

The Best Known Works
of
Edgar Allan Poe
in
One Volume

Poems, Tales, Essays, Criticisms
with New Notes

Special Biographical Introduction
by
Hervey Allen

Author of
"Israfel," the Life of Poe



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Introduction

UP UNTIL within recent years the biography of Poe has been one of the most obscure and controversial in the field of American letters. The careful labors of various scholars, and the bringing to light of new evidence from time to time, due to research and fortunate accidents during the elapse of years, has now made it possible to reconstruct with a more less final degree of accuracy the main events in the life of one of the few figures in American literature who has attained a niche in the hall of international fame. As far as the events and the calendar facts of the poet's life are concerned, there is no excuse any longer to speak of the "Poe mystery." The enigma, if any, which continues to cling to the name of Edgar Allan Poe is to be found in the character of the man rather than in the facts of his mortal journey.

To the reader of these and the following pages who may become interested in the fascinating, and withal strange character of Poe himself, the satisfaction of curiosity must be found to a large degree elsewhere, in the historical, literary, critical, and psychological commentaries which have gradually gathered about the poet's name. But the main interest in any writer whose works remain alive, must of necessity be most legitimately centered in what he wrote. Biographical and bibliographical, even psychological comment is necessarily secondary.

The most essential thing then is to have available a conveniently arranged,

accurately edited, and complete text of his work, with an introduction containing the pertinent and definitely ascertained facts about the life of the author in the light of the most recent research available. If to these facts a few critical remarks, not open to reasonable objection be added, in order to aid the generally intelligent reader to a more immediate and yet primary approach, and if the whole work be permanently bound in a single pleasant volume, the publisher may be considered to have rendered a valuable and a practical service.

Such is the ideal of the present edition of the Works of Edgar Allan Poe. In the case of Poe, indeed, such a service is peculiarly necessary and timely. There are available many excellent and well edited editions of *various collections* of his work both in prose and poetry, but a reasonably complete edition of his work in all fields bound in one volume has been up until the present time entirely unavailable to the public. To remedy this somewhat scandalous state of affairs, one that has recently been justly complained of by an eminent English critic, is the *raison d'être* of this book. Considerable expense, research, and justifiable enthusiasm has gone into its preparation. The introduction will, as outlined above, confine itself almost exclusively to biographical facts. To these we can now proceed:

Edgar Allan Poe was born at 33 Hollis Street, Boston, Mass., on January 19, 1809, the son of poverty stricken

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actors, David, and Elizabeth (born Arnold) Poe. His parents were then filling an engagement in a Boston theatre, and the appearances of both, together with their sojourns in various places during their wandering careers, are to be plainly traced in the play bills of the time.

Paternal Ancestry

The father of the poet was one David Poe of Baltimore, Maryland, who had left the study of the law in that city to take up a stage career contrary to the desire of his family. The Poes had settled in America some two or three generations prior to the birth of Edgar. Their line is distinctly traced back to Dring in the Parish of Kildallen, County Cavan, Ireland, and thence into the Parish of Fenwick in Ayrshire, Scotland. Hence they derived from Scotch-Irish stock, with what trace of the Celtic is doubtful. The first Poes came to America about 1739. The immediate paternal ancestors of the poet landed at Newcastle, Delaware, in 1748 or a little earlier. These were John Poe and his wife Jane McBride Poe who went to settle in eastern Pennsylvania. This couple had ten children in their family, among them one David who was the grandfather of the poet. David Poe married Elizabeth Cairnes, also of Scotch-Irish ancestry, then living in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, whence, sometime prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution they moved to Baltimore, Maryland.

David Poe and his wife, Elizabeth Cairnes Poe, took the patriot side in the Revolution. David was active in driving the Tories out of Baltimore and

was appointed "Assistant Deputy Quartermaster," which meant that he was a local purchasing agent of military supplies for the Revolutionary Army. He is said to have been of considerable aid to Lafayette during the Virginia and Southern campaigns, and for this patriotic activity he received the courtesy title of "General." His wife Elizabeth took an active part in making clothes for the Continental Army. David and Elizabeth Poe (Sr.) had seven children David, the eldest son, becoming the father of the poet. Two sisters of David, Eliza Poe (afterward Mrs. Henry Herring) and Maria Poe (later Mrs. William Clemm) enter into the story of the poet's life, the latter particularly, as she became his mother-in-law in addition to being his aunt. With her he lived from 1835 to 1849.

Young David Poe was destined for the law, but as previously mentioned, he finally left his native city to go on the stage. His first professional appearance took place at Charleston, S. C., in December, 1803. A dramatic notice of this performance in a local paper describes David Poe as being extremely diffident while—

" . . . His voice seems to be clear, melodious and variable; what its compass may be can only be shown when he acts unrestrained by timidity. His enunciation seemed to be very distinct and articulate; and his face and person are much in his favor. His size is of that pitch well fitted for general action if his talents should be suited to sock and buskin. . . ." This is perhaps the only direct evidence extant of the physical appearance of the poet's father. No pictures of him are known to exist. His histrionic powers were at best very

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limited. He continued to play in minor parts in various Southern cities and in January, 1806, married Elizabeth Arnold Hopkins, a young childless widow, also an actress, whose husband had died but a few months before. Elizabeth Arnold Poe became the mother of Edgar Allan Poe.

Maternal Ancestry

The young widow whom David Poe married in 1806 had been born in England in the spring of 1787. She was the daughter of Henry Arnold, and Elizabeth Arnold (born Smith) both actors at the Covent Garden Theatre Royal, London. Henry Arnold died apparently about 1793. His widow continued to support herself and her child by acting and singing, and in 1796, taking her young daughter with her, she came to America and landed in Boston. Mrs. Arnold continued her professional career in America at first with considerable minor success. Either immediately before, or just after arriving in the United States, however, she married a second time, one Charles Tubbs, an Englishman of minor parts and character. The couple continued to act, sing, and dance in various cities throughout the eastern seaboard and the young Miss Arnold was soon noticed on the play bills appearing in childish roles as a member of the various troupes to which her family belonged. Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs disappeared from view about 1798 but the career of Elizabeth Arnold, Poe's mother, can be traced accurately by various show bills and notices in the newspapers of the different cities in which she played until her death in 1811. It was during her

wanderings as an actress that she married C. D. Hopkins, himself an actor, in August, 1802. There were no children by this union. Hopkins died three years later, and in 1806, as previously noted, his widow was married to David Poe.

The couple continued to play together but with very minor success. They had three children. William Henry Leonard born in Boston in 1807, Edgar born in Boston in 1809, and Rosalie at Norfolk, Va., probably in December, 1810. Due to their poverty, which was always extreme, the first child, Henry, had been left in the care of his grandparents in Baltimore shortly after his birth. Edgar was born while his parents were filling an engagement at the Boston Theatre. In the summer of 1809 the Poes went to New York where David Poe either died or deserted his wife, probably the former. Mrs. Poe was left with the infant Edgar and some time afterward gave birth to a daughter. A suspicion was afterwards thrown on the paternity of this last child and on the reputation of Mrs. Poe, which played an unfortunate part in the lives of her children. It is safe to say that it was unjust.

From 1810 on, Mrs. Poe continued, although in failing health, to appear in various roles in Norfolk, Va., Charleston, S. C., and Richmond. In the winter of 1811 she was overtaken by a fatal illness and died on December 8th in circumstances of great misery and poverty at the house of a Scotch milliner in Richmond. She was buried in the churchyard of St. John's Episcopal Church in that city two days later, but not without some pious opposition.

Mrs. Poe was survived by three orphaned children. Two of these, Edgar

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and Rosalie, were with her at the time of her death and were cared for by charitable persons. Edgar, then about two years old, was taken into the home of John Allan, a Scotch merchant in fairly prosperous circumstances, while the infant Rosalie was given shelter by a Mr. and Mrs. William Mackenzie. The Allans and Mackenzies were close friends and neighbors. The children remained in these households, and the circumstances of their fostering were, as time went on, equivalent to adoption.

Frances Keeling Valentine Allan, the wife of the Scotch merchant who had given shelter to the "infant orphan Edgar Poe," was a childless woman who had been married for some years. The child Edgar appears to have been a bright and attractive little boy, and despite some reluctance on the part of Mr. Allan, he was soon ensconced as a permanent member of the household. Although there is some evidence of an attempt on the part of paternal relatives in Baltimore to assert their interest in the child, the young boy remained as the foster-son of John Allan in Richmond, where he was early put to a school kept by a Scotch dame and apparently later to one William Irwin, a local schoolmaster. There is every evidence that his early years of childhood were spent in happy and comfortable surroundings. Mrs. Allan and her maiden sister, Nancy Valentine, who resided in the same household, were peculiarly fond of their "pet." He seems, indeed, to have been somewhat overdressed and spoiled as a very little boy, a propensity on the part of the women which the foster-father tried to offset by occasional but probably well-timed severity.

In 1815 the family sailed for England on the Ship "Lothair," taking Edgar with them. After a brief stay in London they visited Scotch relatives, the Galts, Allans, and Fowlds, at Kilmarnock, Irvine, and other places about Ayrshire. A journey was made to Glasgow and then back to London in the late fall of 1815 when Edgar was sent back to Scotland at Irvine. There for a short time he attended the Grammar School. By 1816, however, he was back in London where his foster-father was endeavoring to build up a branch of his Richmond firm, Ellis and Allan, by trading in tobacco and general merchandise. The family resided at Southampton Row, Russell Square, while the young Edgar was sent to a boarding school kept by the Misses Dubourgs at 146 Sloane Street, Chelsea. He remained there until the summer of 1817. In the fall of that year he was entered at the Manor House School of the Rev. Mr. John Bransby at Stoke Newington, then a suburb of London. At this place he remained until some time in the spring of 1820 when he was withdrawn to return to America. The young Poe's memories of his five years' stay in Scotland and England were exceedingly vivid and continued to furnish him recollections for the remainder of his life. He seems to have been a precocious and somewhat lordly young gentleman. A curious and vivid reminiscence of these early school days in England remains in his story of "William Wilson." It is significant of his relations with his foster-parents that the bills for his English schooling are rendered for Master Allan. There can be little doubt that at this time Mr. Allan regarded him as a son. Other evidence is not lacking.

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John Allan's business ventures in London had been unfortunate. He returned to the United States, arriving in Richmond in August, 1820, considerably embarrassed, a condition in which his partner Charles Ellis was also involved. Assignments of real estate were eventually made to satisfy creditors. The life of the Allan family, however, continued to be comfortable. Edgar was sent to an Academy kept by William Burke, later by Joseph H. Clarke, and attended by the sons of the best families in Richmond. At school the young Poe excelled in languages, oratory, amateur theatricals, and attained a notable prowess in swimming. He appears to have attracted the attention of his masters and elders by his brilliance and to have been well liked but somewhat aloof from most of his playmates. At a very youthful age he began to write poetry, his first verses dating from his early teens. About 1823 he became intimate in the home of a schoolmate, Robert Stanard, whose mother, Jane Stith Stanard, took a tender interest in the brilliant young boy, an affection which was ardently and romantically returned. It was to this lady that Poe afterwards addressed his poem "To Helen," beginning

"Helen, thy beauty is to me"

Mrs. Stanard soon went mad and died. The tragedy was undoubtedly taken to heart by Poe to whom it came as a great blow shocking him significantly. He is said on somewhat questionable authority to have haunted her grave in the lonely cemetery by night. There is no doubt that he continued to cherish her memory as long as he lived.

Be that as it may, however, by 1824 the young poet who had been address-

ing the girls of a neighboring female academy in juvenile lyrics found himself fully embarked upon the troubled waters of a more adult life. Mrs. Stanard had died; his foster-father John Allan was in precarious financial straits; Mrs. Allan's health was rapidly failing; and there was domestic dissension of the most serious kind in the household. John Allan had from time to time indulged in extra-marital relations. Some of his natural children were then living in Richmond and the knowledge of this in one way or another seems to have become known to his wife. Her sorrow was great. During the visit of Lafayette to Richmond in 1824 young Poe, who was an officer in a cadet company, acted as an escort to the old General. This gave him a new sense of his own dignity and importance and at the same time he appears in some of his contacts about the town with more adult companions to have learned of his foster-father's mode of life. At home Edgar took the part of his mother, and a quarrel, which through various ramifications lasted for upwards of a decade, now took place between Poe and John Allan.

The situation was peculiarly exasperating to all concerned and the conflict dramatic.

Mr. Allan, it appears, had at the time of the death of Mrs. David Poe come into the possession of some of her correspondence. What was in these letters no one will ever know as they were afterwards destroyed by Mrs. Clemm at the request of Poe himself. There may have been some compromising matter in them. At any rate, in order to insure Edgar's silence as to his own affairs, Mr. Allan wrote a letter

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to William Henry Leonard Poe in Baltimore, complaining of Edgar in vague terms accusing him of ingratitude, and attacking the legitimacy of the boy's sister Rosalie. The effect of this letter, and there may have been others, was evidently very disturbing to both the sons of Elizabeth Poe. Certainly it must have drawn the lines much tighter in the Allan household in Richmond. Three years later we find Henry in Baltimore publishing a poem entitled "In a Pocket Book," which shows every indication that the doubts about his sister's legitimacy had gone home.

Rosalie Poe about this time began to show distinct signs of arrested development. She never fully matured, and though she continued to be cherished as a daughter by the Mackenzies who had first sheltered her, she remained at best a sorrowful reminder of the past to her brother Edgar. She outlived him by many years, finally dying in a charitable institution in Washington, D. C.

The death of Mrs. Stanard, the financial troubles and consequent irritability of John Allan, the disputes and counter charges in the household, and his own doubtful position there—for he had never been adopted and his dependence on charity was constantly reiterated—all of this proved an uneasy background for a young and ambitious poet. In addition there are indications that Mr. Allan as a practical Scotchman had little or no sympathy for his foster-son's ambitions in the realm of literature.

In 1825 Mr. Allan's financial straits were amply relieved by the inheritance from his uncle William Galt of a large fortune. He found himself in short, a very wealthy man. The whole scale of living of the family now changed to a

method of life consonant with their better condition. A new house of considerable pretension was purchased, and in this large and comfortable mansion, situated at Fifth and Main Streets in the City of Richmond, a round of entertainments and social functions began despite the failing health of its mistress. Poe accompanied the family to the new house. His foster-father withdrew him from Mr. Clarke's Academy and had him prepared for the University of Virginia which under the patronage of Thomas Jefferson had but recently opened its doors.

On a street nearby lived a little girl by the name of Sarah Elmira Royster. Poe frequented her parlor where they sang, and drew pictures. Elmira played the piano while Edgar accompanied her on the flute, or they walked in the gardens close at hand. Henry Poe is known to have visited his brother in Richmond about this time and to have accompanied Edgar to the Roysters. Before Edgar left for the University he was engaged to Elmira. The affair, however, was not made known to the adults of either household.

In February, 1826, Edgar A. Poe matriculated at the University of Virginia. He was then only a little more than seventeen, but his manhood may be said to have begun.

His position at the University was a precarious one. As the "son" of a wealthy man he had a great deal of credit and Poe himself was prone to live up to the reputation. On the other hand his foster-father appears even at this time to have been so alienated from his ward that he provided him with considerably less than the amount necessary to pay his way. The young

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student made a rather brilliant record in his studies but also fell in with a somewhat fast set of youths. In order to maintain his position he began to play heavily; lost, and used his credit with local shopkeepers recklessly. It is at this time also that we first hear of his drinking. The effects of a very little alcohol on Poe's constitution were devastating. He appears to have been a brilliant, but rather eccentric and decidedly nervous youth. Another cause of strain at this period was the unhappy "progress" of his love affair. Mr. and Mrs. Royster were evidently aware of the fact that young Poe was no longer regarded as an heir by his foster-father. They had, of course, soon learned of his love affair with their daughter and now brought pressure to break off the match. Poe's letters to his sweetheart were intercepted; Elmira was forbidden to write; the attentions of an eligible young bachelor, A. Barrett Shelton, were pressed upon her, and she was finally sent away for a while into safe keeping. In the meantime Mr. Allan was informed of the financial difficulties of his ward whose indebtedness is said to have totalled \$2500. His anger became extreme, and upon the return of Poe to Richmond to spend the Christmas holidays of 1826, he was advised by his guardian that he could not return to the University.

The opening weeks of 1827 were spent in Richmond in the most strained relation between young Poe and Mr. Allan. Poe's career at the University had no doubt been very unsatisfactory. On the other hand Mr. Allan's anger was implacable and extreme. He refused to pay any of his

ward's debts of honor, or any other debts, thereby reducing the proud spirit of the youngster whom he had raised as his son to despair. The young Poe was pressed by warrants. His foster-father used the opportunity to insist upon his reading law and abandoning all literary ambitions. On this rock apparently they finally split. A violent quarrel took place between them in March, 1827, at the conclusion of which the young poet dashed into the street and went to an inn whence he wrote demanding his trunk, personal belongings and clothes. Several letters passed between the two without a reconciliation being effected. Their mutual grievances were rehearsed and Poe finally concluded, despite his utter destitution, to work his way North to Boston, then the literary capital of the United States. Mr. Allan it appears tried to interfere, but his wife and her sister seem to have supplied Poe secretly with a small sum of money by means of one of the slaves before the young man set out on his travels.

Under the assumed name of Henri Le Rennét he left Richmond with one companion, Ebenezer Burling, and reached Norfolk, Va. Here Burling left him while Poe went by ship to Boston where he arrived almost penniless some time in April, 1827. He did not, as has so often been asserted, even by himself, go abroad. The dates of his known whereabouts taken from letters and documents at this time definitely preclude even the possibility of a European trip.

In Boston there is some obscure evidence that Poe attempted to support himself by writing for a newspaper. It is certain, however, that while in Boston

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during the spring and summer of 1827 he made friends with a young printer, one Calvin F. S. Thomas then newly embarked in the trade, and prevailed on him to print a volume of verse, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. The printer does not appear to have known Poe by any but an assumed name. The title page of the little volume proclaimed the work to be "By A Bostonian." The bulk of it, probably due to Poe's inability to recompense the printer, was apparently destroyed or suffered to lie in neglect. Only a few copies of it got into circulation and only two obscure notices appeared. Poe himself seems to have secured scarcely some for personal use. In the meantime the author of this unknown but now famous little volume was reduced to the greatest extremity. Totally without means and too proud or unable to appeal to Richmond, he finally as a desperate measure enlisted in the United States Army on May 26, 1827, under the assumed name of Edgar A. Perry. He was assigned to Battery "H" of the First U. S. Artillery and spent the summer of 1827 in the barracks of Fort Independence, Boston Harbor. At the end of October his regiment was ordered to Fort Moultrie, Charleston, S. C.

The ensuing two and a half years form a curious interlude in the life of a poet. Poe spent the time between November, 1827, and December, 1828, doing garrison duty as an enlisted man at Ft. Moultrie, S. C. The fort was located on Sullivan's Island at the mouth of the harbor. The young soldier had a good deal of spare time on his hands which was evidently spent in wandering along the beaches, writing poetry, and reading. His military duties

were light and wholly clerical, as he had soon been noticed by his officers better fitted for office work than for practice at the great-guns. Of this period, and of his doings and imaginings, the best record is the "Gold Bug," written many years later, but replete with exact local color and scenes. Poe's duties evidently brought him into close contact with his officers. He was steady, sober, and intelligent; and promotion ensued. We soon find him listed as an "artificer," the first step out of the ranks. He himself, however, felt that his life was being wasted and some time in 1828 correspondence was resumed with his foster-father in Richmond, the purport of which was a request for reconciliation and a return to civil life. Although Poe's letters were touching, appealing, and penitent, his guardian was obstinate and the youth remained at his post until December, 1828, when his regiment was ordered to Fortress Monroe, Virginia.

Seeing that his guardian would not consent to having him return home, he now conceived the idea of entering West Point. Some of the officers of his regiment, a surgeon in particular, became interested, and influence was brought to bear on John Allan. On January 1, 1829, Poe, still serving under the name of Perry, was promoted to Sergeant-Major of his regiment, the highest rank open to an enlisted man. His letters home became more insistent and to them were now added the prayers of Mrs. Allan, who was dying. She desired to see her "dear boy" before she expired. Strange as it may seem, John Allan remained firm until the very last. He finally sent for his foster-son, then only a few miles away from Richmond,

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but it was too late. Mrs. Allan died before Poe arrived home, and despite her dying request not to be buried until her foster-son returned, her husband proceeded with the funeral. When Poe arrived at the house a few hours later all that he loved most was in the ground. His agony at the grave is said to have been extreme.

Mrs. Allan had extracted a promise from her husband nevertheless, not to abandon Poe. A partial reconciliation now took place and Mr. Allan consented to help Poe in his plan to enter West Point. Letters were written to the Colonel of his regiment, a substitute was secured, and the young poet found himself discharged from the army on April 15, 1829. He returned for a short period to Richmond.

Poe remained only a short time at "home." He secured, largely through his own solicitation, a number of letters of influence to the War Department. Armed with these, and a very cold letter from his guardian who averred, "Frankly, sir, do I declare that he is no relation to me whatever"—he set out about May 7th for Washington where he presented his credentials, including a number of recommendations of his officers couched in the highest terms, to the Secretary of War, Mr. Eaton. A long delay of almost a year occurred, during which his appointment to West Point was in doubt.

During most of this period, May, 1829, to the end of that year, he resided in Baltimore. His foster-father supplied him from time to time with small sums just sufficient to keep him alive, and remained cold and suspicious of his good intentions as to West Point. In the meantime young Poe, after being

robbed by a cousin at a hotel, sought shelter with his Aunt Maria Clemm, the sister of his father. In the household of this good woman, who was from the first his guardian angel, Poe found his grandmother, Mrs. David Poe, Sr., then an aged and paralyzed woman, his brother Henry, and his first cousin Virginia Clemm, a little girl about seven years old. She later became the poet's wife. During this stay in Baltimore Poe exerted himself to further his literary name. Shortly after his arrival we find him calling on William Wirt, just retired from active political life in Washington, author of "Letters of a British Spy," and a man of considerable literary reputation. Poe left with Wirt the manuscript of "Al Aaraaf" and received from him a letter of advice rather than recommendation. The incident, however, shows that he had then on hand the manuscript for a second volume of poems. These consisted of several which had appeared in his first volume, much revised, and some new ones.

He now went to Philadelphia and left the manuscript with Carey, Lea and Carey, a then famous publishing firm, who demanded a guarantee before they would print it. Poe wrote to his guardian asking him to support the little volume to the extent of \$100, but received an angry denial and strict censure for contemplating such an action. By July 28th he had, however, apparently arranged for publication of the volume in Baltimore and wrote to Carey, Lea and Carey withdrawing the manuscript. Through Baltimore friends and relatives he was enabled to reach the ear of John Neal, then an influential Boston editor, and the forthcoming work re-

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ceived some helpful notices in the September and December issues of the *Yankee* for 1829. The book itself, entitled *Al Aaraaf Tamerlane and Minor Poems*, was published by Hatch and Dunning in Baltimore in December, 1829. Somewhat mollified by this success and the notice it attracted, but much more so by the assurance that his foster-son was about to receive his long delayed appointment to the Military Academy, Mr. Allan permitted Edgar to return to Richmond where he stayed from January to May, 1830, at the "big mansion." His life in Baltimore had been a poverty-haunted one, and the return to his former mode of existence was undoubtedly a welcome one to Poe.

Mr. Allan, however, had his own private reasons for desiring to have his ward out of Richmond as soon as possible. He had resumed intimate relations with a former companion after the death of his wife and was now expecting an unwelcome addition to his natural children. Quarrels with Poe were renewed. After a peculiarly bitter one Poe wrote a letter to a former acquaintance in the army, a sergeant to whom he owed a small sum of money. In this he permitted himself to make an unfortunate statement about his guardian. The letter was later used by the man to collect from Mr. Allan the amount due him and was the final cause of Poe's being cast off.

The appointment to the Military Academy was received at the end of March. The examinations for entrance were held at West Point at the end of June, and in May Poe bade farewell to his guardian and left for the Military Academy, visiting his Baltimore rela-

tives on the way. On July 1, 1830, he took the oath and was admitted as a cadet at West Point.

Poe remained at the United States Military Academy from June 25, 1830, to February 19, 1831. There can be no doubt that the military career was distasteful to him and that he had been forced into it by his guardian in whose fortune he might still hope to share. Mr. Allan, however, regarded his duties as fulfilled, with Edgar provided for at the public charge, and was glad to have him away from Richmond. On the day that Poe entered West Point, his guardian was presented with a pair of natural twins for whom he later on arranged in his will. This did not prevent his marrying a second time, nevertheless, and the new relation made him more than ever inimical to his foster-son.

Edgar Poe continued to perform his duties creditably at the Military Academy when all hope of any help in the future from Mr. Allan was shattered by a letter from Richmond which disowned him. The soldier had presented to his guardian the letter written by Poe a year before, and the rage of Mr. Allan was extreme. Realizing that all hope of a competence from Richmond was now at an end, Poe decided to take things into his own hands and leave the army forever. As he could not obtain Mr. Allan's consent to resign he went on strike and neglected to attend formations, classes, or church. He was court martialled and dismissed for being disobedient. While at the Military Academy he had arranged with Elam Bliss, a New York publisher, to bring out a third volume of poems to which the

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student body at the Academy had subscribed.

In February, 1831, he went to New York. He was penniless, illy clad, and nearly died of a "cold" complicated by internal ear trouble, after reaching the city.

Forced to eat humble pie he again appealed to his guardian, but in vain. He remained in New York long enough to see his third volume off the press. It was entitled *Poems, Second Edition*, and contained a preface addressed to "Dear B.," a person unknown, in which some of the young author's critical opinions, largely taken from Coleridge, were first set forth.

After attempting abortively to obtain letters of introduction to Lafayette from Col. Thayer, the Superintendent at West Point, in order to join the Polish patriots then revolting against Russia, Poe left New York and journeyed by way of Philadelphia to Baltimore. He arrived in the latter city some time about the end of March, 1831, and again took up his residence at Mechanics Row, Milk Street, with his aunt Maria Clemm and her daughter Virginia. His brother Henry was then in ill health, "given over to drink," and dying. The next four years were spent in Baltimore under conditions of extreme poverty. Poe was still obscure and his doings for much of the time are very vague. A few facts, however, can be certainly glimpsed.

During most of the Baltimore period Poe must have followed the life of a recluse. He now began to turn his attention to prose and was able to place a few stories with a Philadelphia publication. His brother Henry died in August, 1831. Edgar continued to live

with the Clemms. The household was poverty stricken, he himself was not in very good health part of the time. What the family lived on is not clear. Attempts were made to interest Mr. Allan once more in his behalf but in vain. No relief came from Richmond except upon one occasion when on account of a debt contracted by his brother Henry, Edgar was in danger of being imprisoned. Mr. Allan sent a belated response which was the last that Poe ever received from him. Poe is known to have paid ardent attention to Mary Devereaux, a young girl who lived close by. He was refused, and horse-whipped the girl's uncle. At this time he also frequented the houses of his relatives, the Poes, and Herrings, especially the latter. It was then, too that he was hard at work perfecting his art as a writer of short stories, and upon his only drama, "Politian."

In October, 1833, he competed for a prize of \$50 offered for the best short story submitted to a Baltimore paper, *The Saturday Visitor*. The prize was awarded by a committee of well known citizens to Poe's "The Manuscript Found in a Bottle." It was his first notable success and marks his emergence into fame. The cash was grateful to his necessity, but a more important effect of the contest was the help given to the poverty stricken young poet by John P. Kennedy, a gentleman of Baltimore of considerable means, a kind heart, and a writer of parts himself. Mr. Kennedy by various timely acts of charity and influence set Poe upon the way to fame. He, Kennedy, enabled Poe to place some of his stories and introduced him to Thomas White, the editor of the *Southern Literary Mes-*

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senger, published in Richmond, Va. Poe now began to contribute reviews, and short stories to that periodical and was finally invited in 1835 to come to Richmond as an assistant editor. In the meanwhile Mr. Allan had died, in 1834, and there was no mention of Poe in his will. Two ill-advised trips to Richmond by Poe himself between 1832 and 1834 had only succeeded in further estranging his former guardian and the Allan family. They remained embittered to the last. In July, 1835, Poe left Baltimore to take up his new editorial duties in Richmond.

As an editor, considered purely from the aspect of the desk and chair, Poe was a decided success. Subscriptions began to mount for the *Southern Literary Messenger*. Mr. White might well have been satisfied. He was a kindly man and well disposed. It is significant of Poe's inability to let stimulants alone that within a few weeks after arriving in Richmond he found himself discharged. He returned to Baltimore and there married secretly on September 22, 1835, his first cousin Virginia Clemm. She was only about thirteen years old at the time and the secret marriage was caused by the opposition of relatives to so early a union. Poe now applied again to Mr. White with promises to abstain, and was reinstated in his old position upon good behavior and with a fatherly warning. Mrs. Clemm and her daughter Virginia followed Poe to Richmond and took up their residence with him in a boarding house on Capitol Square.

Poe remained in Richmond as assistant editor to Mr. White on the *Southern Literary Messenger* from the autumn of 1835 to January, 1837. During his

connection with the paper its circulation increased from 700 to 3500. It attracted national attention, and it is safe to say it was initially due to Poe that it became the most influential periodical of the South. Its reputation was afterward maintained and increased by other men of considerable journalistic ability.

The task of the young editor ranged from purely hack work of a frankly journalistic nature to contributions to literature. He wrote poems, book reviews, general and particular literary criticism, and short stories both serial and complete. The book reviews varied from comment on Coleridge's *Recollections* to references about others such as *Mrs. Sigourney's Letters to Young Ladies*, in short from well reasoned and often trenchant critiques to mere notices with a slight critical comment. Some of the poems which had previously appeared in the volumes of poetry already alluded to were republished considerably revised. This was following out a policy of more or less constant revision and republishing in redacted form which Poe continued throughout his career. Among the most notable of the new poems to appear at this time were "To Helen," "Irene," or the "Sleeper," "Israfel," and "Zante."

The general tone of literary criticism in the United States at the time Poe began to write for the *Southern Literary Messenger* was either perfunctory, fulsome, or dull. The comment of the young man in Richmond was interesting, disturbing and refreshing. His frequent severity elicited reply and remark, and though he aroused antagonism in some quarters, his presence on the scene and the trenchancy of his

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style became more and more evident. A number of the stories which Poe had prepared for "Tales of the Folio Club" in Baltimore before receiving the *Saturday Visitor Prize*, he now published in the *Messenger*. Such stories as "Metzengerstein" attracted considerable notice, as they well might, and added not a little to his reputation. In some of them a marked morbidity was even then noted and deprecated. Such deprecatory comment, however, did not prevent their unique fascination from being felt. Under the title of "Pina-kidia" the young editor also published at this time a collection of curious gleanings covering a wide field of interest which were taken from his commonplace book. Many of these he used again later in the *Democratic Review* under the title of "Marginalia."

Poe was described about this time as being "graceful, and with dark, curling hair and magnificent eyes, wearing a Byron collar and looking every inch a poet." The earliest known portrait of him dates from his early days on the *Messenger* and shows him with sideburns and a slightly sardonic cast of countenance for so young a man. Even at this date he was evidently somewhat fragile and delicate. His complexion which later became quite sallow is described as having been olive.

Of his private affairs the most important event of the Richmond epoch was his second marriage to his cousin Virginia. The reasons for this appear to be sufficiently obvious. The first marriage in Baltimore had been clandestine with Mrs. Clemm as the only witness. It had been opposed by influential relatives and had never been made public. All explanations were obviated

by a second marriage in public, nothing was said about the first affair, and on May 16, 1830, a marriage bond was signed in the Hustings Court of the City of Richmond which described Virginia Clemm as twenty-one years old. She was, as a matter of fact, less than fourteen years of age at the time, and appeared to be a child. The wedding took place in a boarding house kept by a Mrs. Yarrington, in the company of friends, a Presbyterian divine by the name of Amasa Converse officiating. After a simple ceremony the couple left for their honeymoon which was spent at Petersburg, Virginia, at the house of a Mr. Hiram Haines, editor of the local paper. Poe was back in Richmond before the end of May, 1836, at his desk on the *Messenger*. Mr. White had promised him an increase of salary later on.

After his marriage, indeed for some time before, the poet's correspondence with relatives and friends shows that he was desirous of setting up house-keeping. The plan followed was to solicit funds for Mrs. Clemm and Virginia in order to establish a boarding house. Although some small aid, "loans," were obtained, the scheme fell through, and the little family moved to a cheap tenement on Seventh Street, where they seem to have remained until the end of their stay in Richmond.

Poe continued his editorial work and from his observation, experience, and ambition began to evolve in his mind a scheme of which the beginnings can be traced back to Baltimore. It was his hope to establish and to be the editor of a great national literary magazine. That Poe was one of the first men in America to understand the possibilities

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of modern journalism from a magazine standpoint there can be no doubt. From then on until the end of his story it was the darling scheme of his life. Misfortune and his own personality, rather than the theories of journalism which he entertained, were responsible for his failure to realize his ambition.

He now began to think of going North to establish the new publication, a move which his growing reputation and the constantly increasing friction with his editor-in-chief served to hasten. Poe was brilliant but unsuited to work in a subordinate capacity. Mr. White in all justice must be said to have been patient. He was, however, patronized upon occasions by his versatile young editor, and there are also indications that in the fall of 1836 Poe had once more fallen from grace, and in spite of his well-meant promises to White, was again resorting from time to time to the bottle. In addition to this he seems to have been restless. Taking advantage of contacts which he had made by correspondence in New York with such men as Professor Charles Anthon, John K. Paulding, the Harper Brothers, and others, he decided to remove to that city.

Consequently in January, 1837, he wound up his affairs with the *Southern Literary Messenger* and Mr. White, and taking his family with him left for New York. They appear to have arrived there some time about the end of February, 1837, and to have taken lodgings at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Waverly Place, sharing a floor with one William Gowans, a bookseller, who was of considerable service to Poe.

Before leaving Richmond, in the summer of 1836, Poe had made some at-

tempt to have the stories comprising the "Tales of the Folio Club" published in volume form. The manuscripts had been left originally with Carey and Lea in Philadelphia who kept them for some time under consideration but had finally returned them, minus one story, to the author in February, 1836. Poe then mailed to J. K. Paulding in New York who submitted them to Harpers. The result was another refusal. Paulding had written to Poe, however, when he returned the stories, suggesting a long tale in two volumes, a very popular format. Out of this suggestion had grown a long story of adventure, shipwreck, and horrible suffering in the then unknown southern hemisphere. It was called *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and was finally accepted by Harpers, who published it in 1838 in the United States. Wiley and Putnam produced an edition in England where it was later pirated. This was Poe's first book of prose although his fourth bound volume, three volumes of poetry having preceded it. The story appeared serially in the *Southern Literary Messenger* even after Poe had severed his editorial connection. It purported to be written by Arthur Gordon Pym himself and the real author was mentioned only in the preface. The type of adventure story which *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* closely followed was popular at the time. Poe merely allowed his imagination to deal with familiar material found in such books as *The Mutiny of the Bounty*, Morell's *Narrative of Four Voyages to the Pacific*, and the like. His immediate interest in the Antarctic seems to have arisen from the preparation then being made by one J. N. Reynolds for a government expedition to

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those parts. Nathaniel Hawthorne was also interested in the same scheme, which, however, came to nothing. The success of the book was small and brought the author very little fame and less cash.

A short while after arriving in New York, Poe, Virginia and Mrs. Clemm moved to a small house at 13½ Carmine Street, where Mrs. Clemm took boarders in order to make a living. Poe was receiving near nothing at all. It was a period of financial panic and literary work was almost impossible to obtain. The Poes were accompanied to their new domicile by the bookseller Gowans who seems to have introduced the poet to a number of literary people but with small result. The poverty of the family was now extreme. Despite this, nevertheless, Poe continued to write. The chief items which can be traced to this first rather brief sojourn in New York are a review of *Arbia Petraea* in the *New York Review*, edited by Dr. Hawks, "Siope—a Fable," published in the *Baltimore Book* in 1839, and a tale called "Von Jung, the Mystic," which appeared in the *American Monthly Magazine* for June, 1837.

The plans for starting a magazine of his own would at that time, owing to the financial depression, have met no response. Poe, indeed, was unable to obtain even a minor editorial position or sufficient hack work to enable him to exist. His doings at this time must forever remain somewhat obscure. Probably through Gowans he was thrown into contact with James Pedder, an Englishman of almost negligible literary ability but a kindly man. Pedder about this time was engaged in establishing for himself magazine connections

in Philadelphia, where his sisters resided. Through him it seems quite likely that Poe was induced to leave New York and to move to Philadelphia, then the great publishing center of the United States. At any rate we find him in Philadelphia about the end of August, 1838, boarding together with his family and James Pedder at a lodging house kept by the sisters of the Englishman on Twelfth Street, a little above Mulberry (Arch). Poe was soon definitely engaged upon two literary projects, the editing of a text book on Conchology and the now long deferred publication of his collected tales.

Shortly after the arrival in Philadelphia Poe moved nearer the downtown publishing and engraving shops to a house at Fourth and Arch (then Mulberry) where he continued to reside until September 4, 1838. He was now engaged in editing *The Conchologists First Book, or a System of Testaceous Malacology*, a school text to which he lent his name. It was purely a piece of hack work and has nothing to do with the creative or artistic writings of Poe. Among collectors the volume is now much sought after. At least nine editions are known to exist, the first was published in April, 1837, by Haswell, Barrington and Haswell. Poe wrote the preface and the introduction, and was assisted in his arrangement of the text and illustrations by a Mr. Isaac Lee and Professor Thomas Wyatt. Bergman, De Blainville, and Parkinson are quoted, and Cuvier heavily drawn upon. The beautifully engraved plates of shells were pirated from *The Conchologists Text Book*, a work by an Englishman, Captain Thomas Brown, to whom no credit was given. Poe was afterwards