William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

**Composed Upon Westminster Bridge,**

**September 3, 1802\***

Earth has not anything to show more fair:

Dull would be of soul who could pass by

A sight so touching in its majesty:

This City now doth, like a garment wear

The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;

All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep

In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;

Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

This river glideth at his own sweet will:

Dear God! The very houses seem asleep;

And all that mighty heart is lying still!

1802 1807

\* The date of this experience was not September 3, but July, 1802. Its occasion was a trip to France (see Dorothy Wordsworth’s *Grasmere Journals,* July 1802, p. 395). The conflict of feelings attending Wordsworth’s brief return to France, where he had once been a revolutionlist and the lover of Annette Vallon, evoked a number of personal and political sonnets. (Editor’s footnote in *The* *Norton Anthology*, vol. 2. p. 296)