

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR MUSEUM

Timeline

- 1872 Paul Laurence Dunbar was born in Dayton, Ohio on June 27th. He was the son of former slaves Joshua and Matilda Dunbar.
- 1872-1878 Early childhood in Dayton with half-brothers Robert and William Murphy.
- 1878 Wrote his first poem
- 1878-1889 Attended the public, district, and intermediate schools in Dayton.
- 1884 Recited first original poem, "Easter Hymn." At the Eaker Street African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1889 Contributed poems and sketches to Orville Wright's Westside News.
- 1890 Edited the Dayton Tattler, printed by Orville and Wilbur Wright. Initiated a newspaper, the Democratic Sheet, with a Mr. Faber. Was editor-in-chief of the High School Times, contributing editor of Tomfoolery and president of the Philomathæan Debating Society.
- 1891 Wrote a western dialect story, "The Tenderfoot," for the A.N. Kellogg Syndicate, the first literary work for which he was paid (\$6). "Little Billy," another western sold a few weeks later. He also wrote the class song and was graduated from Central High School.
- 1891-1893 Elevator boy, Callahan Building. Met Dr. James Newton Mathews and James Whitcomb Riley. Spoke before the Western Association of Writers.
- 1892 Completed first volume of poems, *Oak and Ivy*.
- 1893 Employed by Frederick Douglass as a clerk in the Haytien Building, World's Fair, Chicago, 1893. Contributes articles to the Chicago Record.
- 1893-1895 Began reading from his own work. Editor of the Indianapolis World. Begins correspondence with future wife Alice Ruth Moore.
- 1895-1896 Second Book of poems, *Majors and Minors* published. Republication of first two books into one volume called *Lyrics of a Lowly Life* with introduction by William Dean Howells.
- 1897 Met future wife Alice Moore and became engaged. Met Booker T. Washington. Toured England as guest of U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, John Hay.
- 1897-1899 Dunbar returned from England. Secured a position as an assistant in the Library of Congress at \$720 per year. Married Alice Ruth Moore on March 6, 1898. Published first novel, *The Uncalled*. *Folks from Dixie*, *Lyrics of Heartside*, and *Poems of Cabin and Field* are published in 1899. Doctors detect tuberculosis.
- 1900 Novels *The Strength of Gideon* and *The Love of Landry* are published. A musical *Uncle Eph's Christmas: A One-Act Play with Music* is published in collaboration with Will Marion Cook.
- 1901 Dunbar participated in President William McKinley's inauguration. Publishes *Roly Poly*, *Lil Gal*, *Candle-Lightin' Time* and his third novel, *The Fanatics*.
- 1902 Dunbar and Alice Moor Dunbar separate for good. He writes his last novel, *Sport of the Gods*, and the Tuskegee Institute School Song.

- 1903 Dunbar publishes *Lyrics of Love and Laughter*, *When Malindy Sings*, and *In Old Plantation Days*. Dunbar returns to live in Dayton (ill).
- 1904 *The Heart of Happy Hollow* is published for the first time while *Sport of the Gods* is published in England as *The Jest of Fate*. Dunbar writes the campaign poem for Theodore R. Roosevelt.
- 1905 *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow* and *Howdy, Honey, Howdy* are published while President Theodore Roosevelt commissions Dunbar as an aide of the Third Civic Division with the rank of colonel.
- 1906 *Joggin' Erlong*, *Sling Along*, and *Equipment* are published. Dunbar dies on February 9, 1906, a few months after the death of his best friend Dr. William "Bud" Burns.

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Edited by Gossie H. Hudson and Jay Martin