WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

William Wordsworth was born in a small village of England where he spent a happy childhood in contact with nature.

He lost his mother when he was 8 years old and his father when he was 13. He had three brothers and a sister, Dorothy.

When he grew up he attended Cambridge. Then he went to France, attracted by the new democratic ideas.

There he had a love affair with Annett Vallon. They had a daughter, Caroline. Probably he also had in mind to marry Annett, but this never happened because Wordsworth’s family, that was against this decision, prevented him to.

When he returned to England, in 1793, the war between France and England broke out, so he could not reach out Annett, who had stayed in France.

In 1795 he met Samuel Coleridge, another famous English writer, and they became friends. In fact they shared the same love for nature.

In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson. This was a good period for him: calm and free from financial problems. It’s in these years that he turned to political and religious conservatism.

WORDSWORTH’S WORKS

Wordsworth started writing poems when he was still a little boy and continued to do it for all his life.

His literary production can be divided into two groups:

1) LONGER POEMS

2) MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

But his masterpiece is surely “The Lyrical Ballads”, written together with Coleridge. Its preface can considered the Manifesto of the Romantic Movement in England.

Wordsworth’s aim was to reconcile realism with poetry. To do such a thing he needed to draw inspiration from everyday life and to write in a language and with a style very close the actual spoken English.
Also other poets had tried to do something similar in the past, but Wordsworth was the one to completely solve the problem. In the second preface of the Lyrical Ballads, in fact, he exposed all these literary theories of his.

Wordsworth thought that man and nature were different but inseparable parts of a whole universe created by God.

The poet was inspired by the landscape of valleys, hills, everything around him, where he could draw inspiration.

He thought that Nature was neither a decorative background as Augustans, nor a mirror of a particular mood as Elizabethans. Instead he thought Nature contained a spirit and a life of itself, present in inanimate objects as well.

Nature’s language could be understood just by those who had a sensitive and deep soul, able to see the real essence of things.

Man can discover God in nature just through a fusion with Nature and a quiet contemplation of its beauty.

Nature’s a friend to man, a teacher: from it, man can learn virtue and wisdom.

The mission of the poet is consequently to open men’s souls to nature and meditation.

(QUESTO TESTO -IN INGLESE- E’ STATO INVIATO E PUBBLICATO ANCHE NELLA SEZIONE APPUNTI DEL SITO "SKUOLA.NET").