

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

1

Life

1830: Dickinson born in Amherst, Massachusetts

1840: Family moves from their Homestead to a home on North Pleasant Street

1847-1848: Attends Mount Holyoke Female Seminary for one year

1855: Visits Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia; repurchases the family Homestead and remains there until she dies, except for two visits to Boston

1856: Dickinson's brother, William Austin Dickinson, marries Dickinson's close friend, Susan Gilbert, and they move in next door. Dickinson visits frequently over the next few years but avoids most of their larger social entertainments.

1858, 1861: Drafts three passionately romantic letters addressed to "Master" (speculation about identity: imaginary person, Charles Wadsworth, Samuel Bowles, Susan Gilbert Dickinson, Kate Scott Anthon Turner)

early 1860s: Stops attending church

1862: Sends some of her poems to Thomas Wentworth Higginson to ask whether her poems "breathed"

Writing

.

.

c. 1859: Writes "[These are the days when Birds come back]"

c. 1861: Writes:

- "[I'm Nobody! Who are you?]"
- "[Wild Nights – Wild Nights!]"

c. 1862: Writes:

- "[A Bird came down the Walk]"
- "[After great pain, a formal feeling comes]"

Publication

1852-1878: ten of Dickinson's poems are published anonymously and apparently without her permission

Life

Writing

Publication

- “[I dreaded that first Robin, so]”
- “[I heard a Fly buzz – when I died]”
- “[I like to see it lap the Miles]”
- “[The Soul selects her own Society]”
- “[We play at Paste]”

c. 1863: Writes:

- “[Because I could not stop for Death]”
- “[Behind Me – dips Eternity]”
- “[Fame of Myself, to justify]”
- “[Publication – is the Auction]”

1864, 1865: Visits Boston for eye treatment

c. 1865: Writes:

- “[A narrow Fellow in the Grass]”
- “[I never saw a Moor]”

c. 1868: “[Tell all the Truth but tell it slant]” written

1866: “[A narrow Fellow in the Grass]” published anonymously

1874: Father dies

1872?: “[A word is dead]” written

late 1870s-1884: Romantic attachment to Judge Otis Phillips Lord

1872: “[We like March]” (first version) written

c. 1873: Writes:

- “[A Word dropped careless on a Page]”
- “[There is no Frigate like a Book]”

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

3

Life

1878: Samuel Bowles dies

1882: Mother dies, Charles Wadsworth dies

1883: 8-year-old nephew dies

1884: Otis Phillips Lord dies

1886: Dickinson dies after several years of suffering from kidney disease

Writing

1878: “[We like March]” (second version)
written

Publication

1890: *Poems by Emily Dickinson* (1890)
published

- “[Because I could not stop for Death]”
- “[I never saw a Moor]”
- “[The Soul selects her own Society]”
- “[These are the days when Birds come back]”

1891: *Poems by Emily Dickinson* (1891)
published

- “[A Bird came down the Walk]”
- “[I dreaded that first Robin, so]”
- “[I like to see it lap the Miles]”
- “[I’m Nobody! Who are you?]”
- “[We play at Paste]”
- “[Wild Nights – Wild Nights!]”

Life

Writing

Publication

1894: Published:

- “[A word is dead]”
- “[There is no Frigate like a Book]”

1896: *Poems* (1896) published

- “[I heard a Fly buzz – when I died]”
- “[We like March]” (second version)

1929: Published:

- “[After great pain, a formal feeling comes]”
- “[Behind Me – dips Eternity]”
- “[Publication – is the Auction]”

1945: Published:

- “[Fame of Myself, to justify]”
- “[Tell all the Truth but tell it slant]”

1947: “[A Word dropped careless on a Page]” published

1955: Published:

- “[A Word made Flesh is seldom]”
- “[We like March]” (first version)

Life

Writing

Publication

Works Consulted

Dickinson, Emily. *Final Harvest*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Back Bay Books, 1964.

Eberwein, Jane Donahue. "Dickinson, Emily." *American National Biography Online*. Oxford University, Feb. 2000. 20 Sept. 2013.
<<http://www.anb.org/articles/16/16-00453.html>>.