# APPENDIXES

## Appendix I

### Emily Dickinson's Biography

Emily Dickinson was born in Amherst at the Homestead on December 10, 1830. Her quiet life was infused with a creative energy that produced almost 1800 poems and a profusion of vibrant letters.

Her lively Childhood and Youth were filled with schooling, reading, explorations of nature, religious activities, significant friendships, and several key encounters with poetry. Her most intense Writing Years consumed the decade of her late 20s and early 30s; during that time she composed almost 1100 poems. She made few attempts to publish her work, choosing instead to share them privately with family and friends. In her Later Years Dickinson increasingly withdrew from public life. Her garden, her family (especially her brother's family at The Evergreens) and close friends, and health concerns occupied her.

With a few exceptions, her poetry remained virtually unpublished until after she died on May 15, 1886. After her death, her poems and life story were brought to the attention of the wider world through the competing efforts of family members and intimates

### Emily Dickinson: The Writing Years (1855-1865)

Although Emily Dickinson's calling as a poet began in her teen years, she came into her own as an artist during a short but intense period of creativity that resulted in her composing, revising, and saving hundreds of poems. That period, which scholars identify as 1858-1865, overlaps with the most significant event of American nineteenth-century history, the Civil War. During this time, Dickinson's personal life also underwent tremendous change.

In late 1855, Dickinson moved, somewhat reluctantly, with her family back to the Homestead, her birthplace. Her father had purchased the home in early 1855 and made significant renovations to it. The Homestead became part of an enhanced Dickinson estate when in 1856 Dickinson's older brother, Austin, married her close friend Susan

Huntington Gilbert, and the couple built a home next door known as The Evergreens.

That household was a lively nexus for Amherst society, and Dickinson herself took part in social gatherings there early in the couple's marriage. Their lifestyle eventually would contrast markedly with her own, more reclusive manner. The couple's three children—Ned, born in 1861; Martha, in 1866; and Gilbert, in 1875—brought much joy to Dickinson's life, even though Susan's developing role as a mother may have put more distance between her and the poet.

In addition to providing close proximity to her brother and his family, the renovated Homestead offered Dickinson several other advantages. Edward Dickinson added a conservatory to the Homestead, where Emily could raise climate-sensitive plants. Now she could engage in her beloved hobby of gardening year-round. And Dickinson had her own bedroom, the southwest corner room on the second floor, a space essential to her writing.

By the time Dickinson turned 35, she had composed more than 1100 concise, powerful lyrics that astutely examine pain, grief, joy, love, nature, and art. She recorded about 800 of these poems in small handmade booklets (now called "fascicles"), very private "publications" that she shared with no one.

Dickinson did share a portion of her poems with family and selected friends whose literary taste she admired. Susan Dickinson received more than 250 poems throughout the two women's forty-year relationship, and to Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who authored an article in an 1862 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* that encouraged young people to write and publish, Dickinson sent about 100 poems. Although a few of her poems were published in newspapers, they were printed anonymously and apparently without her prior consent. The vast majority of her work remained known only to its author.

Some events in Dickinson's life during her intense writing period are difficult to re-construct. Drafts of three letters, now called the "Master Letters," survive from late 1858 and early 1861. They suggest a serious and troubled (though unidentified) romantic attachment that some scholars believe drove Dickinson's creative output. During this time Dickinson also referred to a trauma that she described in a letter: "I had a terror -- since September -- I could tell to none" (L261). The cause of that terror is unknown.

Significant friendships such as those with Samuel Bowles, Rev. Edward Dwight, and Rev. Charles Wadsworth changed during this time, and Dickinson began to feel an increasing need for a "preceptor" to cope with her outpouring of verse and with questions about publication.

In 1864 and 1865, Dickinson underwent treatments for a painful eye condition, now thought to be iritis, with Boston ophthalmologist Henry W. Williams. While

under the doctor's care (eight months in 1864, six months in 1865), she boarded with her cousins, Frances and Louisa Norcross. Those trips were to be her last out of Amherst; after her return in 1865, she rarely ventured beyond the grounds of the Homestead.

**Emily Dickinson: The Later Years (1865-1886)**

After Emily Dickinson's visits to Cambridge for eye treatment in the mid-1860s, the poet settled into a quiet, reclusive existence with her parents and sister. Although she rarely ventured beyond the family Homestead, she did entertain several significant visitors, including Thomas Wentworth Higginson, whom she met in person for the first time in 1870 when he visited her at home in Amherst. To Higginson she offered her own definition of poetry: "If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me I know *that* is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know *that* is poetry. These are the only way I know it. Is there any other way?" (L342a)

Although Dickinson did continue to write poetry, she appears to have stopped formal assembly of the poems into booklets. Manuscripts dated to this period appear less finished that those of her intense writing period (1858-1865), though scholars are increasingly intrigued by what these later manuscripts—some of which are written on scraps of paper—suggest about her writing process. Dickinson's work reached the eyes of several writers and publishers who did express interest in publishing her work. In 1875 Higginson read a few poems by "Two Unknown Poetesses" to the New England Woman's Club, and one of the "poetesses," who were not named during the reading, is believed to have been Dickinson.

Around the same time, the author and Amherst native Helen Hunt Jackson begged Dickinson to contribute a poem to a volume of anonymous verse:

"Would it be of any use to ask you once more for one or two of your poems, to come out in the volume of 'no name' poetry which is to be published before long by Roberts Bros.? If you will give me permission I will copy them—sending them in my own handwriting—and promise never to tell any one, not even the publishers, whose the poems are. Could you not bear this much of publicity? only you and I would recognize the poems." (L573a)

Dickinson's poem "Success is counted sweetest" does appear in *A Masque of Poets (*1878), though whether Dickinson actually gave advance permission is still in question.

In her later years, Dickinson enjoyed a romance with Judge Otis Phillips Lord, a friend of her father. He and his wife had been frequent guests at the Homestead. A widower when he began courting Emily Dickinson, Lord lived in Salem, Massachusetts. Drafts of letters to Lord suggest that the poet even considered marrying him, though she never did.

Dickinson's later life is marked by illness and death: her father's death in 1874, her mother's stroke in 1875, her nephew Gib's death at age eight in 1883, Otis Lord's death in 1884, Helen Hunt Jackson's death in 1885. The poet herself became ill shortly after her nephew Gib died: "The Crisis of the sorrow of so many years is all that tires me" (L873). She remained in poor health until she died at age 55 on May 15, 1886. She was buried four days later in the town cemetery, now known as West Cemetery.

Retrieved from : www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org/emilys biography.
Accessed on Juny 4, 2013. 08.00 am

**APPENDIX 2**

Emily Dickinson:

Because I could not stop for Death

(Handwritten manuscript, Dickinson's own collection)

Because I could not stop for Death -
He kindly stopped for me -
The Carriage held but just Ourselves -
And Immortality.

We slowly drove - He knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For his Civility -

We passed the School, where Children strove,
At Recess - in the Ring -
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain -
We passed the Setting Sun -

Or rather - He passed Us -
The Dews drew quivering and chill -
For only Gossamer, my Gown -
My Tippet - only Tulle -

We passed before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground -
The Roof was scarcely visible -
The Cornice - in the Ground.

Since then - 'tis Centuries - and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses Heads
Were toward Eternity -

Emily Dickinson:

Because I could not stop for Death

(Version published after Dickinson's death)

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor, and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played,
Their lessons scarcely done;
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 't is centuries; and yet
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

**I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –: Text of the Poem**

I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air –
Between the Heaves of Storm –

The Eyes around – had wrung them dry –
And Breaths were gathering firm
For the last Onset – when the King
Be witnessed – in the Room –

I willed my Keepsakes – Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable – and then it was
There interposed a Fly –

With Blue – uncertain – stumbling Buzz –
Between the light – and me –

And then the Windows failed – and then
I could not see to see –

***I heard a fly buzz when I died***

Language: **English**

I heard a Fly buzz -- when I died --
The Stillness [in the Room][1]
Was like the Stillness in the Air --
Between the Heaves of Storm.

The Eyes [around][2] -- had wrung them dry --
And Breaths were gathering [sure][3]
For that last Onset -- when the King
Be witnessed -- in [the Room][4] --

I willed my Keepsakes -- Signed away
What portion of me [be
Assignable -- and then it was][5]
There interposed a Fly --

With Blue -- uncertain stumbling Buzz --
Between the light -- and me --
And then the Windows failed -- and then
I could not see to see --

**My life closed twice before its close (96)**

by Emily Dickinson

My life closed twice before its close—
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me

So huge, so hopeless to conceive
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.
- See more at:
http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/20250#sthash.HqQpSde4.dpuf

“My Life Closed Twice Before Its Close” was first published in Dickinson’s posthumous third collection, *Poems by Emily Dickinson, third series*, in 1896. Scholars do not know when it was written. The poem has also been published in some other anthologies under the name “ Parting.” Like much of Dickinson’s best work, this poem is simultaneously personal and universal. On a personal level, the poem’s speaker is telling of the losses he or she has suffered, so painful that they were like death itself. Though the speaker has not yet experienced real, physical death, he or she cannot bear to imagine anything that could be more terrible than the two deprivations already experienced. The speaker does not tell us what these losses were, but one might imagine some bereavement—the death of a loved one, the end of a passionate affair.

On a universal level, the poem poignantly describes the great tragedy of human life, for to be human is to suffer loss. In the final two lines of the poem, Dickinson creates a brilliant paradox, a statement that seems contradictory but might really be expressing a truth. Here heaven and hell, great symbolic opposites according to conventional wisdom, come together in their relationships to the word “parting.” If there is a heaven, all we know of it is that we must leave behind our loves and lives on this earth in order to enter there. At the same time, all human beings, to some degree, have known the misery of the private hell of separation and loss because that is an unavoidable part of human experience.