

EDITED BY CRISTANNE MILLER

Don't turn the dustiest road!

That's right - "the way is
narrow"

And difficult the gate -

And few when it - correct

again - that "gate" in "what"

It is costly - so are purposes!

It's just the price of beauty

With but the "discount" of

the earn -

of the bankers -

"death"!

And after that - there's

the Lord man's - "live and"

And Bad man - go to "hell"

I guess -

Safe in the
Chambers -

Uninjured

And unharmed

So the man

the house of

Raffles of

of sting!

Grand go the

Croquet - and

World's scoop

And firm man

Whidems - and

surrounding -

Soundless as

else of snore

Springs - shake

But - the earn

How - is the

Emily Dickinson's Poems

As She Preserved Them

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Preface

THIS IS the first edition of Emily Dickinson's poems to present in easily readable form Dickinson's own ordering of the poems she bound into forty handmade booklets between 1858 and 1864, and of the poems she copied onto unbound sheets between 1864 and 1875. It is also the first annotated reading edition of her poems. And it is the first edition to include the alternative words and phrases Dickinson wrote on the pages of many of the poems she retained. It presents the poet at work—beginning with her early copying of the poems she wanted to keep onto folded sheets of stationery, and progressing through her late poems, many of which were left in a state of chaotic draft or perhaps experimental fluidity. The reader can see at a glance, in this edition, the poems that Dickinson retained for herself, and arguably for posterity, in pristine condition and those that include possible substitutions for a concept or thought—sometimes a single alternative word in a poem of twenty or more lines and sometimes more than a score of alternatives for a single line. The reader can further observe which poems Dickinson left in an entirely fluid or unfinished state—a distinction disguised in other reading editions by editorial choices presenting a hypothesized clean or finished version. The poems presented here provide easily legible access to the full complexity of Dickinson's work and her working process.

This edition foregrounds the copies and versions of poems that Dickinson kept for herself during her lifetime, in the form in which she retained them—hence the title, *Emily Dickinson's Poems: As She Preserved Them*. While there is no clear evidence as to whether she retained some of the extant manuscripts, we know with certainty that she retained the more than 1,100 poems she either bound into booklets (called "fascicles" by Dickinson scholars) or copied systematically in fair hand onto unbound sheets and leaves of stationery. After 1875, Dickinson kept her poems in a more

miscellaneous state—some cleanly written and signed as if to send to a correspondent, but then retained, and some on scraps of envelopes, wrapping paper, or drafts of letters. She also circulated almost one hundred fifty poems without retaining a copy for herself. Dickinson's retained poems provide both a record of what she chose to save and the best surviving evidence of her compositional practice: they show lines and poems the poet resolved entirely, poems she copied with isolated alternative possibilities for continued thinking, and lines or poems on which she was still considering multiple alternatives. Often Dickinson circulated a copy of a poem without alternatives and kept for her own records only the page showing the draft, or highly fluid, stage of her thinking and writing. For example, Dickinson circulated the poem "A little madness in the Spring" to two friends with a fifth line that read "This whole Experiment of Green"; in her retained copy, line 5, first written as "This sudden legacy of Green," has fifteen alternatives. This still fluid text is the source copy for the poem printed here.

This volume clarifies Dickinson's different modes of copying, retaining, and circulating her poems by dividing them into five sections: [1] "The Fascicles"—the poems Dickinson copied onto folded sheets of stationery, typically embossed and lightly ruled, and bound into booklets; [2] "Unbound Sheets"—the poems systematically copied onto sheets or leaves of stationery but left unbound; [3] "Loose Poems"—the poems Dickinson retained on paper of various sizes and shapes, not as part of her systematic copying and often in draft or fluid form, showing her process of deliberation between multiple alternatives; [4] "Poems Transcribed by Others"—the poems that remain to us only as transcribed by others because although Dickinson probably retained them, the manuscripts were lost after her death; and [5] "Poems Not Retained"—the poems we have in full only because they were sent to others who preserved them. Annotations appear as endnotes; circulation information appears at the foot of each page. The glossary provides the names of correspondents to whom Dickinson sent poems, and brief notes about them. The appendix indicates the correspondence between Ralph W. Franklin's "sets" and the unbound sheets as numbered here (Franklin was the most recent editor of a variorum edition of Dickinson's poems). With the exception of a few titles, mostly suggested in letters, Dickinson neither titled nor numbered her poems and I have neither titled nor numbered them here. The concluding index of first lines does, however, include cross-references to the poem numbers assigned by Thomas H. Johnson and Ralph W. Franklin in their 1955 and 1998 editions of Dickinson's poetry.

The introduction describes Dickinson's practices in copying and circulating poems, introduces the volume's annotations, summarizes some of the debates within Dickinson scholarship, and presents the editorial principles guiding the presentation of poems in this edition. The "Abbreviations and Reading Guide" provides examples of this edition's representation of the poems, especially Dickinson's alternative words and phrases, which can be challenging to decipher in relation to what is typically the initial text of the poem or, in the case of some chaotic manuscripts, a structurally logical rendering of the text. Every poem appears in clean form on the left side of the page; on the right, and sometimes in the space immediately following the poem, are the alternatives, if any were present on the manuscript used here as source text. My hope is that this edition provides new ways of thinking about Dickinson's poems by allowing the reader to see them in the groupings determined by the poet's own organization of her work. I also hope that it leads to new ways of thinking about the poet Emily Dickinson herself, by allowing the reader to see more fully her various processes of copying, circulating, and composing.



It has been a challenge and a joy to read Dickinson's manuscripts thoroughly and repeatedly, locating the patterns of her inscription and noting her varied deviations from those patterns. I have renewed appreciation and gratitude for the work of R. W. Franklin in his meticulous ordering, dating, and transcribing of the manuscripts, and for all previous editors of the poems. My debts to other scholars are also extensive. Domhnall Mitchell has provided touchstone advice, support, and a willingness to consult from the beginning. At various stages in the manuscript's preparation, Páraic Finnerty, Jennifer Leader, and Helen Vendler generously read every annotation for clarity, accuracy, or typographical error, and Páraic read a draft of the entire edition. Bonnie Costello, Paul Crumbley, Jane Eberwein, Alfred Habegger, Gunhild Kübler, Linda Leavell, Joel Myerson, Marjorie Perloff, Vivian Pollak, Eliza Richards, Christopher Ricks, Gary Stonum, and Marta Werner have all read sections or sample pages and provided valuable commentary; Martha Nell Smith corresponded helpfully about several aspects of Dickinson's manuscripts and transcription; and Judith Scholes provided information for annotation. Jane Wald and Cindy Dickinson of the Emily Dickinson Museum also convened a group that gave excellent feedback on an early draft of the page design. The volume *Open Me Carefully: Emily Dickinson's Intimate Correspondence to Susan Huntington*

Dickinson, edited by Martha Nell Smith, has been a useful resource, as have the Dickinson Electronic Archives and the digital text and archive Emily Dickinson's Correspondences. The Emily Dickinson Archive maintained by the Houghton Library, Harvard University, will simplify the work of all future editors of Dickinson's verse by making a great many manuscript images available. I am grateful to the editor-in-chief of Harvard University Press, Susan Wallace Boehmer, for her enthusiasm for this project from its first mention, and to editor John Kulka's keen eye for detail and sage advice throughout the final stages of preparing this edition. I alone am responsible for any mistakes and for interpretive decisions.

I could not have completed this edition without the superb assistance of librarians from several university and private collections: Harvard University's Houghton Library, Amherst College's Robert Frost Library, the Boston Public Library, Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and Sterling Memorial Library, the Morgan Library & Museum in New York, the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, the Forbes Library in Northampton, Massachusetts, and the Jones Library in Amherst. In particular, I would like to thank Leslie Morris, Susan Halpert, and Heather Cole at the Houghton, and Michael Kelly and Margaret Dakin at the Frost, for their exceptional generosity and assistance. University at Buffalo SUNY graduate students Patricia Caroline Chaudron, Andrew Dorkin, and Daniel Schweitzer ably assisted in collecting and formatting information and proofreading, as did Elizabeth Miller. My research was supported by fellowships from the Fulbright Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies and the leave time provided by the University at Buffalo SUNY.

Introduction

EMILY DICKINSON did not see any of her almost 1,800 poems through the process of publication, but she did copy more than 1,100 poems in fair hand onto folded sheets of stationery, binding the majority of the sheets into the booklets Dickinson scholars call fascicles. This is the first edition of Dickinson's poems to present her fascicle and unbound-sheet poems in the order in which she copied them, in easily readable form.¹ *Emily Dickinson's Poems: As She Preserved Them* presents one version of all her known poems. The emphasis, however, is on the copies that Dickinson herself retained—especially those retained after careful copying and binding into booklets, because these are the poems she took greatest care to ensure would survive during her lifetime and, arguably, for posterity. This is also the first annotated reading edition of Dickinson's poems, with brief notes on her quotations and allusions and on the contexts of her writing, and it is the first to present the alternative words and revisions Dickinson included on the texts she saved. It shows the poet at work through the varying stages of her writing life. *Emily Dickinson's Poems* is intended to provide a clear text of her poems for use in the classroom and for general readers. At the same time, it includes critical information of interest to scholars and advanced students of Dickinson or poetry studies in general.

Dickinson may have ordered the poems in her forty fascicles to develop a particular theme or idea. Or she may have constructed these booklets to create some order among the poems she had accumulated by the time she was twenty-seven, in 1858, when she apparently began this systematic copying: after carefully copying a poem, she discarded previous copies. For the next seven years, Dickinson recopied virtually everything that she wrote or that she wanted to save. Throughout this process, her primary unit for the copies was the folded sheet. To make a booklet, she stacked folded sheets of copied poems on top of one another, poked holes through the stack at the folded edges, and then bound them together with string. While she used a

variety of types of paper for these hundreds of poems, most frequently she used embossed blue-lined or lightly lined stationery already folded by the stationer, most pages measuring about seven to eight inches by five inches.² She only twice continued onto a new sheet to finish a poem.³ Because the sheet was her ordering unit, this edition identifies poems according to both the fascicle in which they were bound, as numbered by Ralph W. Franklin, and the sheet on which they were written. "Safe in their Alabaster Chambers –," for example, appears in its earliest extant version in what is now numbered Fascicle 6 on Sheet 3 (F6 Sh3) and appears with alternative second stanzas in Fascicle 10, Sheet 4 (F10 Sh4). Dickinson copied all but thirty-two of the more than 1,100 poems she had written and saved by 1866 onto a sheet, and most sheets were bound into fascicles.

Franklin hypothesized that Dickinson's unbound sheets were organized into groups that he called "sets." He based his determination of what constituted each set by correlating the date of the handwriting and the type of paper used, and also the state of the manuscripts when Dickinson's sister, Lavinia, passed them on to Mabel Loomis Todd to prepare for publication: four gatherings were connected by a brass fastener and others were grouped in what Todd called "packets." There is no evidence, however, that these gatherings were Dickinson's.⁴ In the types of paper used, the apparently systematic nature of Dickinson's copying, and their inclusion of multiple poems per sheet (except in Franklin's Set 15), these unbound sheets are nonetheless distinct from the great majority of the loose poems found among Dickinson's papers after her death.⁵

Dickinson also circulated more than a quarter of her known compositions to family and friends, mostly in her later years. While she circulated many of the poems copied in fascicles and on unbound sheets, so far as we know the great majority of these poems remained private, perhaps out of self-censorship about subjects and feelings she did not wish to share during her lifetime. Judging from extant letters, Dickinson circulated relatively few of her poems about death, pain, and desire, and, before the late 1870s, few articulating religious doubt; among the almost 1,300 poems she kept entirely private are "Because I could not stop for death –," "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain," "After great pain, a formal feeling comes –," "Wild nights – Wild nights!," "Ourselves were wed one summer – dear –," "'Heaven' – is what I cannot reach!," and "This World is not conclusion." Interestingly, she also apparently never shared "This is my letter to the World" (F24 Sh4), suggesting that she may have regarded not just that poem but all her carefully copied poems as a "letter" that might be read after her death. Many of

the poems she circulated were brief, or she circulated only a stanza or a few lines of a longer poem. Many were also occasional—sent in reference to a season of the year, an event in the recipient’s life, or accompanying a gift. The smallest occasion, however, might give rise to profound speculation on human nature, theology, or the human relationship to the natural world.

This edition indicates if a poem was circulated, to whom it was sent, on what date, whether the circulated poem varied from the version printed in this edition, and other appropriate information—for example, whether Dickinson suggested a title for the poem or whether it accompanied a gift. “The Guest is gold and crimson—” includes the note: “Sent to SD (variant) c. late 1858, titled “‘Navy’ Sunset!”—in other words, Dickinson sent this poem to Susan Dickinson in a variant version around late 1858, with a title. If even a single punctuation mark or capitalization varies from the source text of this edition, the circulated copy is identified as “variant.” Variant versions are not presented here, but variant first lines are listed. One copy 1862 poem begins, alternatively, “Going – to – Her!,” “Going to them, happy letter!,” and “Going to Him! Happy letter!” The reader will find “Going – to – Her!” in “Loose Poems”; in the circulation information at the bottom of that page, the reader will discover that “Going to them, happy letter!” was sent to Dickinson’s Norcross cousins, Louisa and Frances, at about the same time that she copied the poem she retained. A note further informs the reader that she kept an additional copy of the poem written out later that year, beginning “Going to Him! Happy letter!”

After 1865, Dickinson’s productivity dropped precipitously. While she apparently wrote more than 900 poems during the years of the Civil War (1861–1865), in the five years between 1866 and 1870 she seems to have written only 72 poems and copied none onto bifolium sheets. Although she returned sporadically to such copying between 1871 and 1875, after 1865 she also retained poems copied on single loose leaves or scraps of paper—some written out on stationery in fair hand and without alternatives, as if to be circulated; some with several alternatives or in draft, on brown wrapping paper, old envelopes, the back of drafts of letters or advertising flyers, and one on a wrapper from a packet of cooking chocolate.⁶ This volume’s section “Loose Poems” includes all the poems we have good reason to believe Dickinson retained for which we have extant manuscripts and that are not in fascicles or on systematically copied unbound sheets and leaves.

Around 1876, after Dickinson stopped copying poems onto folded sheets, she may have turned to correspondence as her preferred method of maintaining a record of her work—trusting that her friends would

save her missives. This hypothesis is supported by two facts: first, she circulated a much higher proportion of her poems after she stopped systematically copying them, and, second, many of the poems she retained after 1875 were written on clean stationery, sometimes including a signature, as if they were intended to be circulated, but were not. Dickinson without doubt circulated more poems than we have records of; extant evidence, however, suggests it is unlikely that she circulated a great number of her poems before 1876.⁷ Ninety of the around five hundred poems we know she circulated were sent to more than one person. Extant records and manuscripts indicate that Dickinson did not retain almost one hundred fifty poems in complete text (see “Poems Not Retained”). “Poems Transcribed by Others” presents poems probably retained by Dickinson but lost after her death—fortunately, after having been transcribed by someone else.

In several cases, we cannot know whether Dickinson circulated or retained a poem, especially in regard to her correspondence with Susan. Many manuscripts passed into her sister-in-law’s possession after Dickinson’s death.⁸ Martha Nell Smith has been the primary proponent of the argument that Susan received more manuscripts during Dickinson’s lifetime than Franklin acknowledges. In most cases, I find Franklin’s representation of Dickinson’s correspondence convincing, but I include in the poems’ notes competing claims about whether a manuscript was circulated, and I represent every poem Franklin lists as even “apparently” or “perhaps” sent as circulated.

Around the summer of 1861, Dickinson began including alternative words on her pages, most often at the conclusion of a poem, usually marking with a small plus sign the word or phrase potentially being replaced. For example, in the last stanza of “My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun –” (F34 Sh4), Dickinson wrote, “For I have but the power to kill,” marking the word “power” for an alternative and giving “art” as her potential substitution:

Though I than He – may longer live
 He longer must – than I –
 For I have but the power to kill, [the] art
 Without – the power to die –

The alternative “art” for “power” introduces the possibility that one might feel like a loaded gun in the context of inspiration or creative endeavor. That she retained the poem with this alternative (and others) suggests that

she wanted to keep a range of possible interpretations open, at least at the time she copied the poem.

Dickinson also revised fascicle poems by writing in margins or between lines, sometimes cancelling her first choice. By including Dickinson's alternative words, revisions, and cancellations in her record copies of a poem's text, this edition illuminates the degree to which she kept alternative choices in play for further resolution in other copies. While Dickinson revised a few poems first copied in 1859 and 1860, it is not until late in 1861, in Fascicle 11, that we see with any frequency alternative words added at the time that she copied the poem.⁹ Dickinson did not circulate poems with alternatives, although she sent to Susan a few poems with an individual cancelled word.¹⁰ I use the term "alternative" to indicate a potential substitution written on the page of a poem, as distinct from a "variant" word choice made in other copies of the same poem—for example, in a copy she circulated.

Including alternatives in writing out a poem was not a constant practice; well over half of Dickinson's poems contain no alternative words of any kind. Of the texts printed in this edition, around 60 percent contain no alternative words or revisions, and more than 75 percent contain two or fewer.¹¹ At the other end of the spectrum, some poems contain so many alternative words and phrases that it is difficult to identify a final direction to her thinking. There is a qualitative as well as quantitative difference between Dickinson's poems containing alternative substitutions for words or phrases in some number of a poem's lines and those containing so many potential substitutions that it is hard to get a sense of distinct progression in the poem. Whereas the former have the characteristics of a finished work, such as a capitalized word at the start of each poetic line, the latter often do not. I regard the latter poems as "in draft," although Marta Werner has persuasively argued that in her late years Dickinson may have developed a more fluidly disordered style of writing. "A Sparrow took a slice of Twig" is representative of such later poems in that it begins with apparently clear word choices and then has multiple, inconclusive options for its final lines. Even primarily resolved poems can present the reader (or the poet) with a dizzying range of choices: the twenty-six-line poem "Those fair – fictitious People –" (F18 Sh3) contains twenty-one alternatives, making for a possible 7,680 distinct ways of resolving the poem.

Although only a small minority of Dickinson's manuscripts contain a large number of alternatives or revisions, her recurring use of this compositional, revising, or copying method suggests that at the very least she thought of her poems as always open to new formulations of her thought,

Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820): "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." She may also, however, have been echoing more recent allusions to Keats's ode, for example, in Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature* (1836): "The true philosopher and the true poet are one, and a beauty, which is truth, and a truth, which is beauty, is the aim of both"; or Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "A Vision of Poets" (1844): "These were poets true / Who died for Beauty, as martyrs do / For truth – the ends being scarcely two" – lines marked in the Dickinson family copy of Barrett Browning's poems. After the Bible, the most frequent allusions in Dickinson's poems are to Shakespeare, Barrett Browning, Emerson, and other nineteenth-century British and American authors, although she also refers to popular culture and current events – including circuses, minstrel shows, and concerts she attended; literary or scientific textbooks read during her years at the Amherst Academy (1841–1847 and the fall of 1848) and Mount Holyoke Seminary for Women (1847–1848); and popular literature appearing in journals subscribed to by her family, such as the *Atlantic Monthly*.

I do not annotate general preconditions—for example, the several potential sources for Dickinson's posthumous-speaker poems or sentimental expressions. I also do not credit information to particular critics, although I am indebted to many Dickinson scholars for their identification of allusions in her poems—especially to Jack Capps (*Emily Dickinson's Reading*) and Helen Vendler (*Dickinson: Selected Poems and Commentaries*), Mary Loeffelholz and Páraic Finnerty (both for several recent publications), and Jennifer Leader (for her extensive familiarity with biblical scripture).¹⁴ Critics are just beginning to discover the extent of Dickinson's allusions to literary and popular culture and events of her day. For example, Dickinson probably knew Harriet Prescott Spofford's story "The Amber Gods," which ends "I must have died at ten minutes past one" (*Atlantic Monthly*, 1860)—whether or not it influenced her own use of posthumous speakers.

Dickinson grew up in a period of active experimentation with poetic form, which encouraged her to experiment with metrical patterns, line length, and rhyme. The great majority of her poems are written in iambic or catalectic meter or in a popular beat-based rhythm, typically combining the rising rhythms of iambs and anapests.¹⁵ Almost all her poems rhyme, albeit often irregularly or slant. Similarly, Dickinson's verse typically maintains a metrical base, even among its irregularities of rhythm, rhyme, line length, and stanzaic structure. Alternatives generally maintain a poem's meter, and where this is not the case, they may return the poem to a more regular stanzaic or metrical pattern than Dickinson's initial word choice.

Like many poets of her day, Dickinson at times used archaic poeticisms as a guide to metrical pronunciation. In the second stanza of “Trust in the Unexpected –” (F27 Sh5), for example, Dickinson writes “Discernèd” as “Discernèd,” evidently underlining the *e* in order to mark “ed” as a pronounced syllable, to fill out the measure: in this edition, the stanza reads

Through this – the old Philosopher –
 His Talismanic Stone
 Discernèd – still withholden
 To effort undivine –

While the seven syllables of “Discernèd – still withholden” still do not match the first line’s eight syllables (“Through this – the old Philosopher –”), pronouncing the “ed” maintains the iambic meter and gives the quatrain a shape Dickinson used frequently: an 8676 syllable sequence.

In “’Twould ease – a Butterfly –” (F39 Sh6), Dickinson uses the elisions “’Twould” and “Thou’rt” to condense “It would” and “Thou art” – again in the service of an irregular stanzaic organization but regular iambic meter. The first stanza reads

’Twould ease – a Butterfly –
 Elate – a Bee –
 Thou’rt neither –
 Neither – thy capacity –

Other such contractions appear frequently—for example, the one-syllable “ne’er” for “never” in “Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne’er succeed” (F5 Sh1). In contrast, in “There is a word,” Dickinson does not mark the “ed” endings:

There is a word
 Which bears a sword
 Can pierce an armed man –
 It hurls its barbed syllables
 And is mute again –

Readers must decide for themselves whether this poem’s rhythm follows an iambic meter requiring the pronunciations “armèd” and “barbèd,” or

a looser rhythm, in which spondees (“armed man,” “barbed syll[ables]”) disrupt the iambic measure.¹⁶

Despite the many colloquial elements of her verse, Dickinson also used some archaic diction. She often used the biblical pronouns “thee” and “thou” and occasionally used exclamations such as “Lo”; old-fashioned words, such as “aforetime” or “betimes”; and poeticized spellings such as “thro” and “eno” (for “through” and “enough”)—spellings that do not change the words’ number of syllables. All indicate that she was writing within conventions of nineteenth-century verse as well as pushing against them.

EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

This is a reading edition, not a variorum. I have worked roughly from the principles of genetic editing, which assume that an author’s work typically consists of a series of discrete and equally authoritative versions and that all such texts are both unstable, in that they exist as part of a process, and fixed, in and of themselves. A genetic edition does not present a “best” text or “the” poem but instead focuses on a moment or stage in a work’s presentation or genesis. In the case of this edition, that moment is Dickinson’s copying of the text that, to the best of our knowledge, she retained. Because Dickinson never saw her own poems into print, there can be no single correct or definitive printing of her poems. Moreover, Dickinson’s use of alternatives in many poems and her writing out of variant versions suggest that *she* had a sense of her poems as both appropriately finished and potentially fluid, hence genetic criticism provides an excellent foundation for editing her poems. This edition seeks to complement, not replace, existing editions that offer other approaches to the poems.

This edition is “complete” in that it includes one representation of every poem. It does not include variant representations of a poem, except in the sixteen instances where a poem appears more than once in a fascicle or in her unbound sheets.¹⁷ Twice Dickinson copied the same poem in quick succession: in 1860 she copied “Portraits are to daily faces” and then “Pictures are to daily faces” on Sheets 2 and 5 of Fascicle 8, and in 1865 she copied the three-line “Be Mine the Doom –” on Unbound Sheets 12 and 17.¹⁸ She frequently used short poems to fill the space at the bottom of a page or the end of a sheet. I do not include “If I should see a single bird,” which Franklin numbers as poem 1591; Martha Dickinson Bianchi reported that a poem beginning with this line was sent to her brother Gilbert, but no transcript or manuscript survives. A report of a first line is not, in my view, a poem.¹⁹

I also omit “Too few the mornings be,” a text extant only in a transcription by Frances Norcross as prose, and “How slow the Wind –,” a fourteen-syllable text extant only in a letter to Sarah Tuckerman that Franklin describes as “bordering prose and verse” but that seems to me distinctly written as prose (Franklin numbers 1,201 and 1,607). There are many passages of metered prose in Dickinson’s letters, some of it including rhyme.

Editors and scholars do not agree as to what constitutes a “poem,” a version of a poem, metered prose, a letter-poem, or even whether to call Dickinson’s work “poems” (some prefer “manuscript writing”). I find that the great majority of Dickinson’s manuscripts indicate clearly both whether she was writing poetry or prose and what she intended as the form of her poems, once one understands the patterns of her inscription, and assuming that her poems occur in poetic lines marked with an initial capital letter.²⁰ I take the typical Dickinson poem as my guide for editing, not her exceptions—although there is no denying the interest and even beauty of such exceptions. There is also a lyric grace in several of Dickinson’s metered-prose messages, aphorisms, and textual fragments that might well lead readers to call them “poems” or to classify them as occupying an intergenre borderland. At the same time, much great prose has lyrical qualities, as do most of Dickinson’s letters, but that does not make them poems.

Whereas the two previous inclusive editions of Dickinson’s poems have been organized chronologically, this volume is only roughly chronological, in that between 1858 and 1865 Dickinson tended to copy poems onto sheets relatively soon after writing them, and she saved very few loose poems until she no longer engaged in such copying. The poems extant only in others’ transcriptions and the great majority of poems she circulated and did not retain also seem to have been written relatively late. Readers seeking to follow Dickinson’s writing in stricter chronological sequence will want to turn to Franklin’s edition of the poems. Fragmentary phrases that also appear in poems are mentioned, and often quoted, in a poem’s note. Readers seeking representation of Dickinson’s fragments may turn to Marta Werner’s *Radical Scatters*.²¹

Dickinson did not number her poems; nor does this edition. This edition does not provide comprehensive new dating of the poems, a new organization of the fascicles, or a new analysis of Dickinson’s handwriting and punctuation. It provides a new, easily readable print organization, foregrounding Dickinson’s own use and retention of her poems and showing the full range of the complexity of the texts she left to us in the different stages of her composing, copying, and circulating poems. Like all

editions, it is an interpretation of the work the poet left to us, in the form in which she left it.

SOURCE AND ORGANIZATION OF TEXTS

Copy texts for this edition are, first, the poems now extant in fascicles or on Dickinson's unbound sheets and leaves; second, the poems she retained in loose form—always taking the most complete (preferably fair-hand) copy when more than one text survives, or the earliest copy if two extant texts are equally resolved or complete and in fair hand (or roughly written); and third, the poems she did not retain, again taking either the most complete or the earliest poem circulated if there is more than one copy. Where Dickinson's retained copy was transcribed and lost but an apparently equally complete copy of the poem survives as circulated, I use that copy as my source text and position the poem where the lost copy would have appeared (that is, in a fascicle, on an unbound sheet, or as a loose poem). Similarly, if a circulated but unretained copy was transcribed after Dickinson's death and then lost, the poem appears in "Poems Not Retained." Where appropriate, source texts are marked with the name of the transcriber, immediately following the poem. If there is any ambiguity as to a copy text, I identify it in a note.

Generalizations about Dickinson's copying and circulation practices cannot be entirely accurate because she was inconsistent, because too much remains unknown, and because many poems, or copies of poems, may be lost. R. W. Franklin's *The Editing of Emily Dickinson* and his introduction to the 1998 *Poems of Emily Dickinson* remain the best general sources of information on Dickinson's practices and the handling of the manuscripts after her death. An excellent supplemental resource is Domhnall Mitchell's *Measures of Possibility: Emily Dickinson's Manuscripts*.²² Susan Howe, Martha Nell Smith, and Marta Werner have influentially interpreted the poems' material and visual aspects; under Smith's general direction, the digital sources Dickinson Electronic Archives and Emily Dickinson's Correspondences also provide useful information about several poems, and Smith and Hart's *Open Me Carefully* is invaluable for those interested in the poet's relationship with Susan.²³

DATING THE POEMS

Poems in this edition are dated according to when they were copied or circulated, using Franklin's dates except in the few instances where scholars have persuasively challenged them.²⁴ The assigned date of copying is based

transcriptions to be consistent with what one might presume were Dickinson's misspellings ("it's" for "its," "intrenched" for "entrenched," and so on). I do, however, represent transcribed dashes to look like the shorter dashes Dickinson generally produced, regardless of how they were drawn by the transcriber.

POETIC FORM AND LINEATION

Dickinson was inconsistent about the stanzaic organization of her poems—for example, she frequently circulated poems without stanzaic division that she copied in stanzas for her own keeping. Although she typically marked stanzas by leaving space between lines and often drew a horizontal line following a poem (or following its alternatives) to indicate its conclusion, she sometimes drew lines between stanzas. This was a relatively standard practice at the time; her sister Lavinia, for example, drew a line between stanzas in a poem she wrote for Emily after their mother's death.²⁶ Dickinson also occasionally indented a line or patterned series of lines—especially in her early fascicles (see "Papa above!" F7 Sh3). Similarly, she occasionally assigned titles to poems in her fascicles or letters, sometimes formally and sometimes indirectly: she wrote the title "Snow flakes" on her fascicle copy of "I counted till they danced so" and sent a copy of "Heart not so heavy as mine" to Catherine Scott Anthon, referring to it as "Whistling under my window –."

Although Dickinson's increasingly large handwriting caused her to use more run-on lines in her later years, it is in most cases obvious where Dickinson chose to begin a new poetic line.²⁷ She marked poetic lines by beginning with a capital letter written flush with the left margin (except where she indented to avoid a watermark or the tail of punctuation on the line above), often by leaving blank space at the end of the preceding row of script, and by syntax: Dickinson did not end poetic lines on an article ("the," "a") or minor preposition (such as "of").²⁸ The definitive use of such patterns in her more than eleven hundred fascicle and unbound-sheet poems, and her continuation of these patterns in presentation copies of her later poems, make it clear that for her these were norms.

Meter is not always a clear yardstick for poetic form because Dickinson at times unambiguously flouted the metrical presentation of a line. Her most typical variation of the metrical line is to split it into two poetic lines—for example, in "There is a word / Which bears a sword." Frequently such lines appear at the beginning of a poem, often to call attention to a rhyme or syntactic parallelism. For example, Dickinson split two lines to

highlight parallel phrasing in “You’ll know it – as you know ’tis Noon –” (F15 Sh3):

You’ll know it – as you know ’tis Noon –
 By Glory –
 As you do the Sun –
 By Glory –
 As you will in Heaven –
 Know God the Father – and the Son.

One hears a common-meter quatrain (8888 syllables) but the lines as written (835358) emphasize the poem’s repetitions.

Far less frequently, Dickinson combined two metrical lines into a single poetic line, as, for example, in “I tried to think a lonelier Thing” (F25 Sh1). This poem’s first two lines initiate what we might expect to be a standard 8686 meter. The third poetic line, however, combines two metrical lines—as Dickinson indicated by ending her row of script with “An”; were she making metrical and poetic lines coincide, “An” would have begun a row of print. The fourth poetic line of this clearly marked stanza is a seven-syllable line that one would expect to begin stanza 2—perhaps included as part of stanza 1 because it concludes the previous phrase: “An Omen . . . / Of Death’s . . . nearness –.” Consequently the poem’s first stanza has a syllable count of 8, 6, 13, and then 7 syllables, and the second stanza has only three lines, with a 676 syllable pattern. One hears 8676 7676, but in this edition one sees:

I tried to think a lonelier Thing
 Than any I had seen –
 Some Polar Expiation – An Omen in the Bone
 Of Death’s tremendous nearness –

I probed Retrieveless things
 My Duplicate – to borrow –
 A Haggard comfort springs

When Dickinson ceased predictably capitalizing the first word of a new line, and when poems conclude in margins, upside down, or on the backs of pages, it becomes more difficult to tell whether she might have had such linear variation in mind.



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“I tried to think a lonelier Thing”

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Even earlier, Dickinson's lineation is occasionally ambiguous. In "She staked Her Feathers – Gained an Arc –" (F38 Sh3), Dickinson began a new row of script with a new syntactic phrase and the capitalized "Gained." Because in the alternative for this line, "[She staked Her] Wings – and gained a Bush –, " she did not capitalize "gained" and began a new row of script at "Bush –, " and because nothing else in the single extant manuscript of this poem suggests patterned deviation from a metrical norm, I present the poem's first stanza as:

She staked Her Feathers – Gained an Arc – [Her] Wings – and gained a Bush –
 Debated – Rose again –
 This time – beyond the estimate [the] inference
 Of Envy, or of Men –

In contrast, "The Sea said" (Unbound Sheet 90) presents the possibility of a distinct pattern of split metrical lines and syntax; Dickinson ended successive rows of script with "said" and put the sea or brook's speech on a new row of script. One might present this in print as:

The Sea said
 "Come" to the Brook –
 The Brook said
 "Let me grow" –
 The Sea said
 "Then you will be a Sea" –
 "I want a Brook –
 Come now" –
 The Sea said
 "Go" to the Sea –
 The Sea said
 "I am he
 You cherished" –
 "Learned Waters –
 Wisdom is stale to me" –

A presentation that assumes a three-beat metrical line (except in the longer line 3) would read like this:

The Sea said "Come" to the Brook –
 The Brook said "Let me grow" –

The Sea said
 "Come" to the Brook.
 The Brook said
 "Let me go on"
 The Sea said
 "You will
 see the Sea"

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"I want a Brook.
 Come on"
 The Sea said
 "Go" to the Sea.
 The Sea said
 "I am the
 You can
 I learned
 Wisdom
 to me"

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"The Sea said"

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closely resemble “when” and “then”; context and a slight difference in the shape of the letters enable one to distinguish *re* from *n*.

Misuse or absence of apostrophes has been corrected on two principles. First, Dickinson used apostrophes correctly in many words, although not entirely consistently—for example, in “o’er,” “that’s,” “’twere,” “’tis,” “’twould,” “sh’d,” “I’ll,” “she’ll,” “he’d,” and in nouns like “Maple’s.” Second, her use of an apostrophe to designate the possessive “its” as “it’s,” or “our’s” or “her’s,” was acceptable in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, before spelling standardization was common in the United States. Her usage, then, appears to be old-fashioned but correct, and it is equally consistent in her prose—that is, she was not establishing a poetic variation. I emend her apostrophe use to make her syntax less ambiguous for current readers—for example, her consistent use of “cant” for “can’t” does not indicate the noun for sanctimonious speech.³¹ In their reading editions, Johnson and Franklin silently emend Dickinson’s spelling of many words, including her archaic use or misuse of some apostrophes, although Franklin maintains some characteristic idiosyncrasies, most noticeably the absence or misplacement of apostrophes in contractions involving “not” (“wont,” “cant,” “did’nt,” “would’nt”); her archaic representation of the possessive “its” as “it’s”; and her spelling of “upon” as “opon”—a spelling she herself changed to “upon” around 1880.³²

I do not reproduce the many instances in which Dickinson began a word and then cancelled or wrote over letters to change spelling, the word, or the placement of the word in relation to a poetic line. For example, in “Must be a Wo —” (F28 Sh4) she wrote “a” at the end of a row of script, then cancelled it and began the next row of script with the capitalized word “As”—apparently having changed her mind as to where a new poetic line should begin. I do indicate where Dickinson wrote a word and then cancelled it, for example, in “I think To Live – may be a Bliss” (F34 Sh1), where she wrote “So plausible appears becomes”; I put “appears” in the margin with other alternatives. Similarly, if Dickinson apparently inadvertently omitted a word, I include it within square brackets and comment on the addition in a note: in “Afraid! Of whom am I afraid?” (F16 Sh4), Dickinson omits “a” in the line “’Twere odd I fear [a] thing.” These decisions, like all editorial decisions, are shaped by the edition’s goal. My goal has been to provide clear, accurate texts for the general reader in the context of their use and circulation, while also indicating the range of Dickinson’s practices in copying the poems and in marking a text’s fluidity or irresolution at various stages of copying and composition.

Abbreviations and Reading Guide

The following abbreviations and symbols are used to indicate previous editions of Dickinson's writing, sources referred to in the notes, organizational features of this volume, and frequently mentioned correspondents and family members.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	William Austin Dickinson, called Austin
Bianchi	Martha Dickinson Bianchi, editor of Emily Dickinson, <i>The Single Hound: Poems of a Lifetime</i> (Boston: Little, Brown, 1914); <i>The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson</i> (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1924); <i>Emily Dickinson Face to Face</i> (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1932)
Bingham	Millicent Todd Bingham, author of <i>Ancestors' Brocades: The Literary Debut of Emily Dickinson</i> (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945)
DEA	Dickinson Electronic Archives, Martha Nell Smith, executive editor; Lara Vetter, general editor; Ellen Louise Hart and Marta Werner, associate editors; http://archive.emilydickinson.org/working/csd.php
DIHOT	<i>Dickinson in Her Own Time</i> , edited by Jane Donahue Eberwein, Stephanie Farrar, and Cristanne Miller (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015)
ED	Emily Dickinson
EDC	<i>Emily Dickinson's Correspondences: A Born-Digital Textual Inquiry</i> , edited by Martha Nell Smith and Lara Vetter (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008–); http://www.rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/edc/default.xqy
EH	Elizabeth Holland

- F Fascicle; a bound booklet of poems copied onto folded sheets
- Fr *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Ralph W. Franklin, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998)
- HHJ Helen Hunt Jackson
- L “L” numbers cited in this volume refer to the numbers assigned to Dickinson’s letters in *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958)
- Leyda Jay Leyda, author of *The Years and Hours of Emily Dickinson*, 2 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1960)
- MLT Mabel Loomis Todd, coeditor with Thomas Wentworth Higginson of *Emily Dickinson’s Poems and Poems, Second Series* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890 and 1891, respectively); editor of *Letters of Emily Dickinson* and *Poems, Third Series* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1894 and 1896)
- Ns Louisa and Frances Norcross
- OMC *Open Me Carefully: Emily Dickinson’s Intimate Correspondence to Susan Huntington Dickinson*, edited by Ellen Louise Hart and Martha Nell Smith (Ashfield, MA: Paris Press, 1998)
- RWF Ralph W. Franklin, editor of *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1998); see “Fr”
- SB Samuel Bowles
- SD Susan Huntington Gilbert Dickinson
- Sh Sheet, a folded piece of stationery constituting two leaves, or four pages
- ST Sarah Tuckerman
- THJ Thomas H. Johnson, coeditor of *The Letters of Emily Dickinson* (1958)—see “L”—and editor of *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1955)
- TWH Thomas Wentworth Higginson
- Webster’s Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (Amherst, MA: J. S. & C. Adams, 1844); the 1844 dictionary constituted bound sheets printed for the 1841 revised edition; ED used the 1844 Webster’s

MARKS USED IN PRESENTATION OF POEMS

- Indicates the end of a poem
- [] A bracketed word precedes and positions the alternative or revision for a word in that line of the poem; when the alternative begins a line, the bracketed word follows the potential substitution. Typically, an alternative replaces a word or words of the same type and length; if it is unclear how many words an alternative replaces, I give the preceding word in brackets, the alternative, and the following word in brackets: [preceding word] alternative [following word]. Where there are no brackets, the alternative word or phrase replaces the entire line.
- Indicates that the following word or phrase is an alternative for what precedes it. For example:
 Or Order, or Apparent Action – [Apparent] signal – • notice
 indicates that either “signal –” or “notice” follows “Apparent” and might replace “Action.”
- 1863 Dates refer to the date of copying, not the date of the composition of a poem
- Indicates a stanza break when the poem continues onto the following page

Example 1

I cannot dance upon my Toes –¹
 No Man instructed me –
 But oftentimes, among my mind,
 A Glee possesseth me,
 That had I Ballet Knowledge –
 Would put itself abroad
 In Pirouette to blanch a Troupe –
 Or lay a Prima, mad,
 And though I had no Gown of Gauze –
 No Ringlet, to my Hair,

Nor hopped for Audiences – like Birds,
One Claw upon the air –

Nor tossed my shape in Eider Balls,
Nor rolled on wheels of snow
Till I was out of sight, in sound,
The House encore me so –

Nor any know I know the Art
I mention – easy – Here –
Nor any Placard boast me –
It's full as Opera –



I cannot dance: *Sent to TWH (variant) c. August 1862*

SHEET TWO c. autumn 1862

1. I cannot dance: the terms “glee,” “troupe,” “prima,” and “opera” were commonly used to refer to minstrel shows or houses, and dancing grotesquely like a bird might suggest the popular dance “Jim Crow.” ED called herself “Mrs. Jim Crow” in an August 1860 letter (L223).

This poem occurs at the end of Sheet 1 in Fascicle 19 (c. autumn 1862), hence “Sheet Two” and a date follow the line designating the poem’s end and its circulation information; fascicle numbers appear as a running header throughout this section of the text, marking this poem as part of Fascicle 19 (not shown here). It was sent to Thomas Wentworth Higginson, probably sometime before it was copied onto the page bound into a fascicle. There are no alternatives. The annotation (note 1) appears with other notes in the back of this book.

Example 2

SHEET TWO c. early 1862

I got so I could hear his name –²
Without – Tremendous gain –
That Stop-sensation – on my Soul –
And Thunder – in the Room –

[could] think – • take –

o

Dickinson often provided alternatives in pairs or groups of lines. In this poem's line 6, Dickinson gave eight alternative words for "gracious," linking them to the alternative "goes" (substituting for "takes"), and she underlined both "goes" and "spacious," in addition to repeating both words. For lines 7 and 8, she provided three alternative paired lines, cancelling one; following the final paired alternative, she proposed two alternatives to its words: "unavailing –" for "eligible" and "Adversity –" for "extremity –." As my transcription shows, Dickinson did not consistently write paired alternatives as distinct poetic lines: in the alternatives for lines 7 and 8, "from" and "to" are not capitalized and do not begin a row of script, although they replace the "To" at the beginning of line 8. Lines 9 and 10 are similarly reimagined as a group, but with three alternatives to the proposed substitution's final word, "evolved –." The poem's last two stanzas might include any combination of these alternatives for lines 6 through 10. Few poems are this complex in their alternatives.

THE FASCICLES

82-1

v II

The Gentian weaves her fringes -
The Maple's loom is dead -
My departing blossoms
Obviate parade.

A brief, but patient illness -
Am down to

bed
the
a
link
be
we
that
that
live

with this

In the name of the
And of the Butterfly
And of the Breeze.

"The Gentian weaves her fringes -"; "A brief, but patient illness -"; and "In the name of the Bee -"

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FASCICLE ONE

SHEET ONE c. late summer 1858

The Gentian weaves her fringes –
 The Maple's loom is red –
 My departing blossoms
 Obviate parade.



A brief, but patient illness –
 An hour to prepare –
 And one below, this morning
 Is where the angels are –
 It was a short procession –
 The Bobolink was there –
 An aged Bee addressed us –
 And then we knelt in prayer –
 We trust that she was willing –
 We ask that we may be –
 Summer – Sister – Seraph!
 Let us go with thee!



In the name of the Bee –¹
 And of the Butterfly –
 And of the Breeze – Amen!



Frequently the woods are pink –
 Frequently, are brown.
 Frequently the hills undress
 Behind my native town –
 Oft a head is crested
 I was wont to see –

Frequently the woods: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1858*

But when the woods were painted –
 He – too – did fly away –
 Time brought me other Robins –
 Their ballads were the same –
 Still, for my missing Troubadour
 I kept the “house at hame”.

I had a star in heaven –
 One “Pleiad” was its name –
 And when I was not heeding,
 It wandered from the same –
 And tho’ the skies are crowded –
 And all the night ashine –
 I do not care about it –
 Since none of them are mine.

My story has a moral –
 I have a missing friend –
 “Pleiad” its name – and Robin –
 And guinea in the sand –
 And when this mournful ditty
 Accompanied with tear –
 Shall meet the eye of traitor
 In country far from here –
 Grant that repentance solemn
 May seize upon his mind –
 And he no consolation
 Beneath the sun may find.



There is a morn by men unseen –⁷
 Whose maids upon remoter green
 Keep their seraphic May –
 And all day long, with dance and game,
 And gambol I may never name –
 Employ their holiday.

Here to light measure, move the feet
 Which walk no more the village street –
 Nor by the wood are found –
 Here are the birds that sought the sun

When last year's distaff idle hung
 And summer's brows were bound.

Ne'er saw I such a wondrous scene –
 Ne'er such a ring on such a green –
 Nor so serene array –
 As if the stars some summer night
 Should swing their cups of Chrysolite –
 And revel till the day –

Like thee to dance – like thee to sing –
 People upon that mystic green –
 I ask, each new May morn.
 I wait thy far – fantastic bells –
 Announcing me in other dells –
 Unto the different dawn!



As if I asked a common alms –⁸
 And in my wondering hand,
 A stranger pressed a kingdom –
 And I – bewildered stand –
 As if I asked the Orient
 Had it for me a morn?
 And it sh'd lift its purple dikes
 And flood me with the Dawn!



She slept beneath a tree –⁹
 Remembered but by me.
 I touched her Cradle mute –
 She recognized the foot –
 Put on her Carmine suit
 And see!



SHEET THREE c. summer 1858

The feet of people walking home¹⁰
 With gayer sandals go –
 The crocus – till she rises –

As if I: *Sent to TWH (variant) 7 June 1862*
 The feet of: *Apparently sent to SD (variant) c. early 1859*

The vassal of the snow –
 The lips at Hallelujah
 Long years of practise bore –
 Till bye and bye, these Bargemen
 Walked – singing – on the shore.

Pearls are the Diver's farthings,
 Extorted from the sea –
 Pinions – the Seraph's wagon –
 Pedestrian once – as we –
 Night is the morning's canvas –
 Larceny – legacy –
 Death – but our rapt attention
 To immortality.

My figures fail to tell me
 How far the village lies –
 Whose peasants are the angels –
 Whose cantons dot the skies –
 My Classics veil their faces –
 My faith that Dark adores –
 Which from its solemn abbeys –
 Such resurrection pours!



It's all I have to bring today –
 This, and my heart beside –
 This, and my heart, and all the fields –
 And all the meadows wide –
 Be sure you count – sh'd I forget
 Some one the sum could tell –
 This, and my heart, and all the Bees
 Which in the Clover dwell.



Morns like these – we parted –
 Noons like these – she rose –
 Fluttering first – then firmer
 To her fair repose.

o

Never did she lisp it –
 It was not for me –
 She – was mute from transport –
 I – from agony –

Till – the evening nearing
 One the curtains drew –
 Quick! A sharper rustling!
 And this linnet flew!



So has a Daisy vanished
 From the fields today –
 So tiptoed many a slipper
 To Paradise away –
 Oozed so, in crimson bubbles
 Day's departing tide –
 Blooming – tripping – flowing –
 Are ye then with God?



If those I loved were lost¹¹
 The Crier's voice w'd tell me –
 If those I loved were found
 The bells of Ghent w'd ring –
 Did those I loved repose
 The Daisy would impel me.
 Philip – when bewildered
 Bore his riddle in!



SHEET FOUR c. summer 1858

Adrift! A little boat adrift!¹²
 And night is coming down!
 Will *no* one guide a little boat
 Unto the nearest town?

So sailors say – on yesterday –
 Just as the dusk was brown

One little boat gave up its strife
And gurgled down and down.

So angels say – on yesterday –
Just as the dawn was red
One little boat – o’erspent with gales –
Retrimmed its masts – redecked its sails –
And shot – exultant on!



Summer for thee, grant I may be
When Summer days are flown!
Thy music still, when Whippowil
And Oriole – are done!

For thee to bloom, I’ll skip the tomb
And row my blossoms o’er!
Pray gather me –
 Anemone –
Thy flower – forevermore!



When Roses cease to bloom, Sir,¹³
And Violets are done –
When Bumblebees in solemn flight
Have passed beyond the Sun –
The hand that paused to gather
Upon this Summer’s day
Will idle lie – in Auburn –
Then take my flowers – pray!



Oh if remembering were forgetting –
Then I remember not!
And if forgetting – recollecting –
How near I had forgot!
And if to miss – were merry –
And to mourn were gay,
How very blithe the maiden
Who gathered these today!



The tempests touched our garments –
 The lightning's poinards gleamed –
 Fierce from the Crag above us
 The hungry Vulture screamed –

The Satyrs fingers beckoned –
 The Valley murmured "Come" –
These were the mates –
This was the road
 These Children fluttered home.



The Guest is gold and crimson –
 An Opal guest, and gray –
 Of ermine is his doublet –
 His Capuchin gay –

He reaches town at nightfall –
 He stops at every door –
 Who looks for him at morning –
 I pray him too – explore
 The Lark's pure territory –
 Or the Lapwing's shore!



Snow flakes.
 I counted till they danced so
 Their slippers leaped the town –
 And then I took a pencil
 To note the rebels down –
 And then they grew so jolly
 I did resign the prig –
 And ten of my once stately toes
 Are marshalled for a jig!



Before the ice is in the pools –
 Before the skaters go,
 Or any cheek at nightfall
 Is tarnished by the snow –



Before the fields have finished –
 Before the Christmas tree,
 Wonder upon wonder –
 Will arrive to me!

What we touch the hems of
 On a summer's day –
 What is only walking
 Just a bridge away –

That which sings so – speaks so –
 When there's no one here –
 Will the frock I wept in
 Answer me to wear?



By such and such an offering
 To Mr So and So –
 The web of life is woven –
 So martyrs albums show!



SHEET TWO c. early 1859

It did not surprise me –
 So I said – or thought –
 She will stir her pinions
 And the nest forgot,

Traverse broader forests –
 Build in gayer boughs,
 Breathe in Ear more modern
 God's old fashioned vows –

This was but a Birdling –
 What and if it be
 One within my bosom
 Had departed me?

This was but a story –
 What and if indeed

There were just such coffin
In the heart – instead?



When I count the seeds
That are sown beneath –
To bloom so, bye and bye –

When I con the people
Lain so low –
To be received as high –

When I believe the garden
Mortal shall not see –
Pick by faith its blossom
And avoid its Bee,
I can spare this summer – unreluctantly.



Bless God, he went as soldiers,¹⁸
His musket on his breast –
Grant God, he charge the bravest
Of all the martial blest!

Please God, might I behold him
In epauletted white –
I should not fear the foe then –
I should not fear the fight!



If I should cease to bring a Rose
Upon a festal day,
'Twill be because *beyond* the Rose
I have been called away –

If I should cease to take the names
My buds commemorate –
'Twill be because *Death's* finger
Clasps my murmuring lip!



One Sister have I in the house –¹⁹
 And one a hedge away.
 There's only one recorded –
 But both belong to me.

One came the road that I came –
 And wore my last year's gown –
 The other, as a bird her nest
 Builted our hearts among.

She did not sing as we did –
 It was a different tune –
 Herself to her a music
 As Bumble bee of June.

Today is far from childhood,
 But up and down the hills,
 I held her hand the tighter –
 Which shortened all the miles –

And still her hum
 The years among,
 Deceives the Butterfly;
 And in her Eye
 The Violets lie,
 Mouldered this many May –

I spilt the dew,
 But took the morn –
 I chose this single star
 From out the wide night's numbers –
 Sue – forevermore!



SHEET THREE early 1859

“Lethe” in my flower,²⁰
 Of which they who drink,
 In the fadeless Orchards
 Hear the bobolink!

o

Merely flake or petal
 As the Eye beholds
 Jupiter! my father!
 I perceive the rose!



To venerate the simple days
 Which lead the seasons by –
 Needs but to remember
 That from you or I,
 They may take the trifle
 Termed *mortality!*

To invest existence with a stately air –
 Needs but to remember
 That the Acorn there
 Is the egg of forests
 For the upper Air!



I've got an arrow here.²¹
 Loving the hand that sent it
 I the dart revere.

Fell, they will say, in "skirmish"!
 Vanquished, my soul will know
 By but a simple arrow
 Sped by an archer's bow.

MLT



I robbed the Woods –²²
 The trusting Woods –
 The unsuspecting Trees
 Brought out their Burs and mosses
 My fantasy to please –
 I scanned their trinkets curious –
 I grasped – I bore away –
 What will the solemn Hemlock –
 What will the Oak tree say?



I keep my pledge.
 I was not called –
 Death did not notice me.
 I bring my Rose –
 I plight again –
 By every sainted Bee –
 By Daisy called from hillside –
 By Bobolink from lane –
 Blossom and I –
Her oath, and mine –
 Will surely come again –



Heart! We will forget him!
 You and I – tonight!
 You may forget the warmth he gave –
 I will forget the light!

When you have done, pray tell me
 That I may straight begin!
 Haste! lest while you're lagging
 I remember him!



Once more, my now bewildered Dove²⁴
 Bestirs her puzzled wings.
 Once more, her mistress, on the deep
 Her troubled question flings –

Thrice to the floating casement
 The Patriarch's bird returned –
 Courage! My brave Columba!
 There may yet be *Land!*



Baffled for just a day or two –
 Embarrassed – not afraid –
 Encounter in my garden
 An unexpected Maid.

o

She beckons, and the woods start –
She nods, and all begin –
Surely, such a country
I was never in!



FASCICLE THREE

SHEET ONE c. spring 1859

Delayed till she had ceased to know –
 Delayed till in its vest of snow
 Her loving bosom lay –
 An hour behind the fleeting breath –
 Later by just an hour than Death –
 Oh lagging Yesterday!

Could she have guessed that it w'd be –
 Could but a crier of the joy
 Have climbed the distant hill –
 Had not the bliss so slow a pace
 Who knows but this surrendered face
 Were undefeated still?

Oh if there may departing be
 Any forgot by Victory
 In her imperial round –
 Show them this meek apparreled thing
 That could not stop to be a king –
 Doubtful if it be crowned!



Some things that fly there be –
 Birds – Hours – the Bumblebee –
 Of these no Elegy.

Some things that stay there be –
 Grief – Hills – Eternity –
 Nor this behooveth me.

There are that resting, rise.
 Can I expound the skies?
 How still the Riddle lies!



Within my reach!
 I could have touched!
 I might have chanced that way!
 Soft sauntered thro' the village –
 Sauntered as soft away!
 So unsuspected Violets
 Within the meadows go –
 Too late for striving fingers
 That passed, an hour ago!



So bashful when I spied her!
 So pretty – so ashamed!
 So hidden in her leaflets
 Lest anybody find –

 So breathless till I passed her –
 So helpless when I turned
 And bore her struggling, blushing,
 Her simple haunts beyond!

 For whom I robbed the Dingle –
 For whom betrayed the Dell –
 Many, will doubtless ask me –
 But I shall never tell!



My friend must be a Bird –
 Because it flies!
 Mortal, my friend must be –
 Because it dies!
 Barbs has it, like a Bee!
 Ah, curious friend!
 Thou puzzlest me!



Went up a year this evening!
 I recollect it well!
 Amid no bells nor bravoos
 The bystanders will tell!

Cheerful – as to the village –
 Tranquil – as to repose –
 Chastened – as to the Chapel
 This humble Tourist rose!
 Did not talk of returning!
 Alluded to no time
 When, were the gales propitious –
 We might look for him!
 Was grateful for the Roses
 In life's diverse boquet –
 Talked softly of new species
 To pick another day;
 Beguiling thus the wonder
 The *wondrous* nearer drew –
 Hands bustled at the moorings –
 The crowd respectful grew –
 Ascended from our vision
 To countenances new!
 A Difference – A Daisy –
 Is all the rest I knew!



SHEET TWO c. spring 1859

Angels, in the early morning
 May be seen the Dews among,
 Stooping – plucking – smiling – flying –
 Do the Buds to them belong?

Angels, when the sun is hottest
 May be seen the sands among,
 Stooping – plucking – sighing – flying –
 Parched the flowers they bear along.



My nosegays are for Captives –
 Dim – long expectant eyes –
 Fingers denied the plucking,
 Patient till Paradise –

To such, if they sh'd whisper
 Of morning and the moor –

A pace had been between –
 Did but a snake bisect the brake
 My life had forfeit been.

That was a wondrous booty –
 I hope 'twas honest gained.
 Those were the fairest ingots
 That ever kissed the spade!

Whether to keep the secret –
 Whether to reveal –
 Whether as I ponder
 “Kidd” will sudden sail –

Could a shrewd advise me
 We might e'en divide –
 Should a shrewd betray me –
 Atropos decide!



I never lost as much but twice –
 And that was in the sod.
 Twice have I stood a beggar
 Before the door of God!

Angels – twice descending
 Reimbursed my store –
 Burglar! Banker – Father!
 I am poor once more!



I haven't told my garden yet –
 Lest that should conquer me.
 I haven't quite the strength now
 To break it to the Bee –

I will not name it in the street
 For shops w'd stare at me –
 That one so shy – so ignorant
 Should have the face to die.

o

The hillsides must not know it –
 Where I have rambled so –
 Nor tell the loving forests
 The day that I shall go –
 Nor lisp it at the table –
 Nor heedless by the way
 Hint that within the Riddle
 One will walk today –



I often passed the Village²⁹
 When going home from school –
 And wondered what they did there –
 And why it was so still –

I did not know the year then,
 In which my call would come –
 Earlier, by the Dial,
 Than the rest have gone.

It's stiller than the sundown.
 It's cooler than the dawn –
 The Daisies dare to come here –
 And birds can flutter down –

So when you are tired –
 Or – perplexed – or cold –
 Trust the loving promise
 Underneath the mould,
 Cry "it's I," "take Dollie,"
 And I will enfold!



SHEET FOUR c. autumn 1858

The morns are meeker than they were –
 The nuts are getting brown –
 The berry's cheek is plumper –
 The Rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf –
 The field a scarlet gown –

The morns are: *Sent to SD (variant) c. autumn 1858, with a flower and ribbon*

Lest I sh'd be old fashioned
I'll put a trinket on.



Whether my bark went down at sea –
Whether she met with gales –
Whether to isles enchanted
She bent her docile sails –

By what mystic mooring
She is held today –
This is the errand of the eye
Out upon the Bay.



Taken from men – this morning –
Carried by men today –
Met by the Gods with banners –
Who marshalled her away –

One little maid – from playmates –
One little mind from school –
There must be guests in Eden –
All the rooms are full –

Far – as the East from Even –
Dim – as the border star –
Courtiers quaint, in Kingdoms
Our departed are.



Sleep is supposed to be³⁰
By souls of sanity
The shutting of the eye.

Sleep is the station grand
Down wh', on either hand
The hosts of witness stand!

Morn is supposed to be
By people of degree
The breaking of the Day.



Morning has not occurred!

That shall Aurora be –
 East of Eternity –
 One with the banner gay –
 One in the red array –
That is the break of Day!



If I should die –³¹
 And you should live –
 And time sh'd gurgle on –
 And morn sh'd beam –
 And noon should burn –
 As it has usual done –
 If Birds should build as early
 And Bees as bustling go –
 One might depart at option
 From enterprise below!
 'Tis sweet to know that stocks will stand
 When we with Daisies lie –
 That Commerce will continue –
 And Trades as briskly fly –
 It makes the parting tranquil
 And keeps the soul serene –
 That gentlemen so sprightly
 Conduct the pleasing scene!



By Chivalries as tiny,
 A Blossom, or a Book,
 The seeds of smiles are planted –
 Which blossom in the dark.



FASCICLE FOUR

SHEET ONE c. summer 1859

Perhaps you'd like to buy a flower,³²
 But I could never sell –
 If you would like to *borrow*,
 Until the Daffodil

Unties her yellow Bonnet
 Beneath the village door,
 Until the Bees, from Clover rows
 Their Hock, and sherry, draw,

Why, I will lend until just then,
 But not an hour more!



Water, is taught by thirst.
 Land – by the Oceans passed.
 Transport – by throe –
 Peace, by its battles told –
 Love, by memorial mold –
 Birds, by the snow.



Have you got a Brook in your little heart,
 Where bashful flowers blow,
 And blushing birds go down to drink –
 And shadows tremble so –

And nobody knows, so still it flows,
 That any brook is there,
 And yet your little draught of life
 Is daily drunken there –

o

Angels' breathless ballot
 Lingers to record thee –
 Imps in eager caucus
 Raffle for my soul!



An altered look about the hills –³⁵
 A Tyrian light the village fills –
 A wider sunrise in the morn –
 A deeper twilight on the lawn –
 A print of a vermilion foot –
 A purple finger on the slope –
 A flippant fly upon the pane –
 A spider at his trade again –
 An added strut in Chanticleer –
 A flower expected everywhere –
 An axe shrill singing in the woods –
 Fern odors on untravelled roads –
 All this and more I cannot tell –
 A furtive look you know as well –
 And Nicodemus' Mystery
 Receives its annual reply!



Some, too fragile for winter winds³⁶
 The thoughtful grave encloses –
 Tenderly tucking them in from frost
 Before their feet are cold –

Never the treasures in her nest
 The cautious grave exposes,
 Building where schoolboy dare not look,
 And sportsman is not bold.

This covert have all the children
 Early aged, and often cold,
 Sparrows, unnoticed by the Father –
 Lambs for whom time had not a fold.



SHEET THREE c. summer 1859

Whose are the little beds – I asked³⁷
 Which in the valleys lie?
 Some shook their heads, and others smiled –
 And no one made reply.

Perhaps they did not hear – I said,
 I will inquire again –
 Whose are the beds – the tiny beds
 So thick upon the plain?

'Tis Daisy, in the shortest –
 A little further on –
 Nearest the door – to wake the 1st,
 Little Leontodon.

'Tis Iris, Sir, and Aster –
 Anemone, and Bell –
 Bartsia, in the blanket red,
 And chubby Daffodil.

Meanwhile – at many cradles
 Her busy foot she plied –
 Humming the quaintest lullaby
 That ever rocked a child.

Hush! Epigea wakens!
 The Crocus stirs her lids –
 Rhodora's cheek is crimson –
 She's dreaming of the woods!

Then turning from them reverent –
 Their bedtime 'tis, she said –
 The Bumble bees will wake them
 When April woods are red.



For every Bird a nest –
 Wherefore in timid quest
 Some little Wren goes seeking round –
 Wherefore when boughs are free,

Households in every tree,
Pilgrim be found?

Perhaps a home too high –
Ah aristocracy!
The little Wren desires –

Perhaps of twig so fine –
Of twine e'en superfine,
Her pride aspires –

The Lark is not ashamed
To build upon the ground
Her modest house –

Yet who of all the throng
Dancing around the sun
Does so rejoice?



“They have not chosen me” – he said –³⁸
“But I have chosen them”!
Brave – Broken hearted statement –
Uttered in Bethlehem!

I could not have told it,
But since Jesus *dared*,
Sovereign, know a Daisy
Thy dishonor shared!



SHEET FOUR c. summer 1859

She bore it till the simple veins
Traced azure on her hand –
Till pleading, round her quiet eyes
The purple Crayons stand.

Till Daffodils had come and gone
I cannot tell the sum,
And then she ceased to bear it –
And with the Saints sat down.

o

“They have not: *Sent to Mary Bowles (variant) c. summer 1859*

No more her patient figure
 At twilight soft to meet –
 No more her timid bonnet
 Upon the village street –

But crowns instead, and courtiers –
 And in the midst so fair,
 Whose but her shy – immortal face
 Of whom we're whispering here?



We should not mind so small a flower³⁹
 Except it quiet bring
 Our little garden that we lost
 Back to the Lawn again.

So spicy her Carnations nod –
 So drunken, reel her Bees –
 So silver steal a hundred flutes
 From out a hundred trees –

That whoso sees this little flower
 By faith may clear behold
 The Bobolinks around the throne
 And Dandelions gold.



This heart that broke so long –
 These feet that never flagged –
 This faith that watched for star in vain,
 Give gently to the dead –

Hound cannot overtake the Hare
 That fluttered panting, here,
 Nor any schoolboy rob the nest
 Tenderness builded there.



On such a night, or such a night,
 Would anybody care

If such a little figure
Slipped quiet from its chair,

So quiet – Oh how quiet,
That nobody might know
But that the little figure
Rocked softer – to and fro –

On such a dawn, or such a dawn –
Would anybody sigh
That such a little figure
Too sound asleep did lie

For Chanticleer to wake it –
Or stirring house below –
Or giddy bird in Orchard –
Or early task to do?

There was a little figure plump
For every little knoll,
Busy needles, and spools of thread –
And trudging feet from school –

Playmates, and holidays, and nuts –
And visions vast and small.
Strange that the feet so precious charged
Should reach so small a goal!



For our mutual honor,
Immortality!



Our share of night to bear –
Our share of morning –
Our blank in bliss to fill,
Our blank in scorning –

Here a star, and there a star,
Some lose their way!
Here a mist – and there a mist –
Afterwards – Day!



SHEET TWO c. summer 1859

“Good night,” because we must!
How intricate the Dust!
I would go to know –
Oh Incognito!

Saucy, saucy Seraph,
To elude me so!
Father! they won’t tell me!
Won’t you tell them to?



South winds jostle them –⁴²
Bumblebees come –
Hover – hesitate –
Drink, and are gone –

Butterflies pause
On their passage Cashmere –
I – softly plucking,
Present them here!



Low at my problem bending,
Another problem comes –

“Good night,” because: *Sent to SB (variant) c. summer 1859*
South winds jostle: *Sent to Thomas Gilbert, SD’s brother, (variant) and to Ns (lost)*
c. summer 1859, and to TWH (variant) 25 April 1862, with pressed flowers
Low at my: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1859*

Larger than mine – serener –
Involving statelier sums.

I check my busy pencil –
My figures file away –
Wherefore, my baffled fingers
Thy perplexity?



What Inn is this
Where for the night
Peculiar Traveller comes?
Who is the Landlord?
Where the maids?
Behold, what curious rooms!
No ruddy fires on the hearth –
No brimming tankards flow.
Necromancer! Landlord!
Who are these below?



I had some things that I called mine –⁴³
And God, that he called his –
Till recently a rival claim
Disturbed these amities.

The property, my garden,
Which having sown with care –
He claims the pretty acre –
And sends a Bailiff there.

The station of the parties
Forbids publicity,
But Justice is sublimer
Than Arms, or pedigree.

I'll institute an "Action" –
I'll vindicate the law –
Jove! Choose your counsel –
I retain "Shaw"!



In rags mysterious as these
 The shining Courtiers go,
 Vailing the purple, and the plumes –
 Vailing the ermine so.

Smiling, as they request an alms
 At some imposing door –
 Smiling when we walk barefoot
 Upon their golden floor!



My friend attacks my friend!
 Oh Battle picturesque!
 Then I turn Soldier too,
 And he turns Satirist!
 How martial is this place!
 Had I a mighty gun
 I think I'd shoot the human race
 And then to glory run!



SHEET THREE c. summer 1859

“Arcturus” is his other name –⁴⁴
 I'd rather call him “Star”!
 It's very mean of Science
 To go and interfere!

I slew a worm the other day,
 A “Savan” passing by
 Murmured “Resurgam” – “Centipede”!
 “Oh Lord, how frail are we”!

I pull a flower from the woods –
 A monster with a glass
 Computes the stamens in a breath –
 And has her in a “Class”!

Whereas I took the Butterfly
 Aforetime in my hat,

⁴⁴“Arcturus” is his: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1859*

He sits erect in "Cabinets" –
The Clover bells forgot!

What once was "Heaven"
Is "Zenith" now!
Where I proposed to go
When Time's brief masquerade was done
Is mapped, and charted too!

What if the "poles" should frisk about
And stand upon their heads!
I hope I'm ready for "the worst" –
Whatever prank betides!

Perhaps the "kingdom of Heaven's" changed.
I hope the "Children" there
Won't be "new fashioned" when I come –
And laugh at me – and stare!

I hope the Father in the skies
Will lift his little girl –
"Old fashioned"! naughty! everything!
Over the stile of "pearl"!



Talk with prudence to a Beggar⁴⁵
Of "Potosi," and the mines!
Reverently, to the Hungry
Of your viands, and your wines!

Cautious, hint to any Captive
You have passed enfranchised feet!
Anecdotes of air, in Dungeons
Have sometimes proved deadly sweet!



If this is "fading"⁴⁶
Oh let me immediately "fade"!
If this is "dying"
Bury – me, in such a shroud of red!
If this is "sleep,"

On such a night
 How proud to shut the eye!
 Good evening, gentle Fellow men!
Peacock presumes to die!



As Watchers hang upon the East –
 As Beggars revel at a feast
 By savory fancy spread –
 As Brooks in Deserts, babble sweet
 On Ear too far for the delight –
 Heaven beguiles the tired.

As that same Watcher when the East
 Opens the lid of Amethyst
 And lets the morning go –
 That Beggar, when an honored Guest –
 Those thirsty lips to flagons pressed –
 Heaven to us, if true.



Her breast is fit for pearls,⁴⁷
 But I was not a “Diver.”
 Her brow is fit for thrones –
 But I had not a crest.
 Her heart is fit for rest –
 I – a sparrow – build there
 Sweet of twigs and twine
 My perennial nest.

[for] home –



SHEET FOUR c. summer 1859

A something in a summer’s Day
 As slow her flambeaux burn away
 Which solemnizes me.

A something in a summer’s noon –
 A depth – an Azure – a perfume –
 Transcending extasy.



As Watchers hang: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1859*
 Her breast is: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1859*

FASCICLE SIX

SHEET ONE c. early 1860

Who never lost, are unprepared
 A Coronet to find!
 Who never thirsted
 Flagon, and Cooling Tamarind!

Who never climbed the weary league –
 Can such a foot explore
 The purple territories
 On Pizarro's shore?

How many Legions overcome –
 The Emperor will say?
 How many *Colors* taken
 On Revolution Day?

How many *Bullets* bearest?
 Hast Thou the Royal scar?
 Angels! Write "Promoted"
 On this Soldier's brow!



A Lady red – amid the Hill
 Her annual secret keeps!
 A Lady white, within the Field
 In placid Lily sleeps!

The tidy Breezes, with their Brooms –
 Sweep vale – and hill – and tree!
 Prithee, my pretty Housewives!
 Who may expected be?

The neighbors do not yet suspect!
 The woods exchange a smile!

Who never lost.: Sent to SD (variant) c. early 1860, beginning "Who never lost, is unprepared"

A Lady red -: Sent to SD (variant) c. early 1860

Orchard, and Buttercup, and Bird –
In such a little while!

And yet, how still the Landscape stands!
How nonchalant the Hedge!
As if the “Resurrection”
Were nothing very strange!



To fight aloud, is very brave –⁴⁸
But *gallanter*, I know
Who charge within the bosom
The Cavalry of Wo –

Who win, and nations do not see –
Who fall – and none observe –
Whose dying eyes, no Country
Regards with patriot love –

We trust, in plumed procession
For such, the Angels go –
Rank after Rank, with even feet –
And Uniforms of snow.



‘Houses’ – so the Wise men tell me –⁴⁹
‘Mansions’! Mansions must be warm!
Mansions cannot let the tears in –
Mansions must exclude the storm!

‘Many Mansions’, by ‘his Father’ –
I don’t know him; snugly built!
Could the children find the way there –
Some, would even trudge tonight!



SHEET TWO c. early 1860

Bring me the sunset in a cup –⁵⁰
Reckon the morning’s flagons up
And say how many Dew –

Tell me how far the morning leaps –
 Tell me what time the weaver sleeps
 Who spun the breadths of blue!

Write me how many notes there be
 In the new Robin's extasy
 Among astonished boughs –
 How many trips the Tortoise makes –
 How many cups the Bee partakes,
 The Debauchee of Dews!

Also, Who laid the Rainbow's piers,
 Also, Who leads the docile spheres
 By withes of supple blue?
 Whose fingers string the stalactite –
 Who counts the wampum of the night
 To see that none is due?

Who built this little Alban House
 And shut the windows down so close
 My spirit cannot see?
 Who'll let me out some gala day
 With implements to fly away,
 Passing Pomposity?



She died at play –
 Gambolled away
 Her lease of spotted hours,
 Then sank as gaily as a Turk
 Upon a Couch of flowers –

Her ghost strolled softly o'er the hill –
 Yesterday, and Today –
 Her vestments as the silver fleece –
 Her countenance as spray –



Cocoon above! Cocoon below!
 Stealthy Cocoon, why hide you so
 What all the world suspect?

An hour, and gay on every tree
 Your secret, perched in ecstasy
 Defies imprisonment!

An hour in chrysalis to pass –
 Then gay above receding grass
 A Butterfly to go!
 A moment to interrogate,
 Then wiser than a “Surrogate,”
 The Universe to know!



Exultation is the going⁵¹
 Of an inland soul to sea –
 Past the Houses –
 Past the Headlands –
 Into deep Eternity –
 Bred as we, among the mountains,
 Can the sailor understand
 The divine intoxication
 Of the first league out from Land?



I never hear the word “Escape”⁵²
 Without a quicker blood,
 A sudden expectation –
 A flying attitude!

I never hear of prisons broad
 By soldiers battered down,
 But I tug childish at my bars
 Only to fail again!



SHEET THREE c. late 1859

These are the days when Birds come back –⁵³
 A very few – a Bird or two –
 To take a backward look.



Exultation is the: *Sent to SD (variant) c. early 1860*
 I never hear: *Sent to SD (variant) c. early 1860*
 These are the: *Sent to SD (variant) c. autumn 1859*

These are the days when skies resume
 The old – old sophistries of June –
 A blue and gold mistake.

Oh fraud that cannot cheat the Bee,
 Almost thy plausibility
 Induces my belief,

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear –
 And softly thro' the altered air
 Hurries a timid leaf.

Oh sacrament of summer days,
 Oh Last Communion in the Haze –
 Permit a child to join,

Thy sacred emblems to partake –
 Thy consecrated bread to take
 And thine immortal wine!



Besides the Autumn poets sing⁵⁴
 A few prosaic days
 A little this side of the snow
 And that side of the Haze –

A few incisive mornings –
 A few Ascetic eyes –
 Gone – Mr Bryant's "Golden Rod" –
 And Mr Thomson's "sheaves."

Still, is the bustle in the Brook –
 Sealed are the spicy valves –
 Mesmeric fingers softly touch
 The eyes of many Elves –

Perhaps a squirrel may remain –
 My sentiments to share –
 Grant me, Oh Lord, a sunny mind –
 Thy windy will to bear!



Going to Heaven!
 How dim it sounds!
 And yet it will be done
 As sure as flocks go home at night
 Unto the Shepherd's arm!

Perhaps you're going too!
 Who knows?
 If you sh'd get there first
 Save just a little place for me
 Close to the two I lost –
 The smallest "Robe" will fit me
 And just a bit of "Crown" –
 For you know we do not mind our dress
 When we are going home –

I'm glad I don't believe it
 For it w'd stop my breath –
 And I'd like to look a little more
 At such a curious Earth!
 I am glad they did believe it
 Whom I have never found
 Since the mighty autumn afternoon
 I left them in the ground.



Our lives are Swiss –⁵⁸
 So still – so Cool –
 Till some odd afternoon
 The Alps neglect their Curtains
 And we look farther on!

Italy stands the other side!
 While like a guard between –
 The solemn Alps –
 The siren Alps
 Forever intervene!



FASCICLE SEVEN

SHEET ONE c. early to spring 1860

A little East of Jordan,⁵⁹
 Evangelists record,
 A Gymnast and an Angel
 Did wrestle long and hard –

Till morning touching mountain –
 And Jacob, waxing strong,
 The Angel begged permission
 To Breakfast – to return!

Not so, said cunning Jacob!
 “I will not let thee go
 Except thou bless me” – Stranger!
 The which acceded to –

[bless me” –] Signor

Light swung the silver fleeces
 “Peniel” Hills beyond,
 And the bewildered Gymnast
 Found he had worsted God!



All overgrown by cunning moss,⁶⁰
 All interspersed with weed,
 The little cage of “Currer Bell”
 In quiet “Haworth” laid.

This Bird – observing others
 When frosts too sharp became
 Retire to other latitudes –
 Quietly did the same –

But differed in returning –
 Since Yorkshire hills are green –

A little East: Sent to SD (lost, published variant) c. early 1860,
 with the first line “A little over Jordan,”

Yet not in all the nests I meet –
 Can Nightingale be seen –
 Or –
 Gathered from many wanderings –
 Gethsemane can tell
 Thro' what transporting anguish
 She reached the Asphodel!

Soft fall the sounds of Eden
 Upon her puzzled ear –
 Oh what an afternoon for Heaven,
 When “Bronte” entered there!



A science – so the Savans say,⁶¹
 “Comparative Anatomy” –
 By which a single bone –
 Is made a secret to unfold
 Of some rare tenant of the mold –
 Else perished in the stone –

So to the eye prospective led,
 This meekest flower of the mead
 Upon a winter's day,
 Stands representative in gold
 Of Rose and Lily, manifold,
 And countless Butterfly!



Will there really be a “morning”?
 Is there such a thing as “Day”?
 Could I see it from the mountains
 If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like Water lilies?
 Has it feathers like a Bird?
 Is it brought from famous countries
 Of which I have never heard?

Oh some Scholar! Oh some Sailor!
 Oh some Wise Man from the skies!

Please to tell a little Pilgrim
Where the place called "morning" lies!



Great Caesar! Condescend⁶²
The Daisy, to receive,
Gathered by Cato's Daughter,
With your majestic leave!



SHEET TWO c. spring 1860

I have a King, who does not speak –⁶³
So – wondering – thro' the hours meek
I trudge the day away –
Half glad when it is night, and sleep,
If, haply, thro' a dream, to peep
In parlors, shut by day.

And if I do – when morning comes –
It is as if a hundred drums
Did round my pillow roll,
And shouts fill all my childish sky,
And Bells keep saying 'Victory'
From steeples in my soul!

And if I don't – the little Bird
Within the Orchard, is not heard,
And I omit to pray
'Father, thy will be done' today
For my will goes the other way,
And it were perjury!



Where I have lost, I softer tread –
I sow sweet flower from garden bed –
I pause above that vanished head
And mourn.

Whom I have lost, I pious guard
From accent harsh, or ruthless word –

Feeling as if their pillow heard,
 Though stone!

When I have lost, you'll know by this –
 A Bonnet black – A dusk surplice –
 A little tremor in my voice
 Like this!

Why, I have lost, the people know
 Who dressed in frocks of purest snow
 Went home a century ago
 Next Bliss!



She went as quiet as the Dew⁶⁴
 From an Accustomed flower.
 Not like the Dew, did she return
 At the Accustomed hour!

[From] a familiar

She dropt as softly as a star
 From out my summer's eve –
 Less skillful than Le Verriere
 It's sorer to believe!



To hang our head – ostensibly –
 And subsequent, to find
 That such was not the posture
 Of our immortal mind –
 Affords the sly presumption
 That in so dense a fuzz –
 You – too – take Cobweb attitudes
 Upon a plane of Gauze!



The Daisy follows soft the Sun –⁶⁵
 And when his golden walk is done –
 Sits shyly at his feet –
 He – waking – finds the flower there –

image

not

available

If night stands first – *then* noon
 To gird us for the sun –
 What gaze!

When from a thousand skies
 On our *developed* eyes
 Noons blaze!



Surgeons must be very careful
 When they take the knife!
 Underneath their fine incisions
 Stirs the Culprit – *Life!*



SHEET FOUR c. spring 1860

Some Rainbow – coming from the Fair!⁷⁰
 Some Vision of the World Cashmere –
 I confidently see!
 Or else a Peacock's purple Train
 Feather by feather – on the plain
 Fritters itself away!

The dreamy Butterflies bestir!
 Lethargic pools resume the whirr
 Of last year's sundered tune!
 From some old Fortress on the sun
 Baronial Bees – march – one by one –
 In murmuring platoon!

The Robins stand as thick today
 As flakes of snow stood yesterday –
 On fence – and Roof – and Twig!
 The Orchis binds her feather on
 For her old lover – Don the sun!
 Revisiting the Bog!

Without Commander! Countless! Still!
 The Regiments of Wood and Hill
 In bright detachment stand!

Behold, Whose multitudes are these?
 The children of whose turbaned seas –
 Or what Circassian Land?



By a flower – By a letter
 By a nimble love –
 If I weld the Rivet faster –
 Final fast – above –

Never mind my breathless Anvil!
 Never mind Repose!
 Never mind the sooty faces
 Tugging at the Forge!



I can't tell you – but you feel it –⁷¹
 Nor can you tell me –
 Saints, with ravished slate and pencil
 Solve our April Day!

Sweeter than a vanished frolic
 From a vanished green!
 Swifter than the hoofs of Horsemen
 Round a Ledge of dream!

Modest, let us walk among it
 With our faces veiled –
 As they say polite Archangels
 Do in meeting God!

Not for me – to prate about it!
 Not for you – to say
 To some fashionable Lady
 “Charming April Day”!

Rather – Heaven's “Peter Parley”!
 By which children slow
 To sublimer Recitation
 Are prepared to go!



FASCICLE EIGHT

SHEET ONE c. summer 1860

A *wounded* Deer – leaps highest –⁷²
 I've heard the Hunter tell –
 'Tis but the extasy of *death* –
 And then the Brake is still!

The *smitten* Rock that gushes!
 The *trampled* Steel that springs!
 A Cheek is always redder
 Just where the Hectic stings!

Mirth is the mail of Anguish –
 In which it cautious Arm,
 Lest anybody spy the blood
 And “you're hurt” exclaim!



The Sun kept stooping – stooping – low!⁷³
 The Hills to meet him rose!
 On his side, what Transaction!
 On their side, what Repose!

Deeper and deeper grew the stain
 Upon the window pane –
 Thicker and thicker stood the feet
 Until the Tyrian

Was crowded dense with Armies –
 So gay – So Brigadier –
 That *I* felt martial stirrings
 Who once the Cockade wore –

Charged, from my chimney Corner –
 But Nobody was there!



A wounded Deer –: Sent to SD (lost) c. summer 1860
The Sun kept: Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1860

I met a King this Afternoon!⁷⁴
 He had not on a Crown indeed –
 A little Palm leaf Hat was all,
 And he was barefoot, I'm afraid!

But sure I am he Ermine wore
 Beneath his faded Jacket's blue –
 And sure I am, the crest he bore
 Within that Jacket's pocket too!

For 'twas too stately for an Earl –
 A Marquis would not go so grand!
 'Twas possibly a Czar petite –
 A Pope, or something of that kind!

If I must tell you, of a Horse
 My freckled Monarch held the rein –
 Doubtless, an estimable Beast,
 But not at all disposed to run!

And such a wagon! While I live
 Dare I presume to see
 Another such a vehicle
 As then transported me!

Two other ragged Princes
 His royal state partook!
 Doubtless the first excursion
 These sovereigns ever took!

I question if the Royal Coach
 Round which the Footmen wait
 Has the significance, on high,
 Of this Barefoot Estate!



SHEET TWO c. summer 1860

To learn the Transport by the Pain –
 As Blind Men learn the sun!
 To die of thirst – suspecting
 That Brooks in Meadows run!

o

To learn the: *Sent to SD (variant) c. summer 1860,*
beginning "To learn the transport thro' the pain –"

To stay the homesick – homesick feet
 Upon a foreign shore –
 Haunted by native lands, the while –
 And blue – beloved Air!

This is the sovrein Anguish!
 This – the signal wo!
 These are the patient “Laureates”
 Whose voices – trained – below –

Ascend in ceaseless Carol –
 Inaudible, indeed,
 To us – the duller scholars
 Of the Mysterious Bard!



If the foolish, call them “*flowers*” –⁷⁵
 Need the wiser, *tell*?
 If the Savans “Classify” them
 It is just as well!

Those who read the “Revelations”
 Must not criticize
 Those who read the same Edition –
 With beclouded Eyes!

Could we stand with that Old “Moses” –
 “Canaan” denied –
 Scan like him, the stately landscape
 On the other side –

Doubtless, we should deem superfluous
 Many Sciences,
 Not pursued by learned Angels
 In scholastic skies!

Low amid that glad Belles lettres
 Grant that we may stand –
 Stars, amid profound *Galaxies* –
 At that grand “Right hand”!



Sometime, he dwelleth in the grass!
 Sometime, upon a bough,
 From which he doth descend in plush
 Upon the Passer-by!

All this in summer –
 But when winds alarm the Forest Folk,
 He taketh *Damask* Residence –
 And struts in sewing silk!

Then, finer than a Lady,
 Emerges in the spring!
 A Feather on each shoulder!
 You'd scarce recognize him!

By men, yclept Caterpillar!
 By me! But who am I,
 To tell the pretty secret
 Of the Butterfly!



At last, to be identified!⁸⁰
 At last, the lamps upon thy side
 The rest of Life to *see!*

Past Midnight! Past the Morning Star!
 Past Sunrise!
 Ah, What leagues there *were*
 Between our feet, and Day!



SHEET FOUR c. spring 1860

I have never seen 'Volcanoes' –
 But, when Travellers tell
 How those old – phlegmatic mountains
 Usually so still –

Bear within – appalling Ordnance,
 Fire, and smoke, and gun –
 Taking Villages for breakfast,
 And appalling Men –



If the stillness is Volcanic
 In the human face
 When upon a pain Titanic
 Features keep their place –

If at length, the smouldering anguish
 Will not overcome,
 And the palpitating Vineyard
 In the dust, be thrown?

If some loving Antiquary,
 On Resumption Morn,
 Will not cry with joy, “Pompeii”!
 To the Hills return!



Dust is the only Secret.⁸¹
 Death, the only One
 You cannot find out all about
 In his “native town.”

Nobody knew “his Father” –
 Never was a Boy –
 Hadn’t any playmates,
 Or “Early history” –

Industrious! Laconic!
 Punctual! Sedate!
 Bold as a Brigand!
 Stiller than a Fleet!

Builds, like a Bird, too!
 Christ robs the Nest –
 Robin after Robin
 Smuggled to Rest!



I’m the little “Heart’s Ease”!⁸²
 I don’t care for pouting skies!
 If the Butterfly delay
 Can I, therefore, stay away?

o

If the Coward Bumble Bee
 In his chimney corner stay,
 I, must resoluter be!
 Who'll apologize for me?

Dear – Old fashioned, little flower!
 Eden is old fashioned, too!
 Birds are antiquated fellows!
 Heaven does not change her blue.
 Nor will I, the little Heart's Ease –
 Ever be induced to do!



Ah, Necromancy Sweet!
 Ah, Wizard erudite!
 Teach me the skill,

That I instill the pain
 Surgeons assuage in vain,
 Nor Herb of all the plain
 Can heal!



SHEET FIVE c. summer 1860

Except to Heaven, she is nought.
 Except for Angels – lone.
 Except to some wide-wandering Bee
 A flower superfluous blown.

Except for winds – provincial.
 Except by Butterflies
 Unnoticed as a single dew
 That on the Acre lies.

The smallest Housewife in the grass,
 Yet take her from the Lawn
 And somebody has lost the face
 That made Existence – Home!



Pictures are to daily faces⁸³
 As an Evening West
 To a fine – pedantic Sunshine
 In a satin Vest.



I cautious, scanned my little life –⁸⁴
 I winnowed what would fade
 From what w'd last till Heads like mine
 Should be a-dreaming laid.

I put the latter in a Barn –
 The former, blew away.
 I went one winter morning
 And lo, my priceless Hay

Was not upon the "Scaffold" –
 Was not upon the "Beam" –
 And from a thriving Farmer –
 A Cynic, I became.

Whether a Thief did it –
 Whether it was the wind –
 Whether Deity's guiltless –
 My business is, to find!

So I begin to ransack!
 How is it Hearts, with Thee?
 Art thou within the little Barn
 Love provided Thee?



If I could bribe them by a Rose
 I'd bring them every flower that grows
 From Amherst to Cashmere!
 I would not stop for night, or storm –
 Or frost, or death, or anyone –
 My business were so dear!

If they w'd linger for a Bird
 My Tamborin were soonest heard
 Among the April Woods!

Unwearied, all the summer long,
 Only to break in wilder song
 When Winter shook the boughs!

What if they hear me!
 Who shall say
 That such an importunity
 May not at last avail?
 That, weary of this Beggar's face –
 They may not finally say, Yes –
 To drive her from the Hall?



As if some little Arctic flower
 Upon the polar hem –
 Went wandering down the Latitudes
 Until it puzzled came
 To continents of summer –
 To firmaments of sun –
 To strange, bright crowds of flowers –
 And birds, of foreign tongue!
 I say, As if this little flower
 To Eden, wandered in –
 What then? Why nothing,
 Only, your *inference* therefrom!



Do they wear “new shoes” – in “Eden” –
 Is it always pleasant – there –
 Won’t they scold us – when we’re hungry –
 Or tell God – how cross we are –

[we’re] homesick

You are sure there’s such a person
 As “a Father” – in the sky –
 So if I get lost – there – ever –
 Or do what the Nurse calls “die” –

I shan’t walk the “Jasper” – barefoot –
 Ransomed folks – won’t laugh at me –
 Maybe – “Eden” a’nt so lonesome
 As New England used to be!



SHEET THREE c. spring 1861

The murmur of a Bee
 A Witchcraft – yieldeth me –
 If any ask me why –
 ’Twere easier to die –
 Than tell –

The Red upon the Hill
 Taketh away my will –
 If anybody sneer –
 Take care – for God is here –
 That’s all.

The Breaking of the Day
 Addeth to my Degree –
 If any ask me how –
 Artist – who drew me so –
 Must tell!



You love me – you are sure –⁸⁹
 I shall not fear mistake –
 I shall not *cheated* wake –
 Some grinning morn –

To find the Sunrise left –
 And Orchards – unbereft –
 And Dollie – gone!

I need not start – you're sure –
 That night will never be –
 When frightened – home to Thee I run –
 To find the windows dark –
 And no more Dollie – mark –
 Quite none?

Be sure you're sure – you know –
 I'll bear it better now –
 If you'll just tell me so –
 Than when – a little dull Balm grown –
 Over this pain of mine –
 You sting – again!



My River runs to Thee –⁹⁰
 Blue Sea – Wilt welcome me?

My River waits reply.
 Oh Sea – look graciously!

I'll fetch thee Brooks
 From spotted nooks –

Say Sea – take me?



It's such a little thing to weep –
 So short a thing to sigh –
 And yet – by Trades – the size of *these*
 We men and women die!



He was weak, and I was strong – then –
 So He let me lead him in –
 I was weak, and He was strong then –
 So I let him lead me – Home.

o

'Twasn't far – the door was near –
 'Twasn't dark – for He went – too –
 'Twasn't loud, for He said nought –
 That was all I cared to know.

Day knocked – and we must part –
 Neither – was strongest – now –
 He strove – and I strove – too –
 We didn't do it – tho'!



SHEET FOUR c. early spring 1861

The Skies can't keep their secret!
 They tell it to the Hills –
 The Hills just tell the Orchards –
 And they – the Daffodils!

A Bird – by chance – that goes that way –
 Soft overhears the whole –
 If I should bribe the little Bird –
 Who knows but *she* would tell?

I think I won't – however –
 It's finer – not to know –
 If Summer were *an axiom* –
 What sorcery had *snow*?

So keep your secret – Father!
 I would not – if I could –
 Know what the Sapphire Fellows, do,
 In your new-fashioned world!



Poor little Heart!⁹¹
 Did they forget thee?
 Then dinna care! Then dinna care!

Proud little Heart!
 Did they forsake thee?
 Be debonnaire! Be debonnaire!

o

Frail little Heart!
 I would not break thee –
 Could'st credit *me*? Could'st credit me?

Gay little Heart –
 Like Morning Glory!
 Wind and Sun – wilt thee array!



I shall know why – when Time is over –⁹²
 And I have ceased to wonder why –
 Christ will explain each separate anguish
 In the fair schoolroom of the sky –

He will tell me what “Peter” promised –
 And I – for wonder at his woe –
 I shall forget the drop of anguish
 That scalds me now – that scalds me now!



On this long storm the Rainbow rose –⁹³
 On this late morn – the sun –
 The Clouds – like listless Elephants –
 Horizons – straggled down –

The Birds rose smiling, in their nests –
 The gales – indeed – were done –
 Alas, how heedless were the eyes –
 On whom the summer shone!

The quiet nonchalance of death –
 No Daybreak – can bestir –
 The slow – Archangel's syllables
 Must awaken *her*!



SHEET FIVE c. late spring 1861

Musicians wrestle everywhere –⁹⁴
 All day – among the crowded air
 I hear the silver strife –

Musicians wrestle everywhere –: *Sent to SD (variant) c. spring 1861,*
beginning “Musicians wrestling Everywhere!”

And – waking – long before the morn –
 Such transport breaks upon the town
 I think it that “New life”!

It is not Bird – it has no nest –
 Nor “Band” – in brass and scarlet – drest –
 Nor Tamborin – nor Man –
 It is not Hymn from pulpit read –
 The “Morning Stars” the Treble led
 On Time’s first afternoon!

Some – say – it is “the Spheres” – at play!
 Some say – that bright Majority
 Of vanished Dames – and Men!
 Some – think it service in the place
 Where we – with late – celestial face –
 Please God – shall ascertain!



For this – accepted Breath –⁹⁵
 Through it – compete with Death –
 The fellow cannot touch this Crown –
 By it – my title take –
 Ah, what a royal sake
 To my necessity – stooped down!

No Wilderness – can be
 Where this attendeth me –
 No Desert Noon –
 No fear of frost to come
 Haunt the perennial bloom –
 But Certain June!

Get Gabriel – to tell – the royal syllable –
 Get saints – with new – unsteady tongue –
 To say what trance below
 Most like their glory show –
 Fittest the Crown!

