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Edited by Angus Cleghorn, Jonathan Ellis  
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## ELIZABETH BISHOP IN CONTEXT

Elizabeth Bishop is increasingly recognised as one of the twentieth century's most original writers. Consisting of thirty-five ground-breaking essays by an international team of authors, including biographers, literary critics, poets, and translators, this volume addresses the biographical and literary inception of Bishop's originality, from her formative upbringing in New England and Nova Scotia to long residences in New York, France, Florida, and Brazil. Her poetry, prose, letters, translations, and visual art are analyzed in turn, followed by detailed studies of literary movements such as surrealism and modernism that influenced her artistic development. Bishop's encounters with nature, music, psychoanalysis, and religion receive extended treatment, likewise her interest in dreams and humour. Essays also investigate the impact of twentieth-century history and politics on Bishop's life writing, and what it means to read Bishop via eco-criticism, postcolonial theory, and queer studies.

ANGUS CLEGHORN is editor of *Elizabeth Bishop in the 21st Century: Reading the New Editions* (2012), *The Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Bishop* (2014), and *Elizabeth Bishop and the Music of Literature* (2019). He co-organized an "Elizabeth Bishop in Paris" conference at the Sorbonne in 2018.

JONATHAN ELLIS is the author or editor of *Art and Memory in the Work of Elizabeth Bishop* (2006), *The Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Bishop* (2014), *Letter Writing Among Poets* (2015), and *Reading Elizabeth Bishop: An Edinburgh Companion* (2019). He is also the author of a map of Elizabeth Bishop's Paris (2018).

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# ELIZABETH BISHOP IN CONTEXT

EDITED BY  
ANGUS CLEGHORN

*Seneca College, Canada*

JONATHAN ELLIS

*University of Sheffield*



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*Figure*

13.1 Edward Lear's "There was an old person of Ems" (1846) *page 157*

## Contributors

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SANDRA BARRY is a poet and an independent scholar. She is a co-founder of the Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia. She co-owned and administered (2004–15) the Elizabeth Bishop House Artists' Retreat in Great Village, Nova Scotia. She co-edited *Divisions of the Heart: Elizabeth Bishop and the Art of Memory and Place* (2001). Her biography, *Elizabeth Bishop: Nova Scotia's "Home-Made" Poet*, was published in 2011.

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STEPHANIE BURT is Professor of English at Harvard. Her recent books include *After Callimachus* (2020), *Don't Read Poetry: A Book About How to Read Poems* (2019), and *Advice from the Lights* (2017). Her poems, reviews, and essays on poetry, comic books, gender, and other matters appear semi-regularly in *The London Review of Books*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and other journals in the USA, UK, and New Zealand. With Carmen Gimenez Smith, she is co-poetry editor for *The Nation*.

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*Being Here* (2019) won a Northern Writers Award, was a PBS Recommendation, and was shortlisted for the Forward and the T. S. Eliot Prizes.

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HEATHER TRESELER'S *Parturition* (2020) received the Munster Literature Centre's international chapbook prize, and her sequence of poems, "The Lucie Odes," won *Missouri Review's* Editors' Prize (2019). Her poems appear in *Boston Review*, *Harvard Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, and *PN Review*, and her essays appear in *The Los Angeles Review of Books* and in seven books of criticism. She is Associate Professor of English at Worcester State University and a visiting scholar at the Brandeis Women's Studies Research Center.

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## *Acknowledgements*

A book this big incurs many debts (and at last count at least 1,489 emails). We've attempted to remember all of them.

Ray Ryan approached us to edit the book ("I'd like to do a book called *Elizabeth Bishop in Context*," the email began) and has been a constant and reassuring presence as we moved from book proposal to manuscript submission. Edgar Mendez has also assisted us regularly, particularly regarding the preparation of the manuscript.

At a very early stage of the project, even before contacting possible contributors, Tracy Brain very kindly shared her experience of editing *Sylvia Plath in Context*. In her acknowledgements to her collection, she credits the wise counsel of Terry Gifford, who edited *Ted Hughes in Context*. No doubt his advice is present in this volume too.

As we brainstormed chapter titles, we were in the middle of co-organising a conference on Elizabeth Bishop and Paris with Juliette Utard, Associate Professor at Université Paris-Sorbonne. In addition to giving us the chance to follow Bishop's footsteps around Paris, especially in and around the Jardin du Luxembourg near where Bishop and her friend Louise Crane stayed in an apartment, the conference also brought together several generations of Bishop scholars, many of whom were able to deliver the first drafts of chapters you will find here.

Shortly after this, the anonymous reviewers of the book proposal endorsed the project and offered us many insightful suggestions on how to improve it. We have acted on all of them. The main activity of editing the book has necessarily involved a continual transatlantic correspondence between the two co-editors and nearly forty contributors, all of whom have responded to our feedback with good humour and patience. We hope our contributors won't mind our singling out Marianne MacRae who stepped in at the very last minute to write her chapter when she was about to give birth. She completed the final changes as her daughter, Bonnie, was just a few weeks old.

Several of the contributors looked over the Chronology for us. It's not easy to get the facts right, particularly in relation to an author who travelled so much and had so many friends all over the world. Thanks to Sandra Barry, Neil Besner, Langdon Hammer, and Thomas Travisano, each of whom read several drafts of a constantly shifting document. Bishop famously admitted to having what she described as a "George-Washington-handicap. I can't tell a lie even for art, apparently; it takes an awful effort or a sudden jolt to make me alter facts" (*WIA* 402). Fingers crossed readers experience no sudden jolts on reading our account of her life and works. Mistakes, alas, are our own.

The Introduction has benefited from Steven Gould Axelrod and Heather Treseler's attentive reading. Catherine Greenwood, who arranged the works cited and index, has been an effective and unfussy research assistant. At the copy-editing stage, we have both enjoyed working with Ursula Acton.

Angus is grateful for the American Literature Association and Elizabeth Bishop Society that have brought many of the people in this book together, as well as subsequent conferences and good times with Jonathan Ellis in particular, who is a pleasure to work with. When I say that we rarely disagree on any editorial point, it sounds like a lie but is honestly the case. Thanks to my Seneca College students who continually show me how relevant and perceptive Bishop continues to be in so many ways, especially regarding the environment, animals, and people. My family – especially Julie, Andrew, Simon, Amanda, Gavin, Laura, Paul, and Janet – consistently enlarge the windows of my scholarly obsessions. I'd like to give a shout out to everyone determined to address the full realities of our difficult times rather than sequestering themselves among factions who fraction the truth and bury their heads in the sands of denial. My best friends Dale, Rob, Suzanne, Krys, Duncan, Duane, Dave and Cathy keep the pleasure principle going strong with good times in a beautiful northern Ontario environment that makes life enjoyable. Thanks also to my father for instilling passion for people, nature, learning, and seizing the day.

Jonathan is grateful to literally hundreds of undergraduate and post-graduate students whose sharp and subtle readings of Bishop's work continue to inspire and provoke his own writing. Angus Cleghorn is a calm and unflappable co-editor. Making the difficult "second" album has been just as fun as the first. The School of English at the University of Sheffield remains a friendly and inspiring institutional home. My best friends have thoughtfully not asked me about this book! I appear to have developed a habit of finishing books in "interesting" times. Even I couldn't

*Acknowledgements*

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have predicted a twenty-two-day strike *and* a global pandemic. In lockdown I have enjoyed sharing breakfasts with Amber Regis and Amy Ryall and Saturday night cocktails with James and Mel Healy Dufosse-Belton. Joe Bray and Hamish Mathison are great golf partners. Maddy Callaghan remains the quickest and most sympathetic respondent to my grouchy texts. Deryn Rees-Jones sends me the best postcards. Last but not least, my love and thanks to Ana María and Pablo, with whom I have shared a bittersweet lockdown and of course Friday film nights. Finally, we got to see *Groundhog Day* together.

On behalf of all the contributors to this book, we would like to pay particular thanks to Dean Rogers for assisting many of us with archival queries and Victoria Fox at Farrar, Straus and Giroux for generous help in arranging permissions.

Rollie McKenna's glorious but rarely seen 1961 photograph of Elizabeth Bishop graces the book's cover. Sincere thanks to Yale University Art Gallery for giving us permission to reproduce it. The original print was a gift of the artist and purchased with the A. Conger Goodyear B.A. 1899 Fund.

## *Note on Referencing and Abbreviations*

Unless otherwise indicated, poems discussed in this volume are from Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems* (London: Chatto & Windus; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).

- EAP* Elizabeth Bishop, *Edgar Allan Poe & The Juke-Box: Uncollected Poems, Drafts, and Fragments*, ed. Alice Quinn (Manchester: Carcanet; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006).
- EH* Elizabeth Bishop, *Exchanging Hats: Elizabeth Bishop Paintings*, ed. William Benton (Manchester: Carcanet; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996).
- OA* Elizabeth Bishop, *One Art: Letters*, ed. Robert Giroux (London: Chatto & Windus; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994).
- NYr* Elizabeth Bishop, *Elizabeth Bishop and The New Yorker: The Complete Correspondence*, ed. Joelle Biele (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).
- P* Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems* (London: Chatto & Windus; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).
- Pr* Elizabeth Bishop, *Prose*, ed. Lloyd Schwartz (London: Chatto & Windus; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011).
- PPL* Elizabeth Bishop, *Poems, Prose, and Letters*, eds. Robert Giroux and Lloyd Schwartz (New York: Library of America, 2008).
- VC* Elizabeth Bishop Collection, Vassar College Library, Poughkeepsie, New York.
- WIA* Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell, *Words in Air: The Complete Correspondence between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell*, ed. Thomas Travisano with Saskia Hamilton (London: Faber and Faber; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).

# Chronology

(*Italics* denote historical events)

- 1872 William Thomas Bishop (Bishop’s father) is born in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he grows up and attends high school. Becomes vice president and manager of the John W. Bishop Co., a leading construction firm founded by his father.
- 1879 Gertrude May Bulmer (Bishop’s mother) is born in Great Village, Nova Scotia, where she grows up and attends the village school. Gains her teaching licence and teaches school in Nova Scotia. Later trains and serves as a nurse in Boston, Massachusetts (1903–4 and 1905–7): sometime during this period, she meets William Bishop.
- 1908 June 22: William and Gertrude marry privately in New York City. They honeymoon in Jamaica and sail to Panama before setting up house at 875 Main Street in Worcester.
- 1911 February 8: Elizabeth Bishop born in Worcester, Massachusetts; the only child of William and Gertrude.  
 October 13: Bishop’s father dies from Bright’s disease and is buried in Hope Cemetery, Worcester.
- 1914 Spring: Gertrude is hospitalized in Brookline, and then in Norwood, Massachusetts, for a period of three months, during which Bishop lives with her aunt Maude Bulmer Shepherdson and uncle George Shepherdson in Revere, Massachusetts.  
*June 25: The Great Salem Fire destroys over one thousand buildings.* Bishop watches the fire with her mother from the Bishops’ summer home in Marblehead (see the posthumously published poem, “A Drunkard”).
- 1914–18 *World War I. As a self-governing dominion of the British Empire but with no control of its foreign affairs, Canada is involved from*

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	<i>the moment Great Britain declares war on Germany on August 4, 1914. The USA enters the war on April 6, 1917.</i>
1915	Spring: Bishop relocates with her mother from Revere to Great Village, Nova Scotia.
1916	June: Bishop’s mother admits herself to the Nova Scotia Hospital in Dartmouth as a result of severe mental illness. Biographers differ about the causes of Gertrude’s illness and her major symptoms.  Bishop stays with her maternal grandparents in Great Village where she attends Primer Class from fall 1916 to spring 1917.
1917	Winter: Bishop suffers severe bronchitis.  October: Bishop is taken by her paternal grandparents to live with them in Worcester. In her story “The Country Mouse” (1961), she recalls feeling very ill. “First came eczema, and then asthma.”  <i>December 6: The Halifax Harbour Explosion. Nearly two thousand people die following a collision between two ships, one laden with wartime explosives, in Halifax Harbour.</i> The Nova Scotia Hospital, where Bishop’s mother is confined, is damaged but functional enough to become a place for the injured to go to be operated on.
1918	February: Shortly before her seventh birthday she accompanies her aunt Florence Bishop to a dentist’s appointment. She recalls what happens there twice in her work, first in her story “The Country Mouse,” later in her poem “In the Waiting Room” (1970).  May: Moves in with her aunt Maude Bulmer Shepherdson and uncle George Shepherdson in Revere, Massachusetts. In letters to Dr. Ruth Foster written in 1947, Bishop revealed that she was sexually and physically abused by George Shepherdson from the age of eight until she was fourteen or fifteen.
1918–20	<i>Outbreak of Spanish flu, also known as the 1918 flu pandemic. It is estimated the pandemic infected around 500 million people, approximately a third of the world’s population at the time. Around 500,000 Canadians and over 679,000 Americans die during the pandemic.</i>
1919	August: Returns to Nova Scotia with her aunt, Grace Bulmer (she changes her name to Grace Bulmer Bowers on marriage to

- William Bowers in 1923). The journey was a dramatic one. The steamer on which they were travelling, the *North Star*, ran aground off Yarmouth. Although Bishop never lives for an extended period in Great Village again, she continues to make yearly summer trips throughout her adolescence and at other times of the year.
- 1923 Bishop’s paternal grandparents, John W. Bishop and Sarah Bishop, die within a few days of each other. Bishop is left \$10,000 in John W. Bishop’s will, a sum of money which, combined with an inheritance from her father, allowed her to pursue a literary career as a poet.
- 1924–29 Summer: Bishop attends Camp Chequesset on Cape Cod, a sailing camp for girls, for the first time. At Boston South Station, she meets and subsequently begins a decade-long friendship with Louise Bradley. In the Dr. Foster letters, Bishop remembers this as the time when she makes “my first real friends.”
- 1925–26 Attends Saugus High School in Saugus, Massachusetts.
- 1926–27 Attends North Shore Country Day School in Swampscott, Massachusetts, where she publishes her first poems and stories in *The Owl*.
- 1927–30 Attends Walnut Hill School in Natick, Massachusetts. Publishes poems and other writings in school magazine, *The Blue Pencil*. Begins lifelong friendships with Frani Blough Muser and Rhoda Wheeler Sheehan.
- 1929–30 Bishop spends Christmas and New Year’s Eve in Great Village. February 1930: Her beloved maternal grandfather, William Bulmer (“Pa”), dies. Her maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Bulmer (“Gammie”), moves to live with her daughter Mary in Montréal. Gammie dies there in April 1931.
- Summer: Works in a bookshop in Hyannis for a month. Later she travels with uncle George to Great Village, then drives with him from Great Village to Montréal where she sees Gammie for the last time. Bishop does not visit Nova Scotia again until 1946.
- Meets Robert Seaver when visiting her Walnut Hill friend, Barbara Chesney in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The courtship starts in 1932. Bishop and Seaver spend time together, alone, on Nantucket and Cuttyhunk Island as late as 1934. Seaver proposes marriage and is refused, probably in 1935.

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1930	Fall: Enters Vassar College. Intends to major in music but switches to English. Contemporaries at Vassar include Mary McCarthy and Muriel Rukeyser. Her closest friendships are with Louise Crane and Margaret Miller.
1932	Summer: Goes on a three-week walking tour of Newfoundland with Vassar classmate Evelyn Huntington.
1933	Frustrated at being shut out of the college's established literary journal, Bishop and her friends found a new magazine they name <i>Con Spirito</i> . The first issue is published in February. In Bishop's senior year, she also edits <i>The Vassarion</i> with Margaret Miller.
1934	May: Interviews T. S. Eliot for Vassar's <i>Miscellany News</i> . March 16: The Vassar librarian Fanny Borden introduces Bishop to Marianne Moore. They meet for the first time at the New York Public Library. May 29: Bishop's mother dies at the Nova Scotia Hospital from a variety of medical causes. Grace Bulmer Bowers accompanies Gertrude's body back to Worcester where she also meets Bishop. Gertrude is buried beside her husband in Hope Cemetery. After graduation, Bishop moves into the Hotel Brevoort and later a small apartment in Greenwich Village, New York, and works briefly at a correspondence school for aspiring authors that she later writes about in "The U.S.A. School of Writing." Summer: Begins an autobiographical story about her childhood in Nova Scotia. November 10: Bishop attends a lecture by Gertrude Stein entitled "Portraits I Have Written and What I Think of Repetition, Whether It Exists or No." Shortly before Christmas, she completes "The Map." Years later, she would claim that the poem was written home alone with a cold on New Year's Eve.
1935	Marianne Moore chooses "The Map," "Three Valentines," and "The Reprimand" for the anthology <i>Trial Balances</i> . Moore's brief introduction to the poems is the first published criticism of Bishop's work. Makes first trip to Europe and North Africa with Louise Crane. They reside for several months in a large apartment



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- at 58 rue de Vaugirard in Paris, next to the Jardin du Luxembourg. Bishop meets several artists and writers in passing, including James Joyce and Pablo Picasso. She attends a further lecture by Gertrude Stein (on “entity vs. identity”) but is too shy to accept an invitation to have tea. When in Paris, Bishop has shipped from England a custom-made clavichord from Arnold Dolmetsch. The clavichord travels with Bishop for most of her life until she sells it to Howard Moss in 1975 for \$1,000 with “a lot of early keyboard music.”
- 1936–39 *Spanish Civil War.*  
 1936 Spends summer and fall at Chelsea Hotel in New York.
- November: Robert Seaver, who had wanted to marry Bishop, commits suicide. Before killing himself, he mails Bishop a postcard which arrives a few days after his death. It says: “Go to hell, Elizabeth.”
- First trip to Florida with Louise Crane. Becomes friends with Red and Charlotte Russell. Bishop likened Red to Tarzan. He wrestled alligators and hunted with a bow and arrow. She visited the Russells’ home in Brevard, North Carolina, many times over the years.
- 1937 Returns to Europe with Crane. Travel from Ireland to France where they are joined by another Vassar friend, Margaret Miller. In July, while they are travelling in Burgundy, Crane’s car is forced off the road. Miller’s right arm is amputated between the wrist and elbow, a blow to her career as a painter. Crane’s insurance company agrees to pay Miller a financial settlement if Crane is convicted of negligence. Crane pleads guilty at the subsequent trial. Bishop and Crane travel to southern France and Italy before returning to the USA via Genoa in December.
- 1938 Buys 624 White Street in Key West, Florida, with Louise Crane.  
 1939 *Outbreak of World War II.*  
 1940 Spends spring and summer in Key West. Becomes close friends with Pauline Pfeiffer, Ernest Hemingway’s estranged second wife.
- August: Visits North Carolina. On her arrival she is sent a telegram informing her of Maude Shepherdson’s death on a visit to Great Village. See Bishop’s unfinished elegy for Maude, “For M.B.S., buried in Nova Scotia.”

- October: Disagreement with Marianne Moore over Bishop's poem "Roosters."
- 1941 Begins six-year-long relationship with Marjorie Stevens in Key West. In Key West, she befriends the philosopher John Dewey and his daughter Jane Dewey.
- December 7: Pearl Harbor attack. USA enters World War II.*
- 1942 April–October: Travels to Mexico with Stevens. By chance meets Pablo Neruda who helps her find a Spanish tutor. Years later Bishop admits Neruda's poetry "had more influence on me than I knew at the time."
- Fall: Meets Lota de Macedo Soares and Mary Morse in New York. Macedo Soares and Morse later invite Bishop to visit them in Brazil.
- 1943 Bishop works for five days grinding binocular lenses in a US Navy optical shop in Key West. Eyestrain and eczema force her to quit.
- 1945 June: Wins the Houghton Mifflin Poetry Prize Fellowship for the publication of her first book, *North & South*, which appears the year later.
- August: Atomic bombs detonated at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. End of World War II.*
- 1946 Spring: Begins treatment with Dr. Anny Baumann for depression, asthma, and alcoholism. Following Baumann's advice, she also begins analysis with Dr. Ruth Foster.
- Summer: Returns to Nova Scotia for the first time since 1930. Spends time in Halifax, Lockeport, and Great Village. On the return bus journey from Great Village to Boston, the bus driver has to stop suddenly for a moose wandering down the road. Twenty-six years later she completes a poem ("The Moose") about this experience.
- August: Publication of Bishop's first book of poems, *North & South*.
- 1947 Winter: Meets Robert Lowell at a dinner party hosted by Randall Jarrell. Lowell reviews *North & South* in *Sewanee Review*.
- April: Awarded Guggenheim Fellowship.
- Travels to Cape Breton with Marjorie Stevens, a trip remembered in the eponymous poem.

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- 1947–48 Her last extended stay in Key West. Relationship with Stevens ends.
- 1948 November: Attends poetry conference at Bard College. Other attendees include Robert Lowell, William Carlos Williams, Richard Wilbur, Jean Garrigue, and Kenneth Rexroth. She also meets James Merrill for the first time. Merrill becomes a lifelong friend and advocate for her work.
- 1949–50 September: Begins year-long appointment as Consultant in Poetry (now Poet Laureate) at the Library of Congress. Hosts Robert Frost, Dylan Thomas, and William Carlos Williams. Pays regular visits to Ezra Pound at St. Elizabeths Hospital. Visits Jane Dewey at her farm in Havre de Grace, Maryland, and writes “A Cold Spring.”
- 1950–53 *Korean War*.
- 1950 Stays at Yaddo writer’s colony. Meets May Swenson and Kit and Ilse Barker, who became lifelong friends.
- 1951 Receives fellowships from Bryn Mawr College and the American Academy of Arts and Letters.
- August: Travels to Sable Island, Nova Scotia, where, according to family tradition, her great-grandfather had been lost at sea. A projected prose piece (“The Deadly Sandpile”) about Sable Island for *The New Yorker* is never finished.
- November: Travels to South America on Norwegian freighter *S.S. Bowplate*, intending (so she later said) to stop in Brazil for only a few weeks. While in Brazil has an allergic reaction to the fruit of a cashew tree and is nursed back to health by Lota de Macedo Soares.
- 1952 Bishop and Macedo Soares fall in love and Bishop accepts Macedo Soares’s offer to build her a studio behind Macedo Soares’s modernist house then being constructed at Samambaia in the mountains above Petrópolis. Samambaia remains Bishop’s primary residence in Brazil until 1961, when she and Macedo Soares begin to spend more time in Rio de Janeiro.
- February 8: On her forty-first birthday Bishop is given a toucan by one of Macedo Soares’ neighbours. She names him Uncle Sam (“Sammy” for short).
- March 16: Bishop gives Macedo Soares a still life of an oil lamp for her birthday inscribed with a short love poem: “Longer than Aladdin’s burns, / Love, & many Happy Returns.”

- Bishop returns to Key West and New York to have her books and other possessions shipped to Brazil.  
 Wins Shelley Memorial Award.
- 1953 April: Bishop visits Ouro Preto in the mountains of Minas Gerais for the first time. Founded at the end of the seventeenth century, Ouro Preto (Black Gold) was the focal point of the gold rush. Ouro Preto is now known for its baroque architecture, numerous churches and chapels, and steep, winding cobbled streets.
- July: *The New Yorker* rejects “The Shampoo,” Bishop’s love poem for Macedo Soares.  
 Publication of stories “Gwendolyn” (June 27) and “In the Village” (December 19) in *The New Yorker*.  
 November 9: Dylan Thomas dies in New York.
- December: On a trip to Rio with Macedo Soares, meets Manuel Bandeira. Bandeira buys Bishop a hammock for Christmas. Bishop sends Bandeira a letter-poem with a pot of jam (“To Manuel Bandeira, With Jam and Jelly”).
- 1954 August 24: *Suicide of President Getúlio Vargas*. See Bishop’s posthumously published poem, “Suicide of a Moderate Dictator.”
- 1955 July: Publication of *Poems* (a reissue of *North & South* with her new collection *A Cold Spring*).  
 3 October: *Election of President Juscelino Kubitschek*.  
 Edits and translates Henrique Mindlin’s *Modern Architecture in Brazil*.
- 1956 April: Visits Diamantina, setting of *The Diary of “Helena Morley,”* which she was then translating.  
 Receives a *Partisan Review* fellowship and Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for *Poems: North & South – A Cold Spring*. She celebrates the latter by eating “some awful chocolate cookies – Oreos, I think.”
- 1957 January: Receives Amy Lowell Traveling Fellowship.  
 March–October: Long trip to New York with Macedo Soares.  
 December: Publication of her translation of *The Diary of “Helena Morley.”*
- 1958 Aldous and Laura Huxley visit Bishop and Macedo Soares in Petrópolis. Bishop travels with them to Brasília, including a

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- day excursion to see the Uialapiti tribe living on a tributary of the Xingu River.
- 1959 *First American servicemen die in Vietnam.*  
 November: Receives a pair of binoculars from May Swenson. Bishop describes this gift in a thank-you note as “the nicest & most overwhelming present I’ve received in years and years.”
- 1960 February: Travels down the Amazon, visiting Manaus, Santarém, Vigia, and Belém.  
 May: Bishop and Macedo Soares stay with Lilli Correia de Araújo, owner of the Pouso do Chico Rei, in Ouro Preto. Bishop leaves the following poem in the guestbook: “Let Shakespeare & Milton / Stay at a Hilton – / I shall stay / At Chico Rei.”  
*October: Jânio Quadros is elected President of Brazil. Quadros’ political rival, João Goulart, is elected Vice-President. Carlos Lacerda, Macedo Soares’s friend and Petrópolis neighbour, is elected governor of the state of Guanabara (Rio).*  
 Christmas: Lacerda invites Macedo Soares to begin work on Aterro do Flamengo on the Rio waterfront. When finished in 1965, it becomes the largest public park within the city of Rio.
- 1961 *January 31: Quadros takes office. On August 25 he resigns.*  
*September 8: Goulart becomes President, his powers constrained by parliament and the newly created post of prime minister.*  
 November: Bishop and Macedo Soares spend five weeks in New York.
- 1962 February: Publication of *Brazil*, written by Bishop but considerably altered by the book’s editors, for *Life’s* World Library series.  
 Summer: Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Hardwick, and their five-year-old daughter Harriet visit Brazil for two months. Lowell has a breakdown toward the end of the trip and is hospitalized on his return to the USA.  
*October: The Cuban Missile Crisis.*
- 1963 Begins correspondence with poet Anne Stevenson. Bishop’s letters to Stevenson include some of her most memorable statements about poetry and her fullest account of her own biography.

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1964

November 22: Assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy.  
 April 1: The Brazilian military stages a coup to overthrow President João Goulart. Carlos Lacerda, supports the coup.

Visits Northern Italy with Macedo Soares, then England on her own, staying with her friends Kit and Ilse Barker.

Summer: *The Kenyon Review* publishes Bishop's translations of three Clarice Lispector stories, "The Smallest Woman in the World," "A Hen," and "Marmosets."

Becomes a fellow of the Academy of American Poets.

1965

*Beginning of US ground war in Vietnam, which lasts until 1973.*

January: Begins affair with Lilli Correia de Araújo.

April 3: Opening of Aterro do Flamengo.

Purchases and begins restoring a colonial house in Ouro Preto, across town from Lilli Correia de Araújo's home. Bishop names it Casa Mariana in honour of Marianne Moore and because of its position on the road from Ouro Preto to Mariana.

November: Publication of *Questions of Travel*, dedicated to Macedo Soares.

1966

Spring: Teaches at the University of Washington in Seattle where she begins a relationship with Roxanne Cumming.

Fall: Macedo Soares, already depressed about Bishop's decision to teach in Seattle, learns of Bishop's affair with Cumming.

November: Travels with Macedo Soares to England and Holland but cuts trip short when Macedo Soares's health deteriorates. Macedo Soares is hospitalized on her return to Rio.

Anne Stevenson publishes *Elizabeth Bishop* in the Twayne United States Author Series. It is the first critical book on Bishop's poetry.

1967

January: Macedo Soares's doctor recommends a temporary separation. In February, Bishop is treated for alcoholism at the same clinic where Macedo Soares is hospitalized. Bishop and Macedo Soares are reunited in March but in June the doctor recommends another break.

July: Bishop flies to New York. Stays at 61 Perry Street, the apartment of her friends Loren MacIver and Lloyd Frankenberg.

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- September: Against the advice of her doctor, Macedo Soares travels to New York to see Bishop, arriving (according to a letter to U.T. and Joseph Summers) on 17 September. Overnight she takes an overdose of Nembutal and goes into a coma. She dies at St. Vincent's Hospital on September 25. Anny Baumann advises Bishop not to accompany the body back to Rio.
- November: Returns to Brazil. She is unable to return to Samambaia while Macedo Soares's will is being contested by her sister. Many of Bishop's letters to Macedo Soares are destroyed by Mary Morse. When the will is finally settled, Morse inherits Samambaia and Bishop the apartment in Rio.
- December: Stays with Lilli Correia de Araújo in Ouro Preto.
- 1968 Lives for a year in San Francisco with Roxanne Cumming and her one-year-old son. Meets Thom Gunn and Robert Duncan. Travels with Cumming in Canada and visits New York. Awarded a grant from the Ingram-Merrill Foundation. Publication of *The Ballad of the Burglar of Babylon* in a children's edition illustrated by Ann Grifalconi.
- 1969 February: Interviews Black Panther member Kathleen Cleaver, wife of party leader Eldridge Cleaver. The interview has never been published.
- April: Publication of *The Complete Poems*.
- May: Gives readings at the Library of Congress and the Guggenheim Museum where Robert Lowell introduces her as "the famous eye." Bishop begins her reading by saying "The 'famous eye' will now put on her glasses."
- June 28: *Beginning of Stonewall Riots in Greenwich Village*. Spends summer and fall in Ouro Preto with Cumming and her son.
- 1970 March: Wins National Book Award for *The Complete Poems*.
- Spring: Bishop's relationship with Cumming collapses. Cumming has a breakdown and returns to the USA to recover.
- July: James Merrill visits Bishop in Ouro Preto.
- September: Moves to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to teach at Harvard, initially as a temporary replacement for Robert Lowell. Meets Alice Methfessel. Makes the first of several visits to Nova Scotia.

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- 1971 Spends several months in Ouro Preto. Brazilian government awards her the Order of Rio Branco.  
 August: Meets Alice Methfessel in Quito for a long-planned trip to the Galápagos Islands and Machu Picchu.  
 Returns to Harvard for the fall term where she teaches a seminar on letter writing “as an art form or something.”  
 Meets Octavio Paz.  
 November: Hospitalized for asthma.
- 1972 February 5: Marianne Moore dies.  
 March: Bishop and Lowell disagree over his decision to publish versions of Elizabeth Hardwick’s letters in his book-length poem, *The Dolphin*.  
 April: Publication of *An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Brazilian Poetry*, edited with Emanuel Brasil.  
 June 13: Reads “The Moose” at Harvard’s Phi Beta Kappa ceremony. The poem is dedicated to Grace Bulmer Bowers, Bishop’s “favorite relative.”  
 Summer: Flies to Ouro Preto followed by trip to Scandinavia and Soviet Union with Methfessel.
- 1973 March: Purchases a condominium at Lewis Wharf on the Boston waterfront.  
 Spring: Teaches at the University of Washington.  
 Fall: Four-year appointment as lecturer at Harvard begins. Introduces Gwendolyn Brooks at a reading.
- 1974 Bishop spends her first summer on Sabine Farm on the island of North Haven, Maine. She returns there every summer until her death.
- 1974 Winter: Falls and breaks shoulder. Weekend visits in winter and spring to Duxbury, Massachusetts, where she and Methfessel stay in John Malcolm Brinnin’s house. Duxbury is the setting for Bishop’s poem “The End of March,” dedicated to Brinnin and his partner Bill Read.  
 Spring: Bishop visits Ouro Preto to arrange for her belongings to be shipped to Boston. This is her final visit to Brazil.
- August: *President Nixon resigns.*  
 August: Moves into Lewis Wharf.



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- 1975 Winter: Separation from Methfessel and medical leave from Harvard, during which she writes “One Art.”
- 1976 February: Awarded Neustadt International Prize for Literature.  
 Summer: Travels to England where she visits Kit and Ilse Barker and Robert Lowell. Attends International Poetry Conference in Rotterdam, and travels to Lisbon, where she meets Methfessel. Hospitalized for asthma at Harvard on her return.  
 December: Publication of *Geography III*; receives National Book Critics Circle Award.
- 1977 Spring: The end of her teaching contract at Harvard as Bishop passes Harvard’s mandatory retirement age of sixty-five years old.  
 August 22: Bishop’s aunt Grace Bulmer Bowers dies.  
 September 12: Robert Lowell dies.  
 Fall: Teaches at New York University. Revises will, making Alice Methfessel executor, and Methfessel and Frank Bidart literary executors.
- 1978 Receives Guggenheim Fellowship.  
 Spring: Travels with Methfessel to the Outer Banks of North Carolina and then to Quebec.  
 August: Completes “North Haven,” her elegy for Robert Lowell.
- 1979 May: Bishop makes her last visit to Nova Scotia, to receive an honorary degree from Dalhousie University, then travels with Methfessel to England and Greece.  
 September: Begins teaching at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.  
 October 6: Dies suddenly of a cerebral aneurysm at Lewis Wharf. She is buried in Hope Cemetery, Worcester, beside her father and mother.
- 1981 Vassar College purchases Bishop’s archive from her executor, Alice Methfessel.
- 1983 Publication of *The Complete Poems: 1927–1979*.
- 1984 Publication of *Collected Prose*, edited by Robert Giroux.
- 1991 Elizabeth Bishop Society is formed.
- 1993 First exhibition of Bishop’s paintings is held at the East Martello Tower in Key West.

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- 1994 Publication of *One Art: Letters*, edited by Robert Giroux. Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia is formed.
- 1996 Government of Nova Scotia purchases the Bulmer family archive, which is deposited at Acadia University.  
 Publication of *Exchanging Hats: Paintings*, edited by William Benton.
- 2004 Purchase of Bishop's childhood home in Great Village by a group of private owners.
- 2006 Publication of *Edgar Allan Poe & The Juke-Box: Uncollected Poems, Drafts, and Fragments*, edited by Alice Quinn.
- 2008 Publication of the Library of America edition of Bishop's writing, *Poems, Prose, and Letters*, edited by Robert Giroux and Lloyd Schwartz.  
 Publication of *Words in Air: The Complete Correspondence between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell*, edited by Thomas Travisano with Saskia Hamilton.
- 2009 Bishop's literary executor, Alice Methfessel, dies. After her death, a large collection of documents, letters, and photographs is sold to Vassar College. The collection includes letters to her psychoanalyst Ruth Foster in 1947, letters from Bishop to Macedo Soares in 1963–4, letters from Macedo Soares to Bishop in summer 1967, and letters from Bishop to Methfessel in the 1970s.
- 2011 The centenary of Bishop's birth is celebrated by two new editions of her work, *Poems* and *Prose*, the latter edited by Lloyd Schwartz.  
 Publication of *Elizabeth Bishop and The New Yorker: The Complete Correspondence*, edited by Joelle Biele.  
 An exhibition of artworks by Bishop and paintings from her personal collection is held at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery in New York.
- 2015 Publication of *The North Haven Journal, 1974–1979*, edited by Eleanor McPeck, working from transcriptions by Alice Quinn.
- 2017 Elizabeth Bishop House in Great Village is given to the St. James Church of Great Village Preservation Society, which operates it as a retreat for artists and writers.
- 2019 Purchase of Bishop's Key West house at 624 White Street by Key West Literary Seminar.

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2020 Bishop is chosen (and then rejected) as the honouree for the eighteenth edition of Brazil’s biggest annual literary festival, FLIP (Festa Literária Internacional de Paraty). Bishop would have been the first foreign writer chosen for this honour, but a press campaign in Brazil drawing attention to statements Bishop made about Brazil in the 1960s and a change in festival director led to the dissociation of FLIP from the online events held in the summer of 2020 that celebrated Bishop’s writing.

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