

After leaving Cambridge Coleridge settled in lodgings at Bristol, where he gained a scanty livelihood by writing verses for a printer of that place named Cottle. On the strength of his meagre earnings he ventured to marry a Miss Sarah Fricker on October 4th, 1795.

The young couple settled at Clevedon, in Somersetshire. Here Coleridge wrote some of his well-known poems, and established a weekly journal called *The Watchman*, which did not survive its early numbers. The laudanum habit, which proved so fatal to his happiness and so injurious to his intellectual powers, was apparently contracted about this time.

On the last day of 1796 the Coleridge family moved to Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire. Here, in close neighbourhood to the poet Wordsworth, they lived for nearly two years, and here the two poets formulated those poetic theories which were destined to exert so fruitful an influence on English literature. Coleridge wrote his drama *Osorio* (later called *Remorse*) in 1797, and by March, 1798, his *Ancient Mariner* was completed. To this creative period we likewise owe the commencement of a remarkable poem, *Christabel*, which was added to at a later date, but was never completed. Coleridge also contributed a number of political articles to the *Morning Post*, and frequently preached in neighbouring Unitarian pulpits. His material hardships were lessened by the receipt of an annuity of £150 (subsequently reduced) from Thomas and Josiah Wedgwood.

From September, 1798, to June, 1799, Coleridge resided in Germany, familiarizing himself with German metaphysical thought. Late in 1799 he returned to England, and at first devoted himself to journalism in London. In July of 1800 he settled down at Greta Hall, Keswick, in the Lake Country, where Wordsworth was now residing. In 1804 he sailed to Malta in