

# Part one and the prelude



**EduFrogs**

Both William Wordsworth and Adrian Henri base their poems on childhood experiences, which were inspirational for their poems. Each has a nostalgic view of their childhood and idealise the past which were carefree and when they had no responsibilities. Liverpool was a formative influence for Adrian Henri's poem 'part one' which is an account of his early life.

Whereas William Wordsworth's inspiration for his poem came from where he grew up, The Lake District in Cumbria. He has become Britain's most famous poet of nature.

For each poet childhood experiences were a happy time; however there were also traumatic and more disturbing memories, especially for Henri, which they had suppressed. The settings of both Adrian Henri and William Wordsworth's poems are the exact antithesis of each other. Adrian Henri grew up in industrial city which is on the north-west coast of England. The reference to 'the ferryboat' and 'the seven bridges' indicates that Adrian Henri grew up in Liverpool, the river being the river Mersey.

The mention of 'the boats on the bright river' and 'the cranes from the dockyard' evokes the sense that Liverpool is a city where shipbuilding is a major source of employment. The description of the 'nasty smell from the tannery' emphasises the view that Liverpool is an industrial area which creates pollution and causes damage to the environment. The allusion to the 'big shops at Christmas' reminds us that Liverpool is a sizeable city and very busy at Christmas time. Although Liverpool reached its prime during the heady 1960's and indeed the city did suffer economically during the 1980's.

Liverpool is possibly most renowned as the home of the most successful pop band of all time-the Beatles, heralding the beginning of an era in which Liverpool was the capital of popular culture. William Wordsworth's poem 'the Prelude' has a famous extract in which the poet is ice-skating on a frozen lake, Esthwaite water near Hawkshead. The setting of Wordsworth's poem is a pastoral scene where there is mention of 'cottage windows' and 'the striking of the village clock' which gives the impression that he came from a rural background and he was brought up in the countryside.

The reference to 'precipices and crags' indicate that there are mountains nearby where he grew up. The extract from the poem is set in the winter season around January or February. There is reference to the 'frosty season' and there is characterisation of the 'leafless trees' and the 'fires blazing through the twilight gloom' the poet also mentions that it is nearly dark at 6 o'clock. Adrian Henri lived in an area where there were a wide range of back to back terraced houses.

He grew up very much in a traditional working class background, but a proud one which looked after their home, the step was 'cleaned twice a week' and a 'polished lobby' they were a devoutly religious family. We get the impression that Adrian Henri was an only child, who was cared for by his grandfather as his mum had to work. The poet seemed to have been closer to his grandfather rather than his mother. On returning home from shopping he would shout to his grandfather to show him what he had 'just been bought' he also recalls his grandfather's moustache tickling him whilst his grandfather was kissing.

To a young child the grandfather could have been intimidating with his 'load voice'. However, this was not the case because of the 'laughter in his country mans eyes' his bark was more harmful than his bite. He was fastidious over his appearance he wore 'gleaming black boots' he was a man of habit 'he never wore a collar but always a stud. ' He was a countryman at heart. He grew up in a rural and the agricultural environment. His experiences seem to reflect one of the key movements in the nineteenth century called rural depopulation.

Once arriving to Liverpool Adrian's grandfather would try re-create the countryside by building on allotment, he had a connexion with nature Adrian Henri compares his grandfather to a 'tall fir tree inn the park. ' Adrian Henri's uncle Bill was a burden and an embarrassment to the family in front of neighbours and other visitors. He smelt of 'bear and horses' from this we can conjecture he used to spend most of his time in the pub and betting offices. He was a veteran of the First World War, because of the war he became disabled he was incapacitated and unemployed.

Unfortunately William Wordsworth's parents had past away 'cares not for his home' he does not have to worry about going home on time. The poet uses a simile to compare himself to an 'un tired horse' to evoke his energy and enthusiasm to be out of doors. In the line 'we hissed along the polished ice in games' the poet uses onomatopoeia to suggest the sounds the skates would make while moving over the ice. In the middle of the poem Wordsworth deliberately chooses to convey an impression of great sound or movement 'rhythm', 'tumult', not a voice was idle'.

It is manifestly clear that Wordsworth preferred spending time alone rather than being around people. We get the impression Adrian Henri had a reasonable happy childhood he has fond memories of relatives and images of home characterized by bright colours. However when Henri returns to his hometown it was a disillusioning experience. He had hoped to find familiar landmarks but everything had changed. 'The allotment at the foot of the hill had gone now', 'great gaunt terraces scarred with graffiti.' By revisiting Liverpool it had brought back unhappy memories which had been forgotten.

Wordsworth preferred to be on his own and isolated from other people. At the time of the boat incident it was early evening Wordsworth was independent he was in an adventures spirit. Stealing the boat indicates his willingness to do forbidden things. It was an act of stealth and 'troubled pleasure' at first he enjoyed the experience and deliberately rowed for the 'horizons utmost boundary'- to escape from where he started willingness to be alone 'proud of skill' the simile 'the boat moved through the lake like a graceful swan'. There is a change of mood and atmosphere when the huge mountain comes into view.

Wordsworth had a childish imagination that the mountains were alive and like a giant striding after him. Wordsworth uses personification to suggest the mountain is not an inanimate object but has come alive. Wordsworth had the impression that the mountain was in pursuit of him. Wordsworth hastily returned the boat which indicates how frightened he was at the time. After this incident Wordsworth's mood changed significantly. 'part one' by Adrian Henri was not actually thought out, the poem is written in an unstructured

way with no logical sequence, there is no punctuation, virtually no capital letters apart from the names.

It is written in a stream of consciousness with a series of disconnected thoughts, whereas Wordsworth's poem. 'The prelude' is a long autobiographical poem. It is written on a specific childhood experience. Both poems are about childhood memories but clearly there are differences, the settings of both poems, the way the poems are written and the mood and atmosphere of both poems differ. The way that Liverpool had all changed, the place Henri grew changed entirely, everything he had remembered had changed or gone.

Houses had been knocked down 'ugly flats' the people who had lived there had also gone. Henri's Liverpool had dramatically changed into an environment he did not remember. The Lake District is a renowned area of England for its natural scenery beauty, thousands of people visit from England and all over the world. Wordsworth was the one who 'made it popular. ' In my opinion I prefer 'part one' by Adrian Henri because it does not focus on a specific memory. It is easier to understand as it is not as long as 'the prelude' which is on specific memories.