

## An Introduction to "Lines" by ' William Wordsworth: -

The poem commonly known as 'Tintern Abbey' actually has a much longer title.

When the poem first appeared in Lyrical Ballads (1798) as a last-minute addition, it bore the title 'Lines Written (or Composed) a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798'. William Wordsworth (1770-1850) wrote the poem after visiting the ruins of the medieval abbey on the England-Wales border, and was so pleased with it he sent it to his publishers, asking it to be included, at the eleventh hour, in the

collection of poems he and his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge had written.

You can read 'Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey' [here](#); what follows might be regarded as some notes towards an analysis of this, one of Wordsworth's most famous and anthologised poems.

As the full title of Wordsworth's poem 'Tintern Abbey' makes clear, he didn't write the poem at Tintern Abbey, but 'a few miles above it'. But even this is not quite true.

Wordsworth actually wrote the poem in the bustling city: although he began composing the poem in his head while still in the Wye

valley, he wrote it down while sitting in the parlour of his publisher, Joseph Cottle, in Bristol.

As Wordsworth himself later recalled: 'No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol.'

Wordsworth 'wrote' the poem (i.e. worked on it and then wrote it down) on 11-13

July 1798, almost five years after his previous visit to the Wye (August 1793).

Wherever he wrote it, the result was one of the most celebrated verse meditations on the self, the countryside, and the gathering of wisdom with time to be found in all of English literature. 'Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey' is a quintessential work of Romanticism.