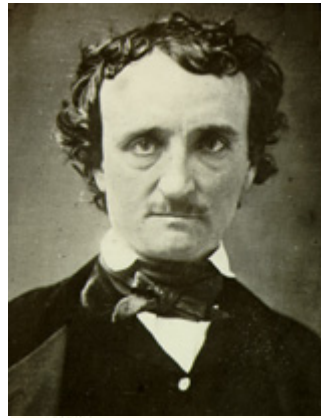


## EDGAR POE



*Edgar Poe*

UTILIZING A DISEASE METAPHOR PREVALENT IN THAT ERA,  
EDGAR ALLAN POE, REVIEWING THE POETRY OF ELLERY CHANNING,  
WROTE THAT HE “APPEARS TO  
HAVE BEEN INOCULATED,  
AT THE SAME MOMENT, WITH VIRUS FROM  
ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON AND THOMAS CARLYLE.”



EDGAR ALLAN POE

EDGAR POE

1809

 January 19, Thursday: Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*5th day 19 of 1 M / Meeting small but about 8 women being very stormy - no buisness at the preparative Meeting except the queries*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

The Bath Chronicle announced that Samuel Wesley was in town and was awaiting an invitation to give an organ concert.

British forces landed on Martinique.

# EDGAR POE

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edgar Poe was born at 62 Carver Street in Boston (Carver St., by the way, is now known as Edgar Allan Poe Way despite the fact that the Poes departed from this address before their infant was a month old). This one-month Bostonian would write sometimes under the sobriquet “The Bostonian” but was also heard to refer to the city of his birth as “Frogpondium”:




I am heartily ashamed to have been born in Boston.





1811

 By the time [Edgar Poe](#) was two, his alcoholic itinerate actor father had abandoned his family, and his mother had died. She died in Richmond, Virginia and so he and an older brother wound up with the family of a tobacco exporter of that city, John Allan (this explains the middle name, which many people including the Boston cabbie Walt Kelley assume should be “Allen”).

1815

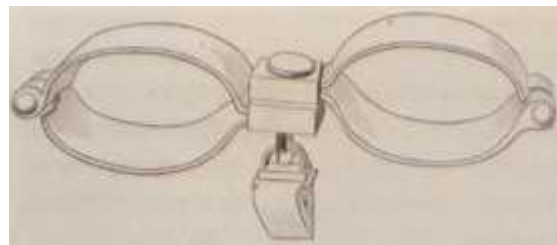
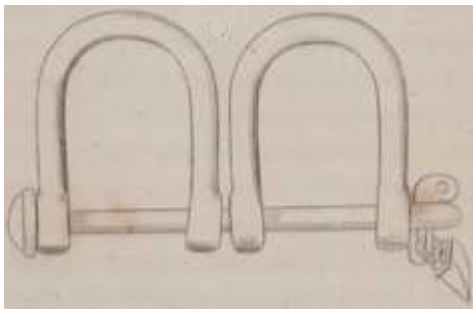
→ The orphaned [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s family of affiliation, the Allans, were living in England and Scotland until 1820, due to Mr. Allan's work as an exporter of [tobacco](#) (he was a "[sotweed](#) factor"). Poe during this period would be spending three years at a fine classical preparatory school at Stoke Newington.



Having completed his preparation at the Edinburgh High School, 17-year-old [Alexander Dyce](#) matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, where he would be taking his bachelor's degree in 1819.

1817

→ [Christmas Day](#): On the previous evening two officers at Fort Independence on Castle Island had been playing cards, and one had accused the other of cheating. On this day the two officers fought a [duel](#) and one of them, Lieutenant Robert Massie, was killed — whereupon that lieutenant's friends are said to have taken the survivor down into the bowels of the fortification and shackled him to the floor of a tiny chamber which they then walled up.<sup>1</sup>



Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

*5th day 25 of 12 M 1817 / My H being unwell with a pain in her side & distress on her lungs - I rode to [Portsmouth](#) with Sister Ruth & Attended our Moy [Monthly] Meeting - In the first - A Sherman H Dennis & D Buffum appear'd in testimony - In the last we had but little buisness. - We dined*

1. "[Edgar A. Perry](#)" would, as an 18-year old enlistee, serve in Battery H of the 1st Artillery on this island and, in later life as [Edgar Allan Poe](#), although making the setting of his famous short story "The Cask of Amontillado" the catacombs of a European nobleman, may well have been basing the story on this grisly American incident of retribution. The incident seems to be factual, or at any rate, in 1905 when some workmen were renovating the fort they are said to have knocked down a wall and to have discovered behind it a skeleton in the remnants of an archaic military uniform.

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

# EDGAR POE

*at R Mitchell & rode home - & a very muddy ride it was*

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

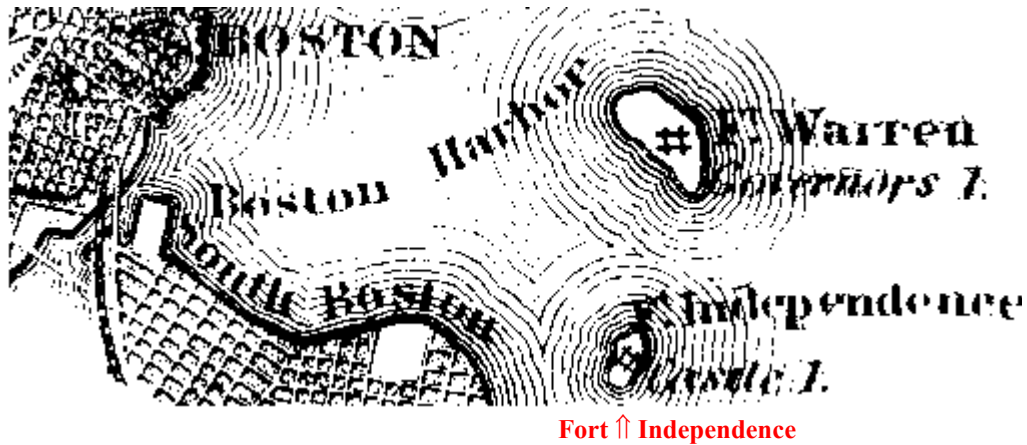
1826

➡ After schooling in England, [Edgar Allan Poe](#) spent a year at the University of Virginia but accumulated gambling debts.



1827

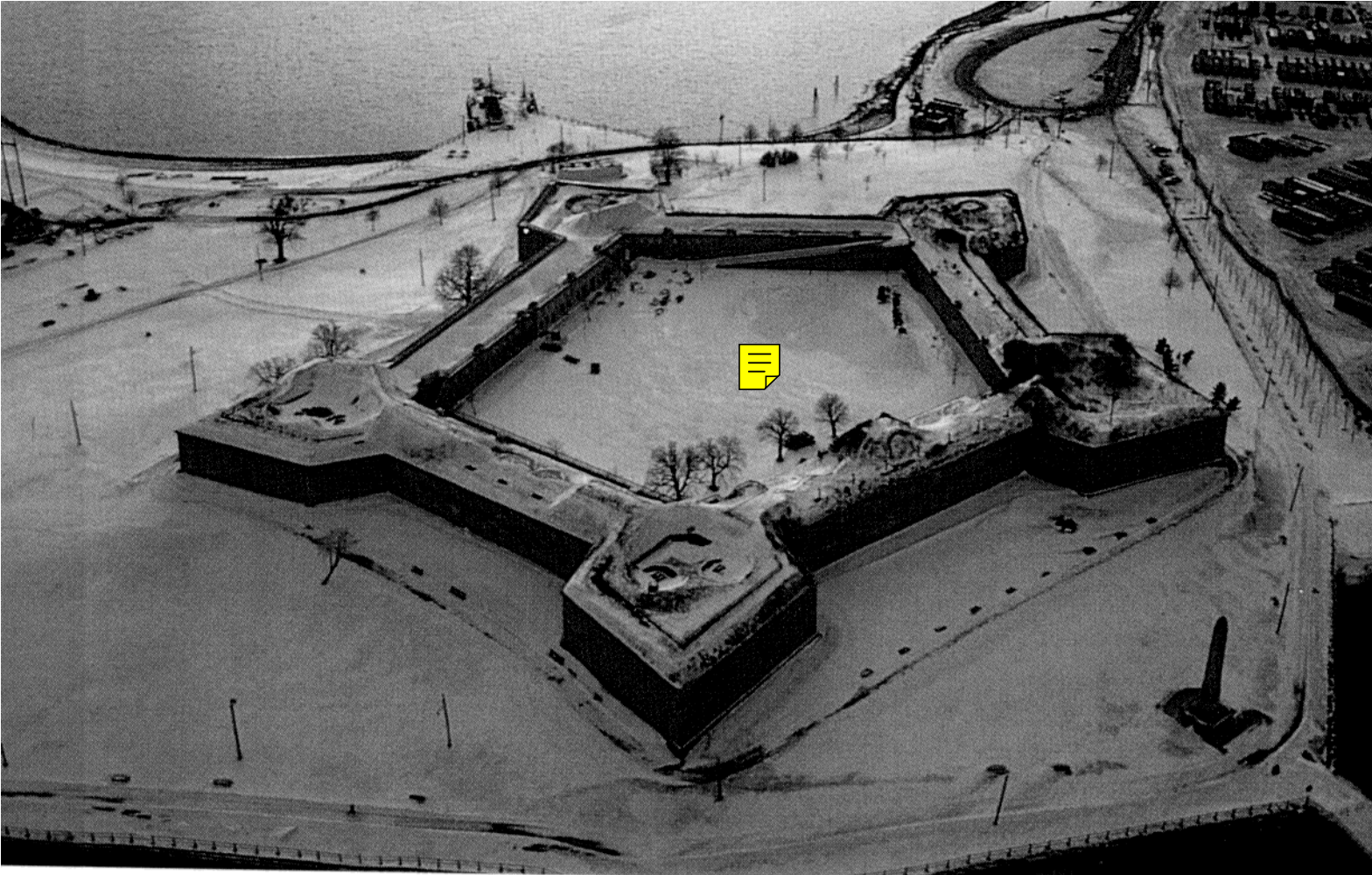
➡ [Edgar Allan Poe](#), 18 years old, went to Boston and self-published his TAMERLANE AND OTHER POEMS under the sobriquet "A Bostonian," then enlisted in the army as a private, as "Edgar A. Perry," and served in Battery H of the 1st Artillery at Fort Independence on Castle Island.



Fort ↑ Independence

## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE



As the channel narrows, we pass between *Castle* and *Winthrop Islands*. On the former stands FORT INDEPENDENCE. The following is the quaint description of The Castle as it was first built:


The Castle is built on the North-East of the Island, upon a rising hill, very advantageous to make many shots at such ships as shall offer to enter the Harbor, without their good leave and liking; the Commander of it is one Captain Davenport, a man approved for his faithfulness, courage, and skill, the Master Canoneer is an active Engineer; also this Castle hath cost about four thousand pounds, yet are not this poor pilgrim people weary of maintaining it in good repair; it is of very good use to awe any insolent persons, that putting confidence in their ships and sails, shall offer any injury to the people, or contemn their Government; and they have certain signals of alarums, which suddenly spread through the whole country.

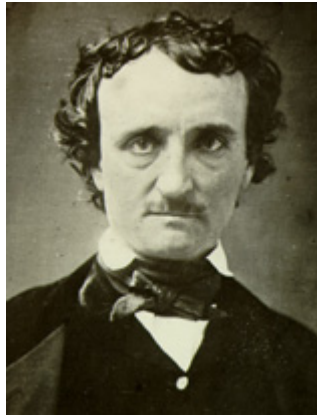
By these alarums is meant the cannon and beacon light upon the great natural pinnacle of Beacon Hill.

It was afterwards rebuilt with pine trees and earth. In a short time this also became useless, and a small castle was built, with brick walls, and had three rooms in it; a dwelling room, a lodging room over it, and a gun room over that. The erection of this castle gave rise to the present name of the island. At one time there was likewise a strong building erected on the island for the reception of convicts whose crimes served the gallows, but the lenity of the government had their punishment changed. Here abode the celebrated Stephen Burroughs. This island belongs to the United States, by which Fort Independence has been erected on the castle ruins.

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

# EDGAR POE

He is said to have based his famous 1827 short story “The Cask of Amontillado,” after he had achieved fame on a grisly incident of revenge that had occurred in the bowels of this fort on [Christmas Day](#) in 1817. 



1829

 [Edgar Allan Poe's AL AARAAF, TAMERLANE, AND MINOR POEMS.](#)



1830

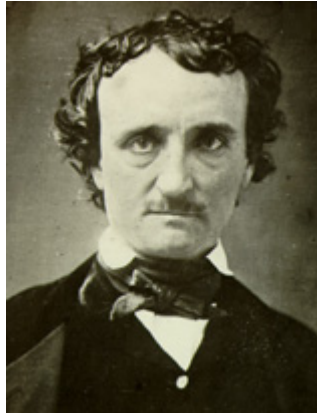


July: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) was bailed out of his enlistment as a private in the army by John Allan, the Richmond, Virginia tobacco exporter who had raised him, and appointed to the corps of officer cadets studying at West Point.



1831

January: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) was expelled from West Point.



By this point this young man would have achieved his full adult stature: [next screen]

Table of Altitudes

☰	Yoda	2' 0"
	Lavinia Warren	2' 8"
	Tom Thumb, Jr.	3' 4"
	Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3' 8"
	Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3' 11"
	Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4' 0"
	<a href="#">Mary Moody Emerson</a> per FBS (1)	4' 3"
	Alexander Pope	4' 6"
	Benjamin Lay	4' 7"
	☰	Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")
<a href="#">Queen Victoria with osteoporosis</a>		4' 8"
<a href="#">Queen Victoria as adult</a>		4' 10"
Margaret Mitchell		4' 10"
length of newer military musket		4' 10"
☰	Charlotte Brontë	4' 10-11"
	Harriet Beecher Stowe	4' 11"
	Laura Ingalls Wilder	4' 11"
	a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4' 11"
	<a href="#">John Keats</a>	5' 0"
	Clara Barton	5' 0"
	Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5' 0"
	Andrew Carnegie	5' 0"



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE





Thomas de Quincey	5 ' 0 "
Stephen A. Douglas	5 ' 0 "
Danny DeVito	5 ' 0 "
Immanuel Kant	5 ' 0 "
William Wilberforce	5 ' 0 "
Mae West	5 ' 0 "
Mother Teresa	5 ' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5 ' 0 "
Dred Scott	5 ' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5 ' 0 " (±)
<a href="#">Harriet Tubman</a>	5 ' 0 " (±)
<a href="#">Mary Moody Emerson</a> per FBS (2)	5 ' 0 " (±)
<a href="#">John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island</a>	5 ' 0 " (+)
Bette Midler	5 ' 1 "
Jemmy Button	5 ' 2 "
Margaret Mead	5 ' 2 "
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5 ' 2 "
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5 ' 2 "
William Walker	5 ' 2 "
<a href="#">Horatio Alger, Jr.</a>	5 ' 2 "
length of older military musket	5 ' 2 "
the artist formerly known as Prince	5 ' 2 1/2 "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5 ' 2 1/2 "
Francis of Assisi	5 ' 3 "
Voltaire	5 ' 3 "
Mohandas Gandhi	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Kahlil Gibran	5 ' 3 "
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5 ' 3 "
The Reverend <a href="#">Gilbert White</a>	5 ' 3 "
Nikita Khrushchev	5 ' 3 "
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5 ' 3 "
Truman Capote	5 ' 3 "
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5 ' 3 "
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5 ' 4 "
Francisco Franco	5 ' 4 "
President <a href="#">James Madison</a>	5 ' 4 "
<a href="#">Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"</a>	5 ' 4 "
Alan Ladd	5 ' 4 "
Pablo Picasso	5 ' 4 "





# EDGAR ALLAN POE

# EDGAR POE

	Truman Capote	5' 4"
	Queen Elizabeth	5' 4"
	<a href="#">Ludwig van Beethoven</a>	5' 4"
	Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4"
	typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	Alan Ladd	5' 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	<i>comte de Buffon</i>	5' 5" (-)
	Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5"
	Charles Manson	5' 5"
	Audie Murphy	5' 5"
	Harry Houdini	5' 5"
	Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5"
	Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6"
	Charles Dickens	5' 6?"
	<a href="#">President Benjamin Harrison</a>	5' 6"
	<a href="#">President Martin Van Buren</a>	5' 6"
	<a href="#">James Smithson</a>	5' 6"
	<a href="#">Louisa May Alcott</a>	5' 6"
	<a href="#">Johann Wolfgang von Goethe</a>	5' 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	<a href="#">Napoleon Bonaparte</a>	5' 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	Emily Brontë	5' 6-7"
	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ?"
	average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85"
	Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7"
	minimum height, British soldier	5' 7"
	<a href="#">President John Adams</a>	5' 7"
	<a href="#">President John Quincy Adams</a>	5' 7"
	<a href="#">President William McKinley</a>	5' 7"
	"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7"
	<a href="#">Henry Thoreau</a>	5' 7"
	the average male of Thoreau's period	5' 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
	<a href="#">Edgar Allan Poe</a>	5' 8"
	President Ulysses S. Grant	5' 8"
	President William H. Harrison	5' 8"
	President James Polk	5' 8"
	President Zachary Taylor	5' 8"
	average height, soldier of 1812	5' 8.35"
	President Rutherford B. Hayes	5' 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

President Millard Fillmore	5 ' 9 "
President Harry S Truman	5 ' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5 ' 9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
Herman Melville	5 ' 9 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "
Calvin Coolidge	5 ' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5 ' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5 ' 10"
Thomas Paine	5 ' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5 ' 10"
<a href="#">Abby May Alcott</a>	5 ' 10"
Reverend <a href="#">Henry C. Wright</a>	5 ' 10"
<a href="#">Nathaniel Hawthorne</a>	5 ' 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5 ' 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5 ' 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5 ' 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
Sojourner Truth	5 ' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5 ' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5 ' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5 ' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5 ' 11"
President Richard M. Nixon	5 ' 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6'
Frederick Douglass	6' (-)
Anthony Burns	6' 0 "
<a href="#">Waldo Emerson</a>	6' 0 "
<a href="#">Joseph Smith, Jr.</a>	6' 0 "
David Walker	6' 0 "
Sarah F. Wakefield	6' 0 "
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6' 0 "
President James Buchanan	6' 0 "
President Gerald R. Ford	6' 0 "
President James Garfield	6' 0 "
President Warren Harding	6' 0 "
President John F. Kennedy	6' 0 "
President James Monroe	6' 0 "
President William H. Taft	6' 0 "
President John Tyler	6' 0 "
John Brown	6' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6' 1"



President Ronald Reagan	6' 1"
Venture Smith	6' 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
<a href="#">John Camel Heenan</a>	6' 2 "
Crispus Attucks	6' 2 "
President Chester A. Arthur	6' 2 "
President George Bush, Senior	6' 2 "
<a href="#">President Franklin D. Roosevelt</a>	6' 2 "
President George Washington	6' 2 "
Gabriel Prosser	6' 2 "
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2 "
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2 "
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
President <a href="#">Thomas Jefferson</a>	6' 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3 "
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3 "
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4 "
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4 "
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4 "
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4 " (?)
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5 "
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7 "
<a href="#">Giovanni Battista Belzoni</a>	6' 7 "
<a href="#">Thomas Jefferson</a> (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "
<a href="#">M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840</a>	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

➡ May: [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s West Point buddies funded the publication of his POEMS, dedicated to the "U.S. Corps of Cadets" and he took a job as an editor in [Baltimore](#), where he could live with blood relatives from his father's side of the family.

The Reverend [Leonard Withington, D.D.](#) preached the prestigious Massachusetts Election Sermon. He came onto the board of the [Dummer Academy](#) (established by bequest of acting governor William Dummer in 1761, this Newbury institution has come to prefer to be referred to as [The Governor's Academy](#)), and would serve on this board for the following seven years, and place his sons in that institution. Frequently, he would be chosen to deliver the closing address: "Many a man now in middle life must still remember those racy, off-hand talks, so full of wisdom and good sense — so entirely free from stereotyped cant and tiresome commonplace. I will not believe that those seeds of truth and goodness all fell upon stony ground."

Increasing deafness led F.A.P. Barnard to accept a position as a tutor at a Hartford, New York school for deaf mutes.

1832

➡ [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s 1st story, "[Metzengerstein](#): A Tale in Imitation of the German," was published in a Philadelphia magazine, the [Saturday Courier](#).



An inmate of the [Eastern State Penitentiary](#), because he was working as the warden's waiter, was able to lower himself from the roof of the front building. This was the institution's 1st escape but the fugitive was promptly recaptured (since the same prisoner would in 1837 use the same technique to stage a 2d escape, the warden could not have been a very big tipper).

1833

 Use of the fantastical theory of Captain John Cleves Symmes of the earth as hollow, and open at the poles, by [Edgar Allan Poe](#) in MS. FOUND IN A BOTTLE.





**WALDEN:** Yet we should oftener look over the taffarel of our craft, like curious passengers, and not make the voyage like stupid sailors picking oakum. The other side of the globe is but the home of our correspondent. Our voyaging is only great-circle sailing, and the doctors prescribe for diseases of the skin merely. One hastens to Southern Africa to chase the giraffe; but surely that is not the game he would be after. How long, pray, would a man hunt giraffes if he could? Snipes and woodcocks also may afford rare sort; but I trust it would be nobler game to shoot one's self.-

“Direct your eye sight inward, and you'll find  
A thousand regions in your mind  
Yet undiscovered. Travel them, and be  
Expert in home-cosmography.”

What does Africa, -what does the West stand for? Is not our own interior white on the chart? black though it may prove, like the coast, when discovered. Is it the source of the Nile, or the Niger, or the Mississippi, or a North-West Passage around this continent, that we would find? Are these the problems which most concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clarke and Frobisher, of your own streams and oceans; explore your own higher latitudes, -with shiploads of preserved meats to support you, if they be necessary; and pile the empty cans sky-high for a sign. Were preserved meats invented to preserve meat merely? Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left by the ice. Yet some can be patriotic who have no *self-respect*, and sacrifice the greater to the less. They love the soil which makes their graves, but have no sympathy with the spirit which may still animate their clay. Patriotism is a maggot in their heads. What was the meaning of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition, with all its parade and expense, but an indirect recognition of the fact, that there are continents and seas in the moral world, to which every man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone.-

“Erret, et extremos alter scrutetur Iberos.  
Plus habet hic vitæ, plus habet ille viæ.”

Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.  
I have more of God, they more of the road.

It is not worth the while to go round the world to count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may perhaps find some “Symmes' Hole” by which to get at the inside at last. England and France, Spain and Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front on this private sea; but no bark from them has ventured out of sight of land, though it is without doubt the direct way to India. If you would learn to speak all tongues and conform to the customs of all nations, if you would travel farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head against a stone, even obey the precept of the old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards that run away and enlist. Start now on that farthest western way, which does not pause at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct toward a worn-out China or Japan, but leads on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and winter, day and night, sun down, moon down, and at last earth down too.

LEWIS AND CLARK

SYMMES HOLE

1835

→ [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s short story "Some Words with a Mummy" toyed with the received idea that has by now borne such evil fruit — that in ancient [Egypt](#) the most impressive features of modernity had already been anticipated or even surpassed.

→ [Edgar Allan Poe](#) became Assistant Editor of the Southern Literary Messenger of Richmond, Virginia, but was fired for sarcasm and [drunkenness](#).



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

➡ April: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) reviewed, in the pages of this month's issue of The Southern Literary Messenger, MEMOIRS OF CELEBRATED WOMEN OF ALL COUNTRIES by Laure Saint-Martin (Permon) Junot, duchesse d'Abrantès (1784-1838), which had been published in part in New-York in 1832 and in full in London in 1834.



➡ December: Though [Theodore Sedgwick Fay](#)'s NORMAN LESLIE: A TALE OF THE PRESENT TIMES was immediately very popular, [Edgar Allan Poe](#) wrote of it: “Here we have a *blistering* detail, a *blistering* truth, a *blistering* story, and a *blistering* brand, to say nothing of innumerable other blisters interspersed throughout the book. But we have done with Norman Leslie, — if ever we saw as silly a thing, may be we — blistered.”

1836

February: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) continued his attack on [Theodore Sedgwick Fay](#)'s NORMAN LESLIE: A TALE OF THE PRESENT TIMES, which amounted, he insisted, to "the most inestimable piece of balderdash with which the common sense of the good people of America were ever so openly or so villainously insulted." This would bring on endless discussion, and endless published commentary, and as we Americans well know — all publicity is good publicity.

At [Harvard College](#), [Henry Thoreau](#) would be perusing this notorious novel:

NORMAN LESLIE, VOL. I



the blistered author

NORMAN LESLIE, VOL. II

➡ April: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) quoted at length from David Brewster's 1832 LETTERS ON NATURAL MAGIC about the spectre of the Brocken, in his essay "Maelzel's Chess-Player."



Travellers upon the top of Ben Lomond startled by seeing their images of colossal size upon a passing cloud.

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

# EDGAR POE

➡ May 16, Monday In Richmond, Virginia, before the Presbyterian minister Amasa Converse, [Edgar Allan Poe](#) got married with his 14-year-old 1st cousin [Virginia Eliza Clemm](#), daughter of the aunt, Mrs. Clemm, with whom they were living.

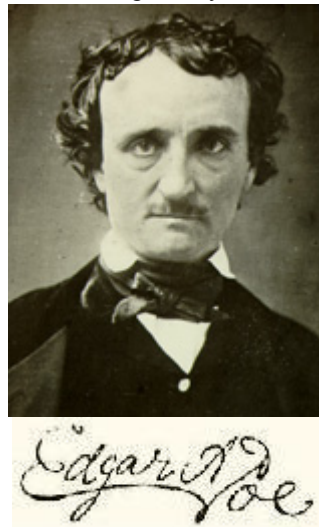


1837

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) used the theory of Captain John Cleves Symmes to facilitate the plot of his THE NARRATIVE OF ARTHUR GORDON PYM OF [NANTUCKET](#).

1838

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) was living in New-York, where [Harper's Monthly Gentleman's Magazine](#) published his novel THE NARRATIVE OF ARTHUR GORDON PYM inspired by the theory of the Symmes Hole.



August 10, Friday: [Henry Thoreau](#) made some comments in his journal, on the nature of the time of the universe:

## EDGAR POE



August 10th. The Time of the Universe. Nor can all the vanities that so vex the world alter one whit the measure that night has chosen –but ever it must be short particular metre. The human soul is a silent harp in God’s quire whose strings need only to be swept by the divine breath, to chime in with the harmonies of creation. Every pulse beat is in exact time with the crickets chant, and the tickings of the deathwatch in the wall. Alternate with these if you can.

Henry would recycle this reference to the cricket and to the deathwatch beetle into his essay on the NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the autumn days, the creaking of crickets is heard at noon over all the land, and as in summer they are heard chiefly at night-fall, so then by their incessant chirp they usher in the evening of the year. Nor can all the vanities that vex the world alter one whit the measure that night has chosen. Every pulse-beat is in exact time with the cricket’s chant and the tickings of the deathwatch in the wall. Alternate with these if you can.

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) may have seen this; it may have been inspiration for his short story using the deathwatch beetle. However, that is rather unlikely, as Thoreau in “Natural History of Massachusetts” and Poe in “The Tell-Tale Heart” evoke considerably different complexes of thought and emotion in regard to the hearing of the deathwatch in the still of the night.



Note Thoreau’s careful use of the “human as instrument” theme, similar to his use of this theme on September 30, 1851, when he would write that “As the wood of an old Cremona<sup>2</sup> its very fibre perchance harmoniously transposed & educated to resound melody has brought a great price—so methinks these telegraph posts should bear a great price with musical instrument makers— It is prepared to be the material of harps for ages to come, as it were put a soak in & seasoning in music....,” and similar to what he would write in “What shall it Profit,” his most carefully considered sermon, “It occurred to me when I awoke the other morning –feeling regret for some intemperance of the day before which had dulled my sensibilities– that man was to be treated as a

2. The famous violin-makers Nicola Amati (1596-1684), Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737), and Guiseppe Guarneri (1683-1745) had lived and worked in Cremona, Italy, in the Po river valley.



musical instrument, and if any viol was to be made of sound timber, and kept tuned always, it was he — so that when the bow of events is drawn across him, he may vibrate and resound in perfect harmony. A sensitive soul will be continually trying its strings to see if they are in tune. A man's body must be rasped down exactly to a shaving. It is of far more importance than the wood of a Cremona violin," and similar to "There was a time when beauty and music were all within, and I sat and listened to my thoughts, and there was a song in them.... Man should be the harp articulate."

William M. White<sup>3</sup> would later present a version of this journal entry as poetry:

*The human soul is a silent harp in God's quire,  
Whose strings need only to be swept  
By the divine breath  
To chime in with the harmonies of creation.*

*Every pulse-beat is in exact time  
With the cricket's chant,  
And the tickings of the death-watch in the wall.*

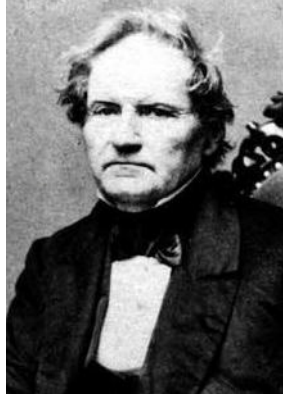
*Alternate with these if you can.*

The [Reverend Convers Francis](#) wrote to the Reverend [Frederic Henry Hedge](#) in Bangor, Maine summarizing the Emerson lecture at the [Harvard Divinity School](#) and reporting upon the reaction to it:

Have you heard that Waldo Emerson delivered the sermon this summer to the class at the Divinity School, on their leaving the seminary? I went to hear it, & found it crowded with stirring, honest, lofty thoughts. I don't know that anything of his has excited me more. He dwelt much on the downfallen state of the church, i.e. the want of a living, real interest in the present Christianity (where I think he rather exaggerated, but not much), on the tendency to make only a historical Christ, separated from actual humanity, — & on the want of reference to the great laws of man's moral nature in preaching. These were his principal points, & were put forth with great power, & sometimes (under the first head especially) with unique humor. The discourse was full of divine life, — and was a true word from a true soul. I did not agree with him in some of his positions, & think perhaps he did not make the peculiar significance of Jesus so prominent as he ought, — though I am inclined to believe not that he thinks less of Jesus than others do, but more of man, every man as a divine being. — The discourse gave dire offense to the rulers at Cambridge. The dean & Mr. Norton have pronounced sentences of fearful condemnation, & their whole *clique* in Boston & Cambridge are in commotion. The harshest words are not spared, & "infidel" & "atheist" are the best terms poor E. gets. I have sometimes thought that to Mr. E. & his numerous detractors might be applied what Plato says of the winged soul, that has risen to the sight of the absolute,

3. A library building at the University of Colorado is named for a William M. White, Class of 1933. I wonder if that is the same William M. White.

essential, & true, & therefore is said by the many to be stark mad. – the multitude are not aware that he is inspired.



Per HOWE'S BIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX OF TWELVE UNITARIAN MORALISTS, PAGE 77: Henry Ware, Jr., his father's colleague at the [Harvard Divinity School](#), attempted to counteract [Emerson's](#) address with a sermon he preached in the Harvard Chapel soon after classes resumed in September. Ware entitled his own address "The Personality of the Deity" and focused his attention upon the doctrine of God. He contrasted Unitarian orthodoxy (if the term be not contradictory) with certain other opinions he let remain nameless. The Unitarian God stood above and beyond the natural order, as Ware defined Him, and should not be confused with nature itself. Furthermore, to use the word "God" to refer to abstract concepts like "beauty" or "virtue" was "to violate the established use of language." God was a conscious personality, and to apply His name to either the universe itself or to inanimate abstractions was a pitiful disguise for atheism. While the younger Ware politely refrained from identifying any local crypto-atheists, his target was obvious. Even so, his statement elicited no rebuttal from Emerson. Ware himself did not press the issue further, very likely because he and Emerson had long been personal friends.

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

## EDGAR POE

1839

Louis A. Godey's Godey's Lady's Book had 25,000 subscribers (at its highest point, in 1860, the circulation



would rise to 150,000). Sarah Josepha Hale, as literary editor, was relying on original material, mostly by women, rather than following the American practice of plagiarizing from European authors. Although she had a nasty habit of stiffing unknown authors, paying them sometimes not at all, she did pay her more well-known contributors well. At one time or another, [William Cullen Bryant](#), Harriet Beecher Stowe, [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), and [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) were all contributing to the magazine and being well rewarded for so doing. [Edgar Allan Poe](#) would supply several of the best-known of his tales, such as “The Mask of the Red Death,” as well as literary essays such as “Tale Writing — Nathaniel Hawthorne” and a series on the “New York Literati.” Even more than Graham's Magazine, this girlie mag relied upon fashion plates and engravings. Godey was even known to refer to the article text as “the illustration of the plate” (in a later timeframe men would be insisting that they subscribed to Playboy only to read the articles, but that is neither here nor there). Godey declared these plates to be “service to the cause of civilization.” Initially one hand-colored plate was being included in every third issue, but soon there was a single hand-colored plate in each issue of the magazine (the origin of the centerfold?). By 1870 civilization had been served most exceedingly well, for a total of a thousand such services to the cause of civilization had at that point appeared in the magazine.



However, in this year, [Poe](#), having moved to Philadelphia, was living on little but bread and molasses and writing “Ligeia” and other stories which appeared in the American Museum of [Baltimore](#). He became co-editor of Burton's Gentleman's Magazine.

1840

Since the high point of consumption during the late 1820s, American males seemed to have been consuming less prodigious amounts of [ethanol](#). Intake, which had been calculated at four gallons per man per year, of 200-proof, was down to a calculated 1.5 gallons per man per year, of 200-proof.<sup>4</sup>

Since the turn of the century American consumption of [coffee](#) had increased by some 500%.<sup>5</sup>

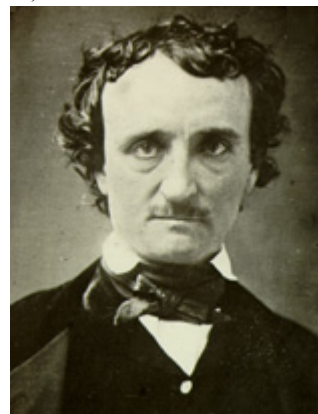
[Edgar Allan Poe](#) was fired by [Burton's Gentleman's Magazine](#) for [drunkenness](#). His TALES OF THE GROTESQUE AND ARABESQUE were collected in two volumes. "The Gold Bug" won a \$100.<sup>00</sup> top prize in a contest sponsored by a Philadelphia paper.



January/February: [Knickerbocker Magazine](#) published Thomas Ward's long poem on [Sam Patch](#), "The Great Descender" ([Edgar Allan Poe](#) would announce it to be "twaddle").



Gone but still Twaddled



Knew Twaddle

4. Larkin, *RESHAPING OF EVERYDAY LIFE*, pages 285-6, 295-7. This makes for an interesting comparison with today's Russia, where I understand your average man downs an average of half a bottle of vodka each day.

5. 19th-Century doctors disapproved of [coffee](#). As for prostitutes, so for medicos, or that is the way the situation is made to appear in a standard joke: the question "What do you like to do?" is said to be followed automatically in the one calling by the remark "Well, that'll be extra," and automatically in the other calling by "Well, that's bad for you."

1841

January: George R. Graham merged The Casket and Burton's Gentleman's Magazine into Graham's Magazine. Edgar Allan Poe became the literary editor of the magazine.

This was predicated on the promise that the job would involve mostly the writing of book notices and thus wouldn't require more than a couple of hours a day of his valuable time. For this the poet was to receive \$800 a year — which was comparable to a salary of perhaps \$60,000 today and thus was nothing to sneeze at for part-time work. The new publication would retain the serial numbering of The Casket but would use the policy of Burton's. Some of the writers in this 1st year would be James Russell Lowell, Poe, Lydia Howard Huntley



Sigourney, and Park Benjamin. The following year the principal contributors would include William Cullen Bryant, James Fenimore Cooper, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. During his editorship the poet would contribute several of his better tales and a few important literary essays. By June, however, he would be writing to a friend that he was disgusted by his situation, and in the following year he would resign, partly because of an argument with fellow editor Charles Peterson and partly because he would be feeling supplanted by Samuel Griswold Goodrich, the gent who would later replace him as literary editor.

During this year Poe's "A Chapter on Autobiography" would include a general denunciation of Emerson as a twaddler:

Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson belongs to a class of gentlemen with whom we have no patience whatever — the mystic for mysticism's sake. Quintilian mentions a pedant who taught obscurity, and who once said to a pupil "this is excellent, for I do not understand it myself." How the good man would have chuckled over Mr. E.! His present **role** seems to be the out-Carlyling Carlyle. *Lycophron Tenebrosus* is a fool to him. THE best answer to his twaddle is *cui bono?*.... His love of the obscure does not prevent him, nevertheless, from the composition of occasional poems in which beauty is apparent **by flashes**.... His [handwritten signature] is bad, sprawling, illegible, and irregular — although sufficiently bold. This latter trait may be, and no doubt is, only a portion of his general affectation.

A young boy named Alex McCaffery was living with the Emersons to help out with household chores.



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

1842

[Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s wife [Virginia Eliza Clemm Poe](#) was falling victim to [tuberculosis](#) as he attempted to start a magazine of his own.

- May: A piece by [Edgar Allan Poe](#) appeared in [Graham's Magazine](#), ostensibly as a review of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s TWICE-TOLD TALES. Actually, the piece is a theoretical article in which Poe defines the short story as a literary *genre*, using these thrice-told "tales" as illustrative instance.
- May: [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s "A Virtuoso's Collection" and [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s "Masque of the Red Death" appeared.

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) was hired by the Philadelphia weekly [Saturday Museum](#).



1843

During this year he wrote "The Black Cat" and "The Purloined Letter."

- Spring: [Thomas Mayne Reid, Jr.](#) relocated from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia to work as a journalist and from time to time publish his "The Poor Scholar" poetry in such venues as [Godey's Lady's Book](#), [Graham's Magazine](#), and the [Ladies National Magazine](#). While in Philadelphia he would be for several years a drinking buddy of [Edgar Allan Poe](#), who would remember him as "a colossal but most picturesque liar. He fibs on a surprising scale but with the finish of an artist, and that is why I listen to him attentively." Not to be outdone, he would remember Poe in the following manner: "Nearly a quarter of a century ago, I knew a man named Edgar Allan Poe. I knew him as well as one man may know another, after an intimate and almost daily association extending over a period of two years. He was then a reputed poet; I only an humble admirer of the Muses. But it is not of his poetic talent I here intend to speak. I never myself had a very exalted opinion of it — more especially as I knew that the poem upon which rests the head corner-stone of his fame is not the creation of Edgar Allan Poe, but of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In 'Lady Geraldine's Courtship,' you will find the original of 'The Raven.' I mean the tune, the softly flowing measure, the imagery and a good many of the words—even to the 'rustling of the soft and silken curtain.'"

August: In declining pulmonary health, [Charles James Fox](#) embarked upon a restorative voyage to the Mediterranean, where he would visit countries such as Spain and [Egypt](#).

Richard F. Fuller joined [Ellery Channing](#) and [Ellen Fuller Channing](#) of Concord for a week’s tour in the Berkshires. [Edgar Allan Poe](#)’s savage review of Channing’s POEMS appeared in [Graham’s Magazine](#):



They are full of all kinds of mistakes, of which the most important is that of their having been written at all.

**POEMS (FIRST SERIES)**

Poe was accusing the novice poet with the famous name of having written in “Channingese.” This review has been termed “perhaps the most contemptuous he ever wrote” — although considering the quality of the material he was reviewing, this was perhaps too kind.



*I am not earth-born, though I here delay;  
Hope’s child, I summon infiniter powers,  
And laugh to see the mild and sunny day  
Smile on the shrunk and thin autumnal hours.  
I laugh, for Hope hath happy place with me;  
If my bark sinks, ’tis to another sea.*

However, to supplement the income from his writing, the Concord PO8 would be able to earn some money this month chopping wood for the [Emersons](#) in their nearby Coolidge mansion, for which labor he would be paid \$0.<sup>50</sup> per cord (presumably therefore he was able to produce about two cords per working day). Ellen had started an elementary school at their little red farmhouse, and was enrolling [Ellen Tucker Emerson](#) and others at a charge of \$1.<sup>00</sup> per month.

**1844**

Graham's Magazine claimed to be the exclusive publisher of [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), [William Cullen Bryant](#), Paulding, and [James Fenimore Cooper](#). A typical issue during this period would consist of three or four short stories, an essay on manners, a biographical sketch, a literary article, and a quantity of poetry. N. Parker Willis was considered one of the best essayists. The magazine's critical reviews were uneven in quality, except for those by Samuel Griswold Goodrich and [Edgar Allan Poe](#). At the end of the first year of publication, George R. Graham would claim a circulation of 25,000. A few months later he would claim 40,000. Graham's American Monthly Magazine published original engravings by John Sartain (1808-1897) at a time when most periodicals borrowed and used old, worn-out plates. Graham's paid its writers well in an era during which even famous writers received little, or nothing. In each issue there were two original mezzotints and a color fashion plate. The payment structure began at \$4.<sup>00</sup>-\$12.<sup>00</sup> a page for prose and \$10.<sup>00</sup>-\$50.<sup>00</sup> per poem, and name writers could negotiate more. Poe was getting only \$4.<sup>00</sup>-\$5.<sup>00</sup> a page while N.P. Willis, a celebrated author (!), was receiving \$11.<sup>00</sup>. The average article accepted would have been producing between \$20.<sup>00</sup> and \$60.<sup>00</sup> for its author. Poe, his wife Virginia, and his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, moved to New-York, where he could do contract writing and editing.

April 13, Saturday: The New-York Sun reported that an Irish balloonist had succeeded in crossing the Atlantic Ocean (and by balloon yet). But this was of course a hoax, initiated by a young writer who had arrived in the city a few days before with only \$4.<sup>50</sup> and his reputation, who had decided upon this as a good device to attract local attention to himself (the young author's name was [Poe](#)).

**1845**

[Edgar Allan Poe's](#) "The Raven" appeared, and he became the lead reviewer of the Broadway Journal. Wiley and Putnam published THE RAVEN AND OTHER POEMS, and he purchased the Broadway Journal on credit.

According to Walter Benjamin, by this point the *flâneur* had all but disappeared from the city streets of Europe, as having become an overly transparent social fantasy. It had come to be no longer possible, in the anonymous crudity of the city throng, to value one's isolation and anonymity as if were some sort of "prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito," consuming and comprehending the throngs who passed before his eyes as a "botanist on asphalt." Dana Brand, who has found exemplars of the *flâneur* in [Edgar Allan Poe](#), [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), and Herman Melville but, strangely, not in [Henry Thoreau](#), has commented on this as follows:<sup>6</sup>



[T]he flaneur, understood by Benjamin and others as an exclusively and quintessentially Continental phenomenon, was in fact a significant presence in the culture of the United States in the three decades before the Civil War.

6. My own take on this, obviously, would be that [Henry Thoreau](#) should be considered as having been in the *flâneur* tradition, except that just as the *flâneur* of the boulevards considered himself to be an on-asphalt transplant of the botanist of the rural walks, by a doubled reversal Thoreau would have considered himself to be an on-soil transplant of the urban "botanist on asphalt." (This situation was so obvious, however, that he didn't ever feel the need to come right out and say so.)

When Evert Augustus Duyckinck asked [Hawthorne](#) whom he might include in a new series of American books



being published by Wiley & Putnam, Hawthorne suggested [Henry David Thoreau](#) but with the same breath damned him to neglect by commenting that “The only way, however, in which he could ever approach the popular mind, would be by writing a book of simple observations of nature, somewhat in the vein of [the Reverend [Gilbert White](#)’s [THE NATURAL HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF SELBORNE](#)].”<sup>7</sup>

*As for Thoreau, there is one chance in a thousand that he might write a most excellent and readable book; but I should be sorry to take the responsibility, either towards you or him, of stirring him up to write anything.... He is the most unmalleable fellow alive – the most tedious, tiresome, and intolerable – the narrowest and most notional – and yet, true as all this is, he has great qualities of intellect and character. The only way, however, in which he could ever approach the popular mind, would be by writing a book of simple observation of nature, somewhat in the vein of White’s History of Selborne.*

7. The Reverend White’s NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE is only the 4th most reprinted book in the English language.

## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

During a visit to [Providence, Rhode Island](#), [Edgar Allan Poe](#), always a man with an eye for the ladies despite the fact that he was already married, laid an eye upon [Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#). At this time she



was unaware of the attention, and he was unaware that she was a widow possessed of funds. Poe's "The Raven" appeared, first in the New-York [Evening Mirror](#) and then in Wiley and Putnam's [THE RAVEN AND OTHER POEMS](#), and its author was made the lead reviewer of the [Broadway Journal](#) and purchased that journal



on credit. It was possibly in this year that Walt Whitman met him:

## “Specimen Days”

### BROADWAY SIGHTS

Besides Fulton ferry, off and on for years, I knew and frequented Broadway – that noted avenue of New York’s crowded and mixed humanity, and of so many notables. Here I saw, during those times, Andrew Jackson, [Daniel Webster](#), Clay, William Henry Seward, Martin Van Buren, filibuster Walker, [Lajos Kossuth](#), Fitz Greene Halleck, Bryant, the Prince of Wales, Charles Dickens, the first Japanese ambassadors, and lots of other celebrities of the time. Always something novel or inspiriting; yet mostly to me the hurrying and vast amplitude of those never-ending human currents. I remember seeing James Fenimore Cooper in a court-room in Chambers street, back of the city hall, where he was carrying on a law case – (I think it was a charge of libel he had brought against some one.) I also remember seeing Edgar A. Poe, and having a short interview with him, (it must have been in 1845 or ‘6,) in his office, second story of a corner building, (Duane or Pearl street.) He was editor and owner or part owner of “the Broadway Journal.” [Page 702] The visit was about a piece of mine he had publish’d. Poe was very cordial, in a quiet way, appear’d well in person, dress, &c. I have a distinct and pleasing remembrance of his looks, voice, manner and matter; very kindly and human, but subdued, perhaps a little jaded. For another of my reminiscences, here on the west side, just below Houston street, I once saw (it must have been about 1832, of a sharp, bright January day) a bent, feeble but stout-built very old man, bearded, swathed in rich furs, with a great ermine cap on his head, led and assisted, almost carried, down the steps of his high front stoop (a dozen friends and servants, emulous, carefully holding, guiding him) and then lifted and tuck’d in a gorgeous sleigh, envelop’d in other furs, for a ride. The sleigh was drawn by as fine a team of horses as I ever saw. (You needn’t think all the best animals are brought up nowadays; never was such horseflesh as fifty years ago on Long Island, or south, or in New York city; folks look’d for spirit and mettle in a nag, not tame speed merely.) Well, I, a boy of perhaps thirteen or fourteen, stopp’d and gazed long at the spectacle of that fur-swathed old man, surrounded by friends and servants, and the careful seating of him in the sleigh. I remember the spirited, champing horses, the driver with his whip, and a fellow-driver by his side, for extra prudence. The old man, the subject of so much attention, I can almost see now. It was John Jacob Astor.

The years 1846, ‘47, and there along, see me still in New York city, working as writer and printer, having my usual good health, and a good time generally.

January 24, Thursday: Although a requiem mass was allowed for the memory of [Nicolò Paganini](#) in Chiesa della Steccata, Parma, the Church continued to refuse the remains Christian burial.

During this timeframe the standing of the United States of America, in regard to international copyright law, was roughly the same as is the standing of the People’s Republic of China today, in regard to international copyright law. We were violating the international law of copyright constantly then, as they violate it now constantly, with impunity and with impudence. On this day [Edgar Allan Poe](#) reacted in the pages of the New-York [Evening Mirror](#):

How we rob foreign authors, and how we argue in our



EDGAR POE

EDGAR ALLAN POE

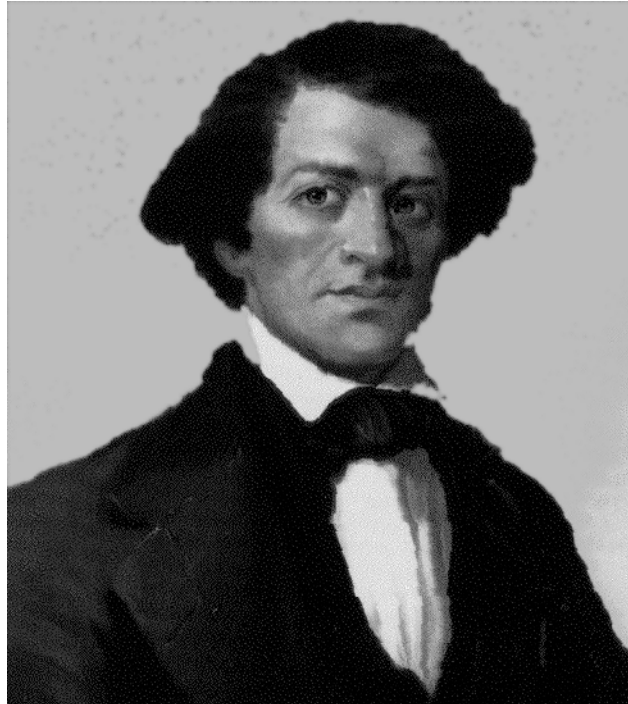
legislative halls that it is an economical thing for us to pick the foreign pocket, are points too well understood to need discussion – but there are still found individuals who ask, innocently enough, in what manner the want of the International Law affects the pecuniary interest of the native American. The man who asks the question should first write a book or a magazine article, and then offer it to a publisher for sale.

The publisher's answer to the offer will be at the same time the practical reply to the general query.

He will say – "My dear sir, you are a man of genius; and I am willing to admit, even, if you think proper, that you are a man of higher genius than – than – any one you have fancy to name. But, if I pay one dollar for your book, I am impliedly acknowledging that you are not only a man of greater genius than – shall we say Dickens? – but that you, who have never published a line, are more popular than he. For, observe! I can get Dickens's works *without* the dollar. It is little better than piracy, I know; but custom sanctions it, and, therefore, I do not feel called upon to blush very particularly when I commit it. At all events, I prefer to blush a little, and save my dollar. I must, therefore, decline having anything to do with your book, *for the present*; but let me recommend you to Mr. A., or the house of H. – they may, possibly, be able to serve you."

The most momentous evil, however – an evil not the less momentous, because hitherto inconsidered – arising from the want of an International Copy-right Law, is the bitter sense of wrong aroused in the hearts of all literary men – is the keen contempt, and profound disgust which the whole Moral Force – which the whole Active Mind of the world cannot help entertaining, even if it would, against the sole region which refuses to protect it, or respect it – *against the sole form of government, which not only robs it upon the highway, but justifies the robbery as a convenient and commendable thing, and glories in t [sic] when cleverly done.*

On this day and the following two days, Frederick Douglass would lecture at the Marlboro Chapel of Boston, and then in the Hall of the House of Representatives for the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. This, according to an oil-on-canvas likeness now in the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC which had been completed by an unidentified artist sometime between 1841 and 1845 (presumably closer to 1845 than to 1841), is what the fugitive anti-slavery orator looked like during his late 20s when he knew [Henry Thoreau](#).<sup>8</sup>



1846

[Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s "Sarah Margaret Fuller," in Godey's Lady's Book for this year: pages 72-75.

WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY is a book which few women in the country could have written, and no woman in the country would have published, with the exception of Miss Fuller.

8. The intriguing 1845 engraving that would serve as the frontispiece of Douglass's NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS, AN AMERICAN SLAVE. WRITTEN BY HIMSELF would base itself upon this painting. Refer to Voss, MAJESTIC IN HIS WRATH.



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

February: Having gotten his wife pregnant again, [Ellery Channing](#) decided not to be a Massachusetts farmer and not to listen to an infant crying, and began to solicit help from his friends because he needed for his personal development as a poet to travel in Europe and inspect masterpieces of art. He manage to raise the sum of \$300.<sup>00</sup>, which he considered to be adequate since he planned to travel steerage class at a cost of \$25.<sup>00</sup> each way across the Atlantic. Margaret Fuller commented reasonably on “the unnatural selfishness of a man who, having brought a woman into this situation of suffering peril and care, proposes to leave her without even knowing whether she lives or dies under it,” but Ellery explained to her what “a bugbear in the house” he was “during the first year of a child’s life.”

Charles Lane wrote Bronson Alcott in [Concord](#) telling him of a Valentines Day party in Brooklyn, New York at which the guest list had included such sweethearts as Albert Brisbane, Christopher Pearse Cranch, [George William Curtis](#), William Henry Furness, Margaret Fuller, and [Edgar Allan Poe](#). Fuller had acted as postmistress and the guests had fabricated Valentine cards to post to one another.

1847

January 30, day: [Mrs. Virginia Eliza Clemm Poe](#), [Mr. Edgar Allan Poe](#)’s child bride, died of [tuberculosis](#) at the age of 24.



Fall: The initial installment of some 600 lines of “A Fable for Critics,” a testimony to the idle mind of James Russell Lowell, were posted to Charles F. Briggs of G.P. Putnam publishers on Broadway in Manhattan. Successive installments over a period of almost a year would complete this puerile poem, which would come across the presses on October 25, 1848.

1848

THE RHODE-ISLAND [ALMANAC](#) FOR 1848. By Isaac Bickerstaff. [Providence, Rhode Island](#): Hugh H. Brown.

THE PROVIDENCE [ALMANAC](#) FOR 1848. [Providence](#).

THE NEW FARMER’S [ALMANAC](#) FOR 1848. By A. Maynard. [Providence](#): Charles Burnett, Jr.

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

## EDGAR POE

The bereaved [Edgar Allan Poe](#), his life falling apart, wrote the poems “Ulalume” and “Annabel Lee,” and the story “Hop-Frog,” and began a long prose poem entitled EUREKA in which he was going to unite his consciousness with the cosmos, or, at least, with the *KOSMOS* of [Alexander von Humboldt](#) — to whom “with very profound respect” he would dedicate this work. Our poet was one guy who was going to hold it together if it could possibly be held together! As a study on the nature and origin of the universe this 150-page prose poem on what today we would term “cosmology” was remarkably prescient regardless of its author’s personal lack of qualifications to engage in scientific research. The conventional understanding of that day notwithstanding — that the universe was static and eternal— Poe depicted it as something that had exploded into being out of a “primordial particle” in “one instantaneous flash” (this, of course, is the Big Bang theory, that would not become received wisdom until the 1960s). The universe was held to be expanding, and the prospect was offered that it might one day collapse (this is the inference that Alexander Friedmann would in 1922 derive from Albert Einstein’s equations). Poe toyed with the idea of something like black holes. He provided a correct appreciation of Olbers Paradox, the issue of why the sky is dark at night rather than suffused with light: the universe is finite both in space and in time. For more of an appreciation of Poe’s musings, consult Tom Siegfried’s *STRANGER MATTERS: UNDISCOVERED IDEAS ON THE FRONTIERS OF SPACE AND TIME* (Joseph Henry Press, 2002). Poe wrote to a friend during this year that

“What I have propounded will (in good time) revolutionize the world of Physical & Metaphysical Science. I say this calmly — but I say it.”



A rich and well-connected and middle-aged [Providence, Rhode Island](#) widow and poet, [Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#), addressed a Valentine’s Day poem to this eligible widower poet cosmologist, whom she was unaware that she had met three years earlier — and he replied with his poem “To Helen” and they became engaged. Friend Sarah began a campaign to get her fiancée to stop drinking. Sarah’s mother, who had been burned by the behavior of Sarah’s father, insisted that her daughter protect herself by obtaining from Poe a prenuptial agreement turning her property over to her mother. Scandalous stories were at the time in circulation about the behavior of the poet, who, apparently, in the middle of all this, staged a suicide gesture. (This was the year in which he coined our term “normality,” evidently as an oppositional term to whatever it was that he personally was representing.) Poe continued to drink, so Sarah called off the wedding. Poe would level accusations against her family and, less than a year later, would attempt another such marriage, this time with Sarah Elmira Royster — and would shortly thereafter be found unconscious in [Baltimore](#) and would die.



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

May: According to Cleveland Amory's *THE PROPER BOSTONIANS* (NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1957, pages 332-5 passim), on this date the redoubtable [Boston Evening Transcript](#), of a local institution, put on the gloves to duke it out with the redoubtable [Edgar Allan Poe](#):

It is doubtful if Boston's institution men would ever have achieved such prominence in their city if they had not had a voice to carry their "way of life" to the Proper Bostonian masses. They found this voice in one of the all-time curiosities of American journalism, the Boston [Evening Transcript](#). Daily except Sunday, just at tea-time—when the Proper Bostonian mind is traditionally at its most receptive stage—the [Transcript](#) was quietly laid, never tossed, on the doorsteps of the best people in Boston. Not to read the [Transcript](#) was unthinkable. It was never a newspaper in the vulgar sense of the word. The story of three representatives of the press who were received into a Beacon Hill home with a servant's announcement, "Two reporters from the papers, Sir, and a gentleman from the [Transcript](#)," was actually a legend once removed from the London [Times](#), but it became the Boston paper's trademark. The loyalty of its readers was proverbial. In the wind of its editorial opinion they swayed, said the poet T.S. Eliot, "like a field of ripe corn."...Throughout its history the paper stood like a rock for Boston's Old Guard. The [Transcript](#) was sound.... Its genteel tub-thumping for the blue bloods began with its first edition on July 24, 1830, with a front page devoted to column after column of free advertising for Boston merchants—of which one historian notes that "one will search the columns in vain for other than a good Yankee name"—and continued unabated for more than a hundred years through every test of Proper Bostonian standards. In May, 1846, the quasi-Bostonian [Edgar Allan Poe](#) was giving trouble and the [Transcript](#) editor was firm:

He is a wandering specimen of the Literary Snob, continually obtruding himself upon public notice; today in the gutter, tomorrow in some milliner's magazine; but in all places, and at all times, magnificently snobbish and dirty, who seems to invite the Punchy writers among us to take up their pens and impale him for public amusement. Mrs. Louisa Godey has lately taken this snob into her service in a neighboring city, where he is doing his best to prove his title to the distinction of being one of the lowest of his class at present infesting the literary world. Whenever seen in print his falsehoods are ever met by the reader with the simple exclamation — pooh! — Poe!

July: [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s poem entitled "The Raven." In Lowell, Massachusetts he had his eye on Jane Ermina Locke, a local poet with whom he had been corresponding and whom he had presumed to be a widow. During this visit, a living husband was in evidence, but he did meet another local wife, Nancy Richmond, in whom he could become interested — or with whom he could become entangled.

September 21, Thursday: Ernst von Pfuel replaced Ludolf Camphausen as prime minister of Prussia.

Crossing from Switzerland, Gustav von Struve with some followers seized the Rathaus in Lörach, Baden and once again proclaimed a [German](#) republic.

[Johannes Brahms](#) gave his initial solo piano performance, in Hamburg. He played music of J.S. Bach, Rossini, Henri Herz, and Jacob Rosenhain. Owing to so much news of revolution, and a cholera epidemic, no review of the concert would be printed.

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) visited eligible widow [Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#) at her home at 88 Benefit Street in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) and over the following couple of days would spend considerable time in typical period wooing activities, such as a day outing at the Swan Point cemetery.



Fall: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) returned to Lowell MA to repeat his lecture on “The Poets and Poetry of America” and to continue his interest in the flirtatious Nancy Richmond, a local wife he had met. For some reason the poet decided this young Nancy’s first name ought to be “Annie,” and in the next year he would write a poem “For Annie.”

That fall, and continuing into the winter, [Henry Thoreau](#) drafted journal entries on reformers, great men, the East, Greece, and Rome that he eventually used in WEEK.



After July 30: I find that I conciliate the gods by some sacrament as bathing –or abstemiousness in diet –or rising early –and directly they Smile on me. These are my sacraments.

We fall in love with some good spirits whose bodies we see — how many many good spirits do we fall in love with whose bodies we never see?

The states of the mind answer to the states of the body and every part of the body has its thought– When that part is soundest that thought thrills us

What do the hands think? what the feet–? the loins? –the back? They should all be thoughtful–



After July 30: All men are children and of one family. The same tale sends them (all) to bed, and wakes them in the morning.

Fame forces the barriers of dialect & custom How could any nation of human children do without its Robinson Crusoe & –“Monarch of all I survey”–? It is such an interesting story –as will carry captivity captive.

Oh it is all in the bible, {*MS torn*} it in the Koran– If it is in {*MS torn*}

The Missionary Wolff says “All the Brahmins I met with had an unlucky habit of affirming that what I said was in the Shastar, and used no further argument.” Christians do the same.

October 25: James Russell Lowell's "A Fable for Critics" was published on Broadway in Manhattan by G.P. Putnam (bearing the date October 21st).



### A FABLE FOR CRITICS

He had farted our nation's first attempt at literary self-examination!<sup>9</sup>

In this curious piece he satirized the Margaret Fuller who had had the temerity to remark on how "stereotyped" Lowell's attempts at poetry were, and who had predicted (accurately enough, it now seems!) that "posterity would not remember him" for his literary endeavors. In this curious piece Lowell also satirized [Henry Thoreau](#)

9. His was a busy pen in this year of 1848: in one year appeared his POEMS: SECOND SERIES, his THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL, and the first series of THE BIGELOW PAPERS. It really is too bad that none of this work has survived the test of time by remaining highly regarded!



and [Ellery Channing](#), depicting them as [Waldo Emerson](#) impersonators:<sup>10</sup>

- His dismissal of [Bronson Alcott](#) as a writer who does not follow the first rule of writing –that to learn to write one must write and write and write– but who will never be able to write intelligibly because he lives on some other planet:

Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,  
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,  
With the Parthenon nigh, and the olive-trees o'er him,  
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,  
With a snug room at Plato's, when night comes, to walk to,  
And people from morning till midnight to talk to,  
And from midnight till morning, nor snore in their listening;  
So he muses, his face with the joy of it glistening,  
For his highest conceit of a happiest state is  
Where they'd live upon acorns, and hear him talk gratis;  
And indeed, I believe, no man ever talked better —  
Each sentence hangs perfectly poised to a letter  
He seems piling words, but there's royal dust hid  
In the heart of each sky-piercing pyramid.  
While he talks he is great, but goes out like a taper,  
If you shut him up closely with pen, ink, and paper;  
Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morning till night,  
And he thinks he does wrong if he don't always write;  
In this, as in all things, a lamb among men,  
He goes to sure death when he goes to his pen.

- His uncritical adulation of [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare  
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;  
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,  
So earnest, so graceful, so lithe and so fleet,  
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet;  
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,  
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,  
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,  
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;  
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,  
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek—  
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;  
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted  
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,  
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared  
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,  
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan  
For making him fully and perfectly man.

- His dismissal of [Edgar Allan Poe](#) as a man whose intellect has overruled his affect:<sup>1</sup>

There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,  
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,  
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,  
In a way to make people of common-sense damn metres,  
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,  
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,...



- His abrupt categorical trashing of “Miranda” (Margaret Fuller):

But here comes Miranda. Zeus! where shall I flee to?  
She has such a *penchant* for bothering me, too!  
She always keeps asking if I don't observe a  
Particular likeness 'twixt her and Minerva.

...  
She will take an old notion and make it her own,  
By saying it o'er in her sibylline tone;  
Or persuade you 't is something tremendously deep,  
By repeating it so as to put you to sleep;  
And she may well defy any mortal to see through it,  
When once she has mixed up her infinite *me* through it.

...  
Here Miranda came up and said: Phœbus, you know  
That the infinite soul has its infinite woe,  
As I ought to know, having lived cheek by jowl,  
Since the day I was born, with the infinite soul.

- His dismissal of [Waldo Emerson](#) as a man who worships himself in place of God:

All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got  
To I don't (nor do they either) exactly know what;  
For though he builds glorious temples, 't is odd  
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.  
'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me  
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,  
In whose mind all creation is duly respected  
As parts of himself — just a little projected;  
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,  
A convert to — nothing but Emerson.

- His dismissal of [Henry Thoreau](#) as a low-rent [Waldo](#) clone:

There comes [Thoreau], for instance; to see him's rare sport,  
Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;  
How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,  
To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace!  
He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,  
His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.  
Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,  
Can't you let neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?  
Besides 't is no use, you'll not find e'en a core,—  
\_\_\_\_\_ has picked up all the windfalls before.

10. The year 1848 was to be, according to his biographers, his *annus mirabilis*, for in the course of the year a total of four volumes would see publication: not only his A FABLE FOR CRITICS but also his POEMS: SECOND SERIES, his THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL, and the first series of THE BIGELOW PAPERS. In one of these volumes he managed to accurately anticipate, some 14 years in advance, what would be Emerson's attitude toward the Civil War:

Ez fer the war, I go agin it,—  
I mean to say I kind o' du,—  
Thet is, I mean thet, bein' in it,  
The best way wuz to fight it thru;  
Not but wut abstract war is horrid,  
I sign to thet with all my heart,—  
But civlyzation **doos** git forrid  
Sometimes upon a powder-cart.



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READER! walk up at once (it will soon be too late) and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate

A  
FABLE FOR CRITICS:  
OR, BETTER,

*(I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,  
an old-fashioned title-page,  
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents)*

A GLANCE

AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES  
*(Mrs. Malaprop's word)*

FROM  
THE TUB OF DIOGENES;  
A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,  
THAT IS,  
A SERIES OF JOKES  
BY A WONDERFUL QUIZ

*who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and  
grace, on the top of the tub.*



“There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,  
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,  
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse the Lord knows,  
Is some of it pr— No, ’t is not even prose;  
I’m speaking of metres; some poems have welled  
From those rare depths of soul that have ne’er been excelled;  
They’re not epics, but that does n’t matter a pin,  
In creating, the only hard thing’s to begin;  
A grass-blade’s no easier to make than an oak,  
If you’ve once found the way, you’ve achieved the grand stroke;  
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,  
But thrown in a heap with a crush and a clatter;  
Now it is not one thing nor another alone  
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,  
The something pervading, uniting the whole,  
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,  
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you  
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;  
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves, singly perfect may be,  
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don’t make a tree.

“But, to come back to Emerson, (whom by the way,  
I believe we left waiting,) — his is, we may say,  
A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range  
Has Olympus for one pole, for t’ other the Exchange;  
He seems, to my thinking, (although I’m afraid  
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made,)  
A Plotinus-Montaigne, where the Egyptian’s gold mist  
And the Gascon’s shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;  
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he’s got  
To I don’t (nor they either) exactly know what;  
For though he builds glorious temples, ’t is odd  
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.  
’T is refreshing to old-fashioned people like me,  
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,  
In whose mind all creation is duly respected  
As parts of himself — just a little projected;  
And who’s willing to worship the stars and the sun,  
A convert to — nothing but Emerson.  
So perfect a balance there is in his head,  
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;  
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,  
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,  
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,  
Of such vast extent that our earth’s a mere dab in it;  
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,  
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer;  
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,  
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,  
With the quiet precision of science he’ll sort ’em,  
But you can’t help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*.

“There are persons, mole-blind to the soul’s make and style,  
Who insist on a likeness ’twixt him and Carlyle;  
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,  
Carlyle’s the more burly, but E. is the rarer;  
He sees fewer objects, but clearer, truelier,  
If C.’s as original, E.’s more peculiar;  
That he’s more of a man you might say of the one,  
Of the other he’s more of an Emerson;  
C.’s the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb, —  
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;  
The one’s two-thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,  
Where the one’s most abounding, the other’s to seek;  
C.’s generals require to be seen in the mass, —

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E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;  
 C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,  
 And rims common-sense things with mystical hues, —  
 E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,  
 And looks coolly around him with sharp common sense;  
 C. shows you how every-day matters unite  
 With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night, —  
 While E., in a plain, preternatural way,  
 Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;  
 C. draws all his characters quite *à la* Fuseli, —  
 Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,  
 He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse  
 They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;  
 E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and severe,  
 And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear; —  
 To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords  
 The design of a white marble statue in words.  
 C. labors to get at the centre, and then  
 Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;  
 E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,  
 And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

“He has imitators in scores, who omit  
 No part of the man but his wisdom and wit, —  
 Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,  
 And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;  
 If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is  
 Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,  
 As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,  
 While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

“There comes, for instance; to see him's rare sport,  
 Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;  
 How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,  
 To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace  
 He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,  
 His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.  
 Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,  
 Can't you let neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?  
 Besides, 't is no use, you'll not find e'en a core, —  
 E. has picked up all the windfalls before.  
 They might strip every tree, and E. never would catch 'em,  
 His Hesperides have no rude dragon to watch 'em  
 When they send him a dishfull, and ask him to try 'em,  
 He never suspects how the sly rogues came by 'em;  
 He wonders why 't is there are none such his trees on,  
 And thinks 'em the best he has tasted this season.



Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,  
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,  
With the Parthenon nigh, and the olive-trees o'er him,  
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,  
With a snug room at Plato's, when night comes, to walk to,  
And people from morning till midnight to talk to,  
And from midnight till morning, nor snore in their listening;  
So he muses, his face with the joy of it glistening,  
For his highest conceit of a happiest state is  
Where they'd live upon acorns, and hear him talk gratis;  
And indeed, I believe, no man ever talked better —  
Each sentence hangs perfectly poised to a letter  
He seems piling words, but there's royal dust hid  
In the heart of each sky-piercing pyramid.  
While he talks he is great, but goes out like a taper,  
If you shut him up closely with pen, ink, and paper;  
Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morning till night,  
And he thinks he does wrong if he don't always write;  
In this, as in all things, a lamb among men,  
He goes to sure death when he goes to his pen.

The famous “Water Celebration” on Boston Common, as the first of Loammi Baldwin III’s upland water reached the Boston metropolitan area from the new Cochituate System. A jet of Lake Cochituate water rose from the fountain in [Boston](#)’s Frog Pond. For the next two generations Boston would have an adequate supply of clean water.<sup>11</sup>

[James Pierson Beckwourth](#) and his party of travelers arrived at Los Angeles, California. From there they would continue north to Monterey, which at the time was the capital of California. Jim would take on a job as a courier for a ranch near the present-day city of Santa Maria, north of Los Angeles. On his way there he would come across the remains of a massacre, of the Reed family who had been living in the old Mission of San Miguel, and would lead a posse that would apprehend the murderers.

Niles’ Register published an account of the Women’s Rights Convention that had occurred in Rochester, New York:

### WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.

A Convention appointed to be held in Rochester, (N.Y.) to advocate Women's Rights, was organized some weeks ago, in that city in the Unitarian Church. There was quite a respectable attendance, the body of the church being pretty well filled, mostly with females, some of whom seemed to have deeply at heart the professed objects of the meeting, but many more seemed to be drawn thither by motives of curiosity. Soon after the appointed hour the committee (all ladies) reported the following list of officers, who were duly appointed

- Mrs. ABIGAIL BUSH, President.
- Mrs. LAURA MURRAY, Vice President.
- Mrs. CATHARINE A. T. STEBBENS, }
- Mrs. SARAH L. HALLOWELL,                    }Sec'taries.
- Mrs. MARY H. HALLOWELL,                    }

11. These Framingham MA reservoirs have not been tapped by Boston since 1931. Pollution forced the metropolis to turn first to the Wachusett Reservoir, and then to the Quabban Reservoir some 65 miles inland. The Sudbury Reservoirs are, however, on a standby basis to be utilized in times of emergency, after heavy chlorination.



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The officers being appointed, Mr. William C. Nell proposed to read an essay upon Woman's Rights, but the President said it was not then in order to do so, and one of the Secretaries commenced reading the minutes of the preliminary meeting, but in so low a tone that she could not be heard by only a few {sic}, when a gentleman in a remote part of the house said the proceedings, to be made interesting, should be understood by all. After one or two more interruptions, Lucretia Mott, who was present, said it was not a fitting excuse for a woman to make that her voice could not be heard. The call for the Secretary to read louder was right, and, with sufficient practice, women could and would make themselves heard in a public assembly. Finally, Mrs. Burtis read the minutes, and they were adopted.

The President then called upon Mr. Nell to read his essay, which he did. After the reading, Lucretia Mott stated her objections to a portion of the paper read. She did not believe in holding up woman as a superior to man, because it was untrue -- she was only an equal. When invested with power woman as well as man was tyrannical. Mr. Nell briefly replied.

A letter was read from Gerritt Smith, assigning his bodily infirmities and private business as reasons for his non-attendance, but concurring in the objects sought to be accomplished.

Mrs. Elizabeth Stanton {Elizabeth Cady Stanton}, of Seneca Falls, read the declaration adopted at the meeting held in that village, and the discussion of this document appeared to be the principal business of the forenoon session. The President having called for remarks for and against the sentiments it embodied, one gentleman said his objection was that there was too much truth in it! Mr. Burtis approved of the declaration, and was glad to see the women asserting their rights. Mr. Colton, of New Haven, briefly stated his objections, which appeared to be of a general nature.

Lucretia Mott wished to know what the speaker considered the proper sphere of woman. It was not strange that he thought she should not be in the pulpit, he having been educated in New Haven, Connecticut. He should read his Bible again, as he may have pinned his faith upon the sleeve of some minister.

W.C. Bloss, Esq. made some very humorous remarks, which were received with much applause. He then went on to show the different tastes of male and female children, and inquired whether these were not in accordance with the instincts of nature.

Mrs. Sanford, of Michigan, made a forcible and eloquent address, in which she contended for the right of women to exercise the elective franchise, and their eligibility to office. It might, she said, be for women to break the bands of slavery, and she urged them to nerve for the effort. One of the consequences of the proposed enfranchisement of women would be less extravagance and waste in dress -- fashion would be neglected. They could be as daughters, as wives, and as mothers, dutiful, gentle, and submissive, even if we hang the domestic wreath upon the eagle's talons! Her remarks called forth considerable applause.

At the suggestion of Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth McClintock read a poetical composition, by Mrs. Chapman, of Boston.

Mr. Cutting objected to that part of the declaration which held out the idea that voting was the first right of women. He regarded education as the first right, and it was the peculiar



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province of women to teach. If mothers teach their sons, wives their husbands, and sisters their brothers, how to vote, it was all the same as though they voted themselves.

Mr. Sanford deprecated the occupation of so much time by the men. He hoped the ladies would assert their rights.

Frederick Douglass went for equal rights of all classes, without regard to sex. After he had finished, the Convention adjourned till two o'clock P.M.

When we went in at the afternoon session the house was crowded, and Mrs. Owen was reading a report.

Several resolutions were adopted, of which the following was one "That, as obedience and submission to the husband is taught and enjoined in the marriage service, we will hereafter use our endeavors to have such a law entirely abrogated."

Lucretia Mott objected to them, as being too milk and water. She was not only for declaring, but for taking and maintaining her rights, and something more than these tame resolutions was necessary. In the course of her remarks, Lucretia said she was not a theologian, but yet she believed that people were as much inspired now as in former times.

Mrs. Roberts made a report in relation to the condition of females who are employed as seamstresses in the city, setting forth the hardships under which they labor, &c. She said they were compelled to work fourteen or fifteen hours a day to earn from thirty-one to thirty-eight cents; that they seldom earned fifty cents, or, if they did, it was by the most extreme exertion. It appeared that those who can endure the most are only able to save some fifty cents per week beyond their board. Mrs. Stanton offered another resolution, asserting that it is duty of those who believe females are oppressed in their wages to pay them better prices.

Lucretia Mott thought little good would be done by efforts to improve the physical condition of woman. The axe must be laid to the root of the corrupt tree. A radical change must be effected in her civil condition before much improvement would be visible. "Overturn, overture {sic}, overturn," must be the motto, until these changes are effected, until all classes are levelled to the same common platform of equality. A slave, however treated, cannot be materially bettered until made free. It is the nature of slavery to debase. Just so it is with women; and, so long as the present usages of society prevailed, nothing would be done by passing resolutions.

Mrs. Stanton offered another resolution, asserting that it is the duty of women, whatever their complexion, to assume as soon as possible their true position of equality, in the social circle, in church and in State.

Other resolutions were also offered, when Mrs. Owen proposed the appointment of a committee to form a society for redressing the wrongs and hardships of laboring females, but Lucretia Mott thought this was foreign to the objects of the Convention.

This has been a remarkable Convention. It was composed of those holding to some one of the various "isms" of the day, and some, we should think, who embraced them all. The only practical good proposed -- the adoption of measures for the relief and amelioration of females -- was almost scouted by the leading ones composing the meeting. The great effort seemed to be to bring out some few, impracticable, absurd, and ridiculous propositions, and the greater their absurdity the better. In



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short, it was a regular "emeute" of a congregation of females, gathered from various quarters, who seem to be really in earnest in their aim at revolution, and who evince entire confidence that "the day of their deliverance" is at hand. Verily, this is a "progressive" era. -- "Rochester Democrat."

November: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) visited [Providence, Rhode Island](#) again to do some more wooing of the eligible widow [Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#), wooing which clearly failed in its result because the poet then traveled by train to Boston, the town of his birth, and with a bottle of [laudanum](#) either attempted suicide or made a suicide gesture.



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Winter: Moses Ely Ring departed with other men of Rhinebeck, New York in a joint overland expedition to the gold fields of California.

[Edgar Allan Poe](#) chose to be offended, or to appear to be offended, by James Russell Lowell's A FABLE FOR CRITICS:

There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,  
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,  
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,  
In a way to make people of common-sense damn metres,  
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,  
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,...

[James Pierson Beckwourth](#) near Los Angeles had also been unable to resist temptation (he seems never to have been able to resist temptation!), and had gone off to open a store in Sonoma. He would soon sell out, however, and relocate to Sacramento to get his living on the gold dust bags of the panners, as a professional gambler.



December: [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s suicide attempt or gesture with the bottle of [laudanum](#) evidently had a desirable effect, for, taking the "temperance pledge," he and his Helen of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) ([Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#)) became engaged to be wed. Poe delivered his lecture "The Poetic Principle." Fearing that their funded widow was in the clutches of a fortune hunter, the family was transferring all of Helen's assets into the name of her mother, and the marriage plans would collapse between Christmas and the turn of the new year. The legacy of this episode is that if you visit the Providence Athenaeum at 251 Benefit Street, you can see not only a Poe daguerreotype but also a portrait of Sarah.



1849

The 1st known use of the term that would be popularized by Warren Harding's "Return to Normalcy" campaign slogan: "normalcy" appeared in [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s poem "Eureka." During this year Poe learned that a childhood sweetheart, Mrs. Sarah Elmira Royster, his "lost Lenore, nameless here forevermore," had become a widow, and so he went to Richmond VA and proposed and was accepted. After two months there, however, he would need to go to Philadelphia for a business engagement and in [Baltimore](#) along the way, after six days of [drunkenness](#) (or [rabies](#)) and four days of delirium, he would die.

From this year into 1851, a new temper of the [temperance](#) movement would become apparent during a tour of the United States of America by Father Theobald Mathew of Ireland. This missionary evangelist for abstinence would be administering a pledge of total abstinence in 25 states, to some 600,000 persons. There would be a White House dinner and a Senate reception to stamp official approval upon his visit. Thus would temperance drift into a new phase, with its ardent spokesman Congressman Gerrit Smith crying that:

I would that no person were able to drink intoxicating liquors without immediately becoming a drunkard. For, who, then would ... drink the poison that always kills, or jump into the fire that always burns?

It would be in this totalizing atmosphere that the first prohibition experiments would be being undertaken on a statewide basis. "Until the liquor traffic is abolished ... all efforts at moral reform must languish," one of the earliest prohibitionists would opine. In "Grappling with the Monster," T.S. Arthur would assert:

"The CURSE is upon us, and there is but one CURE: Total Abstinence, by the help of God, for the Individual, and Prohibition for the State."



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

March: In the Southern Literary Messenger: devoted to every department of literature and the fine arts (Volume 15, Issue 3, pages 189-91), [Edgar Allan Poe](#) responded summarily to James Russell Lowell's A FABLE FOR CRITICS.

There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,  
 Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,  
 Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,  
 In a way to make people of common-sense damn metres,  
 Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,  
 But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,...

### DEROGATION OF A FABLE

Spring: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) paid another visit to friends in Lowell, Massachusetts such as Mrs. Nancy Locke Heywood Richmond. While in town this time he passed a bad check that would make it impossible for him to return.



September 28, Friday: [Jenny Lind](#) sang at [Boston](#)'s Tremont Temple. One gentleman had paid \$625 to have his choice of seat.

Having taken a boat at Richmond on the previous day, [Edgar Allan Poe](#) arrived in [Baltimore, Maryland](#) (and, for a few days, we lose track of his whereabouts and goings-on).

October 3, Monday: On his way to an editing job in Philadelphia, [Edgar Allan Poe](#) had gotten off the train in [Baltimore, Maryland](#). On this wet and chilly day he announced the weather as "a real breeder of suicides." At some point, his friend, the editor Joseph E. Snodgrass, received a note: "There is a gentleman, rather the worse for wear, at Ryan's . . . who appears in great distress, & says he is acquainted with you." He had been found lying unconscious in the street and carried into Ryan's tavern, and was still in a state of "beastly intoxication" and incoherent<sup>12</sup> when Snodgrass arrived.

October 6, Thursday: [Edgar Allan Poe](#) had been mumbling for days in a [Baltimore, Maryland](#) hospital bed about his "degradation," and had asked one of the doctors to "blow out his brains." All day this day he raved.

12. For many years it has been believed that Poe died of complications of alcoholism or drug abuse. However, in an article in the September 1996 issue of the Maryland Medical Journal, [Dr. R. Michael Benitez](#) has pointed out that Poe's recorded symptoms – delirium with tremors and hallucinations, followed by a coma, followed by a calm and lucid period, followed by another delirium in which the patient became combative and required restraint – are uncharacteristic of alcoholism, and that the patient had in fact been abstaining for the six months prior to his death. The symptoms recorded, this diagnostician pointed out, were rather more consistent with encephalitic infection by the [rabies virus \*Rhabdoviridus\*](#).



## EDGAR ALLAN POE

## EDGAR POE

October 7 (?), Friday: At some point during the morning [Edgar Allan Poe](#) became too exhausted to continue his raving, sank back into his hospital bed in [Baltimore, Maryland](#) murmuring “Lord help my poor soul,” and died.

The brig *St. John*, full of Irish families fleeing the Irish Potato Famine, hit the Grampus rock and broke up off Cohasset.

*A just man's purpose cannot be split on any Grampus.*

Lord, help their poor souls.

## Famous Last Words:



"What school is more profitably instructive than the death-bed of the righteous, impressing the understanding with a convincing evidence, that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, but solid substantial truth."

— A COLLECTION OF MEMORIALS CONCERNING DECEASED MINISTERS, Philadelphia, 1787



**"The death bed scenes & observations even of the best & wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life — to subject their whole lives to their will as he who said he might give a sign if he were conscious after his head was cut off — but he gave no sign Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows."**

**—Thoreau's JOURNAL, March 12, 1853**

1836	<a href="#">James Madison</a>	unsolicited comment	<i>"I always talk better lying down."</i>
1846	Benjamin Robert Haydon	final entry in 38-year journal before offing himself	<i>"Stretch me no longer on this tough world. — Lear"</i>
1848	John Quincy Adams	had just voted "no" on war on Mexico	<i>"This is the last of earth. I am composed."</i>
1849	Washington Goode	offered a cup of water before being hanged in Boston	<i>"This is the last Cochituate water that I shall ever drink."</i>
1849	Edgar Allan Poe	in bad shape in Baltimore	<i>"Lord help my poor soul."</i>
1850	John Caldwell Calhoun	unsolicited comment	<i>"The South! The poor South! God knows what will become of her."</i>
<i>... other famous last words ...</i>			

October 9, Sunday: [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s literary executor Rufus Griswold authored a newspaper obit attacking him as the body of the former poet was being deposited in an unmarked grave in [Baltimore](#).

1850

April 20: Daniel Chester French was born in Exeter, New Hampshire. Note that this infant would grow up to be America's fave sculptor, and would live in [Concord](#) and over the years produce rendition after rendition of illustrious Concord residents such as [Waldo Emerson](#), Bronson Alcott, and [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), and of various gents of the Hoar persuasion (Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, Sherman Hoar, George Frisbie Hoar), as well as of general literary lions such as [James Elliot Cabot](#), [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#), [Washington Irving](#), [Edgar Allan Poe](#), and James Russell Lowell. –Why then would such a server of society's legitimated ones never ever attempt even a rough study of Concord's [Henry Thoreau](#)?

Well, one response might be that he had never encountered [Henry Thoreau](#). But then he never had encountered the Reverend John Harvard, either, and a little detail like that did not prevent him from being the sculptor who would produce the “Three Lies” statue outside [Harvard College](#)'s administration building!<sup>13</sup>



On the previous day, the Boston [Daily News](#) reported, “the populations of these towns [[Lexington](#) and [Concord](#) had] turned out literally en masse, added to which the thousands from the cities of [Boston](#) and Lowell MA, swelled the multitude present to a very numerous gathering,” to commemorate a dustup between local militia units and the regular army which had occurred on April 19, 1774.

13. Although the inscription on this 1884 statue lists the seated figure as the “founder” of [Harvard College](#), actually he had not been. After his death and apparently without his instruction, his widow had made one of the early bequests. Although the inscription asserts that Harvard College was founded in 1638, actually it had been founded in 1636. Daniel Chester French was a member of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology class of 1871 and student French's buddy Sherman Hoar, who actually served as the model for this statue, may likewise have been an MIT student.

## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

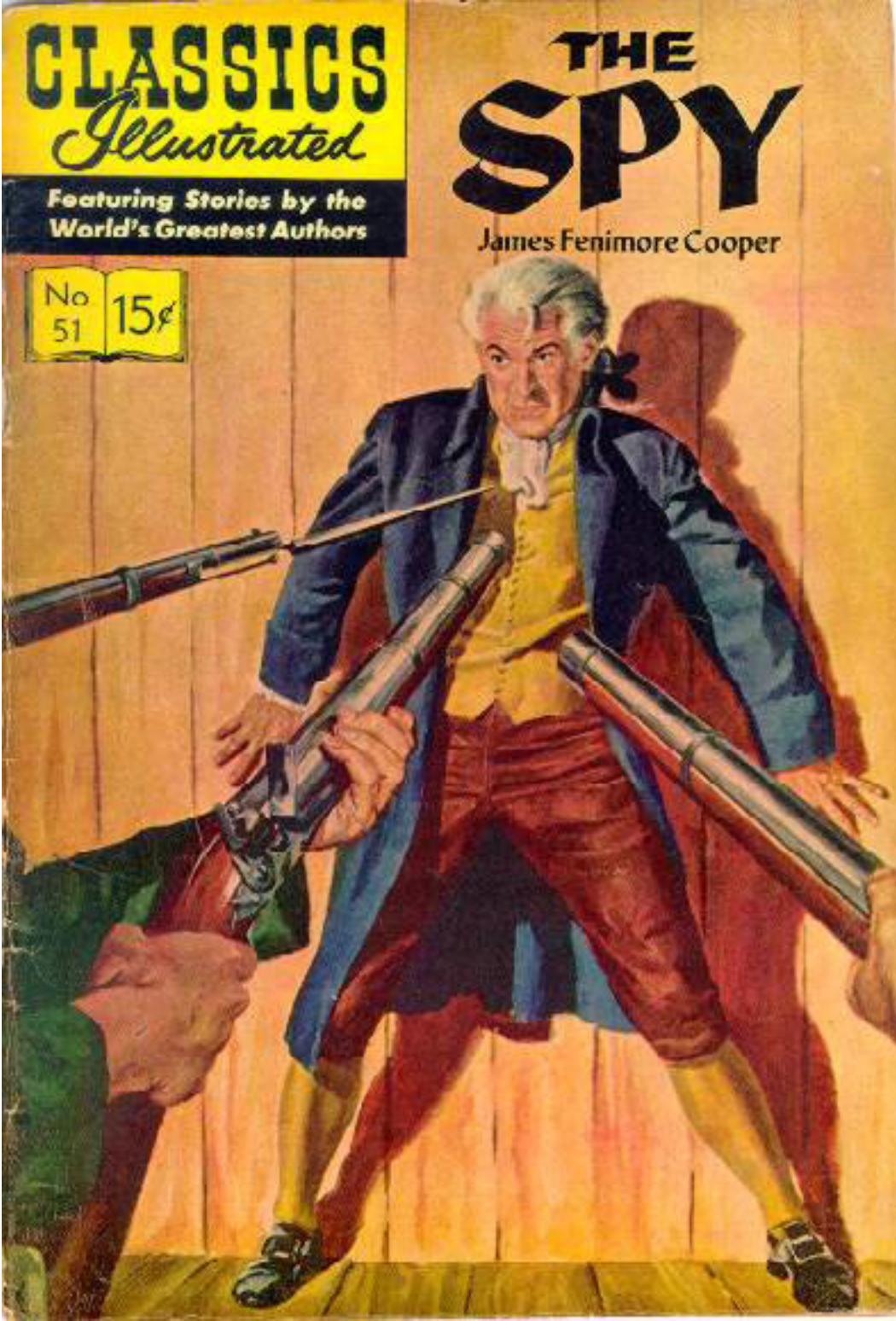
June: [George Robins Gliddon](#) was unwrapping a mummy in an ancient sycamore coffin for an audience at the Tremont Temple in Boston. The unwrapping required a total of three evenings, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The mummy had been advertised to be the body of a young female and some famous Boston names actually sat around for all three evenings during this slow necrotic strip tease, paying \$5 each<sup>14</sup> — but the body that was eventually revealed turned out to have a “thing,” to be definitely that of a male. Gliddon blamed the mix-up on sloppy hieroglyphic writing by the painter of the ancient coffin. [Edgar Allan Poe](#) would write that they had found the name of the mummy to be “*Allamistakeo*.”



1852

[James Fenimore Cooper](#)'s AFLOAT AND ASHORE, THE BRAVE, CHAINBEARER, CRATER, HEADSMAN, HEIDENMAUER, HOME AS FOUND, HOMEWARD BOUND, JACK TIER, LIONEL LINCOLN, MEMORIAL OF J.F. COOPER, MERCEDES OF CASTILE, MILES WALLINGFORD, MONIKINS, OAK-OPENINGS, THE PATHFINDER, THE PILOT, PIONEERS, THE PRAIRIE, PRECAUTION, REDSKINS, SATANSTOE, SEA LIONS, THE SPY, TRAVELING BACHELOR, TWO ADMIRALS, THE WATER-WITCH, WEPT OF WISH-TON-WISH, WING-AND-WING, and WYANDOTTE. [Edgar Allan Poe](#)'s TALES OF MYSTERY were posthumously published. On the more serious side, E. Monnegut's MARGARET FULLER was published in Paris, and Margaret Fuller Ossoli's heavily censored MEMOIRS were issued in Boston in two volumes, and John Henry Newman issued his THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY. Also, Professor [Victor Cousin](#)'s COURS D'HISTOIRE DE LA PHILOSOPHIE MODERNE appeared in an English version.

14. Five bucks was something slightly less than a laboring man's weekly wage. To us this sitting around for three evenings may sound about as interesting as watching paint dry, but there you have the long 19th Century.



HDT

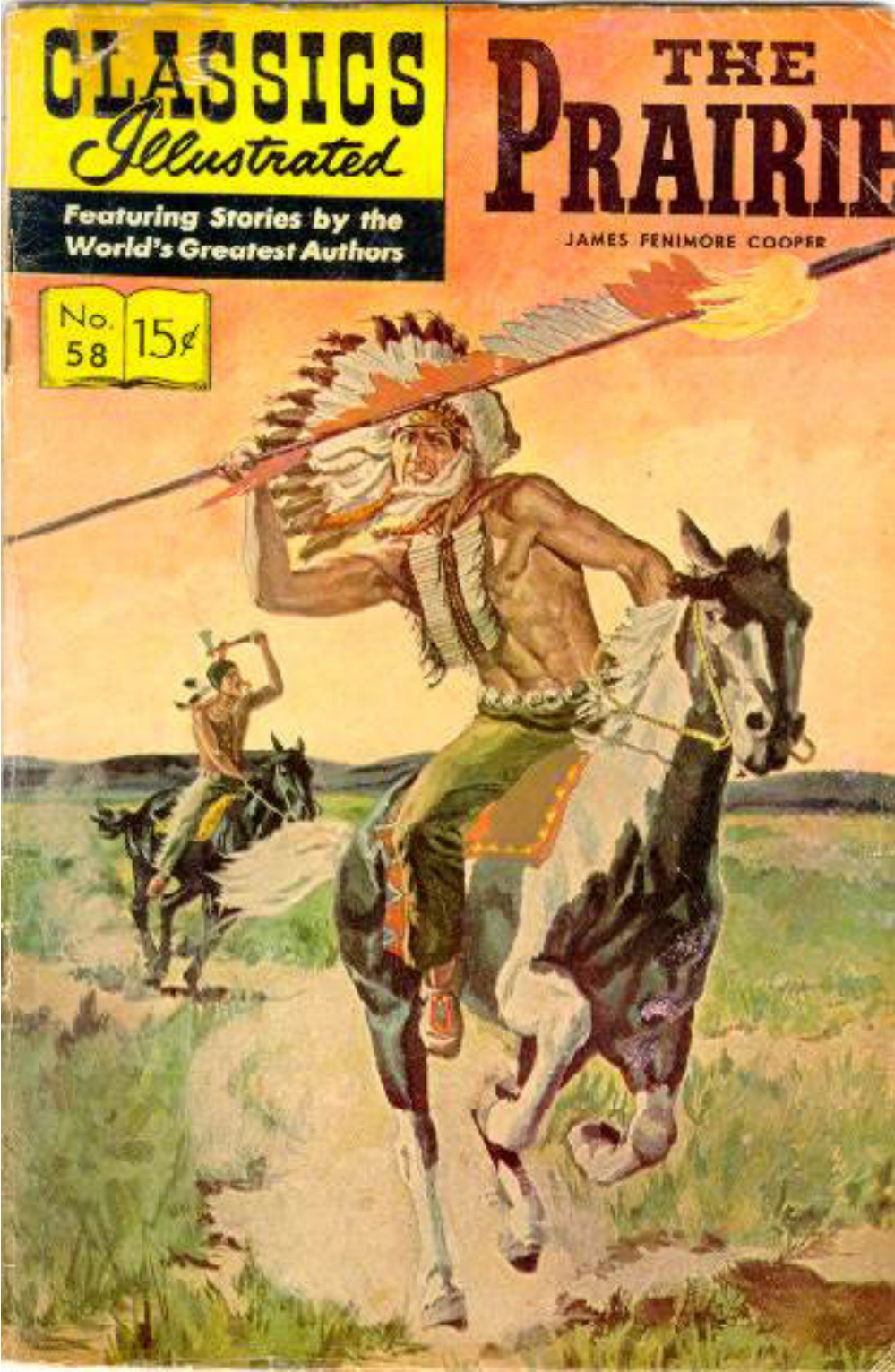
WHAT?

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1860

[Friend Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#)'s EDGAR POE AND HIS CRITICS.

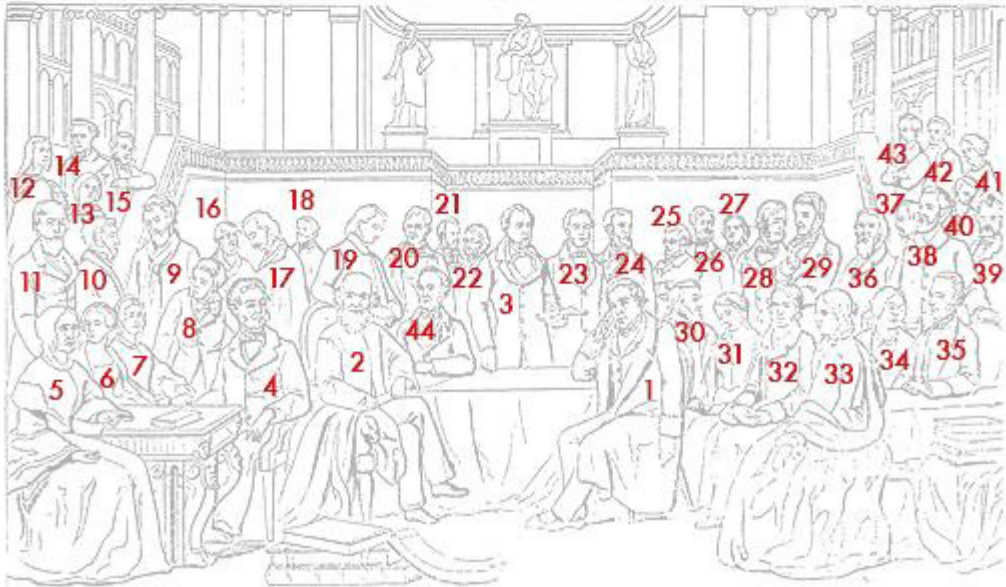
EDGAR ALLAN POE



The lady was not one of his critics.

1866

Thomas Hicks painted his “Authors of the United States” as a name-dropping set piece to show off various of the portraits of prominent personages he had painted at his studio in New-York. We have no idea as to the present whereabouts of the original of this, but an engraving of it was made by A.H. Ritchie. We note that the statues on the upper balcony are of course of founding literary giants [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#), [William Shakespeare](#), and [Dante Alighieri](#). [Henry Thoreau](#) is of course as always not noticeably absent, since he would not emerge into his present renown until well into the 20th Century.





## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

The personages depicted are 1=[Washington Irving](#) 2=[William Cullen Bryant](#) 3=[James Fenimore Cooper](#) 4=[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#) 5=Miss Sedgwick 6=Mrs. [Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney](#) 7=Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth 8=Mitchell 9=Nathaniel Parker Willis 10=Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. 11=Kennedy 12=Mrs. Mowatt Ritchie 13=Alice Carey 14=Prentice 15=G.W. Kendall 16=Morris 17=[Edgar Allan Poe](#) 18=Frederick Goddard Tuckerman 19=[Nathaniel Hawthorne](#) 20=Simms 21=P. Pendelton Cooke 22=Hoffman 23=William H.Prescott 24=[George Bancroft](#) 25=Parke Godwin 26=John Lothrop Motley 27=Reverend Henry Ward Beecher 28=[George William Curtis](#) 29=[Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) 30=[Richard Henry Dana, Jr.](#) 31=Margaret Fuller, *marchesa d'Ossoli* 32=Reverend [William Ellery Channing](#) 33=Harriet Beecher Stowe 34=Mrs. Kirkland 35=Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) 36=James Russell Lowell 37=Boker 38=Bayard Taylor 39=Saxe 40=Stoddard 41=Mrs. Amelia Welby 42=Gallagher 43=Cozzens 44=Halleck.

1874

February 11: A letter from [Sarah Helen Power Whitman](#) (1803-1878) of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), to Ingram, in regard to [Edgar Allan Poe](#) and Rufus Griswold, is briefly characterized below:

Mrs. Whitman believes that Mrs. Clemm, not Poe, might have borrowed money from "a distinguished lady of South Carolina." Quotes from Poe's letter to her of November 24, 1848, explaining his conduct when Sarah Margaret Fuller and Anne C. Lynch (Botta) called on him to retrieve Frances S. Osgood's letters. Relates a visit she had from Professor Thomas Wyatt and all she knows of *THE CONCHOLOGIST'S FIRST BOOK* and Poe's part in it. Does not think Poe wrote "To Isadore," since he did not mark it in the two volumes of the Broadway Journal which he gave to her. Tells of James W. Davidson's attempts to clear Poe's name. George Eveleth is a loyal supporter of Poe and thinks Rufus Griswold fabricated the letter in which Poe is quoted as calling Eveleth "a Yankee impertinent," for Poe knew Eveleth was a Marylander and Griswold did not. Will try to recover from William F. Gill the printed account of William Gowans's recollections of Poe. Both John P. Kennedy and J.H. B.Latrobe have assured Eveleth that they and the Committee did not award the Baltimore Saturday Visitor prize to Poe for his tale under "anything like the circumstances" given by Griswold.

1875

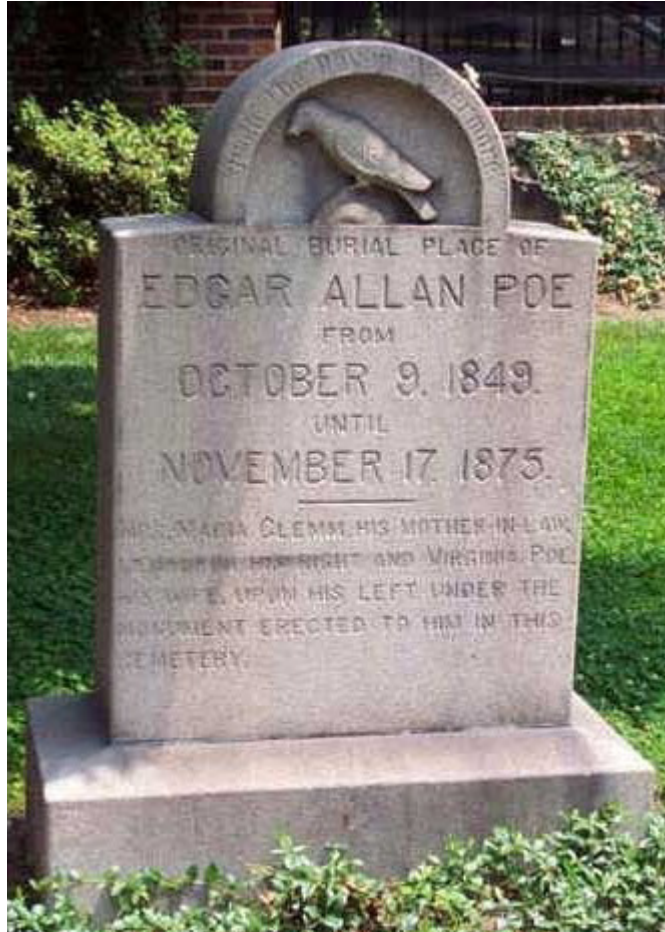
Remains presumed to be those of [Edgar Allan Poe](#) were moved from the back of Westminster Hall and Burying Ground in Baltimore, to a new grave, one with a monument.



## EDGAR POE

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

At the same time a celebratory marker was placed atop the original, originally unmarked, location:



In good humor, this stone should have been inscribed with a motto such as THIS SPACE NOW AVAILABLE.

DIGGING UP THE DEAD



November 16: Invading [Egyptian](#) forces were successfully ambushed by Abyssinian forces at Gundet.

Arthur Sullivan gave his initial performance as conductor of the Glasgow Choral Union.

A report from Walt Whitman in regard to [Edgar Allan Poe](#), with whom in his youth he had met and conversed:

## “Specimen Days”

### EDGAR POE’S SIGNIFICANCE

The following from a report in the Washington “Star” of November 16, 1875, may afford those who care for it something further of my point of view toward this interesting figure and influence of our era. There occur’d about that date in Baltimore a public reburial of Poe’s remains, and dedication of a monument over the grave:

“Being in Washington on a visit at the time, ‘the old gray’ went over to Baltimore, and though ill from paralysis, consented to hobble up and silently take a seat on the platform, but refused to make any speech, saying, ‘I have felt a strong impulse to come over and be here to-day myself in memory of Poe, which I have obey’d, but not the slightest impulse to make a speech, which, my dear friends, must also be obeyed.’ In an informal circle, however, in conversation after the ceremonies, Whitman said: ‘For a long while, and until lately, I had a distaste for Poe’s writings. I wanted, and still want for poetry, the clear sun shining, and fresh air blowing — the strength and power of health, not of delirium, even amid the stormiest passions — with always the background of the eternal moralities. Non-complying [Page 874] with these requirements, Poe’s genius has yet conquer’d a special recognition for itself, and I too have come to fully admit it, and appreciate it and him.

“In a dream I once had, I saw a vessel on the sea, at midnight, in a storm. It was no great full-rigg’d ship, nor majestic steamer, steering firmly through the gale, but seem’d one of those superb little schooner yachts I had often seen lying anchor’d, rocking so jauntily, in the waters around New York, or up Long Island sound — now flying uncontroll’d with torn sails and broken spars through the wild sleet and winds and waves of the night. On the deck was a slender, slight, beautiful figure, a dim man, apparently enjoying all the terror, the murk, and the dislocation of which he was the centre and the victim. That figure of my lurid dream might stand for Edgar Poe, his spirit, his fortunes, and his poems — themselves all lurid dreams.”

Much more may be said, but I most desired to exploit the idea put at the beginning. By its popular poets the calibres of an age, the weak spots of its embankments, its sub-currents, (often more significant than the biggest surface ones,) are unerringly indicated. The lush and the weird that have taken such extraordinary possession of Nineteenth century verse-lovers — what mean they? The inevitable tendency of poetic culture to morbidity, abnormal beauty — the sickliness of all technical thought or refinement in itself — the abnegation of the perennial and democratic concretes at first hand, the body, the earth and sea, sex and the like — and the substitution of something for them at second or third hand — what bearings have they on current pathological study?

1922

Electric vacuum cleaners were used in the White House for the 1st time.

President Warren G. Harding has a radio set installed in a bookcase in his study on the 2d floor of the White House.<sup>15</sup>

Daniel Chester French's seated Abraham Lincoln was dedicated at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC. (In addition it was French who sculpted the standing Lincoln in Lincoln, Nebraska.)



In this year the Concord sculptor was doing a bust of [Edgar Allan Poe](#).

15. Warren Gamaliel Harding was in part of black ancestry, both on his father's side of the family and on his mother's. He was evidently one of those whose "passing for white" required them to mentally suppress all suspicions, although admittedly, from a white political perspective, he did take remarkably liberal positions in regard to racial fairness. During his period of service as President, however, 183 black Americans were lynched.



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"  
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: March 30, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT  
GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



**EDGAR ALLAN POE**

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Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

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Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.  
Arrgh.