

December 1794. He undoubtedly followed closely the guidance he gave Southey for writing a poem and did away with weaknesses pointed out in his commentary. Coleridge made the poet speak instead of Charlotte, altered words in line 5 and 6, replaced line 7 struck out and wrote six lines to round out the portrayal of an outcast²⁰—Coleridge himself used the less euphemistic “Prostitute”²¹ to identify the sonnet in an undated notebook entry listing sonnets for inclusion in *Poems on Various Subjects*. In these lines, perhaps sent with the letter or shown to him when they were together in Bristol, may lie the reason why Southey did not revise the poem and publish it himself.

Southey’s letter to Bedford leaves no doubt that *Effusion 15* was written prior to May 1795. *Effusion XV* came later²² with the transposition of “poor” and “pale” and the substitution of “Roamer” for “Wanderer” in line 1 together with rewriting of line 4. The third poem under consideration in Southey’s letter to Grosvenor Bedford, *The Soldier’s Wife*, provides a valid reason for these changes which may have been made as the poets prepared for publication an abortive joint volume of their poems which occupied their attention as late as July 1795.²³ *The Soldier’s Wife* is followed by the comment “Written with Coleridge. Read this aloud and accent it.” A note in an unidentified hand in Alexander Turnbull’s copy of Southey’s *Poems*, 1797, links *The Soldier’s Wife* with the next poem in the collection *The Widow*. “Southey told me that with some degree of labour he would engage to write Dactyls or Sapphics that should please as well in English or Latin . . .”²⁴ The first and third stanzas of *The Soldier’s Wife*. *Dactyls*²⁵ read:

Weary way-wanderer!²⁶ languid and sick at heart
Travelling painfully over the rugged road,
Wild-visag’d Wanderer!²⁶ ah for the heavy chance!

*Woe-begone mother, half anger, half agony,
As over thy shoulder thou lookest to hush the babe,
Bleakly the blinding snow beats in thy hagg’d face.

*This stanza was supplied by S. T. Coleridge.

The first stanza of *The Widow*. *Sapphics*²⁷ reads:

Cold was the night²⁶ wind, drifting fast the snows fell,
Wide were the downs and shelterless and naked,
When a poor Wanderer²⁶ struggled on her journey
Weary and way-sore.

Coleridge’s stanza in *The Soldier’s Wife* ties the poem to his comment on Simonides “sweet fragment” *Eudeis brephos* and may well be another experimentation as he wrote to Southey on 17 December 1794. Substitution for “Poor Wanderer²⁶ of the night!” with