

HEMANS (née BROWNE), FELICIA DOROTHEA (1793 - 1835), poet

Name: Felicia Dorothea Hemans
Date of birth: 1793
Date of death: 1835
Spouse: Alfred Hemans
Parent: George Browne
Gender: Female
Occupation: poet
Area of activity: Poetry
Author: Gwyn Jones

Born in Liverpool 25 September 1793, a daughter of George Browne, merchant. When she was seven her family moved to Gwrych, near Abergele, Denbighshire. Her education was patchy but she read avidly and her progress and development were so exceptional that she was able to publish her *Juvenile Poems* in 1808 shortly after her fourteenth birthday. These poems were not well received but from then on she wrote and published almost continuously. She married Captain Alfred Hemans in 1812, and by 1818, the year they separated, she had borne him five sons. Other than for one short period, she lived in Bronwylfa, near Abergele, in her mother's house. A number of works belong to this period, *The Domestic Affections and Other Poems*, 1812; translations of the works of the Portuguese poet Camoens and others, 1818; *The Sceptic*, 1820; *The siege of Valencia*, 1823; *The Forest Sanctuary and Lays of Many Lands*, 1825. Her play, *The Vespers of Palermo*, was performed in Covent Garden, London, in December 1823 and with greater success in Edinburgh the following year. In 1825 she crossed the river Clwyd to Rhyllon and there she wrote *Dramatic Scene between Bronwylfa and Rhyllon*. After her mother's death two years later she went to live in Watertree near Liverpool. In 1831 she moved to Dublin; from then on she wrote mainly religious poetry. Her health had never been good and she died in Dublin 16 May, 1835. She was of a loving and gentle disposition and her poetry was tender and flowed gracefully and evenly, but it lacked strength and permanent value. Her collected works were edited by Mrs. Hughes in 1839 and by W.M. Rossetti in 1873.

Author

Professor Gwyn Jones, (1907 - 1999)

Sources

H. F. Chorley, *Memorials of Mrs. Hemans with illustrations of her literary character from her private correspondence* (1836) (two volumes), 1836

Hughes and Rossetti, *Memoir of the Life and Writings of Mrs. Hemans. By her sister* (Philadelphia 1839)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Peter W. Trinder in *Writers of Wales Series*, 1984

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Felicia Hemans](#)

Images

William Holl, William Edward West, [Felicia Hemans](#)

Edward Scriven, William Edward West, [Felicia Hemans](#)

Edward Robertson, Edward Smith, [Felicia Hemans](#)

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Edward William Wyon, [Felicia Hemans](#)

Edward Scriven, [Mrs. Hemans's mother](#)

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