

## Yew Trees

There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the midst  
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore:  
Not loathe to furnish weapons for the Bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that crossed the sea  
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree! -a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note  
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;  
Huge trunks! -and each particular trunk a growth  
Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved, -  
Nor uninformed with Fantasy, and looks  
That threaten the profane; -a pillared shade,  
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,  
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged  
Perennially -beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked  
With unrejoicing berries -ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide: Fear and trembling Hope,  
Silence and Foresight, Death the Skeleton  
And Time the Shadow; there to celebrate,  
As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

William Wordsworth (1803)