



DELPHI
CLASSICS

Anne Bradstreet

Complete Works

DELPHI POETS SERIES

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Anne Bradstreet

(1612-1672)



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The Delphi Classics Catalogue

a Gentlewoman in *New-England*

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Version 1

DELPHI POETS SERIES

Anne Bradstreet



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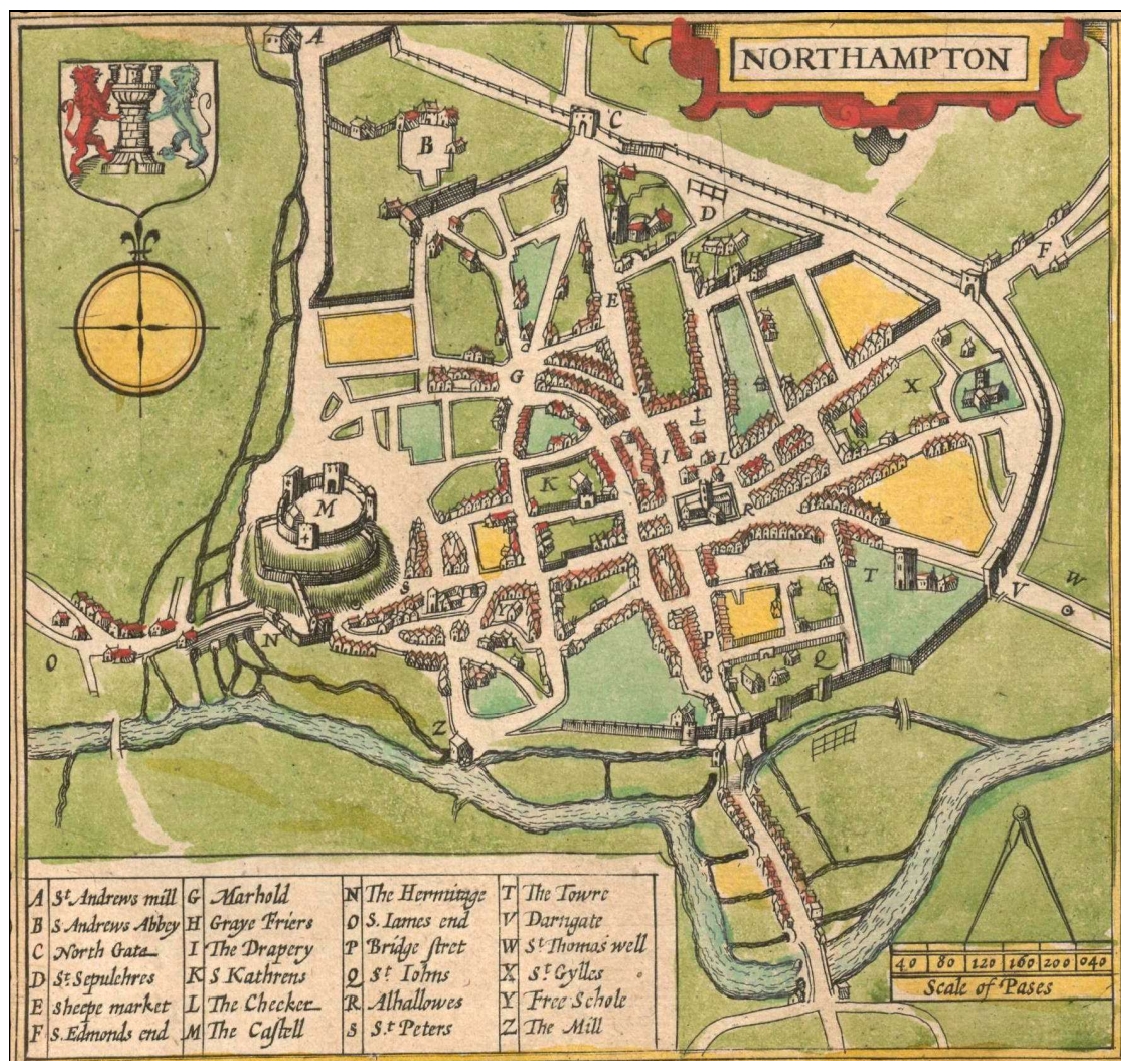


When reading poetry on an eReader, it is advisable to use a small font size and landscape mode, which will allow the lines of poetry to display correctly.

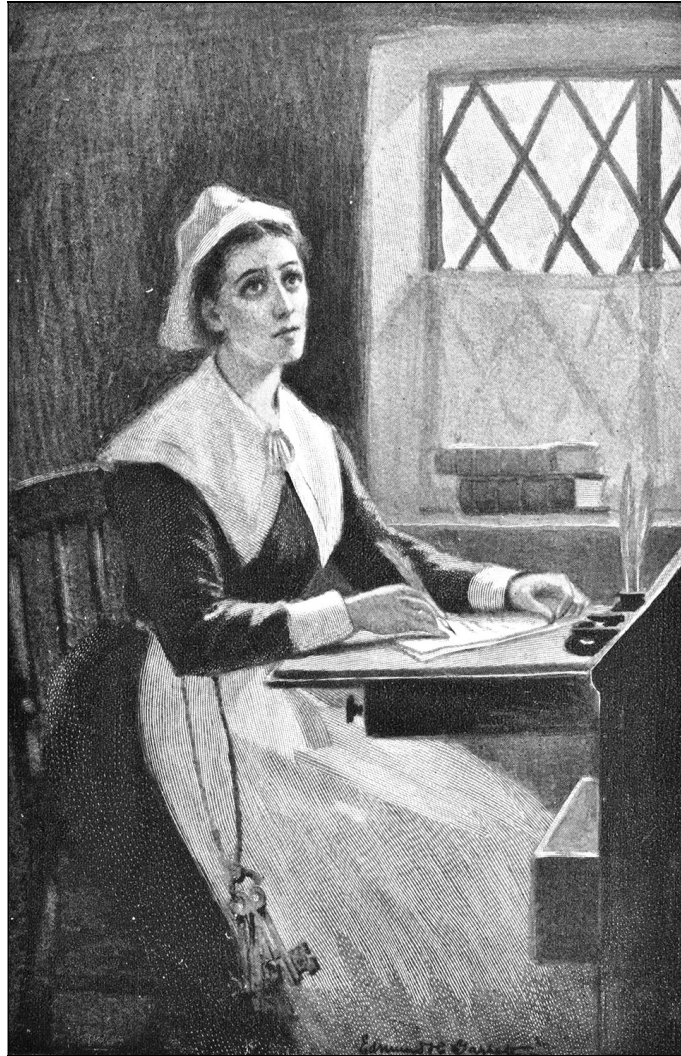
The Life and Poetry of Anne Bradstreet



Northampton, a town 60 miles north-west of London — likely Anne Bradstreet's birthplace



Map of Northampton by John Speed produced around 1610, shortly before the poet's birth in 1612



A nineteenth century depiction of Anne Bradstreet by Edmund H. Garrett. No portrait was made of Bradstreet during her lifetime.

Brief Introduction: Anne Bradstreet

The first writer in England's North American colonies to be published, Anne Bradstreet was born to a wealthy Puritan family in Northampton, England in 1612. She was the daughter of Thomas Dudley, a steward of the Earl of Lincoln, and Dorothy Yorke. She grew up in cultured circumstances and was a well-educated woman for her time, being tutored in history, classical languages and literature. Her education enabled her to write with authority about politics, history, medicine and theology. Her personal library of books was said to have numbered over 800, although many were destroyed when her home burned down.

At the age of sixteen Anne married Simon Bradstreet, who, like her father, would later serve as a governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Anne and Simon, along with Anne's parents, emigrated to America aboard the *Arbella* as part of the Winthrop Fleet of Puritan emigrants in 1630. Upon their arrival at what is now Pioneer Village in Salem, Massachusetts, they found that many of the colonists had died from illness or starvation the previous winter. Her family shared a one-room house with very little furniture or supplies. The family soon moved again, this time to what is now Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1632, Anne had her first child, Samuel, in "Newe Towne," as it was then called. Despite continuing poor health, she would have eight children and achieved a comfortable social standing. Having previously been afflicted with smallpox as a teenager in England, Anne would fall prey to the illness again, as paralysis overtook her joints in later years. In the early 1640's, Simon once more urged his wife, pregnant with their sixth child, to move for the sixth time, from Ipswich, Massachusetts, to Andover Parish.

Both Anne's father and her husband were instrumental in the founding of Harvard University in 1636; her father was a founder, and her husband an overseer. Two of her sons were graduates. In October 1997, the Harvard community dedicated a gate in memory of her as America's first published poet.

In her younger years, Bradstreet wrote five quaternions, epic poems of four parts each, exploring the diverse yet complementary natures of their subject. Much of Bradstreet's poetry is based on observation of the world around her, focusing on domestic and religious themes. Long considered primarily of historical interest, she won critical acceptance in the twentieth century as a writer of enduring verse, particularly for her sequence of religious poems, *Contemplations*, which was written for her family and not published until the mid-nineteenth century.

In 1647, Bradstreet's brother-in-law, Rev. John Woodbridge, sailed to England, carrying her manuscript of poetry. Although Bradstreet later said that she did not know Woodbridge was going to publish her manuscript, in her self-deprecatory poem, *The Author to Her Book*, we learn that she wrote Woodbridge a letter while he was in London, indicating her knowledge of the publication plan. She had little choice but to feign indifference to her craft, though — as a woman poet, it was important for her to downplay her ambitions as an author. Otherwise, she would have faced criticism for being "unwomanly." Bradstreet's only book to be published during her lifetime was printed in London as *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America "by a Gentlewoman of those Parts"* (1650). The publication's purpose appears to have been an attempt, fuelled by devout Puritan men, (i.e. Thomas Dudley, Simon Bradstreet, John Woodbridge), to show that a godly and educated woman could elevate her

position as a wife and mother, without necessarily placing her in competition with men.

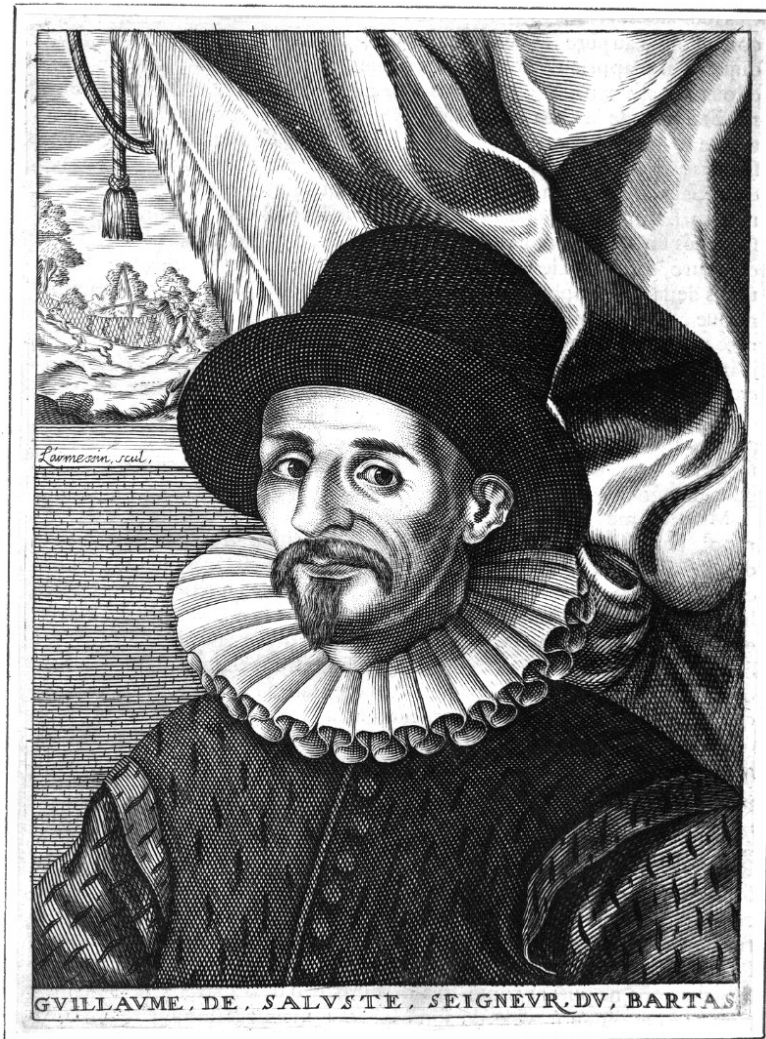
In 1678, her self-revised *Several Poems Compiled with Great Variety of Wit and Learning* was posthumously published in America, and included one of her most famous poems, *To My Dear and Loving Husband*. This poem reveals that she is always in accord with her husband: "If ever two were one, then surely we." The Puritans believed marriage to be a gift from God. In another of Bradstreet's works, *Before the Birth of One of Her Children*, she acknowledges God's gift of marriage in the lines, "And if I see not half my days that's due, what nature would, God grant to yours, and you". Various works of Bradstreet are dedicated to her children. In verses such as *Before the Birth of One of Her Children* and *In Reference to Her Children*, she declares the love that she has for her children, both unborn and born. In Puritan society, children were also viewed as gifts from God, and she loved and cared for all of her children just as she loved and cared for her husband.

On 10 July 1666, the Bradstreets' North Andover family home was destroyed by a fire that left them homeless and with few personal belongings. This event itself inspired a poem titled *Upon the Burning of Our House July 10th, 1666*. At first, she rejects the anger and grief that this worldly tragedy has caused her; she looks toward God and the assurance of heaven as consolation. During this difficult time, her health was slowly failing. She suffered from tuberculosis and had to deal with the loss of cherished relatives, including her daughter-in-law Mercy and several grandchildren. Still, her determination remained strong and as a reflection of her religious devotion and knowledge of the Bible, she found peace. Bradstreet died on 16 September 1672, in North Andover at the age of 60. The precise location of her grave is uncertain, but many believe she was laid to rest in the Old Burying Ground at Academy Road and Osgood Street in North Andover. In 1676, four years after her death, Simon married for a second time a woman also named Anne (Gardiner). In 1697, Simon died and was buried in Salem.

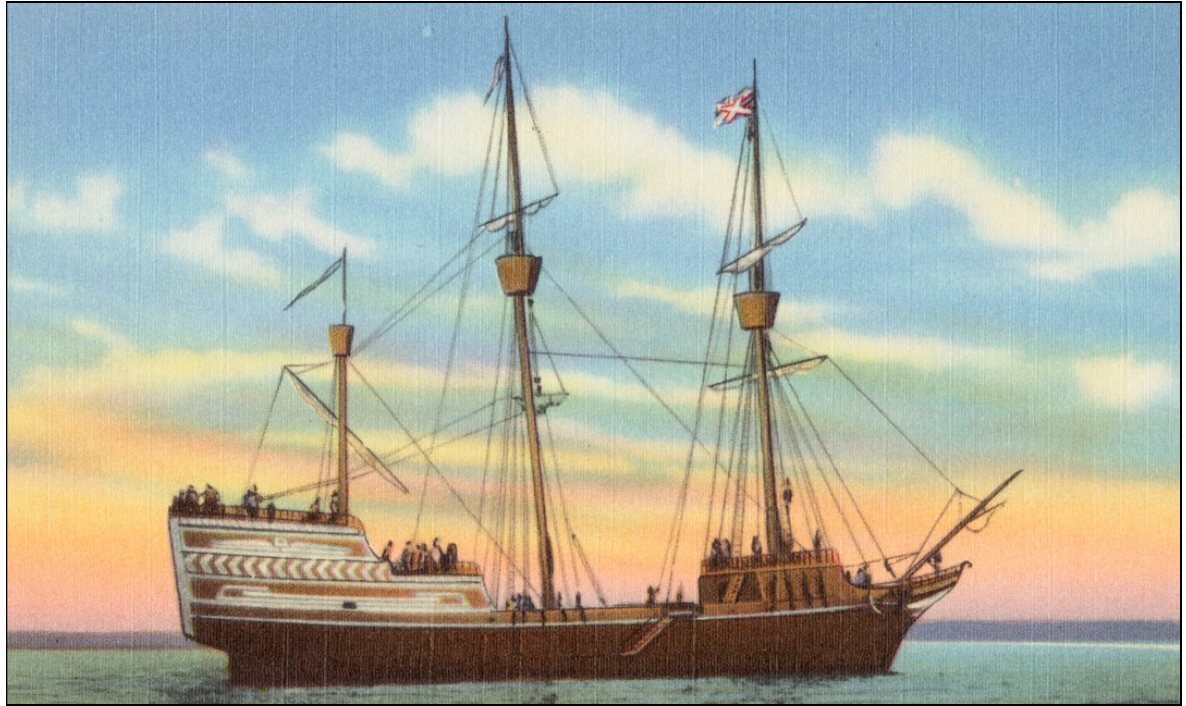
Most of Bradstreet's poems are long and imitative works, based on the standard poetic conventions of the time. However, the last two poems of *The Tenth Muse — Of the Vanity of All Worldly Creatures* and *David's Lamentation for Saul and Jonathan* — are individual and genuine poems in their recapitulation of the poet's own feelings. Her later verses, written for her family in what would become known as *The Andover Manuscript Book*, reveal her spiritual growth, as she came fully to accept the Puritan creed. She also wrote more personal poems of considerable beauty, dealing with subjects such as her thoughts before childbirth and her response to the death of a grandchild. These shorter poems benefit from their lack of imitation and didacticism.

Bradstreet holds the historic distinction of being the first published writer in the American colonies. *The Tenth Muse* defied the odds of the era, proving that the New World could produce sophisticated, publishable literary art. She helped pioneer a distinctly American voice in her verses. Although her earlier works leaned on classical and European forms to explore grand topics like history, medicine and politics, her later, more personal poetry truly shaped American literature. She drew inspiration from her immediate, everyday reality: the harsh realities of frontier life, domestic trials, deep love for her husband and the complexities of her faith. By doing so, she became the first writer to authentically document the emotional and psychological landscape of colonial life. Although she was a devout Puritan, at times her writing quietly rebelled against the rigid constraints placed upon women. In a society where a woman's role was meant to be silent and strictly domestic, she produced a vast body of work — over 7,000 lines — proving that women were highly

capable of intellect, reason and profound artistic expression. Highlights like *To My Dear and Loving Husband* and *Contemplations* remain staples of American literature anthologies. By claiming her space as a female writer, she paved the way for future literary trailblazers, including Emily Dickinson, who could focus their poetry on personal, emotional and female perspectives for the first time.



Guillaume de Salluste du Bartas (1544-1590) was a Gascon Huguenot courtier and poet. Trained as a doctor of law, he served in the court of Henri of Navarre for most of his career. Du Bartas was celebrated across sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe for his divine poetry, which heavily influenced Bradstreet's verse.



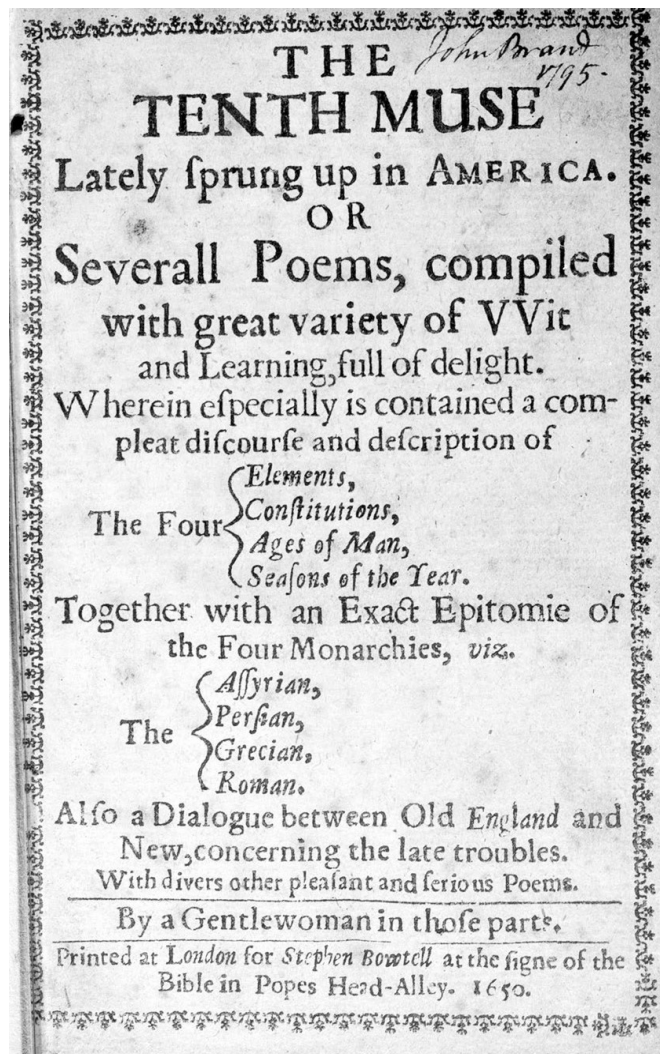
Early twentieth century artist's depiction of the Arabella, the flagship of the Winthrop Fleet on which Governor John Winthrop, other members of the Company (including William Gager), and Puritan emigrants transported themselves and the Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company from England to Salem between April and June 1630, giving legal birth to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Bradstreet was among her travellers.



Portrait of Bradstreet's husband Simon, from Henry W. Smith's "The Signers to the Declaration of Independence," published in 1854. He was a merchant, politician and colonial administrator who served as the last governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Arriving in Massachusetts on the Winthrop Fleet in 1630, Bradstreet was almost constantly involved in the politics of the colony and became its governor in 1679.



John Winthrop, who led the first large wave of colonists from England in 1630 and served as governor for 12 of the colony's first 20 years



The first edition title page of the poet's only book to be published during her lifetime

Complete Works of Anne Bradstreet

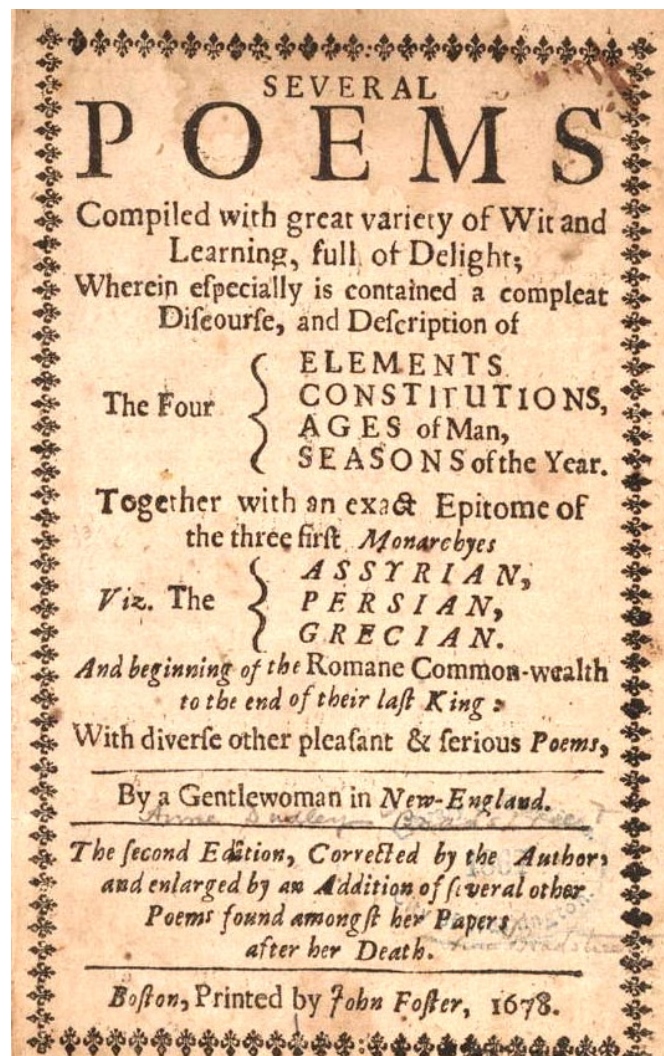
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Of the four Ages of Man.
The four Seasons of the Year.
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Years after the Flood,
The Second Monarchy, being the Persian, began under Cyrus, Darius being his Uncle
and Father in-law reigned with him about two years.
The Third Monarchy, Being the Grecian, beginning under Alexander the Great in the
112. Olympiad.
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A Dialogue Between Old En- gland and New, concerning their present Troubles,
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untimely slain at the Siege of Zutphen, Anno, 1586.
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The Author to her Book.
Upon a Fit of Sickness, Anno 1632. Ætatis Suæ, 19.
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Before the Birth of one of her Children.
To my Dear and loving Husband.
A Letter to her Husband, absent upon Publick employment.
Another.
Another.
To her Father with some verses.
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In memory of my dear grand-child Elizabeth Bradstreet, who deceased August, 1665,
being a year and half old.
In memory of my dear grand child Anne Bradstreet. Who deceased June 20, 1669,
being three years and seven Months old.

On my dear Grand-child Simon Bradstreet, Who dyed on 16. Novemb. 1669. being but a moneth, and one day old.

To the memory of my dear Daughter-in-Law, Mrs. Mercy Bradstreet, who deceased Sept. 6, 1669, in the 28. year of her Age.

A Funeral Elogy. Upon that Pattern and Patron of Virtue, the truely pious, peerless & matchless Gentlewoman



Title page of the second (posthumous) edition of Bradstreet's poems, 1678

**To her most Honoured Father Thomas Dudley Esq; these humbly
presented.**



DEAR Sir of late delighted with the sight { T.D. *On the four parts of the World.*
Of your four Sisters cloth'd in black and white,
Of fairer Dames the Sun ne'r saw the face;
Though made a pedestal for *Adams* Race;
Their worth so shines in those rich lines you show
Their paralels to finde I scarcely know
To climbe their Climes, I have nor strength nor skill
To mount so high requires an Eagle's quill;
Yet view thereof did cause my thoughts to soar,
My lowly pen might wait upon those four
I bring my four times four, now meanly clad
To do their homage, unto yours, full glad:
Who for their Age, their worth and quality
Might seem of yours to claim precedency:
But by my humble hand, thus rudely pen'd
They are your bounden handmaids to attend
These same are they, from whom we being have
These are of all, the Life, the Nurse, the Grave;
These are the hot, the cold, the moist, the dry,
That sink, that swim, that fill, that upwards fly,
Of these consists our bodies, Cloathes and Food,
The World, the useful, hurtful, and the good,
Sweet harmony they keep, yet jar oft times
Their discord doth appear, by these harsh rimes
Yours did contest for wealth, for Arts, for Age,
My first do shew their good, and then their rage.
My other foures do intermixed tell
Each others faults, and where themselves excell,
How hot and dry contend with moist and cold,
How Air and Earth no correspondence hold,
And yet in equal tempers, how they 'gree
How divers natures make one Unity
Something of all (though mean) I did intend
But fear'd you'd judge *Du Bartas* was my friend.
I honour him, but dare not wear his wealth
My goods are true (though poor) I love no stealth
But if I did I durst not send them you
Who must reward a Thief, but with his due.
I shall not need, mine innocence to clear
These ragged lines, will do 't when they appear:
On what they are, your mild aspect I crave
Accept my best, my worst vouchsafe a Grave.
From her that to your self, more duty owes
Then water in the boundess Ocean flows.

March 20, 1642.

ANNE BRADSTREET.



End of Sample