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Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Lowell, Amy, 1874-1925

Title: Amy Lowell Papers

**Inclusive
Dates:** 1916-1956

Bulk Dates: 1916-1925

Quantity: 1 box (61 letters)

Abstract: The collection contains fifty-one letters from Amy Lowell to Elisabeth B. Cutting, two letters to Thomas Boyd, and two letters to other editors of the *North American Review*. There are also three letters from Lowell's lover, Ada Russell, to Cutting, one letter from Mary Cornelia Lee to Lowell, and two letters from W.W. Kean and Barbara Swain about Amy Lowell.

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Biographical Note

Amy Lowell (1874-1925), American poet, biographer, critic, and celebrity, was born in Brookline, Massachusetts. Born to the wealth, culture, and intellectual distinction of the famous Lowell family, as a young woman she lived the life of a Boston socialite. She was a debutante, she travelled abroad, and she gave her share of service to civic and cultural affairs. Shortly after the turn of the century, Amy Lowell, determined to become a poet and writer, dropped many of her social obligations. Her first book of poems, *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass*, was published in 1912. From then until her death, Amy Lowell regularly wrote and published both poetry and critical works. Strongly influenced by Harriet Monroe's magazine *Poetry*, she recognized her own poetic identity with "Imagism" and the new poetry, and became a dominating figure in the movement. Her eccentricity was notorious; and her charm, intelligence, and vibrancy won her many friends and admirers. In her later years Amy Lowell suffered frequently from ill health; at the age of fifty-one she died of a cerebral hemorrhage, not long after she had completed her biography of John Keats. This was her most important critical work and ranks among the greatest biographies in English literature.

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Scope and Content Note

The collection contains fifty-one letters from Amy Lowell to Elisabeth B. Cutting, 1916-1925, an editor at the *North American Review*, concerning articles for the magazine, her poetry, speaking engagements, other writers such as Richard Hunt, Mrs. Kizer, and Winifred Bryher, critics of her writing, the New Poetry, her lover Ada Russell, her health, her memories of James Russell Lowell, her work with Chinese poetry, being on tour, and other aspects of her literary work. Two letters from Russell to Cutting describe Lowell's ill health in May 1921,

and the third describes Lowell's death in May 1925. Also included are two letters to Thomas Boyd and two letters to other editors of *North American Review*, one letter from Mary Cornelia Lee to Lowell, and two letters from W.W. Kean and Barbara Swain about Amy Lowell.

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Access and Use

Access

This collection is open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#) without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

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Subject Headings

Names:

- Boyd, Thomas, 1898-1935
- Bryher, 1894-1983
- Cutting, Elisabeth, 1871-
- Hunt, Richard
- Lowell, James Russell, 1819-1891
- Russell, Ada, 1879-

Subjects:

- American poetry
- Chinese poetry
- Critics
- Literature publishing
- Women poets

VCL Categories

- LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer) Life and Culture
- Literature and Writing

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Elizabeth Clarke, February 2007. Updated by Emma Gronbeck, January 2023.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Amy Lowell Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Original processing date unknown.

The letters in this collection were separated from the [Autograph Files](#) collection, January 2023.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Estate of Elisabeth Brown Cutting (VC 1893) and gift of Ruth Fitch Mason (VC 1892).

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Container List

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Folder 1 | Lowell, Amy to Elisabeth Cutting, 1916-1925 [51 letters, 1 newspaper clipping] |
| Folders 2-3 | Lowell, Amy to Elisabeth Cutting, 1916-1925 [transcripts] |
| Folder 4 | Lowell, Amy to the Editors of the <i>North American Review</i> (with transcripts), 1916 [2 letters] |
| Folder 5 | Lowell, Amy to Thomas Boyd, 1923 [2 letters] |
| Folder 6 | Russell, Ada to Elisabeth Cutting (with transcripts), 1921, 1925 [3 letters] |
| Folder 7 | Kean, W. W. to Elisabeth Cutting (with transcript), 1919 December 2 |
| Folder 8 | Lee, Mary Cornelia to Amy Lowell (with transcript), 1917 November 18 |
| Folder 9 | Swain, Barbara to "Plummie", 1956 April 28 |

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