

poems sent as messages to a correspondent. Thomas Johnson abandoned this method of organizing material for publication, including a poem in his edition of letters only if it had a prose context. He was the first editor to publish texts that previous editors called "letters" as poems but not also as letters, initiating the still dominant pattern of separating Dickinson's writing by genre, rather than providing ways of reading texts in their original manuscript groups — individual correspondences, the manuscript volumes, and ungathered poems and drafts. ("Manuscript volumes" is my preferred term for "fascicles" or "packets.")

In the Whitney section in *Letters* (1894) Todd included fifteen letters written as prose or a combination of prose and poetry. From ten of those letters she removed lines, which she indicated with an ellipsis. Six letters in the Putnam acquisition are among the texts where lines were cut when published by Todd. None of the cuts in any of the letters were restored in Todd's 1931 revised edition of *Letters*. (In the later edition Todd added one letter she held back in 1894; this manuscript is not in the Putnam acquisition.) Among the Putnam manuscripts are versions of poems and versions of prose passages that differ in punctuation and lineation from known manuscripts and have some variation in language.

Although the Houghton Library received these manuscripts eighteen years ago, they have remained unpublished and unknown. The only published writing on the collection is a paragraph by William H. Bond, former Director of the Houghton Library, that appeared in 1980 in *The Houghton Library Reports XXXV–XXXVI: Acquisitions 1975–1977*:

Miss Elizabeth Whitney Putnam bequeathed a small but important collection of holograph poems by Emily Dickinson, unknown to Johnson and thought to have been lost. They are the verses beginning "Bring me the sunset in a cup," "A charm invests a face," "How brittle are the piers," "How well I knew her not," "Than heaven more remote." With these came eight letters to Maria Whitney, 1878–1884.



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The Elizabeth Whitney Putnam Manuscripts and New Strategies for Editing Emily Dickinson's Letters

In August 1976 Harvard University's Houghton Library acquired thirteen Dickinson manuscripts from Elizabeth Whitney Putnam, a manuscript group that includes both poetry and prose. Three manuscripts were previously unknown, ten considered lost or destroyed. In his 1974 biography of Dickinson, Richard Sewall reported in "A Note on the Missing Correspondences": "We probably do not have all the letters she wrote . . . [to] Maria Whitney, who is known to have destroyed all her correspondence, as she 'wished to leave nothing to burden any relatives'" (751). Sewall quotes Millicent Todd Bingham's 1934 interview with Mary Augustus Jordan, who taught English at Smith College from 1884 to 1921 and may have known Whitney through Smith connections. (Whitney taught German and French at the college from 1875 to 1880.) It is not clear why Jordan thought that Whitney had destroyed manuscripts. When Mabel Loomis Todd began editing a collection of Dickinson's letters in the early 1890s, Whitney sent letters that she had received, Todd transcribed them, and, it is assumed, returned them. For her edition Todd organized letters and poems into individual correspondences. Like other early editors, she categorized as letters

This summary shows the conventional valuing of poetry over prose and makes no mention of poems in letters. The Putnam acquisition will be of particular interest to scholars writing about Dickinson's relationship with Samuel Bowles, since the majority of Todd's cuts involve references to Whitney's relationship with Bowles, or to Dickinson's feelings about him. Considerable attention has been paid to Dickinson's correspondence with Bowles, and some critics have suggested he may have been the historical figure constructed as "Master." (See Judith Farr's development of this theory in her chapter "The Narrative of Master," 178-244.) Others contest the theory. (See Pollak.) The debate has been a central part of the critical conversation concerning Dickinson's erotic writing. Farr has written that Dickinson's "generous letters associate her with Maria in a widowed sisterhood" (209). The Putnam materials support this view, adding to what scholars have known about Dickinson's relationship with Bowles.

The acquisition is also of interest for other reasons. The correspondence to Whitney, twenty known documents according to Johnson, nineteen of which were published by Todd in 1931, has until now consisted of only two manuscripts (one each at Amherst College and Princeton University). Understanding more about the pattern of excisions made in the letters to Whitney enables us to analyze Todd's editing practices more closely. Furthermore, this acquisition substantially adds to a Dickinson correspondence that is an important example of a late life friendship. In my discussion of these materials, I examine Todd's editing, highlight aspects of individual manuscripts, and point out editing strategies for representing manuscript features and organizing letters and poems in correspondences.

The first manuscript, according to Houghton reference numbers, MS Am 1118.10 (1), is the poem "Bring me the sunset in a cup -," addressed on the verso "Sue." Martha Nell Smith and I are currently editing the correspondence to Susan Huntington Dickinson, the writer's lifelong friend, sister-in-law, and neighbor, and we will include this manuscript in our edition. How did this poem addressed to Susan, probably written in the late 1850s, end up in the Putnam collection? Whitney may have been given the poem by Susan, or by Bowles, a close friend of Susan's, who might have received it

from her. It is possible, too, that the manuscript was purchased, since Martha Dickinson Bianchi, Susan's daughter, who eventually had possession of letters and poems sent to her mother, occasionally offered individual manuscripts for sale. The second manuscript, "A charm invests a / face," with no address, also has no prior association with Whitney. In other words, Todd did not publish this signed poem in her edition of the Whitney correspondence. There is another version of this poem in the manuscript volumes that Ralph Franklin dates "about 1862"; the Putnam manuscript is probably from about the same period. Like the first manuscript, "A charm invests a / face" may have been sent to Bowles, or to Susan, and given to Whitney, or it could have been purchased.

The date when the correspondence with Whitney began is uncertain. Whitney told Todd in 1894 that before 1877 she "rarely had a letter of any length" from Dickinson (Bingham 258). But she probably did receive at least one poem in the mid 1860s. Bowles, who introduced Whitney to the Dickinsons, may have started his friendship with Austin and Susan sometime in the mid 1850s while covering Amherst College commencement for *The Springfield Republican*. Whitney was a relative of Bowles' wife, who helped educate their children and for a time lived with the family, a friend with whom Samuel Bowles was so intimate that in the late 1860s tension with Mary Bowles and gossip resulted in Whitney's departure from the household. Whitney continued teaching the children, travelling with them to Europe, and her bond with Bowles endured.

There is some discussion of Dickinson's relationship with Whitney in Dickinson's correspondence with her Norcross cousins, Louise and Frances, including the earliest reference to an association between the two women in a letter dated by the Norcrosses "Winter, 1860-61": "Lou's note to Miss Whitney only stopped to dine. It went out with a beautiful name on its face in the evening mail" (*Letters* 1931, 220). (Louise Norcross had apparently asked Dickinson to put Whitney's address on the envelope. Dickinson perhaps knew Whitney's address through Bowles, or through Susan and Austin.) The next reference to Whitney in the Norcross correspondence is dated "Summer, 1875": "I am glad that you loved Miss Whitney on knowing her

nearer" (*Letters* 1931, 256). Clearly Dickinson and Whitney's friendship spanned the period between the letters, perhaps through family friendships rather than correspondence.

It is important to remember the speculative aspects of dating the manuscripts. Johnson dates the earlier Norcross letter "early March 1861?" (*Letters*, vol. 2, 372). The Norcrosses refused to show Todd their manuscripts, which they transcribed and then claimed to have destroyed. Since Todd could not study the handwriting, when she estimated a date, she did so based on information from the Norcrosses. Johnson used his own historical chronology based on all known correspondences. Both methods have advantages — Todd's, proximity to the source, and Johnson's, a broader spectrum of documents. However, both are fallible, and dates are almost always approximated. (In my readings I often give more credence to Todd's tentative dates since Johnson's attempts to be precise can be misleading.)

"A charm invests a / face" could have been sent to Whitney, but the intimacy of the poem is not consistent with the tone of the friendship in the early 1860s. The themes of meeting face to face, or refusing to allow contact, or holding onto an image and not wanting the vision to be marred by reality, are all associated with Dickinson's erotic correspondences, which include the correspondences to Susan and to Bowles. However, the Whitney correspondence does not take on this kind of eroticism. "A charm invests a / face" has the ambiguity, shift in perspective, and play with gender of many of the adaptable, bisexual poems. Here the face behind the veil is both the woman looking and the woman being looked at, by either a man or a woman. The poem could have been sent as a message either to Susan or to Bowles.

The third poem, "How brittle are / the Piers," is the last of the three manuscripts in the Putnam acquisition that have no prior association with Whitney. In this case, the subject matter of the poem — faith — is consistent with themes of the Whitney correspondence. The watermark on the sheet indicates that the poem was written no earlier than 1876. Todd dates a version of the poem sent to Higginson, that has similar handwriting, "Summer, 1878." It is possible that Dickinson sent the poem to Whitney during the time of Bowles' illness or following his death in January 1878. Lines pre-

ceding another version of "How brittle are / the piers" in a letter to Higginson, where Dickinson compares her grief at the loss of Bowles to Higginson's grief at the death of his wife, establish a connection between the poem and Bowles, which would be consistent with Dickinson having sent the poem to Whitney. Dickinson wrote to Higginson:

With the bloom / of the flower / your friend / loved — I have / wished
for her — / but God cannot / discontinue / himself. / Mr Bowles was /
not willing to / die — / When you have / lost a friend, / Master — you /
remember you / could not / begin again — / because there / was no
World. / I have thought / of you often / since the / Darkness — though /
we cannot / assist Another's / Night — .

The last sentence here opens a letter to Whitney, Putnam MS Am 1118.10 (6), the first letter Dickinson wrote Whitney after Bowles' death. A draft of the poem also exists, so the Putnam manuscript both adds the poem to the Whitney correspondence and gives scholars the opportunity to compare a draft with two versions of a poem sent to different recipients.

Throughout this essay in my discussions of the letters I lineate the prose. I do this for several reasons. First, Dickinson did not visually separate prose and poetry in her letters. Her prose lines and the lines of a poem are similar in length, she did not consistently divide poetry from prose through spacing, and she did not vary margins. A standard prose format for the letters results in visual inaccuracies, such as Johnson's paragraphing: Dickinson did not use indentation to indicate paragraphs. Second, the relationship between poetry and prose is so complex in Dickinson's writing that lineating poetry but not prose sets up artificial genre distinctions. There are no easily drawn periods in Dickinson's writing, no distinct point where it is possible to say, "Before this the genre of the letters is exclusively prose, and there is no need to lineate." Furthermore, when prose is not lineated, poetic devices that Dickinson uses in her prose may be deemphasized, muted, or obscured.

"How well I knew / Her not," the fourth Putnam manuscript, is the first text in Todd's edition of the Whitney correspondence. This is the first

of ten Putnam manuscripts that, without question, went to Whitney, since Whitney sent Todd the letters and read prepublication page proofs. Todd notes that the handwriting is that of the "early middle period, and is too indefinite to be safely dated" (*Letters* 1931, 325). She adds: "before the next letter, a long interval seems to have elapsed." There is a manuscript volume version of "How well I knew / Her not," which Johnson and Franklin both date "about 1862." The handwriting is similar to the Whitney manuscript. Johnson notes in his commentary that Whitney's sister, Sarah Whitney Learned, died on July 9, 1864, and this poem may have been sent to her on that occasion (*Poems*, 634). Although it is notable that Whitney appears not to have remembered this when discussing the dates of letters with Todd, Johnson's account is possible. Dickinson often sent poems on the occasion of a death in the family of a friend or a death in the family of a friend of a friend. At this time, she may have viewed Whitney primarily as a friend of Bowles, Susan, and the Norcrosses, and the correspondence may have lapsed and started again about 1877, at the time of Bowles' last illness.

The discovery of the version sent to Whitney of "How well I knew / Her not" gives scholars one more opportunity to compare a version of a poem in the manuscript volumes with a version written to a correspondent. Poems in the correspondences are usually centered on the page with wide margins, arranged more spaciouly than in the manuscript volumes where space is used more economically and more than one poem may appear on a page. The Whitney version has no variation in language, but punctuation and lineation differ. Dickinson used lineation to direct emphasis, create meaning, control pace, and guide her readers. The fourth Putnam manuscript, "How well I knew / Her not," allows for comparison of line breaks in two versions of the poem. The fifth manuscript is the only known version of the poem beginning "Than Heaven / more remote"; this manuscript shows for the first time Dickinson's lineation of the poem.

The eight letters to Whitney (written in prose or prose and poetry), manuscripts numbered six through thirteen in the Putnam acquisition, appear to span about a six year period, tracing the development of a friendship that deepened after the death of Samuel Bowles. The first letter, MS Am

1118.10 (6), has the formal signature, "E- Dickinson," followed by a long dash-like line as a flourish. The formality suggests that the letter is among the first in a reopening of the correspondence. This letter is preceded in Todd's chronology by one other that she dates 1877; Johnson specifies December of that year and may be correct since Bowles died the following month. This letter uses formal address: "Vinnie and her sister thank Miss Whitney," and is signed "E. Dickinson." (*Letters* 1931, 325). (Here the signature's punctuation was probably standardized by Todd.) Dickinson refers to "acuter days" and "thinking too lightly of the gift of mortality," apparent references to Bowles' illness, which suggest that the cuts Todd made here may also be references to Bowles. In the Putnam letter Dickinson writes, "I hope you may / remember me, as / I shall always / mingle you / with our / Mr Bowles - ." The letter includes the line: "That he has / received Immor - / tality, who so / often conferred / it - invests it / with a more / sudden Charm - ." The line echoes language in "A charm invests a / face," the second Putnam manuscript discussed above, and the link emphasizes the possibility that Dickinson did send the poem to Bowles, who passed it on to Whitney.

The next letter, "I lend / you the last / I knew - of / the One who / taught us / of you -," which came with an enclosed flower, perhaps a rose, also focuses on Bowles as the connection between the two women. The third letter begins: "Your touching / suggestion that those / who loved Mr Bowles - / be more closely each / other's - is a tender / permission - ." The poem that concludes the letter, "We knew not that / we were to live -," also concludes a letter to Higginson that Todd dates: "Upon hearing of his engagement, January, 1879." The poem grieving Bowles' death celebrates Higginson's engagement. This letter marks a turning point in the correspondence: the writing becomes more expository on matters of faith, immortality, and consciousness, and Dickinson's tone more intimate and loving toward Whitney:

When not inconvenient
to your Heart,
please remember us,
and let us help

you carry it, if
you grow tired –

The fourth letter [MS Am 1118.10 (9)] includes a reference to Bowles:

I see my Father's
Eyes – and those
of Mr Bowles –
those isolated Comets –

But by this point in the correspondence, Whitney has become a central figure:

The Vane defines
the Wind –
Where we thought
you were, Austin
says you are
not – How strange
to change one's
Sky unless one's
Star go with it –
but yours has
left an Astral
Wake.

This letter is signed: "Always with / love - / Emily -."

In the last four Putnam letters Dickinson describes details of daily events in the lives of the Dickinson families, including the death of her mother. She comments on Whitney's travels, her vacation in the Adirondack Mountains, and thanks her for gifts of tea and candy. In a letter that begins, "Dear friend – / Has the / Journey ceased / or is it still / prog[r]essing," [MS Am 1118.10 (12)], she quotes lines of Emily Brontë's, the same lines sent to Mrs. Mack, a friend and neighbor, in a letter probably written at about the same time. The last Putnam manuscript is the letter "Dear friend – / I cannot / depict a friend" that Todd dates "Probably 1884." The letter is the last in Todd's selection of letters to Whitney. It ends with a reference to Bowles:

I dare not
think of the
voraciousness of
that only gaze
and it's only
return – Remembrance
is the great Tempter –
Emily.

Dickinson's love for Bowles, her memory of him, and her shared bond with Whitney through him became a focal point partially obscured in Todd's editions.

Reconstructing the Whitney correspondence, I find that there are still eight manuscripts missing. In seven of these the Todd texts will continue to stand in. However, a letter to Whitney beginning "Dear friend - / I am constantly / more astonished / that the Body / contains the Spirit -" is represented by a transcript at the Houghton Library, made by Jake Zeitlin, of Los Angeles, California, before the manuscript was sold in 1936. Zeitlin's transcript is more reliable than Todd's, since he appears to follow Dickinson's lineation and restores a cut made by Todd, a reference to Bowles. The Putnam manuscripts restore lineation, punctuation, and capitalization edited out by Todd, and restore her cuts. Her reasons for excising appear to be privacy or decorum, rather than space requirements, repetition, or unnecessary detail. In the lines she removed, in all but three instances, she cuts a reference to Bowles. One of these three exceptions is probably an oversight. In the letter "Dear friend – / Your sweet / selfreprehension" [MS Am 1118.10 (10)], Dickinson includes a poem that exists in three other versions. "Adversity if it / shall be / Or Wild Prosperity," the lines begin in the letter to Whitney. (See Johnson's discussions of poems he numbers 1576, 1584, and 1588.) The poem is also in a letter to Charles Clark that Todd includes in Letters (1931, 355). In other instances when lines of verse appear in more than one place, Todd prints them once and in the next letter provides a footnote. In the letter to Whitney she omits the footnote, and this seems to be an error. The Putnam manuscript shows that these lines were included in a letter to Whitney that pertains to the

death of Dickinson's mother, the first time they have been associated with her mother. (Emily Norcross Dickinson died on November 14, 1882.) The poem is now among those with the most versions; these include three drafts, the letter to Whitney, the letter to Charles Clark, and a letter to Susan following the death of her son Gilbert.

Todd cut the following lines in the letter that begins "Dear friend - / Your touching / suggestion" [MS Am 1118.10 (8)]:

Detained once at a
Sacrament, because
too small to retire,
the Clergyman asked
all to remain "who
loved the Lord
Jesus Christ" -
Though the Lord
Jesus Christ was
a Stranger to me -
the invitation was
noble -

The cut here is consistent with Todd's concern that Dickinson not appear irreverent, a concern Todd notes in her diary when reflecting on questions she received at public talks she gave in the 1890s on Dickinson. One Putnam letter [MS Am 1118.10 (9)] opens:

Dear friend -
You are
like God -
We pray to him
and he answers
"No" - Then we
pray to him to
rescind the "No"
and he dont
answer at all

When Todd transcribed these lines, she capitalized "Him" and "He." This is consistent with the way she normalized capitalization, but the changes also

serve to conceal Dickinson's unorthodox lower case letters that begin pronouns representing deity.

In the last Putnam letter Todd cut this remark about Austin:

The Candy is
still with us, not
in it's first bound -
lessness, for Austin
has prettily shared
it with us, but
still luscious and
gracious -

This matter is a trifle, but the sentence does cast Austin in a somewhat unfavorable light: "prettily" is rather sarcastic. This may be the work of an editor who preferred not to include a line that even minimally slighted her lover, or perhaps Austin himself requested the omission.

The main pattern of Todd's cuts is the excision of references to Bowles. She may have done this at Whitney's request. Bingham writes:

My mother wrote to Miss Whitney . . . to ask the usual questions - when her letters already in my mother's hands had been written, and whether there were passages she wished to omit.

In many of the published letters the very passages which made them most revealing of Emily, who always dealt with the life-germ of a situation, were the ones which the recipients would not permit the editor to use. . . .

In the case of Miss Whitney the omitted paragraphs referred to a warmth of admiration for her on the part of Samuel Bowles. Emily always respected real emotion. But her recognition of this friendship did not look decorous in print. (257)

Although Todd's editing respects Whitney's request, in some cuts Dickinson refers not to Whitney's friendship with Bowles but to her own. The possibility exists that Todd was at least somewhat concerned about the decorousness of the Dickinson-Bowles relationship as it appeared in print. Two notes

from Whitney suggest Todd's control over the selections. On August 5, 1894, she wrote:

I should be very glad to see the proof, if it will not then be too late to make any change, - I mean, if by showing it to me you intend to grant me the right of protest against the inclusion of any passages that may seem to me undesirable. Probably I shall be perfectly satisfied with your choice, as to what should be printed, but I cannot be absolutely sure, in advance.
(Bingham 258)

And on September 20, upon returning the proof:

I do not know I have any reason to object to what is extracted from the letters for publication, tho' some of it, divorced from its context, seems to me to have lost its chief value and significance. My inclination would have been to suppress the whole, in such a case.

(Bingham 258)

In the Putnam manuscript [MS Am 1118.10 (6)] where Dickinson renews her correspondence with Whitney, these lines were removed:

I hope you may
remember me, as
I shall always
mingle you
with our
Mr Bowles -
Affection gropes
through Drifts
of Awe, for
his Tropic Door -

This letter is dated by Todd 1878; in a letter [MS Am 1118.10 (12)] that may have been written five years later, dated by Todd "1883?" Dickinson refers only to her own feelings for Bowles:

I dreamed
Saturday Night
of precious
Mr Bowles -
One glance
of his would
light a World -

The Putnam manuscripts show that Dickinson began the correspondence by focusing on her friend's loss, and over time became more revealing of her own. The cut in the above letter masks a reference to Bowles that was not edited out in another letter, the last in Todd's selection, which is also the last Putnam manuscript:

I fear we shall
care very little
for the technical
Resurrection, when
to behold the
one face that to
us compromised it,
is too much
for us and
I dare not
think of the
voraciousness of
that only gaze
and it's only
return -

When Todd excerpted the reference to Bowles' "glance" in the previous letter in her series, she made it more likely that the "face" and the "gaze" in this letter would be read as belonging to Jesus rather than to Bowles.

Todd's most extensive excision, to which Whitney may be referring in her complaint to Todd that some lines, divorced from their contexts, lost their "chief value and significance," and that in these cases it would have been better "to suppress the whole," is a brief letter [MS Am 1118.10 (7)] where Todd cut all but the last line:

Dear friend.
I lend
you the last
I knew - of
the One who
taught us
of you - to
whom we
instinctively
confide you -

Todd attached this letter's last line, "The Crucifix / requires no / Glove -," to another letter, "Dear friend - / I am constantly / more astonished / that the Body / contains the Spirit -," as if the line were a postscript. She may have done this because she wanted to keep the line, and there is a reference to a rose in the letter "Dear friend - / I am constantly / more astonished." A stain covering the page of "Dear friend. / I lend / you the last / I knew" [MS Am 1118.10 (7)] indicates that a flower, possibly a rose, had been enclosed. The connection between the rose and the crucifix here seems to be Christ's crown of thorns. Dickinson grew roses, as did Bowles. She occasionally sent flowers and leaves as enclosures, and here she may have enclosed a rose from a bush that was somehow associated with Bowles. In the excised lines she reminds Whitney that Bowles introduced them to each other, that life is not permanent, that even the flower is lent. She gives Whitney to Bowles, who is present in the rose that they share. Todd may have chosen not to print this radical concept of an afterlife, of relationships that cross over between worlds of the living and the dead.

In the following lines beginning a letter [MS Am 1118.10 (8)] Todd cut "that those / who loved Mr Bowles - / be more closely each other's," so there is no way of telling what "tender permission" is being discussed:

Dear friend -
Your touching
suggestion that those
who loved Mr Bowles -
be more closely each
other's, is a tender
permission -

In the same letter Todd also cut these lines:

You will be with
us while he is with
us and that will
be while we are
ourselves -

They follow Dickinson's disclosure that "the Lord / Jesus Christ was / a Stranger to me -," which Todd cut, as noted above, and they follow these remarks on belief: "We cannot believe / for each other - / Thought is too / sacred a Despot - / but I hope that / God in whatever / form - is true to / our friend -." Like the reference to the rose, Dickinson writes that Bowles lives on, that Whitney lives in him, that the three friends are merged in "Consciousness." In the context of a discussion of "God in whatever form," clearly these ruminations on love, identity, living after dying are unorthodox, and it would appear that Todd is doing more than privatizing Bowles' "warmth of admiration" for Whitney, as Bingham put it.

Two reviews of Todd's public talks on Dickinson emphasize her manner of portraying Dickinson's religious beliefs as conventional. In 1892 a Boston journalist wrote that "Calvinism's sound core" grafted with liberal thought may have produced "that real reverence which underlies the most startling of Miss Dickinson's utterances; a reverence which we need no longer question, now that Mrs. Todd has set it forth with that explicit statement of one who speaks with authority" (Bingham 196). The same year a librarian at Amherst College wrote Todd: "I think nothing could be more grateful to my sensibilities than the daring naturalness which you so truthfully defend from the charge of irreverence" (Bingham 204). Zeitlin's transcript of a missing letter shows that Todd had deleted this sentence: "Hoarded Mr. / Samuel - not / one bleat of his / Lamb - but is known / to us -." The pattern of cuts revealed by the Putnam letters and the Zeitlin transcript suggests that lost manuscripts in the Whitney correspondence

have passages Todd removed that refer to Bowles, in some cases in the context of expressions of unconventional religious thought.

The manuscript, still missing, of the one letter Todd held back in 1894 and then printed in 1931, dated "November, 1878," is an extraordinary report of Dickinson's conversation with Helen Hunt Jackson and her husband after their visit to Mary Bowles, referred to in Todd's transcription as the wife of "Mr. — — —":

They found her, they said, a stricken woman, though not as ruthless as they feared. That of ties remaining, she spoke with peculiar love of a Miss Whitney of Northampton. . . . To know that long fidelity in ungracious soil was not wholly squandered, might be sweet to you.

(327)

Mary Bowles was Dickinson's friend and correspondent. This criticism of her behavior - perhaps having pressed Whitney to leave the Bowles household - testifies, again, to Dickinson's sympathy with Whitney's bond with Bowles.² Dickinson's letter ends with her wish that Whitney be "in full receipt of the Great Spirit whose leaving life was leaving you." It is remarkable that Whitney sent this letter to Todd, possibly intending to show her Dickinson's approval of her relationship with Samuel Bowles. Perhaps Whitney requested that the letter be withheld out of respect for Mary Bowles. It is also notable that Todd transcribed the letter and added it in 1931, even when she did not return the excised lines from other letters. Considering Todd's opportunities for revision in 1931, it is never entirely clear whether Todd was privatizing only the Whitney-Bowles relationship or also covering up the extent of Dickinson's feelings for Bowles.

Critics have faulted Todd for misrepresenting her relationship with Dickinson, for portraying herself as a close friend when she had never actually met the writer. That Dickinson did not meet Todd face to face was a dilemma for Todd in presenting herself as an intimate. Explaining the matter during her talks could undermine impressions of her bond with the writer or draw attention to Dickinson's unusual manner of maintaining

privacy, which would look peculiar to the public. The fact is that Dickinson wrote to Todd, and writing was her means of establishing and maintaining a friendship at this time in her life. It is clear from these letters, and from letters Dickinson wrote Todd's parents, that a bond between them lasted from the time Todd became acquainted with Susan and Austin until Dickinson's death, a period of about five years. After one of Todd's talks, a Boston journalist, cited above, described Todd as "one who speaks with authority" and noted that "the author was singularly fortunate in her interpreter. . . . Every tone and gesture revealed not only the intelligent critic but the loving friend" (Bingham 196).

But Todd misled audiences on the topic of how she came to know so much about Dickinson. We now recognize that much of the time she spent in the household was with Austin. Important to an understanding of literary history is the fact that Todd became an authority on Dickinson not through her friendship with Dickinson but through her relationship with Austin. She was not primarily an intelligent, energetic neighbor and friend of the family whom Lavinia happened to call on for help with the manuscripts when Susan proved unreliable, as the story has been told. She was Austin's lover and therefore had access to opportunity and to privileged information that helped make her work on Dickinson successful. Reflecting on her work on the letters in a diary entry on October 18, 1891, Todd wrote of Austin: "He tells me many things quite unsuspected by others" (Bingham 166-7). Bingham describes this work in December 1893 as "going forward — this time in collaboration with Mr. Dickinson who told my mother, as they read them together, 'intensely interesting things'" (245).

Todd's status as a privileged insider makes her editorial decisions about the letters especially noteworthy. In the publication history Austin has been portrayed as disengaged, except to come into the story, mysteriously, as perhaps the person who mutilated certain manuscripts, particularly letters that mention Susan. Whereas he does not appear to have commented extensively on Todd's editing of the poems, he did steadily observe the transcribing, according to the accounts of Todd and her husband David. And in the project of publishing the letters, documents show

that his role was significant. First, it is unlikely that the letters, with the exception of those sent to Higginson, would ever have been published if Austin had not approved. Todd's diary entries and her commentary in *Letters* show his approval of the edition and his role in helping to collect letters and prepare them for publication. In her introduction to the 1931 edition she describes Austin's help with publishing the letters as "daily" and "indispensable" (xv, xix). On December 12, 1893 she wrote in her diary:

Austin came toward four, and we read a lot of Emily's letters, which I have prepared for publication. He did not take much exception to any sentence anywhere.

He also came in the evening and we finished the set to himself, which interested him surprisingly. He stayed until ten o'clock. We shall go through the letters again, in detail. (Bingham 245)

A diary entry on January 29, 1894 notes: "Then Austin came at two, & we went over the first 60 pages of proof" (Bingham 245). A letter from Todd to the publisher Thomas Niles on February 26, 1894 reads:

I have had proofs of three chapters (there will be nine) and I am still one chapter ahead of the printers. But Mr. Dickinson, of course, wants to see them all, and he never judges satisfactorily what he wants in or out until he sees them in print; and I must confess that some things I thought quite safe to go in, look very startling in the cold impartiality of type, and have to come out. (Bingham 275)

Did Austin ask Todd to excerpt passages in the letters to Whitney because he was concerned about the image of his sister's relationship to Samuel Bowles that would be created in print? The Putnam manuscripts add to our knowledge and also to our questions.

These letters and poems also contribute significantly to the story of a friendship. The one extant manuscript of a letter sent to Whitney, prior to the Putnam acquisition, was written on the day of Dickinson's mother's death:

Sweet friend -
Our Mother
ceased -
While we bear
her dear form
through the
Wilderness, I am
sure you are
with us -

Emily -

This letter (the manuscript is in the Princeton University Library), and its timing, show the depth of the bond with Whitney. Jay Leyda writes in his section on Whitney in "The People around Emily Dickinson": "Maria Whitney's chief interest for us lies in her devotion to Samuel Bowles, and in ED's awareness of that devotion" (boxviii). This remark is indicative of two pervasive biases in Dickinson studies: that the writer's relationships with men are more significant and worthy of study than her relationships with women, and that romantic relationships, defined as involving marriage or the possibility of marriage, deserve more attention than other kinds of friendships. Overall, the role of friendship in Dickinson's life has been under studied because friendship, generally, is considered in simplified terms. Dickinson's "withdrawal from the world" is misnamed. For instance, Higginson, in "Emily Dickinson's Letters," in *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1891, identifies "the utterly recluse character of her life" (Buckingham 183). But Dickinson was not a conventional recluse, a fact attested to by letters to her ninety-three known correspondents (according to Sewall's count, 751). Grief was among her public emotions, as compared to more private emotions such as desire or shame, and shared grief is one of the constant themes throughout her letters. We see this in the Whitney correspondence, now in an expanded view through the Putnam manuscripts.

This group of letters adds to our understanding of Dickinson's complex definitions of friendship, during a century when friendships had different boundaries, broader definitions, and in many ways were more valued — idealized and honored — than in our own time. Whitney's relationship with

Bowles is an example of what we might think of today as a "permissive" friendship, one with less confining boundaries and fewer prohibitions. "My dearest friend," Whitney wrote to Bowles (Leyda, II, 233). Dickinson's bond with Bowles was also a friendship with extended boundaries. Todd and Austin, for instance, had certain freedoms in public because their "marriage" in some ways could pass for friendship according to nineteenth-century definitions. Dickinson exploited these diffuse boundaries in the language that she used in correspondences. For example, she refers to Higginson's wife as Higginson's "friend," and in other contexts she refers to a spouse as a friend, taking the term to the full extent of, or beyond, the boundaries of nineteenth-century definition. In her terms, friendship has a status equal to marriage, and she shows this again and again in her letters consoling Whitney. Romantic friendships between women have been explored for many years in Women's Studies; Gay Studies has increased interest in romantic friendships between men. But complex dynamics of romantic friendships between men and women in the nineteenth century have yet to be studied extensively. This work will teach us a great deal about gender, sexuality, social conventions and transgressions, expanding possibilities for reading Dickinson's writing.

In this essay my discussion of working with these unpublished Dickinson materials highlights new approaches to editing, breaking with the traditional approach of separating works by genre to present Dickinson's writing in correspondences, and other original manuscript groupings. I have emphasized the importance of paying attention to manuscript features, such as line breaks and spacing, and argued for lineating the prose as well as the poetry. In this final part of the essay I want to discuss the dangers of continuing to use the Johnson editions, focusing on the way a recent project carries out some of Johnson's problematic editing strategies.

William Shurr's *New Poems of Emily Dickinson* claims to present 498 new poems, lines from Johnson's *Letters* reformatted. In a review of *New*

Poems, Gary Lee Stonum describes Shurr's method as "opportunisticallly plucking out anything he thinks resembles a Dickinson poem." But Shurr seems not to know what a Dickinson poem looks like. Because he did not work with the manuscripts, he doesn't realize that there are no consistent markers, such as the varied margins Johnson uses, to indicate when Dickinson is moving into poetry or into prose. For example, the last two lines of Shurr's "Poem 208," taken from Johnson's "Letter 277," look like this: "Let others - show this Surry's Grace - / Myself - assist his Cross," whereas Dickinson's lines are: "Let others - show this / Surry's Grace - / Myself - assist his Cross." Shurr's description of the way Dickinson separated the poetry from prose is erroneous: "Dickinson herself formatted the last two lines as poetry by indenting them" (39). Johnson formatted the last two lines as poetry by indenting them. Dickinson separated three lines from the prose by leaving a line of space, as she occasionally did before verse lines, or, more commonly, afterward.

With a rare exception, Johnson used Dickinson's signals - some combination of rhyme, meter, lineation, capitalization, and spacing - to identify a Dickinson poem, as Todd had done. Shurr creates the fiction of Dickinson "disguising" poems (3). Then, as a rationale for his project of "discovering" them, he relies on a rare poem in the Johnson edition, taken from an early letter to Austin that Dickinson concludes with a description of the way the sky will look on the day he comes home:

She will smile and look happy ~ and be full of
sunshine then - and even should she frown upon
her child returning, there is another sky ever
serene and fair, and there is another sun -
shine, though it be darkness there - Never mind
faded forests, Austin, never mind silent fields -
here is a little forest whose leaf is ever green ~
here is a brighter garden ~ where not a frost
has been, in its unfading flowers I hear
the bright bee hum, prithee, my Brother, into my
garden come! Your very aff Sister.

In 1894 Todd printed the passage as prose. Johnson basically "plucked out" the poem, explaining in the variorum apparatus for "Poem 2": "ED made no line division, and the text does not appear as verse. The line arrangement and capitalization of first letters in the lines are here arbitrarily established."

There is another sky,
Ever serene and fair,
And there is another sunshine,
Though it be darkness there;
Never mind faded forests, Austin,
Never mind silent fields -
Here is a little forest,
Whose leaf is ever green;
Here is a brighter garden,
Where not a frost has been;
Where not a fading flower
In its unfading flowers
I hear the bright bee hum;
Prithee, my brother,
Into *my* garden come!³

While this is the only "poem" Johnson created in exactly this way, Shurr's project depends on this method.

Shurr defended his editorial methodology in a response to a review I wrote for *The Women's Review of Books*, and I quote the letter because his justification reveals the inevitable errors that result from his reliance on Johnson: "The methodology . . . was based on an analysis of the specific meter and rhyme that most profoundly characterizes Emily Dickinson's poems as we have known them from the beginning" (private correspondence). What we have known from the beginning are editorial constructions of texts that have been altered in a variety of ways. "The meter is a pattern of iambic tetrameter followed by a line of iambic trimeter, the rhythms of the hymn and the folk-ballad. One of Dickinson's most famous poems clearly demonstrates this practice," Shurr writes. However, in many cases Johnson established metrical patterns by changing line endings, evidenced by the example Shurr chooses:

Because I could not stop for Death -
He kindly stopped for me -
The Carriage held but just Ourselves -
And Immortality.
(*Poem 712*)

Dickinson's lines look like this:

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

(Franklin, *Manuscript Books*, 509)

Johnson's lines alter Dickinson's meter and emphasis. His first line accentuates "Death." Dickinson's first line accentuates "I." Dickinson's "The Carriage held but" is suspenseful, and "just Ourselves" more chilling alone on the line. Johnson's poems are not Dickinson's poems, and neither are Shurr's.

However, in several instances Shurr correctly identifies verse lines that Todd and Johnson overlooked. One signal that Dickinson uses to mark shifts between poetry and prose is the combination of capitalization and lineation. His "Poem 407" reformats these lines of verse: "When / Continents / expire / The Giants / they discarded - / are / Promoted / to endure - ." ⁴ If "The" and "Promoted" were not capitalized, this would be a sentence. Shurr's "Poem 257" is also based on Dickinson's lines of verse:

How luscious is the dripping
of February caves!
It makes our thinking Pink -

It antedates the Robin -
Bereaving in prospective
that February leaves -

Note Dickinson's capitalization of "Bereaving." Shurr is also correct in his claim that Johnson's "Prose Fragment 24" (*Letters*) is the draft of a poem; see

Shurr's "Poem 486." But he is incorrect when he says Dickinson is choosing between lines to give final shape to a quatrain.

In order to form quatrains, Johnson regularly ignored Dickinson's line breaks and occasionally dropped capitalization beginning a new line if it interfered with his stanza format. Shurr, too, constructs quatrains, in one instance claiming that a particular Dickinson letter "breaks into her more recognizable quatrains" (41) when there are none in the manuscript. Shurr's "Poem 441," which he calls a "perfect quatrain," is particularly deceptive:

Low at the knee that bore her once
unto wordless rest
Daisy kneels a culprit -
tell her her offence.

From the draft known as the second "Master letter," he takes four Dickinson lines and arranges them into four different lines. Then, in order to keep a near rhyme with "once" and "rest," he chooses a word she crossed out - "offence." Dickinson's revised lines read: "... tell her / her fault Master" (Franklin, *Master Letters*, 24).

I have several ethical concerns about Shurr's *New Poems*. First, he does not position himself as a reader finding poems, which would have been appropriate, and innovative. Instead, he identifies as an editor. An editor establishes a text on which others will base their work, and, therefore, has the responsibilities of returning to original documents, staying informed about current trends in editing, and keeping to standards of accuracy. In my view, editing is a science, and sloppy scholarship is misconduct. Another problem is that Shurr does not consistently cite the work of previous editors. There are numerous examples, some of which were corrected in a paperback reprint of *New Poems* where he acknowledges poems previously identified by Martha Nell Smith and myself in our published work. But other gaps remain in his citations. One example pertains to a Valentine letter, written when Dickinson was in her early twenties.

I weave for the Lamp of Evening -
but fairer colors than mine are twined

while stars are shining .
I know of a shuttle swift - I know
of a fairy gift - mat for the "Lamp
of Life" - the little Bachelor's wife !!

Johnson identifies this text as "Letter 41" and prints it as two paragraphs. In her 1931 edition of *Letters* Todd prints it as a prose poem in two stanzas (138). Shurr claims to be the first to identify the poem ("Poem 489"). But even if Todd printed a prose poem, Shurr should have cited her edition. Furthermore, on the folder at the Houghton Library where Johnson made his notes on the text, he writes that this Valentine is "part verse, part prose." Anyone studying Johnson's editing should consult these notes.

Another place where Shurr fails to credit Todd is with his "Poem 256":

Death obtains the Rose,
but the News of Dying goes
no further than the Breeze.
The Ear is the last Face.

Todd prints these lines as verse:

Would you with the bee return,
What a firm of noon !
Death obtains the rose,
But the news of dying goes
No further than the breeze. (306)

Shurr's text differs; nevertheless, he is obligated to credit Todd. Johnson's apparatus note for his "Letter 405" should have directed him to her edition: "One prose passage is printed as verse."

A third instance of Shurr neglecting to mention Todd's editing is his "Poem 20":

The Blood is more showy (gaudy) than the Breath.
But cannot dance as well -

Johnson prints the same text as "Prose Fragment 107" with the reference "[BM 319]," which means page 319 of *Bolts of Melody: New Poems of Emily*

Dickinson, edited by Todd and Bingham. (Note that their subtitle is Shurr's title.) Todd and Bingham's "Poem 633" does not include the variant or the period at the end of the first line and replaces the dash at the end of the second line with a period. If Shurr wanted to claim the discovery of his poem as distinct from Todd - Bingham's, he still needed to credit their editing.

There are several instances where Shurr does not adequately cite Johnson. Here is a prose poem that Dickinson sent to Higginson:

In memory
of your Little
Sister Who "meddled"
with the costly
Hearts to which
she gave the
worth and broke
them - fearing
punishment, she
ran away from
Earth -

Shurr forms "Poem 421" from "Letter 893," where Johnson prints most of the text as a prose poem, indicating verse format through indentation. Johnson prints a version of these lines sent to Susan Dickinson as "Poem 1566." Shurr makes no mention that the letter from which he takes his poem is printed as a prose poem; that there is another version in *Poems*; or that the lines to Higginson were published as a quatrain in Todd's 1931 *Letters* (321), which Johnson points out in his apparatus for "Poem 1566."

There are cases where Shurr notes that Johnson formatted lines in a letter as a poem but did not include them in *Poems*. If Johnson formatted lines as verse, Shurr did not "discover" them. Furthermore, Johnson published *Letters* three years after he published *Poems*. In the interim he changed his mind about the genre of certain lines, deciding to print them as poetry, but never revised the *Variorum*. Finally, in an instance where Shurr also fails to cite Ralph Franklin, he creates "Poem 14" from "Letter 233," a "Master letter," but fails to note that Johnson printed the lines as poetry in *Letters*,

although he did not include them in the variorum, and that Ralph Franklin identified the "lines of verse" in his facsimile edition of the "Master letters" (44). Perhaps further corrections in Shurr's citations will be made in a later edition of *New Poems*.

Finally, are Dickinson's "epigrams" "to be prized as a new genre never before identified" (2), as Shurr claims? In my view he has reformatted Dickinson's aphorisms to make epigrams. For example, his "Poem 196" looks like this:

Biography first convinces us
of the fleeing of the Biographed -

Dickinson's lines look like this:

Biography first
convinces us
of the fleeing
of the Biogra -
phied -

These are prose lines. Furthermore, the divided "Biogra - / phied," mimicking the fleeing, suggests "Biogra-fleed." Johnson's rendition misses the visual pun, and so does Shurr's.

For the last one hundred years critics have written about the epigrammatic qualities of the letters. "Epigrammatic" means "of or having the nature of an epigram," as well as "full of or given to the use of epigrams." In 1894 Todd described the letters' "epigrammatic power" in her introduction to *Letters* (Buckingham 341), and a reviewer wrote, "How epigrammatic Miss Dickinson's letters were can easily be guessed by the readers of her poems" (Buckingham 381). Discussing a project Todd conceived and then abandoned - collecting quotations for a "Birthday Book," Bingham wrote in 1945: "It is hard to think of any writer whose work would lend itself better than Emily's to a selection of epigrams" (201). In her 1979 *Lyric Time: Dickinson and the Limits of Genre*, Sharon Cameron writes: "In Dickinson's letters we can observe that the more vested the relationship with the letter recipient, the more aphoristic, epigrammatic, and explicitly literary the letters become"

(12). While Shurr may not be the first to identify epigrams in Dickinson's letters, he is the first to list them, with varying responses from reviewers. *The New Yorker* declares that Shurr's "prose-formatted poems" "simply do not hold up as poems," with the exception of the epigrams, which "seem most legitimate as freestanding pieces" and "are wonderful to have." Bruce Watson of *The Daily Hampshire Gazette*, Amherst's local newspaper, writes: "Epigram after epigram begs to be placed back in a letter."

Shurr maintains that his new poems speak to the "perceived needs of a present audience" (12), but, in fact, he misjudges many of those needs. Readers need to be provided with reliable texts and instructed in their reading of the letters, rather than being told that poems should be "excavated" from the "limiting contexts" of the prose (10). An understanding of the complex relationship between Dickinson's poetry and prose is essential to informed readings of all her work. In the production of new Dickinson editions, editors have responsibilities to readers who want less mediated texts, who want to see poems and letters in a presentation closer to "the way she wrote them" but may not be able to afford expensive facsimile or electronic editions. The best way to do this, as I hope to have shown, is through "diplomatic transcriptions": line for line print translations of poems and letters that attempt to represent the manuscripts as accurately as possible, with a detailed apparatus describing features that do not translate into print. An outcome of new print translations will be a view of Dickinson as less cryptic, more systematic and accessible than she is sometimes seen to be, an artist whose capitalization, punctuation, and line breaks are not "eccentricities," "accidents," or "habits of handwriting," but visual strategies, symbols used in combination with each other to indicate emphasis and accent, to create and explain her meaning. Editors have the opportunity to recover aspects of Dickinson's work that have been excerpted, muted, and obscured, as well as the obligation to provide editions that teach Dickinson's diverse readership to make their own critical evaluations of the texts they read.

Notes

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1. Manuscripts in the Elizabeth Whitney Putnam Acquisition are published by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Throughout this essay I use type to represent the angle of a dash, since Dickinson used dashes in letters and poems as expressive devices.
2. See Leyda, vol. 2, 129-130, for excerpts from Whitney's March 1868 letter to her sister on Mary Bowles' comments and her departure from the Bowles' household.
3. Johnson also changed punctuation and underlining.
4. However, I had previously identified this poem in "The Encoding of Homocrotic Desire: Emily Dickinson's Letters and Poems to Susan Dickinson, 1850-1886."

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MARTHA NELL SMITH

The Importance of a Hypermedia Archive of Dickinson's Creative Work

"The Poems" will ever be to me marvellous whether in ms. or type.

Susan Dickinson to Thomas Higginson,
Christmas 1890

The receptions of her writings, as well as of Emily Dickinson herself, have largely been determined by the writing technology with which the vast majority of her audiences, academic and popular, is familiar — the print medium that produces books, collections, and variorums of poetry, volumes of letters, and other prose writings of major poets. What might be called the ideology of the book has, therefore, profoundly influenced the ways in which her writings are initially perceived and ultimately judged. Since the poet's death in 1886, printing after printing of Dickinson's poems and letters has been produced, the most "authoritative" of which are now beginning to foreground photographic reproductions (see R. W. Franklin's edition of the *Manuscript Books* for Harvard UP [1981] and his edition of her *Master Letters* for Amherst College P [1986]). These photographic reproductions reveal the importance of Dickinson's handwritten experiments in punctuation, lineation, and calligraphic orthography. Readers can