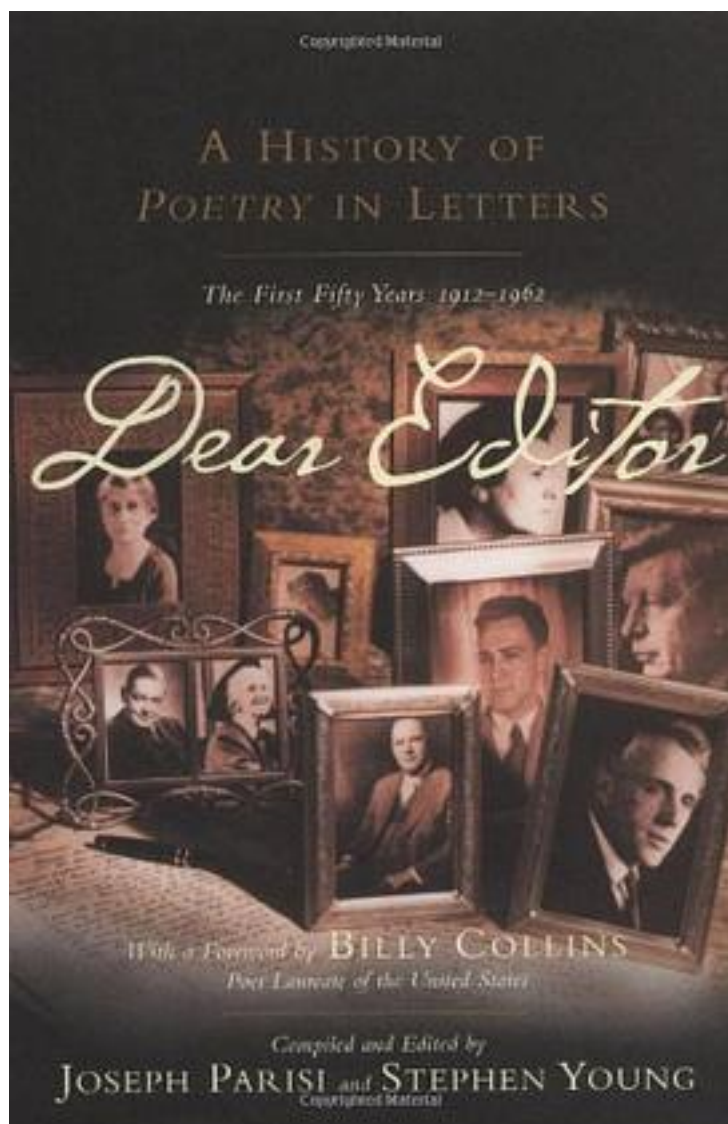


Dear Editor



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"The history of poetry and "Poetry" in America are almost interchangeable, certainly inseparable," A. R. Ammons wrote. "Dear Editor," in gathering over 600 surprisingly candid letters to and from the editors of "Poetry," traces the development of poetry in America: Ezra Pound's opinion of T. S. Eliot ("It is such a comfort to meet a man and not have to tell him to wash his face, wipe his feet") and of Robert Frost ("dull as ditch water...[but] set to be 'literchure' someday"); Edna St. Vincent Millay's pleas for an advance ("I am become very, very thin, and have taken to smoking Virginia tobacco"); Wallace Stevens on himself ("I have a pretty well-developed mean streak"). Here are the inside stories, the rivalries between aspiring authors, the inspirations behind classics, the practicalities (and politicking) of publishing. In fascinating anecdotes and literary gossip, scores of poets offer insights into the creative process and their reactions to historic events.

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