

Emily Dickinson

Poet Description:

Born in Amherst, Massachusetts, to a well-known family?her father was a lawyer?Emily Dickinson was educated at Amherst Academy and enrolled in what was then Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, but returned home after a year. Settling in her family home in 1848, she became uneasy in public places and thus rarely went out. Visitors were also uncommon. But her creative life was unfailingly intense, and she maintained contact with others in letters that are so crafted many consider them prose poems. Little about her imagination was typical of her time, though she did adapt the meters of hymns and the stanzas of ballads for her intricately nuanced, variously skeptical or ecstatic poems. The cultural environment was fervently religious, but Dickinson instead gradually chose irony as her way of viewing the world. She is thus, in an uncanny and symbolic way, the precursor to everything in modern poetry that is condensed, elliptical, and disjunctive, rather than being expansively Whitmanesque. Yet only half a dozen of her ambiguous and witty poems were published in her lifetime, all without her permission. Her substantial output of over one thousand poems, and her large body of letters, would have to wait for an audience. Several volumes of her poems were issued in the 1890s after her death, but the editors normalized her deliberately unconventional punctuation and made bad decisions about how to display the poems on the page. When additional volumes of her poems were issued in 1914, 1929, 1930, 1936, and 1945?with a true collected poems not appearing until 1955?it was repeatedly as if a new poet was being introduced to readers.

Race/Ethnicity:

European ^[1]

Picture:



Emily Dickinson, a daguerrotype made by Southey Hall in 1848.

Gender:

Female ^[2]

First Name:

Emily

Last Name:

Dickinson

Birth & Death Dates:

Friday, December 10, 1830 to Saturday, May 15, 1886

School of Poetry:

Other ^[3]

Birth Place:

Amherst , Massachusetts

United States

See map: Google Maps ^[4]

Massachusetts US

Death Place:

Amherst , Massachusetts

United States

See map: Google Maps ^[5]

Massachusetts US

Group visibility:

Private - accessible only to group members

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[1] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/race-ethnicity/european>

[2] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/gender/female>

[3] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/school-poetry/other>

[4] <http://maps.google.com?q=46.880607+-87.363281+%28%2C+Amherst%2C+MA%2C+%2C+us%29>

[5] <http://maps.google.com?q=42.975613+-78.791422+%28%2C+Amherst%2C+MA%2C+%2C+us%29>