

# Wordsworth's Daffodils and Winderemere

*"I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once, I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils..."*

by Suchita Malik

Of course, Wordsworth's Daffodils could be written here only, here alone... He must have wandered lonely as a cloud amidst those exotic, idyllic and beautiful surroundings, I fancied. These were my first reflections sitting in a coach on my way to visit the Winderemere, the best known of all the English lakes. Wordsworth preoccupied my mind all through and it was like a dream come true when the coach driver slowed down and announced: "On your left, ladies and gentlemen, is the house where that great nature lover lived". It was Grasmere, the birth place of *The Prelude* and the habitat of William Wordsworth, the most famous of the Romantics.

Constantly fleeting bubbly clouds through the window of my coach sent me into dizzy raptures. A deep nostalgia set in on remembering the occasions when I used to teach my students Daffodils, the beautiful poem of William Wordsworth without actually being aware of the sublime surroundings where the poet once lived and moved about. Stunned by the sheer beauty, I thought... he couldn't have done better for he was at his best here, at the peak of his creativity with the Mother Nature providing him all her succour, with a lavish display of her gorgeous gifts to its greatest admirer.

This must have been the real inspiration for

the "inward eye" of a person who revelled absolutely in the lap of Nature.... the deep, high-set innocuous range of small hills all around, the sloping valley within, with its tall range of sycamore trees, the lush green meadows on both the sides of the winding road and the sweet lulling sound coming from the azure crystal-clear waters of the nearby Winderemere lake. Such natural beauty was enough to send anyone into an overwhelming swoon and then, Wordsworth, a human being of extreme sensitivity, was, above all, a poet... a poet among Daffodils ... a host of golden Daffodils .... who wouldn't "dance with daffodils", when lying on the "couch" or in a "pensive mood".

No wonder, Mother Nature was the guiding force casting its spiritual influence upon that fond child of hers and shaped his "poetic vision". These beauteous forms, this scenic landscape was enough to make Wordsworth forget the "still, sad music of humanity" and put him in that blessed mood of elevated thoughts from which oozed out his creativity like a "sounding cataract." Nature, no doubt, became the "anchor" of his "purest thoughts" and he found in it a pastoral serenity, tranquillity and a sense sublime from which he never grew out. A worshipper of nature, he hunted it like an unending passion searching for a Utopia and finding it here. Nature became a priceless anodyne from "the din of towns and cities" and "in

hours of weariness".

The Lake District was discovered by the early tourists about two hundred years ago. These tourists belonged largely to the wealthy strata of society who toured the area mostly in their own horse-drawn carriages. This was the "romantic" phase in English literature and the place was visited and written about by many renowned poets and writers, such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, De Quincy and many others.

A cruise in the famous Winderemere lake opens a vast vista of panoramic landscape before one's eyeview. The lake extends ten-and-a-half miles from amid the Lakeland mountains and falls almost to the sea. It provides the visitor with a breathtaking spectacle of colourful tulips, daffodils and green foliage all around with sunshine and shade playing hide and seek. Its timeless beauty and peaceful serenity truly provides the ambience conducive to the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" for poets and writers, a fertile ground for the wild imagination of artists and photographers, for whom it serves almost as a haven.

A trip to Wordsworth's Lake District and a cruise in the Winderemere lake could be a delight to any student of literature who wishes to translate Wordsworth's immortal poems into one's own words. The effort could be intimidating but not after having a close look at the nature's Winderemere wonder. For me, it was a dream come true.