Wordsworth's Spots of Time:
A Psychoanalytic Study of Revision

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March, 1992

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of
Master of Arts

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Abstract

In the introductory definition of spots of time, Wordsworth claims that these important childhood episodes are virtuous and worthy of celebration. This definition is incongruous with the episodes considered independently, because they reveal themselves as essentially disturbing memories. As he revised the spots of time, Wordsworth attempted to mitigate the disturbing nature of the episodes, betraying his need to repress certain undesirable aspects of the early texts.

The following study is a Freudian reading of Wordsworth's spots of time in their various stages of revision. The Introduction to this study addresses some of the problems of interpretation. Chapter One places a Freudian reading of Wordsworth within the context of previous scholarship. Chapter Two is a close reading of the earliest spots of time as informed by Oedipal memories. Chapter Three examines Wordsworth's attempt, through revision, to repress these Oedipal memories.
Resume

Dans la definition d'introduction des "<spots of time>", Wordsworth pretend que ces importants episodes de l'enfance sont vertueux et dignes d'etre celebres. Cette definition est sans rapport avec les episodes consideres, car ces derniers apparaissent comme des souvenirs essentiellement troublants. Lorsqu'il a revise ces "<spots of time>", Wordsworth a essaye d'attenuer la nature troublante des episodes, trahissant ainsi son besoin de refouler certains aspects indesirables des textes precedents.

L'étude suivante est une lecture Freudienne des "<spots of time>" de Wordsworth au cours de leurs differents stades de revision. L'introduction de cette etude s'occupe de certains problemes d'interpretation. Le Premeir Chapitre place une lecture Freudienne de Wordsworth a l'interieur d'un contexte de savoir anterieur. Le Deuxieme Chapitre est une lecture attentive des "<spots of time>" a leur tout debut en s'inspirant des souvenirs chez Oedipe. Et le Troisieme Chapitre examine les tentatives de Wordsworth pour reprimer ces souvenirs d'Oedipe dans la revision.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. C. Heppner for all of his criticisms and suggestions during the preparation of this thesis. Special thanks to Carolyn and Gillian for all of their support and patience.
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Introduction

I

Wordsworth's spots of time resist easy interpretation. In manuscripts U and V of 1799, the two fair-copy manuscripts of what has since been called the "Two-Part Prelude" and the texts in which the spots of time now survive in their earliest form, Wordsworth describes how these events retain

A fructifying virtue, whence, depressed
By trivial occupations and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
(Especially the imaginative power)
Are nourished and invisibly repaired.
(One 289-94)

Even without considering the two episodes which follow this definition and the complications they give rise to, this statement is replete with its own problems. The most pressing is that Wordsworth gives no clear indication as to how these spots of time fructify, nourish, and repair. We are left instead with a statement which is no doubt suggestive, but in the end enigmatic. Is it enough to say that these memories bear the fruit which nourishes and repairs the mind and imagination? Behind the metaphor, what does this mean? Furthermore, what role does the mind, which appears in this definition as passive and receptive, play in the processes of this phenomenon?

The problems inherent in Wordsworth's definition of the spots of time—even if we once again forego
consideration of the episodes themselves--are compounded when revisions are taken into account. Most notably, in early 1804, when Wordsworth had formulated his short-lived plan for a five-book poem, there is the replacement of "fructifying" with "vivifying," and later that year, after he had abandoned the five-book plan for one of thirteen books, "vivifying" is replaced with "renovating." On top of this, in the thirteen-book version there is the addition of eleven lines to the definition, marked most conspicuously by the assertion that the "efficacious spirit" of the spots of time

chiefly lurks
Among those passages of life in which
We have had deepest feeling that the mind
Is lord and master, and that outward sense
Is but the obedient servant of her will.
(XI 268-72)

How do we reconcile the passive mind of the "Two-Part Prelude" with the "lord and master" of the thirteen-book text? And, importantly, what in fact brought about such a drastic change in Wordsworth's understanding of and attitude toward the spots of time?

There are certainly no easy answers to the above questions, and some will no doubt remain insoluble in spite of the efforts of scholarship to answer them. Before proceeding along more positive lines, however, I would like to consider what I see as the crux of the problem of the spots of time: the relationship of the episodes proper (the Penrith beacon and Christmas vacation episodes) to
the definition Wordsworth gave them. I believe the fundamental problem is Wordsworth's interpretation of these seemingly disturbing memories as favourable (fructifying, vivifying, renovating) and worthy of celebration. In the Penrith beacon episode ("Two-Part Prelude," One 288-327), Wordsworth recalls his boyhood experience of riding out from his grandparent's place in Penrith with "honest James," becoming separated from him and lost, "stumbling on" to a valley where a murderer had at one time been hung, and eventually emerging from the valley to experience what he describes as a state of "visionary dreariness." It is fair to ask how such a memory can be interpreted as beneficent to a mind "depressed / By trivial occupations and the round / Of ordinary intercourse." In the Christmas vacation episode ("Two-Part Prelude," One 328-74), which is no doubt a more disturbing memory than the first, he recalls his adolescent experience of waiting with eager anticipation on a barren crag for the horses that would take him home for Christmas, experiencing the grief of his father's sudden and premature death during the holidays, and afterwards seeing his father's death as God's chastisement for the eager anticipation, the "anxiety of hope," he had experienced during his vigil on the crag. As in the case of the Penrith beacon episode, what is it about this episode that can be interpreted as beneficent? It is fair
to ask how Wordsworth is able to celebrate memories that are concerned primarily with experiences of loss, violence, murder, and premature death. The definition of the spots of time, after all, never reveals how these memories do in fact fructify (nourish, repair) the poet. And in spite of what Wordsworth says about them in his definition, they are clearly resistant to such optimistic interpretation.

The Penrith beacon and Christmas vacation episodes are further complicated by revision. In both the five- and thirteen-book versions, substantial changes are made to the story-line of the Penrith beacon episode, and in the fourteen-book version, some slight (although, I believe, significant) changes are made to the Christmas vacation episode's choice of language, to its historical accuracy, and to the structure and meaning of its short coda.

Furthermore, the entire spots of time sequence experiences several changes in narrative context, being moved from Part One of the two-part text (which roughly corresponds to Book I of both the thirteen- and fourteen-book texts) to Book V of the short-lived five-book version, and to Book XI of the thirteen-book version (which corresponds to Book XII of the fourteen-book text). This has a profound effect on the meaning of the spots of time. They are removed from their place among a series of other boyhood and adolescent memories (two-part version), briefly
reworked into Wordsworth's account of how he recovered from a period of imaginative impairment (five-book version), and finally integrated into a more fully developed narrative of how he recovered from the imaginative and moral impairment precipitated by the failure of the French revolution to live up to its early ideals (thirteen- and fourteen-book versions). We should consider, then, what was it about the spots of time that demanded such revisionary thinking? Or, in other words, why did Wordsworth continually change his mind about these episodes and in turn revise them to match the tenor of his shifting views?

We have so far considered the spots of time as highly enigmatic in their original form and as further complicated by various stages of revision. What has emerged in this preliminary sketch is a portrait of Wordsworth standing with a curious posture toward some vivid memories from childhood and early adolescence, celebrating experiences which reveal themselves as essentially disturbing. What has also emerged is a portrait of a poet who makes substantial and repeated revisions to the text recording some significant moments in his own life-history. In the following study, I am concerned with understanding why Wordsworth revises the spots of time, and what effect revision has upon the meaning of these important, if enigmatic, passages.
My central thesis is that as Wordsworth revises the spots of time he attempts to mitigate what is disturbing in the episodes, and that he uses revision as a strategy for repressing certain undesirable aspects of the text. In spite of this revisionary tactic, however, the spots of time remain resistant to change. In the end, Wordsworth is unable or unwilling to purge them of what is disturbing in them, for he could accomplish this only by completely forgetting the episodes themselves; and this, of course, would result in the loss of not only what is unpleasant in the episodes, but also what is efficacious and worthy of celebration.

II

The following study is a detailed investigation of the spots of time, with particular attention placed on the text's various stages of revision. In Chapter One, I attempt to determine what is essentially disturbing in the spots of time, and how revision is used by Wordsworth as a means of repression. The theoretical perspective I take in conducting this study is Freudian. Psychoanalysis, I believe, offers the biographically-minded critic a rich, systematic, and above all, extensively developed means of inquiry. The use of Freudian theory for the interpretation of literature, however, is certainly not accepted by all critics. Thus, as the initial step in my psychoanalytic investigation, I feel compelled to offer a defense of a
Freudian analysis of literature. I am largely interested in opening a debate with David Ellis, *Wordsworth, Freud, and the Spots of Time* (1985), who is as much concerned with demonstrating the apparent flaws of a Freudian approach as he is with offering his own unique, or "eclectic," brand of psychological analysis. In developing my own argument, I am indebted to Richard J. Onorato, *The Character of the Poet: Wordsworth in The Prelude* (1971); Geoffrey Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry: 1787-1814* (1964); and Lawrence Kramer, "The Other Will: The Daemonic in Coleridge and Wordsworth" (1979). I am particularly indebted to Onorato for his thesis that Wordsworth's premature loss of his mother and father had a profound effect on his development as a man and poet. This loss, I maintain, awakens certain Oedipal anxieties which in turn influence Wordsworth's presentation of images and ideas in the text; and these Oedipal anxieties, I believe, are behind what is essentially disturbing in the spots of time.

Chapter One concludes with a detailed consideration of Wordsworth's practice of revision. I am compelled here to defend my central thesis (that revision can be seen as a mode of repression) against some traditional and conservative viewpoints on the study of manuscripts. I am concerned with the studies of Jonathan Wordsworth and Stephen Gill, and with how their opinions have been
received by other critics. These two influential critics have established what amounts to a programmatic advocacy of the "early Wordsworth," and have argued that much of his later work is aesthetically and philosophically deficient. The problem with the approach of Jonathan Wordsworth and Stephen Gill is that it marginalizes the revised texts of important works such as The Prelude, and thus encourages critics to ignore much of Wordsworth's later work. In contrast, I consider all texts—early and late. The study of manuscript revision, I believe, offers a critic insight into the dynamics of Wordsworth's evolving sense of himself and his poetic mission.

In Chapter Two, I offer a close reading of the spots of time as they appear in the "Two-Part Prelude." My aim is to address the essential problem of the spots of time: the disparity between what Wordsworth says about the episodes and what they reveal about themselves. In other words, I am concerned with why Wordsworth presents two unpleasant memories of loss and death as life-affirming sources of fructification, nourishment, and repair. I argue that Wordsworth's definition of the spots of time represents a wish or desire of his, and that his celebration of these episodes is largely without basis in reality. The bulk of the chapter is then dedicated to demonstrating how the Oedipus complex plays a central, governing role in the poetic fabric of the episodes.
Chapter Three is a thorough examination of the various stages of revision of the spots of time. The aim of this chapter is to trace how Wordsworth attempts to mitigate the essentially disturbing nature of the episodes. I argue that through his revision of the entire spots of time passage Wordsworth reinforces the element of celebration evident in the earliest definition, and that he portrays the spots of time as having increasing powers of renovation and salvation. I also argue that in revising the episodes Wordsworth attempts to weaken or soften the most disturbing images of violence and death. Both strategies relate to his need to repress certain undesirable aspects of the text, and to his desire to reinforce a central belief of his that these two memories from childhood and early adolescence are indeed worthy of celebration.
Chapter One
Wordsworth and Freud

Before conducting a detailed examination of the spots of time, a word of explanation on (and defence of) the use of Freud is necessary. As indicated in the Introduction to this study, I am specifically concerned with the criticisms levelled by David Ellis.

Although Ellis does make fairly extensive use of Freudian theory, he is hostile to what he sees as its programmatic application in the work of literary critics, specifically in the Wordsworthian studies of Richard J. Onorato and Michael H. Friedman, The Making of a Tory Humanist (1979). Ellis's most aggressive criticism of Freudian critics is that they are more concerned with defending their own positions than with reaching a deeper understanding of the poet and literature in question. This argument appears in several places in his book, perhaps nowhere as forcefully as in his conclusion to Part One: "... many of his [Freud's] followers appear to be indulging in ingenuity for its own sake; they are not sufficiently challenged by what they observe, too easily allowing it to serve their Freudian purpose" (82). Ellis's own approach is to offer what he refers to as an "eclectic" (4) reading of Wordsworth, one he says is "very broadly in the tradition of Read and Bateson" (3). Such an approach, according to Ellis, allows him to avoid
"fastening The Prelude on the procrustean bed of this or that version of Freudian dogma" (82). He attempts to make use of what he sees as the appropriate amount or "degree" of Freudian theory, moderated by his own brand of common-sense psychology. And according to him, if his common-sense psychology is "not always very coherent, that is partly because its origins and debts are so numerous and diverse" (4).

Ellis's attack on the Freudians, I believe, is largely unfair. His charge that most Freudians indulge in "ingenuity for its own sake" is never justified nor proven by his study. Furthermore, I believe that his eclectic approach is problematic precisely because it is "not always very coherent." Following Richard J. Onorato, I approach cautiously "the kind of intuitive psychologizing that offers no account of itself but is implicit in many literary studies" (viii). This is not to say that I ignore these studies, many of which offer valuable insights into Wordsworth and his poetic career, but that I prefer to apply an established theoretical model in the development of my own argument.

Ellis does offer some valid criticism of the use of Freudian theory. He points out, for example, that Freudian critics of literature cannot rely upon the use of "free association," which according to him is the "cornerstone" of Freud's psychoanalytic methodology (66-67).
applies to Onorato, who generally believes that "a truth is latent in the text and that a reality, or a constellation of suggestions about realities, is to be recovered in the interpretation" (vii). It should be noted that Ellis does not go so far as to claim that these hidden "realities" do not exist, only that the Freudian interpreters of literature are not especially equipped to discover them, and that "good" autobiography actually establishes its own interpretive context. Ellis's criticism, I believe, could be made of most approaches (Freudian or otherwise) that attempt to investigate the psychological motivations behind a given work of literature. Speculative interpretation, by its very nature, opens itself up to this kind of criticism. A literary critic who makes use of Freudian theory, to be sure, must adapt certain methods in order to deal with the text as a static object of inquiry. Onorato, employing what seems to me a reasonable approach, says that

It is my intention to consider the recollection and representation of character in two ways: character in the sense of a character, the character created by an imaginative construction based on memory, and character in the sense of the characteristics of oneself revealed through verbal behaviour. (vii)

Even though he cannot employ the method of free association, Onorato does follow the basic practices of Freud. In The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (1905), his studies of
folklore (1911) and Fairy Tales (1913), and in "Dostoevsky and Parricide" (1927) Freud himself applies psychoanalysis to written texts. And as Onorato is obliged to do, he investigates the relationship between what is said and what is revealed by patterns of metaphor and imagery. Finally, Ellis's contention that "good" autobiography establishes its own interpretive context and that critics should thus keep "filling in to a minimum" (81-82) is not a self-evident fact, and is further complicated because he never clearly indicates how interpretive "filling in" is to be controlled. Certainly, autobiography lends itself to psychological and psychoanalytic investigation precisely because we must confront and likewise must attempt to understand the various levels of suppression and repression evident in any personal account.

The question still remains: why use Freud? In spite of his thoroughness in applying Freudian theory to a close reading of The Prelude, Onorato opts to offer no defense of his approach: "Of course, anyone who wishes will have his say about the appropriateness of applying psychoanalytic concepts to poets and poetry at all, but I have not sought to anticipate and contest that kind of criticism" (viii-ix). Onorato's indifference to criticism, I believe, is without justification, and a few general words of defence on the use of Freud are not out of place. The most conspicuous reason for employing Freudian
theory, I believe, is that it offers an established and extensively developed system of psychological investigation. It is more accountable than intuitive psychologizing, in spite of the claims of Ellis to the contrary. True, the use of psychoanalytic theory for the interpretation of literature is not accepted by everyone, and (as noted above) poetry does offer interpreters a special set of problems; however, Freud's methods of inquiry are diverse enough to allow a critic access to the psychological structures inherent in a particular text. According to Frederick Crews' essay, "Can Literature Be Psychoanalyzed" (1966, 1975),

"Literature is written from and about motives, and psychoanalysis is the only thoroughgoing theory of motives that mankind has devised. The moment we perceive that works of art can express emotional conflict, or that they contain latent themes, or that their effect on us is largely subliminal, we have entered the realm of interest that is uniquely occupied by Freudianism and its offshoots. The psychoanalyst offers us, with the presumption we are likely to resent, a view of the writer's innermost preoccupations, a technique for exposing those preoccupations behind the defences erected against them, and a dynamic explanation of how the literary work is received and judged."

I think generally that Crews offers a fair assessment of some of the strengths of psychoanalysis. My own study depends upon the presumption that we can in fact learn something about a writer's "preoccupations," and likewise that we can identify the "defences erected against them."

It should also be noted that Wordsworth, especially
in his autobiographical writings, is very accessible to Freudian interpretation. Wordsworth's obsession with childhood, and specifically with important moments in his early life, provides the Freudian critic with an extensive and rich source of material to draw from in developing an interpretation. That is to say, when we approach Wordsworth's poetry—the spots of time and other childhood memories—we approach texts in which the author is attempting to understand his own patterns of behaviour and to learn something of the source of his psychological development as a man and poet. Many of our areas of interest, as Freudian critics, are shared by the poet. The task, of course, is to distinguish between the manifest and latent meanings of Wordsworth's acts of self-identification, and importantly, to trace the dynamics over time of Wordsworth's shifting views. As Murray Schwartz points out in his Introduction to Memory and Desire (1986), the very process of growing old (of aging) plays an integral role in our efforts to achieve self-understanding:

Repetition occurs within generational conflict, and continuity of personal style must come to terms with the new and radically irreversible experiences of age, from the concrete reality of bodily change and decline to the more abstract experience of accepting or resisting one's place within the shifting structure of imagery and linguistic orders that enable us to assign and delimit meaning.... How are we to understand the relation between the experiences of self-continuity and the contributions of aging to the recognition and (possible)
transformations of the self?

The question is a good one, and is central to this present study. What must be determined is how effective Wordsworth is as a self-interpreter, what we can believe of his own account, what motivates him in reaching the conclusions he does about his own life, and how his views change over time.

II

In order to facilitate a psychoanalytic reading of the spots of time, I would like to expand upon, and qualify, the suggestion I made above that Wordsworth himself engages in various acts of self-interpretation which make him accessible to critics interested in reaching a deeper understanding of the mind of the poet. With this in mind, let us turn to Richard J. Onorato's *The Character of the Poet*, which is the only full-scale psychoanalytic study of Wordsworth and his development as a poet.

Onorato's first major assumption is that *The Prelude*, as autobiography, should be considered as much as an act of invention as it is of recollection: "... it would be useful to emphasize the inventive sense along with the recollective sense of the I-speaking character, and remember that the poet is creating a character, is 'characterizing' himself, by using both memory and imagination" (6). Wordsworth is engaged in a vital act
of self-analysis, sifting through his recollections of childhood and later, ordering and restructuring such recollections, and finally interpreting them according to his belief in himself as preeminently a poet: "The selection, evaluation, and belief in exemplary experiences are simultaneous; they animate the poetry with metaphor, with a causal sense of what 'growth' is and what becoming a poet is" (6). Onorato's major thesis is that this act of invention and recollection was influenced by what he sees as Wordsworth's most profound childhood trauma—the death of his mother in early March of 1778, a month or so before Wordsworth's eighth birthday. Because of this trauma, normative growth for Wordsworth was interrupted, and he was compelled to recapture through memory and imagination the lost, pre-Oedipal relationship with his absent mother, with all of its senses of security, belonging, nurture, etc. His model for the lost mother is nature: "In our account of Wordsworth he is seen as fixated to a trauma, obsessed by a vital relationship with Nature which has come to stand unconsciously for the lost mother" (64). It is from this essential trauma that his creative sensibility is born, as the means by which invention and self-identity are actualized in the realm of poetry.

According to Onorato, the absence of any substantial relationship between Wordsworth and his father contributed
to Wordsworth's regressive desire to seek his lost mother. Because of his residence in the grammar school at Hawkshead, his father's frequent business obligations away from the family home, and finally (and definitively) his father's death on December 30 of 1783, Wordsworth was deprived of the normative social education which Onorato, following Freud, identifies as an essential aspect of a boy's interaction with his father. Instead, and in the absence of such interaction, he was compelled to pursue with greater urgency the one relationship with which he could identify: with nature as a surrogate for the lost mother. Wordsworth's understanding and appreciation of mankind and authority was influenced by his desire for isolation in nature. It is thus in the figure of the shepherd, alone and in harmony with his natural surroundings, that Wordsworth finds his first and most idealized father figure. In Wordsworth's choice of the shepherd as a father figure, Onorato recognizes a marked ambivalence in Wordsworth toward his "real" father: on the one hand, his choice of the shepherd reveals a latent resentment toward his own absent father--an intense desire to fill his vacant spot with an idealized figure; and on the other hand, it also suggests that Wordsworth associated the shepherd with his father, who was obliged to serve faithfully those in greater power--Lord Lonsdale, King, and country.
Onorato's argument is compelling and plausible. I believe that the premature loss of his mother and father was indeed a profound trauma for Wordsworth, and that his fixation with Nature is the result of his desire to recapture something like the lost, pre-Oedipal relationship with his mother. The self-inventive or "I-speaking" mode adopted by Wordsworth in the development of his autobiographical poem demonstrates his intense desire to be not only the reporter of his own life but also the interpreter of its significant events. The Prelude is largely a creative autobiography: the poet's history becomes a reflection of his own hopes and ambitions. Consequently, critics must be careful to distinguish between what Wordsworth says about himself and what he reveals in his acts of representation. It is not that he is necessarily untrustworthy, but that his interpretation of himself is influenced to a large extent by his poetic ambitions. In adopting a self-inventive strategy of autobiography, he invariably represses, reorganizes, and reinterprets various aspects of his life in order to accommodate certain ambitions he has for himself. In the present study, I focus upon Wordsworth's habits of self-representation and invention, and attempt to determine how various levels of self-knowledge are at once attained and resisted. The issue of self-knowledge, I believe, is central to the meaning of the spots of time.
In other words, the spots of time are as much a reflection of Wordsworth's desire to understand himself as they are of his need to avoid certain unpleasant and disturbing aspects of his life.

To pursue this line of investigation, let us return to Onorato. In his analysis of the spots of time, Onorato sees Wordsworth's fundamental act of selective and creative memory in operation. Commenting on the Penrith beacon episode, he postulates that it has the essential features of what Freud terms a "screen memory":

When he [Wordsworth] says 'visionary dreariness' he is characterizing what he saw 'then' as he has since come to describe such experiences--that is, as he would describe it now. It is not what separation meant to the five-year-old boy that shows here, but rather what separation has come since then to mean to Wordsworth, a meaning that dates from the trauma.

(211)

Only through recollection does Wordsworth transform this episode into a testimony of his imaginative powers: "He has unconsciously changed a memory from an earlier experience based on Oedipal resolution to one that fits with his repressed trauma and with his powerfully fixated sense of his poetic identity since then" (216). Because of the trauma of losing his mother and the consequent interruption of his growth, Wordsworth was compelled "to deny all earlier senses of loss and separation" from the mother, and instead attempted to recapture in such experiences some form of that lost relationship. According
to Onorato, we should recognize Wordsworth's attempt to recapture his relationship with the lost mother in his use of the word "visionary" (i.e. "visionary dreariness"), which, says Onorato, is a term Wordsworth consistently associates with the state of mind in which nature comes to stand for the lost mother:

The child [in the Penrith beacon episode] did not cry out for the mother, but proceeded--to survive, to seek the visible world, to discover his 'visionary' powers. The poet, who grew out of that child, described as 'visionary' the experiences by which that lost relationship was preserved; and in consequence even such an earlier experience had to be unconsciously altered to fit the fiction in which the strengths of a poet seem to be acquired and developed.

(216-17)

As noted above, I agree with Onorato that the premature loss of his mother and father compelled Wordsworth to seek in nature something like the reciprocal relationship between a mother and child. There is certainly an element of regression in his adult attachment to nature as a fostering influence in his life. My interests, however, are much more narrowly focused than those of Onorato, and my argument must reflect this. Onorato's treatment of the spots of time, although headed in the right direction, is too general. His assertion that Wordsworth is here engaged in the overall program of recapturing his lost mother does not adequately address the idiosyncracies of this particular spot of time and, importantly, its relationship with the episode immediately
following it. Although it is a reasonable characterization of Wordsworth's ambitions (especially as expressed in the earliest definition of the spots of time ["Two-Part Prelude," One 288-96]), it does not approach what is essentially disturbing in the episode itself, other than acknowledging a general pattern of continuing obsession with the lost mother. Furthermore, it is problematic when considered in the light of Wordsworth's claim in the thirteen-book text (and his similar claim in the fourteen-book text) that the spots of time are the passages in life in which Wordsworth has had

deepest feeling that the mind
Is lord and master, and that outward sense
Is the obedient servant of her will. (XI 270-72)

This, after all, does not illustrate the reciprocal interplay of nature/mother with poet/child, but the very hegemony of the poet/child.

To clarify my position, I believe that both spots of time are representational memories (not "screen memories," proper) that come to stand for events and ideas implicit in the images of the stories. Ellis is right in criticizing Onorato's use of the term "screen memory," for Freud does say that screen memories "will most probably strike us as trivial" (CW, III 307), and these two episodes, especially the second one, do not appear trivial to Wordsworth (Ellis 18-19). The spots of time, however, are not simply memories as experienced in
everyday life. They are instead the memories explored by a poet in a state of heightened imaginative activity—and here lies the difference. According to Freud, creative writing, like dreaming (and he sees the two as analogous), is an avenue through which unconscious desires are released from repression. The work of art comes to stand for, or represent, unconscious ambitions (drives, desires, wishes) which otherwise might not have found conscious expression. This does not mean that the creative writer is necessarily neurotic. According to Crews, if the neurotic's solution is the helplessly regressive and primitive one of allowing repressed ideas to break into a disguised expression which is satisfying neither to the neurotic himself nor to others, the artist has the power to sublimate and neutralize conflict, to give it logical and social coherence through conscious elaboration, and to reach and communicate a sense of catharsis.

As Freud argues, all conscious behaviour is marked by, or represents by degrees, unconscious motivation, this being manifest in parapraxies (slips of the tongue), sexual habits, phobias, etc. With creative writing, however, as a form of differentiated intellectual activity, the process is simply exaggerated and intensified. In the case of Wordsworth's spots of time, the episodes come to stand for certain unconscious thoughts, or memory-traces, which rise to the surface of consciousness. The spots of time reveal (albeit obliquely), and have encoded within them, evidence of the surfacing of latent and repressed memories.
What, then, do the spots of time in fact represent? Common-sense, the approach taken by Ellis, suggests that they represent nothing other than what they are, the memories of two particular, if enigmatic, episodes in Wordsworth's life-history (Ellis 39-45). Such a common-sense approach, as suggested above, is problematic. In the Penrith beacon episode, Wordsworth conflates two separate murder stories (we must assume unintentionally), and in revision makes substantial changes to his account of discovering the place where a murderer had been hung in a gibbet. His memory appears faulty and indecisive. We are invited to probe below the surface of his story in order to determine what Wordsworth is unwilling or unable to fully remember. In the Christmas vacation episode, Wordsworth's strong sense of guilt over his father's death is not substantiated by what is recorded in this particular memory. It is not really fair (nor logical) to assume that he punishes himself so vigorously for an apparently selfish and "impatient" wish to go home for the holidays. In spite of what the episode suggests, it does not follow that he would see God as correcting his "desires" for the innocent ambition to be reunited with his family. It is more likely that this, like the Penrith beacon episode, acts as a substitute for some memory that is not fully revealed.

According to Freud, there is no trauma that does not
in some way feed upon a repressed memory from the 
psycho-sexual development of early childhood. In other 
words, traumas become the catalysts for bringing repressed 
memories to the surface of consciousness. If we maintain 
the position that the premature loss of his mother and 
father was a traumatic event for Wordsworth, we should 
identify some infantile experience that would necessarily 
augment and sustain it. In the spots of time, the memories 
of the executed murderer, the murderered wife, and 
the dead father suggest that this infantile memory must 
involve something that was itself essentially disturbing. 
In short, I believe that the spots of time, specifically 
the episodes considered in isolation of their definition, 
do not represent the visionary moments in which the lost, 
pre-Oedipal relationship between mother and child is 
preserved, as Onorato asserts, but the point at which this 
reciprocal relationship is first breached: the Oedipus 
crisis itself. Let us briefly consider the general 
features of the Oedipus complex, then determine how 
it (as a fundamental structure of unconscious memory) 
relates to Wordsworth's particular situation. I would like 
to demonstrate that there is a plausible and meaningful 
correlation between this general feature of unconscious 
behaviour and Wordsworth's attitude toward the loss of his 
parents.

Freud postulates that mental energy is channeled
along two basic cathetic courses, or in other words, is employed in two fundamental ways—as libido and aggression. In a child, libido first emerges as auto-eroticism; the child is unable to differentiate between subject and object, has not yet developed a sense of object-love, and instead directs libido toward the self. Similarly, aggression first emerges as a form of masochism, in which the child attempts to recapture a state of immobility or stasis. This arises because he or she, following what Freud identifies as the "pleasure principle," attempts to mitigate the tension resulting from libido. As the child grows, auto-eroticism is eventually replaced by object-love, with the mother emerging as the first object of desire. In a boy, this eventually precipitates the Oedipus crisis, which is characterized by the boy's ambition to behave as an adult, or to direct libido toward the mother in the way in which the father does. As the Oedipus crisis intensifies, the flow of mental energy directed toward the mother as libido is interrupted, halted so to speak, by the emergence of a sense of threat coming from the father. The boy comes to see the father as a rival for the mother's affections. This energy which was employed as libido is now employed as a strengthened or reinforced form of aggression, directed against the father in an attempt to get rid of him and somehow take his place. Thus, during the most
turbulent and traumatic period of the Oedipus crisis the boy experiences a profound object loss: the mother is denied him by the father, becoming forever the "taboo" object of his erotic impulses, and the father in turn is rejected by the boy as the hated object standing between him and what he desires. He, however, with the inevitable recognition of the superior power and authority of the father, must eventually submit to his influence and repress his erotic impulses toward the mother. With the resolution of the Oedipus crisis, he comes to identify with and esteem the father and so develops the social and moral sense of the super-ego. Aggressive energy once more resumes its course as libido, although it is now sublimated by the emerging super-ego into eros: directed as socially acceptable affection toward the parents and a sense of pride toward the self.

The boy who experiences the actual loss of his mother and father unconsciously remembers a period in his life when aggressive and erotic feelings were associated with the experience of a comparable, if only temporary, loss. The repressed Oedipus complex exists as a parallel experience in unconscious memory, and has a large measure of guilt and anxiety associated with it. Through the associational interplay of the conscious and unconscious mind, this guilt and anxiety attaches itself to his memory of the actual deaths of his mother and father and informs
it with emotions not properly its own. The adult experiencing the emergence of the unconscious memory of this confusing and traumatic episode in his life cannot consciously remember the episode itself, but constructs one out of conscious memory to act as a substitute for it; and with this constructed memory, in turn, attempts to resist the emergence of unconscious memory through the distortion (condensation, displacement) of emergent images, ideas, emotions, etc. The adult doing the remembering is both impelled by the unconscious and resistant to it.

The Oedipus complex is at the root of what is both disturbing and celebratory in the spots of time. What is essentially disturbing manifests itself in Wordsworth's need to formulate metaphors of Nature as the lost mother and in his feelings of guilt associated with his father's death. It can be argued that the spots of time reveal in Wordsworth what might be generally described as a death-anxiety, an obsessive preoccupation with mortality, annihilation, and destruction. The premature loss of his parents would awaken this death-anxiety and it would be sustained by the Oedipal situation, which offers a primal memory (an unconscious one) of aggression, violence, and object-loss. The pre-Oedipal child has no knowledge of differentiation and death, but the Oedipal and post-Oedipal child has had to confront these two
basic, and disturbing, realities. What is essentially celebratory in the spots of time is that the adult has the power to offer some resistance to unconscious memory—even if he is not fully aware of this power. Resistance to full knowledge of unconscious memory is evident in Wordsworth's belief that the spots of time are a source of fructification, nourishment, and repair; and in the protective distortion that occurs when he consciously represents (re-presents) unconscious memories of the Oedipal situation.

III

It is useful at this point to turn to an important work by Geoffrey Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814* (1964), and to a related study by Lawrence Kramer, "The Other Will: The Daemonic in Coleridge and Wordsworth" (1979). I would like to examine the argument I have been tracing in relation to Hartman's influential anatomy of the Wordsworthian imagination. Specifically, I am interested in determining what the dialogue (or argument) between celebration and disturbance, consciousness and the unconscious has to tell us about the operations of the poetic imagination. After all, as noted above, the spots of time are not ordinary memories, but are the memories of a poet in a state of heightened imaginative activity. And we may assume, again as noted above, that this heightened imaginative activity affords Wordsworth access (if only
(partial) to unconscious memories which might otherwise remain repressed. What must be determined is how Wordsworth's faith in the life-affirming powers of the imagination (fructification, nourishment, and repair) is related to the death-anxiety he reveals, and if these two opposing forces in his mind can be reconciled. The relationship in the spots of time between celebration and disturbance may in fact be less anomalous than surface issues would suggest; and if this is true, the role of the poetic imagination in bringing about various levels of reconciliation must be examined.

According to Hartman, Wordsworth's imagination, especially as it reveals itself in the spots of time, should be recognized as betraying two phases of operation, what Hartman generally refers to as the romantic and apocalyptic phases of the imagination. The romantic "vitalizes" and "animates," and is that which discovers harmony, unity in multeity, and "the one life within us and abroad." The apocalyptic, however, is related to death: "The poet is isolated and immobilized by it; it obscures rather than reveals nature; the light of the senses goes out" (17). In the operation of the imagination, the first or primary phase is the apocalyptic, interrupting the poet from the "ordinary vital continuum," separating him from the familiar scenes of nature, bringing in a flood of thoughts
concerning death or judgement, reversing his perception of the received order of nature, and ushering forth feelings of "solitude or loss or separation." The second or reactive phase is the romantic, in which the imagination strives to recover from the isolation and desertion of the apocalyptic. In the romantic, the soul is vitalized and animated and comes to know its "individual greatness." Only afterwards, when it has secured its own inner powers, does it reach outside itself to the world of sense and nature (17-18). Hartman sees Wordsworth as profoundly resistant to the apocalyptic tendencies of the imagination. Wordsworth halts at the threshold of apocalyptic vision, unwilling to abandon the phenomenal world, that of nature and of sense, for the noumenal world revealed in his fleeting visions. The romantic is what keeps him obstinately wedded to nature and humanity.

In his consideration of the spots of time, Hartman sees this dialectic between the apocalyptic and romantic phases of the imagination as the source of what is both rewarding and disturbing in these two episodes. According to Hartman, the child who experienced these episodes is protected by ignorance from an understanding of the mind's powers of imagination, and instead perceives power as an attribute of the landscape around him. He needs such protection to allow his mind normal growth. The adult in his recollection of these episodes comes to know power as
an attribute of his own mind or imagination. He, however, like the child, defends himself against full knowledge of the apocalyptic powers of the imagination. This is what Hartman calls the "profoundly conservative" character of the imagination (215). Against the knowledge derived through apocalyptic vision of the mind as autonomous and independent of nature, and consequently of the mind's capability of bringing about the imaginative destruction (apocalypse) of nature, Wordsworth seeks intimations of a previous immortal existence, turning to the natural world around him as substitute for a lost Heaven: "Nature, on its side, does the best it can to act as Heaven's substitute, and the imagination, deprived of directly numinous data, seizes on nature's imagery to fill the vacuum" (215). In spite of the compensatory efforts of the romantic phase of imagination, the apocalyptic maintains a powerful resistance: "imagination remains too strong for the milder, perishable beauties of nature. The shadow of its power often erases the reality of the familiar world or is affixed to parts of it with overwhelming psychic effect" (216). Thus, Wordsworth is able to celebrate nature and the physical world as a Heaven-substitute with which he has meaningful imaginative interaction, and at the same time must recognize in the objects of nature "stark hieroglyphs" replete with disturbing intimations of isolation, vacancy, and death. He stands precariously on
the borderland or threshold of apocalyptic vision and romantic salvation.

According to Kramer, the principle of otherness in the imagination can best be described by the term daemonic, a term, as we shall see, related to what Hartman refers to as the apocalyptic. The daemonic is the opposite or dark side of the romantic, and in its operation seeks out the workings of the unconscious mind: "[it] can simply be described as the personification of an unconscious will to represent whatever aspects of the self that the self chooses to forget--the side of the self we can still call repressed, if we use the term loosely" (299). The romantic, as in Hartman's formulation, is the vitalizing aspect of the imagination, or that which seeks to unify, harmonize, and link humanity with "the one life within us and abroad." It is a product or operant of the conscious will, and is related to the daylight world of nature, life, love, and the beautiful. The daemonic, on the other hand, disrupts normal perception of the natural world, and is thus associated with the darker operations of the mind, and with terror and sublimity. Kramer, like Hartman, sees the operation of these two drives as part of a greater dialectic in the overall functioning of the imagination. The romantic, thus, responds to the promptings and intimations of the daemonic, and works to "encompass" or regularize the sublimity it finds in the operation of the
daemonic. According to Kramer, the strength in Wordsworth—unlike Coleridge, who finds only terror and dismay in the operations of the daemonic—is in his ability to use the daemonic to achieve "access" to the shadowy depths of the mind: "The romantic 'lifting' is therefore a receding of genuine vision, a return to ordinary consciousness; but it is also an assimilation of the daemonic into ordinary consciousness, which appears as an enrichment both in the self and in the world" (300). It is, says Kramer, a mode of Wordsworthian "epiphany" (301).

In his consideration of the spots of time, Kramer, like Hartman (whose reading he acknowledges and affirms), sees the dialectic between the romantic and daemonic (apocalyptic, sublime) as the source of what is both disturbing and rewarding in these episodes; unlike Hartman, however, he sees Wordsworth as inclined to celebrate the darker functions of the mind, in what we noted above as the romantic's enriching "assimilation of the daemonic into ordinary consciousness." The difference between Hartman and Kramer lies largely in emphasis, or in their differing appreciations of Wordsworth's strength in confronting the powers of his own mind. According to Kramer, the operation of the daemonic in the spots of time should be considered as an example of what Freud calls the "uncanny," or the emergence of hidden and unfamiliar things that have been subject to
repression. In the Penrith beacon episode, the boy's experience of loss and his confrontation with death, "I ... / Came to a bottom where ... / A murderer had been hung in iron chains" (thirteen-book *Prelude*, XI 287-89), call forth unbidden the daemonic powers of imagination, which alter the boy's perception and so transform the landscape about him: "Wordsworth's terror becomes the medium in which the landscape assumes its visionary dreariness.... visible nature becomes an uneasy reflection of the presence of an unseen dead man, a daemonic agent who embodies the mind's own un governed imagination of death" (315-16). Although this was a profound source of disturbance for the boy, it is a source of renovating virtue for the adult, because through it he is able to recognize the "sublime strength" of his own imagination, even if he is compelled to face what is disturbing in the operations of the daemonic. The romantic, however, does not overpower or submerge the daemonic, but has its own beauty and softness strengthened by it; and the daemonic, in turn, though modified to a "supplementary" power by the subsequent appearance of the romantic, nevertheless remains resilient (317). According to Kramer, "to undergo daemonic vision, and to lift it through an answering romantic vision, is to expose and purge (at least for a while) whatever is questionable, or self-haunting, or debased about the imagination itself."
The daemonic acts as the imagination's "principle of self-interrogation" (318). What it accomplishes, then, is to provide an intimation of the shadowy and sublime strengths of the imagination, and at the same time point to the rather tentative or imperfect powers of the romantic in its attempt to repress the hidden knowledge brought to the surface through daemonic vision. Here both Hartman and Kramer converge in their acknowledgement of the resiliency of daemonic (apocalyptic) vision in the face of romantic repression.

IV

Let us stand back and assess the situation. The arguments of Hartman and Kramer correspond with several of Onorato's major assumptions and with the approach I have been following. The self-inventive, "I-speaking," mode Wordsworth develops in his autobiography is a correlative of the romantic imagination. Like the romantic, it is simply one phase (the reactive phase) of an imaginative act which has its genesis in a disturbing psychological event which has been conveniently, if only partially, forgotten. In effect, to seek nature as a replacement for the lost mother is to deny, or attempt somehow to forget about, the mother's death. The daemonic or apocalyptic motivation for such romantic reaction-formation appears in the form of a death-anxiety which has been heightened by memory-traces of the Oedipal
situation. The continuing pressure of the daemonic makes the program of romantic reaction-formation all the more urgent.

So far we have seen the imagination in its daemonic (apocalyptic, sublime) function as betraying a curious self-willed tendency, bringing to the surface of consciousness intimations of what has been repressed in the unconscious; we have considered the reactive phase of imagination, the ordered or daylight realm of the romantic, as basically an attempt to repress once again what has surfaced in daemonic vision; and finally, we have seen the confrontation of these two modes of imagination as the uneasy and volatile dialectic between what is repressed and retrieved. It has been argued that Wordsworth experiences a profound death-anxiety. Hartman sees this as his resistance to the apocalyptic destruction of the self and nature; and Kramer, as his confrontation with the mind's "ungoverned" intimations of death. His sense of mortality, of death in things (the self and nature), is a direct product of the imagination, the faculty normally associated with what is generous and life-affirming. Wordsworth is forced to confront the disturbing reality that devotion to the imagination is devotion to a Janus-faced god, that the imagination will bring him as close to apocalypse and death as it will to salvation and life. And he must confront the very
self-willed or capricious nature of the imagination in its
daemonic functionings, and attempt to come to terms with
his inability to gain complete control over this important
human faculty. On the other hand, as Kramer argues,
Wordsworth can celebrate the strength of the imagination
in its confrontation with daemonic forces, and likewise
can find a great source of power in daemonic memory.

I will clarify my argument in a close reading of the
spots of time. Before doing this, however, it is necessary
to address the issue of revision. I am particularly
interested in seeing how the dynamic relationship between
daemonic and romantic forces is developed over the
changing course of the text.

V

I have proposed that in his revisions of the spots of
time Wordsworth attempts to mitigate what is disturbing in
the episodes. It has been argued that disturbance comes in
the form of the daemonic emergence of a repressed
death-anxiety, and that what is celebratory in the spots
of time is Wordsworth's ability to respond to the daemonic
with an act of romantic idealization. I would like to
consider how the romantic applies to Wordsworth's
revisions of the spots of time. I believe that the
romantic can be seen as a mode of revisionary thinking, a
means by which the self, engaged in the processes of
memory, can gain a measure of control over daemonic (or
self-willed) memory. Wordsworth's attempt to mitigate disturbance through revision is an attempt to subdue (or at least control) the daemonic through continuing invocations of the romantic. Revision allows Wordsworth to maintain a critical discourse with his past—as recorded memory—and to temper his understanding of the past with his present beliefs and future ambitions. This equating of revision to the romantic is admittedly schematic, but does point to a general feature of Wordsworth's revisionary mode when returning to the spots of time. I would like to emphasize that the daemonic does in fact remain active in all stages of revision, and likewise, that the romantic is evident in the earliest recorded version of the spots of time. The romantic, I believe, is simply reinforced with each stage of revision.

My thesis concerning Wordsworth's revisionary practices requires some defence. As noted in the Introduction to this study, many critics have disapproved of Wordsworth's later poetic production, arguing that there is a general decline in his artistic abilities. I, therefore, feel compelled to come to terms with this attitude toward Wordsworth's later work, and to relate it to my own views on revision as a form of memory.

In his analysis of the spots of time, R. D. Havens, _The Mind of a Poet_ (1941), contends that the fourteen-book text is not sufficiently clear as a statement in its own
right nor in its relation to the rest of Book XII, and became obscure through repeated revision. He believes that much of the ambiguity of the spots of time can be cleared up if the fourteen-book text is considered along with the evidence of earlier manuscripts dating between 1799 and 1804 (specifically, MSS. V and W). In his approach to the spots of time, Havens is working within a tradition of sifting through manuscript evidence and variant texts in order to piece together an edited text that will supposedly provide the clearest expression of an author's idea or experience. Such an approach is very much tied up with locating the 'intention' of an author, an intention which has been either muddled or clarified with revision. My interests, however, as indicated above, are in examining how Wordsworth's revisions reveal his changing attitude toward his original utterances, and in determining the strategies he employed to integrate original utterance with revision. The rift between my approach and that of Havens becomes clear when value judgments are made, and one text (original or editorial creation) is favoured over others as more authentic, poetic, true to original thought, etc. These value judgments have a tendency to marginalize variant texts, relegating them to a pile of unfortunate errors and artistic failures.

In more recent years, Jonathan Wordsworth and other
like-minded critics have developed what is perhaps the most polemic and programmatic exploration of what they see as Wordsworth's more authentic and poetic utterances. If Havens seeks what is best in Wordsworth through a reconstruction of various manuscripts, Jonathan Wordsworth seeks it in a return to early manuscripts and texts which date from what has been described as Wordsworth's 'great decade.' According to Jonathan Wordsworth, most if not all of Wordsworth's revisions are to the detriment of the original texts. For example, in their article "The Two-Part Prelude of 1798-99," Jonathan Wordsworth and Stephen Gill declare that the "1799 [text] offers a treatment that is at once fuller and more concentrated than that presented in the first two books of 1805, to which in some sense it corresponds." According to them, Part One of the "Two-Part Prelude" is "plundered" for revisionary material, and important passages such as the spots of time, "on which the thought of the two-part poem had turned," are unfortunately relegated to other books (504).

The arguments of Jonathan Wordsworth, Gill, and Havens constitute one of two basic attitudes or schools of criticism: those who favour 'the early Wordsworth,' and those who favour 'the later Wordsworth'--or, at least, those who have a critical awareness of the merits of Wordsworth's often disparaged later work. The controversy
over which stage of the poet is superior is perhaps best epitomized in the 1984 Wordsworth Summer Conference debate over the merits of the thirteen- and fourteen-book texts of The Prelude (see TWC 17 (1986): 1-38). The debate, understandably, was held in the best of humour; however, the implications of the controversy are far reaching and serious. For instance, as Jack Stillinger points out in a recent article on the editorial practices employed by the Cornell Wordsworth editors,

The Cornell Wordsworth ... is a work of immense practical usefulness for the study of Wordsworth and one of the most significant editing projects in romantic literature in this century.... Nevertheless, the Cornell Wordsworth, in its condemnation of 'the worst' of Wordsworth and its understandable eagerness to discover, promulgate, and extol early versions to take the place of later ones, is in the process of doing away with the later Wordsworth once and for all.

(13-14)

Support for the later Wordsworth has strengthened in the past few years. Quite often this program is tied up not so much with favouring later texts over earlier ones, as with reevaluating the kinds of standards that have been employed in making value judgments on textual superiority. Kenneth R. Johnston's Wordsworth and The Recluse (1984) and William H. Galperin's Revision and Authority in Wordsworth (1989) have contributed, though in different ways, to this relatively recent and growing body of texts concerned with the reevaluation of the later Wordsworth. Johnston is interested in a less rigid approach to
literary theory, employing a formalism which in places encompasses the developments of psychoanalysis, phenomenology, structuralism, and deconstruction. However, taking traditional formalism for his lead, he argues for the "coherence" and "connection" of the texts he considers (xix-xx). According to his major thesis, "The Recluse exists, not as an unrealized idea, but as a coherent though incomplete body of interrelated texts, comprising nearly twenty thousand lines of poetry susceptible to a constructive reading" (xi). His contribution to a reevaluation of the later Wordsworth rests on his argument that Wordsworth, instead of failing in the composition of his projected Recluse, went a long way towards the accomplishment of his plans. Wordsworth's revision of the spots of time, according to Johnston, contributed to his development of the major theme of The Recluse: namely, his exploration of the 'mind of man.' Johnston sees the spots of time as they appear in the thirteen-book text as a refined examination of the renovation of an imagination impaired by radical political theories: "Wordsworth is clearly aware that he is plunging deeper into the roots of human consciousness than in 1799's childhood recollections or the five-book plan's normative educational scheme. Images of depth and mystery abound, thickening the originally spare narrative" (197).

Galperin, with his eclectic or "new, hybrid" (4)
approach to literary theory, proposes that Wordsworth's various changes in personae throughout his career have provided him with vantage points from which to critique preceding personae: "Thus, the conservative personae of the later poems--far from forgetting their various progenitors--actually recall the authority of Wordsworth's earlier humanism. And in so doing they make clear what is already detectable in the early poetry: namely, the arbitrariness of authority in general" (2). In reference to the spots of time, Galperin finds in the thirteen-book text a resistance to authority not found earlier. According to Galperin, Wordsworth here deconstructs an "ascension to authority" through the proposition of a mind that is at once patriarchal--"lord and master"--and at the same time feminine--"outward sense / Is but the obedient servant of her [the mind's] will" (170-72; emphasis added). He sees the Wordsworth of 1805 as finally able, as he was not in 1799, to deconstruct the centers of authority built around the notions of enfranchisement (chosen poet) and revolutionary ambition: "These last are, in the absence of a feminized will, utterly paternalistic" (184).

Though they come to different conclusions, Galperin arguing for a destabilization of authority and Johnston for the coherence and refinement of projected plans, both contribute to a portrait of Wordsworth radically different
from that proposed by Jonathan Wordsworth and those of his school. The differences, as we have seen, largely depend on the kinds of value judgments made concerning change and revision. In other words, for Jonathan Wordsworth's "plundered" read Galperin's deconstruction of authority and Johnston's "plunging deeper into the roots of human conciousness." All three critics certainly recognize change, though they appreciate and interpret it in radically different ways.

VI

I would now like to focus upon three critics, Sybil S. Eakin, Eve Walsh Stoddard, and Theresa M. Kelley, whose meticulous readings of the textual revisions of the spots of time are useful in the consideration of Wordsworth's development. Instead of focusing exclusively upon one particular stage of the text, as Ellis does, they attempt to understand the dynamics of Wordsworth's changing views as manifest in the various manuscripts. Although I disagree with many of their individual conclusions, I find that they do provide a helpful picture of the general pattern of change reflected in the revisions.

In "The Spots of Time in Early Versions of The Prelude" (1973), Eakin explores the various stages of revision as indicative of Wordsworth's "continuing reinterpretation" (390) of experience and the written word, and more specifically, his growing belief in the
power of his imagination. According to Eakin, between 1799 and 1805 Wordsworth had worked and reworked the spots of time episodes into three separate interpretive contexts; seen together, these interpretive contexts reflect his changing attitude toward the affective power of nature on mind: "In the place of his active ministry of nature ["Two-Part Prelude" of 1799] and his groping formulation of 1804 in which nature supplied the mind with the means of knowing itself, Wordsworth asserted, in 1805, the dominance of the mind" (404). Eakin believes that this formulation of the mind as 'lord and master' is "to miss both the point of the episodes themselves and the strength of the poetry that Wordsworth made from them" (404).

In spite of her serious consideration of various stages of textual revision, Eakin is unwilling to see these revisions as ultimately valid in their own right. Her methodology is illuminating (or potentially so), but her aesthetic standards and her insistence upon a single authorial intention which has been degraded through revision marginalizes the importance of later versions. In this respect, she falls into the school of those in favour of the early Wordsworth.

In "The Economics of the Heart: Wordsworth's Sublime and Beautiful" (1981), Theresa M. Kelley explores Wordsworth's revisionary mode as evidence of his extensive habit of suppression and retrieval of "difficult or
inadmissible knowledge" (16). According to Kelley, this enterprise can best be understood through a consideration of Wordsworth's notion of the sublime and the beautiful. The sublime, for Wordsworth, involves that which is difficult and unknowable, and is thus associated with blockage and loss of speech. In contrast, the beautiful involves that which is comprehensible: "It is found where there exists a gracious and complex equilibrium of center and circumference, of light and shadow" (16). Its appearance, for Wordsworth, is associated with speech and poetry. Kelley asserts that Wordsworth does not necessarily see these two aesthetic categories as polar opposites, but as interdependent elements in a dialectic of suppression and retrieval. Generally speaking, the beautiful works to at once retrieve and suppress the sublime—in as much as its terrible power to overwhelm us with too much knowledge (or unlimited signification) and to open large gaps in our discourse is eventually acknowledged, and suppressed in as much as it is rendered comprehensible in discourse (things are both forgotten and simplified) and thus involves a finally manageable signification. In her treatment of the spots of time, Kelley argues that these episodes exemplify this dialectic of suppression and retrieval. According to her, although both the "Two-Part Prelude" and thirteen-book Prelude versions of the spots of time involve suppression, the
thirteen-book version must come to terms with a "more powerful loss" (25), its positioning in Book XI now involving it with the moral and imaginative crisis brought on for Wordsworth by the failure of the French Revolution. This greater burden on the poetry accounts for the "enigmatic" character of the later spots of time. They become "too full" with meaning, "and so cannot be contained by the limits of human expression." The spots of time in the "Two-Part Prelude" are much more manageable, carrying less symbolic weight than the later ones, and this, she argues, accounts for the preference of such critics as Jonathan Wordsworth for these supposedly "more primary" versions of the spots of time (26).

In "The Spots of Time: Wordsworth's Semiology of the Self" (1985), Eve Walsh Stoddard, like Eakin and Kelley, provides a close reading of manuscript changes made to the spots of time between 1799 and 1805. She, however, differs from Eakin in that she sees the thirteen-book version as a refinement of the "Two-Part Prelude." According to Stoddard, through semiology we can see that the spots of time episodes, the autobiographical incidents independent of Wordsworth's editorial comments, should be considered as a system of signs whose meaning is wholly dependent upon the epistemological standards brought to bear on them: "Thus Wordsworth stands toward his past as a reader to a text, his work of self-interpretation becoming an act
of textualization, of constructing a poetic text which purports to narrate the story of his own development" (2). According to her, these episodes remain relatively unchanged between 1799 and 1805, and it is only Wordsworth's understanding of and attitude toward them that changes over time. Basically, this change of attitude and understanding is symptomatic of Wordsworth's larger shift in thinking from an epistemology that is predominantly empirical, in which the mind is viewed in Lockean terms as passive and receptive, to one that is transcendental, in which in Kantian terms the mind is seen as active and creative. Wordsworth's interpretation of these episodes changes from a belief that he has been educated by nature to one in which he sees "these same anecdotes as illustrations of the mind's hegemony over external nature" (19).

Eakin, Kelley, and Stoddard fundamentally reach the same conclusions, emphasizing that Wordsworth's revisions of the spots of time basically amount to a general change in his understanding and appreciation of the episodes as they first appear. Eakin sees this in Wordsworth's continuing reinterpretation of experience and the written word, Kelley in his need to suppress a more powerful loss, and Stoddard in his shift from empiricism to transcendentalism. They differ, however, in their explanations as to why Wordsworth underwent this change in
perspective. According to Eakin, Wordsworth was launched into an "abyss of idealism" because of the shock he suffered after the drowning of his brother John in February of 1805 (404). She does not adequately explain why this personal tragedy would cause such a change, and we must assume it is because Wordsworth suffered a blow to his faith in the benevolence of nature. Kelley sees Wordsworth as subjecting the spots of time to a greater burden of signification, his change of the narrative context in which they are received basically a change of the standards with which they are to be interpreted. And Stoddard maintains that Wordsworth's epistemological change is the result of a general sophistication in his thinking, making him into what she describes as a "proto-semiologist" (2).

Stoddard's and Eakin's position that Wordsworth moves from an epistemology that is empirical (Lockean or Hartlean) to one that is transcendental (Kantian) is difficult to maintain. We need only turn to "Tintern Abbey," for example, where he celebrates the power "of all the mighty world / Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create, / And what perceive" (105-07), to recognize the difficulties in asserting that in 1799 he accepted Locke's model of passive receptivity as a general epistemology. Although it is likely that through his conversations with Coleridge Wordsworth was later exposed to and perhaps
influenced by German idealism, I do not believe that we should see him necessarily as an adherent of this system. After all, in manuscript D of the fourteen-book Prelude, which was revised as late as 1839, Wordsworth still celebrates the influence of nature on the human mind and likewise the gracious interchange between the imagination and outward sense. Wordsworth was no philosopher, and did not consistently follow any one philosophical system. Our most reasonable approach to the spots of time, then, is not to find evidence of some larger epistemology or philosophical system supposedly accepted by Wordsworth, but to discover the nature and function of a most certainly unique phenomenon. He may well have been generally influenced by Locke's and then later by Kant's pervasive philosophical formulations; however, the very enigmatic nature of the spots of time reveals his attempt to communicate experiences that were highly personal and atypical of the poetry and philosophy of his age.

VII

My own approach to Wordsworth's revisions of the spots of time has been most influenced by the arguments of Galperin and Kelley, although I do differ from them in a number of significant ways. Galperin's assertion that Wordsworth's various changes in personae throughout his career provide him with the vantage points from which to critique preceding personae is an extremely good one. It,
for example, effectively (and freshly) illustrates Wordsworth's habit of interpreting the past according to his present beliefs and future ambitions. Galperin's reading of the spots of time, however, albeit interesting and insightful, is too limited to deal with the complexities of this passage. I do not doubt that a criticism of authority is central to the spots of time, although as argued in Chapter Three I believe his attitude toward authority is marked more by ambivalence. Furthermore, I believe that Wordsworth's reevaluation (suppression/repression) of previous personae goes beyond a conscious criticism of authority to involve his confrontation with emergent unconscious drives that he is most likely only partly conscious of. This brings us to Kelley, whose position is closest to my own. I agree with her that much of Wordsworth's poetry, especially the spots of time, demonstrates a dialectic between the beautiful and sublime, which corresponds roughly with the romantic and daemonic (apocalyptic) explored in my own argument. And I also agree that the spots of time take on more significance, more symbolic weight, with each successive stage of revision. I must, however, disagree with Kelley's assertions that there is no evidence of an Oedipal conflict in the spots of time (17), and that Wordsworth's mode of forgetting unwanted knowledge is suppression (a conscious act) and not repression (an
unconscious act) (15). As indicated in Chapter Two of the present study, the Oedipal conflict is central to my reading of the spots of time. Finally, Wordsworth's mode of forgetting, I believe, involves both suppression and repression, and I do not think the line between these two can in fact be delineated with any great certainty.

To summarize my position, I believe that the spots of time can be fully understood only when considered as embodied within a dynamic text--or group of interrelated texts--reflective of Wordsworth's changing attitude toward the past. The spots of time certainly do become more complicated with revision, and instead of disparaging this complication we must seek out its cause. Textual revision (as it applies to this particular case, if not generally) should be seen as something more than a strictly literary enterprise, one that has traditionally been seen as the task of correcting or improving a text. The study of revision allows a critic to trace the changing attitudes of an author toward his or her original utterance, each revised version supplying clues toward the dynamic interplay of the author and the written word. Such a study, moreover, provides insight into the processes of authorial memory, allowing us to see what the author has chosen to rewrite and in effect forget. Revision thus can be seen as a form of selective memory; the author, compelled for whatever reasons, remembers one thing and in
turn forgets something else, highlights one feature of the text and obscures another. Revision is a means of working through difficult memories and emotions, as a form of self-therapy. Wordsworth accomplishes this by reconstructing recorded memory, by attempting to forget what is disturbing in each spot of time episode. When we adopt such a theoretical perspective, value terms traditionally employed by literary critics--such as true or authentic or good or beautiful--should not be used to favour one particular stage of revision and ignore another. When revision is seen as a form of memory, and each version of the text as a stage in the continuing dynamics of memory, the aesthetic or truth value of a particular stage of revision becomes a secondary consideration. This, of course, is only one of several ways to approach a text, and I do not wish to suggest that it is an exclusive method of interpretation. Certainly, the debate over which text is aesthetically superior can play an important part in telling us much about our own contemporary aesthetic standards. In the present study, however, I would like to forego making such aesthetic judgments.
Chapter Two
The Earliest Spots of Time

I

I would now like to undertake a close examination of the spots of time as they appear in the 1799 text of the "Two-Part Prelude." The primary task, in keeping with the focus of this study, is to distinguish between what is disturbing and what celebratory in the earliest version of the spots of time. It has been noted earlier that although Wordsworth attempts to mitigate what is disturbing through revision, these attempts are also clearly evident in this earliest version; or in other words, there are signs in the "Two-Part Prelude" spots of time of a romantic reaction-formation to the daemonic emergence of unconscious and hence repressed memory of the developmental stage that Freud has identified as the Oedipus complex. The first place to look for evidence of the romantic—that which attempts to submerge or at least distort this emergent Oedipal memory—is in Wordsworth's opening definition of the spots of time, for it is in this definition that he offers the clearest expression of what is in fact celebratory. Manuscript V of the "Two-Part Prelude" defines the spots of time as follows:

There are in our existence spots of time
Which with distinct pre-eminence retain
A fructifying virtue, whence, depressed
By trivial occupations and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
(Especially the imaginative power)
Are nourished, and invisibly repaired.

55
Such moments chiefly seem to have their date
In our first childhood.

(One 288-96)

What exactly does Wordsworth mean by the phrase "spots of time"? In a sense, the spots of time are both spots in time (places associated with or experienced at certain points in time) and spots of time (distinguishable temporal units). As defined, however, the spots of time are largely concerned with the temporality of these important episodes. In the final two lines of this definition, Wordsworth characterizes the spots of time as "moments" that predominate in what he describes as "our first childhood." Their continuing efficacy, as the person grows and experiences various stages of development, is dependent upon their resiliency in memory, where they now exist independently of time and place. Memory is seen as efficacious precisely because it rescues Wordsworth from the states of mind in which he is least sensitive to the natural world around him, and hence least likely to be productive as a poet. To be engaged in "trivial occupations" and "the round of ordinary intercourse" is to lose contact with the more vital occupations and intercourses which lead to a heightening of poetic sensibility. The reciprocal interplay of memory and imagination is a form of extraordinary intercourse, elevating us beyond the mundane or "trivial" roles we are forced to play in "ordinary" life. The spots of
time seem in this respect to bring about a state of mind necessary for artistic creativity. The poet, subject to the banalities of "trivial occupations" and "the round / Of ordinary intercourse," waits upon memory as a form of grace capable of inspiring composition.

The key to understanding what is unique in the spots of time, as defined, is in the metaphorical structure of the definition. What is note-worthy in this structure is the implicit parallel Wordsworth draws between memory and nature. Memory retains "A fructifying virtue" and in turn nourishes a mind and imagination "depressed / By trivial occupations and the round / Of ordinary intercourse." We should not ignore an inherent distinction between memory as content and memory as function. After all, Wordsworth is as much celebrating the function or faculty of memory, that which holds certain events in his life-history in "distinct pre-eminence," as he is particular memories; and this faculty is portrayed as offering Wordsworth the beneficent influence usually attributed to nature. We should also recognize a parallel between memory and the mother. Memory, as a "fructifying virtue" and a form of nourishment, is suggestive of the mother in her role as creator and care-giver. Wordsworth relates himself to memory much as an infant is related to the mother--as receptive to her ministrations and influences.

This consideration of the metaphorical structure of
the definition of the spots of time suggests Onorato's argument, that Wordsworth is in fact trying to recapture the lost relationship with his mother through the surrogate of nature (and as I am arguing, through the mediation of memory). Specifically, the definition calls to mind the developmental stage in which libido is directed toward the mother as a child's innocent desire to receive nurture and protection from her, which Freud identifies as the stage in which the child emerges from a state of auto-eroticism (in which libido is directed toward the self) to develop a sense of object-love. This is the point before mental energy becomes disruptive and aggressive--the Oedipus complex--which is itself characterized by the child's direction of libido toward the mother in a manner that is overtly erotic and domineering. Thus, the mother (nature/memory) appears in the definition of the spots of time as that which is distinctly life-affirming, sustaining the poet/child with a generosity beyond question; and the poet/child appears as receptive and appreciative, betraying none of the emotional ambivalence characteristic of the Oedipus complex.

In spite of this optimistic celebration of the powers of memory, or what is clearly romantic in the definition of the spots of time, we should not ignore the appearance of darker or daemonic elements. The spots of time are said
to rescue the poet when he is "depressed / By trivial occupations and the round / Of ordinary intercourse." In contrast to the pre-Oedipal nature of the spots of time as defined, these trivial occupations and ordinary intercourses are more the problems of adulthood, or development after the Oedipus complex. They refer to the time in life when a child has become aware of the larger social structures of the world around him or her and must engage in the various occupations necessary for normal social interaction. According to Freud, the socializing of a child is the direct result of the Oedipus complex; in a boy, this sense of society comes after libido is no longer directed toward the mother as eroticism, and after he has given up his aggressive impulses toward the father and has come to identify with him. The definition of the spots of time, then, although ostensibly a romantic recapturing of the lost, pre-Oedipal state between a mother and child, is tinged with traces of anxiety dating from the Oedipus complex.

The definition of the spots of time, I believe, is a mode of what Freud terms "wish-fulfilment." His theory of wish-fulfilment first receives major treatment in The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), where he hypothesizes that all dreams, pleasant or disturbing as they may appear, represent the fulfilment of a wish. In a later work, Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming (1907), he
broadens his theory of wish-fulfilment to include the activities of creative writing and day-dreaming. The parallels between Freud's theory of wish-fulfilment, as it relates to creative writing, and Wordsworth's definition of the spots of time, are striking. According to Freud,

The relation of phantasy to time is in general very important. We may say that it hovers, as it were, between three times--the three moments of time which our ideation involves. Mental work is linked to some current impression, some provoking occasion in the present which has been able to arouse one of the subject's major wishes. From here it harks back to a memory of an earlier experience (usually an infantile one) in which this wish was fulfilled; and now it creates a situation relating to the future which represents the fulfilment of the wish. What it thus creates is a day-dream or phantasy, which carries about it traces of its origin from the occasion which provoked it and from the memory. Thus, past, present and future are strung together, as it were, on the thread of the wish that runs through them. (147-48)

Freud's claim that the emergence of a wish is linked to some "current impression, some provoking occasion in the present" brings to mind Wordsworth's assertion that the spots of time come to the poet's rescue when he is "depressed / By trivial occupations, and the round / Of ordinary intercourse." For Wordsworth, the provoking occasions that bring on this special form of mnemic activity are precisely the times in his life when he is least sensitive as a poet--when he is occupied by "trivial" and "ordinary" things. The wish that emerges is that he may be able to substitute extraordinary for ordinary intercourse (intercourse, we must assume, not
only with other men but also with nature and the self),
that he may be able to reach a state of heightened
imaginative interchange with the world around him.
Freud's next assertion that mental work then "harks back
to a memory of an earlier experience (usually an infantile
one) in which this wish was fulfilled" can be compared to
Wordsworth's belief that certain childhood memories (spots
of time) represent the important moments of extraordinary
intercourse when he in fact had achieved such heightened
imaginative activity. We may also assume that Wordsworth's
conscious wish for reciprocity with nature is reinforced
by an unconscious one for some form of reunion with the
lost mother. Finally, Freud's assertion that mental work
then "creates a situation relating to the future which
represents the fulfilment of the wish" suggests
Wordsworth's hope that there will be some future point at
which he will finally be "invisibly repaired."

Wish-fulfilment, however, is only one element of the
spots of time as they appear in their entirety. It is an
aspect of the romantic imagination's attempt to valorize
experiences which, in accordance with my central thesis,
nonetheless remain essentially disturbing. Let us turn to
these episodes in order to determine how and to what
extent they remain resistant to the optimism in
Wordsworth's definition of the spots of time.
II

The task at hand now is to justify the assertion that the Penrith beacon and Christmas vacation episodes as they appear in the "Two-Part Prelude" carry memory-traces of the Oedipal situation. The meaning I attempt to draw forth should be recognized as the precipitate of unconscious motivations which ultimately inform the pattern of images and ideas in each particular memory. In effect, and put simply, it is my belief that unconscious memory emerges in conscious thought and expression, and my aim is to determine how and to what extent. The approach that I employ, as indicated in Chapter One, is fundamentally different from that of Ellis, who believes that a common-sense approach should be applied to the spots of time. He is generally hostile to the sexual/symbolic interpretations of Onorato and Friedman, largely on the grounds that he does not believe these episodes justify such approaches (Ellis 39-45); and he does not favour an Oedipal reading of the episodes (Ellis 23). I offer my own reading of the Penrith beacon episode partly in reaction to that provided by Ellis. According to him,

In the first spot of time, although the alarm he [Wordsworth] experiences when faced by two relics of the judicial process is in one sense comprehensible--something we recognize from our own knowledge of life--he leaves us much more completely in the dark as to its causes, partly because these are self-evidently not immediate. Yet that is not surprising. There are those who, whenever they read of a murder in the newspapers, can never be
absolutely certain they didn't do it. It is doubtful whether they could give reasons for this feeling just as, on a more banal level, some of us would have difficulty in providing a complete explanation of the irrational impulse which makes us slow down from thirty to twenty-five miles an hour when we happen to catch sight of a policeman.

(73-74)

As demonstrated in what follows, I do not believe that Wordsworth's reaction in this episode is one that we can in any way describe as a commonly shared "irrational impulse." Instead, I believe it reveals something unique in his own understanding of guilt and its relationship with violence, murder, and execution. Let us turn to a detailed consideration of the Penrith beacon episode.

Manuscript V of the "Two-Part Prelude" records the Penrith beacon episode as follows:

I remember well
('Tis of an early season that I speak,
The twilight of rememberable life)
While I was yet an urchin, one who scarce
Could hold a bridle, with ambitious hopes
I mounted, and we rode towards the hills;
We were a pair of horsemen: honest James
Was with me, my encourager and guide.
We had not travelled long ere some mischance
Disjoined me from my comrade, and through fear
Dismounting, down the rough and stony moor
I led my horse and, stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom where in former times
A man, the murderer of his wife, was hung
In irons; mouldered was the gibbet mast,
The bones were gone, the iron and the wood,
Only a long green ridge of turf remained
Whose shape was like a grave. I left the spot,
And, reascending the bare slope, I saw
A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
The beacon on the summit, and more near
A girl who bore a pitcher on her head
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind. It was in truth
An ordinary sight but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man
To paint the visionary dreariness
Which, while I looked all around for my lost guide,
Did, at that time, invest the naked pool,
The beacon on the lonely eminence,
The woman and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind.

(One 296-327)

The first, and perhaps most direct, link between this passage and the preceding definition of the spots of time is Wordsworth's claim that this episode occurred in what he has called "our first childhood" (296): "'Tis of an early season that I speak." What he basically does is support his assertion that the spots of time remain "with distinct pre-eminence"; even though this particular memory finds its date in the "early season" of the shadowy "twilight of rememberable life," he emphasises its distinctness (perhaps above other episodes from this same period) with the plain and simple statement, "I remember well." The scene established at the opening of this passage is one of pastoral quietude, his relationship with "honest James" appearing to be more characteristic of the fraternal companionship shared by "a pair of horsemen" than that of the paternal guardianship of an authority figure, "guide," over a young boy. One variation in the manuscript has "honest James" capitalized to read, "Honest James." This points to and emphasizes the almost allegorical nature of "honest James" as he appears in this brief portrait. Wordsworth, as adult speaker, remembers him (or
wants to remember him) as he appeared to the child—nothing less than his honest encourager, guide, and comrade. In contrast, he takes a playfully ironic attitude toward himself as a child, his once "ambitious hopes" now seen as obviously too ambitious for "an urchin ... who scarce / Could hold a bridle." This playful irony sits comfortably with the anecdotal tone of the opening scene, suggesting that the adult speaker is now amused by his own childhood pretensions, perhaps much in the way "honest James" might have been amused by his young companion.

The opening scene is characterized by the "ambitious hopes" of a boy who basically wants to behave like a man. Ambition is represented in the images of climbing and riding: "I mounted, and we rode toward the hills." For the young boy, the horse is the means with which he can do the things that adults do; by mounting it, he raises himself up to or above the height of an adult, and by riding the horse, he clearly becomes the adult's equal: "We were a pair of horsemen." The anecdotal tone of this opening scene belies consideration of it as anything vital or important in the developing narrative. It is in what occurs directly afterwards, with the boy's arrival at the place where a murderer had been hung on a gibbet, that most of the importance of the episode seems to rest; however, what appears to be an innocuous portrait of the harmless ambition of a boy should not be considered
unimportant in the overall meaning of the episode. The evidence is only suggestive, but the most probable cause of the boy's separation from his guide is in fact his own ambition. As the adult speaker has recognized, the boy--"an urchin ... who scarce / Could hold a bridle"--had ambitions outmatching his abilities.

We are faced with the possibility that the opening scene, being anecdotal and pastoral, might in fact mask the importance Wordsworth is attaching to this childish desire to behave as an adult. He is unwilling to blame the boy or "honest James" for the disturbing experience that follows, and instead places the blame in the safely ambiguous and abstracted realm of "some mischance." These evasive tactics suggest that Wordsworth is here engaged in a mode of repression. The ambition of the boy to behave as an adult corresponds with the first stage of the Oedipus complex in which a boy has a comparable desire to be a man. Repression would ensure that the Oedipal memory remains latent, appearing only in the displaced images of mounting and riding and in "honest James" as a displaced father figure. These images in turn are suggestive of a number of related aspects of the initial stage of the Oedipus complex. The boy's act of mounting and riding--"I mounted, and we rode"--suggests the sexual act in its purely physical nature. And his desire to behave like a man suggests a mode of aggression (here portrayed as
"ambitious hopes") in which he attempts to raise himself from a subordinate position.

The shift in tone and atmosphere between the opening scene and that following it is abrupt. The boy and "honest James" do not remain long "a pair of horsemen," but soon "some mischance" has "disjoined" the boy from his "comrade" and he finds himself bewildered and lost. His proud mounting and riding in the first scene is followed immediately by his fearful "dismounting, down the rough and stony moor / ... and, stumbling on ... / ... to a bottom." The images of mounting and riding (upward movement and mobility) are countered with those of "dismounting" and "stumbling" (downward movement and immobility). What begins as anecdotal becomes suddenly serious, Wordsworth's narrative voice marking the passage from a scene of pastoral quietude to one of gothic terror. The boy finds himself in a place "where in former times / A man, the murderer of his wife, was hung / In irons." The first scene is largely concerned with presence and with what is positive and reassuring: there is the distinct presence of memory, "I remember well"; "honest James" is a large and trustworthy presence in the boy's landscape; and the boy's elevation of himself up to the status of "honest James" marks a general, albeit temporary, condition of fulfilled ambition. The second scene, in contrast, is concerned with absence and with
what is negative and disturbing: "honest James" suddenly disappears from the landscape, his absence forcing the boy to relinquish, or lose, his premature claims to adulthood, the "gibbet mast" has "mouldered"; and even the dead man appears as nothing more than a ghostly apparition haunting "a long green ridge of turf ... ' Whose shape was like a grave."

The consequences of the boy's ambition become clear in this second scene. Non-threatening and idealized "honest James" is replaced by the disturbing figure of "A man, the murderer of his wife." Femininity, which appeared only as a principle of reciprocity and nurture (as encouragement and guidance) in the boy's relationship with "honest James," now appears in the figure of the lost woman murdered by her husband. Honesty has been replaced by murder, and the single, all-sufficient figure of the comrade has been replaced by--in a sense bifurcated into--the strict divisions of male and female, husband and wife, murderer and victim. This transformation of the boy's landscape corresponds with the second stage of the Oedipus complex, or the period of object loss (of mother and father) characteristic of the traumatic power struggle between a boy and his father. The difference, of course, between the Oedipal structure and this tale of violence is the amplification or intensification of the roles of the mother and father in the murder story. The absent or
denied mother of the Oedipus crisis becomes the dead mother of the tale. She is removed by the father/mother. The threatening father, the object standing between the boy and his mother, becomes the murderer. And the boy's aggressive feelings toward the father are intensified into a vision of violent retribution, where the father/murderer is punished for his crime and his corpse is displayed in an act of public retribution.

In the final scene, with the boy's reemergence from the "bottom where in former times / ... the murderer ... was hung," he reascends the "bare slope" to experience a state of heightened or altered perceptivity. The atmosphere of gothic terror permeating the second scene gives way to one of "visionary dreariness," which appears, we must assume, as the boy's imaginative and emotional colouring of the landscape around him. What is characteristic of this third scene is the distinctness of the figures in the landscape. In the second scene, the series of objects in the description of the mouldered gibbet (the absent gibbet) appears with no excess of detail and no indication of the relation of parts:

"mouldered was the gibbet mast, / The bones were gone, the iron and the wood." Here, however, there is a clarity of vision and precision of description not found elsewhere in the episode. The boy reascends the "bare slope" to see a "naked pool" lying "beneath the hills,"
The beacon on the summit, and more near
A girl who bore a pitcher on her head
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind.

His first description is immediately followed by a second
in which he catalogues once again the distinctive figures
of the landscape:

the naked pool,
The beacon on the lonely eminence,
The woman and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind.

Significant changes in detail mark the almost holographic
nature of his visionary moment, the "summit" becoming the
"lonely eminence," the "girl who bore a pitcher on her
head" now (and curiously) a "woman" whose garments are
"vexed and tossed," and the "blowing wind" now "the strong
wind." Unable to find "Colours and words that are unknown
to man / To paint the visionary dreariness" of the boy's
landscape, Wordsworth instead communicates the impression
left upon his mind by the boy's vision.

In this scene of "visionary dreariness," the
landscape has undergone its final transformation. The
distinctness of the figures suggests that Wordsworth is
here closer to direct (if unintentional) symbolization
than anywhere else in the episode. The terrifying image of
the "murderer" and the "mouldered ... gibbet mast"
associated with him are replaced by "The beacon on the
summit," which is certainly the most distinctive phallic
(male) symbol in the episode; and the murdered wife is
replaced by the very much living "girl [woman'] who bore a pitcher on her head." This scene corresponds with the third stage of the Oedipus complex, in which the boy is forced to submit to the power and authority of the father and relinquish his obsessive attachment to the mother. The male figure, the beacon, emerges from absence (as executed murderer) and from its lowly position in the "bottom" of the landscape to take up prominence "on the summit" of "the lonely eminence." Height, the valorizing term of aggression and ambition in the first scene, now similarly characterizes the beacon's relationship with the boy as that which is above him and beyond his reach. The female figure, though now not utterly lost (murdered), appears as subjugated below the beacon, forcing her "difficult steps" against the unseen force of a "blowing" and "strong wind." Like the post-Oedipal mother, she has a diminished role in relation to paternal authority.

David Ferry interprets the final scene of the Penrith beacon episode as Wordsworth's recording of the imaginative act in which he finds unity in a scene of inhospitable violence, the girl and the wind together forming a symbol of harmony in disorder (164). This interpretation, it seems to me, is not substantiated by the text in any of its stages of development. If anything, it shows the influence of Wordsworth's definition of the spots of time, in which he promises (as much to himself as
to his audience) to recount certain episodes in his life which have repaired and nourished his mind. Taking the Penrith beacon episode in isolation, we should recognize the image of the girl forcing her way against the wind as more likely, and more simply, representative of man's destiny to struggle against strong, unseen forces. There is no evidence in the episode, again taken in isolation, of much else than the poet's feelings of loss and fear in finding himself alone in a threatening landscape. The "visionary dreariness" he experiences is a state of mind precipitated by his isolation and his sense of the hostility of the landscape around him. According to the argument I have been developing, any evidence of the saving graces of imagination (romantic imagination) should be recognized in the episode's very existence as a distorted representation of emergent memory-traces of the Oedipal situation. Through this romantic agency of repression, Wordsworth mitigates the full force of disturbing, unconscious memory that has made its way to the surface of consciousness. As it applies here, then, romantic imagination is less a means of discovering the underlying unity in nature than it is a protective barrier between consciousness and thoughts arising from the unconscious mind. This is not to say that the romantic imagination does not at times and in certain situations operate to keep the poet in touch with "the one life
within us and abroad," only that in this situation its role is more defensive and repressive. To further illustrate this, let us turn to the Christmas vacation episode.

III

In the second spot of time, Wordsworth offers what he sees as a comparable or related memory to that of the Penrith beacon episode. Once again, he prefaces his account by emphasizing the "distinct pre-eminence" of the spots of time as they exist in memory:

Nor less I recollect
(Long after, though my childhood had not ceased)
Another scene which left a kindred power
Implanted in my mind.

(One 327-30)

How in fact these two episodes are related, beyond these merely suggestive correlations drawn by Wordsworth, is not immediately apparent. If the first episode is characterized by the boy's distress over losing his "encourager and guide," the second focuses upon his curious sense of guilt over his father's sudden and premature death; and if the first episode appears almost incidental as an autobiographical moment (on the surface, at least), the second most certainly focuses upon what must have been an important and formative event in Wordsworth's life-history. I believe, however, that there is in fact an interrelatedness between these two episodes, and that it is evident in a shared constellation of images
and ideas largely informed by the Oedipus complex. In the Christmas vacation episode, Oedipal memory, specifically Wordsworth's memory of adolescent aggression toward the father, is the informing sub-text of what is consciously remembered. Because of certain associational parallels between these two events, unconscious memory has become conflated with the memory of his father's actual death.

My interpretation of the Christmas vacation episode is partly in response to Ellis's own reading, particularly his assertion that Wordsworth's "anxiety of hope" was probably no more than an eagerness to go home. In which case, the "desires" he speaks of (and which God "corrected") would be the normal holiday projects and schemes of a boy tired of school.... And it is because the difference between what he had anticipated and what actually happened is so great that the former becomes a source of guilt. One can imagine Wordsworth asking himself how he could have remained so absorbed in his own selfish concerns when his father was about to die. (19-20)

It seems to me that the transient kind of guilt Ellis is talking about does not properly characterize what Wordsworth here experiences. As argued in the following section, I believe that in the Christmas vacation episode Wordsworth demonstrates a more primary and further reaching guilt than that suggested by Ellis. Ellis does go on to say that the reader should recognize "a certain hostility [of Wordsworth's] towards the father, as the sender of the horses, for continuing to keep him waiting" (20). I am more inclined, however, again as argued in the
following section, to see any hostility he demonstrates in this episode as the precipitate of unconscious feelings of aggression toward the father and towards paternal authority in general. Let us turn to a detailed consideration of the Christmas vacation episode.

Manuscript V of the "Two-Part Prelude" records the Christmas vacation episode as follows:

One Christmas time,
The day before the holidays began,
Feverish, and tired and restless, I went forth
Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those three horses which should bear us home,
My Brothers and myself. There was a crag,
An eminence which from the meeting point
Of two highways ascending overlooked
At least a long half-mile of those two roads,
By each of which the expected steeds might come,
The choice uncertain. Thither I repaired
Up to the highest summit; 'twas a day
Stormy, and rough, and wild, and on the grass
I sate, half-sheltered by a naked wall;
Upon my right hand was a single sheep,
A whistling hawthorn on my left, and there,
Those two companions at my side, I watched
With eyes intensely straining as the mist
Gave intermitting prospects of the wood
And plain beneath. Ere I to school returned
That dreary time, ere I had been ten days
A dweller in my Father's house, he died,
And I and my two Brothers, orphans then,
Followed his body to the grave. The event
With all the sorrow which it brought appeared
A chastisement, and when I called to mind
That day so lately passed when from the crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope,
With trite reflections of morality
Yet with the deepest passion I bowed low
To God, who thus corrected my desires;
And afterwards the wind, and sleety rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music of that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist
Which on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes,
All these were spectacles and sounds to which
I often would repair, and thence would drink
As at a fountain, and I do not doubt
That in this later time when storm and rain
Beat on my roof at midnight, or by day
When I am in the woods, unknown to me
The workings of my spirit thence are brought.
(One 330-74)

The Christmas vacation episode has an atmosphere of
"visionary dreariness" much like that found in the
concluding scene of the first episode. This can be
recognized in its pervading seriousness of tone and
uneasiness of mood, in the altered and heightened
perceptivity of the boy as he observes the landscape
around him, and generally in the sense that Wordsworth
approaches direct symbolization in his presentation of the
details of this memory. The boy, "Feverish, and tired and
restless" and "impatient for the sight" of the three
horses that would take him and his brothers home for
Christmas vacation, makes his way up to a crag with eager,
though troubled, anticipation. The day is "Stormy, and
rough, and wild," and the boy can sit only "half-sheltered
by a naked wall," his "two companions" a "whistling
hawthorn" and a "single sheep." The presentation and
colouring of details in this description suggest that the
landscape is in some way portentous of the unhappy fate
awaiting the boy. The three adjectives in a series
describing the mood of the boy, "Feverish, and tired and
restless," appear as parallels to those describing the
weather of the day, "Stormy, and rough, and wild," suggesting that there is a reciprocal interplay between the boy and the landscape around him. And Wordsworth's two brothers, who perhaps should have been his "two companions" in this vigil on the summit, are instead replaced by "a single sheep" and "a whistling hawthorn." The human world merges with the natural with an economy and balance suggestive of a certain, if obscure, mode of symbolization. Even the crag, "the meeting point / Of two highways" overlooking "At least a long half-mile of those two roads" appears as a significant center-point in the landscape from which the boy may in fact receive a more than earthly vision.

From his position on the summit, the boy does not gain a clear prospect of the "long half-mile of those two roads," but "With eyes intensely straining" into the "mist" is afforded only "intermitting prospects of the wood / And plain beneath." With distance obscured by the elements, he must focus upon the objects close at hand: the "naked wall," the "whistling hawthorn," and the "single sheep." The "naked wall," like the "bare slope" and "naked pool" of the Penrith beacon episode, appears as a distinctive visual image emphasizing the inhospitality of a landscape exposed to "wind, and sleety rain, / And all the business of the elements." The very nakedness of the wall, again like that of the slope and pool,
suggests that the landscape is in a state of enervation or deca~ unable because of the "business of the elements" to adequately sustain life. The boy has found himself in a landscape replete with images of deprivation and isolation. The "whistling" and later "blasted" hawthorn is clearly a figure of desolation, or like the "naked wall," of the life-disrupting effects the elements have had upon the landscape; and the "single sheep," which is perhaps the most suggestive figure in the landscape, appears as a counterpart to the boy: alone and shepherdless and unprotected in a bleak environment. All three figures, "naked wall," "whistling hawthorn," and "single sheep," appear as harbingers of coming loss--of the boy's immanent destiny to be orphaned, or made shepherdless, by the death of his father.

This episode begins with the same thematic concern as that in the opening scene of the Penrith beacon episode. The boy, impatient to go home for the holidays, displays an ambition to strike out--"I went forth into the fields"--and gain a position of prominence: "There was a crag, / An eminence.... / Thither I repaired / Up to the highest summit." The boy is now able to reach the elevated position in the landscape denied him in the Penrith beacon episode, where he is instead forced "to a bottom where ... / A ... murderer ... was hung / In irons." We recall that the Penrith beacon episode concludes with the boy
located below the beacon on the "lonely eminence" of a "summit," and in a sense subjugated by it and its command of the surrounding landscape. In the Christmas vacation episode, however, it is the boy who finds himself on the "eminence" of "the highest summit," attempting to gain command of the "long half-mile of those two roads." In effect, there is a reworking of the Oedipal ambition (mounting) evident in the opening scene of the Penrith beacon episode, although here, with the boy taking the beacon's place of "eminence," ambition is more aggressively asserted. If the Penrith beacon episode begins with a portrait of fraternal companionship shared between man and boy, the Christmas vacation episode focuses upon a solitary boy, "Feverish, and tired and restless," on his lonely quest for the summit. There is no "honest James" at the beginning of this episode, and likewise none of the reciprocal interplay between a boy and his "encourager," "guide," and "comrade." Furthermore, his vigil upon the summit has become a strange and disturbing parody of the holy trinity. He (or the adult after him), in what should be recognized as the most exaggerated form of Oedipal ambition, has placed himself in the position of God the father: "Upon my right hand was a single sheep, / A whistling hawthorn on my left." Yet, the very futility and absurdity of this exaggerated act of ambition appears in the constituent parts of the trinity:
a "Feverish, and tired and restless" boy-god, a "single [and most likely lost] sheep," and a "whistling [later \textit{blasted}] hawthorn."

Following this account of his boyhood vigil on the crag "The day before the holidays began," Wordsworth abruptly launches his narrative into the future, moving rapidly ahead to describe the premature death and subsequent burial of his father:

\begin{quote}
Ere I to school returned
That dreary time, ere I had been ten days
A dweller in my Father's house, he died,
And I and my two brothers, orphans then,
Followed his body to the grave.
\end{quote}

The immediacy and focus of detail found in the opening scene is abandoned for a narrative mode characterized by a scarcity of detail and urgency of pace. The event anticipated, the coming of the three horses to take the boys home for the holidays, has been elided by the poet in this apparent breach of narrative continuity. It seems unimportant to Wordsworth that the "expected steeds" did--or did not--finally arrive to take the boys home for the holidays, or that he was able to see them approaching down the "long half-mile" of one of the two roads. What is important is that Wordsworth's eager anticipation, as forbidding as it may appear in memory, was met with profound disappointment, shock, and grief. As in the Penrith beacon episode, ambition is interrupted or halted by a disturbing vision of a dead man's grave. In the first
episode, Wordsworth reaches the lowest point in the landscape to see "a long green ridge of turf ... / Whose shape was like a grave." In the second episode, he arrives at a similar locality, although here the recorded journey down to the grave is not so much physical as mnemonic: "he died, / And I and my two brothers, orphans then, / Followed his body to the grave." The grave becomes the very symbol of the lost father.

Following this brief account of his father's death, Wordsworth offers what is perhaps the most enigmatic passage of the entire spots of time sequence:

The event
With all the sorrow which it brought appeared
A chastisement, and when I called to mind
That day so lately passed when from the crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope,
With trite reflections of morality
Yet with the deepest passion I bowed low
To God, who thus corrected my desires.

The language of narration here, in contrast to that found in the opening of the episode, becomes suddenly abstracted. If the opening focuses predominantly upon distinct physical objects in nature—"fields," "three horses," "Brothers," "crag," "roads," "grass," "naked wall," "single sheep," "whistling hawthorn," "mist," "wood," "plain," "Father's house," "body," "grave"—this later passage focuses upon distinct emotional and imaginative states/ideas of mind: "sorrow," "chastisement," "anxiety of hope," "trite reflections of
morality," "deepest passion," "God," "desires." What is merely forboding or portentous in the images of the vigil now clearly emerges in this discursive analysis.

Wordsworth is compelled to see the "sorrow" he has over his father's death as a "chastisement" for the "anxiety of hope" he experienced while waiting for the horses. "With the deepest passion" he has "bowed low / To God, who" has "corrected" his "desires." His ambition, restlessness, and impatience must, in retrospect, be viewed by him as immoral—perhaps sinful. He faces a debasement or lowering, "I bowed low," comparable to the Penrith beacon episode's account of his physical (and according to my reading, symbolic) journey to the "bottom where in former times / A man ... was hung / In irons." The highly abstract notions of chastisement and correction are significantly translated into a physical metaphor—bowing low—of humility and supplication. The absent father, who has been followed to the grave by Wordsworth and his two brothers, is replaced by the most dominant and imposing father figure available to the imagination: God. Oedipal ambition, as evident in the boy's desire to reach a point of "eminence" and from there participate in a strange parody of the trinity, is finally met with overwhelming opposition.

The Christmas vacation episode concludes much as the Penrith beacon episode does. Once again, Wordsworth is
compelled to review the distinctive features of the landscape now indelibly fixed in memory and imagination:

And afterwards the wind, and sleety rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music of that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist Which on the line of each of those two roads Advanced in such indisputable shapes,
All these were spectacles and sounds to which I often would repair....

There is an intensification and broadening of vision in this return to the day of his vigil on the crag. What is first of all a predominantly general description of the conditions of weather that day, notably in the adjectival series "stormy, and rough, and wild," is now fleshed-out with a more detailed account of particular aspects of the weather: "wind," "sleety rain," "all the business of the elements," "noise of wood and water," and "mist" advancing along the two roads "in such indisputable shapes."

Wordsworth gives the impression that over time, with continuing acts of memory, the scene increases in detail and significance, his imagination and memory somehow able to increase the store of "spectacles and sounds" first experienced.

Wordsworth concludes the second episode with a short coda echoing the definition of the spots of time:

All these were spectacles and sounds to which I often would repair, and thence would drink As at a fountain. And I do not doubt That in this later time, when storm and rain Beat on my roof at midnight, or by day
When I am in the woods, unknown to me
The workings of my spirit thence are brought.

Femininity appears for the first time in the Christmas
vacation episode with Wordsworth's claim that he oftened
returned to these "spectacles and sounds" and "would drink
/ As at a fountain." We are reminded of the definition of
the spots of time, that they "retain / A fructifying
virtue" in which we are "nourished, and invisibly
repaired." Memory, as the lost mother, comes to haunt
his everyday life, "at midnight, or by day," and provide
him with continuing nourishment. Feeding here also appears
as a form of self-love, the poet--through memory--being
somehow able to provide himself with his own source of
nourishment. The romantic, then, is clearly the feminine
side of of the imagination, that associated with beauty
and softness and ease from disturbance. The daemonic, on
the other hand, is the masculine side of the imagination.
And for Wordsworth, particularly because of his troubled
attitude toward male ambition and authority, the daemonic
is clearly associated with sublimity, terror, and
continuing anxiety.

According to my reading of the spots of time, then,
both the Penrith beacon and Christmas vacation episodes
are memories representative of a single event--the Oedipus
crisis. We, of course, may wonder why a single,
unconscious memory would inform two conscious memories so
far removed from each other in time and space. This situation, I believe, is brought about by the curious economy of the unconscious mind, and especially by the tenacity of daemonic drives in the face of romantic repression. The Penrith beacon episode does not satisfy Wordsworth as an outlet for repressed memory. Instead, daemonic energy is directed toward Wordsworth's memory of the Christmas vacation. The romantic imagination does operate in the Christmas vacation episode to disguise or distort emergent unconscious memory—most notably in his obsession with waiting for the horses and with the details of the landscape (sheep, hawthorn, etc.). Here, however, Wordsworth is much closer to a conscious apprehension of unconscious thought. In spite of his best efforts to set up mnemonic barriers, he cannot ignore the fact his father's death is a keen source of inexplicable guilt and anxiety.
Chapter Three
The Spots of Time in Revision

In the Introduction to this study, it is proposed that when approaching the spots of time Wordsworth employs three basic revisionary strategies: changes are made to the introductory definition, to the episodes themselves, and to the contexts in which the entire spots of time sequence is received. We must now consider how these various aspects of the spots of time are influenced by revision. I will argue that in approaching the definition and context, Wordsworth feels the need to reinforce his program of romantic wish-fulfilment. Each revised version of the spots of time portrays these childhood episodes as more affective, as increasingly powerful in providing the poet with some form of renovation. Focusing upon this element of wish-fulfilment allows him to displace a great deal of the anxiety he has over the past (as clearly manifest in the episodes themselves) into the present. Wordsworth's present concern, I maintain, manifests itself as growing anxiety over the notion of paternal authority as both a personal and social evil. If death-anxiety is largely unconscious, appearing only in a number of suggestive images and ideas in the spots of time episodes, anxiety over authority is clearly conscious, becoming a central and growing concern in all later versions of The Prelude. Finally, I argue that it is only
when revising the spots of time episodes that Wordsworth attempts to mitigate what is clearly death-affirming in them. This he does by either eliminating (where he can) or at least distorting their most disturbing images of violence and death.

Let us turn to a consideration of the various narrative contexts in which the spots of time appear, and to the closely related matter of Wordsworth's revisions of the introductory definition. The purpose is to determine how the notion of authority becomes central to Wordsworth's understanding and appreciation of the spots of time.

II

In the "Two-Part Prelude," the spots of time appear amongst a series of episodes concerning Wordsworth's childhood and early adolescence—how he was educated by the ministrations of nature. In this early text, nature is portrayed in anthropomorphic terms abandoned later. According to Wordsworth, as a child he was influenced by what he describes as "the impressive agency of fear" and by "pleasure and repeated happiness" ("Two-Part Prelude," One 433-34). These two primary influences on his childhood, which in the thirteen-book text he describes as the fostering forces of "beauty and ... fear" (I 306), are personified as spirits that have had a profound influence on his development as a man and poet.
The mind of man is fashioned and built up
Even as a strain of music: I believe
That there are spirits, which, when they would form
A favoured being, from his very dawn
Of infancy do open out the clouds
As at the touch of lightning, seeking him
With gentle visitation; quiet powers!
Retired and seldom recognized, yet kind,
And to the very meanest not unknown;
With me, though rarely, [in my early days]
They communed: others too there are who use,
Yet haply aiming at the self-same end,
Severer interventions, ministry
More palpable, and of their school was I.
("Two-Part Prelude," One 67-79)

The spots of time appear amongst a number of early episodes exploring these darker, or more "palpable," means with which nature educates a "favoured being":
trap-robbing (One 27-49), raven's-nest (One 50-66),
boat-stealing (One 81-129), and drowned-man (One 258-87).
In each of these episodes, which are themselves often loosely classified as spots of time, Wordsworth describes how, through fear or shock or troubled excitement, he experiences a state of heightened imaginative activity.
In this sense, these episodes do resemble the spots of time, and Part One of the "Two-Part Prelude" does appear to have a great deal of thematic coherence. To employ Wordsworth's own mode of classification, then, we can identify the "Two-Part Prelude" spots of time as part of a series focusing upon Wordsworth's early education through the "ministry of fear."

In the context of Part One of the "Two-Part Prelude," the "ministry of fear" is seen clearly in paternal and
authoritarian terms. The boy's clandestine adventure in
the brief trap-robbing episode results in his hearing

Low breathing coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

(47-49)

In the short raven's-nest episode, the boy's "mean / And
... inglorious" (55-56) attempt to steal eggs evokes a
"strange utterance" from the "loud dry wind" and makes him see the night sky as "not a sky / Of earth" (64-66). In the boat-stealing episode, his night-time theft of a shepherd's boat and his moonlit row out on the lake appear to conjure up from behind the 'rocky steep' of the horizon "a huge cliff," which, "As if with voluntary power instinct, / Upreared its head" (107-10). And in the drowned-man episode, the quiet lake of the boy's landscape is disrupted by the appearance of a "dead man" who rises from the water "bolt upright" with a "ghastly face" (277-79). Central to all four of these boyhood memories is Wordsworth's perception or recognition of corrective, paternal forces in nature. In the trap-robbing, raven's-nest, and boat-stealing episodes, the landscape appears to respond directly to the boy's acts of theft. We are given the impression that conscience is externalized in nature as a force capable of resisting the boy's illicit activities. In the drowned-man episode, however, the sudden appearance of the dead man simply
interrupts the boy's quiet and apparently guiltless enjoyment of the "beauteous scene" (277). Nature does not adopt the role of externalized conscience but acts to intervene in a child's idle pleasures. It offers the boy a stark, if perhaps uncalled for, reminder of what can be concealed in a beautiful and serene landscape.

In the "ministry of fear" passages of the "Two-Part Prelude," Wordsworth's understanding and presentation of paternal authority is coloured by the context of how Nature offers ultimately beneficent ministrations to the young boy. In other words, the influence of authority (the male force of correction and conscience) is seen as but one element within a larger, natural program of educating a favoured being. There is a clear and apparently useful role for authority within this educational model, as a force capable of precipitating visionary moments of lasting value. In the manuscripts contributing to the short-lived five-book text, the spots of time find themselves within a wider ranging and more extensively developed narrative. They are no longer directly associated with the manner in which nature educates a favoured being, but are now concerned with how Wordsworth once suffered from a personally devastating period of imaginative impairment. Furthermore, the notion of authority becomes more complicated. Wordsworth now begins to focus on some of the darker and more destructive
aspects of authority, and attempts to come to terms with
the relationship between the poetic imagination and
certain authoritarian aspects of the mind.

The nature and extent of Wordsworth's so-called
period of imaginative impairment is a matter of some
debate. The only extensive historical account of it is in
fact Wordsworth's narrative in *The Prelude*. The problem
with this account is that it is studied and vague, and the
text is often digressive and meandering. Wordsworth has
the habit of talking in very general and abstract terms,
making it difficult to piece together a coherent picture
of what certainly appears to be an important period in his
life. What he does say is that he suffered imaginative
impairment during a time in his life when petty cares
and false ambitions prevented him from having more
meaningful imaginative interaction. This happened because
he had "misplaced" and "misemployed" his intellectual
powers (MS. W; See Abrams, Gill, and J. Wordsworth, eds.,
*The Prelude*, Appendix 3b). Certain unstable and artificial
trends in thinking (the picturesque in the aesthetic
realm, and Godwinian rationalism in the political realm)
were more appealing to him during this period than the
more authentic and natural modes of thinking he had relied
upon since his early boyhood. It is not clear precisely
when Wordsworth first suffered this condition, nor when he
finally emerged from it with renewed powers; however, it
is generally believed to have occurred sometime between February of 1793 (with England's war with revolutionary France) and July of 1797 (with Wordsworth's and Dorothy's move to Alfoxden).

The imaginative impairment passage, nevertheless, is important to *The Prelude*. In the manuscripts contributing to the five-book text, it acts as a link between Wordsworth's account of the ascent of Snowdon (where he provides one of his most memorable celebrations of the powers of imagination) and the concluding sequence of the spots of time. He begins the passage first with a list of certain evils which have contributed to a general and pervasive decline in the imaginative powers of society at large: "petty duties and degrading cares, / Labour and penury, disease, and grief" (MS. W). He then decides not to address this issue, saying that it is really "fit matter for another song" (MS. W), *The Recluse* we must assume. Turning to "fit matter" for his present song, he goes on to describe how his own imagination once suffered—how he experienced a "tyranny" of the intellect over such faculties as emotion and fancy, and how his sense of aesthetics declined because he made the eye (or sight) the "master" of his other senses of hearing, smell, taste, and touch (see the thirteen-book *Prelude*, XI 108-83, to which this corresponds). Judgment and reason were made to stand in the way of imagination and emotion.
Reason became the "idol" of his mind, and the eye the "tyrant" of his other senses. According to Wordsworth, this happened during a period in his life when he had abandoned his role as a natural man (one who integrates all faculties and senses into a condition of reciprocal interplay) for that of authoritarian man (one who makes reason and the eye the tyrants over all other faculties and senses). As it applies here, authority appears as the radical opposite to all that is balanced and harmonious, as a male attribute of authoritarian control.

In the thirteen- and fourteen-book texts of The Prelude, the spots of time are placed within their final context, appearing in Book XI of the thirteen-book text and Book XII of the fourteen-book version. In the thirteen-book text, Wordsworth separates his account of Snowdon from the spots of time, making it the conclusion to the expanded Prelude. As noted by Jonathan Wordsworth ("Five-Book Prelude" 16-17), it is not until the thirteen-book text of The Prelude that Wordsworth sees the mist on Snowdon as "The perfect image of a mighty mind, / One that feeds upon infinity" (XIII 69-70), and similarly in the fourteen-book text, as "the emblem of a mind / That feeds upon infinity, that broods / Over the dark abyss" (XIV 70-72). We must assume that Wordsworth's revised vision of Snowdon as an "image" or "emblem" of a mind feeding upon "infinity" prompted him to consider this
important passage as the appropriate conclusion to a poem that attempts so much to be a celebration of the powers of poetic imagination. We must also assume that the spots of time, because of the problematics we have been considering (as being both celebratory and disturbing), although highly important to his narrative, could not form an adequate conclusion to the poem. Wordsworth needed a less troubling conclusion to his poem, and Snowdon provided him with this.

The problems of imaginative impairment and authority are now considered along with Wordsworth's political and moral crisis precipitated by the failure of the French revolution and by the consequent war between England and France. According to Wordsworth, the war, in which he saw England as engaged in a misguided attempt to suppress the cause of universal freedom and equality, was a "shock" to his "moral nature" (thirteen-book Prelude, X 233, 244), a very "revolution" (237) of his self, far exceeding any crisis he had ever experienced:

I, who with the breeze
Had played, a green leaf on the blessed tree
Of my beloved country--nor had wished
For happier fortune than to wither there--
Now from my pleasant station was cut off,
And tossed about in whirlwinds.
(thirteen-book Prelude, X 253-58)

With the advent of the revolution, republicanism (which he associates with nature and youth) was given room to test the long established "customs" and "laws" of traditional
government (which he associates with authority and age). Republicanism is seen as part of all that is just, liberal, and natural—as the higher ideal of a renovated political and poetic man. On the other hand, authority is presented as man's separation from his natural instincts for liberty, equality, and justice. According to Wordsworth, this essential struggle between natural and authoritarian man aggravated the condition of imaginative impairment he experienced in the years following his return from revolutionary France. To maintain a tyranny of the intellect and mastery of the eye is to experience a personal regime much like that being acted out on the wider political stage. After all, in admitting to such imaginative impairment, Wordsworth is basically describing a time in his life when he behaved toward himself (the integrated or natural Wordsworth) much as Robespierre in France or Pitt at home behaved toward the larger populace.

What, then, do the various revisionary stages of the spots of time have to tell us about Wordsworth's changing attitude toward the episodes? If the earliest text illustrates how the poet was originally educated, in all later versions the spots of time play a central role in demonstrating how he recovered from the major crisis of his early manhood. In effect, the later spots of time are presented as more powerful than their counterparts in
the "Two-Part Prelude." Wordsworth offers an extended illustration of how the episodes are capable of providing the poet with fructification, nourishment, and repair.

Recontextualizing the spots of time assists Wordsworth in forgetting what is essentially disturbing in the episodes themselves. Focus is displaced from the episodes, and redirected at the adult crises of imaginative and moral impairment. Anxiety over the notion of authority is linked to Wordsworth's experience of a death-anxiety, in as much as he unconsciously remembers his own infantile ambition to reach a position of prominence (height, male power) as having been the cause of the loss of the mother and father experienced during the Oedipal phase. Any continuing trouble he may have over paternal authority is fueled by unconscious memory of the Oedipus complex. The abstract and general notion of authority serves Wordsworth as a conscious representative of all that the father was to the child. To have the ambition to be an authority figure, a chosen poet or a man speaking to men, is to awaken concerns lying deep within the unconscious mind. We must assume that it is easier for Wordsworth to confront these adult crises, and hence to confront a clearly manifest anxiety over the notion of authority, for the very act of writing The Prelude is proof to him that he has survived and grown. The text is the medium through which he records (and creates) the
nature of his salvation, and through which he attempts to distance himself from some of the realities of his own life-history. Childhood memories of loss and death, however, though valorized by the poet in his acts of textualization, must remain essentially (if unconsciously) disturbing to him.

III

Let us now turn to the revised introductory definition of the spots of time. According to Jonathan Wordsworth ("The Five-Book Prelude" 20-22), extant manuscript evidence suggests that the five-book version of the definition of the spots of time is basically like that of the thirteen-book text, with the exception that for a short while the five-book text had replaced the two-part version's "fructifying" with an intermediate adjective, "vivifying." The fourteen-book version is also extremely close to that of the thirteen-book Prelude. My base quotation is from the thirteen-book Prelude. Manuscript A (D.C. MS. 52), the fair-copy transcribed by Dorothy Wordsworth between November 1805 and February 1806, records the definition as follows:

There are in our existence spots of time, Which with distinct preeminence retain A renovating virtue, whence, depressed By false opinion and contentious thought, Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight In trivial occupations and the round Of ordinary intercourse, our minds Are nourished and invisibly repaired— A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.
This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
Among those passages of life in which
We have had deepest feeling that the mind
Is lord and master, and that outward sense
Is but the obedient servant of her will.
Such moments, worthy of all gratitude,
Are scattered everywhere, taking their date
From our first childhood--in our childhood even
Perhaps are most conspicuous. Life with me,
As far as memory can look back, is full
Of this beneficent influence. (XI 257-78)

The replacement of the two-part text's "fructifying"
with "vivifying" in the five-book Prelude has a profound
effect on the metaphorical structure of the definition of
the spots of time. With the replacement of this important
adjective, and later with the replacement of the five-book
text's "vivifying" with "renovating" in the thirteen- and
fourteen-book versions, the spots of time are no longer as
closely associated with the beneficence of nature or that
of the lost mother as they are in the earliest text. The
only remaining element directly associating them with
nature and the mother is the verb "nourished," which
maintains the image of the spots of time as capable of
feeding the poet and repairing him when he is beset
with various problems. "Vivifying" nonetheless is related
to "fructifying," in as much as both adjectives generally
address the power of the spots of time to enliven or
animate the poet's mind. With "vivifying," however, the
notion of animation becomes more abstracted, losing the
earthiness and the sexual associations (of seeding and
impregnating) inherent in the term "fructifying." Thus, when he revises the definition of the spots of time for the five-book text Wordsworth is compelled to sorten the sexual and physical nature of the definition, and instead emphasizes what is more intellectual and perhaps spiritual.

It is my belief that the sexuality surrounding the definition of the spots of time, as innocent and as vague as it may appear, must have been a source of some concern for Wordsworth—at least on the unconscious level. If the two-part text's definition of the spots of time is suggestive of Wordsworth's desire for something like the lost, pre-Oedipal relationship between a mother and child, as argued in Chapter Two, it is possible that a measure of post-Oedipal guilt would attach itself to this desire and effectively color Wordsworth's unconscious memory of his mother and his relationship with her. The safer move for him, in revision, would be to distance himself from the aspects of unconscious memory too suggestive of sexuality and perhaps of the incestuous desires a child has toward the mother during the Oedipus complex. Finally, with the replacement of "vivifying" by "renovating," Wordsworth shifts the emphasis in the definition from the life-creating ("fructifying," "vivifying") to the restorative (repairing) power of the spots of time.

In the revised definition of the spots of time,
Wordsworth expands upon his list of the evils from which this special form of memory is capable of providing renovation. We recall that in the "Two-Part Prelude," Wordsworth says that "the spots of time repair the poet when he is "depressed / By trivial occupations and the round / Of ordinary intercourse." The spots of time are now said to repair him when he is depressed

By false opinion and contentious thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight
In trivial occupations and the round
Of ordinary intercourse.

Wordsworth is not explicit in defining what he means by "false opinion," "contentious thought," "Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight"; however, judging from the context of Book XI of the thirteen-book Prelude it is likely that he is referring generally (and on a conscious level) to his experience of imaginative and moral impairment. His choice of language in the revised definition is suggestive of that used elsewhere to describe the misjudgments he suffered after the French revolution led to a repressive political climate in England and abroad. We are reminded, for example, of his assertion in Book X of the thirteen-book text that after England declared war on revolutionary France

a way was opened for mistakes
And false conclusions of the intellect,
As gross in their degree, and in their kind
Far, far more dangerous. (765-68)
Certainly, the phrases "false opinion" and "contentious thought" accurately characterize Wordsworth's attitude toward this troubled or "dangerous" period in his life-history. It is reasonable to assume that he would remember this period as a time when he suffered from a "heavier or more deadly weight," and it is also reasonable that he would see the spots of time as an essential (perhaps the principle) means of providing him with some form of rescue.

Curiously, in the revised introductory definition of the spots of time Wordsworth makes use of certain images of ambition and authority which have caused him a measure of anxiety in other related areas of his narrative. He, for example, reexamines the notion of verticality (height and depth), which is important to his metaphors of ambition in the two-part text. According to the revised definition, the spots of time are

A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.

We recall that in the Penrith beacon and Christmas vacation episodes Wordsworth's efforts to reach a position of prominence or height are followed immediately and consequently by downward movement ("I ... / Came to a bottom where ... / A man ... was hung / In irons"

["Two-Part Prelude," One 307-10], and "I bowed low / To God who thus corrected my desires" ["Two-Part Prelude,"
One 359-60]) and by a vision of death as symbolized by the image of the grave. In his revised definition of the spots of time, Wordsworth is finally able to achieve the ascension or upward movement denied him in both episodes. In effect, he is saying that certain important events in his life that left him depressed, subjugated, and bowing low have become the memories with the power to lift him up "when fallen." The metaphor for ambition found in both episodes of the spots of time, height, now appears in the definition as a metaphor for renovation and salvation. No doubt, verticality is a common means of measuring success and failure, and Wordsworth is essentially borrowing a metaphor with much popular currency; however, I believe its use here (as a direct commentary on the episodes) is significant. In effect, Wordsworth is attempting to reconstitute the notion of height, or more properly his own ambition for height, so that it is no longer seen as something destructive.

Wordsworth then reexamines the concept of male authority as it relates to the poetic imagination. In the revised definition, he claims that the efficacious power of the spots of time

chiefly lurks
Among those passages of life in which
We have had deepest feeling that the mind
Is lord and master, and that outward sense
Is but the obedient servant of her will.

What is surprising about this assertion is Wordsworth's
abandoning of the two-part version's model of the mind as passive for one of it as having dominion over nature or "outward sense." Against the emergence of daemonic memory, which has effectively colored the mnemonic landscape with images of death and loss, Wordsworth is compelled to see himself in a position of control. He feels the need to make himself the "lord and master" of "outward sense."

There must be a measure of relief for Wordsworth in seeing the daemonic images of death and loss in the episodes as a product of his own imaginative dominion over nature. To be able to lay claim to some form of control must mitigate the anxiety he experiences over these disturbing and apparently self-willed memories. On the other hand, to propose that the mind is "lord and master" is to be guilty of an intellectual despotism much like that experienced during his experience of imaginative impairment. This, I believe, is why Wordsworth introduces the notion of the feminized mind: "and that outward sense / Is but the obedient servant of her will" (emphasis added). In effect, he softens the masculinity of a mind as "lord and master" with the introduction of femininity. The lost mother, or femininity in general, now appears as an attribute of the mind in its interactions with "outward sense", and the mind, though "lord and master," is portrayed as essentially androgynous.

When revising the definition of the spots of time,
then, Wordsworth now portrays the episodes as having a greater efficacy or power in rescuing the poet from the various crises (imaginative and moral) he must face as an adult. We note this especially in his shift in emphasis from the fructifying and vivifying powers of the spots of time to their ability to renovate the mind and imagination, and in his offering of a more detailed list of the various evils these episodes have the power to rescue him from. He is also compelled to reevaluate the notion of authority, and particularly himself as an authority figure. Although in each revised context of the spots of time the notions of mastery and tyranny are used to describe a growing list of personal and social evils, Wordsworth is unwilling or unable to abandon his own desire for some measure of authority. In order to reach a balance or compromise, he offers a version of authority radically different from that of traditional power structures. With his introduction of the androgynous mind, he attempts to reconcile the dichotomy between masculinity and femininity, and similarly between natural man and his authoritarian counterpart. The author or "master" of the spots of time, at least according to the revised definition, is in touch with what is feminine in the mind. He knows that authoritarian control is essentially counterproductive to meaningful imaginative interchange between a poet and his or her environment; and he also
knows that losing this meaningful interchange leads to a diminishing of the very powers of poetry. What he needs is a mind with the power (the male power) to control physical nature, to be able to manipulate or rearrange it in acts of creative imaging, and at the same time one that is in touch with (or in feminine harmony with) "the one life within us and abroad." Essentially, "his androgynous mind is a wedding or at least a compromise between the daemonic (apocalyptic, sublime) and romantic modes of imagination. To allow the mind its measure of romantic femininity is to keep the imagination operating authentically, to ensure that it is in vital contact with the unity in multeity and harmony in disorder underlying the greater operations of nature.

IV

Let us now turn to a detailed consideration of the revised Penrith beacon episode. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, I am particularly interested in how Wordsworth attempts to come to terms with its disturbing images of violence and death. The Penrith beacon episode is first revised for the thirteen-book text. In this intermediate stage of revision, Wordsworth makes substantial changes to the episode, followed in the fourteen-book text by only slight (though in places significant) revision. I use the thirteen-book text for my base quotation. Manuscript A (D.C. MS. 52) records the
Penrith beacon episode as follows:

At a time
When scarcely (I was then not six years old)
My hand could hold a bridle, with proud hopes
I mounted, and we rode toward the hills:
We were a pair of horseman--honest James
Was with me, my encourager and guide.
We had not travelled long ere some mischance
Disjoined me from my comrade, and, through fear
Dismounting, down the rough and stony moor
I led my horse, and stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom where in former times
A murderer had been hung in iron chains.
The gibbet-mast was mouldered down, the bones
And iron case were gone, but on the turf
Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,
Some unknown hand had carved the murderer's name.
The monumental writing was engraven
In times long past, and still from year to year
By superstition of the neighbourhood
The grass is cleared away; and to this hour
The letters are all fresh and visible.
Faltering, and ignorant where I was, at length
I chanced to espy those characters inscribed
On the green sod: forthwith I left the spot,
And, reascending the bare common, saw
A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
The beacon on the summit, and more near,
A girl who bore a pitcher on her head
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,
An ordinary sight, but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man
To paint the visionary dreariness
Which, while I looked all around for my lost guide,
Did at that time invest the naked pool,
The beacon on the lonely eminence,
The woman, and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind. When, in blessed season,
With those two dear ones--to my heart so dear--
When, in the blessed time of early love,
Long afterwards I roamed about
In daily presence of this very scene,
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
And on the melancholy beacon, fell
The spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam--
And think you not with radiance more divine
From these rememberances, and from the power
They left behind? So feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.  
(XI 278-327)

The opening scene of the revised Penrith beacon episode is similar to its counterpart in the earliest text. The first major difference is the thirteen-book text's omission of the two-part version's reference to the murdered wife. We recall that in the "Two-Part Prelude" Wordsworth says,

I led my horse and, stumbling on, at length
Came to a bottom where in former times
A man, the murderer of his wife, was hung
In irons.  
(One 307-10)

In the thirteen-book text, Wordsworth simply says that he "Came to a bottom where in former times / A murderer had been hung in iron chains." The question we must ask is why does Wordsworth omit the reference to the dead woman? It is worthwhile to remember that in the episode Wordsworth conflates two separate murder stories. In their manuscript edition of The Prelude, Abrams, Gill, and J. Wordsworth offer a brief synopsis of these two stories:

Thomas Nicholson had murdered a local butcher near Penrith and had been hanged there in 1767, eight years before the probable date of the Prelude incident. A hundred years earlier, in 1672, Thomas Lancaster had poisoned his wife (and others) and been hung in irons on a gibbet in the water-meadows near the home of Ann Tyson, Wordsworth's landlady at Hawkshead. (9 n.9)

One possible reason for Wordsworth's omission of the reference to the woman is that during revision he noticed his mistake (if it is one) in conflating two separate
stories, and decided that his own account refers to the
tale of Thomas Nicholson—the murderer of the butcher, not
the woman. This, however, is not likely the case. After
all, it was Thomas Parker who was hung on a gibbet,
not Thomas Nicholson, and the gibbet is central to all
versions of the episode. Instead, there must be some other
reason. I believe the motivation for this significant
textual revision is of a more personal nature. In the
revised version of the Penrith beacon episode, Wordsworth
effectively eliminates what amounts to the most disturbing
portrait of the lost mother, a portrait, as noted in
Chapter Two, in which loss appears in its most definitive
and violent form. It appears that both anxiety over
the symbolic loss of the mother during the Oedipus complex
and the trauma precipitated by her premature death
eventually prompt Wordsworth to strengthen his romantic
program of denial of loss and death and in turn to alter
memory, recorded memory, to accommodate this. He is
unwilling or unable to maintain such a stark and
disturbing portrait of the lost mother. Removing any
reference to her must mitigate some of the daemonic
urgency of the episode, and hence must offer him a measure
of relief.

The next major revision to the Penrith beacon episode
is the addition of the "monumental writing" passage. We
recall that in the two-part text Wordsworth concludes his
account of discovering the place where a murderer had been hung by stating that "Only a long green ridge of turf remained / Whose shape was like a grave" (One 312-13). In revision, the simplicity of this statement and likewise the clarity of the image of the grave are exchanged for a more discursive account of the mise en scène of the boy's brief stay at the spot where the murderer had been executed:

The gibbet-mast was mouldered down, the bones
And iron case were gone, but on the turf
Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,
Some unknown hand had carved the murderer's name.
The monumental writing was engraven
In times long past, and still from year to year
By superstition of the neighbourhood
The grass is cleared away; and to this hour
The letters are all fresh and visible.
Faltering, and ignorant where I was, at length
I chanced to espy those characters inscribed
On the green sod.

Curiously, the grave of the two-part text has been replaced by the image of engraving, itself a significant pun. The letters have been "carved," "engraven," and "inscribed," literally dug into, the "green sod" somewhere near the spot where the gibbet had stood. In effect, the clear and uncomplicated image of the grave has been diffused into the mnemonic landscape as "monumental [memorial, epitaphian, sepulchral] writing," and in the fourteen-book text, as "monumental letters." As it effects this passage, then, the pattern of Wordsworth's practice of revision is from emphasis on the object (the "long
green ridge of turf ... / Whose shape was like a grave")
to emphasis on the word ("monumental writing"). According
to his account, however, the name itself is not revealed.
We are never told what the letters are, only that they do
in fact exist and that "to this hour" they "are all fresh
and visible." They remain in the landscape and in memory
with a distinct (fresh/visible) preeminence, yet they also
remain utterly illegible, as symbols without meaning. The
murderer's name is inscribed into an epitaph that at once
reveals and conceals his identity. Wordsworth's account of
the "monumental writing" distances him from the event and
softens some of the anxiety surrounding this place of
violent retribution. When encoded in a text rather than
symbolized by an object, the memory of the dead man is
more manageable for Wordsworth, much in the way that he
attempts to make his own life-history more manageable in
the writing of The Prelude. According to Douglas J.
Kneale,
The identity of the murderer is not important, not
meaningful. The text cancels the direct name, so
that the reader sees only a nominal effect, un effet
d\nom, that has suggestive self-reflexive
implications. A man is displaced, even effaced, by
a name, by the effect of naming--which is
allegorical of an aspect of autobiography.
Wordsworth tropes himself as he writes The Prelude,
turning flesh into word, putting effect in place of
cause, substituting the misnomer "Wordsworth" for
the proper noun that is his name. (146)
There are also some interesting parallels between the
"monumental writing" passage and Wordsworth's myth of
memory. The act of carving the murderer's name into the turf and "from year to year" clearing the spot to render "The letters ... all fresh and visible" is representative of the processes of authorial memory. The murderer's name is enshrined in the letter, and in effect all of the violent events associated with this name (murder and execution) are textualized by the "monumental writing."

With this passage, then, Wordsworth is basically offering an oblique commentary on the affective power of recorded memory. It is because of the "superstition of the neighbourhood" that "the grass is cleared away" and the letters are kept "all fresh and visible." The text is kept alive, and as a result the memory survives long after the gibbet-mast has "moulder down" and the bones and iron case have "gone." What exactly this "superstition of the neighbourhood" might be is never revealed in Wordsworth's account. It is possible, though, that the letters are kept "fresh and visible" to act as some sort of talisman protecting the neighbourhood from any ill effects the dead man might have on the area. Wordsworth is hinting at the power of the written word to offer protection, suggesting that his own acts of textualization—specifically, the recording of the two spots of time—can offer him some form of protection. Textualization is a way of making memory manageable, of interpreting it according to the hopes (or wishes) of the author. Language is a means
of distancing and controlling painful memories.

From lines 301 to 315, the "visionary dreariness" passage, the five- and thirteen-book texts are almost identical to the two-part version; although in the fourteen-book text, the boy's exit from the "bottom where ... / A murderer had been hung" is more urgent and disturbing than it is in any other version. In the two-part text, he simply says "I left the spot," and in the five- and thirteen-book texts he says "forthwith I left the spot." In the fourteen-book version, however, he says "I fled, / Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road" (XII 246-47). The fourteen-book text thus intensifies the disturbing nature of the boy's flight from the "monumental letters." Generally speaking, this intensification runs counter to Wordsworth's revisionary practices. In this final stage of revision, Wordsworth abandons a fairly consistent pattern of mitigating the darker aspects of the episode. What it points to is the resiliency of daemonic forces in the face of romantic repression, and likewise to the continuing dialectic between these two modes of imagination. Wordsworth is compelled to remember his flight from the "bottom" with a greater sense of urgency and with more anxiety than in any other version of the episode.

The "blessed season" passage, first appearing in the manuscripts contributing to the five-book text as the
"blessed time" passage, has a profound effect on the meaning of the Penrith beacon episode:

When, in blessed season,  
With those two dear ones—to my heart so dear—  
When, in the blessed time of early love,  
In daily presence of this very scene,  
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,  
And on the melancholy beacon, fell  
The spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam—  
And think you not with radiance more divine  
From those remembrances, and from the power  
They left behind? So feeling comes in aid  
Of feeling, and diversity of strength  
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.

On his return to the landscape of Penrith, in what he describes as a "blessed time" of "early love," Wordsworth finds himself in a situation radically different from that of his first visit. During his first visit, we recall, he becomes separated from his guide, stumbles into a valley where he sees a ridge of ground shaped like a grave, and emerges to experience what he describes as a state of "visionary dreariness." This first visit, in spite of what he says in the definition of the spots of time, is a time of loss (absence) and anxiety. The second visit (or recorded visit), in contrast, is a time of presence, love, and happiness. If his first visit is marked conspicuously by the absence of "honest James (his "encourager," "guide," and "comrade"), his second is marked by the distinct and reassuring presence of Dorothy and his then future wife, Mary. The landscape, which had been frightening to the boy, now has no great affective power
over him. The objects in the landscape still retain their essentially disturbing nature—the "dreary crags," "naked pool," and "melancholy beacon"; however, Wordsworth, as an adult and in the company of those to his "heart so dear," is able to alter his perception of the landscape, and thus gains some control over the processes of imagination. In effect, his return to Penrith is a romantic return to a daemonic landscape; it is a revisionary return (in many senses of the expression) in which the text (nature, recorded memory) is subject to profound reevaluation. If his first visit is marked by images of violence and death, his return is marked by peace and life. The visionary power of the poet now colours the landscape not with "dreariness," but with the "spirit and pleasure of youth's golden gleam."

With the "blessed season passage," we also experience a reintroduction of femininity into the landscape. During his first visit, femininity appears as the object of violence and subjugation. We recall that in the two-part text the story revolves around a man who murders his wife, and that in all versions it ends with the vision of a girl (woman) forcing her way against a powerful wind. With the "blessed season" passage, these two female figures are replaced by Dorothy and Mary, who do not appear as objects of violence but as Wordsworth's companions. We are given the distinct impression that his return to this landscape
would not be triumphant were it not for such feminine companionship, that these two women are important to the "golden gleam" of his youthful imaginative powers.

Curiously, however, in the fourteen-book text Wordsworth decides to omit his reference to Dorothy. He now says, "When, in the blessed hours / Of early love, the loved one at my side." What motivates him to do this? I believe that in the final version of this passage he feels the need to eliminate the incestuous overtones found in the earlier texts. To treat Dorothy as Mary's equal is to stretch the limits of sibling affection. As Freud notes, incest-anxiety develops during the Oedipus complex. It is reasonable to postulate that the continuing pressure of emergent Oedipal memory compels Wordsworth to eliminate this reminder of potentially dangerous family attachments, such as those once centered around the pre-Oedipal mother and perhaps around Dorothy as a substitute for the mother.

In his approach to the Penrith beacon episode, Wordsworth cautiously approaches the tale of violence and death that forms the center of this childhood memory, and likewise reconsiders the relationship between his experience of loss and the consequent "visionary" atmosphere of this important spot or place in time. He abandons the detail and clarity of his early tale about stumbling into the place where "A man, the murderer of his wife" had been executed and afterwards discovering "a long
green ridge of turf ... / Whose shape was like a grave."

Death clearly becomes a more abstract notion, now codified not by the grave but the "monumental writing" ("monumental letters" in the fourteen-book text) appearing in the landscape; and is now not so much a personal experience, as one that is part of a collective (or neighbourhood) superstition. The most profound, and telling, reconsideration of the landscape, however, is the "blessed season" passage, which in fact epitomizes Wordsworth's intentions throughout the entire episode. With this romantic reconsideration of the daemonic landscape, this life-affirming return to this once dreary spot, we are made keenly aware of Wordsworth's desire to infuse the landscape, or mnemonic landscape at least, with an atmosphere of vitality, nourishment, and growth. Forgetting death, where he can disguising it and weakening its images, is the essence of his romantic program when approaching this memory.

V

In the five-book text, Wordsworth bridges the two spots of time with the following passage:

Oh mystery of man, from what a depth
Proceed thy honours! I am lost, but see
In simple childhood something of the base
On which thy greatness stands; but this I feel
--That from thyself it comes, that thou must give
Else never canst receive. The days gone by
Come back upon me from the dawn almost
Of life; the hiding-places of my power
Seem open, I approach, and then they close.

(WS. W)

As in the definition of the spots of time, Wordsworth here identifies childhood as the "base" of man's "greatness" and the source of his later strength. Adulthood, however, although possessed of certain "honours" and "greatness," is seen as a time of weakened access to the childhood source of mankind's power: "I am lost," "the hiding places of my power / Seem open, I approach, and then they close."

In the thirteen-book text, Wordsworth expands upon this short transitional passage, now saying, in what Jonathan Wordsworth calls "elegaic" terms ("The Five-Book Prelude" 20), that memory is not only precarious but perhaps also subject to unremitting decay as the adult ages:

I see by glimpses now, when age comes o.
May scarcely see at all; and I would give
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
A substance and a life to what I feel:
I would enshrine the spirit of the past
For future restoration.

(thirteen-book Prelude, XI 337-42)

According to this reformulation of the relationship between childhood memory and adulthood, affective incidents from childhood (spots of time) are not seen as remaining with "distinct preeminence"; and the motivating source of memory here rests in the will of the adult, who must "approach" the "hiding-places" of his own power. In effect, Wordsworth formulates what amounts to a negative definition of the spots of time, one in which memory is
seen not as a curiously self-willed nor preeminent agency (a daemonic force) but as a precarious human faculty subject to failure. As in the revised definition of the spots of time, the "mystery of man" passage displaces any anxiety Wordsworth may have about the past (childhood), especially any anxiety he may have over the spots of time episodes, into the present. Childhood, in spite of what is revealed in the text, is consistently and forcefully interpreted as a time only of strength and greatness. Even though Wordsworth records the Penrith beacon episode as a time when he became lost in a bleak and frightening landscape and the Christmas vacation episode as a time when he lost his father, in the "mystery of man" passage he dwells upon a present sense of being lost--"I am lost"--forgetting, or unwilling to remember, that this theme of loss is the thematic backbone of both spots of time.

VI

The Christmas vacation episode is subject to less revision than any other passage of the spots of time, its plot and thematic structure remaining basically unchanged in all stages of revision. It is not, for example, revised to the extent that the Penrith beacon episode is, which as noted above has the "blessed season" passage appended to it and experiences several major changes of imagery; nor is it subject to such radical alterations as those made to
the introductory definition of the spots of time. When revising the thirteen-book text into fourteen books, however, Wordsworth does make a number of minor (although I believe significant) changes to the language or vocabulary of the episode, to its historical accuracy, and to the structure and meaning of its short coda. Manuscript D of the fourteen-book Prelude records the Christmas 27 vacation episode as follows:

One Christmas-time, On the glad eve of its dear holidays, Feverish and tired, and restless, I went forth Into the fields, impatient for the sight Of those led palfreys that should bear us home; My brothers and myself. There rose a crag, That, from the meeting-point of two highways Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched; Thither, uncertain on which road to fix My expectation, thither I repaired, Scout-like, and gained the summit; 'tws a day Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall; Upon my right hand couched a single sheep, Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood; With those companions at my side, I sate Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist Gave intermitting prospects of the copse And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,— That dreary time,—ere we had been ten days Sojourners in my father's house, he died, And I and my three brothers, orphans then, Followed his body to the grave. The event, With all the sorrow that it brought, appeared A chastisement; and when I called to mind That day so lately past, when from the crag I looked in such anxiety of hope; With trite reflections of morality, Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low To God, Who thus corrected my desires; And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain, And all the business of the elements, The single sheep, and the one blasted tree, And the bleak music of that old stone wall, The noise of wood and water, and the mist
That on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes;
All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
To which I oft repaired, and thence would drink,
As at a fountain; and on winter nights,
Down to this very time, when storm and rain
Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
Some inward agitations thence are brought,
Whatever their office, whether to beguile
Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

(XII 288-335)

The fourteen-book text of the Christmas vacation episode replaces a number of relatively plain words and expressions with more elevated or poetic language. Instead of relating how a young man waited on a hilltop for the "horses" that would take him home for the holidays, a sheep and hawthorn bush on either side of him, the day "stormy and rough and wild," and the "woods" appearing intermittently through the mist in the valley; Wordsworth now describes how he went "Scout-like" toward the hills to wait for the "led palfreys" and sat down with a single sheep "couched" on his right hand, the day now not "stormy" but "tempestuous," and now not a "wood" but a "copse" appearing through the valley's mist. What must be considered is why does Wordsworth decide to abandon some of the plain or unadorned language of the episode for more poetic words and expressions? Certainly, the poeticizing of the Christmas vacation episode is part of a general pattern of the entire fourteen-book text, which is
marked conspicuously by Wordsworth's efforts to poeticize his narrative. The fact, however, that this practice of revision is widespread throughout the fourteen-book text does not detract from its importance to this particular episode. If anything, it emphasizes a change in thinking (in attitude toward recorded personal history) experienced by Wordsworth as he addressed the final version of his poetic autobiography.

Most critics focus on Wordsworth's poeticizing of this and other passages in the fourteen-book Prelude in order to make judgments on the aesthetic value of his revisions. According to a critic like Jonathan Wordsworth, the substitution, for example, of "palfreys" for "horses" (or "Sojourners" for "dweller") leads to the weakening of a text which in its initial form is more direct, concrete, and aesthetically pleasing—much in the way that the "monumental writing" passage of the Penrith beacon episode is felt to be inferior to the clear and uncomplicated image of the "long green ridge of turf ... / Whose shape was like a grave." Such aesthetic judgments, as maintained throughout this study, tend to prevent a critic from determining why these revisions are made, and what they can tell us about the author's changing attitude toward memory. In the preceding sections of this chapter, it is argued that Wordsworth's revisions of the Penrith beacon episode basically assist him in mitigating the
full force of the death-anxiety as manifest in the various images of the recorded memory. His strategy is to remove the most direct and disturbing images of death (the murdered wife, the grave) and to record his romantic and life-affirming return to the daemonic landscape. In the Christmas vacation episode, I believe, his motives for revision are basically the same, although his strategy here is substantially different, and importantly, his success in actually achieving mitigation is far less certain.

Jonathan Wordsworth and those of his school are correct in describing the later versions of *The Prelude* as less direct and concrete than the "Two-Part Prelude," and this leads to the heart of the matter. What happens in the fourteen-book version of the Christmas vacation episode is that Wordsworth attempts to distance himself from the realities of his own past history, and he does this specifically by being less direct and concrete in returning to and reworking this important memory. By valorizing (dignifying, elevating) this episode through the introduction of poetic diction he is able to remove some of its immediacy, and likewise a measure of what is disturbingly stark and barren in it. In effect, the episode takes on more of the colouring of a personal mythos than that of a troubling event from early adolescence. The "Scout-like" Wordsworth of the revised
episode--now found in a landscape of palfreys (or expected palfreys), "couched" sheep, and tempests--appears to be more a hero in romance than a school-boy.

This evasive tactic, as tentative as it may be, is reinforced by a curious historical inaccuracy introduced into the final text's short description of the father's burial. In all versions before the fourteen-book text, Wordsworth correctly recounts how only he and two of his brothers, Richard and John, were present at their father's funeral: "he died, / And I and my two brothers, orphans then, / Followed his body to the grave" (thirteen-book Prelude, XI 365-67). In the fourteen-book text, however, he now incorrectly says that he and all three of his brothers attended the funeral: "I and my three brothers ... / Followed his body to the grave." Why does he do this? I believe that his motivation is based upon an unconscious need to redress intense feelings of separation and loss, specifically the loss of important male figures in his life--his father and in 1805 his brother John Wordsworth Jr. In the revised memory, the family "circle" of male members is intact at this important ceremony. Since this ceremony marks the Wordsworth children's passage to the status of orphans ("I and my three brothers, orphans then"), then it must be a measure of relief for Wordsworth to have all the remaining male members of his family present at the funeral.
The final significant change to the Christmas vacation episode is Wordsworth's expansion upon the short coda. We recall that in the thirteen-book text he says,

And I do not doubt
That in this later time, when storm or rain
Beat on my roof at midnight, or by day
When I am in the woods, unknown to me
The workings of my spirit thence are brought.

(XI 384-88)

This coda, which is present in the earliest text of the "Two-Part Prelude," acts as a reminder of the "distinct preeminence" of the spots of time as defined, as an affirmation of the powers of memory. In its expanded version in the fourteen-book text, it basically serves the same function:

... and on winter nights,
Down to this very time, when storm and rain
Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
Some inward agitations thence are brought,
Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

The "storm and rain" of "winter nights" and "strong wind" of "noon-day" remind us of the Penrith beacon episode's "blowing" and "strong wind" (fourteen-book Prelude, XII 253, 261), and of the present episode's "Tempestuous, dark, and wild" day. Strong wind, of course, is a common Wordsworthian metaphor for imaginative inspiration; and it is reasonable to interpret this passage as a reminder of how outward agitations have led and continue to lead to
corresponding "inward agitations" of imagination and memory. However, in this version the specific role of memory as set forth in the introductory definition is substantially reformulated by Wordsworth. The "office" or function of memory is now not so much to fructify, vivify, or renovate the poet but simply to "beguile / Thoughts over busy in the course they took, / Or animate an hour of vacant ease." Wordsworth now appears to have some reservations about the efficacious power of the spots of time, or at least the power of this particular memory. In the "mystery of man" passage (fourteen-book Prelude, XII 272-87), we recall that he shows some doubt whether important childhood memories will always remain with "distinct preeminence," although he does maintain the hope that the "spirit of the Past" can be enshrined for "future restoration" (285-86). In the coda to the Christmas vacation episode, the doubt evident in the "mystery of man" passage is translated into the suggestion that the spots of time may only have the power to charm overbusy thoughts or simply animate an "hour" of vacancy.

In spite of Wordsworth's program of romantic reevaluation of memory, the Christmas vacation episode resists his best efforts to forget what is essentially disturbing in it. Why is Wordsworth unwilling or unable to radically alter this episode in revision? The problem, I believe, is that the episode's focus on the death of the
father forces Wordsworth to avoid revising it to any great extent. If we maintain that both spots of time episodes are informed by memory-traces of the Oedipal situation, we must recognize that the Penrith beacon episode involves a greater amount of mnemonic distortion, the mother and father appearing in the displaced figures of the murderer and the murdered wife. The initial distortion in this memory provides Wordsworth with fairly strong protection from the immediacy of Oedipal memory. He can approach the Penrith beacon episode with only a marginal amount of anxiety, and likewise has a greater amount of freedom in resisting full knowledge of the Oedipal situation. In contrast, mnemonic distortion is less prevalent in the Christmas vacation episode. Here the boy's Oedipal ambition is clearly related to the absence of his actual father. The unconscious mind, with unrelenting and almost sinister economy, relates the father's actual death to the guilt the boy has over aggressive impulses toward him during the Oedipus complex. The daemonic imagination understands that the actual death of the father is the precipitating cause of emergent Oedipal memory and thus forces Wordsworth to see the two events as one and the same. Wordsworth does not necessarily rescind his assertion (and belief) that the spots of time offer renovation, nourishment, and repair; nor does he abandon his attempt (and need) to mitigate what is essentially disturbing in the episode;
however, the very immediacy of this episode compels Wordsworth to resist transforming it through revision. In other words, the romantic imagination is of extremely limited power in the Christmas vacation episode.
Conclusion

In Chapter One of this study, it is proposed that through revision Wordsworth attempts to mitigate what is disturbing in the spots of time. What is disturbing, primarily in the episodes themselves, is a manifest death-anxiety experienced by Wordsworth, or in the language of Hartman, a sense of the apocalyptic in man and nature. The cause of this death-anxiety is Wordsworth's experience of the premature deaths of his mother and father. It is sustained by the emergence of repressed memory of the Oedipus complex, which, because of certain associational parallels (ie. the symbolic loss of the mother and father), behaves as an analogous, unconscious memory to that of their actual loss. The difference is that the unconscious memory of the Oedipus complex has a large measure of guilt associated with it. Wordsworth must remember this unconsciously as a time when he directed aggression toward his father and had erotic impulses toward his mother. Conscious memory of the mother and father, and especially of their deaths, becomes confused with unconscious memory, and has a profound effect on Wordsworth's understanding of nature (as a surrogate for the lost mother) and on his appreciation of paternal authority.

As Onorato argues, Wordsworth attempts to find in nature all that is (or was) positive in the lost
mother—nurture, guidance, guardianship. In effect, Wordsworth responds to her loss and to emergent anxiety over erotic impulses directed toward her during the Oedipus complex with denial. He will not give up his quest for union with the mother, nor does he (at least in the spots of time sequence) wish to remember having these erotic impulses. His attitude toward his father is more problematic. Aggression becomes manifest in the acts of ambition found in both spots of time episodes, and consequently Wordsworth's memory of the loss of his father (the Christmas vacation spot of time) reveals a large measure of guilt associated with his death, as enigmatic as this guilt appears in the episode. Wordsworth feels if not in some way responsible for his father's absence, at least ashamed over latent feelings of aggression toward him. Aggression is too closely associated with the sadistic impulses of the child to remain repressed after the trauma of his father's premature death. Wordsworth responds to authority, to himself as an authority figure and to others, with ambivalence. On the one hand, his poetic ambition, as a man speaking to men, compels him to assume a position of authority (chosen poet) and to interact with society in a meaningful and productive way; on the other hand, the emergent memory of Oedipal aggression colors his perception of authority with guilt and regret, compelling him to seek retirement in the bosom
of nature and to find the base of man's greatness in what he sees as the innocence of childhood.

In Chapter Two of this study, it is argued that although the "Two-Part Prelude" version of the spots of time clearly reveals the anxiety Wordsworth associates with these memories, he does in fact attempt to mitigate their essentially disturbing nature. This can be recognized in two basic structural traits of the early spots of time: in the definition as a form of romantic wish-fulfillment, Wordsworth's desire (or wish) that these memories be fructifying, nourishing, and repairing; and in the episodes themselves as representational memories which, although informed with strong traces of Oedipal guilt, nevertheless distort this with the conscious memory of becoming lost and waiting for the horses.

In Chapter Three the nature and extent of Wordsworth's reevaluation of the spots of time is examined in detail. It is argued that Wordsworth basically attempts to strengthen his program of romantic wish-fulfilment and to distort the episodes's most disturbing images of violence and death. In the revised introductory definition, the spots of time are characterized as more efficacious in offering the poet a means of renovation and as increasingly powerful as a source of poetic inspiration. Contextual changes show that Wordsworth displaces a great deal of anxiety from the episodes.
themselves, as Oedipal memories, to the more manageable, adult crises of imaginative and moral impairments. These adult crises are more manageable precisely because the writing of *The Prelude* is evidence to Wordsworth that he has in fact survived and grown as a poet. Finally, through significant changes in imagery and narrative focus, Wordsworth attempts to distance himself from memory-traces of the Oedipal situation in the episodes. The daemonic emergence of repressed memory, as evident in the early episodes, is resisted (if never subdued) by the romantic imagination.

II

The daemonic has been characterized as a source of disturbance and anxiety for Wordsworth, associated with apocalypse, death, terror, and sublimity; and Wordsworth has been portrayed as resistant to its influences, compelled to react with a countering act of romantic revision. If I have emphasized the darker functions of the daemonic, I have done so precisely to wrestle myself free from the influence of Wordsworth's all too inviting definition of the spots of time as essentially beneficial and renovating.

We should not forget, however, that the daemonic plays a significant role in the greater operations of the imagination. As noted in Chapter One, Lawrence Kramer believes that the daemonic acts as the imagination's
principle of self-interrogation. By this, he means that it brings into question the authenticity of romantic vision. I would like to carry this notion a step further and suggest that the daemonic is really the imagination's means of self-preservation. We should consider that it offers Wordsworth's unconscious mind a modicum of relief after the correlation is drawn between Oedipal loss and the actual loss of both of his parents. In effect, it works toward the relief of repression, allowing the unconscious mind to force to the surface of consciousness a measure of what is causing tension and anxiety. This is the function, as opposed to the effect, of the daemonic imagination; and in regard to function, it is not necessarily opposed to the romantic but engaged in a curious dialogue with it. The daemonic allows the mind, in both its conscious and unconscious acts of romantic imaging, to address some of the most disturbing matters of its history. These matters may be unpleasant to the conscious mind, perhaps more so to the unconscious, yet to confront them is to come one step closer to coming to terms with, and perhaps forgetting, them.
NOTES

In the following notes, I provide only the name of the critic, unless he or she appears more than once in the Works Cited, or if the provision of a title assists in the clarity of the note. For the most part, titles in the notes are in short-form.

1 All quotations from the "Two-Part Prelude" of 1799 are from Stephen Parrish, ed., The Prelude, 1798-1799.

2 All quotations from the thirteen-book Prelude are from Abrams, Gill, and J. Wordsworth, eds., The Prelude: 1799, 1805, 1850. The Cornell Wordsworth edition of the thirteen-book text, although near completion, has not yet been published. For a detailed account of the five-book Prelude, see Jonathan Wordsworth, "The Five-Book Prelude of Early Spring 1804." According to Jonathan Wordsworth, the five-book Prelude was abandoned for one of thirteen books ca. 10 March 1804 (1).

3 All quotations from the fourteen-book Prelude are from W.J.B. Owen, ed., The Fourteen-Book Prelude. It should be noted that I wish to avoid, when possible, titling the various texts of The Prelude by year: 1799, 1805, 1850. Such a method is problematic for a number of reasons, two of which I offer as most conspicuous: one, in spite of the advances in scholarship, precise dating of the manuscripts is still not possible; two, and most important, the title "1850" for the fourteen-book text, as it actually refers to the year in which this text was first published and not when the bulk of it was written, is misleading. As W.J.B. Owen, The Fourteen-Book Prelude, notes, MS. D, the principal manuscript of the fourteen-book text, was copied between December 1831 and January 1832, and was further revised sometime between 1838 and May of 1839 (8-9).

4 The spots of time have received extensive critical treatment. Because of the limited scope and narrow focus of my argument, I can address only a representative portion of this criticism. Following is a fairly comprehensive, but not exhaustive, list of critics who provide interpretations of the spots of time. Many of these critics, although they do not appear directly in the text of my study, have been extremely useful to me. In keeping with the methodology employed elsewhere in the notes, titles are provided only when a critic appears more

5

Stephen Gill, William Wordsworth: A Life, also contends that the premature loss of his mother and father was a profound trauma for Wordsworth. Of Wordsworth's loss of his mother, Gill says,

The effect of her death upon the family was immediate and destructive. In The Prelude Wordsworth said of his mother that "she left us destitute, and as we might / Trooping together," an astonishing comment which testifies to how keenly he still felt in adulthood that his mother's death was a vicious blow. (18)

And of Wordsworth's loss of his father, Gill contends that "What the 13-year-old boy felt at this second bereavement it is impossible to say, but, although father and son can hardly have been close, it was clearly a profound shock" (33).

6

Freud, "Screen Memories," CW, III, defines screen memories as follows:

... two psychical forces are concerned in bringing about memories of this sort. One of the forces takes the importance of the experience as a motive for seeking to remember it, while the other--a
resistance--tries to prevent any such preference from being shown. These two opposing forces do not cancel each other out, nor does one of them (whether with or without loss to itself) overpower the other. Instead, a compromise is brought about, somewhat on the analogy of the resultant in a parallelogram of forces. And the compromise is this. What is recorded as mnemonic image is not the relevant image itself—in this respect the resistance gets its way; what is recorded is another psychical element closely associated with the objectionable one—and in this respect the first principle shows its strength, the principle which endeavours to fix important impressions by establishing reproducible mnemonic images. The result of the conflict is therefore that, instead of the mnemonic image which would have been justified by the original event, another is produced which has been to some degree associatively displaced from the former one. And since the elements of the experience which aroused objection were precisely the important ones, the substituted memory will necessarily lack those important elements and will in consequence most probably strike us as trivial. (306-07)

See also "Childhood Memories and Screen Memories," CW, VI, and "The Psychical Mechanism of Forgetfulness," CW, III.

7
See Freud, Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, CW, XVI (375-77); and for a general discussion of creative writing as it relates to day-dreaming and dreaming, see Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," CW, IX (141-53).

8
For a synopsis of this position, see Freud, "A Short Account of Psycho-Analysis," CW, XIX (191-209), note especially (194-98). This notion of the necessity of an affective catalyst for the precipitation of an illness (neurosis or psychosis) is common in Freud's work. For specific treatment, see Freud, "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy," CW, X (01-150), for his discussion of the case history of Little Hans. Here Freud argues that "a time of privation and of intensified sexual excitement" is the affective catalyst for the bringing forth of Hans' latent (hence repressed and unconscious) feelings of hostility and jealousy toward the father and sadistic impulses toward the mother (138-41).
According to Freud, "A Short Account of Psycho-Analysis," CW, XIX, the Oedipus crisis, in fact, is at the root of all neuroses: "... the complicated emotional relation of children to their parents--what is known as the Oedipus complex... [is] the nucleus of every case of neurosis..." (198).

My treatment of the Oedipus complex is based principally upon three separate but related works by Freud. Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, CW, VII (123-245); "The Development of the Libido and the Sexual Organizations," CW, XVI (320-38); and Beyond the Pleasure Principle, CW, XVIII (1-64). Freud, of course, explores this important phenomenon in many other areas of his work.

This sentiment is echoed by Weiskel, who claims that the spots of time document those moments in which Wordsworth stands in the "liminal" space between the order of the signifier--that which is seen as object or image--and the order of the signified--that which is represented by the object or image. Weiskel argues that these moments of the "liminal sublime" reveal how Wordsworth is resistant to (or represses) the signified meaning of the symbol/signifier (184-85). See also Helen Reguerio, who sees Wordsworth as generally resistant to what she calls the "transcendent" powers of the imagination (45-46); and Sherry, who claims that Wordsworth is able to bridge the gap (Weiskel's liminal space) between the physical world of objects and images and the transcendent realm through a mnemic act of anamnesis, which, says Sherry, gives evidence that the mind is at home in both the physical and transcendent realms (2-6).

See Freud, "The 'Uncanny'," CW, XVII (217-56). See also Wilson for his detailed reading of the "uncanny" in Wordsworth's spots of time.

It should be noted that Ellis also sees evidence in both spots of time that Wordsworth suffers from an essential death-anxiety:

As far as the first spot of time is concerned, I have argued that--through the agency of guilt--the record of the murderer's execution suggests to Wordsworth the imminent possibility of his own
destruction. The death which provides its own subject-matter is Wordsworth's own. It now appears to me likely that this is true of the second spot also. (99)

Ellis and I differ, however, in as much as I see Wordsworth as preoccupied with a general and abstract notion of death as he is with his own personal sense of mortality. Note also that Weiskel sees Wordsworth in the spots of time as resistant to decoding the images in the landscape, which, as Hartman generally argues, appear as "imbued" with "intimations" of death (184-85).

14

In her recent book, *Wordsworth's Revisionary Aesthetics* (1988), Kelley expands upon the basic assumptions of this article. I choose to explicate the article because its treatment of the spots of time is more extensive than in her book.

15


16

Theresa M. Kelley, "The Economics of the Heart," also recognizes the essential gothicity of this scene. According to her, gothic terror as it appears in the two-part text is an "externalized" form of terror, and thus "is not equipped to deal with the more powerful loss that propels the 1805 [thirteen-book] poem" (25). This she offers as the reason for Wordsworth's eventual abandoning of these gothic images for the "monumental letters" passage of the thirteen-book text.

17

Both Alan Bewell (179-183) and Leslie Brisman (314-18) argue that the Christmas vacation episode is essentially Oedipal in structure.

18

According to Alan Bewell, Wordsworth's focus upon this center-point where two highways meet has far-reaching implications:

> Of all places that humans have traditionally feared and avoided, the crossroads or "meeting of the ways" is one of the most sinister. Oedipus killed his father Laius "in a place where three roads meet...." Crossroads were also spots traditionally associated with social outcasts and the damned; it
was there that suicides were buried, parricides were left to rot, and murderers were gibbeted.... It should be added that the crossroads were places where demonic powers were felt to be especially strong. One went to the crossroads to meet devils or demons; they were places where magic was practiced; and it was believed that witches met there for sabbats. (180-81)

Ellis's interpretation of this image is much like my own. According to him, Wordsworth's reference to the "single sheep" is a "reinforcement of a sense in the description of someone who is already orphaned" (25).

Richard E. Brantley sees the Christmas vacation episode as centered upon Wordsworth's exploration of an essentially religious experience, his "anxiety of hope" a form of pride that is "corrected" by God. According to Brantley, Wordsworth was generally influenced by the natural methodism of Wesley and his followers. I am more inclined to see the religious elements in this episode, specifically the reference to God, as simply part of a pattern of ideas and emotions centered on Wordsworth's exploration of the notions of paternal authority.

Ellis, in spite of his hostility toward a great amount of Freudian interpretation, does recognize that aggressive impulses toward the father are common in men and that they can be a profound source of guilt. In interpreting this episode specifically, however, he contends that "the evidence for thinking that 'desires' could refer to anything more than Wordsworth's holiday plans is desperately meagre" (21-23).

See W.J.B. Owen, "The Sublime and the Beautiful in The Prelude" for his analysis of this and other similar passages in relation to the Burkean sublime and beautiful. Owen has identified these two classes of spirits (or modes of education) as reflecting the Eighteenth-Century aesthetic categories of the beautiful and the sublime, the "quiet powers" corresponding to the beautiful and the "others" of a "ministry / More palpable" to that of the sublime (72-73). Certainly, there are correlations between Wordsworth's own aesthetic formulations and those of the Eighteenth-Century philosophers and aesthetes. And
no doubt the sensibility and language of his culture provided him with a common perspective for categorizing experience; however, I do not think it is correct to see him as strictly following any one particular system of thought, be it that of Edmund Burke or of Kant (via Coleridge). Wordsworth, I believe, although influenced by what he read and by his conversations with Coleridge, continually attempted to be true to and hence to accurately describe his life-history and the world around him as personal experience dictated. For a more general consideration of this important matter of the influence of Eighteenth-Century aesthetics of the sublime and beautiful on Wordsworth's thought, see also Theresa M. Kelley's "Wordsworth and the Rhinefall" and "Wordsworth, Kant, and the Romantic Sublime," which provide interesting perspectives on the influence of German idealism; Thomas Weiskel's The Romantic Sublime, which investigates both Bur kean and Kantian concepts (as well as others) in order to gain an historical perspective on a psychology of the sublime; and Albert O. Wlecke's Wordsworth and the Sublime, which provides an interesting phenomenological reading of how Wordsworth's concept of the sublime is in many ways unique.

23 The term "spots of time" is often used loosely to describe any of a number of episodes in Wordsworth's life-history important to his imaginative development or to his sense self-worth. Harold Bloom, for example, in his influential book The Visionary Company entitles a chapter "Spots of Time," then proceeds to offer detailed readings of "Resolution and Independence" and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (164-77). His only extended interpretation of the spots of time proper is found, not inappropriately, within a chapter entitled "The Myth of Memory." I am not essentially opposed to the critical practice of taking such liberties with this phrase, especially if it assists in the explication of other related texts, as I believe it does in the case of Bloom. It is only that in the development of my own argument I choose to use the term as Wordsworth specifically meant it to be used. After all, my study is an attempt to understand exactly what Wordsworth means by the term spots of time--not generally, but as it specifically relates to these two particular episodes.

24 Piecing together the five-book version of The Prelude, which survives only in various rough-copy manuscripts, is a difficult, but not impossible, task. In his article, "The Five-Book Prelude of Early Spring 1804," Jonathan
Wordsworth provides a fairly detailed account of the features of this text, and I use this as the basis of my brief consideration. Book I of the five-book text is much like that of Part One of the "Two-Part Prelude," with the exception that Wordsworth removes the drowned-man episode (placing it in Book IV) and the spots of time (placing them in Book V), and adds the "glad preamble" (thirteen-book text, I 1-54). Book II is almost identical to Part Two of the "Two-Part Prelude," the only significant change being Wordsworth's omission of the "cool piazza" passage ("Two-Part Prelude," Two 140-78). Book III is basically like that of Book III of the thirteen-book version, focusing upon Wordsworth's first sojourn in Cambridge and with the education he receives observing urban life. Book IV broadly corresponds with material comprising Books IV and V of the thirteen-book version. It is constructed of two distinct sections: the first section addresses Wordsworth's summer vacation of 1789, and the second his attitudes toward formal education and the influence of books on his early life. Finally, Book V of the five-book text is based upon material later appearing in Books XI and XIII of the thirteen-book text (Books XII and XIV of the fourteen-book version). The first part of Book V generally corresponds with the first third of Book XIII of the thirteen-book text (the ascent of Snowdon and supporting material), and the second with the last two thirds of Book XI (the spots of time and supporting material).

25 According to Mark L. Reed, Wordsworth: The Chronology of the Early Years, 1770-1799, "the moral crisis precipitated in part by this event [England's declaration of war on France] reaches its climax between 20 Nov 1795 and late 1796" (141). Wordsworth signed the lease for the house in Alfoxden on 7 July 1797 (Reed 201).

26 According to his account in The Prelude, there can be no doubt that Wordsworth's sympathies were with those of the revolutionaries in France and with the republicans at home. Two recent studies, Nicholas Roe's Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical years and David V. Erdman's "The Dawn of Universal Patriotism: William Wordsworth Among the British in Revolutionary France," postulate that Wordsworth took more than a passive interest in the social and political developments of the early stages of the revolution. Roe (194-95) and others, for example, have noted that Wordsworth met many times with William Godwin, the author of the influential Political Justice, and believe that there is strong evidence that he attended
meetings of the republican leaning Philomathean Society.

27


28

Stephen Gill, *William Wordsworth: A Life*, notes the essential irony in the young Wordsworth's elevation of himself to the authority figure of the chosen poet. According to Gill, Wordsworth basically begins his autobiography on the growth of a poetic mind not after completing a long and distinguished career, when most such autobiographies are written, but before he had any real public success as a poet:

Although it [the "Two-Part Prelude"] reaches right back to "the infant babe" and celebrates "unfading recollections" of childhood pursuits, the real importance of the poem lies not in what it says about the past but in what it promises about the future. The great Victorians looked back to childhood and youth knowing that it had led to a lifetime of literary achievement. Their's is a genuine retrospect. Wordsworth on the other hand looks back as a young man, one with a future before him but little other than faith to support him in the belief that he will be worthy of the task to which he perceives he has been called. (5)
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