

# ESSLEMONT SPECIAL BINDING

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

## THE PRELUDE

EDITED BY ROBERT WOOF

WATERCOLOURS BY DAVID ESSLEMONT

FOREWORD BY STEPHEN GILL



PUBLISHED IN 2007 BY THE WORDSWORTH TRUST

### 'Wordsworth's masterpiece'

This edition of Wordsworth's masterpiece follows the text of one of the Trust's greatest treasures, the fair copy made by Dorothy Wordsworth in 1805–6 known as 'Manuscript A'. In 1805 Dorothy wrote to Lady Beaumont: 'I am now engaged in making a fair and final transcript of the poem on his life, I mean final till it is prepared for the press, which will not be for many years. No doubt before that time he will, either from the suggestions of his friends, or his own, or both, have some alterations to make, but appears to us at present to be finished.'

### 'greatest poetic achievement'

As predicted, Wordsworth continued to revise the poem and it was not published until after his death in 1850. The 1805 version of the poem, now considered Wordsworth's greatest poetic achievement, did not reach the public until 1926 in an edition based on Manuscript A, with reference to 'Manuscript B', another fair copy made at the same period by Mary Wordsworth. Our new edition follows closely the original spelling and light punctuation of Manuscript A and presents Wordsworth's poem as it stood at a particular point in time when he appeared, to his wife and sister, 'to be finished'.

### 'a haunting need'

Robert Woof's introductory essay describes the early growth of the poem, tracing the changes that were made between the very first fragments of 1798 and the poem as completed in 1805–6: 'Many of these changes reveal a different, often expanded and more deeply explored presentation of Wordsworth's experience as a boy, a young man, a political figure and a potential poet whose subject is a haunting need to deepen his own self-analysis.'

### Illustrations

Esslemont was artist-in-residence with the Trust in Grasmere during 2005. His fourteen illustrations are details from a single watercolour inspired by the same landscape that inspired Wordsworth 200 years earlier.

### Edition details

380 pp., 290 x 185 mm.

Set in Adobe Bembo and printed on Zerkall mould-made acid-free paper in an edition of 200 copies. The illustrations are archival inkjets. Designed and printed by David Esslemont in Minneapolis.



### The special binding

David Esslemont is pleased to offer ten copies of his special binding of *The Prelude*.

The cover design is based on a detail from the same watercolour that was used for the illustrations. Other details form doublures and fly-leaves. Bound in white alum-tawed goatskin, the book is hand-sewn on linen tapes, with hand-sewn, two-colour headbands and leather-jointed endleaves. It is presented in a felt-lined drop-back box together with an extra set of the illustrations, including one not printed in the book.

Price: \$5000

### Order form

To: David Esslemont, 1990 Fox Hollow Road, Decorah, IA 52101  
Telephone 563 382 1220

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