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| Cummings, E. E. (1894-1962) |
| Cummings, Edward Estlin |
| Edward Estlin Cummings was a prolific and iconoclastic figure in American poetry of the mid-twentieth century. He experimented with unconventional verse forms, often playfully disrupting syntax, punctuation and typography. This created a more flexible, visually active kind of poetry, which yet retained surprising lyric power. He was also a painter and dramatist. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Cummings was educated at Harvard University. In 1917, he contributed to *Eight Harvard Poets,* and the same year enlisted as an ambulance driver at the Western Front. Arrested on suspicion of anti-French activities, Cummings spent three months in a detention centre, an experience recounted in his powerful and innovative war text *The Enormous Room* (1922). Based in New York, Cummings wrote a series of collections of poetry, for which he often struggled to find publishers because of his non-standard forms and sometimes openly sexual content. |
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| Further reading:  (Cummings)  (Cummings, Complete Poems 1904-1962)  (Firmage)  (Friedman)  (Kennedy)  (Sawyer-Lauçanno) |