

# EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

b. February 22, 1892

d. October 19, 1950

POET

*“I am glad I paid so little attention to good advice; had I abided by it I might have been saved from some of my most valuable mistakes.”*

**She was a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet known for her feminism and social activism.**

Edna St. Vincent Millay was a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet known for her feminism and social activism. From an early age, she spoke out against injustices against women, often rebelling against authority at home and at school. She published her first poems when she was 15. By the time she enrolled in Vassar College, which was then exclusively female, she was having affairs with her classmates. Her poem “The Lamp and the Bell” is about the love shared between women.

Millay eventually moved to New York City where she immersed herself in the bohemian culture of Greenwich Village. She worked with the famed Provincetown Players, a theater group founded by Eugene O’Neill. She later helped launch the Cherry Lane

Theater for experimental drama. During her years in New York City, she lived an openly bisexual life and counted among her friends the writers Edmund Wilson and Susan Glaspell.

Millay is most famous for her poem “Renescence” and her 1920 collection, “A Few Figs From Thistles,” which explored themes of female sexuality. She won the Pulitzer Prize for “The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver” in 1923, becoming only the third woman ever to win the poetry prize at the time. She was also the sixth person (and second woman) to win the Frost Medal for her contribution to American poetry.

The writer Thomas Hardy said that America had two great attractions: the skyscraper and the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay. Today, her former residence in upstate New York is a museum dedicated to honoring her legacy in poetry and social activism.

