

<p>Institution: Lancaster University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 29 English Language and Literature</p>
<p>Title of case study: Wordsworth in our Time: Poetry, Place and Public Engagement</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact William Wordsworth's poetry is of lasting value to our cultural and national identity and to perceptions of the Lake District. The desire to communicate core Wordsworthian principles shapes and informs the research undertaken by the Wordsworth Centre, Lancaster University, which seeks to vitally reconnect poetry and the region in the twenty-first century. Such research has produced an increased engagement with Wordsworth's poetry and transformed the understanding of his work and its continuing relevance for a range of beneficiaries.</p> <p>Two research projects undertaken through collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere have realised considerable impact in the assessment period through three main channels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a pioneering website, designed for diverse users, containing the first digital versions of selected Wordsworth manuscripts, which has received over 580,000 hits; 2) contributions to the visitor experience at Dove Cottage, Grasmere; 3) 40 'Wordsworth Walks' around Grasmere and its environs involving over 950 participants from a range of different groupings (business, public sector, general public).
<p>2. Underpinning research Two linked AHRC-funded research projects, designed and conducted in collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, investigated the relationship between place and vocation for Wordsworth's poetry. Through innovative research into the poet's manuscripts and his writing about place, they examined how environment shapes art and identity, and how environment is in turn shaped by the writings and responses it has stimulated. The research findings of Dr (now Professor) Sally Bushell emphasised the previously underestimated value of draft materials and produced new methods of analysis for them.</p> <p><i>From Goslar to Grasmere</i> sought to explore how a website could be used to make such manuscript materials available to a range of different audiences. The website (http://collections.wordsworth.org.uk/GtoG) was created collaboratively by Bushell and Jeff Cowton (Curator, the Wordsworth Trust) and was launched in January 2008. This project was inspired by research insights from Bushell's ground-breaking research into manuscript culture. Such work began with the monograph <i>Re-Reading The Excursion</i> (Ashgate, 2002) and developed through her work as co-editor on the final volume of the prestigious Cornell Series of Wordsworth, <i>The Excursion</i> (2007). The volume included a section (pp. 425-477) unique within the series, on 'Manuscript History' written by Bushell explaining the eight stages of compositional process for the poem. This kind of editorial work then fed directly into more active critical interpretation of such materials in the major monograph <i>Text as Process</i> (2009). This book analysed Wordsworth's manuscripts, developing a new research method for compositional materials involving full understanding of manuscript materiality and context. Such ideas were further developed in relation to place and space for Wordsworth in two later linked papers on 'Home at Grasmere' and 'Michael', published in <i>Studies in Romanticism</i> in 2009-10.</p> <p><i>From Goslar to Grasmere</i> sought to bring these research findings to a wider audience, creating the first-ever digital versions of Wordsworth's manuscripts and presenting them in the context of the key themes of place and vocation. As such, the website is both an extension and public dissemination of the research, covering a period of instability in Wordsworth's life (1799-1800) when he moved from a state of isolation to finding and settling into what was to be his poetic home in Dove Cottage, Grasmere. The project explores the relationship between physical and imagined space, location, vocation and composition. The website presents all manuscript versions and the</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

full text of *Home at Grasmere* and of *Prelude MS JJ*, poems written during this period, within a superstructure of interpretative information and activities. The primary objective of the website project was to explore imaginative ways of presenting manuscript materials to a wide audience, and to create accessible ways of understanding those materials. A secondary objective was to develop and strengthen links between Lancaster University and the Wordsworth Trust.

The research themes of place, vocation and composition were also the focus of the collaborative doctoral studentship, 'The Spatial, Literary and Cultural Making of Dove Cottage', undertaken by Polly Atkin from 2007-2011. The thesis was supervised by Professor Simon Bainbridge (English and Creative Writing, Lancaster), Professor John Urry (Sociology, Lancaster) and Jeff Cowton (Curator, Wordsworth Trust). Methodologically, it brought together responses to literary works and manuscripts in one field, and site-specific sociological and anthropological investigation in another. The findings of the PhD developed understanding of the ways in which places acquire cultural value and their importance for the nation, leading to enriched appreciation of cultural heritage in the larger community. The project also engaged with contemporary issues concerning the changing demographic and economic structure of the Lakes and the rising value of tourism to the region.

3. References to the research

Funding for both the *From Goslar to Grasmere* website and the Collaborative PhD Studentship was provided under the AHRC Landscape and Environment Programme in a competitive grant bidding system which was peer-reviewed as part of the process.

Outputs

1. The primary output of *From Goslar to Grasmere* was the website itself: <http://www.digitalwordsworth.org/> also located on the Wordsworth Trust website at: <http://collections.wordsworth.org.uk/GtoG>. Research quality indicated by AHRC funding as part of a competitive programme and acceptance into NINES (Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-century Electronic Scholarship) with a status NINES describes as 'representing a judgement that the project has been created to a high standard of excellence and will remain of definitive scholarly value to the field of nineteenth-century studies'.
2. Bushell, Sally, *Text as Process: Creative Composition in Wordsworth, Tennyson and Dickinson* (Charlottesville: Virginia University Press, 2009), 302 pp. Research quality indicated by status as a major peer-reviewed monograph with leading publisher in field and highly positive post-publications reviews in leading journals.
3. Bushell, Sally, 'The Making of Meaning in Wordsworth's *Home at Grasmere*: Speech Acts, Micro-Analysis and "Freudian Slips"', *Studies in Romanticism* 48.3 (Fall, 2009): 391-421. Research quality indicated by publication in the major (peer-reviewed, international) journal for Romantic studies.
4. Bushell, Sally. 'The Mapping of Meaning in Wordsworth's "Michael": Spatialised Speech Acts, Textual Place and Space', *Studies in Romanticism* 49.1 (Spring 2010): 43-78. Research quality indicated by publication in the major (peer-reviewed, international) journal for Romantic studies.
5. Atkin, Polly, 'The Spatial, Literary and Cultural Making of Dove Cottage, Grasmere', Collaborative Doctoral Studentship with the Wordsworth Trust: Passed at a viva in July 2011.
6. Atkin, Polly, 'Ghosting Grasmere: the Musealisation of Dove Cottage' in *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture*, ed. Nicola Watson (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 84-94.

4. Details of the impact

The increased engagement with Wordsworth's poetry and transformed understanding of his work for a range of audiences has been realised through 3 main channels:

1. **Website and linked outputs / activities:** The *From Goslar to Grasmere* website has received over 580,000 hits since going live in January 2008. Its primary objective was to make manuscript

Impact case study (REF3b)

materials more easily available to non-academic audiences, recognising the need for a supporting apparatus that would increase their accessibility. As an editorial in the *British Association for Romantic Studies Bulletin and Review* commented, 'Sally [Bushell] has been involved in groundbreaking work with this project, and the outreach into the community is very valuable' (No. 33, July 2008, p. 1). The website was specifically designed to achieve impact beyond academia and has three levels of intended audience - scholarly, educational, general - enabling users to choose their own route through the site. The site includes a 'Beginner's Guide to Working with Manuscripts' written for non-academics as well as materials created specifically for use in schools and mapped onto Key Stages (designed in collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust's Education Officer, Katherine Kay). A 30 minute DVD entitled 'Wordsworth's Sense of Place' was produced to encapsulate the key ideas of the website and heighten its impact. This DVD was sent out free to university and school teachers in the UK, America, Japan, China, Sweden, Germany, Saudi Arabia and New Zealand and was available on request from the Wordsworth Centre.

The website has produced a number of forms of impact for non-academic users. It has made valuable cultural treasures freely available to a wide range of users worldwide and has provided support to enrich the users' appreciation of them. It has demonstrated the significance of understanding Wordsworth's writing practices and materials and the value of place for his poetry. It has informed the Wordsworth Trust's decision to digitize their entire manuscript collection in a commercial venture with the publisher Adam Matthews. The research on place and poetry central to the project has shaped academic curricula and the public understanding of Wordsworth more generally. For example, the themes of identity, location and the materiality of manuscripts are central to the Open University's course 'Romantics and Victorians', launched in 2012, with Bainbridge and Bushell both contributing to the core film 'Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Dove Cottage' (also available on YouTube). This film has also had a strong public impact, having been featured on the iTunes homepage and becoming the most downloaded iTunesU programme for a period in December 2011. The research has also had a public impact through Bainbridge's discussions of Wordsworth and Landscape on the BBC Radio 4 Programmes 'Crossing the Bay' (25 Feb 2013; quoted on 'Pick of the Week' 3 Mar 2013) and 'Open Book: Literary Landscapes' (11 August 2013), a programme which receives over 1 million listeners. As a model of successful collaboration between a university and a museum, *From Goslar to Grasmere* was chosen as one of ten best practice case studies for the report 'Shared Interest: Developing Collaboration, Partnerships and Research Relations Between Higher Education, Museums, Galleries and Visual Arts Organisations in the North West' (jointly commissioned by North West Universities Association, Arts Council England North West and Renaissance NW). It was also chosen as an 'Impact Case Study' for the AHRC Landscape and Environment programme.

2. Contributions to the visitor experience at Dove Cottage museum site: The insights of *From Goslar to Grasmere* and 'The Spatial, Literary and Cultural Making of Dove Cottage, Grasmere' have had an impact upon the Dove Cottage museum site, enhancing and developing what is a major tourist and educational location visited by in excess of 50,000 people a year. The website project fed directly into the Trust's exhibition 'A Home Within A Home' (2008) while Atkin's work on the cultural history of Dove Cottage strongly informed the exhibition 'Romantic Poets; Romantic Places' (2009-2010). Atkin's research involved direct public engagement, surveying visitors about their experience. Having been designed and undertaken in collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust, it has fed into the Trust's reconsideration of both its site and the display of its collections. As the Trust's curator commented in a report for the AHRC of 2010: 'Through [Atkin's] work ... we are now gathering material that will inform the re-interpretation of the site ... over the next few years'. Both projects have contributed to physical transformations of the Dove Cottage museum site. For example, Bushell's work on manuscript materials was central to the special exhibition in the Jerwood Centre Rotunda, a project for which she was one of two academic consultants (the other being Stephen Gill). Completed in autumn 2012, the display in the rotunda, freely accessible to anyone, uses a circular timeline to lead viewers visually and textually through the manuscript stages of *The Prelude*, illustrating the concept that 'Great Poems Don't Just Happen'.

3. Wordsworth Walks: During the assessment period, the Wordsworth Centre has organised 40 Grasmere-based 'Wordsworth Walks' for over 950 participants. These walks were designed as a

Impact case study (REF3b)

means of enacting the research insights of the two research projects for diverse audiences, creating a Wordsworthian framework through which participants could reflect on a number of aspects of their own lives. They use mini-lectures, activities, and a series of on-site readings of the key research texts ('Home at Grasmere' and early versions of *The Prelude*) to enable participants to explore how Wordsworth's ideas about location, vocation, vision and identity remain relevant today.

A particular focus of one set of these walks is on the values of Wordsworth's ideas for organisations, including businesses, the public sector and volunteer groups. Originating in a collaboration with Lancaster University Management School, since 2008 these walks have been developed for a range of external users, including the following: Cumbria University's LEAD programme for Small and Medium Enterprises (3 walks for an average 15 delegates); Cumbria University's MBA in Leadership and Sustainability' (14 walks for an average of 35 participants); Cumbria County Council's 'Transition and Resilience' Programme for Senior Managers (5 seminar-based sessions on Wordsworthian vision for an average of 15 participants); Renmin (China) University Business School (3 walks for an average 30 participants); individual companies (for example, Sheffield-based company 'School Trends' travelled to the Lake District with all 150 employees for their annual 'Development Day' in 2008). In collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust, 12 walks have been provided for the general public and special interest groups (e.g. 'Dementia Adventure') and walks have also been staged at the request of specific organisations, such as the Kendal Fellfarers. Participants in the walks have come from all 6 inhabited continents.

In 2012, Bainbridge was awarded a Faculty Knowledge Exchange Fellowship (£9,000 over 18 months), facilitating the offering of 'Wordsworth Walks' to businesses and organisations on a free-standing basis and at a reduced rate (see the website <http://wordsworthwalks.com/>).

The significance of 'Wordsworth Walks' is evidenced by participants' positive feedback, ranging from letters of thanks from school children and senior citizens to comments in anonymous evaluations such as the following: 'The most profoundly impactful learning and development experience of my life', 'the catalyst for both inspiration and reflection', 'a very different and very high impact experience'. The significance of the use of Wordsworth's poetry in a business context is indicated by the widespread media coverage and blog discussions the walks have generated (e.g. *THE* [9.8.2012], *Huffington Post* [12.8.2012], *BBC News North West Tonight* [6.7.2012], *Border News* [9.7.2012]: see, for example, <http://www.itv.com/news/border/2012-07-09/wordsworth-inspires-blue-chip-companies/>).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

For impact of 'From Goslar to Grasmere':
Evaluation Manger, AHRC
Director, *AHRC Landscape and Environment Programme* Deputy Director, Museum

For impact on Dove Cottage Site:
Curator, Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere
Director, Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere

For impact on curricula: <http://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/literature-and-creative-writing/wordsworth-de-quincy-and-dove-cottage>

For impact of 'Wordsworth Walks':
Enterprise Manager, University of Cumbria
Anonymous Feedback Forms and letters of thanks for Wordsworth Walks available on request.
Media coverage: 'Well versed in business: Scholar offers entrepreneurs insights inspired by Wordsworth's poetry', *THE*, [9.8.2012]:
<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=420809&c=1>
Huffington Post [12.8. 2012: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-lundberg/poetry-the-bottom-line_b_1763626.html

ITV News <http://www.itv.com/news/border/2012-07-09/wordsworth-inspires-blue-chip-companies/>