring use of Stainmore Heath.

The setting of The Borderers is as much historical as topographical, and it is clear from Wordsworth's comments to Isabella Fenwick that these considerations were originally fused. Wordsworth's comments on "the absence of established Law & Government" are echoed in the play itself, and in other works on the Borders:

Happy are we

Who live in these disputed tracts that own
 No law but what each man makes for himself.
 (The Borderers, II, i, 51-3)

There was a certain tract of land between the two kingdoms,
 claimed by both, and inhabited by a set of robbers, without
 any government or laws.

(J. Clarke, A Survey of the Lakes) 36

In Clarke's description the essential features Wordsworth
 required for his play, are present. The similarities to the
 Robin Hood cycle of stories, where justice is enforced by a
 band of outlaws led by a good man often labelled a criminal,
 has been noted by Sanftleben and Osborn,³⁷ though not the
 fact that these stories are set in a period close to that of
 Wordsworth's play:

You have not heard that Henry has at last
 Dissolved the Baron's League and sent abroad
 His sheriffs with fit force to reinstate
 The genuine owners of such Lands and Baronies
 As in these long commotions have been seized.

(The Borderers, II, iii, 330-4)

The reference here is to the events after the battle of
 Evesham in 1265 which is consistent with Wordsworth's
 setting ("TIME, the reign of Henry III").³⁸ Further, many
 elements of Herbert's story derive from The Beggar's
 Daughter of Bednall-Green, also set shortly after the battle
 of Evesham. Thus the play is firmly, if not conspicuously,
 set at the time of the conflict between the barons and King
 Henry III.

There are, of course, parallels between the absence
 of established "Law & Government" in Henry III's time and
 the political situation in France in 1796-7. The
 fundamental similarities lie in the overthrow of established
 law and government, and the way in which leaders found it
 necessary to determine for themselves the form of both

government and law. Late in life Wordsworth maintained the changes in character depicted in The Borderers were immediately connected with the French Revolution:

The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that, as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from the very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart, and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory, that the Tragedy of "The Borderers" was composed. 39

Like The Robbers, The Borderers appears to have parallels with the earliest stages of the French Revolution. Sanftleben goes so far as to identify Rivers with Robespierre and the Jacobins, and Mortimer with Beaupuis and the Girondists,⁴⁰ and though this is too extreme a view, there are reasons to think that the argument has some utility. The changes in character to which Wordsworth refers ("hardening of the heart" and "perversion of the understanding") are evident in the events of the French Revolution, The Borderers, and some of Wordsworth's own works. Thus, like Milton, Wordsworth condemned the pity expressed by many at the execution of the king,⁴¹ going on to argue that "Liberty"

in order to reign in peace must establish herself by violence. She deploras such stern necessity, but the safety of the people, her supreme law, is her consolation.

(Prose, i, pp.33-4)

This is the rhetoric of the French Revolution.⁴² The abuse of reason to justify crimes, a significant part of the Preface to The Borderers, has parallels in the French Revolution, particularly the speeches of Robespierre. It is

worth noting that in Salisbury Plain Wordsworth calls upon the "herculean mace / Of Reason" and hopes for the destruction of "Error's monster race", and in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff he refers to "the advocates of error".⁴³ This appeal to reason was commonplace amongst supporters of the French Revolution. Wordsworth had turned away from some of the more extreme views expressed in A Letter and Salisbury Plain before he began The Borderers. It seems that in his description of the psychological consequences of the French Revolution in The Borderers Wordsworth drew upon his own experiences, much as he was to do later in Book III of The Excursion and Book X of The Prelude.⁴⁴ The reliance on reason, the rejection of certain forms of pity, and the use of sophistries to justify violence that are in A Letter appear to have parallels in the Preface to The Borderers and the character of Rivers in the play itself. This is not to suggest Wordsworth was creating a self-portrait at any point, only that he drew on elements of his own experience. This is also suggested by the use of "Mortimer" as a pseudonym when he published The Convict in the Morning Post of 14 December 1797, and later in his description of himself as "a borderer of his age".⁴⁵ On the other hand, Wordsworth's claim to have drawn on his own observations of character changes in others seems supported by his comments on the Solitary:

the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may now say, a Mr. Fawcett

(PW, v, p.374)

It seems possible that Wordsworth drew on his experiences of

changes in character in response to the French Revolution in the creation of his drama, drawing upon his own life, his observations of others, and political figures in France itself. It can thus be seen that the setting of The Borderers had relevance to its historical context on more than one level.

The historical setting and the historical context of the play are linked in a meaningful way: in each the use of analytical reason as the key ethical instrument is explored in a political situation which allowed those speculations to be realized. Wordsworth did not try and set the play in Republican France (though Southey and Coleridge did so in The Fall of Robespierre) perhaps because, as in the Preface, he was intent on "penetrating somewhat into the depths of our Nature",⁴⁶ rather than making a specific political point. In The Borderers, as in Adventures on Salisbury Plain, Wordsworth's interest seems to lie in the psychology of the individual criminal, but in his play this is used as an exemplum of a process that is common to all criminals, including politicians. The physical setting of the play is the country that Wordsworth knew well, and it appears that the intellectual setting was also familiar to him. The settings for The Borderers unite many disparate sources, as well as bringing together elements already found in Wordsworth's earlier works.

IV

Accordingly, his reason is almost exclusively employed in justifying his past enormities and in enabling him to commit new ones. He is perpetually imposing upon himself; he has a sophism for every crime.

(Preface: Osborn, p.64)

The Borderers unites elements of two traditions: the Gothic, and the conventional tale of the sophist-villain who misleads his innocent victim into committing murder. The combination of these two traditions is characteristic of early Romanticism. The eighteenth-century models for this type of play are, however, as important as the more frequently discussed Shakespearean models, and it is within the context of late eighteenth-century drama that The Borderers should first be considered.

Elements in the Gothic tradition, especially in drama, point to the contemporaneity of The Borderers. Varma argues that the "emergence of Gothic fiction coincides roughly with a revival of interest in Elizabethan drama", going on to assert that "Gothic novelists sought to shelter themselves under Shakespeare's authority" and the same seems true of Gothic drama.⁴⁷ Surveys of the drama of the period support this view, showing the frequency with which Gothic tragedies and Shakespeare's later plays were acted.⁴⁸ Given the Gothic tradition in late eighteenth-century drama, Wordsworth's play was hardly unusual with its ruined castle and threats of murder.⁴⁹ The trend of dramatizing Gothic novels brought into conflict the taste for the supernatural in novels and the conventions of probability on the English stage, resulting in a preference for the type of Gothicism that could be explained in rational terms.⁵⁰ There are typologies of established plot structures of Gothic plays that show a striking similarity with the transition from Gothic Tale to The Borderers: "the earlier the castle-dungeon-ghost variety, the later the

bandit-forest-cottage sort".⁵¹ Railo claimed The Borderers was typical of Gothic drama,⁵² and there is a substantial case for seeing The Borderers as closely related to the conventions of Gothic drama.

The Borderers embodies a number of elements of the Gothic, including the psychological exploration of the murderer. As Gothic Tale and Adventures on Salisbury Plain testify, Wordsworth had already used this motif before The Borderers, as had many others including Gessner, Lewis, Fawcett, Cottle, Godwin, and Schiller, and their precursors in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Southey had commented in his fragmentary essay On Romance (1792):

There is a certain train of reflections which naturally occupies the mind upon the sight of a castle mouldering in ruins⁵³

perhaps in justification of his use of such a setting in An Improbable Tale (1792):

In their adventures they are benighted- they seek shelter from a tempest & discover a castle- Hugo refuses admittance they press more earnestly- he insults them they force an entrance- a female shriek is heard- & while Hugo falls beneath Robert Elgar hastes thro a secret passage & discovers the solitary Matilda

(MS. Eng. Misc. e. 21-2)

Southey had also used the Middle Ages as a historical setting: in the early manuscript of Madoc (1794) the play was set in 1169⁵⁴ (quite close to the date of The Borderers). In Madoc a group of outlaws were in conflict with the government, and the peasant of Book II has parallels with Robert in The Borderers:

yet his eye
Beamd kindness, such methought as yet might dwell
In one, whom Misery with no sparing hand

Had chasten'd

(Add. MSS. 47,883)

Southey, like Wordsworth, had used historical settings as vehicles for political dramas, particularly in Wat Tyler and Joan of Arc. Though Wordsworth may well have been familiar with all these works by Southey it seems unlikely they were sources, though they do demonstrate that some of the Gothic elements in The Borderers were common literary devices of the period and employed by authors well-known to Wordsworth. Other details redolent of the Gothic tradition abound in The Borderers.⁵⁵

A central feature of The Borderers, the sophist-villain, was also a popular subject during the period. Parallels with the relationship between Rivers and Mortimer in eighteenth-century literature are so common that it is not easy to identify any specific source as central to the development of these two characters. The pattern of a sophist-villain and his victim whom he leads to commit a murder is an old one. Ribner, in his introduction to The Atheist's Tragedy, shows how the tradition stretches back to Roman drama.⁵⁶ The relevance of this tradition to The Borderers is shown not only in the villain, but in the associated imagery of the conflict between a material and spiritual vision of the universe:

two conventional symbols, thunder and the stars, each commonly used in literature as a sign of the divine presence in the universe.

(The Atheist Tragedy, p. xliii)

These images are used in Gothic Tale and The Borderers. The casuistic villain was a favourite of Gothic writers as Railo has shown,⁵⁷ and Thorslev has suggested that the Gothic

villain was the archetype for the Romantic hero-villain.⁵⁸ Few of these commentators point to the long-established tradition of this type of philosophical villain that justifies murder, or to its use in earlier eighteenth-century drama.

Sharrock is one of the few critics to suggest that eighteenth-century drama influenced The Borderers,⁵⁹ pointing out the border setting and Gothic elements of Home's Douglas are of a type with Wordsworth's play. The Iago-like Glenalvon and his dupe, Randolph (who is tricked into murdering Douglas) are broadly similar to Rivers and Mortimer, and there are other minor parallels between the two plays.⁶⁰ Sharrock's comments do indicate the parallels that exist between The Borderers and some eighteenth-century drama, though the parallels with Douglas are not particularly close.

An examination of the dramatic works of Edward Young shows a fascination with the sophist-villain who tempts an innocent into murder. Busiris, King of Egypt explores the psychology of murder, but the closest of Young's dramas to The Borderers is Revenge. Zanga (the villain), like Rivers, pursues a virtuous leader until he commits a murder. In both plays the hero treats the villain well, rewarding him after their initial conflict. There are other details common to both plays,⁶¹ but the most significant are the types of argument that Zanga uses to convince Alonzo (the Mortimer figure):

Alonzo.

She dies;

Tho' my arm tremble at the stroke, she dies.

Zanga.

That's truly great. What think you 'twas set up

The Greek and Roman name in such lustre,
 But doing right in stern despite to nature,
 Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
 When great, august, and godlike justice
 call'd? 62

just as Rivers appeals to justice over mercy (The Borderers, II, iii, 385-401). Although the device of the villain portraying innocence as guilt is a commonplace, the moral sophistries link the plays. A further parallel in the interaction between the hero and villain occurs at the end of the plays where both heroes, having realized that the murder was unjustified, show signs of madness:

Alonzo raves;
 And in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
 Attempted on his life . . . After pause,
 He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga:
 (Works, ii, p. 83)

The early Prose Synopsis for the final act of the Ur-Borderers describes a similar scene: "Ferdinand's reason, which had been disordered, restored by the sight of Danby!" (Osborn, p.48). In both The Borderers and Revenge the confrontation between hero and villain after the murder restores the hero, and is presented in a similar pattern of disjointed blank verse.⁶³ As in The Borderers, the villain makes an unforced confession to his victim. The parallels between the two plays are not particularly striking, but they do indicate how The Borderers was part of a tradition of plays current early in the eighteenth century.⁶⁴

Another play in this tradition is The Gamester by Moore.⁶⁵ The villain, Stukely, and his dupe, Beverley, act out a drama of deception and ruin that ends in the hero's suicide. Stukely is another villain armed with arguments in

cries out, undo.

(The Gamester, p. 57)

Arguments like this were also used in novels, such as Radcliffe's Romance of the Forest.⁶⁸ The sophist-villain often used the arguments of the atheist and these arguments were by 1796 elements of an established literary convention.

There are other parallels between The Borderers and The Gamester that show how the dramatic pattern of the sophist-villain includes elements that are commonplaces in their own right. As in Revenge, the madness of the hero after discovering he has been duped is traditional: Beverley, the hero, in the "madness of despair"

started up, look'd wild, and trembled; and like a Woman, seiz'd with her Sex's Fits, laugh'd out loud
(The Gamester, p. 53)

As in The Death of Abel and Adventures on Salisbury Plain the murderer becoming a wandering outcast is part of the convention, and echoes of this appear in both The Gamester and The Borderers:

How like an Out-cast do I wander? Loaded with every Curse,
that drives the Soul to Desperation-
(The Gamester, p. 58)

No prayers, no tears, but hear my doom in silence!
I will go forth a wanderer on the earth
(The Borderers, V, iii, 264-5)

Equally, the description of the guilty conscience in The Gamester:

Be Conscience then his Punisher, 'till Heaven in Mercy gives
him Penitence, or dooms him in his Justice...
(The Gamester, p. 50)

is similar to that in The Borderers:

A thing by pain and thought compelled to live,
 Yet loathing life, till heaven in mercy strike me
 With blank forgetfulness- that I may die.

(The Borderers, V, iii, 273-5)

The reference to heaven's mercy in both passages serves as a reminder of the strong theological roots of the themes of both plays.

Although Osborn sees a parallel between Rivers and the satanic type,⁶⁹ the fundamental point is that, in bare outline, The Borderers was based on the well-established dramatic convention of the sophist-villain. This dramatic tradition was related to theological issues, and in particular the basis of moral action, often seen in terms of a contrast between 'natural law' and God's law (or man's law to the sophist-villain). In this respect, the themes of The Borderers were traditional, but their application was not: Wordsworth had the experience of the French Revolution before him, and what had been a pattern that allowed a confrontation in drama between differing theological positions had, in Wordsworth's eyes, been acted out in deadly earnest with all the tragic consequences of The Terror. The Borderers' critique of the psychology of the revolutionary mind went further than casting the revolutionary in the satanic mould: it was an attempt to specify the means by which the transition of character occurred which allowed a man with many good qualities to commit crimes. Wordsworth seized upon abstract reasoning, outside the ameliorating influence of social and political order (and morality), as the basis of this transformation, and in doing so turned his attention from the social forces that produced evil (as in Salisbury Plain and Adventures on

Salisbury Plain) to the intellectual roots of crime. In doing so, Wordsworth was beginning to fix upon the "mind of man" as the fundamental focus of his interest, using the eighteenth-century conventions of the Gothic and sophist-villain as a basis, but going beyond both.

V

Both the Ur-Borderers and the early version of The Borderers have epigraphs, and these not only indicate something of Wordsworth's concerns during the composition of his play, but also highlight aspects of the moral philosophy and aesthetic theory that informed both works.

The Ur-Borderers material is found in DC MS. 12, and inside the front cover of this small notebook Wordsworth had written:

Irritat mulcet falsis terroribus implet
(Osborn, p. 303)

The position of the line and the fact that it is in Wordsworth's best hand suggest that it was intended as the epigraph of the Ur-Borderers. Osborn does not identify the source of the line⁷⁰ which is from Horace's epistle To Augustus (Epistles, II, i). An awareness of the original context is essential to a full understanding of the epigraph. Horace's epistle deals with the literary tastes of society, and the poet's distrust of the theatrical audience.⁷¹ Both Horace and Wordsworth seemed to have distrusted their contemporary audiences for similar reasons. Horace's satirical description of the audience's craving for spectacle:

but weaker in worth and rank, unlearned and stupid and ready to fight it out if the knights dispute with them, call in the middle of a play for a bear or for boxers: 'tis in such things the rabble delights. But nowadays all the pleasure even of the knights has passed from the ear to the vain delights of the wandering eye. For four hours or more the curtains are kept down, while troops of horse and files of foot sweep by: anon are dragged in kings, once fortune's favourites, their hands bound behind them: with hurry and scurry come chariots, carriages, wains, and ships
(Horace, p. 413)

is similar to Wordsworth's later condemnation in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads (1800) of the taste of modern audiences:

To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakepear and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. -When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble effort with which I have endeavoured to counteract it

(Prose, i, 128-30)

Wordsworth may have come to feel this way because he felt the "deprav'd State of the Stage" was the reason behind the rejection of The Borderers by Covent Garden.⁷² The evidence from Wordsworth's letters and the Preface to Lyrical Ballads would suggest that his theories of the relationship between author and public were similar to those in Horace's epistle: both were concerned with what they felt was a growing tendency in literary audiences to demand works that satisfied a degrading desire for the spectacular, and both linked these tastes to the social and political conditions of the day.

Although Horace's epistle is predominantly concerned with popular tastes in literature, the immediate context of the epigraph itself is Horace's praise of the tragic

playwright:

ac ne forte putes me, quae facere ipse recusem,
 cum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne,
 ille per extantum funem mihi posse videtur
 ire poeta, meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
 irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
 ut magus, et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis
 (Epistles, II, i, 208-13)

By directly alluding to this passage Wordsworth appears to have some sympathy with Horace's views on the nature and ends of tragedy, rejecting the "outrageous stimulation" expected by the audience, and seeking to achieve the emotional effects of the great tragic poet ("meum qui pectus inaniter angit, / irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet"). The focus on the feelings of the reader, rather than the events of the narrative itself, is evident in the

Preface to Lyrical Ballads:

The feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation and not the action and situation to the feeling.

(Prose, i, p.128)

Horace's epistle may not have been the source for any of these ideas (though it could have been), but it seems likely Wordsworth was sympathetic to such ideas at the time he was composing the Ur-Borderers. The epigraph thus creates a complex pattern of allusion that includes the relationship between the tragic dramatist and the audience.

Perhaps arising from the need to justify the character of Rivers, Wordsworth wrote a Preface to The Borderers during 1797. At the same time he gave the play a new epigraph from Pope's Epistle to Cobham:

On human actions reason though you can,
 It may be reason, but it is not man;
 His principle of action once explore,
 That instant 'tis his principle no more. 73

This epigraph also creates a complex pattern of allusion that depends on an awareness of its context, especially the lines that follow in Pope:

Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect.

(Epistle to Cobham, 39-40)

Wordsworth adapted Pope's metaphor so it became a seminal image for some of his fundamental ideas on the nature of knowledge. One such idea is that abstract reason is not a sufficient epistemological basis of knowledge but, like the dissection of an animal, kills the life it wishes to explore. Allied to this is the use of the dissection metaphor to express the sterility of abstract reasoning. Wordsworth also used the image to criticize "the dangerous use which may be made of reason when a man has committed a great crime".⁷⁴ These ideas and associated imagery are also found in Wordsworth's fragmentary Essay on Morals (1798) where, condemning "such books as Mr Godwyn's, Mr. Paley's, & those of the whole tribe of authors of that class", he cites their main fault as

All this is the consequence of an undue value set upon that faculty which we call reason...

(Prose, i, p.103)

going on to contrast feeling and reason in morality:

We do not argue in defence of our good actions, we feel internally their beneficent effect; we are satisfied with this delicious sensation; &, even when we are called upon to justify our conduct, we perform the task with languor & indifference. Not so when we have been unworthily employed; then it is that we are all activity & keenness; then it is that we repair to systems of morality for arguments in defence of ourselves; & sure enough are we to find them. In this state of our mind[?]s lifeless words, & abstract propositions, will not be destitute of power to lay asleep the spirit of self-accusation & exclude the uneasiness of

repentance.

(Prose, i, p.104)

It is clear that in the Essay on Morals, as in the Preface to The Borderers, Wordsworth was condemning the use of abstract reasoning in morality.⁷⁵ The image of the sterility of abstract reasoning ("lifeless words") follows Pope's metaphor.⁷⁶ In The Borderers there are similar passages, as well as in the action of the play: Mortimer's reliance on reasoning and 'proof' overcomes his repugnance at hurting an old man, whilst Rivers uses abstract reasoning to justify his crimes to himself and Mortimer. In adopting this stance on morality Wordsworth was taking a position in the eighteenth-century debate on whether the foundations of morality are sentiment (feeling) or reason. According to Hume Shaftesbury initiated the debate, and a useful summary is found in Hume's An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals.⁷⁷ It can be seen that Wordsworth's view was essentially like Shaftesbury's for he saw sentiment and feeling as the basis of morality, unlike authors such as Godwin and Paley who felt reason was more important. Within The Borderers the proper basis of morality lies in the feelings⁷⁸ as opposed to A Letter and Salisbury Plain where it lies in reason. All this suggests that within the period 1793-7 Wordsworth was shifting from political to moral concerns, and from advocating reliance on reason to an emphasis on sentiment and feeling.

Wordsworth was concerned primarily with the abuse of reason in The Borderers, not with Godwin's philosophical system, a point made in the epigraph and within the play itself. An examination of the supposed influence of Godwin

on The Borderers suggests that such influence was very limited, if indeed it existed in any real sense at all. This conclusion has been reached by Grob, and Godwin's editor, Priestley:⁷⁹

The notion that Oswald is a mouthpiece of Godwin shows a profound ignorance of most of Godwin's teaching.
(Political Justice, iii, p. 103)

The closest parallel to Godwin's Political Justice given by Osborn as a source is curiously unconvincing:

You have taught mankind to seek the measure of
justice
By diving for it into their own bosoms.
To day you have thrown off a tyranny
That lives but by the torpid acquiescence
Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny
Of moralists and saints and lawgivers.
You have obeyed the only law that wisdom
Can ever recognize: the immediate law
Flashed from the light of circumstance
Upon an independent intellect.

(The Borderers, III, v, 24-33)

How great would be the progress of intellectual improvement, if men were unfettered by the prejudices of education, unseduced by the influence of a corrupt state of society, and accustomed to yield without fear to the guidance of truth, however unexplored might be the regions and unexpected the conclusions to which she conducted us? 81

The parallel is not as convincing as it might seem: the passage from Political Justice refers to the corruptions inherent in the present state of society (as Wordsworth does in his Preface) and, following Rousseau, suggests the improvement in people's understanding that would result if they were free from society's prejudices. The passage from The Borderers refers to a rejection of all moral restraint, and the inclusion of "saint" makes Rivers's atheism apparent. Further, the passages that appear to support the argument that The Borderers is a formal rejection of Godwin often rely on quotations taken out of

context. For example, a closer parallel in Political Justice to the passage from The Borderers above is:

The true principle which ought to be substituted in the room of law, is that of reason exercising an uncontrolled jurisdiction upon the circumstances of the case.
(Political Justice, iii, p.406) 82

but Godwin is explicit about the dangers involved in such a process, and points to the corruption of laws and jurisprudence that might force those seeking justice to rely on reason. Yet the complexity of the issues raised in Rivers's speech in The Borderers is greater than the debates about Godwin's influence might suggest. As noted above, Rivers's arguments are often those of the sophist-villain, and even of philosophical treatises on rationalism: in Berkeley's The Minute Philosopher Lysander, when asked about "laws and crimes", replies:

They serve to bind weak minds, and keep the vulgar in awe; but no sooner doth a true genius arise, but he breaks his way to greatness through the trammels of duty, conscience, religion, law; to all which he sheweth himself infinitely superior. 83

Nor was Rivers's appeal to reason unusual: as in Salisbury Plain, such appeals were part of the political rhetoric of the radicals in England, France and America:

Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. 84

Godwin was, in many ways, appealing to the primacy of reason in Political Justice, but he was not alone in so doing, nor did he underrate the emotional side of people, especially the importance of benevolence. A more appropriate model for Rivers (rather than Godwin) might be Robespierre:

We wish to substitute in our country morality for egotism, probity for mere sense of honor, principle for habit, duty for etiquette, the empire of reason for the tyranny of

custom 85

whose intellectual pride might be a suitable model.⁸⁶

An essential point about the relationship between The Borderers and Political Justice is that Wordsworth must have been aware that Godwin firmly believed in juries and did not believe in capital punishment, as well as abhorring the sort of sophistry Rivers uses. Nor was Wordsworth's condemnation of abstract reasoning (made explicit in the earliest version of The Prelude where he terms it a "false secondary power")⁸⁷ contrary to some of Godwin's teaching. In fact, Godwin condemned the abuse of abstract reasoning in relation to a set of circumstances paralleled in The Borderers:

"I am impanelled upon a jury to try a man arraigned for murder, and who is really innocent. Abstractedly considered, I ought to acquit him. But I am unacquainted with his innocence, and evidence is adduced such as to form the strongest presumption of his guilt. Demonstration in such cases is not to be attained; I am obliged in every concern of human life to act upon presumption; I ought therefore to convict him."

It may be doubted however whether any good purpose is likely to be answered by employing the terms of abstract science in this versatile and uncertain manner. Morality is, if any thing can be, fixed and immutable; and there must surely be some strange deception that should induce us to give an action eternally and unchangeably wrong, the epithets of rectitude, duty and virtue.

(Political Justice, iii, p.250)

Here Godwin answers sophistries by condemning the abuse of abstract reasoning, and suggesting morality is "fixed". Godwin goes on to point to the abuse of reason in questions of morality:

The human mind is incredibly subtle in inventing an apology for that to which its inclination leads. Nothing is so rare as pure and unmingled hypocrisy. There is not an action of our lives which we were not ready at the time of adopting it to justify . . . There is scarcely any justification which we endeavour to pass upon others, which we do not with

tolerable success pass upon ourselves.
 (Political Justice, iii, p. 250)

The broad parallels with the arguments in Wordsworth's Preface (though they are commonplaces) show that Wordsworth was not necessarily at odds with Godwin's ideas. From all the above it would seem that The Borderers is not an attack on Political Justice, nor does the play show close parallels with Godwin's work.

Wordsworth was, in The Borderers, intent on condemning abstract reasoning in morality within the context of the sophist-villain convention, and in light of the actions of revolutionaries in England and France. It may have been that, as in A Letter, Wordsworth was concerned with the relative importance of established opinion and the dictates of reason. This was one way in which the central difference between figures like Burke and the apologists for the French Revolution might be characterized: the first was appalled by the destruction of custom, the second justified such destruction as necessary to create a more reasonable society. As France produced a continuing stream of incidents which seemed to prove Burke was right in insisting that custom and habit have positive restraining influences, it is possible that Wordsworth presented the same problems in his play with conclusions quite different from those in A Letter. In this light, The Borderers is not a debate about Godwin, but an exploration of the relationship between reason and custom in morality.

Pope's Epistle to Cobham also raises other issues of morality. In the context of the application of post-Newtonian analysis of light to morality, Pope wrote:

Yet more; the diff'rence is as great between
 The optics seeing, as the objects seen.
 All Manners take a tincture from our own,
 Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.
 Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies,
 Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes...
 (Epistle to Cobham, 23-8)

an image that is also found in Wordsworth's Preface:

He looks at society through an optical glass of a peculiar tint: something of the forms of objects he takes from objects, but their colour is exclusively what he gives them, it is one, and it is his own. 88

These images of undistorted perception of objects and right moral judgements being contrasted with distortions, particularly of colour, were common:

where the powers
 Of Fancy neither lessen nor enlarge
 The images of things, but paint all
 Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
 In Nature; there Opinion will be true,
 And Action right.

(Pleasures of the Imagination, iii, 18-23)

This attitude to perception and the related idea of the inherent goodness of natural objects has a considerable intellectual history, and is related to the theological idea of the liber naturae.⁸⁹ Wordsworth and others appear to be fusing a number of traditional ideas with the newer discoveries in science: pure light was traditionally associated with truth, whilst (in the aftermath of Newton's discoveries) coloured light could be used as an image of partial or distorted perception, and thus the eye itself could be used as a metaphor in its manner of perception of natural objects (and liber naturae) with the human soul's perception of God. This link, prefigured in the twenty-eighth Query of Newton's Opticks, is a central one in the understanding of the relationship between man and

nature in The Borderers and other literature.⁹⁰

The moral value of the natural world is shown in a number of places in The Borderers, and is occasionally contrasted with the abuse of abstract reasoning:

Last night when I would play the murderer's part
I did believe all things were shadows, yea,
Living and dead all things were bodiless;
Till that same star summoned me back again.
Now I could laugh till my ribs ached. Oh! fool!
To let a creed built in the heart of things
Dissolve before a twinkling atom.
Philosophy! I will go forth a teacher,
And you shall see how deeply I will reason
Of laws, of qualities and substances,
Of actions, and their ends and differences.

(The Borderers, III, ii, 72-82)

Although the star is a traditional warning, the contrast here is between a trust in Nature and a trust in analytical reason. The echo of the play's epigraph ("On Human actions reason though you can" / "I will reason . . . Of actions") underlines the importance of the contrast. A similar dichotomy (nature or reason) is apparent when the traditional warning thunder makes Rivers remark, "Great souls / Look to the world within" (The Borderers, II, iii, 75-6). Indeed Rivers frequently suggests turning from the "language of the sense" (Tintern Abbey, 109):

By showing that you calculate, and look
Beyond the present object of the sense-
(The Borderers, II, i, 109-110)

Rivers's rejection of natural forms is overt in his confession:

When from these forms I turned to contemplate
The opinions and the uses of the world,
I seemed a being who had passed alone
Beyond the visible barriers of the world
And travelled into things to come.
(The Borderers, IV, ii, 141-5)

This is another example of Wordsworth's use of Lucretius' image of the man of science, but the context is critical of the power of reason, a point made in The Prelude where, describing "human reason's naked self" Wordsworth ironically comments:⁹¹

How glorious!- in self-knowledge and self-rule
To look through all the frailties of the world
(The Prelude, x, 819-20)

Against this power of analytical reasoning Wordsworth places nature, and the world of natural objects. The use of analytical reasoning to "look through" appearances is shown in The Borderers as a method that denies the beneficent effects of a clear perception of the liber naturae and the inherent moral guidance that it offers.

The role of natural objects in the psychological development of character is expounded by Rivers in a passage referred to in the Preface to The Borderers:

Oft I left the camp
When all that multitude of hearts was still
And followed on through woods of gloomy cedar
Into deep chasms troubled by roaring streams,
Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed
The moonlight desert and the moonlight sea;
In these my lonely wanderings I perceived
What mighty objects do impress their forms
To build up this our intellectual being
(The Borderers, IV, ii, 127-135)

or when dormant associations are awakened tracing the revolutions through which his character has passed, in painting his former self he really is great.
(Osborn, p.65)

This passage recalls much of Wordsworth's poetry of the time, especially the image of impressing forms upon the mind:

To his mind
The mountain's outline and its steady form
Gave simple grandeur and its presence shaped

The measure and the prospect of his soul
 To majesty
 (drafts towards The Ruined Cottage) 92

Nor less I deem that there are powers,
 Which of themselves our minds impress
 (Expostulation and Reply, 21-22)

the earth
 And common face of Nature spake to me
 Rememberable things: sometimes, 'tis true,
 By quaint associations, yet not vain
 Nor profitless if haply they impressed
 Collateral objects and appearances,
 Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep
 Until maturer seasons called them forth
 To impregnate and to elevate the mind.
 (The Prelude (1799), i, 418-26)

The idea that natural objects are an important part of the development of character was not new: Coleridge asserted that "moral Sentiments, Affections, or Feelings, are deduced from, and associated with, the scenery of Nature".⁹³ Paine, in a passage recalling the "mighty objects" of Rivers's speech, wrote of North America:

The scene which that country presents to the eye of a spectator has something in it which generates and encourages great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatness he contemplates. 94

The process Rivers describes is part of the wider function of the natural world in relation to the mind in The Borderers, and is consistent with the condemnation of abstract reasoning in favour of the intuitive and emotional knowledge gained from an undistorted perception of the natural world.

Wordsworth's choice of epigraphs indicates that he condemned the abuse of abstract reasoning in systems of morality and saw the aim of the tragic poet as, in part, to work through the feelings of the audience. Both of these

elements are reflected in The Borderers, but it may also be that Wordsworth's theories of tragedy, like his theories of morality, show that he had come to accept the primacy of feelings over abstract reason. Rivers's view of suffering is implicitly condemned in the play:

A whipping to the moralists who preach
That misery is a sacred thing!
(The Borderers, III, ii, 17-8)

and in Herbert's direct injunction:

Learn, young man,
To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery.
(The Borderers, III, iii, 80-1)

Some eighteenth-century theories of tragedy saw its purpose, as Blair did, as improving the audience's "virtuous sensibility".⁹⁵ These theories were often related to moral theories that saw feeling and sentiment as the basis of morality (as in Wordsworth's fragmentary Essay on Morals). In such a context, the evocation of feelings in the audience could, unlike abstract reasonings, influence the audience's morality.⁹⁶ It would seem that in The Borderers Wordsworth saw tragedy as a moral instrument that worked through the audience's feelings, much as Matilda responds to her father's tragic story:

Nay, father, stop not, let me hear it all:
'Twill do me good.
(The Borderers, I, i, 156-7)

Herbert's tale also influenced Mortimer when he was young, and his sympathy was the basis of other feelings:

It was my joy to sit and hear Matilda
Repeat her father's terrible adventures
Till all the band of play-mates wept together,
And that was the beginning of my love.
And afterwards, when we conversed together
This old man's image still was present: chiefly
When I had been most happy.
(The Borderers, I, i, 65-71)

Here "joy" is associated with "terrible adventures", and the image of the old man is associated with happiness. These images of tragedy seem to perform the same function in Wordsworth's theories of psychological (and moral) development as the "mighty objects" of nature that "impress" themselves upon the mind, a point made explicit in the earliest version of The Prelude:

Distresses and disasters, tragic facts
Of rural history that impressed my mind
With images, to which in following years
Far other feelings were attached, with forms
That yet exist with independent life
And, like their archetypes, know no decay.
(The Prelude (1799), i, 282-7)

It would seem that Wordsworth's theories of tragedy, as embodied in the text of The Borderers, are related to his theories of morality and the development of the mind and moral feelings.

The epigraphs to The Borderers point to Wordsworth's central concerns during the composition of the play. They show the continuity of Wordsworth's thought with earlier works, as well as his concern with some of the central debates of eighteenth-century moral philosophy. Wordsworth's theories of tragedy and morality, highlighted by his choice of epigraphs, were part of a philosophy that saw the mind's interaction with natural objects and tragic narratives as formative moral experiences, and the feelings (rather than abstract reason) as the primary agents in both morality and art. This cohesive philosophy was later to find expression in many of Wordsworth's works, from The Ruined Cottage to Tintern Abbey.⁹⁷

VI

while I was composing this play I wrote a short essay illustrative of that constitution & those tendencies of human nature which make the apparently motiveless actions of bad men intelligible to careful observers. This was partly done with reference to the character of Oswald & his persevering endeavour to lead the man he disliked into so heinous a crime

(Isabella Fenwick note: Osborn, p. 815)

Wordsworth's Preface to The Borderers concentrates almost exclusively on an account of the character of Rivers. Such character analysis was common in eighteenth-century criticism. Owen argues that just as The Borderers is to some extent a Shakespearean imitation, the Preface is an examination of the central character in the manner of eighteenth-century Shakespearean criticism, and that the Preface and the play are best seen as a "package".⁹⁸ Owen suggests that Richardson's Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters⁹⁹ is probably closest to Wordsworth's Preface, pointing to Richardson's analysis of Macbeth in particular. The similarities Owen cites are essentially structural: the postulation of a problem of portrayal followed by its solution in terms of the theory of the 'ruling passion'. Although the 'ruling passion' theory is expounded in Pope's Epistle to Cobham, the structure of Wordsworth's Preface and its generalizing "we" show that it was in the same pattern as essays such as Richardson's.

Although there are minor similarities between Richardson's approach and Wordsworth's,¹⁰⁰ accounts of character like that in the Preface were common. A good example of the type can be found in The Monk where Lewis

describes the character and upbringing of Ambrosio¹⁰¹ to show how a man of many virtues becomes so corrupted he is able to murder someone. A closer parallel with The Borderers and its Preface can be found in the Tytler translation of Schiller's The Robbers. In his introduction, Tytler also attempts to explain the behaviour of the play's protagonist:

The sentiment of moral agency is so rooted in the mind of man, that no sceptical sophistry, even of the most acute genius, is capable of eradicating it . . . The hero of this piece, endowed by nature with the most generous feelings, animated by the highest sense of honour, and susceptible of the warmest affections of the heart, is driven by perfidy, and the supposed inhumanity of those most dear to him in life, into a state of confirmed misanthropy and despair. In this situation, he is hurried on to the perpetration of a series of crimes, which find, from their very magnitude and atrocity, a recommendation to his distempered mind.

(The Robbers, pp. xi-xii)

The issues of sophistry in relation to crime, the perversion of good qualities, and the explanation of the murderer's motivation demonstrate how the introduction to The Robbers has clear parallels with Wordsworth's Preface.

Wordsworth's Preface suggests that Rivers is dominated by his passions:

His master passions are pride and the love of distinction.
(Osborn, p. 62)

As this is the basis of Falkland's character in Caleb Williams, some critics feel there is a close link with Godwin's novel.¹⁰² However, as The Monk and The Robbers show, this type was common in the literature of the day. In Epistle to Cobham Pope also describes a character dominated by the 'ruling passion' of pride:

Search then the Ruling Passion: There alone,
The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known;
The Fool consistent, and the False sincere;

Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.
 This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,
 Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise
 (Epistle to Cobham, 174-81)

There is a significant difference between the love of public approval in characters such as Falkland and Wharton, and Rivers. Rivers's "love of distinction" is closely tied to his "pride". Rivers's pride, as described in the Preface and shown in the play itself, is an intellectual pride. As Lovejoy has argued in a different context, intellectual pride was a central concern of eighteenth-century moral philosophy.¹⁰³ Rivers's abuse of reason is part of his intellectual arrogance in taking upon himself the determination of all questions of morality, and has implicit parallels with some of the leaders of the French Revolution. Wordsworth's presentation of Rivers in his Preface is based in part upon the 'ruling passion' theory, and intellectual pride in particular, and some of these elements are also described by Pope and other eighteenth-century authors.

The Preface shows a consonance with eighteenth-century literary criticism in form and content, but has few parallels with Wordsworth's other works, other than The Borderers itself.¹⁰⁴ Osborn notes the exception: the Preface seems close to Yew-Tree Lines:

Let us suppose a young Man of great intellectual powers, yet without any solid principles of genuine benevolence. His master passions are pride and the love of distinction . . . He goes into the world and is betrayed into a great crime . . . and he quits the world in disgust, with strong misanthropic feelings.

(Osborn, p.62)

He was one who own'd
 No common soul. In youth, by genius nurs'd,
 And big with lofty views, he to the world

Went forth, pure in his heart, against the taint
 Of dissolute tongues, 'gainst jealousy, and hate,
 And scorn, against all enemies prepared,
 All but neglect: and so, his spirit damped
 At once, with rash disdain he turned away,
 And with the food of pride sustained his soul
 In solitude.

(Yew-Tree Lines, 12-21)

Although there are clear differences, both characters are proud, and are rejected by their peers.¹⁰⁵ In broader terms the Preface shows Wordsworth's concern to make Rivers convincing to the reader, and to describe some of the underlying laws of human nature. The Preface marks the furthest point in Wordsworth's exploration of the psychology of the murderer's guilt and looks towards the examination of psychology in The Ruined Cottage and other, later, verse.

Owen and Smyser have shown that there are a number of direct literary references in the Preface.¹⁰⁶ An examination of these suggest that Wordsworth relied heavily on his memory for references of this kind. For example, Wordsworth's reference to Rousseau:

Power is much more easily manifested in destroying than in creating. A child, Rousseau has observed, will tear in pieces fifty toys before he will think of making one...

(Osborn, p.63)

has no exact equivalent in Émile,¹⁰⁷ though the general gist of Rousseau's idea is preserved. Another example can be found in the comment

He is the Orlando of Ariosto, the Cardenio of Cervantes, who lays waste the groves that should shelter him.

(Osborn, p.63)

As Owen and Smyser show, it is not Cardenio but Don Quixote himself who proposes to follow Orlando's example.¹⁰⁸ The comparison is also grossly inappropriate as in both

Orlando Furioso and Don Quixote the madness of love is satirized. More fitting references are to Shakespeare. Rivers is described as lacking "the milk of human reason" which recalls Macbeth ("the milk of human kindness"), and there is a direct allusion to Othello:

But there are particles of that poisonous mineral of which Iago speaks gnawing his inwards
(Osborn, p.66)

which recalls Othello ("the thought . . . / Doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards").¹⁰⁹ The close correspondence between Wordsworth's comment and Othello confirms Wordsworth's immediate knowledge of the play at the time of the composition of The Borderers, as well as his awareness of the similarity between Rivers and Iago.

Another possible allusion in the Preface implies a link between the character of Rivers and the revolutionary leaders in France. Wordsworth's description of the criminal's rationalizations,

his feelings and his reason are equally busy in contracting its dimensions and pleading for its necessity
(Osborn, p.68)

has, as Owen and Smyser point out, a faint parallel in Paradise Lost:¹¹⁰

So spake the Fiend, and with necessitie,
The Tyrants plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
(Paradise Lost, iv, 393-4)

The passage from Paradise Lost is echoed in The Prelude in a passage describing the revolutionary leaders in France, and their reaction to the British government's declaration of war:

the men who for their desperate ends
Had plucked up mercy by the roots were glad

Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong before
 In devilish pleas, were ten times stronger now
 (The Prelude, x, 306-10)

These parallels establish a tenuous link between Rivers and the revolutionary leaders in France, but they also support the argument that Wordsworth's later comments linking The Borderers with events in France were not the afterthoughts of an old man.

The Preface concentrates exclusively upon the character of Rivers. In giving an account of Rivers's motivation, Wordsworth may have been following the tradition of character analysis exemplified by Richardson, as well as the Preface to The Robbers. Wordsworth used the 'ruling passion' theory of character as described by Pope and others, and his concern with Rivers's pride is paralleled in a number of other eighteenth-century works. There are a number of literary references in the Preface, most of which seem to have been drawn from memory. Wordsworth's conception of Rivers may have loose parallels with his view of the leaders of the French Revolution. On the whole, Wordsworth's Preface shows a conventional approach to drama and characterization, though it does demonstrate his growing interest in psychology and the 'laws' of human nature.

VII

It gives me pleasure, venial I trust, to acknowledge at this late day my obligations to these two great authors, whose writings, in conjunction with Percy's Reliques, powerfully counteracted the mischievous influence of Darwin's dazzling manner, the extravagance of the earlier dramas of Schiller, and that of other German writers upon my taste and natural

tendencies.

(PW, iii, p. 442)

Wordsworth's covert acknowledgement of the influence of Schiller points to the major single influence on The Borderers: The Robbers. Wordsworth had read the English version of the play, translated by Tytler, and published in 1792 and 1795.¹¹¹ It is possible to demonstrate Wordsworth's knowledge of The Robbers. In The Borderers, II, iii the scene is a ruined castle with a dungeon where Herbert is sleeping; above Rivers and Mortimer converse about the weather:

Mortimer. The wind blows keen;
My hands are numb.

Rivers (blowing his fingers)

Hu! hu! 'tis nipping cold.

(The Borderers, II, iii, 2-3)

In a similar scene in The Robbers outside a ruined tower, Herman speaks to the Old Moor in the dungeon:

The wind whistles through the rents of the tower- a music of the night that makes the teeth chatter, and the nails turn blue.- Hark, 'tis there again.- I hear a murmuring noise, like those that groan in sleep.- You have company, old man- hu! hu! hu!

(The Robbers, pp. 165-6)

The general similarities are striking, but 'hu' is the most significant link as the word is not reported in the Oxford English Dictionary,¹¹² and is, in fact, taken from Schiller's German "hu".¹¹³ It is clear, therefore, that Wordsworth drew directly from The Robbers at this point in The Borderers.

The basic parallels between The Robbers and The Borderers are often underestimated because they are so obvious, and so much a part of the dramatic conventions of the period. The variety and extent of the parallels

are clearly evident in the larger features of both plays. Both Tytler's translation and Wordsworth's play have prefaces that comment on the central character, and the language of both is heavily influenced by Shakespeare. The titles are similar, and both concern a band of outlaws.¹¹⁴ Both plays are set in a specific historical setting and a lawless environment, and the restoration of order in both is related to the act of a ruler:

The action of this play is supposed to have passed in the reign of the Emperor Maximilian (grandfather of Charles V.) who in 1506 procured that great enactment of the Imperial Diet, which established a perpetual peace between all the different States that compose the Germanic body. Before this time, they were constantly at war with each other, a state of society favourable to every species of depredation and outrage.

(The Robbers, p.27n.) 115

In both plays there are murders (by both 'hero' and villain), and the death of the father-figure through starvation and exposure is the central crime. Whilst Schiller's play was seen as prophetic of the French Revolution, Wordsworth's was probably directly concerned with the political issues raised by the Revolution.

The fundamental parallels between the plays are extensive, and early commentators such as Sanftleben and Cooke¹¹⁶ identified further similarities. Both early critics cite the setting of both plays (wild moorland scenery and the ruined castle).¹¹⁷ Both note the similarity of the main characters. Herbert and Matilda are broadly similar to the Old Moor and Amalia. Charles is a more melodramatic figure than Mortimer, though they share many features, including the leadership of the outlaw band. Equally the malevolent Francis and the traitorous Spiegelberg have qualities in common with Rivers, though

they are all part of the same tradition of villains. These rather vague general parallels are more striking when the disposition of characters vis-a-vis one another is considered:

<u>father-figure:</u>	<u>villain:</u>	<u>hero:</u>
Old Moor, Herbert	Francis, Rivers (Spielberg)	Charles Mortimer
<u>daughter/beloved:</u>	<u>villain's witness:</u>	
Amalia, Matilda	Herman, beggar woman	

In each play, the villain mediates between the hero and the father/daughter pair, and in each case misrepresents the actions of one to the other. Although this disposition of types is not uncommon (as in Cabal and Love and, less clearly, in Othello and the sub-plot of King Lear) it helps demonstrate the close correspondence between the two plays. Sanftleben also points to more specific parallels, such as both villains being dragged off to their death by members of the band,¹¹⁸ and both heroes requesting water from a nearby stream:

I would beg some of you to fetch me a little water in the hollow of your hand from yonder brook
(The Robbers, p. 107)

A most strange faintness- will you hunt me [?]
A draught of water?
Rivers. Nay, to see you thus
Moves me beyond my bearing; I will try
To gain the torrent's brink-
(The Borderers, II, iii, 82-5)

These specific links help establish the pervasive influence of The Robbers on The Borderers,¹¹⁹ but they are

not the only significant parallels.

In common with other plays of the same type, both Schiller's play and The Borderers share certain features such as an important letter or the sudden clap of thunder. Both plays draw upon Shakespeare, so that it is not always possible to determine which plays are influencing Wordsworth's. For example, Lacy's suggestion as to a suitable fate for Herbert, "Stab him then / Before the altar" is also found in The Robbers in a passage that clearly echoes Hamlet.¹²⁰ Other elements in the plays are commonplaces: the way in which Herbert has been deceived about Mortimer is paralleled in The Robbers but also in many other plays. A less frequently found feature is the curse: Matilda's formal curse of the murderer of her father seems to derive from that of Charles.¹²¹ Another shared feature of both plays is the image of the raven, noted by Sanftleben:¹²²

when I had none to help me she brought me food, she was a raven sent to me in the wilderness.

(The Borderers, II, iii, 124-5)

The source of the image is partly the story of Elijah in the wilderness ("I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there"),¹²³ though the same image is used to describe

Herman, who brings the Old Moor food:

Old Moor. Is it thou, Herman, my raven?

Herman. Yes, 'tis thy raven Herman- Come to the grate, and eat.- Thy comrades of the night make fearful music.- Old man, does thou relish thy meal?

Old Moor. Yes- hunger is keen.- O thou who sendst the ravens! accept my thanks- for this thy bread in the wilderness!

(The Robbers, p. 165)

Schiller's direct reference to the common source is more

the principle of Fatalism, which pervades the whole piece, and influences the conduct of the chief agents of the drama . . . And it is a singular phenomenon, that the opposing principle of fatalism, while it urges on to the perpetration of the most flagitious acts, has in reality no effect in weakening the moral feeling, or in diminishing that remorse which is attendant on the commission of crimes. . .

(The Robbers, pp.x-xi)

and these ideas are expressed, albeit in different ways, in both plays. At times in both plays such an absolute determinism is ascribed to God:

I see the end for which
An arm invisible hath led me hither.
(The Borderers, III, iii, 122-3)

IF FOR THAT END THOU HAST DECREED I SHOULD BECOME THE CHIEF
OF THESE FOUL MURDERERS: Eternal Providence!
(The Robbers, p. 203)

these things could never be
Were we not instruments in the hands of heaven-
(The Borderers, IV, ii, 66-7)

serve as instruments in the Almighty's hand
(The Robbers, p.178) 126

Such ideas are in both plays, but behind both philosophies is the thought that people are not responsible for their own actions:

You understand me, with an awful comfort
I saw that every possible shape of action
Might lead to good- I saw and burst forth
Thirsting for some exploit of power and terror.
(The Borderers, IV, ii, 107-110)

The ascription of all responsibility for actions to a "principle of Fatalism" or a determinist divinity leads one to a moral wilderness. In The Borderers both lines of argument are condemned, in The Robbers only fatalism. Tytler's introduction tries to defend Schiller's creation from the charge that it fails to condemn both arguments,¹²⁷

and seizes upon the seeming difficulty of The Robbers, that Charles remains an attractive figure, despite his crimes. This pitfall Wordsworth avoids, though in doing so he detracts from the interest the audience can feel in Mortimer. Wordsworth makes his moral point abundantly clear: neither divine will or fatalism are valid justifications for evil; hence murderers are not betrayed, they betray themselves.

These philosophic parallels find expression in the speeches of Rivers and Charles. Just as Charles reacts to Spiegelberg's idea of forming the band of robbers, so Rivers is exultant with his "projects / Which seemed to have no limit".¹²⁸ More important parallels are found in Charles Moor's revelation and Rivers's speeches (particularly in Act IV, scene ii):

The scales drop from my eyes! What a fool I was to think of returning to my cage! My soul thirsts for action, my spirit pants for liberty! -Robbers and assassins! with those words I set all laws at defiance!- Man had no humanity when I appealed to humanity! Pity and compassion! here let me throw you off for ever!

(The Robbers, p.48)

The image of "scales" that "drop from my eyes" is found in Rivers's speech, most obviously in "I saw unveiled the general shape of things". Charles's soul "thirsts for action" just as Rivers "burst forth / Thirsting for some exploit of power and terror". Just as Charles "set all laws at defiance", Rivers remarks, "we receive / Laws, and we ask not whence those laws have come". Both speeches show exultation in wrong intentions, and even Charles's rejection "Pity and compassion! here let me throw you off for ever!" is earlier echoed by Rivers, "Compassion! pity! pride can do

without them".¹²⁹ These echoes link Schiller's protagonist with Wordsworth's villain in their intellectual 'enlightenment'.

There are other aspects of Wordsworth's characters that seem to have their origins in Schiller's play. As Osborn notes, both Spiegelberg and Rivers resent not being chosen as leader of the outlaws, though this has a parallel in Othello.¹³⁰ Sanftleben notes the similar function of the beggarwoman and Herman, characters suborned to mislead the hero and later repenting.¹³¹ More important similarities exist between Charles and Mortimer. Both confess their guilt to their beloved, though Charles's is thinly disguised:

Yes, when they think they press an angel to their heart, and grasp- a murderer!

(The Robbers, p.156)

I am the murderer of thy father.

(The Borderers, V, iii, 99)

As Charles murders Amalia, so Mortimer asserts

Why, if I loved this woman,
I would take care she never woke again.

(The Borderers, V, iii, 174-5)

Finally, both Mortimer and Charles pronounce a judgement on themselves in front of their band of followers:

Hard by I have observed a wretch who labours by the day, an officer- He has eleven children.- To him who shall deliver up the Robber Moor, a high reward is now proclaimed.- He and his babes shall have it!

(The Robbers, pp.219-20)

The Baron of St. Clair

Lives in this district- lead me to his court.

(The Borderers, V, iii, 192-3)

Such parallels of action and character, though not necessarily convincing singly, have the cumulative effect of

showing Wordsworth's debt to Schiller was considerable.

If the "earlier dramas" of Schiller are considered as a whole, they too bear some relationship to Wordsworth's play. Fiesco¹³² is a political drama centering on a revolutionary leader and his betrayal, and its hero, like Mortimer, is a man of fine qualities. Fiesco's hero is also driven to murder. In Love and Intrigue Schiller follows Othello closely, with a young hero betrayed into killing his betrothed. Both of these dramas involve an investigation of the origins and psychology of murder and, with The Robbers, constitute an exploration of the ways in which a character with good qualities can be manoeuvred into committing murder (the subject of both Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Borderers). Wordsworth's acknowledgement of the influence of these "early dramas" possibly referred to this common subject matter.

The parallels between The Robbers and The Borderers are striking in their range and variety: the historical setting, the lack of laws and restraints, the parallels of character, the concern with forms of 'fatalism', the outlaw band and its leader, the famished father-figure, murder, and even specific verbal echoes. Despite its "extravagance", The Robbers seems the single most important source for Wordsworth's play.

VIII

We . . . who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake
 (Poems Dedicated to National Independence
 and Liberty, I, xvi, 11-2)

There is a river in Macedon; and there is also moreover a river in Monmouth; it is call'd Wye at Monmouth, but it is out of my prains what is the name of the other river; but 'tis all one, 'tis alike as my fingers is to my fingers, and there is salmons in both. If you mark Alexander's life well, Harry of Monmouth's life is come after it indifferent well; for there is figures in all things.

(Henry V, IV, vii, 27-35)

The single most important source for the language of The Borderers was Shakespeare. The use of Shakespearean images and language was common in the eighteenth century, even in novels.¹³³ The influence of Shakespeare on The Borderers has been exaggerated by some critics, particularly Smith¹³⁴ who comes close to arguing that Wordsworth's play is a pastiche of Shakespeare's late tragedies. Owen, on the other hand, has argued that the Shakespearean reminiscences in The Borderers are intended to give authority to the play.¹³⁵ Although Shakespeare's plays did influence The Borderers, the welter of suggested sources needs a careful reassessment. In the following discussion, all the suggested parallels derive from previous critical works unless otherwise noted.¹³⁶

Othello is frequently considered the most important source for The Borderers, and Iago is often considered the origin of Rivers.¹³⁷ Iago's manipulation of Othello, based on sexual jealousy, had generated a host of imitations by the time Wordsworth wrote The Borderers, but Wordsworth's reference to Iago in the Preface suggests that parallels of plot or situation derive directly from Shakespeare's play. These parallels can, of course, be over-stated: there is no father-figure in Othello like Herbert, Mortimer does not murder Matilda, and Rivers only attempts to convince Mortimer of Herbert's guilt (not Matilda's) and so on.¹³⁸

On the other hand, Rivers' manipulation of Mortimer does, at times, follow patterns reminiscent of Othello:

Rivers. I see I have disturbed you-
Mortimer. By no means.
(The Borderers, III, v, 73)

Rivers. -Nay, you are pale.
Mortimer. It may be so.
(The Borderers, III, v, 81)

Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your
spirits.

Othello. Not a jot, not a jot.
Iago. I' faith, I fear it has...
(Othello, III, iii, 218-9)

where the similar techniques of the two villains find similar expression. There are other moments in the play where Rivers's methods seem similar to Iago's, but many of these parallels are not very convincing.¹³⁹ Sharrock has neatly pointed out an essential difference between Iago and Rivers:

Oswald's sheer intellectual mastery lifts him above the dexterity in intrigue of an Iago (it is a notable and persuasive mark of difference that while Iago's easy vulgarity makes him popular with men, Oswald's mental superiority earns the hostility of most of the band). 140

Nor does Rivers have the "motiveless malignity" of Iago: Rivers's account of his reasons for his actions (like Charles, Spiegelberg and Francis in The Robbers) make the motivation of the villain a central aspect of the play. There is a good case for suggesting that some elements of Iago's technique in deceiving Othello are present in The Borderers, but given the very general nature of the evidence, the diverse and prolific sophist-villain tradition, and the fundamental differences in character and philosophy between Wordsworth's villain and Shakespeare's, it is misleading to assert Wordsworth created Rivers in

Iago's image.

The verbal parallels between the plays are neither extensive nor particularly striking.¹⁴¹ Although traditional imagery, Mortimer's description of Matilda follows Othello's description of Desdemona:

She smell'd most sweet and she was fair- and now
They have snapped her from the stem.

(The Borderers, III, iii, 52-3)

O thou weed!

Who are so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet.

(Othello, IV, ii, 66-7) 141

Again, Mortimer's comment on Herbert's story ("False! False as hell-") follows Othello's on Desdemona ("thou are false as hell").¹⁴² Both of these echoes point to fundamental differences in plot between the plays: the focus of Mortimer's resentment is Herbert, not Matilda, and the idea of Matilda's implied seduction places Mortimer as protecting her from those around her (an all-too-common feature of eighteenth-century fiction after Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe).

The parallels between Othello and The Borderers are thus more apparent in peripheral details and language than in theme or character, lending weight to the argument that Wordsworth's use of Shakespeare was more a question of manner than matter. This general conclusion is supported by an examination of the influence of King Lear on The Borderers. Osborn, following many other commentators, sees Herbert and Matilda as counterparts to Lear and Cordelia. To avoid the obvious difficulty that Lear has few of the saintly qualities of Herbert, Osborn suggests that Wordsworth was drawing on the reformed Lear.¹⁴³ There are reasons to question the closeness of the parallel:

Herbert's ordeal on the heath (offstage) is as much like the Old Moor's as Lear's, and death by exposure had already figured in Salisbury Plain and An Evening Walk, as well as in Wordsworth's own life in the death of his father. The character and story of Herbert also clearly owes something to the old man in The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall-Green and to the associations with St. Herbert of Derwentwater. In this context, the character of Lear can best be seen as a limited influence on Herbert. On the other hand, the language in which Wordsworth conveys his character at times echoes King Lear:

A poor, forsaken, famished, blind old man?
(The Borderers, V, ii, 3)

A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man
(King Lear, III, ii, 20)

What if he be sick,
Tottering upon the very verge of nature
(The Borderers, II, iii, 378-9)

Nature in you stands on the very verge
(King Lear, II, iv, 145)

Lear's vision of happiness with Cordelia is echoed by Herbert:

We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage
(King Lear, V, iii, 9)

I should be as chearful
As if we two were twins; two songsters bred
In the same nest
(The Borderers, I, i, 120-2)

Other parallels with King Lear are less convincing.¹⁴⁴ Although there are parallels between King Lear and Cordelia and Herbert and Matilda, King Lear is more in evidence in the language of Wordsworth's play.

The context of verbal echoes within the original source and within The Borderers often indicates both the validity

of the claim to be a source and the dramatic function of the echo itself. In reference to Macbeth, such echoes tend to centre on passages that evoke the psychological state of murderers. There are no convincing comparisons between characters in The Borderers and Macbeth, and it is here that the similarity with Shakespeare's plays is most clearly a matter of verbal echoes. For example, Wordsworth draws upon Macbeth in his evocation of the murderer's guilt:

In the torrent hard by there is water enough to wash all the blood in the universe.

(The Borderers, II, iii, 257-8)

A man may be a murderer and his hand
Shall tell no tales, nay, the first brook he meets
Shall wash it clean.

(The Borderers, V, iii, 51-3)

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand?

(Macbeth, II, ii, 60-1)

A little water clears us of this deed...

(Macbeth, II, ii, 67)

as well as an incidental reference to spots of blood.¹⁴⁵ Attempts at murder in both plays are stopped for similar reasons:

Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

(Macbeth, II, ii, 12-3)

There was something in his face the very counterpart of Matilda.

(The Borderers, II, iii, 272)

Other parallels with Macbeth are less convincing.¹⁴⁶

Wordsworth's use of Macbeth is both circumspect and fitting: the allusions to the blood on the murderer's hands in particular evoke in a subtle way the abhorrence of murder and the power of guilt.

The problem of Shakespearean attributions in The

Borderers is highlighted in the case of Hamlet. Some critics have held that the influence of this play is evident,¹⁴⁷ but an examination of the evidence suggests that Wordsworth's debt to Hamlet is confined to one image. Mortimer cannot be seriously compared with Hamlet as a character, nor can Hamlet's quandary be seen as similar to the murder of an innocent victim. The allusion to Hamlet in The Borderers evokes the murder of Hamlet's father:

A Bee came darting, which the child with joy
Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear-
And suddenly grew black as he would die.
(The Borderers, I, iii, 31-3)

The other links between the plays rest on verbal similarities that are not convincing.¹⁴⁸ The parallels with Hamlet are, therefore, of little importance.

Wordsworth's allusions and echoes from Shakespeare's plays are largely confined to Othello, Lear, and Macbeth,¹⁴⁹ and the influence of Shakespeare on The Borderers is mainly confined to Wordsworth's language. Perhaps because of these verbal echoes, it has been accepted by many critics that The Borderers was heavily influenced by Shakespeare. Smith states the most extreme version of the argument:

"The Borderers" is modelled so closely upon Shakespeare's tragedies that its characters, scenes and dialogue are frequently adopted ready-made and never quite assimilated; moreover, considering Wordsworth's purpose and the kind of play he was attempting, it is imitation of the wrong models.
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This view seems unjustified. A more convincing analysis is in Owen who argues the allusions in The Borderers were "a deliberate strategy":

Shakespeare's voice sounds in addition to Wordsworth's; his

weight and authority are added to Wordsworth's; and the play is the more significant because it starts up in our minds echoes of the most significant tragic sound that has been uttered in Europe since the Greeks began to make tragedy. 151.

This view would be in keeping with eighteenth-century practice, and appears to reflect more accurately Wordsworth's use of Shakespeare.

The influence of Shakespeare on The Borderers has been over-emphasized, and the allusions Wordsworth does make to Shakespeare are usually fully appropriate to his drama. Further, the distribution of Shakespearean echoes in the play is not uniform: the two scenes that have the greatest density of allusion and most closely follow other sources, also contain most of the Shakespearean echoes,¹⁵² and it is consistent with Owen's view of the role of allusion in The Borderers that Wordsworth introduced "Shakespeare's voice" at these points to add weight and authority to the two longest scenes in his play. Wordsworth used verbal allusions as a means of evoking Shakespeare's exploration of the psychology of murder but, especially in the light of the slavish imitations of Shakespeare that were current at the time,¹⁵³ his use of Shakespearean language is both restrained and effective.

IX

There are a variety of other sources that may have contributed to different aspects of The Borderers, and an exploration of these suggests Wordsworth drew upon a wide range of works in the composition of his play. Because the early version of The Borderers was revised after 1797, it

is not clear whether specific verbal echoes originate before that date, so it is probably more helpful within the context of Wordsworth's use of sources 1793-1797 to examine more general issues such as names, character, and plot, rather than details of diction.

Attempts to identify specific sources for the names Wordsworth used in The Borderers show how he may have fused historical and literary characters, though on the whole the onomastic debate (with one significant exception) leads to the conclusion that the names used in the play were common at the time.¹⁵⁴ Watson suggested that the characters were based on historical figures, arguing that Clifford was based on Roger de Clifford (1211-85) and Mortimer on Roger de Mortimer (1231-82).¹⁵⁵ Wordsworth's reading of history may have supplied him with a stock of appropriate names, but as Pollin has pointed out,¹⁵⁶ there are literary sources for the names that are equally fitting. For example, 'Mortimer' appears in chronicles of the period, Drayton's Mortimeriados, as the name of Godwin's Falkland in the stage version of Caleb Williams, and in Gray's The Bard. Matilda, Ferdinand, Rivers, Oswald, Wilfred, and even Herbert's dog, Tray, all have a number of possible sources in literature or history.¹⁵⁷ The names of minor characters such as Wallace are, as Wordsworth noted, common:

left the name
Of Wallace to be found like a wild flower
All over his dear country
(The Prelude, i, 213-5)

The name that seems to have a more specific source is Herbert, associated within the play with St. Herbert of Derwentwater. With this exception, it seems the names in

the play have no specific sources: they were common in the geographical and historical setting of the play, as well as in literature.

An equally problematic area is the source of Rivers's story of abandoning the captain on a desert island.¹⁵⁸ There seems clear evidence that Wordsworth had read books on travel in The Borderers:

mere birds of winter
That haunt some barren island of the north,
Where if a famishing man stretch forth his hand
They think it is to feed them.
(The Borderers, II, i, 5-8)

This refers to the 'penguins' of the north (perhaps the Great Auk) on uninhabited islands approaching explorers without fear. Within this image are elements of Rivers's story of the captain,¹⁵⁹ though whether this story also reflects Wordsworth's reading of travel works is doubtful. There is a tradition in literature of the man abandoned on a desert island that stretches further back than Robinson Crusoe, and The Iliad's Philoctetes would be the earliest example known to Wordsworth, though the voyages and explorations of Purchas His Pilgrims and some contemporary poetry would offer other examples.¹⁶⁰ As Jacobus suggests, the conflict with a sea captain might have come from John Newton's conflict with the master of The Greyhound, or, as Osborn argues, from the Bounty story.¹⁶¹ The last suggestion seems more likely. Jacobus herself suggests that Mortimer's comment, "I am in hell" is taken directly from Christian's words, and that Rivers's torment parallels Christian's.¹⁶² It seems likely Wordsworth would not have believed Christian said

these words, and his attitude to Christian would make him see the 'mutineer' as an innocent victim.¹⁶³ In any event, there are many conflicts with sea captains that Wordsworth might have drawn on, though that of the Bounty could certainly have been one of them.

Many critics have asserted that The Borderers was significantly influenced by Caleb Williams, and Jonathan Wordsworth went so far as to declare that Wordsworth "of course based the central relationship of The Borderers on that of Falkland and Caleb Williams in Godwin's novel".¹⁶⁴ An examination of the evidence for such a belief suggests that Godwin's novel is unlikely to have been a significant source. Osborn's discussion of the influence of Caleb Williams rather obscures the differences in character and situation between Wordsworth's play and the novel.¹⁶⁵ Godwin's Falkland is a rather artificial character (he is both too good and too evil), and his ruling passion has more of chivalry in it¹⁶⁶ than Rivers's intellectual evil. Falkland attempts to hide his crime (the mainspring of the plot) and continues to commit crimes knowing all the time he is wrong and, according to Caleb Williams, racked with remorse. Indeed, the whole force of Godwin's argument would be negated if Falkland, like Rivers, was only worthy of condemnation. Nor can Caleb himself, innocently involved in Falkland's life through mere coincidence, be reasonably compared to any of Wordsworth's characters. The situations, save that both works concern murder, are little alike, especially the mutual congratulations at the end of Caleb Williams that would be ludicrous in The Borderers. More specific suggestions of

parallels are, in light of other sources, unconvincing. Thus the robber band that figures incidently in Godwin's novel is, given the obvious parallel in The Robbers, irrelevant.¹⁶⁷ Another example is the blow that incites Rivers which is quite different from the battering Falkland receives, and which has a clearer parallel in Young's Revenge. Other parallels show the two authors were using commonplaces related to crime.¹⁶⁸ Although both authors believed that there were "abuses interwoven with the texture of society",¹⁶⁹ the similarities between the two works do not constitute a sound basis for assuming the direct influence of Caleb Williams on The Borderers.

It is likely that Percy's Ballads does supply some of the details of The Borderers, especially details of Herbert's story. Wordsworth set his play about the time of the Battle of Evesham (1265), and it is probable that his choice of date was in part determined by his source in Percy's ballad, The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall-Green.¹⁷⁰ Percy's ballad concerns a Baron blinded in the battle of Evesham, who then conceals his rank and the remains of his fortune by disguising himself as a beggar. His daughter and her suitors are the subject of the poem in the familiar 'marriage test' tradition, and the poem ends with the Baron revealing his secret. There is a general parallel in that the poem's blind beggar and his daughter are similar to Herbert and Matilda, but there are other links between the two works, especially the Battle of Evesham itself. Like Percy's beggar, Herbert is a Baron who is blinded and reduced to poverty, and even the figure of the wife may have been part of Wordsworth's original plot:

Matilda having executed her commission comes to a church yard- meets a pilgrim whom she discovers to be her mother.

(Osborn, p. 48)

Further, Percy's ballad had been dramatized in Dodsley's Miscellanies.¹⁷¹ In the play there are details that offer general parallels with The Borderers: the blind beggar's dog on a string, the daughter's plea that she cannot marry because of her duty to her father, and pressure on the old man to prostitute his daughter.¹⁷² On the other hand, Hartman has argued that the blind old man and his daughter are analogous with the opening of Oedipus at Colonus,¹⁷³ and it is true that these figures are to some extent types. The evidence linking Percy's ballad to Wordsworth's play is therefore most convincing in relation to the historical setting of the play, and the plot device of the blind and poor Baron.

Both Milton's Satan and the legend of the Wandering Jew have been suggested as influences on The Borderers, though it seems that the Bible is more important than either. A comparison of Rivers with Milton's Satan only operates at a very high level of abstraction, and is unlikely to have been a source of the play in any direct way in light of the other literary sources that appear to have contributed to Rivers's character.¹⁷⁴ The Borderers also shows little evidence of Miltonic echoes.¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, the final lines of The Borderers do recall the Wandering Jew legend, though they also recall Genesis.¹⁷⁶ However, any similarity between Mortimer and the Wandering Jew is confined to the final lines of the play. On the other hand, allusions to the Bible help to

establish the ethical perspective of The Borderers.
The Borderers, like The Robbers, relies on Biblical
 allusion at times:

Merciful God! thou has poured out the phials of thy wrath
 upon my head- but I will not murmur
 (The Borderers, II, iii, 130-1)

pour the vials of his wrath
 (The Robbers, p. 178)

pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.
 (Revelations 16:1)

These Biblical allusions occur in passages that can be dated
 1797 as well:

I took it as a sign from him who hung
 The bow in heaven, we are not all to sleep,
 But we shall all be changed...
 (Churchyard Scene, 22-4)

with its direct allusion to Genesis.¹⁷⁷ As Osborn notes,
 explicit references to the Bible occur on a number of
 occasions in the play:¹⁷⁸

There is a psalm that speaks
 Of the tender mercies of God, which with Matilda
 I used to sing...
 (The Borderers, III, iii, 8-10)

(which probably refers to Psalm 25). These references are
 all associated with Herbert (as, in The Robbers, they are
 associated with the Old Moor), and thus the locus of
 goodness in the play is reinforced by Biblical allusion.
 Wordsworth's collection of Biblical phrases in DC MS. 2¹⁷⁹
 may indicate that he consciously sought appropriate images
 at some point before the composition of The Borderers, but
 the play marks his first sustained use of Biblical
 allusion.¹⁸⁰ The relevance of the Bible, particularly the
 story of Cain and Abel, to the eighteenth-century
 exploration of the psychology of murder in literature is

well-known and may be relevant to the final scene of the play. More significantly, Biblical allusions are used in the presentation of Herbert to help create the ethical framework of the play.

A number of works contributed in a minor way to The Borderers, though some suggested sources such as Caleb Williams do not seem to have contributed in any significant way. Perhaps the two most important of these sources are The Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bednall-Green, which seems to have contributed to the plot and setting of the play, and the Bible, which was used to establish a specifically Christian locus within the play.

X

In reviewing the pattern of sources for The Borderers it appears that the literary conventions and specific sources of the play have not previously been analysed with sufficient care. Whilst the influence of Wordsworth's early works had been partly described by Osborn and others, the key point that such debts are mostly confined to certain scenes in the play has been overlooked. The close relationship in thematic terms to Wordsworth's earlier works is also significant, though the ideology of The Borderers is a new (and less radical) expression of his political consciousness that was less explicit in his poetry after Salisbury Plain and A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff.

The literary context of the play has never been accurately established and this has, in all probability, led to the assertion that the play is based upon contemporary

novels or the political philosophy of Godwin. The play derives, in large part, from the sophist-villain dramatic tradition. The single most important influence on the play within the sophist-villain convention is The Robbers. The influence of Shakespeare, common enough at the time, is largely confined to Wordsworth's dramatic discourse. A significant feature of Wordsworth's use of other sources was the range of sources he used and the integration of those sources. This is equally true of his world view: the political, psychological, and aesthetic philosophy which informs the play does not derive from any single author, but shows Wordsworth's familiarity with the central philosophical debates of the period and his integrative approach to this philosophy. The epigraphs of the play indicate much of Wordsworth's literary theory and practice was consonant with the Preface to Lyrical Ballads. These links with Wordsworth's later poetry and criticism, albeit the possible result of later revisions of the play, suggest (in conjunction with the links to his earlier works) The Borderers was a part of Wordsworth's continuous development.

Wordsworth's use of sources for The Borderers was, in the most part, both deft and apt. Structuring his play on The Robbers he was able to extend the philosophical debates that play contained at the same time as relating it to the French Revolution. Wordsworth also removed much of the melodramatic from Schiller and from his other sources, even to the extent of avoiding any portrayal of the act of murder. The multiple sources for some aspects of the play show Wordsworth's integrative imagination, though there seems less reliance on factual sources than in many of

his poems. Finally, his subtle and controlled use of allusion at specific points in his play to add authority or to establish moral overtones shows a conscious manipulation of the patterns of literary resonances within The Borderers.

The Borderers was a contemporary drama, strongly influenced by contemporary literature and political events, and a key stage in Wordsworth's developing poetry and ideology. The dramatic techniques that are apparent in Lyrical Ballads, the rejection of the extraordinary, the tragic response centering on sympathy, and the developing use of blank verse as a medium all suggest The Borderers has been misjudged as crudely imitative and an expression of Wordsworth's supposed crisis. Rather it is a culmination of the political and ideological debate begun in Descriptive Sketches and expressed a new and distinctly Wordsworthian world view.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RUINED COTTAGE

The first thing that was read after he came was William's new poem The Ruined Cottage with which he was much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy Osorio. The next morning William read his tragedy The Borderers

(Dorothy Wordsworth, June 1797:
EY, p. 189)

The version of The Ruined Cottage Coleridge heard in June 1797 has not survived except for the final lines, though the initial drafts towards the poem in DC MS. 13 (MS. A) as well as some stubs¹ have survived. The textual history of the poem is examined in detail by Butler,² and his first reading text, MS. B, was probably written in 1798.³ The version of the poem Coleridge heard was probably only about "200 to 370 lines", half as long as MS. B,⁴ and included Margaret's story as told by the Pedlar to a "stranger", but probably did not include an account of the Pedlar himself.⁵ These textual problems mean that an examination of the sources of the poem as it stood in 1797 can only be a tentative exploration of possible influences in light of the fragments of the poem that have survived and the later text, MS. B.

There has been considerable critical discussion of The Ruined Cottage since the publication of Jonathan Wordsworth's The Music of Humanity,⁶ and the poem has come to be regarded as one of the central texts in the Wordsworth canon. There has been some discussion of the sources of the poem, though this has tended to follow Jonathan Wordsworth's analysis. However, there is a case for arguing that the specific literary context of the poem has not been fully clarified, and there remain a number of influences on the

poem that have not been examined.

A discussion of the sources of The Ruined Cottage is also complicated by the complexities of the patterns of debts to Wordsworth's earlier works, and the range of fragmentary poems that seem to have contributed to its development. The debts to Wordsworth's earlier works are numerous, and problems of dating the manuscripts of The Borderers, Adventures on Salisbury Plain, and The Ruined Cottage mean no definite order of composition can be established for these three works. The fragmentary poems related to The Ruined Cottage present fewer problems of dating, but their relationship to Wordsworth's other verse is complex.

The limitations imposed by the manuscripts for The Ruined Cottage as it stood in 1797 and the complexities of the poem's relationship to Wordsworth's other works mean any conclusions drawn about its sources must be guarded. Nevertheless, the poem of 1797 reflects a key process in Wordsworth's use of his own poetry as a source, indicating the importance of revision and integration of previous poetry as a fundamental feature of his poetic practices.

II

The Ruined Cottage shows the influence of almost all of Wordsworth's major poems before 1797: Salisbury Plain, An Evening Walk (1794), Descriptive Sketches (1794), Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Borderers, as well as a number of other minor poems. This is, in itself, evidence of the unity of the works of the period, as well as an

indication of the integrative qualities of Wordsworth's poetic imagination. The relationship between The Ruined Cottage and these poems varies from similarities in context to detailed and extended verbal parallels.

The parallels between minor poems and The Ruined Cottage are not extensive. Butler notes two such debts,⁷ the first from The Three Graves:

Fast rooted to the spot, you guess,
The wretched maiden stood
(The Three Graves, ii, 5-6)

Yet still
She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
Have parted hence; and still that length of road
And this rude bench one torturing hope endeared,
Fast rooted at her heart
(The Ruined Cottage, 522-6)

where the verbal similarities are more striking than the contexts. The second is from Old Man Travelling, itself a blank verse description of a character:

The little hedge-row birds,
That peck along the road
(Old Man Travelling, 1-2)

the little birds
That peck along the hedges
(The Ruined Cottage, 210-1)

The verbal echo is unmistakable here. Another verbal echo of this type (but not noted previously) is from Gothic Tale:

something have I stored to meet the hour
When crippling Age shall bring the wanderer to his
door.
(Gothic Tale, 125-6)

the little he had stored to meet
The hour of accident or crippling age
(The Ruined Cottage, 203-4)

Other similarities are of subject or theme. Thus the

involved description of "the poor man's horse" in MS. A of The Ruined Cottage owes something to the setting of Lines Written in Very Early Youth.⁸ The thematic relationship between The Ruined Cottage and "In vain have time and Nature toiled to throw" is evident in the poems' treatment of ruins as physical symbols for time, but also in some of the incidental imagery of the earlier poem:

feudal
Again they rear the ~~haughty~~ head that lowers
wretched [~~roofed~~]
Stern on the ~~half-ruined~~ huts that crouch below
("In vain", 3-4)

Here the imagery of the cottages or huts is used to express the consequences of political injustice, and though the poem is more overtly political than The Ruined Cottage, there are some broad similarities. These minor parallels with Wordsworth's shorter poems do not suggest anything more than some incidental similarities of expression.

The Ruined Cottage also shows the influence of the poems revised in 1794, An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches. The debts to An Evening Walk are largely echoes, although the dying woman of An Evening Walk finds the "dim-seen roofless stone" just as the traveller in MS. A may "come within these roofless walls".⁹ Butler notes how the imagery of Ecclesiastes in An Evening Walk becomes the basis of an extended passage in The Ruined Cottage:¹⁰

For hope's deserted well why wistful look?
Chok'd is the pathway, and the pitcher broke.
(An Evening Walk, 255-6)

"As I stooped to drink,
Few minutes gone, at that deserted well
What feelings came to me! A spider's web
Across its mouth hung to the water's edge,
And on the wet and slimy foot-stone lay

The useless fragment of a wooden bowl
(The Ruined Cottage, 140-5)

It is interesting to see how the derivative allegorical treatment in An Evening Walk has become the detailed and particularized passage in The Ruined Cottage. An extended passage from An Evening Walk is the basis of the opening of The Ruined Cottage as Averill shows:¹¹

When in the south, the wan Noon brooding still
Breathed a pale steam around the glaring hill.
And shades of deep embattled clouds were seen
Spotting the northern cliffs with sunny streaks
between
(An Evening Walk (1974), 53-6)

Along the south the uplands feebly glared
Through a pale steam, and all the northern downs
In clearer air ascending shewed their brown
And [] surfaces distinct with shades
Of deep embattled clouds that lay in spots
Determined and unmoved, with steady beams
Of clear and pleasant sunshine interposed
(The Ruined Cottage, 2-8)

When he who long with languid steps had toiled
Across the slippery moor, oppressed and foiled,
Sunk down and found no rest, while as he turns,
The fervid earth his languid body burns,
Nor can his weak arm faintly lifted chase
The insect host which gathered round his face,
And join their murmurs to the tedious sound
Of seeds of bursting furze that crackle round
(An Evening Walk (1794), 57-64)

Across a bare wide Common had I toiled
With languid feet which by the slippery ground
Were baffled still; and when I sought repose
On the brown earth my limbs from very heat
Could find no rest nor my weak arm disperse
The insect host which gathered round my face
And joined their murmurs to the tedious noise
Of seeds of bursting gorse which crackled round.
(The Ruined Cottage, 18-25)

Here Wordsworth appears to have re-worked the couplets of An Evening Walk (1794) into the blank verse of The Ruined Cottage without materially altering them in content or expression. The debts to An Evening Walk show Wordsworth

incorporating old material in a variety of ways, from a major expansion of an image to following closely his original. These processes can be seen as fundamental to Wordsworth's use of his own material, as they show the constant revision of his poetry extended into other poems in much the same way as The Ruined Cottage itself was to become part of The Excursion.

The Ruined Cottage also shows the influence of Descriptive Sketches, particularly Descriptive Sketches (1794). As Butler notes, the final line of The Ruined Cottage ("Last human tenant of these ruined walls") echoes Descriptive Sketches ("Sole human tenant of the piny waste").¹² A more important parallel exists in the draftings towards Descriptive Sketches (1794) and the related fragment, The Old Man of the Alps. In the 1793 version of Descriptive Sketches, Wordsworth describes the anxious thoughts of the wife of the "chamois-chaser":

-Meanwhile his wife and child with cruel hope
All night the door at every moment ope
(Descriptive Sketches, 408-9)

This passage is amplified in the revisions of 1794:

Each fell extreme of passion doomed to share
Desire & hope & doubt & worse despair
All night the housewife paces o'er & o'er
With intermitting step the cottage floor
Insessant turning to the restless door
If breaking the wild tempests dismal howl
Her clock's small voice more dismal chill her soul
Then mid the misty winds & beating rain
Truce to her troubled thoughts she seeks in vain
(Birdsall, p. 177, edited)

and, in what appears a continuation:

Hangs o'er her garden gate her aching head
And hears in every sound a human tread
Till at the loud shriek of the bursting storm
Shrinks to his earthly cell the garden worm
So shrinks her spirit & with terror wild

Hopeless she flies to clasp her sleeping child
 (Birdsall, p. 177, edited)

This seems the origin of some aspects of The Ruined Cottage: besides the "beating rain" of MS. A,¹³ the woman's situation and actions mirror Margaret's, and the image of the woman at the gate recalls

And by yon gate
 Which bars the traveller's road she often stood
 And when a stranger horseman came, the latch
 Would lift, and in his face look wistfully
 (The Ruined Cottage, 506-9)

Both women await husbands that will not return, and there are suggestions of Margaret's mental torment in the woman's inability to find "Truce to her troubled thoughts", her gamut of emotions, and her "Incessant turning". In this expansion of the passage of 1793 in order to describe something of the psychological turmoil of a wife awaiting a dead husband's return, Descriptive Sketches (1794) prefigures one of the central elements in The Ruined Cottage. The Old Man of the Alps, long thought to be the work of Coleridge but now thought to be a product of the revisions to Descriptive Sketches (1794),¹⁴ also shows a concern with the mental decay of a woman, in this case because her betrothed goes to war and does not return. The woman in The Old Man of the Alps suffers a gradual decay leading to her suicide, and her distraction has some parallels with Margaret's:

And instantly an anguish wrench'd her frame,
 And left her mind imperfect. No delight
 Thenceforth she found in any cheerful sight,
 Not ev'n in those time-haunted wells and groves,
 Scenes of past joy
 (The Old Man of the Alps, 74-8)

Although the only surviving version of the poem may well have been modified by Coleridge, the central situation is Wordsworth's, and shows how another key element in The Ruined Cottage can be found in the revisions of 1794.

The Salisbury Plain poems, Salisbury Plain and Adventures on Salisbury Plain, are closely related to The Ruined Cottage in theme and content. In some ways The Ruined Cottage is a major revision of Salisbury Plain, with the transformation of Spenserian stanza to blank verse, and the focus on the external events changed to a psychological focus. There are a number of general similarities that show the links between the poems: both are a "shattered idyll",¹⁵ both tell the story of a destitute woman who has lost her husband and children through war. Both women are portrayed in conjunction with ruins, and both poems start with a "traveller" going across a plain. Perhaps most important, both poems concern the effects of war on a particular person, and convey these effects through an extended narration. Having cited the central similarities between the two works, there are significant differences: Margaret is a static figure, she does not tell her own story, and there are no extensive verbal parallels between the poems.¹⁶ The radical and democratic elements overtly apparent in Salisbury Plain exist in a different form in The Ruined Cottage: the figure of the prophetic poet, standing above the action in Salisbury Plain, becomes humanized in the form of a travelling Pedlar with no implicit claim to represent the authority of literature. Further, the language of The Ruined Cottage was intended to be "homely in attire", which is arguably a more democratic discourse.

Central to the Salisbury Plain poems and The Ruined Cottage remains the sympathy for the ordinary person untinged with the condescension of humanitarian verse. The Ruined Cottage can thus usefully be seen as a development of Salisbury Plain.

Although Adventures on Salisbury Plain was completed before The Ruined Cottage, the dates of the surviving manuscripts mean it is impossible to ascertain the order of composition for any particular passage. Nevertheless, the verbal correspondences between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Ruined Cottage are significant, indicating other links between the Salisbury Plain poems and Margaret's story. There are also a few parallels of content: for example, the female vagrant's self-abuse, noted by Jacobus:¹⁷

But, what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth
Is, that I have my inner self abused
(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 546-7)

'I am changed,
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much
wrong . . .'
(The Ruined Cottage, 405-6)

Another link might be the connection between suffering and calm.¹⁸ The sailor's wife's story in Adventures on Salisbury Plain parallels Margaret's situation:

Long in that house I knew a widow's cares,
Yet still two children did partake my bed
(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 748-9)

Gill notes verbal similarities between Adventures on Salisbury Plain and The Ruined Cottage:¹⁹

No gypsey cowl'd o'er fire of furze or broom;
No labourer watch'd his red kiln glaring bright
(Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 176-7)

Roaring with storms beneath nights starless gloom
 No Gypsy cowered o'er fire of fern or broom
 Nor farmers red kiln glared upon his sight
 (SPP, p. 57, edited)

The wandering gypsy in a stormy night
 Would pass it with his moveables to house
 On the open plain beneath the imperfect arch
 Of a cold lime-kiln.

(The Ruined Cottage, 32-5)

The passage from Adventures on Salisbury Plain shows the influence of the Racedown landscape in "furze or broom" as the phrase "furze and broom" is found in Dorothy Wordsworth's letters.²⁰ A description of a soldier is common to both poems:

His ragged coat scarce showed the Soldier's faded
 red.
 (Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 9)

A man whose garments shewed the Soldier's red
 (The Ruined Cottage, 499)

as is the image of the female vagrant's illness:

say the worm is on my cheek.
 (Adventures on Salisbury Plain, 743)

She is dead,
 The worm is on her cheek
 (The Ruined Cottage, 157-8)

These verbal echoes are not, however, the most important aspect of the relationship between the Salisbury Plain poems and The Ruined Cottage. Adventures on Salisbury Plain contains the story of two women who are destitute because of war: the female vagrant herself, and the sailor's wife. The story of the sailor's wife, and her death through neglect and poverty, develop aspects of the female vagrant's story central to The Ruined Cottage.

The problems of dating manuscripts for The Borderers and The Ruined Cottage mean that the order of composition

for specific passages is not always clear. Material in The Borderers shows Wordsworth developing the destitute woman motif and, in particular, the mental derangement which plays such a significant part in The Ruined Cottage. The victim of Clifford's seduction in The Borderers, besides recalling The Thorn, also has parallels with Margaret's psychic decay as Butler notes:²¹

Rivers

Oh! the poor tenant of that ragged cottage,
She whom the villain Clifford drove to madness.

Mortimer

I met a peasant near the spot, he told me
These ten years she had sat all day alone
Within these empty walls.

(The Borderers, II, i, 16-20)

Rivers's description of the captain's daughter is the most extreme version of the psychosis described elsewhere in the play:

She neither saw nor heard as others do,
But in a fearful world of her own making
She lived- cut off from the society
Of every rational thing- her father's skeleton.

(The Borderers, IV, ii, 86-9)

This, as in the prose Fragment III and earlier verse, is part of an exploration of the dislocation of perception characterised by an imbalance in

the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,
And what perceive

(Tintern Abbey, 106-8)

where the mind's creation comes to dominate perception completely (and hence cuts off the sufferer from a beneficent nature), a process described in The Ruined Cottage, Incipient Madness, and The Baker's Cart:

driv'n to that state

In which all past experience melts away
 And the rebellious heart to its own will
 Fashions the laws of nature.

(The Baker's Cart, 22-5)

As Butler shows, there are also other details linking The Baker's Cart to The Borderers:²²

I have seen the Baker's horse
 As he had been accustomed at your door
 Stop with loaded wain, when o'er his head
 Smack went the whip

(The Baker's Cart, 1-4)

I have heard
 The boisterous carman in the miry road
 Check his loud whip and hail us with mild voice
 (The Borderers, III, iii, 76-8)

These links are not as significant as those linking The Borderers with MS. A of The Ruined Cottage (dated 1797), as these indicate both the connection between the two works, and the links with the other poems related to The Ruined Cottage. In the play, the beggar woman tells a story of her journey over the heath:

but two nights gone
 The darkness overtook me, wind and rain
 Beat hard upon my head- and yet I saw
 A glow-worm through the covert of the furze
 Shine [] as if nothing ailed the sky
 At which I half-accused the God in heaven-
 You must forgive me, Sirs-
 Rivers. Well, well- today
 Has made amends.
 Beggar. Thanks to you- but oh! Sir!
 How would you like to travel on whole hours
 As I have done, my eyes upon the ground,
 Expecting still, I knew not how, to find
 A piece of money glittering through the dust.
 (The Borderers, I, iii, 49-60)

This passage is close to parts of MS. A:

But two nights gone
 stormy showers
 This dreary common.- Driv'n by wind & rain . . .
 You will forgive me Sir
 I feel I play the truant with my tale . . .
 Only within the ruin, I beheld
 At a small distance on the dusky ground

A broken pain which glitter'd to the moon
(RCP, pp. 85-7)

Not only is the narrative technique strikingly similar (a poor woman narrating her own story), there are verbal echoes. As the passage in MS. A is also close to Incipient Madness, it seems as if the three works are closely associated at this point. The Borderers and The Ruined Cottage share aspects of the poor woman motif, especially the psychic consequences of deprivation.

Not only are there parallels between The Ruined Cottage and some of Wordsworth's earlier works, but there also exist a group of fragmentary poems that can be seen as directly contributing to The Ruined Cottage. These poems were composed 1796-7, and are linked by their use of blank verse, content, and theme. XVI (a) and (b), Incipient Madness and The Baker's Cart are part of a complex of poems associated with the Salisbury Plain poems as shown by the central figure of a poor woman and the setting on a plain. All of the poems appear to have contributed to The Ruined Cottage.

The earliest of the poems, XVI (a) and (b), are in blank verse and debased Spenserian stanzas respectively. Gill offers the only detailed account of the sources for the poems and their relationship to Wordsworth's other works.²³ The most obvious source is J.B. Farish's The Heath, July 1770, a pair of poems also in blank verse and Spenserian stanzas that Wordsworth had heard as an undergraduate at Cambridge.²⁴ The similarity with Farish's two poems poses problems of dating: the existing manuscript of Wordsworth's poems has been shown by Landon to date from 1796,²⁵ but as de Selincourt argued it seems unlikely that Wordsworth would

have waited five years before using Farish's idea or that he would have used the debased Spenserian stanza after Salisbury Plain.²⁶ It is possible Wordsworth first composed some lines of the poem about 1791 and heavily re-worked them in 1796. The sight of the glowworm links the poems to Wordsworth's earliest work on the female wanderer in DC MSS. 5-7, as well as to The Borderers passage quoted above:²⁷

disheartened sore
With the rough element and pelting shower,
I saw safe sheltered by the viewless furze
The tiny glowworm, lowliest child of earth
(XVI (a), 28-31)

another babe
Sat by & smiled delighted, for it held
A little glowworm in its gleaming hand
(DC MS. 5)

On the other hand, Gill rightly argues the poems are close to Adventures on Salisbury Plain:

There are parallels, too, of situation. The incident in which the woman offers hospitality to the vagrant, for example, is a fusion of the details in ASP from the episodes where the Female Vagrant tells her story to the sailor and where they meet the poor woman whose husband maltreats their child.

(SPP, pp. 287-8)

Gill also shows how a number of details link the poems to the Salisbury Plain poems, from details such as the "Minster tower"²⁸ to almost exact correspondences:

Our farm was sheltered like a little nest,
No greener fields than ours could eye survey,
Pleasant fields without, and all within as gay.
(XVI (b), 88-90)

Our farm was shelter'd like a little nest
No greener fields than ours could eye survey
And happily indeed we liv'd from day to day.
(SPP, p. 183)

Another image is common to both sets of poems:

Her cheeks, the beauty of whose doubtful hues
Showed like a rose, its time of blowing past
(XVI (b), 77-8)

Might Beauty charm the canker worm of pain
 The rose on her sweet cheek had ne'er declined:
 (Salisbury Plain, 204-5)

Although the image is conventional, the parallels between the Salisbury Plain poems and XVI (a) and (b) suggest they are closely related.²⁹ The two poems can be seen as an attempt to separate the story of the female vagrant from Adventures on Salisbury Plain by returning again to the format used in Salisbury Plain where a traveller meets the woman and hears her tell her tale. The obvious differences would be that the woman is not a vagrant, and the form would be blank verse. In any event, XVI (a) and (b) mark the origins of a poem in blank verse about a destitute woman in a cottage: The Ruined Cottage.

The Incipient Madness fragments and The Baker's Cart are part of the drafting that lead to the first version of The Ruined Cottage.³⁰ The Baker's Cart reflects the terrible conditions of the poor in 1795-6, and may even refer to the bread cart at Racedown.³¹ It also has links with Wordsworth's other works.³² In general terms the poem deals with the distracted poor woman, a subject in Wordsworth's works from the woman "crazed with care and pain" in The Vale of Esthwaite to The Borderers. The sudden confrontation between the distracted woman and the observer

recalls the prose Fragment III:

and from the wrinkles of
 her face (which, from their fineness, seemed rather the wrinkles of Sorrow than of Years) it was easy to see they had been acquainted with weeping; yet had not perpetual tears been able to extinguish a certain wild brightness which, at the first view, might have been mistaken for the wildness of great joy. But it was far different- it too plainly indicated she was not in her true and perfect mind.

(Prose, i p.8)

The words were simple, but her look and voice
 Made up their meaning, and bespoke a mind
 Which being long neglected and denied
 The common food of hope was now become
 Sick and extravagant-

(The Baker's Cart, 17-21)

Not only does this suggest the continuity in Wordsworth's approach to the distracted woman motif, but it also seems to echo XVI (a), 9 ("the common hope"), and this may help show a line of development between XVI (a) and The Ruined Cottage.

The Incipient Madness fragments are, like Argument for Suicide, discarded draftings from a longer work. Butler shows how Incipient Madness is very closely related to MS.

A: 33

By the storm compell'd
 The poor man's horse that feeds along the lanes
 Had hither come among these fractur'd walls
 To weather out the night, and as I pass'd
 While restlessly he turn'd from the fierce wind
 And from the open sky, I heard, within,
 The iron links with which his feet were clogg'd
 Mix their dull clanking with the heavy noise
 Of falling rain.

(Incipient Madness, 26-34)

And when the poor mans horse that hither comes
 For shelter turns [?ab]
 And open sky the passenger may hear
 The iron links with which his feet were clogg'd
 Mix their dull clanking with the heavy sound
 Of falling rain

(RCP, p. 83, edited)

It seems as if Incipient Madness marks a change in narrative technique from XVI (a) for the story appears to have no auditor:

I alone
 Remained: the winds of heaven remained- with them
 My heart claimed fellowship and with the beams
 Of dawn and of the setting sun that seemed
 To live and linger on the mouldering walls.

(Incipient Madness, 45-9)

This narrative technique was discarded in the earliest

version of The Ruined Cottage in favour of a third person narrating Margaret's story to a "Stranger":

and, Stranger, here
In sickness she remained, and here she died,
Last human tenant of these ruined walls-
(RCP, p. 95)

The fusion of the two narrative techniques (the traveller hearing a first person narration) had been used in Salisbury Plain, and the change in narrative technique to third person in The Ruined Cottage allowed both the healing sentiments of the Pedlar to frame Margaret's story, and the inclusion of her death. Incipient Madness is an attempt to tell a first person tale of a traveller (as in XVI (a) and (b)), and its close relationship to MS. A of The Ruined Cottage demonstrates the line of textual development that links the Salisbury Plain poems to The Ruined Cottage.

Although the textual issues are complex, Wordsworth was developing a blank verse description of a destitute woman and the psychological consequences of her destitution for at least a year before the first version of The Ruined Cottage. The intermediate fragments between the Salisbury Plain poems and The Ruined Cottage show Wordsworth was particularly concerned with changes in form and narrative technique. These fragments drew on elements within the Salisbury Plain poems and perhaps even earlier poetry, showing a remarkable pattern of constant and inventive revision. The links between these poems also indicate the coherence of Wordsworth's poetry 1793-1797, and the inclusion of Margaret's story in The Excursion suggests the constant modification of this strand in his work was a significant feature of his later poetry.

III

Possibly in 1797, but certainly by March 1798, Wordsworth has chosen the epigraph for The Ruined Cottage from Burns's Epistle to J. L****k, An Old Scotch Bard:

Give me a spark of nature's fire,
Tis the best learning I desire.

My Muse though homely in attire
May touch the heart. 34

Like both epigraphs to The Borderers, the quotation is from a verse epistle and, in its wider context, raises issues later developed in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads.

Burns's poem adopts the same anti-scholastic stance as Wordsworth in Lyrical Ballads, stressing the "spark of nature's fire" above the learning of the "schools":

A set o' dull, conceited Hashes,
Confuse their brains in Colledge-classes!
They gang in Stirks, and come out Asses,
Plain truth to speak;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!
(Epistle, 67-72)

In this respect Burns's epistle is consistent with Wordsworth's use of the epigraph from Pope's epistle because both question the value of academic learning when compared with learning from nature. This contrast is made explicit in MS. B itself where the same question about the value of "a' jargon o' your Schools"³⁵ is put:

Though he was untaught,
In the dead lore of schools undisciplined,
Why should he grieve? He was a chosen son:
To him was given an ear which deeply felt
The voice of Nature

(The Ruined Cottage, 74-8)

The description of scholastic knowledge as "dead" (an image perhaps derived from Pope) is in contrast with natural, vital knowledge much as it is in Expostulation and Reply and The Tables Turned.

There are further links between Burns's poem and the Preface to Lyrical Ballads, for the "lore of schools" is not the only academic folly Burns attacks:

Your Critic-folk may cock their nose,
 And say, 'How can you e'er propose,
 'You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
 'To mak a sang?'
 But by your leaves, my learned foes,
 Ye're maybe wrang.
 (Epistle, 55-60)

If in a Poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms as they call them, imagine they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession.

(Prose, i, p.132)

Although this sort of criticism was derided by others,³⁶ Wordsworth's choice of Burns's poem as an epigraph demonstrates his familiarity with its attack on criticisms of this sort as part of a defence of "homely attire" in poetry.

Related to the different kinds of knowledge and attacks on the pretensions of critics is the use of simple, natural language. The connection between natural knowledge and natural language is indirectly discussed in MS. B:

 He from his native hills
 Had wandered far: much had he seen of men,
 Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits,
 Their passions and their feelings, chiefly those
 Essential and eternal in the heart,
 Which 'mid the simple forms of rural life
 Exist more simple in their elements

And speak a plainer language.
 (The Ruined Cottage, 58-65)

The role of nature's "simple forms" in the psychological development of the Pedlar is similar to Rivers's observation:

I perceived
 What mighty objects do impress their forms
 To build up this our intellectual being
 (The Borderers, IV, ii, 133-5)

As well as the implied role of nature in the developing mind, in the passage from The Ruined Cottage is the underlying rationale of Wordsworth's choice of the "language of men" in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads:

Low and rustic life was generally chosen because in that situation the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can obtain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language
 (Prose, i, p.124)

As noted by Owen and Smyser³⁷ the language of The Ruined Cottage and the Preface are very close here ("their passions . . . Essential and eternal" / "the essential passions of the heart"; and "speak a plainer language" / "speak a plainer and more emphatic language"), though the poem does not connect the language of rural life to poetry. The epigraph from Burns also implies that the purpose of poetry is to "touch the heart", and that this end can be achieved through simple language.

The epigraph of MS. B and certain parts of the poem itself suggest that Wordsworth saw the importance of nature both as a source of vital knowledge and an influence on the growth of the human mind. Allied to these ideas was the concept of natural verse, and the emphasis on "homely

attire" in poetry. Thus, at this stage, Wordsworth had already united three key features of nature's ministry: nature as a source of knowledge, nature's role in the development of the mind, and language of rustic life deriving in part from natural forms. The epigraph and the passages in MS. B that relate to it cannot be dated 1797, though there can be no doubt that Wordsworth had, by March 1798, developed some of the ideas which two years later found expression in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads.

IV

Although The Ruined Cottage is part of the tradition of ruin poems it also reflects the immediate social and political background of 1797, as well as elements in Wordsworth's own life. In light of this, the long development of Wordsworth's verse on the destitute woman can be seen as a response to a society in which starvation was a normal occurrence, and related to the central political objective of the French Revolution as expressed by Beaupuy:

And when we chanced
 One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl
 Who crept along fitting her languid self
 Unto a heifer's motion- by a cord
 Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the lane
 Its sustenance, while the girl with her two hands
 Was busy knitting in a heartless mood
 Of solitude- and at the sight my friend
 In agitation said, ' 'Tis against that
 Which we are fighting'

(The Prelude, ix, 511-20)

Combined with these general considerations were the immediate problems posed to the poor by the restriction in trade and agricultural undermanning caused by the war with

France, factors that suggest The Ruined Cottage was firmly anchored in its immediate historical context.

Butler reviews the biographical context of The Ruined Cottage,³⁸ showing how the Wordsworths were, at Racedown, confronted with extreme poverty:

The peasants are miserably poor; their cottages are shapeless structures (I may almost say) of wood and clay—indeed they are not at all beyond what might be expected in savage life.

(Dorothy Wordsworth, 30 November 1795: EY, p. 162)

This poverty, which the Wordsworths to some extent shared, was the basis of much of The Ruined Cottage:

All that relates to Margaret & the ruined cottage &c was taken from observations made in the South West of England
(RCP, p.478)

Thus some features of the poem seem to have been drawn from actual observations during the Wordsworth's stay at Racedown.

There are two aspects of Dorothy Wordsworth's early experiences which appear related to The Ruined Cottage. The first is mentioned in the Isabella Fenwick note to The Affliction of Margaret:

This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mary, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to inquire of him after her son.

(PW, ii, p.476)

This recalls the other Margaret who

And by yon gate
That bars the traveller's road, she often sat,
And if a stranger-horseman came, the latch
Would lift; & in his face look wistfully,
Most happy, if from aught discovered there
Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
The same sad question—

(RCP, p. 95, edited)

Besides showing how Wordsworth drew upon factually-based stories of individuals, this offers another possible example of Wordsworth drawing upon Dorothy's observations in the composition of his verse. It could also be that Dorothy and William's visit to their father's house in Cockermouth in May 1794 when it was deserted was a relevant element in the biographical background to The Ruined Cottage. Dorothy's description of the garden has suggestive similarities with the poem, although her letter was written many years after the visit:

all was in ruin, the terrace-walk buried and choked up with the old privot hedge which had formerly been so beautiful, rose and privot intermingled- the same hedge where the sparrows were used to build their nests
(EY, p.516)

These biographical parallels may indicate how The Ruined Cottage combines a reflection of Wordsworth's immediate personal and historical situation during the Racedown years with elements drawn from earlier events in his family history.

Perhaps because the reality of starvation and destitution was so obviously at odds with most versions of Christianity, the subject of poverty was frequently written about in the eighteenth century. There was a considerable literature describing destitute women in ruined cottages in a wide range of writing. Two examples of these descriptions, drawn from authors well-known to Wordsworth, demonstrate how The Ruined Cottage can be placed within the context of humanitarian writing. Gilpin's description of Tintern Abbey includes one such account:

Among other things in the scene of desolation, the poverty and wretchedness of the inhabitants was remarkable She led us, through an old gate, into a place over-spread with nettles, and briars; and pointing to the remnant of a shattered cloister, told us, that was the place. It was her own mansion. All indeed she meant to tell us, was the story of her own wretchedness; and all she had to shew us, was her own miserable habitation. We did not expect to be interested: but we found we were. I never saw so loathsome a human dwelling. It was a cavity, loftily vaulted, between two ruined walls 39

Here, as in The Ruined Cottage, the habitation of the woman is emblematic of her "story", and the images of plants ("over-spread with nettles, and briars") are used to reinforce the woman's "wretchedness". Other descriptions in a similar vein can be found in Trimmer's Oeconomy of Charity⁴⁰ which concentrates on changing the attitudes of the reader towards the poor:

It is a most lamentable sight to enter a cottage, and behold a poor woman sitting in rags, surrounded by a set of dirty children: we are shocked, and turn away with disgust, condemning her in our hearts for sloth and untidiness; but let us stop an instant, and hear her apology.

"I am ashamed to appear before you ladies in this condition, but indeed I have not the means of cleanliness- I have not so much as a mop or pail to clean my apartments- we have no change of apparel- look at the bed in which my dear babes must lie naked while I wash their linen- not so much as a single sheet- nor can I purchase even a bit of sope-nay, I have not a towel to wipe our faces and hands with: my husband labours hard in summer, but what he earns then is exhausted before winter is half over- he has been out of work for many weeks; and we have had so much sickness in the family that we have been obliged to sell our clothes, and the little furniture we were possessed of- I also go haymaking, weeding, &c. when I possibly can, but have never been taught to do any in-doors work- nay, I cannot even mend the rags I have, for I have had no learning bestowed upon me- consider also, how my constitution is worn by frequent child-bearing and nursing my infants at the breast, without a proper supply of nourishment myself- consider how hard I live- how uncomfortably I lie- how I am harassed with incessant fatigue and corroding care- how I am overlooked by my superiors.- The parish it is true allows me as much as can be afforded to our share, but that is barely sufficient to keep us from starving:- we may be admitted into the workhouse, but that is already crowded with poor.- O that death would come and take from the world a set of abject wretches whom nobody regards!" This apology and others of equal weight might, I am persuaded, be made by many a poor

despised fellow-creature.

(Oeconomy of Charity, pp. 63-4)

Here is the first person 'true' narration used in an attempt to change the "disgust" and condemnation of her readers into sympathy, much as Wordsworth did in some of the fragmentary poems leading up to The Ruined Cottage. The obvious didactic purpose of the above, with the neat marshalling of points to answer possible objections by unsympathetic readers, has more in common with Salisbury Plain than The Ruined Cottage, for the later poem uses Margaret's tale for more complex purposes. The description of a dilapidated cottage and the occupant's mental suffering are found in another description from Trimmer's book:

it would answer a better purpose if some, who can judge by sympathy of the feelings of these poor wretches, would enter their miserable dwellings, and view them in their uncomfortable beds.

Is it possible to behold a poor creature, stretched perhaps on a little straw or hard flocks, and covered with sackcloth, or a few dirty rags, in a room with broken casements, and a roof that admits even the rain and snow, with only a little bread and water to sustain her, a helpless infant lying at her side, unconscious itself of the misery to which it is born, but which the mother anticipates with anguish that adds redoubled force to her other sufferings; the partner of her grief sitting by her, surrounded with other little wretches clamorous for food, to whom he divides the scanty morsel afforded by the parish; and then, with a bursting heart, leaves his melancholy home to solicit charity, in order to satisfy the cravings of his own hunger- is it possible, I say, to view such a scene as this, and not be impatient to give assistance?

(Oeconomy of Charity, pp.88-9)

Here the author presents to the reader the plight of the woman, using emotions of both subject and reader as the means of enforcing her moral point, much as Wordsworth does. Details of this description are found in The Ruined Cottage group of poems:

Unconscious of her woes another babe

Sat by

(DC MS. 5)

Till this reft house by frost, and thaw, and rain
Was sapped; and when she slept the nightly damp
Did chill her breast

(The Ruined Cottage, 518- 20)

These humanitarian accounts of poor cottagers have similarities with The Ruined Cottage in aspects of subject matter and purposes, as well as narrative technique and details of description.

Given the wider historical background and the prose accounts of the poor, The Ruined Cottage is also part of the eighteenth-century literary fascination with ruins. The relevance of the image of the ruin in Romanticism as well as its pervasiveness has been discussed by McFarland,⁴¹ and its common use in eighteenth-century poetry has been demonstrated by Aubin.⁴² Jonathan Wordsworth is probably correct in seeing The Deserted Village as the foremost poem in the genre of ruin poems.⁴³ Some of the techniques of The Ruined Cottage are adumbrated in Goldsmith's poem:

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.

(The Deserted Village, 137-140)

The desertion of the ruin and the use of the garden as an emblem to evoke the previous life of the village are both reminiscent of The Ruined Cottage. Occasionally both poems use similar imagery:

Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall
(The Deserted Village, 47-8)

offers to the wind
A cold bare wall whose earthy top is tricked

With weeds and the rank spear-grass.
 (The Ruined Cottage, 160-2)

Although The Deserted Village was probably the best-known example of the genre, there were many similar poems such as Shenstone, The Ruined Abbey and Oram, Written near the Ruins of a Nobleman's Mansion. Amongst poems on ruins there are ballads with similarities to The Ruined Cottage. The most striking example is Wolcott's Old Cicely:⁴⁴

My cottage is fallen to decay,
 The tempest blows cold on my head,
 Thro' the ruin the rains find their way,
 And trickle cold tears on my bed:
 I sigh from the night till the morn,
 For, alas! I am old and forlorn.

My garden is cover'd with weeds,
 Once so trim, and so usefully neat;
 There the toad on the aconite feeds
 From a hole in the rotten old seat.
 (Old Cicely, 1-10)

The central images of the decaying cottage and the slow destruction of the garden are similar to those used by Wordsworth. Like Margaret, Old Cicely ceases to work ("No more to my labours I rise") and "Like a spectre I wander at night".⁴⁵ Another such ballad is Charlotte Smith's The Forest Boy, in which the ruins of a cottage are the basis of the poem, and the story of its inhabitants is narrated retrospectively, as in The Ruined Cottage:

The trees have now hid at the edge of the hurst
 The spot where the ruins decay
 Of the cottage, where Will of the Woodland was
 nursed
 (The Forest Boy, 1-3)

The poem recounts the story of a widow whose son joins the army and, as in The Ruined Cottage, the "purse" is the last she sees of him. Perhaps the most significant change is in

Phoebe, the son's beloved, whose "senses are injured" and "fancies she hears / His light step" (though he has, in fact, died as a soldier).⁴⁶ The Ruined Cottage is distinguished from these ruin poems by its sustained narrative treatment of Margaret's story, but its subject matter and incidental imagery are largely within such eighteenth-century conventions.

A number of Wordsworth's acquaintances used the motifs of The Ruined Cottage. Butler notes how Southey's Joan of Arc has a passage close to the final lines of Wordsworth's poem:⁴⁷

Of unrecorded name
Died the mean man; yet did he leave behind
One who did never say her daily prayers,
Of him forgetful; who to every tale
Of the distant war, lending an eager ear,
Grew pale and trembled. At her cottage door,
The wretched one shall sit, and with dim eye
Gaze o'er the plain, where on his parting steps
Her last look hung. Nor ever shall she know
Her husband dead, but tortur'd with vain hope,
Gaze on- then heart-sick turn to her poor babe,
And weep it fatherless!

(Joan of Arc, vii, 320-331)

Wordsworth commented on Joan of Arc that it had "some passages of first-rate excellence", and this passage seems the source for "one torturing hope endeared" in the final lines of his poem.⁴⁸ Like The Borderers, Southey's poem had extended blank verse narrations and, like Salisbury Plain and The Ruined Cottage, it adopted the politically radical stance of criticizing war when Britain was at war. The mental effects of isolation are also described in Joan of Arc:

From that hour
On all the busy turmoil of the world
I gaz'd with strange indifference; bearing want
With the sick patience of a mind worn out.

(Joan of Arc, ii, 693-6)

and bespoke a mind
 Which being long neglected and denied
 The common food of hope was now become
 Sick and extravagant- by strong access
 Of momentary pangs driv'n to that state
 In which all past experience melts away
 And the rebellious heart to its own will
 Fashions the laws of nature.

(The Baker's Cart, 18-25)

Another possible connection with a poet known to Wordsworth is with Lovell. Southey and Lovell's Poems (1795) included three ruin poems.⁴⁹ Lovell's Elegy. The Decayed Farm House is closest to The Ruined Cottage: a stranger asks a "passing shepherd" for an account of the ruins, and he describes the ruined farmhouse through specific details:

The little gate that through the garden leads,
 The fork now useless where the milk-pail hung.
 (Poems, p.37)

Joseph Fawcett used similar devices in Change, a poem possibly known to Wordsworth, in which a character surveys the changes time brings: "to yon vacant walls his feet repair" though "Untenanted the empty scene remains":⁵⁰

Tall weeds, in wild luxuriance rising round,
 Ensigs of Solitude, possess the ground;
 Choaking each walk

(Fawcett, Poems, p. 79)

the border tufts-
 Daisy, and thrift, and lowly camomile,
 And thyme- had straggled out into the paths
 Which they were used to deck.

(The Ruined Cottage, 375-8)

Elements of The Ruined Cottage can thus be found in the work of a number of poets known to Wordsworth.

Although the "Stranger" in The Ruined Cottage MS. A is clearly a narrative device similar to the "traveller" in Salisbury Plain, the other main characters have

sources, some of which are described by Wordsworth:

the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances. Nevertheless much of what he says & does had an external existence that fell under my own youthful & subsequent observation. An Individual named Patrick, by birth & education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years & afterwards settled in the Town of Kendal . . . At Hawkshead also, while I was a school boy, there occasionally resided a Packman . . . with whom I had frequent conversations

(RCP, pp. 477-8)

Now for a few particulars of, fact respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here . . . several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying & doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses & trials under which different persons were suffering, some of them Strangers to me, & others daily under my notice . . . the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in 93. opportunities of which I availed myself in the Story of the Female Vagrant

(RCP, pp. 478-9, edited)

The Pedlar passages in The Ruined Cottage are likely to have been written after 10 June 1797,⁵¹ but they show Wordsworth combining the characteristics of someone known to him with elements of his own character and philosophy. There may also be elements of Herbert in the Pedlar (especially the use of religious discourse), as well as elements of the literary 'sage' figure (as in Beattie's The Minstrel). This would suggest that in developing the character of the Pedlar Wordsworth was partly concerned with creating a new narrative technique to combine the prophetic voice and humanitarian narrative into a more cohesive form. It is significant that his narrative method was ultimately dramatic, as in many of the Lyrical Ballads. It can also be seen how the characters of Margaret and Robert were created from a range of sources (including the female vagrant's

story) as well as drawing on Wordsworth's own observations, again showing how (as in The Excursion as a whole), Wordsworth drew on stories of people known to him, his own observations, and literary sources to create his characters. These methods are central to much of his poetry.

In light of the literary sources discussed above, some of the suggested sources for The Ruined Cottage seem unlikely to have contributed to Wordsworth's poem. Sources discussed by Jonathan Wordsworth include Southey's Hannah and Cowper's Crazed Kate,⁵² and Butler mentions Fawcett's Art of War and Langhorne's Country Justice.⁵³ None of these poems is particularly close to Wordsworth's, and Southey's and Fawcett's were written after Wordsworth's earlier work on a woman's derangement. Jonathan Wordsworth tentatively suggests that Goethe's Der Wanderer is a source for The Ruined Cottage, though it is not clear if Wordsworth knew the poem.⁵⁴ Goethe's pretentious stranger is unlike the Pedlar for he pays little attention to the woman (or her well), and is primarily concerned with the "mouldering monuments of ages gone".⁵⁵ In Der Wanderer the woman's husband and children are alive, and there is no mention of war or mental suffering. Goethe's poem has more in common with Dyer's Ruins of Rome and the mania for classical antiquities fuelled by the proto-archeologists such as Julien-David Le Roi, The Comte de Caylus, James Stewart, and Nicholas Revett. It is therefore doubtful that Wordsworth used Goethe's poem as a source. Equally Adkin's suggestion that Paul and Virginia is a source for the narrator of The Ruined Cottage is no more likely than Lyon's alternatives of Thelwell's Ambulator in The Peripatetic or Euphranor in

Berkeley's Alciphron.⁵⁶ In fact The Three Graves offers a closer parallel in terms of narrative technique, and the Churchyard Scene uses a similar figure in the old pilgrim. Some of the suggested sources for The Ruined Cottage do not seem likely to have contributed to Wordsworth's poem.

Given the long development in Wordsworth's poetry of the deranged woman motif, and in the context of the ruin poem tradition, there is little in The Ruined Cottage that is revolutionary. The poem is, in a way, the same kind of story as Salisbury Plain, with the significant change that the prophetic voice of the poet has become the dramatic voice of the Pedlar, and the emphasis on reform has changed from political to moral. Like the Salisbury Plain poems, The Ruined Cottage focusses on the victims of war, their isolation, extreme poverty, and mental suffering, though these events are distanced in time and mediated through the reflective discourse of the Pedlar. The Ruined Cottage is also related to the blank verse narrations of The Borderers, and the theories of tragedy that inform it, from the rejection of "moving accidents",⁵⁷ to the belief in the positive value of tragic narrative:

But we have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,
A power to virtue friendly
(The Ruined Cottage, 286-8)

let me hear it all:
'Twill do me good.
(The Borderers, I, i, 156-7)

Thus patterns within Wordsworth's earlier works show how The Ruined Cottage is a culmination of many elements in Wordsworth's poetry, as well as a reflection of some of the literary conventions of the day.

V

Although little of the surviving manuscript of The Ruined Cottage was written before 10 June 1797, it is useful to consider briefly a few of the details of the poem's language and imagery. Some of the imagery derives from ruin poetry or Wordsworth's earlier works, and the language tends to show, like The Borderers, the influence of Shakespeare and the Bible.

There are a number of incidental echoes of Shakespeare and the Bible in The Ruined Cottage as Butler notes. One is the description of a tale:

'Tis a common tale,
By moving accidents uncharactered
(The Ruined Cottage, 290-1)

Wherein I spake of most disastrous changes,
Of moving accidents by flood or field;
Of hairbreadth scapes i' th' imminent deadly
breach
(Othello, I, iii, 134-6)

Here Shakespeare's imagery is used only to show the contrast with Wordsworth's purposes. The other Shakespearean echo is minor.⁵⁸ The undercurrent of religious discourse in The Ruined Cottage is most clearly evident in an image from Psalms, as Butler shows:⁵⁹

We die, my Friend,
Nor we alone, but that which each man loved
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him or is changed, and very soon
Even of the good is no memorial left.
(The Ruined Cottage, 130-4)

And of the poor did many cease to be,
And there place knew them not.
(The Ruined Cottage, 195-6)

As for man, his days are as grass:

As a flower in the field, so he flourisheth.
 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone;
 And the place thereof shall know it no more.
 (Psalm 103: 15-6)

Jonathan Wordsworth argues that the imagery of the decaying garden is a literary convention deriving from Isaiah, though there are many other literary examples of such a pattern of imagery.⁶⁰ There are, however, elements of religious discourse in the earliest drafts of The Ruined Cottage.⁶¹ An important point about Wordsworth's use of Shakespeare and the Bible in The Ruined Cottage is that he does not employ such allusions to add authority to his discourse as in The Borderers.

There may be echoes of other works in The Ruined Cottage. A passage not included in The Ruined Cottage MS. B echoes Mason's Caractacus:

But from these haunts
 lonesome
 Of ~~untamed~~ nature he had skill to draw
 A better & less transitory power
 (RCP, pp. 119-21, edited)

Surely there is a hidden power, that reigns
 'Mid the lone majesty of untam'd nature,
 Controuling sober reason; tell me else,
 Why do these haunts of barb'rous superstition
 O'ercome me thus?

(Mason, pp. 159-60)

Other phrases such as the "beating rain" of MS. A were commonplaces, and perhaps more important is the use of words or phrases that seem to derive from the language of everyday life: "Made my heart bleed", "the garden fence", and "I have heard her say"⁶² which, though they recall Shenstone, Langhorne, Burns and others, lend credence to Wordsworth's claim to have used the "language of conversation in the middle and lower classes".

The language of The Ruined Cottage seems broadly similar to that in The Borderers, though there are, of course, differences. It is not possible given the fragmentary nature of the manuscript evidence to establish the pattern of sources for the poem's language, but it would seem The Ruined Cottage drew upon a wide range of sources in its form and content, and possibly in its language as well.

VI

The Ruined Cottage is a landmark in Wordsworth's verse in a number of different ways. It brings together elements of Wordsworth's earlier poetry and a number of fragmentary poems into a single cohesive narrative. Perhaps developing theories inherent in The Borderers, the poem overtly adopts a stance towards the tragic and a dramatic mode of presentation which has much in common with Wordsworth's later poetry. The language of the poem tends to be deceptively simple, though it continues to embody literary influences. It would be misleading to characterize the poem as radically different from either Wordsworth's earlier verse or the work of other contemporary poets: there is no doubt that it draws heavily upon both these sets of sources. Of most interest is the way in which The Ruined Cottage is a part of an enormous pattern of constant revision and recasting of the war widow's tale, stretching back to Wordsworth's earliest poetry, through the Salisbury Plain poems, the revisions of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches, The Borderers, fragmentary poems related to The Ruined Cottage, and continuing into Book I of The Excursion,

a pattern evidenced by links of subject, theme, and even verbal echoes.

The Ruined Cottage also shows how Wordsworth drew upon stories of real life, his own observations, and literary sources. As in the Salisbury Plain poems and the revisions of 1794, Wordsworth used factual and biographical materials, and this indicates his "noble employment" of "fitting words to things" not "things to words".⁶³ In many ways Wordsworth's literary sources continued to influence most heavily matters of form and expression (rather than content or theme) throughout the period 1793-7, and The Ruined Cottage seems no exception. Given the democratic and radical provenance of the poem, it can be seen that the overt political didacticism of Salisbury Plain based upon political change dictated by reason and cast in the literary form and manner of Spenser (with something of his prophetic voice), has become transformed into a democratic form and manner, whose didacticism is moral and psychological, and based upon the feelings. Finally, the poem is, as much as either the Salisbury Plain poems or The Borderers, a product of its time: a reflection of the terrible suffering of many poor during the war with France that concentrates upon:

the mind of Man,
My haunt and the main region of my song.
(Home at Grasmere, 989-90)

CONCLUSION

Wordsworth's works between 10 July 1793 and 10 June 1797 are closely related, and this relationship is shown in the distinctive pattern of common components (the deranged woman, the storm, the heath, the traveller, murder, and images of isolation). This unity is enhanced by the various patterns of development, notably the treatment of the war widow's tale in all its forms from Salisbury Plain to The Ruined Cottage. There are other patterns where the same motif is employed but in strikingly different ways, as in the progression from the Windy Brow Inscription to the Steep Hill Inscription, and finally to Yew Tree Lines. The poetry of the period can therefore be considered a coherent whole within Wordsworth's works.

Many of the key elements in Wordsworth's verse of 1797 can be seen as related to eighteenth-century politics and philosophy. The key influences on Wordsworth were the natural philosophy of Bacon and Newton as assimilated by the Deists, and the democratic politics of the later eighteenth-century. From the natural philosophy of the period Wordsworth took the importance of evidence and truth. These ideas were related to a literary sense of nature (that is, what is real as opposed to artificial: literature as mimesis). In particular, Wordsworth focussed on the mind, and the interrelationship between mind and environment. In this process he saw nature as a key agent, ascribing to it the beneficent powers with which Deists invested the natural world. These theories of nature became a concern with the "primary laws of our nature":¹ a combination of the law-generating sciences and the power of nature to

generate morality. These ideological aspects of Wordsworth's verse are apparent in An Evening Walk (1794), but become integrated with more radical aspects of Wordsworth's works in The Ruined Cottage. Wordsworth's "levelling" muse² arose from his radical politics which were transformed into a democratic choice of subject matter and sources, a democratic choice of language, and more democratic narrative techniques. These changes altered the relationship between poet and audience, denying the implicit claim to 'elevated' content, style, or knowledge of much eighteenth-century poetry. Abrams noted these changes were not a departure from the eighteenth-century descriptions of the general and uniform, but were a "drastic break in poetic decorum" because of the choice of the beggar, the child and the idiot to illustrate general laws applicable to "all mankind".³ These democratic tendencies in Wordsworth's practice became inextricably bound up with his ideas of nature that stressed feeling and habit over reason, and his use of evidence from real life drawn from natural philosophy. From these differing strands of eighteenth-century thought emerged the distinctly Wordsworthian world view embodied in Lyrical Ballads.

Changes in Wordsworth's world view during the period are evident in the political aspects of his poetry. In A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff and Salisbury Plain, political injustice is the cause of private tragedy, and the solutions Wordsworth proposes are political and couched as appeals to reason. In this context, the vagrant's story in Salisbury Plain is intended to enlist the sympathies of the reader in order to reinforce a political argument. In

The Borderers the roots of injustice and suffering lie within the individual, and the revolutionary politicians and their political solutions to social ills (based as they were on reason rather than feelings) are implicitly criticized. In The Ruined Cottage Wordsworth returns to the character of the soldier's wife, but the intrusive voice of the poet that creates the political frame of Salisbury Plain is replaced by the dramatic narration of the Pedlar. The political and socio-economic roots of her suffering remain, but the sympathies of the reader are more powerfully evoked through the presentation of the disintegration of Margaret's physical and psychic worlds. In this way the purpose of the tragic narrative has shifted from being an exemplum of a political argument, to being itself "A power to virtue friendly".⁴ Further, Salisbury Plain emphasizes external events and advocates external political solutions, whilst The Ruined Cottage emphasizes internal changes, and advocates internal, moral solutions. Wordsworth had come to see the purpose of poetry as having an emotional rather than ideological effect on the reader, heralding a fundamental change in both his methods and world view (especially his distrust of abstract systems of morality). Nevertheless Wordsworth's subjects, the poor and the everyday, remained democratic.

The pattern of sources Wordsworth drew on during the period shows a number of features: his use of his own works as a source, his use of factual and biographical materials, the hitherto unrecognized extent of his use of literary sources, and the difference between the previously accepted pattern of those sources and the one that emerges after a

more thorough examination. A fundamental aspect of Wordsworth's use of sources during the period (and later) is the use of his own poetry as a source, a process which combines poetic parsimony with a mania for revision. Wordsworth incorporated everything from details of expression to extensive passages from earlier poems. This was closely related to his major revisions of An Evening Walk, Descriptive Sketches, and Salisbury Plain. Thus Sharrock's image of Wordsworth's poetry as a vast "palimpsest"⁵ is fully appropriate. Wordsworth also drew heavily on factual and biographical sources as in the stories of the female vagrant and Gervas Matchan, as well as in a variety of other areas from the characters in The Ruined Cottage to the use of Stainmore Heath as a setting. Wordsworth's poetry was also intensely literary in its origins. The pervasiveness of literary sources is indicated by the sheer bulk of close correspondences which demonstrates that previously accepted views of Wordsworth's rejection of his literary heritage are fundamentally incorrect. Further, previous accounts of his sources are occasionally misleading: the extent of Shakespeare's influence on The Borderers is overstated, and the assertion that Godwin's works significantly influenced The Borderers is misguided. On the other hand, the influence of Schiller, Rousseau, Paine, Latin poets, and ballads has been neglected. Perhaps the most important group of poets as influences on Wordsworth during this period were the "poets of nature", such as Thomson, Beattie, John Scott and Burns. Besides the obvious influence on Wordsworth's "poetry of nature", the ideological aspects of eighteenth-century

nature verse (the Deistical appeal to nature rather than the church, the condemnation of corruption in society and the praise of rural life, and the radical political bias) were consistent with Wordsworth's Republican sympathies. The undercurrent of radical poetry and prose as evidenced in such eighteenth-century writers was central to Wordsworth's own poetic practices, especially in his challenge to eighteenth-century literary decorum in his choice of sources and of diction. It is in this light that the poetry of 1797 can be seen as an expression of radical trends of the late eighteenth century.

Wordsworth's implied claim in the Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads that his poetry was close to "our elder writers, and with those in modern times who have been most successful in painting manners and passions"⁶ reflects his choice of sources to some extent. Of the "elder writers", Shakespeare and Milton figure prominently, and Spenser and traditional ballads to a lesser degree. On the other hand, there appear to be no significant debts to Chaucer, Dryden, and other "elder writers". Of "those in modern times" Wordsworth seemed to have drawn largely on Northern and Scottish authors, rather than the imitators of Pope or (except in his earlier verse) Gray and Collins. The obvious debts to works in other languages from Horace to Schiller and the debts to prose works, though not mentioned in the Advertisement, are also important. Wordsworth's selection of sources reflects his literary tastes, and the revolution of Lyrical Ballads lay, in part, in Wordsworth's innovative choice of sources and literary models.

Wordsworth's use of sources is, in some ways, as

important as the pattern of sources themselves. In An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches the use of allusion and reference to other literature follows the eighteenth-century pattern of more formal poets by including a large number of quotations and, implicitly, asserting a claim to belong to that literature. These features of Wordsworth's verse never entirely disappear: the allusion to Greenwood's A Poem Written during a Shooting Excursion on the Moors in An Evening Walk is not dissimilar to the allusion to Coleridge's Complaint of Ninathóma in Address to the Ocean. Further there are direct and indirect allusions to other literature in most of Wordsworth's poetry of the period. Nevertheless, the panoply of literary allusion and footnotes in An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches does not survive, and there are a number of reasons for this. The first is Wordsworth appears to have changed the pattern of his sources towards oral sources, particularly stories told to him by ordinary people, or at least about ordinary people. This indicates Wordsworth deliberately distanced himself from the concept of decorum in his selection of sources. The second is that Wordsworth's allusions often involve the transformation of the source: thus the allusion to Horace's Ode to Blandusia in An Evening Walk (1794) directly challenges the sentiments of the source, and his use of Caesar's and Mason's images of Druids in Salisbury Plain greatly expands their range of reference. The final significant factor is that Wordsworth appears to have developed an integrative approach to sources as in The Borderers where a variety of sources contributed to the plot and setting of the play.

These three factors (the changing pattern of sources, the transformation of sources, and the integration of sources) seem to have altered the way in which Wordsworth drew upon his sources in a fundamental way. In the final stanza of Salisbury Plain the description of the battle between Error and Truth draws heavily on The Faerie Queene and Wordsworth does little to modify the source, but rather employs it to create poetical resonances. Later poetry shows him more willing to transform his sources, as with the image from Pope:

Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect...
(Epistle to Cobham, 39-40)

where Wordsworth seized upon the implications of Pope's image to express his distrust of abstract reasoning and its 'deadly' effects in moral philosophy, thus imaginatively transforming Pope's witty simile into a powerful metaphor to express a major intellectual premise. Wordsworth's use of sources in his early poetry is reminiscent of Coleridge's definition of Fancy:

a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space . . . it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association...7

where appropriate sources are brought together with little or no modification. His later use of sources is, on the other hand, closer to Coleridge's definition of the secondary imagination:

It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still, at all events, it struggles to idealize and unify. It is essentially vital 7

where the source is modified.⁸ This would be consistent with the rather stilted allusions and borrowed imagery of Salisbury Plain giving way to the more flexible use of sources in The Borderers and The Ruined Cottage.

Wordsworth relied heavily on his sources, though the selection and use of sources changed during the period 1793-7. This was not, however, a temporary feature of his poetic techniques in 1797, but fundamental to his poetic practices throughout his later years. An example of this may illustrate how the intertextuality of Wordsworth's verse (between his own works, and between his works and the works of others) is fundamental to an understanding of his poetry. Wordsworth's account in The Prelude of his journey over Salisbury Plain in 1793 draws not only on his own experiences, but also on a range of literature:

To such mood,
 Once above all- a traveller at that time
 Upon the plain of Sarum- was I raised:
 There on the pastoral downs without a track
 To guide me, or along the bare white roads
 Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,
 While through these vestiges of ancient times
 I ranged, and by the solitude o'ercome,
 I had a reverie and saw the past,
 Saw multitudes of men, and here and there
 A single Briton in his wolf-skin vest,
 And shield and stone-ax, stride across the wold;
 The voice of spears was heard, the rattling spear
 Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in strength
 Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
 I called upon the darkness, and it took-
 A midnight darkness seemed to come and take-
 All objects from my sight; and lo, again
 The desert visible by dismal flames!
 It is the sacrificial altar, fed
 With living men- how deep the groans!- the voice
 Of those in the gigantic wicker thrills
 Throughout the region far and near, pervades
 The monumental hillocks, and the pomp
 Is for both worlds, the living and the dead...
 (The Prelude, xii, 312-336)

going on to describe another "antiquarian's dream" on the

plain. As has been noted, Wordsworth is "drawing heavily"⁹ on Salisbury Plain from the transition from one kind of vision to another to incorporating two lines of the earlier poem directly into his text:

It is the sacrificial altar fed
With living men. How deep it groans-
(Salisbury Plain, 184-5)

Such use of earlier poetry in The Prelude is not uncommon, but like The Prelude's better-known dream of the Arab with his two books, or even Coleridge's Kubla Khan, both dream and vision have essentially literary sources.¹⁰ The parallels with Salisbury Plain in this part of The Prelude are extensive, from the opening that recalls "O'er Sarum's plain the traveller with a sigh" to the "desert" where "A dismal light its farthest bounds illume".¹¹ Other passages show how Wordsworth slightly modified his source:

The voice of spears was heard, the rattling spear
Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in strength
Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
(The Prelude, xii, 3 24-6)

While warrior spectres of gigantic bones,
Forth-issuing from a thousand rifted tombs
(Salisbury Plain, 97-8)

 red arms appear
Uplifted thro' the gloom and shake the rattling
 spear...
(Salisbury Plain, 188-9)

or, more transparently, the "Gigantic beings" that "With shield and stone-ax stride across the wold"¹² become "A single Briton" whom Wordsworth sees with "shield and stone-ax, stride across the wold". The "antiquarian's dream" is a compression of a similar vision in Salisbury Plain:

And saw bearded teachers, with white wands
 Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,
 Alternately, and plain below, while breath
 Of music seemed to guide them, and the waste
 Was cheered with stillness and a pleasant sound.
 (The Prelude, xii, 349-53)

-Long bearded forms with wands uplifted shew
 To vast assemblies, while each breath of night
 Is hushed, the living fires that bright and slow
 Rounding th'aetherial field in order go.
 Then as they trace with awe their various files
 All figured in the mystic plain below,
 Still prelude of sweet sounds the moon beguiles
 And charmed for many a league the hoary desert
 smiles.
 (Salisbury Plain, 191-8)

The passages from Salisbury Plain have, in turn, their own literary sources. Thus the first "reverie" in The Prelude passage derives ultimately from the list of references to Druids in DC MS. 12 which came from the notes to Mason's Caractacus. Using these notes Wordsworth drew on the reference to Caesar's description of Druids (and their wickers), though some of his incidental imagery came from a range of works, including Julius Caesar, where he found descriptions of warriors arising from the tomb. The second "dream" follows the conventional visions in poems such as Collins's An Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland and Thomson's Castle of Indolence. Other details from the first passage from The Prelude indicate there may have been further sources: the "bare white road" recalls the "white road" of XVI (a) and "the living and the dead" is conventional. Thus the passages in The Prelude that purport to describe Wordsworth's "dream" and "reverie" on Salisbury Plain are a blend of literary and biographical reminiscences. The fundamental point here is not that these passages have a variety of

sources, but the deeply literary nature of Wordsworth's works, and of his poetic imagination.

In many ways the critical presuppositions about the relationship between Lyrical Ballads and contemporary poetry have tended to divert attention away from Wordsworth's use of his eighteenth-century literary heritage, and deny the profoundly literary nature of his poetry. His poetry during the period is, in itself, a record of the development from eighteenth-century poetry to Romantic poetry, and thus of great importance in charting the evolution of Wordsworth's verse and of Romantic poetry generally. Wordsworth's use of sources reveals an imaginative transformation of a wide range of sources in later works, rather than the conscious rearrangement of literary elements and direct allusions that characterize his earlier works. Wordsworth's changing use of sources suggests the importance of the use of sources as an element in the evolution of Romantic poetry. The poems of 1797 are not characterized by a radical rejection of eighteenth-century poetry, but rather a selective and recreative use of that literary heritage, and a selection of sources and techniques in part informed by democratic ideals. Wordsworth's choice and use of sources needs to be seen as a key element in the transformation of his poetry and in the revolution Lyrical Ballads does, in many ways, embody.

NOTES

The place of publication is London unless stated otherwise.

All quotations from Wordsworth are from the Cornell Wordsworth series or The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth (in that order of priority). Quotations from Lyrical Ballads are from the edition edited by Brett and Jones (LB), and those from The Prelude are from W. Wordsworth, The Prelude: 1799, 1805, 1850, ed. J. Wordsworth et al. (1979). Quotations from the Bible are from the Authorized Version.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads as given in The Prose Works of William Wordsworth, ed. W.J.B. Owen and J.W. Smyser, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1974), i, pp. 116-7: this quotation is from p. 116. All quotations from the Advertisement are from this text. All quotations from WW's prose works are from this edition which is cited below as Prose.

2. É. Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-1798, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed. (1921).

3. R. Mayo, "The Contemporaneity of the Lyrical Ballads" in A.R. Jones and W. Tydeman, eds., Wordsworth: 'Lyrical Ballads' (1979), pp. 79-126 (hereafter Mayo). For a more balanced assessment of these issues see M. Jacobus, Tradition and Experiment in Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads' (1798) (Oxford, 1976) (hereafter Jacobus). See also J.E. Jordan, Why the 'Lyrical Ballads'? (1976).

4. Mayo refers in his footnotes to poems written after WW's possibly because he did not have access to details of the chronology of WW's poems, though many of the poems bear

little relation to WW's (for examples of both these features see Mayo, p.116, footnote 14). See also L.S. Johnson, "Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads and late Eighteenth-Century Magazine Poetry" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1973).

5. A.R. Jones and W. Tydeman, eds., Wordsworth: 'Lyrical Ballads' (1979), pp. 16-17. All quotations from Lyrical Ballads are from WW and S.T. Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads, ed. R.L. Brett and A.R. Jones (1968) which is cited below as LB. For a more circumspect view see S. Gill, ed., William Wordsworth (Oxford, 1984), p. xviii.

6. G.M. Harper, William Wordsworth: His Life, Works and Influence, 3rd ed. (1929), p.83.

7. M.L. Reed, Wordsworth: The Chronology of the Early Years, 1770-1799 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) (hereafter Reed). All dating is based on Reed unless stated otherwise.

8. M.H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism (1973). See pp.19-140 in particular.

9. A. Beatty, William Wordsworth: His Doctrine and Art in their Historical Relations, 3rd ed. (Madison, 1962), P.D. Sheats, The Making of Wordsworth's Poetry, 1785-1798 (Cambridge, Mass., 1973) (hereafter Sheats), J. Wordsworth, ed., Bicentenary Wordsworth Studies (Ithaca, 1970), pp.29-49, The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. E. de Selincourt and H. Darbishire, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1940-58) (hereafter PW), and the Cornell Wordsworth series. The many others are discussed elsewhere, though no attempt has been made to cite the first published account of suggested sources in every case.

10. By Legouis, Beatty, and Jonathan Wordsworth

respectively: these attributions are discussed in detail below.

11. H. Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence, A Theory of Poetry (1973).

12. J. L. Lowes, The Road to Xanadu, 2nd ed. (1978), p. 396.

13. R. Scholes, Structuralism in Literature, An Introduction (1974), p. 176. See also pp. 170-80.

14. Prose, i, p. 130.

15. Prose, i, pp. 116, 124.

16. See, for example, R.B. Hearn, The Road to Rydal Mount: A Survey of William Wordsworth's Reading (Salzburg, 1973), and B.R. Schneider, Jr., Wordsworth's Cambridge Education (Cambridge, 1957). A specific list of WW's books is given in C.L. and A.C. Shaver, Wordsworth's Library: A Catalogue (1979).

17. See 'Schedule of Books of the Late Mr John Wordsworth of Cockermouth sent by Rich'd Wordsworth to Mr William Wordsworth at Grasmere at his request, Oct. 1805' (DCP); Richard Wordsworth's letter to WW of 7 October 1805 (DCP), and M. Moorman, William Wordsworth: A Biography, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1957, 1965), i, p. 71 (cited below as Moorman).

18. C. Wordsworth, Memoirs of Wordsworth, 2 vols. (1851), i, p. 34 (see also p. 10).

19. See T.W. Thompson, Wordsworth's Hawkshead, ed. R. Woof (1970), pp. 344-5.

20. Hawkshead Grammar School Library Catalogue (hereafter HGSLC) is a manuscript catalogue of the school's library drawn up in the nineteenth century. As it lists dates of publication it is a good indicator of the books in the

library when WW attended, and as such it is used in the thesis to indicate works WW might have read from the library.

21. B.R. Schneider, Jr., Wordsworth's Cambridge Education (Cambridge, 1957), p. 77, and Reed, p. 296. For WW's knowledge of John Scott, see the footnote to An Evening Walk, 173 (hereafter EW) and HGSLC. See Sheats, pp. 1-42 and Moorman, i, pp. 56-85.

22. The Poetical Works of John Scott (1782), p. 92. See J. Scott, Critical Essays (1785), pp. 2, 113 for other ideas parallel to WW's.

23. W. Wordsworth, An Evening Walk, ed. J. Averill (1984), p. 301 (cited below as Averill).

24. See The Prelude (1805), v, 582-90, Moorman, i, pp. 10-11, and PW, v, pp. 406-7 for some indication of WW's oral training and knowledge. The Prelude (1805) is cited below as The Prelude.

25. For a full account of WW's Cambridge days and his reading, see B.R. Schneider, Jr., Wordsworth's Cambridge Education (Cambridge, 1957).

26. C. Wordsworth, Memoirs of Wordsworth, 2 vols. (1851), i, p. 14.

27. See Prose, i, pp. 50-66.

28. See the notes to EW in Averill and to Descriptive Sketches (hereafter DS) in W. Wordsworth, Descriptive Sketches, ed. E. Birdsall (1984) (hereafter Birdsall).

CHAPTER ONE

Salisbury Plain

1. The Salisbury Plain Poems of William Wordsworth, ed. S.

Gill (Hassocks, 1975), pp. 6-7 (cited below as SPP). Salisbury Plain (cited below as SP) and Adventures on Salisbury Plain (cited below as ASP) are quoted from Gill's reading texts.

2. EW, 257-300 and see Reed, p.310.

3. V. Knox, Elegant Extracts . . . Poetry, 2nd ed. (n.d.), p. 177 (hereafter EE). For WW's knowledge of this collection, see Z.S. Fink, The Early Wordsworthian Milieu (Oxford, 1958). All quotations from Thomson are from J. Thomson, Poetical Works, ed. J.L. Robertson (1971): for WW's knowledge of Thomson, see the footnote to EW, 173. See also J. Wordsworth The Music of Humanity (1969), pp. 52-3 (hereafter M of H).

4. PW, i, p.330, Averill, p. 148. J. Wordsworth's claim in M of H, p.52 and n. that WW was mistaken in asserting travellers had died on Stainmore is contradicted in B.R. Alderson, ed., The Parish Register of Bowes, 1670-1837 (Wakefield, 1964), p. 166.

5. SPP, p. 216.

6. SP, 145-53.

7. Reed, p.144n.

8. See SP, 406 where the descent from Stainmore to Brough may be implied. There may also be other internal evidence: SP, 91-9 and 181-9 seem alternative versions of a similar scene, written at different times.

9. The Vale of Esthwaite, 47-74 (hereafter VE). See also VE, 302-8. There are also parallels in EW, 257-300 and similar images: "eyes through tears" (EW, 252)/"in tears he eyed" (SP, 57); "straw-built shed" (EW, 258)/ "straw-built home" (SP, 112).

10. VE, 219, 221, and SP, 175, 79.

11. See SPP, p. 35n. for another suggested parallel to SP, 421-3, though the DS passage is not as close as those quoted below, and seems to follow Gray, Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College, 91-7 (for WW's knowledge of Gray, see PW, i, p.323). All quotations from Gray, Collins or Goldsmith are from The Poems of Thomas Gray, William Collins, Oliver Goldsmith, ed. R. Lonsdale (1969), cited below as Lonsdale.

12. SPP, p.28n. See also SPP, p. 36n.

13. See Prothalamion and Moorman, i, p.23. See also Anacreon, 38-46 and SP, 406-10 where both follow L'Allegro, and SP, 25 and C. Smith, Written at the Close of Spring, 14.

14. See SP, 436-41 and Prose, i, p.36 and, more specifically, SP, 435, 507-8 and Prose, i, p.49.

15. SPP, p.5.

16. This version would consist of the following stanzas of SP as it stands in DC MS. 10, though the stanzas may have been rewritten before being recorded in that manuscript: 7(?), 9-10, 12-8, 19(?), 20, 22(?), 23-34, 36-8, 41-7.

17. J. Wordsworth, ed., Bicentenary Wordsworth Studies (Ithaca, 1970), pp.142-79.

18. É. Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-1798, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed., (1921), pp.238-45 and G.M. Harper, William Wordsworth: His Life, Works and Influence, 3rd. ed. (1929), pp.160-3.

19. Other than rightly pointing out that female vagrants are "stereotypes" (Mayo, p.87), Mayo's article gives little information on sources. The poems he cites in his footnote (pp. 116-7) were mostly written after 1793.

20. E. Welsford, Salisbury Plain (Oxford, 1966), pp.5-30,

Jacobus, pp.133-58, Sheats, pp.84-94, and SPP, pp.5-7 and in the notes to the reading text.

21. Gill does not deal at length with biographical sources, though he notes Fink's suggestion that WW knew a "story of local oppression" (SPP, p.29n.). The death of WW's father near Cold Fell due to exposure and possibly WW's affair with Annette Vallon might also be relevant, though the female vagrant's story appears to pre-date WW's leaving France.

22. See, for example, B. Willey, The Eighteenth-Century Background (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 10-24 and, on politics, L.F. Chard, Dissenting Republican (The Hague, 1972) and F.M. Todd, Politics and the Poet (1957).

23. R. Price, A Discourse on the Love of Our Country (1790), p.41.

24. See C. Hill, The World Turned Upside Down (Harmondsworth, 1972).

25. For Gill's notes see SPP, pp.23,25,28,31 and 37. The other examples are from SP, 162,332, and 363, and The Faerie Queene, I,xi,10,2; II,xi,39,9, and VI,x,7,8 (hereafter FQ). All quotations from Spenser's works are from E. Spenser, Poetical Works, ed. J.C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (1977).

26. See SPP, pp.25n., 26n.

27. See SP, 208-16, and Prothalamion, 37-41.

28. SP, 73-90 (SP, 78, 88 are quoted here).

29. See SPP, p. 6 and n.

30. T.J. Gillcrist, "Spenser and Reason in the Conclusion of Salisbury Plain", English Language Notes, 7 (1969), pp.11-8.

31. See FQ, I, xxi, 22, 7 and SP, 545. See also SP, 313-5

and FQ, I, i, 25, 1-9. See also SP, 543 and FQ, I, iv, argument, 1 and iv, 4, 6.

32. T.J. Gillcrist, "Spenser and Reason in the Conclusion of Salisbury Plain", English Language Notes, 7 (1969), p. 17.

33. SPP, p. 32n. All quotations from Beattie and Blair are from The Poetical Works of Beattie, Blair, and Falconer, ed. Rev. G. Gilfillan (Edinburgh, 1854). For WW's knowledge of Beattie, see the footnote to EW, 116. Blair's The Grave is in EE.

34. See SPP, p. 36n.

35. J. Holloway and J. Black, eds., Later English Broadside Ballads (1975), p. 42: lines 9-20 are quoted here.

36. C. Smith, The Old Manor House, ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis (1969), p. 356 (all quotations are from this edition which is cited in the text by its title). For WW's knowledge of Smith, see Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years, 1787-1805, ed. E. de Selincourt rev. C.L. Shaver, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1967), p. 68 (cited below as EY).

37. R. Sharrock, "Wordsworth and John Langhorne's The Country Justice", N&Q, 199 (1954), pp. 302-4. The last two poems were extremely popular, and for WW's knowledge of Bowles see Moorman, i, p. 125 and of Shenstone, see EY, p. 154.

38. The Poetical Works of William Shenstone, ed. Rev. G. Gilfillan (Edinburgh, 1854) (line 25 is quoted in the text). All quotations from Shenstone are from this edition. W.L. Bowles, Verses on . . . Criminals (1790), p. 20. For The Poor Man's Prayer see The Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 61 (1791), pp. 852-3 (see also Douglas, III,

iii, 77-82, and SPP, p.29n.).

39. F.L. Ford, Europe, 1790-1830 (1971), p.122. See EY, p.124.

40. J.-J. Rousseau, Du Contrat Social ou Principes du Droit Politique (Paris, 1960), pp.46, 42, 43, 42 respectively. See also P. Kelley, "Rousseau's Discourse on the Origins of Inequality and Wordsworth's Salisbury Plain", N&Q, N.S. 24 (1977), p.323. For WW's knowledge of Rousseau, see Prose, i, pp. 36, 56.

41. See C.W. Roberts, "The Influence of Godwin on Wordsworth's 'Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff'", Studies in Philology, 29 (1932), pp.588-606 and Prose, i, pp.20-1n. The assertions in C.W.Roberts, "Wordsworth, The Philanthropist, and Political Justice", Studies in Philology, 31 (1934), pp.84-91 are undermined by comparing EY, pp.124-5, SP, 507-49, and R. Price, A Discourse on the Love of Our Country (1790), pp.10-3 where similar arguments are expressed in similar terms. Godwin was not, in any event, absolutely opposed to political violence in the first edition of Political Justice (see W. Godwin, Political Justice, ed. F.E.L. Priestley, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1946), iii, p.229), and Paine offers an equally forthright appeal to reason (see T. Paine, The Rights of Man, ed. H. Collins (Harmondsworth, 1977), p.168). None of this absolutely precludes WW's being influenced by Godwin, but it demonstrates he was aware of these ideas before reading Godwin (see also EY, pp. 170-1).

42. SP, 446-73. SP, 473-504 are missing, and some of these lines referred to colonialism.

43. For example Paradise Regained, iii, 71-86 and J.Swift,

Gulliver's Travels, ed. P. Dixon and J. Chalker (Harmondsworth, 1979), pp.343-4.

44. See H.M. Williams, Poems, 2 vols. (1786) (all quotations from her poems are from this edition, and for WW's knowledge of Williams, see Reed, p.19).

45. The Poetical Works of John Scott (1782). All quotations from Scott are from this edition. The quotations are from Serim, 8 and SP, 470, 471.

46. E. Darwin, The Botanic Garden (Menston, 1973): see PW, iii, p.442. For other parallels in diction see SP, 426, 461-2 and The Botanic Garden, I, ii, 480, 417, and 432.

47. The Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. J. Butt (1975). All quotations from Pope are from this edition. The image is a commonplace. For WW's knowledge of Pope, see EY, p.55.

48. As quoted in W. Blake, Complete Writings, ed. G. Keynes (1976). This poem was printed but not published by WW's publisher, Joseph Johnson, in 1791. It seems unlikely that it is an echo, but if so it is the earliest echo of Blake.

49. See also "Pride" (SP, 543) which WW connected with intellectual arrogance, A.O. Lovejoy, "'Pride' in Eighteenth-Century Thought", MLN, 46 (1921), pp.31-7, Prose, iii, p.128, and The Prelude, x, 317-9.

50. SPP, p.37n. All quotations from Milton are from The Poems of John Milton, ed. H. Darbishire (1961).

51. R. Price, A Discourse on the Love of Our Country (1790), pp.10-2. See also G. Kelly, The English Jacobin Novel, 1780-1805 (Oxford, 1976), pp.7-8.

52. See William Mason, Poems (York, 1771), p.159-60 and DS, 55-6, 424-5. All quotations from Mason are from this

edition which is cited below as Mason. See also J.R. Nabholz, "Wordsworth and William Mason", RES, N.S. 15 (1964), pp.297-302 and A.L. Owen, The Famous Druids (Oxford, 1962), pp.115,172 (and SP, 191).

53. See SPP, pp. 35n. and 217 (11.30-5).

54. See Mason, p.246 and SP, 182-3; and Mason, pp.236-7, 243, and SP, 185-8.

55. On the literary traditions associated with Druids see A.L. Owen, The Famous Druids, (Oxford,1962), pp.101-38, 163-7, R.A. Aubin, Topographical Poetry in XVIII-Century England (New York, 1966), p.401 (hereafter Aubin), and T.D. Kendrick, The Druids (1927), pp.212-21.

56. The other two references might have come from J. Smith, Galic Antiquities (Edinburgh, 1780), pp.5, 43 (in HGSLC).

57. J. Caesar, The Gallic War, ed. and trans. H.J. Edwards (1966), p. 340. For WW's knowledge of Caesar, see B.R. Schneider, Jr., Wordsworth's Cambridge Education (Cambridge, 1957), p. 68.

58. W. Hutchinson, An Excursion to the Lakes (1774), cited in the text as An Excursion.

59. SP, 123 and An Excursion, p. 10; and SP, 75-6 and An Excursion, pp. 12-5. There may also be a parallel between Hutchinson's description of the Castle Rocks of St. John's (pp. 104-5) and SP, 77-85 where WW could have transformed Hutchinson's "delusion" into a Gothic nightmare through the imagery of Spenser's Cave of Merlin.

60. W. Gilpin, Observations on the Western Parts of England (1798) which is cited in the text by its title. For WW's possible knowledge of the text, see p. iv, The Poems of

Thomas Gray, ed. W. Mason, 4 vols. (York, 1778), iv, p.199, MSS. Eng. Misc. e. 510, d.558-9 (Bodleian Library), as well as the Farish-Gilpin letters and WW's friendship with the Farishes. On Wordsworth's journey, see Reed, p.146n., but also SP, 199 and The Gentleman's Magazine 56(i) (1786), p.261: there is no reason to suppose a particular storm is being referred to in SP.

61. W. Gilpin, Observations on the Western Parts of England (1798), pp. 83-4 and SP, 109, 98.

62. See Aubin, pp. 171, 180-1, 198-9, 406.

63. See P.M. Spacks, The Insistence of Horror (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), pp.33, 165-93, Goldsmith, The Traveller, 11-22 and The Deserted Village, 1-34, Rogers, The Pleasures of Memory, i, 35-6 (and SP, 249), and J. Sturrock, "Wordsworth: an Early Borrowing from Dante", N&Q, N.S.27 (1980), pp.204-5.

64. See C.A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England, 1700-1760", PMLA, 31 (1916), pp. 315-22 where the connection between pastoral poetry and polemical poetry is discussed.

65. Aubin, p. 100.

66. All quotations from Shakespeare are from W. Shakespeare, The Complete Works, ed. P. Alexander (1978).

67. See Collins, Ode to Fear, 20-1 and Lonsdale, p. 419n. See also Paradise Lost, xi, 641-4 (cited below as PL) and SP, 174-5.

68. F. Celoria, "Chatterton, Wordsworth and Stonehenge", N&Q, N.S. 23 (1976), pp.103-4. All quotations from Chatterton are from T. Chatterton, Poems (1777). For WW's knowledge of Chatterton, see PW, i, p.367.

69. The quotations are from T.W. Thompson, Wordsworth's Hawkshead, ed. R. Woof (1970), p. 319 (see SPP, p.126n.), and A. Radcliffe, Gaston de Blondville . . . Poetical Pieces, 2 vols. (New York, 1976), ii, p.110.

70. See SPP, p.28n., Sheats, p.87, SP, 289 and The Lord's Prayer; and SP, 311 and Smollett, Ode to Independence, 93.

71. Metamorphoses, vii, 628-9 as given in Ovid, Metamorphoses, ed. and trans. F.J. Miller, 2 vols. (1971).

72. SP, 58 and The Cotter's Saturday Night, 13. All quotations from Burns are from R. Burns, Poems and Songs, ed. J. Kinisley (Oxford, 1969), and for WW's knowledge of Burns see the footnote to EW, 317.

73. SPP, p. 24n.

74. W.J.B. Owen, "Some Wordsworthian Borrowings", N&Q, 193 (1948), p.429.

75. See SP, 406-10 and L'Allegro, and VE, 22, EW, 108, Tintern Abbey, 18-9, DS, 28, Summer, 1666, and The Minstrel, I, xxxix, 2. See also SPP, p.85, PL, ii, 398-400, and The Minstrel, I, xxvi, 7-8. For related critical comments, see R.D. Havens, The Influence of Milton on English Poetry (New York, 1961) and W.J.B. Owen, "Some Wordsworthian Borrowings" N&Q, 193 (1948), pp.429-30.

76. C. Smith, Elegiac Sonnets, and Other Poems (1829). All quotations from Smith's poetry are from this edition. See also EE, p.245 and PL, iv, 156.

77. Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads (Prose, i, p. 116).

CHAPTER TWO

The 1794 Revisions of An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches

1. See Averill, pp. 12-16 and Birdsall, pp. 12-18.

Further evidence to suggest that the Huntington Quarto additions (here HQ: as printed in Birdsall, pp. 134-87) belong to 1794 can be found in the similarities with SP: "lonesome way" (HQ, p.6, SPP, p.45), the "freshening" rain (HQ, p.6, SP, 345), the wind wildly "whistling" (HQ, p.17, SP, 52-3), "disastrous" lightning (HQ, p.29, SPP, p.57 and DC MS. 2, p.65), a dawn of "gladness" (HQ, p. 46, SP, 337), and a few parallels of setting.

2. Averill's edition is the first accurate text, though some of the additions were available in the notes to EW in PW.

3. Sheats, p. 268. See Sheats, pp. 95-104 and Averill, pp. 11-6.

4. See Aubin, pp. 100, 218-9. See also J. Scott, Critical Essays (1785), pp.2-3 (cited below as Critical Essays) and B. Brydone, A Tour Through Sicily and Malta, 2 vols. (1791), i, p.91.

5. Critical Essays, pp. 333, 11.

6. W. Gilpin, Three Essays (1794), p.18n.

7. DS, 103.

8. Aubin, p. 6.

9. [of Ullswater]: T. Gray, The Poems of Mr. Gray, ed. W. Mason, 4 vols. (York, 1778), iv, p.165.

10. Georgics, ii, 469. All quotations from Virgil are from Virgil, trans. H.R. Fairclough, rev. ed., 2 vols. (1978): one of DS's epigraphs is from Virgil.

11. W. Gilpin, Observations, Relative Chiefly . . . Lakes of Cumberland, and Westmoreland, 2 vols. (1786), i, pp.99-100. See also i, pp.124-6. There may be a faint parallel between i, p.98 and EW (1794), 177-8.

12. C.A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England, 1700-1760", PMLA, 31 (1916), pp.264-325. For a discussion of 'nature' in the eighteenth century, see B. Willey, The Eighteenth-Century Background (Harmondsworth, 1965).

13. H.W. Piper, The Active Universe (1962), pp.3-28 (cited below as The Active Universe).

14. Sheats, pp. 95-104, 268-70.

15. See G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814 (1977), p.363, M of H, pp.184-88, and The Active Universe, pp.60-84.

16. The Active Universe, pp.60-84 and Sheats, pp.269-70. See also J.W. Beach, The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth-Century English Poetry (New York, 1966), p.569, though D'Holbach's Systeme de la Nature was in WW's father's library (DCP).

17. E. Darwin (Zoonomia), The Active Universe, p.115n., and D'Holbach. See also N. Hampson, The Enlightenment (Harmondsworth, 1979), p. 89.

18. C.A. Moore, "The Return to Nature in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century", Studies in Philology, 14 (1917), p.271. See also note 11 above.

19. See R.D. Havens, The Mind of a Poet, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1941), i, pp.125-50, 386-91, 161-176 respectively, Jacobus, pp.39-58, and J.W. Beach, The Concept of Nature (New York, 1966), pp.35-42. All quotations from Akenside are from The Poetical Works of Mark Akenside, ed. C.C. Clarke (Edinburgh, 1868) (quotations from The Pleasures of the Imagination are from the three book version), and all quotations from Cowper are from The Poetical Works of

William Cowper (Edinburgh, 1892): both poets are quoted extensively in EE.

20. See EY, pp.32-8 and Sheats, p.270; and see also DC MS. 2, WW's early sonnets, and VE.

21. On the Morning of Christs Nativity, 64, 66.

22. All quotations from Bowles are from The Poetical Works of William Lisle Bowles, ed. Rev. G. Gilfillan, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1855). See also EW (1794), 125, 130 and DS, 249-50. The Task, iii, 290-299 encapsulates many of the main metaphors discussed here.

23. The Pleasures of the Imagination, i, 109-124 and iii, 358-68. See Jacobus, p.56n.

24. Young, Night Thoughts, ix, 889 (all quotations are from E. Young, Night-Thoughts (1822): for WW's knowledge of Young see his note to EW, 361). But also see Langhorne, Inscription on the Door of a Study, 19-20, Pope, Essay on Man, ii, 183-5, or even The Novels of Mrs Ann Radcliffe, ed. W. Scott (1824), p.77.

25. See also DS, 55-6 and J.R. Nabholz, "Wordsworth and William Mason", RES, N.S. 15 (1964), pp.297-302. EW (1794), 725-36 refers to the events of Caractacus.

26. See for example The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1969-), i, pp.224-5 and notes (this series is cited below as CC).

27. See The Pleasure of the Imagination, i, 56-138 and iii, 278-424 and The Minstrel. See The Task, vi, 84-117.

28. This is part of WW's rapid review of English poetry, and probably simplifies his ideas.

29. J. Thomson, Poetical Works, ed. J.L. Robertson (1971) pp.240-1.

30. Lonsdale, p.50n.

31. PW, i, p.321. See also Sheats, p.51.

32. See Moorman, i, pp.41-2.

33. EW (1794), 759-68 and Summer, 538-63 or Autumn, 1030-6: Mickle's Pollio is one amongst many other poems to use the same motif. EW (1794), 408-9 and Spring, 21-5 (but see Deserted Village, 44); EW (1794), 187-90 and Summer, 285-6; and EW (1794), 69-78 and Summer, 480-513 (but see J. Clarke, A Survey of the Lakes of Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire, 2nd ed. (1789), p.30).

34. VE, 456-77. See also EW (1794), 42 and Elegy, 13.

35. See Gray, Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College, especially ll. 51-3.

36. See EW (1794), 737-58, Averill, p.80 and n., Gray's Elegy, 10, Spring, 161, Aeneid, iv, 462-3, and Deserted Village, 113-24. See also Z.S. Fink, The Early Wordsworthian Milieu (Oxford, 1958), pp.141-2.

37. See EW (1794), 568, Georgics, iv, 307 and Lonsdale, p.121 and n.

38. John Scott, Critical Essays (1785), p. 103 and see Averill, p.50n.

39. See EW (1794), 366-75 and 737-802 and The Poetical Works of John Scott (1782), pp.63, 72-3.

40. EW (1794), 160 and J. Arthos, The Language of Natural Description in Eighteenth-Century Poetry (1949), pp.278-81. For "brown" see EW (1794), 112 and Lonsdale, p.50 and n.

41. Averill, p. 135n. See EW (1794), 109-42. All quotations from Horace's odes are from Horace, The Odes and Epodes, ed. and trans. C.E. Bennett (1978) and from

'Satires', 'Epistles' and 'Ars Poetica', ed and trans. H.R. Fairclough (1978) for his other verse. For WW's knowledge of Horace, see Septimi Gades. The echo of Milton in EW (1794), 111 is also found in ASP, 84.

42. Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, trans. W.H.D. Rouse, rev. M.F. Smith (1975), p.9n. (all quotations from Lucretius are from this edition). See P. Kelley, "Wordsworth and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura", N&Q, N.S. 30 (1983), pp.219-22.

43. SPP, p.36n.

44. Winter, 276-321, and EW (1794), 484-537 and note. The image was a commonplace: see DC MSS. 5-7, A Winter Piece (EE, p.177), and Smollett, Tears of Scotland.

45. EW (1794), 275-87: the passage contains an allusion to A Midsummer's Night's Dream, I, i, 3-4 as noted in PW.

46. See Birdsall, pp.289-97.

47. There is also the reference to Milton: see Averill, pp. 14-5, 153 and n. There is a Miltonic allusion in EW (1794), 292-3: see Averill, p.141 and n., DS (1793), 336-7, and VE, 319-22.

48. EW (1794), 279, 287.

CHAPTER THREE

Adventures on Salisbury Plain (1795)

1. SPP, pp.9-12.

2. J. Wordsworth, "Startling the Earthworms", TLS, 3 December 1976, p. 1524.

3. See SPP, pp. 109-17.

4. SP, 334-5, 403 and ASP, 563, 568-9.

5. There were less than two months in which WW could have re-written the poem (55 new stanzas and revising 37 to

reach MS. 2 seems impossible), and he had spent much time exploring the area (see P.P.: A. Pinney to WW, 26 Nov. 1795, and EY, p. 156). See also ASP, 36 and XVI (b), 10-1 that seem to refer to the country around Racedown, and Dorothy WW to Jane Marshall, 30 November 1795 (EY, p. 162) and ASP, 361-74 where the incidents of 17 November 1795 seem incorporated into MS. 2 (and see SPP, pp.11-12 and n.).

6. See SPP, p.116n. The first two calculations refer to SP as it stands in MS. 1, the third may refer to a 70 stanza version.

7. SPP, p.12.

8. SPP, pp.7-13 and S.C. Gill, "Adventures on Salisbury Plain' and Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest 1795-7", SR, 11 (1972), pp. 48-65, hereafter Gill.

9. Gill, pp. 49-50n. reviews these accounts well, and see Sheats, pp. 108-18.

10. This is a long-standing convention, as in Hamlet (see the parallel with Hamlet in W. Godwin, Caleb Williams, ed. D. McCracken (Oxford, 1978), pp. 126-9: all quotations are from this edition). It is likely this kind of associationism derives from literary sources rather than Hartley or Darwin. See also ASP, 643-5, Farish, The Heath, 25-6, and S. Gessner, The Death of Abel, trans. M. Collyer (Baltimore, 1807), p.172 (all quotations are from this edition), ASP, 109-26, J.C.F. von Schiller, The Robbers, trans. A.F. Tytler (1792), pp.184-5 (cited below as The Robbers), and The Heath, 8-18.

11. See L.J. Davis, Factual Fictions (New York, 1983), pp. 123-37, Caleb Williams, p.340 and n., and C.J. Smith, "Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Growth of a Theme",

Studies in Philology, 54 (1957), pp. 53-64.

12. The convention is also similar to many other literary murderer conventions (as in Othello), and Gothic novels such as those by Radcliffe. The English versions often employ the 'fatal flaw' theory: for example, see Caleb Williams, pp. 138-9. The innocent murderer may owe something to the American experience as well: see W. Bartram, Travels . . . Carolina, ed. F. Harper (New Haven, 1958), pp.15-6 (for WW's possible knowledge of this book, see C.N. Coe, Wordsworth and the Literature of Travel (New York, 1953), p. 106).

13. Gill, p.62. On this page Falkland is called a "benevolent" murderer, but see the quotation from The Robbers given in the text. Of the other parallels Gill cites, the gang of thieves was a commonplace (see A.-R. Lesage, The Adventures of Gil Blas, trans. T. Smollett (1899), p.8-18), and in any event it doesn't really parallel the female vagrant's story; the distress on the heath in ASP comes from SP which pre-dates Caleb Williams; and the "compassionate" human beings are more in evidence in ASP (the similarity here is a bit forced).

14. In both the murderer is a good man who gives himself up after abandoning his loved ones (see below), and both deal with the corruption of society and the individual. This is not to argue such similarities are convincing: better parallels with ASP can be found in traditional accounts of murderers in ballads, Newgate Calendars, and books such as J. Reynolds, The Triumphs of God's Revenge . . . Murder, 6th ed. (1679) and similar compilations.

15. A. Beatty, Joseph Fawcett: The Art of War (Ann

Arbor, 1918):

16. See Gill, p.61, and also p.61n. and p.62.

17. See SPP, pp. 307-10.

18. Gill, p.55.

19. CC, i, pp.222-3n.

20. T. Paine, The Rights of Man, ed. H. Collins (Harmondsworth, 1977), p. 240 (cited below as The Rights of Man). For WW's knowledge of Paine, see Prose, i, p. 53.

21. J. Cottle, Poems (Bristol, 1795), p. i.

22. See ASP, 697-738, The Rights of Man, p.270, and Langhorne, The Country Justice, ii, 225-230 (for WW's knowledge of Langhorne, see PW, i, p.322). Another example is in ASP, 91-3 and G.Dyer, The Complaints of the Poor People of England (1793), p. 131.

23. Gill, p.53.

24. The Letters of John Wordsworth, ed. C.H. Ketcham (Ithaca, 1969), p.70.

25. But see SPP, p. 149n.

26. Written at the Close of Spring, 14 and SP, 224-5. There is also similar evidence in MS. 2: ASP, 1-9 and Moss, The Beggar's Petition, 1-8; ASP, 43 and Chatterton, An Excelente Balade of Charite, 82; ASP, 154 and Collins, An Ode on the Popular Superstitions . . . Scotland, 142; ASP, 291-2 and Lonsdale, p. 51 and n.; ASP, 453 and Hart's apostrophe on Pope, 7 (as quoted in The Dunciad Variorum); and ASP, 510-11 and Scott, Eclogue IV, 5-6.

27. T.W. Thompson, Wordsworth's Hawkshead, ed. R. Woof (1970), p. 319 (see also pp. 311-21).

28. See ASP, 406-7 and The Heath, 19; and ASP, 644-5 and The Heath, 25-6.

29. Some version of these lines would be necessary to give Matchan's background. Other Miltonic parallels in MS.2: ASP, 715-6 and PL, iii, 22-6; and ASP, 777 and PL, vi, 774.

30. Gill, p.50.

CHAPTER FOUR

Shorter Poems

1. Reed, pp. 22-3, 305-6. For the text of "When slow" see WW, The Poems, ed. J.O. Hayden, 2 vols. (Harmondsworth, 1977), cited below as Hayden. The first draft of Lines Written Near Richmond is similar to "When slow" in a number of ways.

2. Sheats, p.48. See The Task, i, 141-3.

3. See Lonsdale, pp. 118-9n. most of which is relevant to WW's poem. For other parallels see G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814 (1977), pp. 96-7, 358, Z.S. Fink, The Early Wordsworthian Milieu (Oxford, 1958), pp. 108-9, 117, C. Landon, "A Survey of an Early MS. of Wordsworth" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of London, 1962), p. 348, PL, iii, 38-9, Il Penseroso, 74-7, and Dr. John Brown's description of an evening scene (as quoted in Guide to the Lakes).

4. "When slow", 2 and Sonnet to Twilight, 3. See C. Landon, op. cit., p.360. For "top", see PL, ii, 488-9 and Summer, 1691-2.

5. "When slow", 10 and Hayden, i, p.928. See also "When slow", 6-8 and Prose, i, p.7.

6. See C. Landon, op. cit., pp. 375-6 (her notes suggest the sources discussed), R.S. Woof, "Wordsworth's Poetry and Stuart's Newspapers: 1797-1803", Studies in

Bibliography, 15 (1962), pp. 182-3, and Reed, p. 22.

7. Ed. H. I. A. Fausset, Minor Poets of the Eighteenth Century (1930), pp. 116-7. See also PW, i, pp. 318, 320.

8. Written in . . . Youth, 2 and Elegy, 5. C. Landon also sees a parallel with Mason's Ode on Melancholy. Julius Caesar, II, i, 232, C. Smith, Sonnet X, and the popular image of the Mimosa (the 'sensitive plant') may also be relevant.

9. PW, i, p. 318. See also line one ("Silence sets her seal"), Samson Agonistes, 49, and "A slumber did my spirit seal".

10. PW, v, p. 340. See also Jacobus, pp. 113-4.

11. Night Thoughts, vi, 424. See also Tintern Abbey, 42-50 where the abstraction from the senses and ideas of harmony take on a deeper significance.

12. See J. Wordsworth, The Borders of Vision (Oxford, 1982) for a discussion of these issues.

13. For texts see DC MS. 11. For approximate printed versions see Sheats, p. 84 (incomplete), and Hayden, p. 117 (inaccurate). PW, i, pp. 307-8 gives the text of At the Isle of Wight.

14. See Reed, p. 25 although "In vain" was, at some point, revised.

15. See Aubin, pp. 414, 350-64.

16. G. Richards, The Aboriginal Britons, A Poem (Oxford, 1791), p. 24. All quotations from John Dyer are from Poems (1761).

17. Sheats, p. 84, Elegy, 9.

18. DS, 720-739, 784-7.

19. See Lloyd's Sonnet IV (published 1795) for a poem

with a similar theme to "In vain".

20. The Novels of Mrs Ann Radcliffe, ed. W. Scott (1824), pp.82-3. Compare line 22 with W. Gilpin, Observations on the Western Parts of England (1798), p.276: the OED gives 1815 as the first usage of 'weather-stain'.

21. See Moorman, i, pp.230-1 and WW, The Prelude 1799, 1805, 1850, ed. J. Wordsworth et al. (1979), p.374 and n.

22. See Sheats, pp. 79-83 for his discussion of the poem.

23. See Reed, pp. 22, 24-6.

24. PW, i, p. 375. For text see F. Christensen, "The Date of Wordsworth's 'The Birth of Love'", MLN, 53 (1938), pp.280-2.

25. PW, i, p.371. L'Education de l'Amour is quoted from F. Wrangham, Poems (1795).

26. H.M. Williams, Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (1796), ii, pp.40-1 (cited below as Letters). For WW's knowledge of this book, see PP, A. Pinney to WW (26 November 1795) "Miss Williams Letters". See also Jacobus, pp. 186-7 and n., Reed, p.345, and Hayden's text.

27. See Averill, p. 135n.

28. EY, p. 157.

29. U.V. Tuckerman, "Wordsworth's Plan for his Imitation of Juvenal", MLN, 45 (1930), pp. 209-215.

30. S.C. Gill, "'Adventures on Salisbury Plain' and Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest 1795-97", SR, 11 (1972), pp. 50-2 and n.. See also CC, i, pp. 60, 379-80.

31. PW, i, pp. 372-3: Imitation, 6 and PL, iv, 35; Imitation, 58 and Hamlet, III, iv, 147.

32. See PW, i, pp. 373-4, and U.V. Tuckerman, "Wordsworth's Plan for his Imitation of Juvenal", MLN, 45 (1930), pp. 214-5, and EY, p. 157.
33. See Reed, pp. 26-7 and the related Appendix XVI.
34. See Mayo, pp. 97-102 for a useful summary.
35. R.S. Woof, "Wordsworth's Poetry and Stuart's Newspapers", Studies in Bibliography, 15 (1962), pp. 160-4. The text of The Convict is the Morning Post version as given here, and the Lyrical Ballads version is from LB.
36. Mayo, pp. 93-4, 118-9. The parallels Mayo cites are unconvincing as sources.
37. S.C. Gill, "'Adventures on Salisbury Plain' and Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest 1795-97" SR, 11 (1972), p. 56.
38. The Life and Correspondence of the late Robert Southey, ed. the Rev. C.C. Southey, 6 vols. (1849-50), i, p. 237. See also WW, The Borderers, ed. R. Osborn (1982), p. 20 (hereafter Osborn), and The Borderers, III, ii, 85-8 and IV, iii, 19-22 (cited below as B).
39. É. Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth 1770-1798, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed., (1921), p. 369, Moorman, i, pp. 351-2, PW, i, p. 374, and LB, p.295.
40. W. Godwin, Political Justice, ed. F.E.L. Priestley (3 vols., Toronto, 1946), iii, p.103 (cited in the text and below as Political Justice: all quotations are from the 1793 version of the text).
41. See Jacobus, pp. 185-6.
42. B. Beccaria, An Essay on Crimes and Punishment, trans. not given (1770), p. 43. For WW's knowledge of Beccaria, see EY, p. 125.

43. H.M. Williams, Letters Written in France, 2nd ed. (1791), pp. 155-6.

44. The Convict, 9, Measure for Measure, III, i, 124, and DS, 795.

45. See also Paradise Regain'd, iii, 78-87. The DC MS.2 version of The Convict, 1 (as SP, 353) echoes PL, ii, 492-3.

46. See Joan of Arc, v, 160-71, and CC, i, p. 70.

47. The Pleasures of the Imagination, ii, 723: "the prospect blackens on thy view".

48. All quotations from Coleridge's poems are from, S.T. Coleridge, Poetical Works, ed. E.H. Coleridge (1969), cited below as CPW.

49. J.R. MacGillivray, "An early poem and letter by Wordsworth", RES, N.S. 5 (1954), pp. 62-6, and S.M. Parrish, The Art of the 'Lyrical Ballads' (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), p.64 (cited below as ALB).

50. Jacobus, pp. 187-8 notes Coleridge's debt to Gay, but not WW's. The parallel with C. Smith is noted in B.C. Hunt, Jnr., "Wordsworth and Charlotte Smith" TWC, 1 (1970), p. 100.

51. CPW, p.269

52. See CPW, p. 268, and The Three Graves, ii, 103.

53. See ALB, pp. 91-5 and B, v, iii, 64-73, 93-5.

54. CPW, p. 267.

55. See Prose, i, p.113.

56. ALB, p.94. It is not entirely clear whether Coleridge modified the poem (see Reed, pp. 189-90n.).

57. See J.W. Draper, "The Metrical Tale in XVIII-Century England", PMLA, 52 (i) (1937), pp. 390-7.

58. ALB, p.92.

59. There are references to toads in The Three Graves, i, 8, Lass of Fair Wone, 5, but also in Othello, IV, ii, 61-2 and Walcott, Old Cicely, 9.

60. Jacobus, p.211. See also The Three Graves, i, 37 ("fere"); The Ancyent Marinere, 180, and Sir Cauline, 8.

61. Texts of Percy are from Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, ed. T. Percy 2 vols. (n.d.), ii, pp. 52-3. All quotations are from this edition: for WW's knowledge of Percy see HGSLC and PW, iii, p.442.

62. CPW, p. 271n. Compare The Three Graves, ii, 65-72 and Job 3: 1-8.

63. See Reed, pp. 22-3. The texts are in DC MS. 11 (printed without variants in Jacobus, pp. 86-7), DC MS. 2, and G.H. Healey, The Cornell Wordsworth Collection (Ithaca, 1957), opp. p. 200. Jacobus, pp. 86-7 links the early version to Bowles's Sonnet VI, but the parallels are vague.

64. Jacobus, p.88.

65. PW, i, p.324. See also Jacobus, p.89n.

66. See Lonsdale, pp.486-7: the poem seems to adumbrate Resolution and Independence's reflections on poets.

67. G.H. Hartman, "Wordsworth, Inscriptions and Romantic Nature Poetry" in F.W. Hilles and H. Bloom (eds.), From Sensibility to Romanticism (New York, 1965), pp. 394-5, 410.

68. Reed, pp. 25, 27. For texts, see PW, i, pp. 300-2 and R.S. Woof, "Wordsworth's Poetry and Stuart's Newspapers: 1797-1803", Studies in Bibliography, 15 (1962), pp.178-9.

69. See note 67 above and, for example, R. Dodsley, A Collection of Poems, 4 vols. (1770), iv, pp.263-6.

70. Line one and OED under 'bouyant'; and the final lines and Comus, 373. See also B.C. Hunt, Jnr., "Wordsworth and Charlotte Smith" TWC, 1 (1970), p.97.

71. See Hartman's comments in F.W. Hilles and H. Bloom (eds.), From Sensibility to Romanticism (New York, 1965), pp. 394-7 and M of H, pp. 196-7.

72. For a useful summary, see WW and S.T. Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads, 1798, ed. W.J.B. Owen, 2nd ed. (1969), pp.126-8 or Moorman, i, pp. 311-2.

73. Yew-Tree Lines, 44-60: see ALB, pp. 67-70, and M of H, pp. 206-7n.

74. PW, i, p. 329. See The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. E.L. Griggs, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1956-71), i, p.280, and CC, i, p.35.

75. The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. E.L. Griggs, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1956-71), i, p.334.

76. Osborn, p.64.

77. See note 73.

78. Birdsall, p.72 and Osborn, p.64.

79. M of H, pp. 65-6 and n. See also W.A. Walling, "Wordsworth's The Borderers: A Critical and Historical Study" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New York Univ., 1966), p. 152 ff. and Jacobus, pp.15-37. See also Sheats, pp. 154-61 and Osborn, p.62 and n.

80. Osborn, p. 64; Yew-Tree Lines, 43 and B, V, iii, 262-3; and Yew-Tree Lines, 2 and B, V, iii, 268.

81. M of H, p. 196 (see also pp. 195-7).

82. See Bowles's translation of In Horto . . . Amici.

83. See WW and S.T. Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads, 1798, ed. W.J.B. Owen (2nd ed., 1969), p.128 but also Cowper,

Retirement, 621-4 and Goldsmith, The Deserted Village, 122.

84. Yew-Tree Lines, 29 and An Evening Walk (1794), 217.

85. The stone-chat in desolate scenery (An Evening Walk (1794), 151-4 and Yew-Tree Lines, 21-6). See also the use of bees as an emblem of rural felicity (ASP, 291-2, Yew-Tree Lines, 4, and Georgics, iv).

86. For Hartman's similar comment, see F.W. Hilles and H. Bloom (eds.), From Sensibility to Romanticism (New York, 1965), p.401.

87. See Reed, p. 27. The text of Old Man Travelling is from LB (or DC MS. 13), and of Description of a Beggar, the Pierpont Morgan sheet from that notebook. Jacobus, p. 180n. argues that Old Man Travelling, 15-20 is a later addition, but there seems no support for this in the mss.

88. Mayo, pp. 92-3. See p.123 for his list of 'sketches', though most of these are not of characters.

89. EW, 247, SPP, p.91, Averill, pp. 236-7 (this is the only point in the thesis where a different reading is given from that in the Cornell WW series, and the image is a commonplace: see Dryden's Aeneid, ii, 698), and Windy Brow Inscription, 14. See also Osborn, p. 110n.

90. Compare The Beggar's Petition, 1-8 and Guilt and Sorrow, 1-9.

91. M of H, p.84n. Old Man Travelling seems echoed in The Discharged Soldier.

92. H. Mackenzie, The Man of Feeling (1886), p.124 (cited below and in the text by its title).

93. The Man of Feeling, p.138. There are differences: Harley knows the old man, and the old man's son

is dead.

94. The Poetical Works of Mark Akenside, ed. C.C. Clarke (Edinburgh, 1868), p.3. See also The Novels of Mrs Ann Radcliffe, ed. Sir W. Scott (1824), p.88.

95. Description of a Beggar; see Milton, At a Vacation Exercise, 69, Steep Hill Inscription, 17-8, and Jacobus, p.181n. The image of an old person looking at the ground as they walk in Description of a Beggar ("his eyes forever on the ground / He plies his weary journey") is also conventional: see FQ, I, i, 29, 5-6 and B, I, iii, 57-60.

96. See also Lewesdon Hill, 219-21.

97. See W.J.B. Owen, "Two Addenda", TWC, 13 (1982), p.98. See also Description of a Beggar ("maids and youths") and Collins, Ode Occasioned by the Death of Mr Thomson, 49. There are also parallels with the Pilgrim in the Churchyard Scene discarded from B.

98. E. Darwin, Zoonomia, 2 vols. (1794, 1796), i, p.467.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Borderers

1. See Osborn, pp. 7-17. For variations on the names in B, see Osborn, p.8.

2. Osborn, p.16. The problems are highlighted in IV, i and IV, iii where Robert's actions are not consistent. Revision in preparation for possible production in London did take place.

3. É. Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-1798, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed. (1921), pp. 253-78 and E. de Selincourt in his notes to the play in PW.

4. See H.W. Garrod, Wordsworth: Lectures and Essays

2nd ed. (1939), pp.57-93, G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814 (1971), pp. 125-35, Prose, i, pp.72-3, and A. Grob, "Wordsworth and Godwin: A Reassessment", SR, 6 (1967), pp. 98-119.

5. C.J. Smith, "The Effect of Shakespeare's Influence on Wordsworth's 'The Borderers'", Studies in Philology, 50 (1953), pp. 625-39, and W.J.B. Owen, "The Borderers and the Aesthetics of Drama", TWC, 6 (1975), pp. 227-39.

6. See P. Sanftleben, Wordsworth's 'Borderers' und die Entwicklung der nationalen Tragödie in England im 18. Jhd. (Rostok, 1907) (hereafter Sanftleben), and M.W. Cooke, "Schiller's 'Robbers' in England", MLR, 11 (1916), pp. 156-75.

7. Osborn, p.20.

8. See also Osborn, pp.22-3, 45.

9. B, II, iii, 344 and see Osborn, p.172n.

10. See Osborn, pp. 19-24, and more generally, pp. 17-39.

11. Lines Written as a School Exercise, 92.

12. J. Home, Douglas, ed. G.D. Parker (Edinburgh, 1972), p.55 (all quotations from Douglas are from this edition). See also Prose, i, p.13.

13. See Osborn, pp.20, 45-6. The parallel with "The Blessings of a Shepherd's Life" (Osborn, p.46) is not convincing: see Churchyard Scene, 67-8 and L'Allegro, 81-2.

14. For King Lear, see Prose, i, p.13, and King Lear, IV, vii, 63. For The Bible, see Churchyard Scene, 140-2, Prose, i, p. 7, and Matthew, 5:45; and Churchyard Scene, 22-3 and Genesis, 9:13-6.

15. See also Churchyard Scene, 31, EW, 174, and Summer, 1629, as well as Churchyard Scene, 86-7, DS, 627, and The Task, vi, 11-2. Churchyard Scene, 37 prefigures The Thorn.

16. Osborn, p. 106n.

17. SPP, p.287.

18. The three distracted women are described in B, I, iii, 5-23, II, i, 13-31, and IV, ii, 85-9. See Osborn, p. 104n., and Jacobus, pp. 141-2.

19. Osborn, p. 104n. A Ballad and Dirge as printed in PW: the quotation from A Dirge is from stanzas not included in the later version. Osborn, p. 104n. suggests a connection with Julian's Bower, but it seems folk lore and popular ballads would be a more appropriate source. For an example of other debts, see B, II, i, 25-9, EW (1794), 741-3, and Gothic Tale, 50.

20. See Churchyard Scene, 96-100, ASP, 100-3, and Osborn, p. 234n.

21. Osborn, p. 238n. and P. Kelley, "Wordsworth and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura", N&Q, N.S. 30 (1983), pp. 219-22. See also B, IV, ii, 102-6, The Excursion, iii, 700-1, and PL, ii, 420-34.

22. Of course the difficulties in dating the B mss. pose problems, but the parallels in Yew-Tree Lines and The Three Graves (see ii, 79-80 and B, V, iii, 70-2) are apparent. Clearly dated parallels do exist in B material from 1796-7: see Osborn, p. 26 and n., The Idiot Boy, Churchyard Scene, 53-7, EY, p. 397, and W. Cox, Travels in Switzerland with notes by R. de Carbonnieres (3 vols., Basil, 1802), i, p. 403. For The Prelude, see Sheats, pp.

169-71, 278-9, Osborn, p. 112n., The Prelude, iv, 400-5, and Margaret and the Peasant Scene, 11-4.

23. See SPP, pp. 287-8, though the woman tells her tale to another woman (not the sailor). See also C. Landon, "Wordsworth's Racedown Period: Some Uncertainties Resolved", BNYPL, 68 (1964), pp. 100-9.

24. See Osborn, pp. 19-24, 746-9, particularly pp. 748-9. Osborn notes the debts to VE and EW, de Selincourt to Collins (Ode to Evening, 37 and Gothic Tale, 5). See also Gothic Tale, 211-2 and PL, ii, 476-7 (and EW, 124); "The Western Clouds a Deepening Gloom Display", 13-6 and Gothic Tale, 101-3; "In vain have Time and nature toiled to throw", 1-4, and Gothic Tale, 68-71; Gothic Tale, 185 and Paradise Regain'd, ii, 117; SPP, p. 12n., and SP, 165-6 and Gothic Tale, 15.

25. Osborn, notes to pp. 140-68. Rather doubtful assertions about Gothic elements by Osborn are: (1) p. 140n.: the horsemen "may be supernatural" seems to reflect the sources, not B (and see Osborn, pp. 349, 361), (2) p. 23 where the suggestion for a biographical source for a literary convention seems doubtful, (3) p. 138n. makes a dubious link to EW, and (4) p. 258n. misrepresents Composed in Roslin Chapel During a Storm, 1-3 (it is "for a bell", not necessarily a bell ringing). See also C. Smith, The Old Manor House, ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis (1969), pp. 61-2, E. Railo, The Haunted Castle (1927), pp. 11, 331-2, and Blair, The Grave, 52 ("And the great bell has toll'd, unring, untouch'd").

26. See note 25 above, section (4), and, for example, EE, p. 31 where an alpine bridge is the scene of a 'murder'

or B, V, i, 19-22, VE, 387-90, Julius Caesar, IV, iii, 273-5, and Gay, A True Story of an Apparition, 25-6. Osborn, pp. 22-3, 168n. rightly connects B, II, iii, 289-91 with Gothic Tale, 195-8 where the intervention of the star recalls similar interventions in Gothic works. He also links the lightning of B, II, ii, 45-8 with Gothic Tale, 93-6: another common feature of Gothic works (see C. Smith, The Old Manor House, ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis (1969), pp. 93-7 and H. Walpole, The Castle of Otranto, ed. A. Wright (1963), p. 27).

27. See M. Osborn, "Wordsworth's 'Borderers' and the Landscape of Penrith," Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, N.S. 76 (1976), pp. 144-58 (hereafter cited as M. Osborn).

28. Osborn, p.10. A cottage on the edge of a heath also appears in SP, XVI (a), and XVI (b).

29. Osborn, p. 409 and SPP, p.47. See also ASP, 60 and Osborn, p. 423. Another example is to be found in Osborn, pp. 409, 423, B, IV, ii, 24-8, ASP, 55-6, and SP, 46-7.

30. M. Osborn, p. 144.

31. For example, the castle (M. Osborn, p. 156n.4) for there are other castles in Wordsworth's verse, especially Gothic Tale; the monument (M. Osborn, pp. 154-4) as the monuments are different and there are other literary parallels; the tree (M. Osborn, pp. 153-4, 157-8) but, though the suggestion is more probable, B, III, iii, 37-9 does not match the description in Osborn, p. 194n.; the cave (M. Osborn, p. 151-2), as there are many caves and the pilgrims are only passing through; and the reference to St.

Mary (M. Osborn, p. 148, see also Osborn, p. 98), but there are many literary references to St. Mary.

32. B, I; iii, 5-15 and M. Osborn, p. 149: although Clifford holds his "orgies" in part of the castle (B, III, ii, 57-63) the link with a mistress, the same seducer (Clifford), and the location near the Appleby Road seem to confirm the suggestion.

33. M. Osborn, p. 157 and Osborn, p. 88n. show how St. Cuthbert may be connected to St. Herbert in James Clarke's Survey of the Lakes (1787), p. 84.

34. M. Osborn, pp. 150-1, 157. See also B, I, ii, 31 and SP, 121-3.

35. M. Osborn, p. 155.

36. J. Clarke, A Survey of the Lakes, 2nd ed. (1789), p. 155. Robert de Clifford is mentioned on the same page.

37. Sanftleben, p.36 and Osborn, p. 172.

38. See Osborn, p. 172n., but also Osborn, p. 86n.

39. Osborn, p. 813. See also Osborn, p. 815.

40. Sanftleben, pp. 22-3.

41. See Prose, i, pp. 32-3 and J. Milton, Selected Prose, ed. C.A. Patrides (Harmondsworth, 1974), pp. 251-2.

42. See Prose, i, p. 54.

43. SP, 544-5 and Prose, i, p.35.

44. See PW, v, pp. 374-5 where another source is described.

45. W. Wordsworth, Home at Grasmere, ed. B. Darlington (Hassocks, 1977), p. 261.

46. Osborn, p. 814.

47. D.P. Varma, The Gothic Flame (New York, 1966), pp.29-30.

48. J. Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, 10 vols., (Bath, 1832) gives detailed accounts of plays produced during the period.

49. A. Nicoll, A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama 1750-1800 (Cambridge, 1927), pp.97-107.

50. See W. Thorp, "The Stage Adventures of Some Gothic Novels", PMLA, 43 (1928), pp. 476-86.

51. D.J. McNutt, The Eighteenth-Century Gothic Novel (Folkestone, 1975), p. 71.

52. E. Railo, The Haunted Castle (1927), pp. 164-5.

53. Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. Misc. e. 21-2, 129^r (cited in the text by its catalogue reference).

54. Parts were written before WW wrote B: see British Museum, Add. MS. 47, 883: "Thus far in 1794" (cited in the text by its catalogue reference).

55. For a specific example, see Edge of a Heath Scene, 48-54, B, V, ii, 46-51, C. Smith, The Old Manor House, ed. A.H. Ehrenpreis (1969), p. 59, and Sanftleben, p. 37. Gothic elements that appear in WW's earlier works also appear in B such as the dungeon (Vale of Esthwaite), the ruined castle ("In vain have Time and nature toiled to throw"), the good murderer (ASP), and refuge from a storm in a ruined building (SP).

56. C. Tourneur, The Atheist's Tragedy, ed. I. Ribner (1964), pp. xxxv-xliii, especially pp. xxxix-xl and notes. All references are to this edition, cited in the text by its title.

57. E. Railo, The Haunted Castle (1927), pp. 219-41, and see C.F. McIntyre, "The later Career of the Elizabethan Villain-Hero", PMLA, 40 (1925), pp. 874-880, and É.

Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-98, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed. (1921), pp. 270-1 and notes. See also G.H. Hartman, "Wordsworth, The Borderers, and 'Intellectual Murder'", JEGP, 52 (1963), pp. 761-8.

58. P.L. Thorslev, Jnr., The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes (Minneapolis, 1962) and, by the same author, "Wordsworth's Borderers and the Romantic Villain-Hero", SR, 5 (1966), pp.84-103. These works show the weakness of approaches such as in B.S. Allen, "Analogues of Wordsworth's The Borderers", PMLA, 38 (1923), pp. 267-77.

59. R. Sharrock, "The Borderers: Wordsworth on the Moral Frontier", Durham University Journal, N.S. 25 (1964), p. 172, but see J. Home, Douglas, ed. G.D. Parker (Edinburgh, 1972), pp.4-5 where the description of Douglas as 'Gothic' is questioned.

60. The artificial introduction of the letter in Douglas, IV, iv, 295 and B, II, ii, and Randolph's feelings at the end of the play which are similar to Mortimer's.

61. Alonzo is prevented by heaven when about to commit murder in V, i as Mortimer is influenced by a star, and the source of Zanga's hatred is a blow (see B, IV, ii, 32-6 and Osborn, p. 228n.).

62. E. Young, The Works of the Author of the Night-Thoughts, 3 vols. (1792), ii, pp.68-9. All quotations from the play are from this edition, hereafter The Works.

63. See E. Young, The Works, ii, p.84 and B, V, iii, 224-8.

64. See also Osborn, pp. 810-1, Argument for Suicide, 5-6 and Night Thoughts, viii, 1330-32 where the means of suicide and their order are the same (except the gun, an

anachronism (in B). Other early eighteenth-century versions of the benevolent murderer are in Lillo's The London Merchant and Fatal Curiosity.

65. See Prose, i, p. 146 where WW refers to Moore's play.

66. E. Moore, The Gamester (1753), p. 31. All quotations are from this edition.

67. The sexual subject matter is also a commonplace (see Revenge).

68. See The Novels of Mrs Ann Radcliffe, ed. W. Scott (1824), p. 164 and the whole of the passage from The Gamester, É. Legouis, The Early Life of William Wordsworth, 1770-1798, trans. J.W. Matthews, 2nd ed. (1921), p.272, Osborn, pp. 28-9, D.P. Varma, The Gothic Flame (New York, 1966), p. 60, and E. Railo, The Haunted Castle (1927), pp. 219-20.

69. See Osborn, pp. 29-30 and E. Moore, The Gamester (1753), pp. 40-41: such parallels were, of course, a commonplace.

70. See Osborn, p. 303n.

71. See Horace, Epistles, II, i, 214-5, Osborn, p. 814, and The Poems of John Milton, ed. H. Darbishire (1961), p. 506. It is possible WW had not thought of the stage until Coleridge suggested it to him. Horace, Satires, Epistles and 'Ars Poetica', ed. and trans. H.R. Fairclough (1978) is cited in the text as Horace.

72. EY, p. 197n.

73. See Osborn, p.72 and n., and P. Kelley, "Wordsworth and Pope's Epistle to Cobham", N&Q, N.S. 28 (1981), pp. 314-5.

74. Osborn, p. 67.

75. See especially Prose, i, p. 107.

76. Of course the relative superiority of feeling over abstract reasoning as a basis of morality was commonly upheld: see J.-J. Rousseau, 'The Social Contract' and 'Discourses', trans. G.D.H. Cole, rev. J.H. Brumfitt and J.C. Hall (1977), p. 69.

77. D. Hume, Enquiries, ed. L.A. Selby-Brigge, rev. P.H. Nidditch, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1979), pp. 169-75.

78. For the abuse of reason, see B, II, iii, 422-8, III, ii, 79-82, III, iv, 25, and IV, ii, 188-93. Rivers often rejects feelings (see B, III, v, 74).

79. See A. Grob, "Wordsworth and Godwin: A Reassessment", SR, 6 (1967), pp. 98-119, and Sheats, pp. 106-7, 270-1.

80. It is possible for B to have a connection with Godwin's ideas other than through Rivers, but Priestley's point seems valid for the play as a whole.

81. As quoted by Osborn, p. 30 (see also Osborn, pp. 30-1) .

82. See PW, i, p. 356.

83. The Works of George Berkeley, ed. A.C. Fraser, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1901), ii, p. 84.

84. T. Paine, The Age of Reason, ed. P.S. Foner (Secaucus, New Jersey, 1974), p. 46 (this is a quotation from Thomas Jefferson). See also The Prelude, x, 889-90.

85. H.M. Jones, Revolution and Romanticism (1974), p. 23.

86. See Osborn, p. 62 for Rivers's 'pride', and A.O. Lovejoy, "'Pride' in Eighteenth-Century Thought", MLN, 36

(1921), pp. 31-7.

87. WW, 'The Prelude', 1798-9, ed. S. Parrish (Hassocks, 1977), p. 187.

88. Osborn, p. 65. See also M.L. Peacock, Jnr., The Critical Opinions of William Wordsworth (Baltimore, 1950), p. 61 and P. Kelley, "Wordsworth and Pope's Epistle to Cobham", N&Q, N.S. 28 (1981), pp. 314-5.

89. See M. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism (1973), p. 88.

90. See M.H. Nicolson, Newton Demands the Muse (Princeton, 1968), especially pp. 98-9. Arguments such as in Sheats, pp. 128-35 seem, on this basis, unjustified: nature doesn't show "indifference" (Sheats, p. 128) but it is a human abuse of nature to use nature as a tool towards human ends.

91. See P. Kelley, "Wordsworth and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura", N&Q, N.S. 30 (1983), pp. 219-22 and WW, 'The Prelude', 1799, 1805, 1850, ed. J. Wordsworth et al. (1979), p. 402 and n.

92. W. Wordsworth, 'The Ruined Cottage' and 'The Pedlar', ed. J. Butler (Hassocks, 1979), p.121 (hereafter RCP), and see also EY, pp. 35-6.

93. S.T. Coleridge, ed., Sonnets by Various Authors (1796), p. 1.

94. T. Paine, The Rights of Man, ed. H. Collins (Harmondsworth, 1977), pp. 181-2.

95. H. Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1809-11), iii, p.275 (see also iii, p. 293-5).

96. An example of such a theory of tragedy is in Burke

(Philosophical Enquiry into our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful, Part I, sections xiii-xiv) where he argues for the importance of sympathy in this process.

97. See The Ruined Cottage, 278-95 where similar comments on tragedy are rehearsed (even to the rejection of "moving accidents"), and Tintern Abbey, 108-112 (and passim) where the role of the liber naturae in the mind's development and morality is set out in detail. The Ruined Cottage is cited below as RC.

98. W.J.B. Owen, "The Borderers and the Aesthetics of Drama", TWC, 6 (1975), pp. 227-39 (the quotation is from p. 237). See also Owen and Smyser's general introduction to the text of the Preface (Prose, i, pp. 69-74).

99. W. Richardson, Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters, 4th ed. (1786) is in HGSLC. This text is cited below as Essays.

100. Both cite a link between tragedy and morality (Richardson, Essays, pp. 1-2), suggest passion distorts perception (Essays, pp. 88-9), and favour simple language in literature (Essays, pp. 105-6).

101. M.G. Lewis, The Monk, ed. J. Kinsley and H. Anderson (Oxford, 1980), pp. 236-9.

102. See Jacobus, p. 30 and Osborn, p. 62n.

103. A.O. Lovejoy, "'Pride' in Eighteenth-Century Thought", MLN, 36 (1921), pp. 31-7.

104. See Jacobus, p. 30n., but her argument is not convincing. For parallels in B itself, see Prose, i, pp. 81-5.

105. See Osborn, p. 62n.

106. Prose, i, pp. 81-6.

107. See Prose, i, p. 82 and Osborn, p. 63n.
108. Prose, i, p. 82.
109. Osborn, p. 64, Macbeth, I, v, 14 and Othello, II, i, 290-1.
110. Prose, i, pp. 85-6.
111. See PW, iii, p. 442 ("then [1786] and at a later period"), Prose, i, p. 93, EY, pp. 128-9, and Osborn, p. 11n. Given the possible influence of The Robbers on ASP and the general knowledge of the play in WW's circle (see D.L. Milburn, "German Drama in England: 1750-1850" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rice Univ., 1964), pp. 36-41 and L.A. Willoughby, "English Translations and Adaptations of Schiller's Robbers", MLR, 16 (1921), pp. 297-315) it seems probable WW had read the play before the composition of the Ur-Borderers. There remains the slight possibility WW read one of the French translations, perhaps while in France.
112. Except as a variant of 'hew' (wholly inappropriate here). For "nipping cold" see 2 Henry VI, II, iv, 3.
113. J.C.F. von Schiller, Die Räuber, ed. H. Stubenrauch (Weimar, 1953), p. 111.
114. See Osborn, pp. 140n., 309, but the difference between "smugglers" and "Banditti" and the outlaws is not terribly significant.
115. See B, II, iii, 330-4.
116. Sanftleben (passim) and M. Cooke, "Schiller's Robbers in England", MLR, 11 (1916), pp. 156-75. Both used the 1842 text of B, but their specific parallels usually remain valid.
117. B, I, ii and The Robbers, p. 26, and B, II,

iii and The Robbers, p. 157. (See also Sanftleben, p. 32. The stage directions are also similar (The Robbers, pp. 157, 169 and Osborn, p. 140) and so are some aspects of the description of the moon (The Robbers, p. 174 and B, III, iii, 127-8 though this is a commonplace).

118. Sanftleben, p. 28, The Robbers, p. 202, and Osborn, p. 292 (V, iii, 256).

119. See also Sanftleben, p. 33, The Robbers, p. 194 and B, IV, i, 22.

120. B, II, ii, 377-8, The Robbers, pp. 190-3 and Hamlet, III, iii, 36-98. See also B, III, ii, 93-5, The Robbers, p. 87, and Macbeth, I, vii, 54-9.

121. B, V, iii, 64-72 and The Robbers, p. 177.

122. Sanftleben, p. 35.

123. 1 Kings, 17:4. See also Osborn, p. 122n.

124. Osborn, p. 128n.

125. Osborn, p. 216n.

126. See Osborn, p. 154n.

127. The Robbers, pp. xiv-xvii.

128. B, IV, ii, 116-7 and The Robbers, p. 48.

129. Quotations from B: IV, ii, 161, IV, ii, 109-10, IV, ii, 190-1, and III, v, 74-5 respectively.

130. Osborn, p. 122n.

131. Sanftleben, p. 27 (see also Osborn, p. 106n.).

132. Fiesco was translated in 1796 by Noëhden and Stoddart, the last being one of Basil Montagu's (and WW's) friends.

133. Such as Caleb Williams or Anna of St. Ives (see G. Kelly, The English Jacobin Novel, 1780-1805 (Oxford, 1976), p. 131). The five act blank verse play was

a conventional form, though it owed some of its continuing popularity to Shakespeare.

134. See C.J. Smith, "The Effect of Shakespeare's Influence on Wordsworth's The Borderers", Studies in Philology, 50 (1953), pp. 625-39 and the notes in Osborn. There are reasons why Shakespeare should loom so large: the easy availability of concordances, and the tremendous emphasis given to the study of Shakespeare in English Literature which, because of scholars' familiarity with Shakespeare's works, makes possible reminiscences seem more convincing (this is coupled with a limited emphasis on eighteenth-century drama).

135. W.J.B. Owen, "The Borderers and the Aesthetics of Drama", TWC, 6 (1975), pp. 227-39.

136. Mainly in PW, Osborn, and C.J. Smith (see note 134 above).

137. See, for example, Osborn, p. 28.

138. See Osborn, p. 24 and n. for a rather strained comparison of the two plays.

139. B, I, i where he appears hesitant to reveal his lies to his victim seems a fairly good parallel (if a commonplace- see The Robbers), whereas C.J. Smith's idea that B, IV, ii, 219 parallels Othello, V, ii, 305 seems over-stated as it is common to all plots of this kind, and Osborn, p. 76n. seems a forced comparison.

140. R. Sharrock, "The Borderers: Wordsworth on the Moral Frontier", Durham University Journal, N.S. 25 (1964), p. 175.

141. See, for example, Osborn, p. 194n. on B, III, iii, 53-5 which seems not very convincing, and Osborn, p. 80n.

which is just possible (though Mortimer was only six at the time and the "terrible adventures" were Herbert's). See also p. 106n.

142. B, I, i, 209 and Othello, IV, ii, 40 (but see EE, p. 474).

143. Osborn, p. 27. Of course the saintly old man is a type and Lear, even in Act V, seems a different sort of character.

144. Osborn, p. 172n. is, when the contexts are considered, not convincing, Osborn, p. 146n. seems forced, and "single virtue" (B, ii, i, 65 and King Lear, V, iii, 104) seems too slight a link. The dog of B, V, iii, 203-5 is from VE, not King Lear, V, iii, 257.

145. B, V, iii, 230 and Macbeth, V, i, 30. See also the denial of guilt in B, V, ii, 44 and V, iii, 205 which might parallel Macbeth, III, iv, 49-50, though, in a similar vein, Osborn, p. 170n. seems unlikely.

146. For example, see Osborn, p. 168n. (the star is traditional in this context). Osborn, p. 148n. is a commonplace. Osborn also notes very vague similarities: see Osborn, pp. 158n., 276n. (commonplaces), and pp. 224n, 286n. (forced comparisons). Osborn, p. 194n. seems convincing, but see PW, i, p. 356.

147. G.W. Knight, The Starlit Dome (1971), p. 116 (and see Osborn, p.33).

148. The image of poisoning through the ear is also in B, V, ii, 68. Some of the suggestions are plausible (B, II, iii, 236-8 and Hamlet, V, ii, 9-11 and I, v, 166-7), but most rely on one or two words (or a common phrase): see Osborn, 286n.; B, III, iii, 51 and Hamlet, I, v, 106;

Osborn, pp. 178n., 192n.; and Osborn, p.202n. which is a commonplace (see SP, 315).

149. There are other suggestions: see A.F. Potts, Wordsworth's 'Prelude' (Ithaca, 1953), pp. 154-63 (which is unconvincing). There may be other examples of Shakespearean language or imagery: see Osborn, pp. 168n, 276n. On the other hand, Osborn, p. 264n. seems too distant a parallel, and Osborn, p.82n. is a commonplace.

150. C.J. Smith, "The Effect of Shakespeare's Influence on Wordsworth's The Borderers", Studies in Philology, 50 (1953), p. 625.

151. W.J.B. Owen, "The Borderers and the Aesthetics of Drama", TWC, 6 (1975), pp. 237-8.

152. B, II, iii and V, iii. B, I, i has a number of reminiscences of Othello. Act IV seems to have no Shakespearean echoes of any moment.

153. See A. Nicoll, A History of Early Eighteenth Century Drama 1700-1750, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1929), p. 61 and A. Nicoll, A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama 1750-1800 (Cambridge, 1927), p. 56.

154. See PW, i, p.334.

155. H.F. Watson, "Historical Detail in The Borderers", MLN, 52 (1937), pp. 577-9 and Sanftleben, p. 40.

156. B.R. Pollin, "Permutations of Names in The Borderers, or Hints on Godwin, Charles Lloyd, and a Real Renegade", TWC, 4 (1974), pp. 31-5.

157. Matilda: Douglas, The Tempest, The Castle of Otranto, and Drayton's Matilda the Fair and Chaste. Ferdinand: The Tempest, Schiller's Love and Intrigue, and Caleb Williams. Rivers: Richard III, Peter de

Rivaulx, and Percy's A Balet by the Earl Rivers. Oswald: John Oswald, and Lloyd's Oswald. Wilfred: The Iron Chest, and The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall-Green. Tray: King Lear, and Lubin and his Dog Tray. The lists above are, in part, collated from Pollin and Osborn.

158. There is a similar problem with Wordsworth's influence on The Ancyent Marinere: some passages in WW's works seem to be similar to those in Coleridge's poem. See A. Beatty, "The Borderers and The Ancient Mariner", TLS, 29 Feb. 1936, p. 184, H.F. Watson, "The Borderers and The Ancient Mariner", TLS, 28 Dec. 1935, p. 899, and PW, i, p. 360-1. See also B, IV, ii, 11-36; ASP, 125-35, SP, 323-87, and The Ancyent Marinere, 434-7 (and elsewhere). Similarities can be found in SP, 181-9 and The Ancyent Marinere, 483-96, and in diction: "sweet sounds" (SP, 197, The Ancyent Marinere, 341), "cold sweat" (ASP, 638, The Ancyent Marinere, 245), and "silent sea" (SP, 375, The Ancyent Marinere, 102). Vague parallels exist in The Ancyent Marinere, 322-3 and SP, 185-6 and The Ancyent Marinere, 394-6 and SP, 147-53. Curiously, there is a wedding festival in B, I, ii and a sentiment not unlike the conclusion of Coleridge's poem in B, V, iii, 61-3. There are some lines by WW in The Ancyent Marinere, but it seems unlikely the full extent of his contribution or Coleridge's debt to WW's works can be accurately assessed. It is not clear whether B, IV, ii in the text that survives was written before The Ancyent Marinere (though Osborn, pp. 15-6 implies B may have been written first). In any event, WW's acknowledged contribution to The Ancyent Marinere is the main point (but see also G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry,

1787-1814 (1971), pp. 131-5).

159. For "barren island" and "famishing man" see B, IV, ii, 57-60, 63 and ASP, 470. See Osborn, p. 122n.

160. Purchas His Pilgrims is in HGSLC. For poetry, see EE, p.489 and Cowper, Verses, Supposed to be Written by Alexander Selkirk.

161. Jacobus, p. 26 and n. and Osborn, p. 228n.

162. Jacobus, p. 28 and n.

163. For WW's probable view of the Bounty incidents, see EY, p. 171 and n. and the appendix to Minutes of the Proceedings of the Court Martial that expressed, in part, the views of Captain Wordsworth of the Abergavenny and John Losh. The debate over the Court Martial turned on points such as the exact words and context of "I am in hell" (see W. Bligh et al., A Book of the 'Bounty', ed. G. Mackaness (1938), p. 255-6) and WW would probably support the view that "I am in hell" was a misquotation.

164. M of H, p. 247n.

165. Osborn, pp. 31-3. In passing it should be noted that WW's meetings with Godwin in London do not necessarily imply influence.

166. See W. Godwin, Caleb Williams, ed. D. McCracken (Oxford, 1978), p. 326 ("thou imbibest the poison of chivalry"). This edition is cited below as Caleb Williams.

167. Godwin's robbers are of another type: see A.-R. Lesage, Gil Blas, trans. T. Smollett (1899), pp. 3-10. See also Caleb Williams, pp. 335-41, 349.

168. See, for example, Mortimer's abstraction in B, V, i, 1-3, Falkland's in Caleb Williams, p. 124, and T. Warton,

The Suicide, 25-30. WW had, in any event, used this commonplace in VE, 379-94 which was written before Caleb Williams (and compare the VE passage with B, V, i, 8-10, 19-22).

169. Osborn, p. 67.

170. See W.A. Walling, "Wordsworth's The Borderers: A Critical and Historical Study" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New York Univ., 1966), p.208 where he suggests the Earl of Athol's story as a historical source, though this seems unlikely, especially in light of Percy's ballad.

171. R. Dodsley, ed., Miscellanies, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (1777), i, pp. 119-50. This edition is cited below as Miscellanies.

172. See the illustration in Dodsley (Miscellanies, p. 119), Miscellanies, pp. 124, 128, and B, I, iii, 80-1; II, iii, 268-70.

173. See Sanftleben, p. 34 and G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814 (1971), p. 131. WW knew Oedipus at Colonus: see B.R. Schneider, Jr., Wordsworth's Cambridge Education (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 95-6. There are some very minor parallels of content such as B, V, iii, 266 and Sophocles, The Theban Plays, trans. E.F. Watling (Harmondsworth, 1976), p. 75.

174. See Osborn, pp. 29-30 for a different view.

175. Osborn, pp. 34, 128n., 134n., 176n., 214n. most of which are minor or not very convincing parallels.

176. B, V, iii, 264-75, Percy's The Wandering Jew, 46-56, and Genesis 5:14. The possible use of Percy as a source for the legend may be supported by the seeming echo of Percy's Frantic Lady, 1 in B, III, v, 137 and IV, ii,

13 variant (see Osborn, p. 228n.). G.H. Hartman, Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814 (1971), p. 126 is one of those suggesting the relevance of the legend.

177. Genesis 9: 8-17. See also Chuchyard Scene, 140-2 and Matthew 5:45.

178. See Osborn, pp. 26, 190n., 198n., and 202n.

179. These may be related to The Three Graves or the projected work on Cain with Coleridge.

180. But the inscriptions (Windy Brow, Steep Hill and Yew-Tree Lines) do have religious overtones.

CHAPTER SIX

The Ruined Cottage

1. RCP, pp. 78-95.

2. RCP, pp. x-xiii.

3. RCP, p. xi. MS. B is the text of The Ruined Cottage quoted unless otherwise noted.

4. RCP, p. x.

5. See RCP, pp. 7-14 for a detailed account of the probable shape of the 1797 version of the poem, and a review of the manuscript evidence.

6. M of H, and, for example, Sheats, pp. 137-51 and notes.

7. RCP, pp. 54n., 72n.

8. See RCP, pp. 81-5 for examples.

9. EW, 290 and RCP, p. 85.

10. RCP, p. 50n.

11. Averill, p. 133n.

12. RCP, p. 72n. and DS, 189. See also DS, 702-39 where the image of the cottage garden is used to show the positive effects of freedom.

13. RCP, p. 85, but also in Castle of Indolence, II, vi, 5, and T. Warton, The Pleasures of Melancholy, 5.
14. Birdsall, pp. 289-97. All quotations from Old Man of the Alps are from Birdsall.
15. Osborn, p.38.
16. There are minor parallels, such as RC, 57-8 and SP, 39-41 (see also XVI (b), 25-7); and RC, 330-2 that encapsulates the female vagrant's fate.
17. Jacobus, p. 157.
18. J.H. Averill, "Suffering and Calm in Wordsworth's Early Poetry", PMLA, 91 (1976), pp. 223-34, especially pp. 230-1, and ASP, 109-35, 631-666. Averill sees a parallel in Summer, 1169-1232 (see p. 225 of his article), but a closer parallel can be found in John Scott, Eclogue IV.
19. See SPP, pp. 123n., 128n., 152n., RC, 528, and ASP, 586.
20. EY, p. 161. See also DS, 188 for another "gypsey" figure.
21. RCP, p. 70n. (see RCP, p.463n.).
22. RCP, p.463, but see also The Old Cumberland Beggar, 37-43. For texts of The Baker's Cart and Incipient Madness, see RCP, pp. 460-75.
23. SPP, pp. 287-8 (and for the texts, see SPP, pp. 289-303), but see also T.W. Thomson, Wordsworth's Hawkshead, ed. R. Woof (1970), pp. 311-21 where the texts of Farish's poems are printed, and their relationship to WW's poetry discussed.
24. SPP, p. 126n. Farish had, like WW, written English "poems upon the Vacation & upon Spring" (Margaret Farish to Mrs. Gilpin, 10 August 1791: Bodleian Library, Eng. Misc. b.

73), and WW also knew the family.

25. C. Landon, "Wordsworth's Racedown Period: Some Uncertainties Resolved", BNYPL, 68 (1964), pp. 100-109.

26. PW, i, p. 370.

27. See also SPP, p. 296. For a link with B, see Osborn, p. 108n.

28. XVI (b), 26 (see SPP, p. 289).

29. Incidental debts may indicate links to other poems: "eye of hunger" (SPP, p. 300) is found in Joan of Arc, II, 629 ("the asking eye of hunger"), and the image of a waggon indenting a road in XVI (a), 7 ((b), 10) is found in Description of a Beggar and Crowe, Lewesdon Hill, 219-21.

30. See RCP, p. 461.

31. See Moorman, i, p. 314n.

32. See RCP, pp. 461-2, 463n. (discussed above).

33. RCP, p. 79: "dull clanking" is also in The Convict,

37. See the pane of glass (RCP, 85-7) and C. Landon, "A Survey of an Early MS. of Wordsworth (Dove Cottage MS. 4)" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of London, 1962), p. 314. See also Sheats, pp. 152-3.

34. RCP, p. 42 and n.: "homely in attire" (although a misquotation) seems echoed in RC, 267 ("Her homely tale"). See also PW, iii, p.442.

35. Epistle, 61.

36. Prose, i, p. 173. See also P. Sidney, Apologie for Poetrie, ed. J.C. Collins (Oxford, 1907) for similar arguments: "follow Nature" (p.7), verse is not essential to poetry (p.11-2), and an attack on the current poetic diction (pp. 57-9).

37. Prose, i, pp.167-8. There is, of course, an echo of the opening of The Odyssey in the MS. B lines.

38. RCP, pp. 4-5.

39. W. Gilpin, Observations on the River Wye, (1782), pp. 35-6.

40. S. Trimmer, The Oeconomy of Charity (1787), cited in the text by its title. For WW's knowledge of this book, see EY, p. 30.

41. T. McFarland, Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin (New Jersey, 1981) though his case seems over-stated.

42. Aubin, p. 414 gives an undifferentiated list of poems with ruins that suggests how common the motif was.

43. See M of H, especially p. 90.

44. For the text of the poem, see W. Mavor, ed., Classical English Poetry (1823), pp. 390-1.

45. Old Cicely, 31, 37.

46. The Forest Boy, 126, 128-9.

47. RCP, pp. 5-6. The quotations from Southey are from Joan of Arc (1796).

48. EY, p. 169 and RC, 525.

49. All quotations from R. Lovell and R. Southey, Poems, (Bath, 1795). The Miser's Mansion and Elegy. The Decayed Monastery are the other ruin poems.

50. J. Fawcett, Poems, (1798), p. 78 (all quotations are from this edition). The poem was published in 1798, but possibly written much earlier. Fawcett was the model for the Solitary in The Excursion.

51. See RCP, p. 14.

52. M of H, pp. 61-7.

53. RCP, p. 6, and see J.H. Averill, Wordsworth and the

Poetry of Human Suffering (1980), p. 60 (Averill's suggestion that Samson Agonistes, 1755-8 is related to the end of RC seems doubtful).

54. See M of H, pp. 261-8 for the text and discussion. As Stoddard was a close friend of Montague and lived with him when WW visited in 1795-7, the link between WW and Taylor's translation is less tenuous than Jonathan Wordsworth implies.

55. Line 88 of Taylor's translation (WW did not know German at this time).

56. N.F. Adkins, "Wordsworth's Margaret: or the ruined cottage", MLN, 38 (1923), pp. 460-6 and L.S. Lyon, The Excursion: A Study (1950), p. 44.

57. RC, 291, and see the wider context of the epigraph to the Ur-Borderers.

58. For the two echoes of Shakespeare, see RCP, pp. 58n., 62n.

59. RCP, p. 52n. (and see p. 50n.).

60. M of H, pp. 125-7 in particular. Isaiah 13:20-2 is a key passage, but see the discussion of ruin poems above and, for example, Henry V, v, ii, 36-55.

61. In MS. A, for Margaret's religious love, see RCP, p. 81; for religious discourse, "God in Heav'n", "It pleased Heaven", and "their place knew them not" (RCP, pp. 83, 87).

62. See note 13 above. Quotations are from RCP, p. 83.

63. Prose, i, p. 103.

CONCLUSION

1. Prose, i, p.122.

2. H.J. Wüscher, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity in Wordsworth, 1791-1800 (Uppsala, 1980), p. 20, and also

see pp. 94-119 and notes.

3. M.H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp (1971), p. 107.

4. RC, 288.

5. R. Sharrock, The Figure in a Landscape: Wordsworth's Early Poetry (1973), p. 4.

6. Prose, i, p. 116.

7. S.T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, ed. G. Watson (1977), p. 167.

8. If this argument is valid it would make sources in Wordsworth's later poetry harder to identify because they had been modified, and might account, in part, for the difficulties in locating sources previous critics seem to have encountered.

9. W. Wordsworth, The Prelude: 1799, 1805, 1850, ed. J. Wordsworth et al. (1979), pp. 454n.

10. Op. cit., p. 374n. and p. 158n., and J.L. Lowes, The Road to Xanadu, 2nd ed. (1978), passim.

11. SP, 38, 95, 96.

12. SP, 175, 177.

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