

**WINTERSLOW: ESSAYS
AND CHARACTERS
WRITTEN THERE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649206520

Winterslow: essays and characters written there by William Hazlitt

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WILLIAM HAZLITT

**WINTERSLOW: ESSAYS
AND CHARACTERS
WRITTEN THERE**

The World's Classics

XXV

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WILLIAM HAZLITT—III

WINTERSLOW
ESSAYS AND CHARACTERS
WRITTEN THERE

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WINTERSLOW
ESSAYS AND CHARACTERS
WRITTEN THERE
BY
WILLIAM HAZLITT



LONDON
GRANT RICHARDS
48 LEICESTER SQUARE
1902

*These Essays were first published collectively
in the year 1830. In 'The World's Classics'
they were first published in 1902.*

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1850

WINTERSLOW is a village of Wiltshire, between Salisbury and Andover, where my father, during a considerable portion of his life, spent several months of each year, latterly, at an ancient inn on the Great Western Road, called Winterslow Hut. One of his chief attractions hither were the noble woods of Tytherleigh or Tudorleigh, round Norman Court, the seat of Mr. Baring Wall, M.P., whose proffered kindness to my father, on a critical occasion, was thoroughly appreciated by the very sensitiveness which declined its acceptance, and will always be gratefully remembered by myself. Another feature was Clarendon Wood—whence the noble family of Clarendon derived their title—famous besides for the Constitutions signed in the palace which once rose proudly amongst its stately trees, but of which scarce a vestige remains. In another direction, within easy distance, gloams Stonehenge, visited by my father, less perhaps for its historical associations than for its appeal to the imagination, the upright stones seeming in the dim twilight, or in the drizzling mist, almost continuous in the locality, so many spectre-Druids, moaning over the past, and over their brethren prostrate about them. At no great distance, in another direction, are the fine pictures of Lord Radnor, and somewhat further, those of Wilton House. But the chief happiness was the thorough quiet of the place, the sole interruption of which was the passage, to and fro, of the London mails. The Hut stands in a valley, equidistant about a mile from two tolerably high hills, at the summit of which, on their approach either way, the guards used to blow forth their ad-

monition to the hostler. The sound, coming through the clear, pure air, was another agreeable feature in the day, reminiscentiary of the great city that my father so loved and so loathed. In olden times, when we lived in the village itself—a mile up the hill opposite—behind the Hut, Salisbury Plain stretches away mile after mile of open space—the reminiscence of the metropolis would be, from time to time, furnished in the pleasantest of ways by the presence of some London friends; among these, dearly loved and honoured there, as everywhere else, Charles and Mary Lamb paid us frequent visits, rambling about all the time, thorough Londoners in a thoroughly country place, delighted and wondering and wondered at. For such reasons, and for the other reason, which I mention incidentally, that Winterslow is my own native place, I have given its name to this collection of 'Essays and Characters written there'; as, indeed, practically were very many of his works, for it was there that most of his thinking was done.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

CHELSEA, *Jan.* 1850.

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