



# Guide to the Aileen Pippett Papers, 1953-1961

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## Summary

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**Collection Title:**

Aileen Pippett papers, 1953-1961

**Creator:**

Pippett, Aileen, 1895-1974; Lisa Unger Baskin Collection (David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library)

**Abstract:**

Aileen Pippett was a British journalist and author who wrote *The Moth and the Star* (1955), the first full-length biography published about Virginia Woolf. This collection contains letters to Pippett relating to her research and publication of the biography, sent from various acquaintances or "intimates" of Woolf, as well as some letters from other authors responding to Pippett's published reviews of their work. Forms part of the Lisa Unger Baskin Collection.

**Extent:**

0.25 Linear Feet

**Language:**

Materials in English.

**Mixed materials [box]:**

1

**Collection ID:**

RL.11956

**Permalink:**

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m10445>

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Aileen Pippett Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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## Background

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### Scope and Content

Collection consists largely of letters received by Aileen Pippett during the course of her research, writing, and post-publication of *The Moth and the Star*, a biography of Virginia Woolf. The collection's correspondants relayed their opinions (which were mixed) on Pippett's writing a biography of Woolf, and some included general impressions or memories of Woolf as Pippett conducted her research. Other letters are directed to Pippett relating to her printed reviews of other books. There is a letter from Vanessa Bell declining to contribute content to the biography. There are two letters from May Sarton discussing Virginia Woolf along with Pippett's review of Sarton's memoir, *I Knew a Phoenix*. The collection also includes a copy of Rumer Godden's mixed review of *The Moth and the Star*, along with letters between Pippett and Godden and their husbands, Roger Pippett and L. Haynes Dixon.

### Biographical/Historical

(Winifred) Aileen Pippett (1895-1974) was a British journalist, literary critic, and author who researched and wrote *The Moth and the Star*, the first full-length biography of Virginia Woolf (first published in 1955 by Little, Brown). She faced some resistance from Woolf's family, including Leonard Woolf and Vanessa Bell (whose letter is included in the collection) but was encouraged by Woolf's friend Vita Sackville-West.

Aileen Pippett's second husband was Roger Pippett (1895-1962), also an author and literary critic who also has some correspondence in the collection. The couple lived in New York City.

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## Arrangement

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Collection was originally housed by Lisa Unger Baskin in a custom album. Materials have been removed from their original container and arranged alphabetically by author.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

### Acquisition Information

The Aileen Pippett Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 2015. They form part of the Lisa Unger Baskin Collection.

### Processing Information

Processed by Meghan Lyon, November 2021

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2015-0050

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## Names and Subjects

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- Memoirs and biographies
- Woolf, Virginia, 1882-1941

## Collection Inventory

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Aiken, Conrad, 1954 June 30	Box 1
Bell, Vanessa, 1953 October 26	Box 1
Bowen, Elizabeth, 1953-1955	Box 1
Church, Richard, 1953-1956	Box 1
Collins, W.A.R., to Roger Pippett, 1954 May 4	Box 1
Godden, Rumer, and her husband L. Haynes Dixon; to both Aileen and Roger Pippett, 1955 September-November	Box 1
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
Includes a copy of the newspaper article review of <i>The Moth and the Star</i> , written by Godden.	
Gowing, Julia, 1953 November 16	Box 1
Lehmann, John, 1953 December 14	Box 1
MacCarthy, Mary, 1953 October 27	Box 1
Raverat, Gwen, 1953 October 22	Box 1
Sarton, May, approximately 1959	Box 1
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
Two undated letters following Pippett's positive review of Sarton's <i>I Knew a Phoenix</i> , and including Sarton's reflections on Woolf and other women writers, like Dickinson and Austen; Sarton laments that "I get so angry when limitations are brought out (of course they were there) when true genius is involved." She also mentions traveling with her partner, Judith Matlack, described as "the friend with whom I live."	
Unknown author: Edith, re: Mrs. Lewis, 1953 March 9	Box 1
Unknown author from King's College, Cambridge, 1955 March 3	Box 1

Unknown author: Raleigh T?, 1961 April 2

Box 1