



**Name:** William Cullen Bryant

**Years:** November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1794- June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1878

**Residence:** New York, New York

**Brief Biography:**

Renowned poet and editor William Cullen Bryant was born November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1794, the second son of Peter Bryant and Sarah Snell in Cummington, Massachusetts. Bryant's interest in poetry began at a very young age, and perhaps his most well-known poem "Thanatopsis" is thought to have been written in 1811 while Bryant was only 17 years old. A highly intelligent young man, Bryant was admitted to the bar in 1815. The walk to school was roughly seven miles for Bryant each and every day, and on one of these walks he noticed a small bird which inspired his 1821 poem "To a Waterfowl." Also in 1821, Bryant married Frances Fairchild while he still found himself heavily immersed in building his legal career. However, after the publishing of his compilation of works entitled simply "Poems" in America as well as Britain, Bryant was considered America's leading poet. Realizing that poetry could not feasibly support his family, Bryant became the editor of the New York-Evening Post. Bryant occupied the position of Editor-In-Chief from 1828 until 1878 which allowed him to build his fortune as well as exercise political power. In his later years, Bryant spent much of his time translating works by Homer. William Cullen Bryant passed away on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1878 after complications suffered from a fall.

**Major Achievements:**

Bryant was a major force in the creation of Central Park in New York City. Also, Bryant was a leading figure in the creation of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as New York Medical College. Bryant also served as a mentor for poet and naturalist Walt Whitman

**For More Information:** William Cullen Bryant: The Complete Stories, Edited by Frank Gado;  
William Cullen Bryant: Author of America, by Gilbert H. Muller

**Resources:** <http://www.poemhunter.com/william-cullen-bryant/biography/>

**By Ben Smith**

