

which nestles at the foot of the hills on the far side of the Grasmere Lake. It was a thirty-minute bus ride from the Windermere railway station. The lake, one of the prettiest in the Lake District, and its surroundings were a constant source of inspiration to William Wordsworth, regarded by many as the nature poet and the sage of Grasmere. He lived there for nine years and wrote some of his famous poems. Grasmere is a beautiful old village, which remains in pristine condition. Because of its association with Wordsworth, it has become a place of pilgrimage for poetry lovers from all over the world.

Our first stop as we walked the narrow cobbled footpaths of the village was Wordsworth's grave. There at one end of the graveyard he and his wife Mary and sister Dorothy, who lived with them, were buried. It was a simple grave with an ordinary tombstone, which gave Wordsworth's year of birth in 1770 and death in 1850. We next visited the Dove Cottage, Wordsworth's home. It was a small stone cottage with some of the walls papered with the pages of the London Times newspaper, apparently for insulation. His own and his sister's bedrooms and a small study with fireplace were upstairs. Wordsworth would compose his beautiful verses sitting at a small wooden desk in his study or writing on his lap while sitting in a chair in the living room downstairs. Wordsworth and his sister put a lot of work in the garden and orchard surrounding the house. Amongst the poems he composed while at the Dove Cottage was the Daffodils written in 1804, considered by many as the best of his lyrics: "They flash upon that inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude; and then my heart with pleasure fills, and dances with the daffodils."

Many famous people visited Wordsworth at his house and some stayed with him. Among them were Walter Scott, Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Wordsworth lived on a modest but steady income as the Distributor of Stamps for the region and from the sale of his books of poetry. He received a small annual allowance from 1843, when he was appointed the Poet Laureate of England.

Close to his house is a Museum, opened in 1891. It has many portraits of Wordsworth in oil and of a few other dignitaries. It also has a great collection of manuscripts, books and paintings relating to British Romanticism.

We came back from the Lake District with a deep appreciation of nature's beauty, bliss and solitude and a feeling of nostalgia for the place.

*Azizul Jalil writes from Washington*

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