

Catharine Maria Sedgwick Biography

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Biography

Catharine Maria Sedgwick (28 December 1789-31 July 1867), novelist, was born and lived most of her life at the family estate in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. She was educated both in schools and at home, though her early life was devoted to social pleasures and religious training, the latter greatly influenced by the Reverend William Ellery Channing. Her first novel, *A New-England Tale* (New York: Bliss & White, 1822), was typical of her other five: it accurately described and recreated a native American setting while promoting the virtues of domesticity. *Hope Leslie* (New York: White, Gallaher & White, 1827), an historical romance set in colonial Massachusetts, is her most famous work. She died in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. Sedgwick, though the most popular female novelist before Harriet Beecher Stowe, is of value today primarily because of her pioneering attempt to create a realistic background for her fiction, acting as a midpoint between the romanticism of the past and the realism of the future.