

# Bristol and Romanticism

Walking Guide by Amy O'Beirne



**Bristol Festival  
of Ideas /**

In association with

**TheObserver**

 University of  
**BRISTOL**

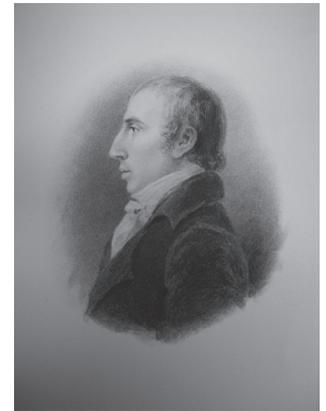
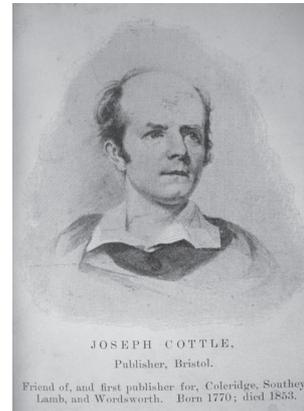
**BRISTOL**  
2015 EUROPEAN  
GREEN CAPITAL

Bristol was central to the Romantic Movement. The poets William Wordsworth, Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge spent time in the city; the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* was produced here by Joseph Cottle, a local publisher; and it was here that Coleridge fostered critical debate with his celebrated series of lectures and the publication of his newspaper, *The Watchman*. Romanticism marked a time of revolution, medical and scientific progress, the beginning of democratic politics and the wide discussion of ideas.

This guide provides directions for two enjoyable tours, one from the top of Park Street to St Mary Redcliffe, the other around Clifton and Hotwells. Both tours enable you to walk in the footsteps of key figures of Romanticism, to learn where they lived, worked, visited, lectured and wrote poetry, and to find out more about the ideas they argued and debated. There are plenty of visitor attractions and opportunities for refreshments along the way.

The tours are linked to the award-winning Bristol Legible City (BLC) way-finding information system, which includes walking maps and on-street signage designed to improve people's understanding and experience of the city. The BLC walking maps are free of charge and are widely available across the city. They can be found at the Tourist Information Centre, visitor attractions, libraries, hotel receptions, travel arrival points and many other sites.

Enjoy your exploration of Bristol's literary heritage!



Portrait of Joseph Cottle reproduced in *Early Reflections*, 1837 (BRL B258). Portraits of William Wordsworth (top right), Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey (bottom row) from drawings by Hancock in the collection of Joseph Cottle (1796-1798) (SCUBL Fry Portrait Collection; BRL 343; BRL 362).

# Introduction/

Robin Jarvis, Professor of English Literature at the University of the West of England

Bristol was an exciting place to be in the Romantic period (roughly speaking, 1780-1830). Described by one contemporary guidebook as addicted to 'Trade and Manufactures', the city also had a vigorous cultural and intellectual life. It had strong traditions of political and religious Dissent (around twenty per cent of the population was Nonconformist), which meant that there was always a ready audience for unconventional views. It had newspapers and publishing houses, coffee-houses and meeting rooms, theatres, lending libraries, and a Philosophical and Literary Society to provide a fertile ground for debate. Above all, it was fortunate in either producing or attracting a series of uniquely talented writers and thinkers – leading one local figure, invoking the prestige of classical Rome, to refer to the 1790s as the 'Augustan Age of Bristol'.

His short life coming tragically to an end before the Romantic era proper, Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), whose forged medieval poems intrigued and scandalised the literary world, became an icon of neglected genius. In the 1790s, Robert Southey (1774-1843) published poems and plays reflecting his radical political views and support for the French Revolution, but ended his life as a pillar of the establishment and author of children's stories such as 'The Three Bears'. In 1795, he shared lodgings with Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), with the two young men earning money and notoriety through public lectures while planning to emigrate to America and set up a commune. In the same year Coleridge, best known for 'The Ancient Mariner', met William Wordsworth (1770-1850) for the first time. They would later collaborate on *Lyrical Ballads*, a volume of poems commissioned by a Bristol publisher, Joseph Cottle, and now considered a landmark of English Romanticism. Among Coleridge's other acquaintances in the city

was the brilliant young scientist, Humphry Davy (1778-1829), who launched his career at the Pneumatic Institution in Hotwells led by the pioneering doctor Thomas Beddoes (1760-1808).

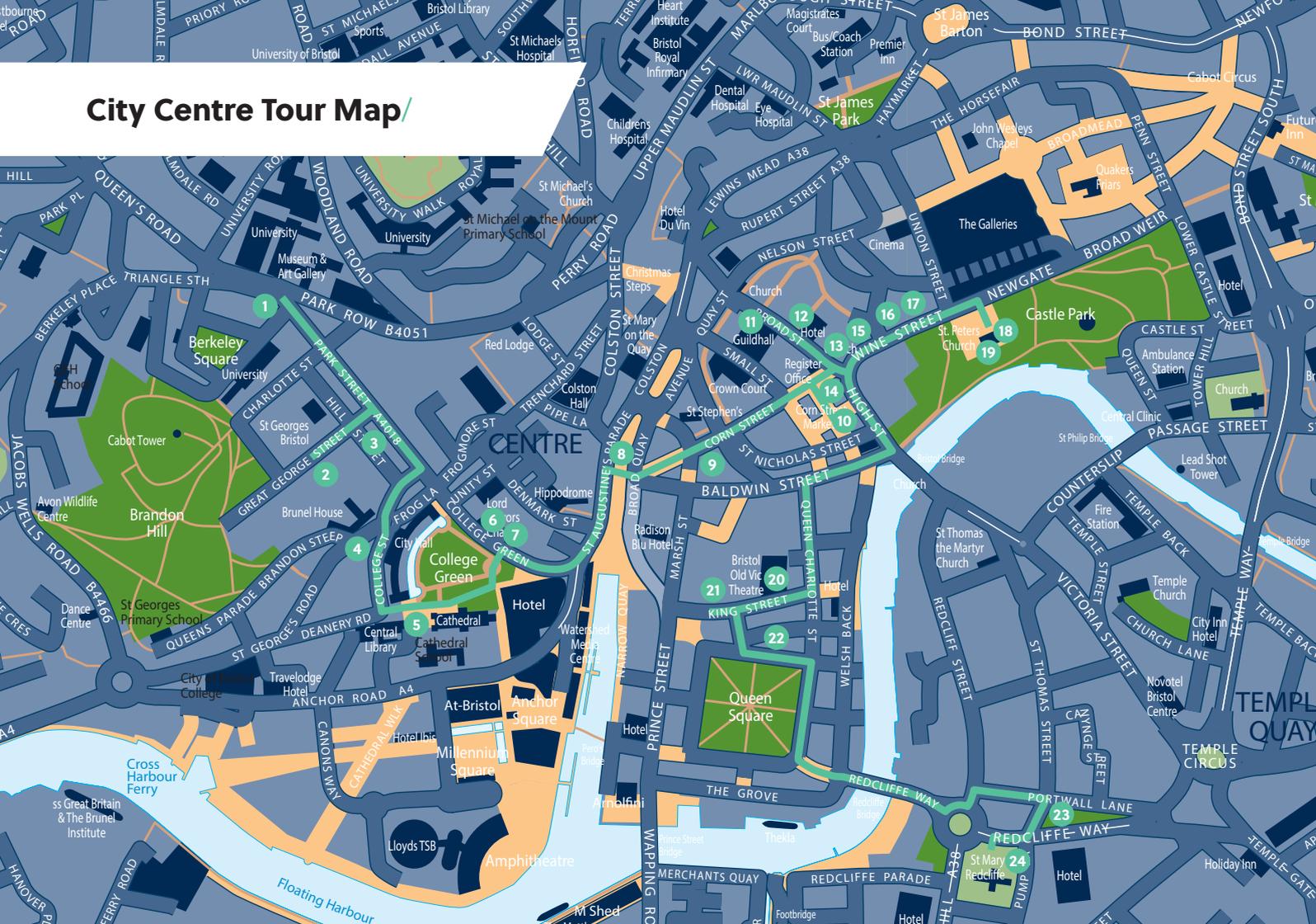
Bristol also had its celebrated women writers. Hannah More (1745-1833), author of plays, poems, essays and counter-revolutionary propaganda, has been described as the most influential woman living in England in the period. She helped bring to public notice a gifted working-class poet, Ann Yearsley (the 'Bristol Milkwoman'), who later terminated the relationship when More's patronage became too intrusive.

The walking tours will take you past numerous sites associated with these and other writers who ensured that Bristol made an indelible mark on the Romantic age.



Hannah More presenting Ann Yearsley to Mrs Montague (SCUBL Restricted HAE).

# City Centre Tour Map



# City Centre Tour/

This walk is mainly level with slight declines down Park Street and St George's Road. Allow around an hour to complete the route, and longer if you wish to include time for visiting attractions or stopping for refreshments along the way.

*Begin your tour at the top of Park Street.*

## 1 Park Street

In 1798, William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy took a trip to Bristol to see *Lyrical Ballads* through the press. They stayed with Joseph Cottle, publisher, in Wine Street. During their time in Bristol they visited Tintern, and on 13 July, as they walked down Park Street on their way to Cottle's house, Wordsworth composed the last passage of 'Tintern Abbey', a poem which encapsulates his philosophy of nature.



Interior view of West window, Tintern Abbey, S C Jones (BRL 143). The abbey is set in the Wye valley, which by the late 1700s had become a popular destination for tourists travelling in search of the picturesque.

Wordsworth later wrote:

I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it was written down till I reached Bristol.

'Tintern Abbey' was the last poem to be written in the original *Lyrical Ballads*. It was probably at Cottle's home that it reached the page.

*Proceed down Park Street. Turn right on to Great George Street. On the left of the street is:*

## 2 7 Great George Street (The Georgian House Museum)

John Pretor Pinney, a wealthy sugar merchant and slave-owner, first occupied the newly-completed house in 1791. Wordsworth and Dorothy stayed in the house between 21 August and 26 September 1795. It was during this time that Wordsworth was introduced to Cottle, Robert Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and it is likely that some early meetings between Coleridge and Wordsworth took place at Pinney's house, though probably not the first. 'Coleridge was at Bristol part of the time I was there,' Wordsworth wrote in October 1795. 'I saw but little of him. I wished indeed to have seen more – his talent appears to me very great.'

**Pinney's house has been restored and is open to visitors. Entry to the museum is free, and eleven rooms spread over four floors show what life was like in the eighteenth century. Visit the museum's website for further information.**

*Return to Park Street and continue down the hill. The second shop on your right is:*

### 3 43 Park Street

Hannah More and her sisters established a school for young women at 43 Park Street. More was a leading campaigner for better education for the poor, and participated in campaigns against the slave trade. The school concentrated on 'French, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Needlework', and each sister took responsibility for a particular part of the curriculum. It is likely that Sarah, Edith and Mary Fricker, the women who married, respectively, Coleridge, Southey and Robert Lovell, went to the school run by the Mores. Cottle's sisters were also educated at the school.



St Mark's, the Mayor's Chapel, with a view up Park Street, c 1826, Thomas L Rowbotham (BMGA M2592). The images from the collection of George Weare Braikenridge used in this walking guide are from the early nineteenth century and offer a useful indication of how Bristol looked at the time of the Romantics.

*Continue walking down Park Street. Turn right into St George's Road and continue straight on to College Street.*

### 4 College Street

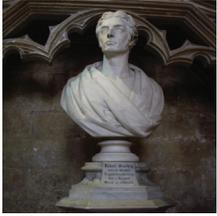
In 1795, 25 College Street was the home of Coleridge, Southey and George Burnett, the three originators of Pantisocracy. Coleridge and Southey met in Oxford and this scheme, to emigrate to America and found a utopian commune-like society in the wilderness, developed during their long discussions. The name for the proposed community came from the Greek *pan-socratia*, meaning an all-governing society.

The community was to consist of twelve men and twelve women who would support themselves by farming the land. Coleridge and Southey thought that no more than three hours of labour would be required each day, and so planned for the remaining time to be devoted to study, liberal discussions and educating their children. Members of the community were to be allowed their own opinions in matters of politics and religion, but land would be held in common, belonging to everyone.

*Continue walking along College Street. Turn left at the end of the street and walk past the library and the statue of Raja Rammohun Roy, the Indian philosopher who died during a visit to the city in 1833. In front of you is:*

### 5 Bristol Cathedral

In the 1840s, Cottle decided that Bristol should inaugurate a project to honour Southey. He wanted a monument, but the money raised fell short, and the committee that took over the management of the campaign downgraded the project to a bust. This was created by E H Bailly in 1845 and is installed in the north choir aisle of the Cathedral.



Left: Memorial bust of Robert Southey in Bristol Cathedral (BCDP: Melanie Kelly).

Below: The Cathedral and College Green from Great George Street, 1827, Thomas L Rowbotham (BMGA M2538).

**Bristol Cathedral is open daily, and visitors are welcome to go inside and look around. Admission is free. Visit the Cathedral's website for further information.**



*Opposite the Cathedral is College Green. This street was home to Elizabeth Tyler and Robert Lovell.*

## 6 Elizabeth Tyler's House, College Green

One of the houses on College Green was home to Elizabeth Tyler, Southey's aunt and Edith Fricker's employer. Southey spent a large part of his childhood here, and often stayed with his aunt when he was not at Oxford, so he frequently saw Edith. Southey proposed to Edith in 1794, and the two intended to emigrate to America along with the other members of the Pantisocracy scheme.

However, on 17 October 1794, all thoughts about moving to America were thrown into doubt when Southey's aunt found out about the plan to emigrate, as well as his secret engagement to Edith, whom she referred to as 'a mere seamstress'. She threw Southey out of her house without his coat, though it was cold and raining heavily, and told him that she wished to have nothing more to do with him or his family.

## 7 Robert Lovell's House, College Green

When Coleridge arrived in Bristol in August 1794, he found Southey at the house of Robert Lovell, the Bristol poet whose own rich Quaker family had disowned him for marrying Edith's sister, Mary Fricker, earlier that year. When Coleridge arrived at their house, he found himself in the midst of a lively family party; Southey, Lovell and Mary and Sarah Fricker were all there.

*Continue along College Green and follow it around the corner to Anchor Road/St Augustine's Parade. Use the crossing by the Hippodrome to cross over to the Centre Promenade. On your left, towards the group of trees, you will find:*

## 8 Statue Of Edmund Burke

Edmund Burke, the Irish philosopher and politician, represented the city of Bristol in Parliament between 1774 and 1780. In his Speech to the Electors of Bristol on 3 November 1794, Burke said:

Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation with one interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament.

Burke is widely remembered for his opposition to the French Revolution. Wordsworth read Burke's 1790 book *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in spring 1791, and attacked Burke in *Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff* (1793).



*Walk back towards the fountains, and cross the first pedestrian crossing on your left. Turn left, crossing Baldwin Street. Continue straight on along Clare Street until you reach Corn Street.*

Right: The (Old) Council House, Corn Street, 1822, James Johnson (BMGA M2337). The Bush Inn is towards the end of the row.

Opposite: Portrait of Edmund Burke from a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1775 (SCUBL Restricted HGc).



## 9 Bush Inn, Corn Street

The Bush Inn was demolished and a bank was built on the site in the nineteenth century.

On about 5 August 1794, Coleridge, who had been on a walking tour to Wales, arrived at the inn and immediately sought out Southey. Southey had arrived in Bristol shortly before him, and was busy recruiting friends to their Pantisocracy scheme. One of the people who joined was Lovell. It was at Lovell's house on College Green that Coleridge eventually found Southey.

Continue along Corn Street, and walk past the Exchange. The bronze 'nails' outside the building refer to the tables on which merchants once conducted their business. Note that the clock on the Exchange has two minute hands, one of which shows the old Bristol time, used before the coming of the railways led to the application of standardised time across the country. Turn right into All Saints Lane.

### 10 The Rummer Tavern, All Saints Lane

The Rummer Tavern building is now occupied by the Rummer Hotel. Please note that All Saints Lane is quite narrow, which may make it awkward for wheelchair users and pushchairs.

In late 1795 or early 1796, a group of friends met with Coleridge in the Rummer Tavern to persuade him to start a new radical periodical. Entitled *The Watchman*, it would contain news, parliamentary reports, original essays, poetry and reviews, and Coleridge would be its editor, publisher and chief contributor. Its motto was 'That All may know the Truth; and that the Truth may make us free.'

Having attracted 250 subscribers in Bristol alone, the first issue of *The Watchman* went out on 1 March 1796, and Coleridge and Cottle spent four hours arranging, counting, packing and invoicing the copies for the 150-or-so London and provincial customers. The journal was issued every eighth day (to avoid tax), and survived until 13 May, when the tenth and final issue appeared.

Return to Corn Street and continue walking along the road. Turn left into Broad Street.

On the left of Broad Street is:

### 11 Bristol Guildhall

Crop failure in 1794 and the effects of the war with France resulted in national scarcity, which, by the end of 1795, led to popular protests. In London, George III's coach was attacked by stone-throwing crowds crying 'Bread! Peace! No Pitt!'

A meeting, called at Bristol Guildhall on 17 November 1795 to congratulate the king on his escape from the attack, attracted also a large number of people who were against the war. One voice repeatedly called out 'Mr Mayor! Mr Mayor!' in an attempt to be heard. That voice was Coleridge's, arguing that although the war had been costly to the rich, they still had a great deal; 'but a PENNY taken from the pocket of a poor man might deprive him of a dinner'. *The Star*, a London newspaper, published an account of the Bristol Guildhall meeting and reported Coleridge's speech as 'the most elegant, the most pathetic, and the most sublime Address that was ever heard, perhaps, within the walls of the building.'

Broad Street, 1824, Edward Cashin (BMGA M2335). The door to the Guildhall is in the right foreground. The White Lion Inn is just in front of the church.



## Also on Broad Street was:

### 12 White Lion Inn

This building no longer exists; the site is now occupied by the Grand Hotel.

Between 28 October and 24 November 1813, Coleridge gave a series of twice-weekly lectures on Shakespeare in the Great Room of the White Lion Inn. The first lecture had to be cancelled when, in the coach at Bath, Coleridge changed his mind and decided to escort a lady to North Wales instead. He turned up a couple of days later, agreed on another time, and was then 'only' an hour late for his audience. Cottle wrote that 'the lectures gave great satisfaction'.

## Turn and walk back towards Corn Street. On the corner between Broad Street and Corn Street is:

### 13 Christ Church

Southey was baptised in Christ Church, Broad Street. He later wrote, 'I was christened in that old church, & at this moment vividly remember our pew under the organ'. Southey also wrote that when he was young he enjoyed the Quarter Jacks: 'I have many a time stopt for a few minutes with my satchel on my back to see them strike. My father had a great love for these poor Quarter Boys who had regulated all his motions for about 20 years'.

The church Southey knew as a child was demolished in 1786, but the Quarter Jacks are still on the new building (though currently in storage and awaiting repair), and the organ, reworked, has also been reinstalled.

The bottom of High Street, 1826, Thomas L Rowbotham (BMGA M2245).



## Opposite Christ Church, on the corner of Corn Street, you can see:

### 14 49 High Street

In the days that followed Coleridge's arrival in Bristol in August 1794, Lovell and Southey introduced him to a city strong in political radicalism. Coleridge met Cottle, whose shop stood at the corner of Corn Street and High Street. Cottle considered Pantisocracy an 'epidemic delusion', but acted as a patron for the poets, and offered Coleridge a guinea and a half for every 100 lines of poetry he produced. In April 1795, he published *Poems on Various Subjects*, Coleridge's first major collection. Cottle also commissioned and printed *Lyrical Ballads*, although he disliked the idea of a joint volume and the plan of anonymous publication.

A red plaque on the building reads:

On this corner site from 1791-1798 Joseph Cottle (1770-1853) bookseller, publisher and poet. The first effective publisher of the poems of Coleridge, Southey, Lamb and Wordsworth (some of whose works were written here).

## Cross over to Wine Street.

### 15 9 Wine Street

The house that is of interest here no longer exists as this area was heavily bombed during the Second World War, but there is a plaque on the Prudential Buildings, 11-19 Wine Street, between the second and third trees on the left, that refers to it.



The pump on Wine Street by Charles Bird from *Picturesque Old Bristol*, 1886 (BRL BL10F). Southey's house is the third on the right, with the gable roof, next to the tenement.

In August 1774, Robert Southey was born above his father's shop in Wine Street, a linen draper's signalled by a sign of a golden key. Southey called his place of birth 'Wine Street below-the-Pump', referencing the pump which divided the street. In a letter in March 1804, he wrote:

when I first went to school I never thought of Wine Street & of that Pump without tears, & such a sorrow at heart – as by heaven no child of mine shall ever suffer while I am living to prevent it! & so deeply are the feelings connected with that place rooted in me, that perhaps in the hour of death they will be the last that survive.

### 16 5 Wine Street

This building was also lost as the result of bombing in the Second World War.

Cottle moved into a house on Wine Street on 7 March 1798, and moved his shop to 5 Wine Street later that month. The shop on Wine Street was larger than his previous one, but was in a less prominent position; thirty-five years later Wordsworth recalled that the move had been disastrous.

### 17 The Corn Market, Wine Street

By late February 1795, Coleridge had organised a series of public lectures at the Corn Market in Wine Street. The building no longer exists. Entrance to the lectures was charged at one shilling per head, and the money collected was intended to help fund Coleridge and Southey's emigration to America.

The lectures attacked Pitt's government and condemned the war against France. Coleridge dealt well with hecklers. On one occasion, some men who disliked what they heard began to hiss.

Coleridge responded instantly: 'I am not at all surprised, when the red hot prejudices of aristocrats are suddenly plunged into the cool water of reason, that they should go off with a hiss!' After the second lecture it was felt necessary to move the third to a private address – a house on Castle Green.

## Cross Wine Street and enter Castle Park.

### 18 House On Castle Green (Castle Park)

Coleridge gave the third lecture of his 1795 series at a house on Castle Green, which no longer exists. Further lectures by both Southey and Coleridge were to follow; Coleridge delivered one notable speech attacking the slave trade, and at the end of June he was to begin a series of six lectures at the Assembly Coffee House on the Quay, comparing the English Civil War and the French Revolution. A prospectus for these lectures has survived, but it is not known for certain whether he actually delivered them.



The backs of St Peter's Hospital from the Floating Harbour and of Castle Green, 1820, Hugh O'Neill (BMGA M2702 and M2741).

*Also in Castle Park, behind the remains of St Peter's church, is the site of:*

### 19 St Peter's Hospital

Until it was destroyed in the Second World War, St Peter's Hospital could be found to the rear of St Peter's Church.

Sometime in 1798, Wordsworth wrote 'The Mad Mother'. It is possible that the subject of this poem is Louisa, the Maid of the Haystack, who lived for a time at St Peter's Hospital.

In 1776, a young, well-mannered girl entered a house at Flax Bourton asking for milk. After leaving, she wandered through the nearby fields and slept under a haystack for four nights. Local women fed her and offered her a bed in their houses, but she refused them. The women then clubbed together to purchase the haystack for her. The girl was eventually taken to St Peter's Hospital, but she returned to the haystack, where she lived for four more years. The locals continued to feed her and gave her the names Louisa and 'The Maid of the Haystack'. Hannah More took her up in 1781, and had her taken to the Henderson Asylum at Hanham; she continued to pay for her keep there until Louisa's death in 1800.

**Before you leave, be sure to read the information boards to learn about the history of this park of national distinction.**

*Return to Wine Street and walk back towards Corn Street. Turn left, following Wine Street on to High Street. Continue down High Street, turn right on to Baldwin Street, then left on to Queen Charlotte Street, then right on to King Street. Stop outside the Theatre Royal (Bristol Old Vic).*



King Street, 1825, Thomas L Rowbotham (BMGA M2509).

## 20 Coopers' Hall, King Street

Coopers' Hall was incorporated into the Theatre Royal (Bristol Old Vic) as the theatre's foyer during the 1970s.

By 1784, the craze for balloon flights had reached England, and ascents, with or without people on board, were taking place in almost every large city, including Bristol. High balloon ascents prompted advances in meteorology, and drew people's attention to the formation and beauty of clouds. Poets and writers, including Coleridge and Wordsworth, saw ballooning as a symbol of hope and liberation. In January 1784, Michael Biaggini exhibited an air balloon at the Coopers' Hall in King Street for three days. He charged a 2s 6d entrance fee, and the balloon, around 30ft/9.14m in circumference, attracted much public interest. For an extra 2s 6d, Biaggini allowed those who were interested 'to see the method and process of filling the balloon with inflammable air'.

**Bristol Old Vic offers theatre tours. For further information about these, and for information about the theatre's shows, visit the Bristol Old Vic website.**

*Continue down King Street. On the right hand side of the street you will see:*

## 21 Bristol Library, King Street

The library building still stands but it is now occupied by a restaurant (Cathay Rendezvous).

The Bristol Library Society, founded in 1773, charged an entrance fee and an annual subscription of one guinea per member until 1798, when the fee increased to four guineas. In 1798, the library had around 200 members and held 5,000 books, as well as providing custody of 2,000 books belonging to the city. You were not allowed to become a member if you owned a lodging-house, inn, tavern, coffee-house, place of public entertainment or circulating library. The library was made free to the public from 1856. Coleridge, Southey, Lovell and Cottle all valued the library and used it frequently. Southey was library member number 278 and Coleridge number 295.

*Walk a short distance back down King Street, and turn right on to King William Avenue. This will lead you to the north side of Queen Square. When you enter Queen Square, turn left and you will see:*

## 22 2 Queen Square

This was the home of Josiah Wade, a radical Bristol tradesman who became a principal supporter of *The Watchman*, Coleridge's political journal. Coleridge stayed with Wade from late October to late November in 1813 while he was presenting a series of lectures on Shakespeare and Milton. Coleridge intended to begin a further series on 7 December, but on 2 December a physical and mental crisis, induced by opium and alcohol, overcame him.

Before leaving Queen Square, read its fascinating history on the information board.

*Walk clockwise around Queen Square and leave via Bell Avenue (the pathway between 24 and 26 Queen Square). Follow the pathway to the mini-roundabout. Continue straight on and cross Redcliffe Bridge. Continue straight on, cross the zebra crossing and walk along Portwall Lane. At the other end of the car park is a small house. This is:*

### 23 The Chatterton House

The Chatterton house was constructed in 1749 as the Master's house for the adjoining Pile Street School, founded around 1739. The poet Thomas Chatterton, whose father was Master of the school, was born in the house in 1752 and subsequently educated at the school. Since the 1930s, when the surrounding buildings were demolished, the façade of the school has been attached to the house, and the building has more recently been renovated.

*Turn around and walk back along the main road towards the roundabout. Cross over the zebra crossing just before the roundabout. You are now standing in front of:*

### 24 St Mary Redcliffe

It was on 4 October 1795 that Reverend Benjamin Spry married Coleridge and Sarah Fricker in a quiet ceremony at St Mary Redcliffe. Their marriage was witnessed by Mrs Fricker and Josiah Wade. On 14 November 1795, Southey married Edith Fricker, Cottle and his sister, Sarah, acting as their witnesses. Cottle also paid for the ring and marriage licence. The marriages of Coleridge to Sarah and Southey to Edith were intended as a prelude to emigration. Southey's friend George Burnett also intended to join the Pantisocracy scheme, and proposed to Martha Fricker, one of the younger Fricker siblings. Martha turned him down.

St Mary Redcliffe was where Chatterton claimed to have discovered poems written by a fifteenth century monk named Thomas Rowley. The poems were hailed as a magnificent find and experts were unstinting in their praise. However, the Rowley poems were found to have been the work of Chatterton himself. Both Coleridge and Wordsworth wrote about Chatterton, Wordsworth in *Resolution and Independence* and Coleridge in *Monody on the Death of Chatterton*.



Portrait of Thomas Chatterton (BRL 327).

**St Mary Redcliffe is open daily and welcomes visitors. There is an exhibition about Chatterton in the Chatterton room. Visit the church's website for further information.**



## Clifton and Hotwells Tour/

If you return to the city centre after completing the first tour, you can catch the number 8 bus from the Centre Promenade to Christ Church, Clifton. The Clifton Suspension Bridge, the suggested starting point for the second tour, is a short walk from Christ Church.

**This walk will take you to sites associated with Hannah More and Ann Yearsley, celebrated women writers of the period, and Thomas Beddoes and Humphry Davy, pioneering scientists. Please note that this walk includes some steep sections and steps, which will make it difficult for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Allow around an hour to complete the route, and longer if you wish to include time for visiting attractions or stopping for refreshments along the way.**



Front View of Bristol Hotwells and St Vincent's Rocks, 1793 (BRL 393).

*Begin your tour on the Leigh Woods side of the Clifton Suspension Bridge. If you stand on the right hand side of the bridge as you face Bristol, you will be able to see a row of buildings on the Portway road. The first, the curved red brick building with white pillars, is:*

### 1 The Colonnade

The Colonnade was built in 1786 as an addition to the Hotwell Pump Room, and Ann Yearsley opened a lending library there in 1793. Yearsley was one of only a few working-class women of the time to gain recognition as a writer, and her success was thanks in part to the patronage of Hannah More. Yearsley was also one of many prominent Bristol women who campaigned against the slave trade.



View down the Avon with Hotwells and Clifton, c 1825, Samuel Jackson (BMGA K2742). The spa was in decline by the 1790s.

## 2 Avon Gorge

The Avon Gorge was firmly established as a tourist attraction in the Romantic Period, as it provided the 'picturesque' and 'sublime' natural scenery that was so fashionable at the time. In his elegy on Chatterton, Coleridge imagined his subject roaming the wooded sides of 'Avon's rocky steep' where 'the screaming sea-gulls soar'. The dramatic alterations to the landscape of the Gorge created by limestone quarrying offended many visitors. Southey complained that the people of Bristol were 'selling the sublime and beautiful by the boat-load'.

**The Clifton Suspension Bridge Visitor Information Centre is situated at the Leigh Woods end of the bridge. Entry is free and the Centre is open daily. Visit their website for further details.**

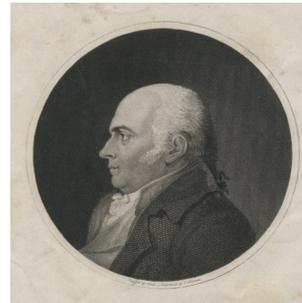


Sketching party in Leigh Woods, c 1830, Samuel Jackson (BMGA K2761). Set on the plateau above the Avon Gorge, this diverse woodland is managed by the National Trust. It was a favourite destination for Bristol artists of the early nineteenth century, and provides spectacular views of Clifton.

*From the bridge, walk towards Clifton. Continue straight on, following the road as it turns into Gloucester Row and Beaufort Buildings, until you reach the mini-roundabout. At the mini-roundabout, turn right on to Clifton Down Road. On your right you will see Portland Street, and just off the junction of Portland Street and Clifton Down Road you will see Rodney Place.*

## 3 Rodney Place

Dr Thomas Beddoes was a leading figure in the scientific life of Bristol and at the time owned probably the most up-to-date scientific library in the west of England. The Bristol Pneumatic Medical Institute (6-7 Dowry Square) was his idea of a centre for free public medicine and research into diets, drugs and inhalable gases. In 1798, he invited Humphry Davy to take up the post of Superintendent at the Institute. Davy arrived in Bristol on 5 October 1798 and stayed with Beddoes in Rodney Place.



Portrait of Dr Thomas Beddoes MD from painting by Edward Bird (BRL v29/p545 Braikenridge).

Turn back on to Clifton Down Road and continue walking towards Regent Street. Turn right on to Royal York Crescent and then left on to York Gardens. Continue on, turning right on to Windsor Place. At the end of Windsor Place is Windsor Terrace.

#### 4 Windsor Terrace

Hannah More lived at 4 Windsor Terrace from 1829 until her death in 1833. In April 1814, Cottle had taken Coleridge to visit More at Barley Wood in north Somerset, her previous home. Coleridge had made a good impression but Cottle, unaware of Coleridge's opium use, was concerned: Coleridge's hands shook and he spilled a glass of wine. Cottle wrote about this to a friend. The friend replied: 'That arises from the immoderate quantity of OPIUM he takes.'



The Paragon, Windsor Terrace and St Vincent's Parade, 1823, James Johnson (BMGA M2964).

Walk back to the end of Windsor Terrace. Where the road branches, take the right hand street (Victoria Terrace). At the end of Victoria Terrace, cross Granby Hill and walk down Hope Chapel Hill. When you reach the bottom of the hill, turn left into:

#### 5 Dowry Square

Originally at 6-7 Dowry Square, Beddoes' Pneumatic Institute later moved to number 11. At the Institute, Davy experimented with nitrous oxide (laughing gas). As well as experimenting on himself, he tested the effect of the gas on friends and acquaintances, and asked them to record their experiences.



Humphry Davy, after T Philips Esq. (BRL 555).

Southey wrote to his brother:

O, Tom! Such a gas Davy has discovered, the gaseous oxide. Oh, Tom! I have had some; it made me laugh and tingle in every toe and finger-tip. Davy has actually invented a new pleasure, for which language has no name. Oh, Tom! I am going for more this evening! It makes one strong and happy! So gloriously happy!

On 22 October 1799, Coleridge met Davy at Dowry Square. Coleridge was only in Bristol for a fortnight, but spent several evenings talking with Davy. The two had repeated inhalation sessions at the laboratory. Coleridge was fascinated by the phenomenon and its psychosomatic (a term he coined) implications. Coleridge and Davy later corresponded extensively, sharing their ideas about poetry and science.

When Davy left Bristol for London in 1801, Beddoes abandoned further research and converted the Institute into a charitable dispensary, the Preventative Medicine Institute for the Sick and Drooping Poor. However, the work of the Pneumatic Institute played a major part in the development of modern anaesthesia.

*Leave Dowry Square, turning left on to Hotwell Road and walking away from Hope Chapel Hill. Turn left and walk up Clifton Vale. At the top, turn right on to Goldney Avenue. At the top of Goldney Avenue, cross Regent Street and go up the steps to the grass embankment. Follow the path through to Clifton Hill on the other side.*

## 6 Clifton Hill

Born in 1753, Ann Yearsley had been taught to read and write by her mother, a milkwoman who trained her daughter to follow her in the same occupation. Yearsley's home was on Clifton Hill. By May of 1784, she and her family had fallen into destitution. They were rescued from near-starvation by local charitable individuals. One of these people, Hannah More, learned of Yearsley's reputation as a poet and organised, by subscription among her literary and wealthy friends, a volume of Yearsley's poetry, *Poems, on Several Occasions*. This was published in June 1785. Over one

thousand subscribers are listed. 'Clifton Hill' was also the title of the last and longest poem in the publication.

Thomas Beddoes' grave is in the Strangers' Burial Ground on Lower Clifton Hill.

*Your walk around Clifton and Hotwells is now over. We do hope you enjoyed it. If you would like to return to the city centre, you can catch the number 9 bus from Clifton Village or Christ Church, Clifton.*

## Further information/

---

**Websites for information on locations referred to in this guide:**

Bristol Cathedral [www.bristol-cathedral.co.uk](http://www.bristol-cathedral.co.uk)

Bristol Old Vic [www.bristololdvic.org.uk](http://www.bristololdvic.org.uk)

Clifton Suspension Bridge Visitor Information Centre  
[www.cliftonbridge.org.uk](http://www.cliftonbridge.org.uk)

The Georgian House Museum  
[www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/georgian-house-museum](http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/georgian-house-museum)

Leigh Woods [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/leigh-woods](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/leigh-woods)

St Mary Redcliffe [www.stmaryredcliffe.co.uk](http://www.stmaryredcliffe.co.uk)

**Other websites of interest:**

Centre for Romantic and Victorian Studies [www.bristol.ac.uk/crvs](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/crvs)

The Friends of Coleridge [www.friendsofcoleridge.com](http://www.friendsofcoleridge.com)

## Suggested reading:

Brett, R L and Jones, A R, eds. 1963. *Wordsworth and Coleridge: Lyrical Ballads*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cottle, B, 2008. *Joseph Cottle and the Romantics: The Life of a Bristol Publisher*. Bristol: Redcliffe Press.

Cottle, J, 1847. *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey*. London: Houlston & Stoneman.

Holmes, R, 1989. *Coleridge: Early Visions, 1772-1804*. New York: Pantheon.

Holmes, R, 2008. *The Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation Discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science*. London: HarperPress.

Jones, K, 1997. *A Passionate Sisterhood: Women of the Wordsworth Circle*. London: Constable.

Mayberry, T, 1992. *Coleridge and Wordsworth in the West Country*. Stroud: Alan Sutton.

Mulvey-Roberts, M, ed. 2015. *Literary Bristol: Writing the City*. Bristol: Redcliffe Press.

Roe, N, ed. 2010. *English Romantic Writers and the West Country*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sisman, A, 2006. *The Friendship: Wordsworth and Coleridge*. London: HarperPress.

**A large-print PDF of this guide can be sent by email on request. Contact [ideas@businesswest.co.uk](mailto:ideas@businesswest.co.uk)**

Back cover image: View of the North porch of St Mary Redcliffe from John Britton's history of the church, 1813 (SCUBL Restricted C514).

## Acknowledgements/

This walking guide has been published as part of the Romanticism programme in the Festival of Ideas ([www.ideasfestival.co.uk](http://www.ideasfestival.co.uk)), which is run in association with Bristol 2015, European Green Capital ([www.bristol2015.co.uk](http://www.bristol2015.co.uk)).

**Bristol Festival  
of Ideas/**

**BRISTOL  
2015 EUROPEAN  
GREEN CAPITAL**

The Festival of Ideas is an initiative of Bristol Cultural Development Partnership and is supported by:



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



**TheObserver**



The walks were devised by Amy O'Beirne. Robin Jarvis provided guidance on the route, made additions to some of the entries, and contributed some text. Thanks to Andrew Kelly, Melanie Kelly and Lucy Prior for additional research, advice and comments.

Bristol Legible City maps: © Bristol City Council

Collection credits for images: BMGA = Bristol Museum and Art Gallery (Jenny Gaschke); BRL = Bristol Reference Library (Dawn Dyer); SCUBL = Special Collections, University of Bristol Library (Michael Richardson and Hannah Lowery).

No map, image or text may be reproduced from this publication without the permission of the copyright holders.

Designed by Qube Design Associates Ltd. Printed by Doveton Press.

© Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, 2015



 @FestivalofIdeas  
[www.ideasfestival.co.uk](http://www.ideasfestival.co.uk)