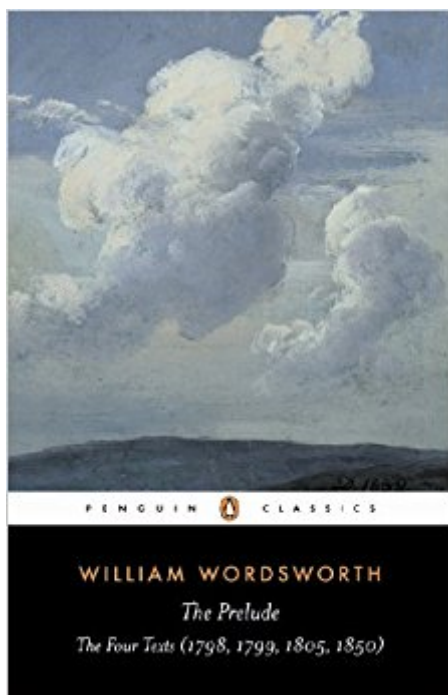


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The Prelude: A Parallel Text (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

First published in July 1850, shortly after Wordsworth's death, *The Prelude* was the culmination of over fifty years of creative work. The great Romantic poem of human consciousness, it takes as its theme 'the growth of a poet's mind': leading the reader back to Wordsworth's formative moments of childhood and youth, and detailing his experiences as a radical undergraduate in France at the time of the Revolution. Initially inspired by Coleridge's exhortation that Wordsworth write a work upon the French Revolution, *The Prelude* has ultimately become one of the finest examples of poetic autobiography ever written; a fascinating examination of the self that also presents a comprehensive view of the poet's own creative vision.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Prelude is William Wordsworth's masterpiece and one of the greatest poems of all-time. It began as a relatively short, two part work finished in 1799 but was expanded to fourteen books by 1805. Wordsworth labored over it until 1839, polishing, making a few additions based on later events, and altering some of his more radical statements about the divinity of nature and mind to fit his increasing religious conservatism. He published several excerpts at various times, but the whole was not released - indeed, hardly even known - until shortly after his 1850 death. The edition has all three versions plus an early draft, giving readers the full experience. *The Prelude* is now seen as his crowning achievement, at once his art's prelude and culmination. The work is of course an epic and highly influenced by prior ones from Spenser and Milton, but like Wordsworth's other major early

work, it is ground-breakingly original. The subtitle describes it succinctly: "Growth of a Poet's Mind." After deciding to be a poet, Wordsworth surveyed his life to find the events, thoughts, and feelings qualifying him for the role, and this is the result. Though in verse, it gives an overview of his life to that point much like a traditional autobiography, but his real focus is internal. Wordsworth details what molded his mind - and perhaps more importantly, his heart - for poetry. Anyone curious about his life will naturally find it invaluable, and it is also of great value to those interested in the era. Wordsworth saw many important events, including the French Revolution nearly at first hand, and relates them vividly; this is an excellent primary source for both historians and biographers.

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