

Born future was molded by the early deaths

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Born May, 1803, Ralph Waldo Emerson was an early American writer/philosopher that led the Transcendentalist movement of the 19th century.

Despite the tragic occurrences going on around him, he remained with a generally sunny disposition that rang with optimism. Emerson was raised by a strict, Unitarian minister father that came from a long line of ministers himself (2)*. Despite this, Emerson left the church at the age of 34, and did not follow in his footsteps(1).

This could've been due to his father's untimely death when Emerson was eight. In fact, it is believed that much of Emerson's future was molded by the early deaths that plagued his familial life (1). Apart from his father, his three brothers, his first wife at the age of 20, and his oldest son faced premature death (2). However, his aunt, Mara Emerson, embodied everything that Emerson would ever become. Though morbid, she was intelligent and very vibrant(2). Emerson also acquired some excellent brains, as he attended Harvard, but sadly his education was thwarted by his vision problems (2). He became a minister for a short while, but resigned after the untimely death of his first wife, Ellen Tucker (2). Soon after, he began lecturing, and ended up completely devoting his life to teaching, writing, and spreading his philosophy(1, 2).

In 1835, he married his second wife, Lydia Jackson, and they had four children together (2). Emerson's family lived comfortably, and Emerson was always busy. He had famous friends such as Margaret Fuller, and Henry Thoreau helping out around the home, as well as other friends such as

George Ripley, and Branson Alcott who helped him create a magazine named *The Dial*, which Fuller edited in 1840 (2). Despite the immense happiness that clouded Emerson's life at this point, it took a turn when his eldest son, Waldo, died from Lockjaw, a commonly used slang term for Tetanus(2). After his son's passing, his work took a noticeably darker turn, but ultimately resumed its normal tone. He began lecturing a lot more frequently, so much so that by 1885, he lectured at least 80 times a year on a variety of subjects. By this time, Emerson had traveled all over the nation, and published several essays.

He traveled to England in 1847 to receive more information on the gap between the rich and poor, which influenced some of his future writings (2).

As Emerson grew older he traveled frequently, wrote a lot, and was all around hard-working. Though he worked diligently, he was always self-aware of his personal limits and made sure to remain within the confines of them.

Emerson had grown very popular by this time, and inspired others to write, such as the renowned Walt Whitman (2).

He always fought for what he believed in, advocating for abolition despite the medical challenges he faced. His memory decayed at a moderate pace, with it speeding up after his home burned down, until his death in 1882.

Emerson's works always revolved around the individuality of the person, most likely why he advocated for abolition. In works such as *Self-Reliance*, Emerson explores the individuality of each person and their fate threaded through it. He has deeply intricate meaning on life and death in all writings he published.

He was a sensational inspiration to many authors, and to many people who simply needed guidance.