

# Life...the thrilling preface to suppremer things

**1813** Samuel Fowler Dickinson, Emily's paternal grandfather, builds the Homestead on Main Street in Amherst.

**1821** Amherst College opens with Samuel Fowler Dickinson as a principal founder.

**1830** Emily Elizabeth Dickinson is born on December 10 at the Homestead to Edward and Emily Norcross Dickinson.

**1840** Dickinson moves with her parents, brother Austin, and sister Lavinia to a house on Pleasant Street in Amherst. She attends Amherst Academy until 1847.

**1847** In September, Dickinson enters Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (until August 1848).

**1852** On February 20, *The Springfield Daily Republican* publishes Dickinson's "Sic transit gloria mundi" anonymously as "A Valentine," the first known publication of a Dickinson poem.

**1853** Edward Dickinson elected to a single term in the U.S. House of Representatives.

**1853** The railroad comes to Amherst through the efforts of Edward Dickinson.

**1855** The Edward Dickinson family moves back to the repurchased and remodeled Homestead.

**1856** Austin Dickinson marries Susan Gilbert, girlhood friend of the poet's, and moves into a house built for them next door to the Homestead. The couple names the house "The Evergreens."

**1858** Emily and Lavinia visit Washington D.C. and Philadelphia.

**1861** Edward (Ned) Austin Dickinson, Emily Dickinson's first nephew, is born at The Evergreens. The Civil War begins.

**1862** Emily Dickinson begins collecting her poems into small packets, today called "fascicles." This practice continues until 1864. Dickinson writes the first of three manuscript drafts now known as the "Master Letters" to an as-yet unidentified correspondent.

**1862** On April 15, Dickinson initiates a life-long correspondence with Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a writer and social activist.

**1864** Five of the Dickinson poems known to have been published in her lifetime appear in newspapers, including the *Drum Beat*, the *Brooklyn Daily Union*, and the *Round Table*.

**1864 & 1865** Dickinson twice spends many months in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for treatment of a severe eye ailment.

**Late 1860s** Dickinson's period of intense reclusion begins.

**1865** The Civil War ends.

**1866** Dickinson's dog, Carlo, dies. Martha Gilbert Dickinson, Emily Dickinson's niece, is born.

**1869** Dickinson family hires Margaret Maher as their primary domestic help.

**1870** Thomas Wentworth Higginson makes his first visit to Emily Dickinson in Amherst. He called again in 1873.

**1874** Edward Dickinson dies.

**1875** Thomas Gilbert (Gib) Dickinson, Emily Dickinson's second nephew, is born. Emily Norcross Dickinson suffers a stroke, leaving her partially paralyzed.

**Late 1870s** Dickinson's romance with Otis Phillips Lord begins.

**1878** Dickinson's poem "Success is counted sweetest" is published in *A Masque of Poets*, a volume of anonymous verse.

**1881** Mabel Loomis Todd and David Todd move to Amherst. Mabel Todd later becomes co-editor of first volumes of Dickinson's poetry.

**1882** Emily Norcross Dickinson dies.

**1883** Gib Dickinson dies.

**1884** Otis Lord dies.

**1886** On May 15, Emily Dickinson dies.

**1890** *Poems by Emily Dickinson*, edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and T.W. Higginson, is published by Roberts Brothers of Boston.