1861

**Between A 829 & A 826**

**Spring 1861**

**Historic National Events**

- April 12: Confederates fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, at 4:30 a.m.; Fort Sumter surrenders approximately thirty-six hours later. War is formally declared.
- April 15: Lincoln calls for 75,000 volunteers to put down the insurrection. Lincoln rejects Robert E. Lee’s request to command the Union Army.
- April 17/18: Robert E. Lee rejects Lincoln’s request to command the Union Army.
- April 19: Lincoln orders the blockade of ports in Confederate states.
- April 20: Robert E. Lee resigns his commission in the Union Army.
- April 21: Professor of Greek William Seymour Tyler preaches a sermon in the Amherst College Chapel; in its wake one hundred Amherst students try to enlist in the Union Army.
- April 23: Robert E. Lee accepts command of Virginia State forces. (He contemplated the Confederate offer for two days before accepting.)
- May 3: Lincoln calls for an additional 43,000 plus volunteers to serve for three years, expanding the size of the Union Army.
- May 6: Arkansas secedes from the Union.
- May 20: North Carolina secedes from the Union.
- May 24: Union forces cross the Potomac and occupy Arlington Heights, the home of future Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

**Writings Circulated**

- ED copies and sends “Title divine – is mine!” (Fr 194A; L 250) to Samuel Bowles, ca. spring.\(^{159}\)
- ED copies and sends “I stole them from a Bee –” (Fr 226A) to Samuel Bowles, ca. spring.
- ED writes Samuel Bowles, ca. spring, “I can’t explain it, Mr Bowles...”; her letter includes the poem “Two swimmers wrestled on the spar” (L 219; Fr 227A).
- ED copies and sends “No Wilderness can be” (the second stanza of “For this – accepted Breath –”) (Fr 230A) to Samuel Bowles, ca. spring.
- ED copies and sends “What shall I do – it whimper so –” (Fr 237A) to Samuel Bowles, ca. spring.
- ED copies and sends “I’ve nothing Else, to bring, you know –” (Fr 253A) to Samuel Bowles, ca. spring.
- ED writes Susan Dickinson, about April, “Will Susan please lend Emily ‘Life in the Iron Mills –...’” (L 231).\(^{160}\)
- ED copies and sends “Musicians wrestling Everywhere!” (Fr 229A) to Susan Dickinson, ca. spring.
- ED copies and sends “A slash of Blue –” (Fr 233A) to Susan Dickinson, ca. spring.\(^{161}\)

**Writings Retained**

- “A wife – at Daybreak” (Dickinson composes/copies the fourth extant “Master” document, A 826/ Fr 185A, ca. spring; it remains unbound).
- ED copies the following poems onto a sheet, ca. early spring: “The Skies cant keep their secret!” (Fr 213A); “Poor little Heart!” (Fr 214A); “I shall know why – when Time is over –” (Fr 215A); “On this long storm the Rainbow rose –” (Fr 216A). [This sheet will become the fourth sheet of F9.]
- ED copies the following poems onto a sheet, ca. spring: “The murmur of a Bee” (Fr 217A); “You love me – you are sure –” (Fr 218A); “My River runs to Thee –” (Fr 219B); “It’s such a little thing to weep –” (Fr 220A); “He was weak, and I was strong – then –” (Fr 221A). [This sheet will become the third sheet of F9.]
- ED copies the following poems onto a sheet, ca. spring: “Dying! Dying in the night!” (Fr 222A); “Morning – is the place for Dew –” (Fr 223A); “An awful Tempest mashed the air –” (Fr 224A); “I’m ‘wife’ – I’ve finished that –” (Fr 225A); “I stole them from a Bee –” (Fr 226B); “Two swimmers wrestled on the spar –” (Fr 227B); “My eye is fuller than my vase –” (Fr 228A). [This sheet will become the sixth sheet of F9.]
- ED copies the following poems onto a sheet, ca. late spring: “Musicians wrestle everywhere –” (Fr 229B); “For this – accepted Breath –” (Fr 230B); “We don’t cry – Tim and I –” (Fr 231A). [This sheet will become the fifth sheet of F9.]
- ED copies the following poems onto a sheet, ca. late spring: “He forgot – and I – remembered –” (Fr 232A); “A Slash of Blue! A sweep of Gray!” (Fr 233B); “I should not dare to leave my friend,” (Fr 234A); “The Flower must not blame the Bee –” (Fr 235A); “Some – keep the Sabbath – going to church –” (Fr 236B). [This sheet will become the seventh sheet of F9.]

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159 Habegger convincingly dates this poem-letter to Bowles to spring 1861; see Habegger, *My Wars Are Laid Away in Books*, ‘Appendix S’.

160 Hart and Smith also date this letter to spring (likely April) of 1861; see OMC, p. 95.

161 Hart and Smith date this poem sent to Susan Dickinson “1850s”; see OMC, p. 69.
A miss at Leymor
I shall cr.

Sunrise last then a flag from
At midnight I am at a
maid.

How short it takes to make it divide!
Then. Midnight. I have passed
from one
and the East. And behold!
Midnight. Good night! I have
them call.

The Angels watch in the hall.
Softly, my future claims it.