

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

*I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed--and gazed--but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

## Notes

1] Wordsworth made use of the description in his sister's diary, as well as of his memory of the daffodils in Gowbarrow Park, by Ullswater. Cf. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, April 15, 1802: "I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones . . .; some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind, that blew upon them over the lake; they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing." For this reason, some readers will know this poem as "Daffodils," a title used, for instance, by Arthur Quiller-Couch in his edition, *The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250.-1900* (1919): no. 530.

21-2] Wordsworth said that these were the two best lines in the poem and that they were composed by his wife.

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