

**THE POEMS OF
ERNEST DOWSON**

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The poems of Ernest Dowson by Ernest Dowson & Arthur Symons & Aubrey Beardsley

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ERNEST DOWSON & ARTHUR SYMONS & AUBREY BEARDSLEY

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1887

Ernest Lawson, Ph. Sc.

Ernest Lawson
From a drawing by W. Rothenstein.

THE POEMS OF
ERNEST DOWSON

WITH A MEMOIR BY
ARTHUR SYMONS
FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS BY
AUBREY BEARDSLEY
AND A PORTRAIT BY
WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN

JOHN LANE, THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON & NEW YORK MDCCCCV

ERNEST DOWSON

I

THE death of Ernest Dowson will mean very little to the world at large, but it will mean a great deal to the few people who care passionately for poetry. A little book of verses, the manuscript of another, a one-act play in verse, a few short stories, two novels written in collaboration, some translations from the French, done for money ; that is all that was left by a man who was undoubtedly a man of genius, not a great poet, but a poet, one of the very few writers of our generation to whom that name can be applied in its most intimate sense. People will complain, probably, in his verses, of what will seem to them the factitious melancholy, the factitious idealism, and (peeping through at a few rare moments) the factitious suggestions of riot. They will see only

ERNEST DOWSON

a literary affectation, where in truth there is as genuine a note of personal sincerity as in the more explicit and arranged confessions of less admirable poets. Yes, in these few evasive, immaterial snatches of song, I find, implied for the most part, hidden away like a secret, all the fever and turmoil and the unattained dreams of a life which had itself so much of the swift, disastrous, and suicidal impetus of genius.

Ernest Christopher Dowson was born at The Grove, Belmont Hill, Lee, Kent, on August 2nd, 1867; he died at 26 Sandhurst Gardens, Catford, S.E., on Friday morning, February 23, 1900, and was buried in the Roman Catholic part of the Lewisham Cemetery on February 27. His great-uncle was Alfred Domett, Browning's "Waring," at one time Prime Minister of New Zealand, and author of "Ranolf and Amohia," and other poems. His father, who had himself a taste for literature, lived a good deal in France and on the Riviera, on account of the delicacy of his health, and Ernest had a somewhat irregular education, chiefly out of England, before he entered Queen's College, Oxford. He left in 1887 without taking a degree, and came to London, where he lived for several



ERNEST DOWSON
(From a photograph)

