Amherst Poets and Authors

EMILY DICKINSON

Though Emily Dickinson today is widely known as a poet, during her lifetime, 1830-1886, only 11 of her poems appeared in print. Dickinson lived in Amherst in the last 40 years of her life. She was known to have kept to herself and her poetry was mostly hidden away from the world. However, in 1955, she published her first book, "The Poems of Emily Dickinson," which became a bestseller and brought her national recognition. She died in 1886, and her poetry continues to be studied and enjoyed by readers today.

ROBERT FRANCIS

Robert Francis was a poet, novelist, and journalist who lived in Amherst most of his life. He was born in 1895 and died in 1938. His poetry was often characterized by its use of American folk and working-class dialects, and his work has been praised for its honesty and directness. He is perhaps best known for his collection of poems "A Cup of Poems." He died at 43, leaving behind a large body of work that continues to be read and studied today.

ROBERT BLOCH

Robert Bloch was a horror and science fiction writer who lived in Amherst most of his life. He was born in 1917 and died in 1974. His most famous work, "The Demon Seed," was published in 1970 and is considered a classic of horror literature. His other works include "Psycho" and "A World of One's Own." He was a member of the group of horror writers known as the "High Peaks" and is remembered for his contributions to the genre.

JOSEPH LANGLAND

Joseph Langland was a poet who lived in Amherst most of his life. He was born in 1926 and died in 2014. His most famous work is the long poem "The New Land," which was published in 1961. Langland was a social and political activist and his poetry often addressed issues of war, poverty, and injustice. He was awarded the National Book Award for his first book of poems, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," in 1961.

Helen Hunt Jackson

Helen Hunt Jackson was a writer and poet who lived in Amherst most of her life. She was born in 1830 and died in 1885. Her most famous work is the novel "Riding Home from the War," which was published in 1871. The novel is a social criticism of the Mexican War, and it is considered a classic of American literature. Jackson was also a leader in the women's suffrage movement and was one of the first women to serve in the U.S. Congress.

Ellsworth Barnard

Ellsworth Barnard was a farmer and businessman who lived in Amherst most of his life. He was born in 1817 and died in 1886. Barnard was a successful farmer and businessman, and he was known for his innovative farming practices. He was also a politician and served as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Barnard was buried in the Amherst Cemetery, where his gravestone reads: "Ellsworth Barnard, farmer, merchant, and statesman, born in 1817, died in 1886."