

**ANNUAL MEETING:
POE STUDIES ASSOCIATION**

New York, December 29, 1978
Hilton Hotel, Nassau B, 10 a.m.-noon

After a brief business meeting, there will be a series of papers on "Recent Poe Scholarship":

- "Writing Poe's Biography," John Carl Miller, Old Dominion U.
- "Editing Poe's Fiction," Mrs. Thomas O. Mabbott, New York City
- "Surveying Poe Criticism," G. Richard Thompson, Purdue U.

Gary D. Hermalyn, executive director of the Bronx County Historical Society, extends an invitation to Association members to a special viewing of the audiovisual show "Edgar Allan Poe at Fordham" and to a special guided tour of The Edgar Allan Poe Cottage, landmark museum. Details will be announced at the meeting.

NEMLA

Hartford, Connecticut, March 29-31, 1979

The spring meetings of the Northeast MLA will include a Poe Studies section.

The program consists of the following papers:

1. Bernard Rosenthal (SUNY Binghamton): "The Case of Poe's Innocent Orang-Outang; Or How to Play Chess"
2. Kenneth W. Graham (University of Guelph, Canada): "'Unknown in the Records of the Earth': Beckford and Poe"
3. Burton R. Pollin (CUNY): "Poe and the Dance"

Chairman of this meeting is Professor Frederick S. Frank, English, Allegheny College, AC Post Office Box 90, Meadville, PA 16335.

POE SCHOLARSHIP

ALS 1976 - American Literary Scholarship: *An Annual/1976* - distributed to members of the American Literature Section of MLA (Duke University Press, 1978) includes a chapter survey of Poe criticism and scholarship by Donald B. Stauffer.

**Recent Poe Dissertations
(through May 1978):**

A dissertation completed at Northwestern University under the direction of Harrison Hayford, *Michael De Witt Bayton's* "Poe, the Critics, and Film-Makers," DA, 38 (1978), 5472-A, is among the first attempts to explore the relationship between Poe's fictional artistry and another popular art form. Other recent dissertations on Poe are as follows: *Leonard W. Engel*, "The Use of the Enclosure Device in Selected Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe," DA, 38 (1977), 2124-A; *David R. Saliba*, "A Psychology of Fear: The Nightmare Formula of Edgar Allan Poe," DA, 38 (1978), 4832-A; and *Jay B. Jacoby*, "The Victorian Response to Edgar Allan Poe," DA, 38 (1978), 5479-A.

Dissertations which touch on Poe are as follows: *Michael J. Auer*, "Angels and Beasts: Gnosticism in American Literature," DA, 37 (1977), 5117-A; *Gary E. Tombleson*, "Alpha and Omega Recast: The Rhetoric of Cosmic Unity in Poe, Bronte, and Hardy," DA, 37 (1976), 2165-A; *America Martinez-Cruzado*, "The Philosopher-Mystic Aspects of Poe, Baudelaire, and Cortazar," DA, 37 (1977), 6466-A; *Robert J. Wilson*, "Poetics of the Sublime in America, 1650-1860," DA, 37 (1977), 5835-A; *Jack E. Surrency*, "The Kentucky Tragedy in American Literature: From Thomas Holley Chivers to Robert Penn Warren," DA, 38 (1977), 792-A; *Paul Lewis*, "Fearful Questions, Fearful Answers: The Intellectual Functions of Gothic Fiction," DA, 38 (1977), 2791-A; *Ana Maria Hernandez*, "Poetics and Myth in the Works of Julio Cortazar: The Influence of John Keats and Edgar Allan Poe," DA, 38 (1977), 3468-A; *Stephen L. Carter*, "From the 'Sacred Self' to the 'Separate Self': A Study of the Mystical Elements in Five American Poets Prior to 1900," DA, 38 (1978), 4823-A; *Lawrence Stahlberg*, "The Grotesque in Gogol and Poe," DA, 38 (1978), 5449-A; and *Judith Woodsworth*, "Valéry et Poe: Le Délire de la Lucidité," DA, 38 (1978), 6127-A.

Poe Studies Association Newsletter

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This issue of the PSA Newsletter was prepared by J. Lasley Dameron and distributed by the Department of English, Memphis State University, Memphis, Tennessee 38152. Copies are available upon request.

BALTIMORE POE SOCIETY

On October 8, Professor Richard P. Benton delivered the fifty-sixth annual Edgar Allan Poe lecture, "Bedlam Patterns: Love and Madness in Poe's Fiction." A commemoration of Poe's death preceded the lecture with the traditional laying of memorial wreaths on Poe's tomb in Westminster Churchyard. The society has also published its first book, *Poe at Work*, at \$8.00, edited by last year's speaker, Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV. Society President James J. Foster announced that repair work on the Poe House on Amity St. should be completed by the end of 1978, at which time the city of Baltimore will take over staffing of the house. Professor Fisher's 1977 lecture, "The Very Spirit of Cordiality: The Literary Uses of Alcohol and Alcoholism in the Tales of Edgar Allan Poe," is also available at \$2.50 a copy from Alexander G. Rose, Poe Society of Baltimore, 402 E. Gittings Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21212. When ordering, add 40¢ for mailing cost.

POE IN PERFORMANCE

The fall program of the Bronx County Historical Society included: the opening of "Edgar Allan Poe Cottage at Fordham," an audiovisual show with music by the Galliard Quintet; "Poe in Person, a One Man Show" starring Conrad Pomerleau; and a presentation of "Poems and Short Stories of Edgar Allan Poe" (commemorating Poe's death, October 8).

The Chamber Repertory Theatre of Boston, specializing in dramatizations of literary works, is touring with "Tell Tale Poe," a full-length play based upon several of Poe's stories, letters, and events in the last days of his life. Adapted and directed by Ted Davis, the play is performed by four actors and is set in a small tavern in Baltimore in October, 1849. According to a publicity release, "Poe is revealed through portions of his greatest stories . . . as fact and fantasy are combined for a glimpse of the inner wanderings of a doomed artist."

POE LETTERS

Professor John W. Ostrom welcomes any information about letters, dates, correspondents, locations, original MS. or copy that was not included in his former checklists: the original checklist (1948), two supplements in *American Literature* (1952) and (1957), the Supplement in the Gordian Press edition (1952), and the "Fourth Supplement" in *American Literature* (1974). Professor Ostrom intends to bring into one index all items in the total Poe correspondence (letters by and to Poe). Any corrections to items in previous checklists would be appreciated.

Query: Who is the author of the memoir in THE POETICAL WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, with Original Memoir. Illustrated by F. R. Pickersgill. London: Sampson Low, Son and Co., 1857?

—J. Lasley Dameron,
English, *Memphis State University*

NEW POE PUBLICATIONS

COLLECTED WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE:
TALES AND SKETCHES, ed. Thomas Ollive Mab-

bott, with the Assistance of Eleanor D. Kewer and Maureen Cobb Mabbott. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard U. Press, 1978. 2 vols. \$45.00

These second and third volumes in the "Harvard Poe" bring to fruition the forty years' labors of the late Thomas Ollive Mabbott and the ten additional by Maureen Cobb Mabbott and Eleanor D. Kewer. Clearly organized, these volumes make accessible a wealth of scholarship to the beginner as well as the specialist. Scholarly though they are, they bear the mellow authority, as well as the stamp of the never-flagging courtesy characteristic of T.O.M., who always acknowledged assistance, whether in matters of *recherche* facts or in aid in making available an elusive text.

The format is excellent. In basically chronological order, the texts are flanked by headnotes of interpretive content and by explanatory notes elucidating obscurer points, generally source-oriented. Poe's sources are winnowed, his aims made clearer through this wealth of information. Textual variants are recorded, and, in the case of "Lionizing," original and final printings appear entire to avoid messiness in presenting extensive revisions. Obviously, this edition will expedite analyses of the evolving texts. Hitherto uncollected writings are few, the most interesting being the late satiric sketch, "A Reviewer Reviewed." Along with it are several pieces, e.g., the "Autography," which many don't immediately perceive as fiction, yet which embody enough fictional substance for Mabbott's warranting their inclusion. His introduction, in vol. I, gives the palm to the tales as Poe's great contribution to literature, a claim few would dispute. He also estimates Poe as fictionist in a clear-headed, objective style. The lists of manuscript repositories, frequently cited source quarries, detailed indexing, good print and paper, durable binding, plus important illustrations (primarily of manuscripts) enhance the whole. Given current outrages in publishing charges, the price is reasonable.

These books are mines abounding in gems of purest ray. Their appearance draws, at long last, into solid reality a life's dream of T.O.M., vital and enthusiastic even during painstaking gathering of information or collating and deliberating about texts. For inestimable aid in enriching the world of Poe, we salute his memory and the fortitude of his assistants.

Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV
Hahnemann Medical College

Richard P. Benton, ed. *Journey into the Center—Studies in Poe's Pym. American Transcendental Quarterly*, 41 (Winter 1978), [1] - 115.

To the extent that coherence in symposia is discernible, Benton's collection gives additional thrust to dual approaches to *Pym* that have been recently prominent. One approach explores self-referential qualities which supposedly demonstrate Poe's concerns with fiction-making and illusion; another examines *Pym* as an embodiment of mythic and archetypal patterns. In the former camp, David Ketterer traces *Pym's* journey through a maze of multiple deceptions, the destination of which is an "idealistic" state of being. Ketterer labels this ultimate state "arabesque," minimizing the important aesthetic connotations of that term explored previously by L. Moffitt Cecil and Patricia Smith.

Ketterer finds a constant in Poe's technique: reversal of expectations. His suggestive comments on *Pym's* structural integrity notwithstanding, one could argue, using the same cited passages, that expectations are constantly raised rather than defeated in order to prepare adequately for the tale's awesome conclusion. Ketterer's comments on the cycle of death and rebirth are remarkably close to those of John P. Hussey whose fine essay in the 1974 *South Atlantic Bulletin* is cited in none of these studies. J. V. Ridgely and Iola Haverstick, authors of the 1966 essay "Chartless Voyage," take their lumps from Ketterer as they do from Alexander Hammond, who shares the view that *Pym* is concerned with illusion. Hammond's main purpose, however, is minute investigation of *Pym's* composition. Hammond's tentative conclusion is that Harper's had received a finished manuscript when *Pym's* copyright was registered in June, 1837, and therefore speculates that delay in publication was due to reasons other than Poe's inability to provide sufficient material. As for his study of the Folio Club (noted above), the reader should be prepared for Hammond's many scholarly qualifications, allowances for alternative theories, and massive detail with respect to dates, manuscript disposition, and printing practices. For those inclined to read *Pym* mythically, Barton Levi St. Armand's and Grace Farrell Lee's essays will contain much of interest. While the skeptic will bridle at imposition of a studied post-Jungian approach on an 1838 text, St. Armand's contribution is as well written and as fascinating to read as his previous studies of Poe's alchemical symbols. Lee, taking a cue from Patrick Quinn *cum* Eliade, explores a common pattern of descent and return in *Pym* and *Moby-Dick*. Adeline Tintner's essay shows convincingly how Henry James used imagery from *Pym* and appropriated it to the consciousness of Prince Amerigo in *The Golden Bowl*. Three other pieces round out the symposium: Leonard Engel's running commentary on imagery of enclosure, Gerald Bello's translation of Roger Forclaz' "A Voyage to the Frontiers of the Unknown," and Burton Pollin's listing of editions and translations of *Pym*.

Kent Ljungquist
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV, ed., *Poe at Work: Seven Textual Studies*. Baltimore, Md.: The Edgar Allan Poe Society, 1978. 110 pp. \$8.00.

In the spirit of Poe's revisions, this collection contains significant changes from its appearance in the University of Pennsylvania *Library Chronicle*. A useful checklist of materials on Poe's revisions is appended. Fisher's introduction presents an overview of previous scholarship on evolving texts and notes the disposition of manuscript collections. Alexander Hammond, after repeating information from his previous essays on the abortive "Tales of the Folio Club," launches into a tortuous study of Poe's unpublished volume. James Christie reaps valuable insights from his modest goal of examining the five published texts of "Bon-Bon": Poe moved from haphazard punning to a unified, refined tale in the *Blackwood's* mode by firmly establishing the characterizations of both the narrator and Satan. Placing "Silence—A Fable" in the dual traditions of Gothic horror and Romantic orientalism, Fisher contends that the tale dramatizes seriously a dis-integrating, tormented soul; his evidence will undoubtedly not "silence" those who prefer to enlarge the interpretive scope of the Folio Club. Fisher also reprints the manuscript. Marc Leslie Rovner studies the revisions of "William Wilson" and notes the ironic juxtaposition of Wilson's acute eye for visual details and his utter inability to appropriate those details to his moral understanding. Rather than merely monitoring textual changes, Christie, Fisher, and Rovner demonstrate that attention to revisions can advance interpretation. Less satisfying in this regard are Joel Kenneth Asarch's and Richard Fusco's studies of the detective stories. Asarch's claim that a later version of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is more "realistic" and more "grotesque" begs clarification of vague terminology; Fusco's theory that a later text of "Marie Rogêt" marks a change in Poe's attitude toward ratiocination lies in the realm of ingenious speculation. In sum, however, these essays offer useful insights on an aspect of Poe's craftsmanship that has heretofore received only sporadic attention.

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The Poe Studies Association and its *Newsletter* are independent of the journal *Poe Studies*, published at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99163, subscription \$3 per year (two issues, June, December).

NEW MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL FOR 1978

I wish _____, do not wish _____ to continue receiving *PSA Newsletter* (May, November).
(check one)

Enclosed is my \$3 check for dues and subscription for the calendar year 1979. (Check should be made out to "Poe Studies Association" and mailed to Joseph M. DeFalco, Dept. of English, Marquette University, 635 North Thirteenth St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233).

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The Edgar Allan Poe Scrapbook, ed. Peter Haining. New York: Schocken Books, 1978. \$7.95, paper.

This double-column quarto is largely a product of the Poe industry, the main business of which is to cash in on the Poe legend as salable property free for the taking. Published by a trade-book house (Simon and Schuster), dedicated to Vincent Price, "who has kept Poe alive" and whose photograph appears on the cover, it is edited and introduced by Peter Haining, a former journalist now living in England, with a foreword by Robert Bloch, author of *Psycho* and of fiction and films based on Poe stories. Haining contends that the voluminous writings about Poe lack "an examination of him, not from only one viewpoint, but from the many opinions, good, bad and indifferent, that have been taken towards him over the years." This *Scrapbook*, "a unique kaleidoscope of words and pictures," therefore is intended to provide the details of his life and work, the opinions and influences that shaped that work, and the forces that helped make his legend. But no serious student of Poe will be taken in by these overstated claims, nor will he be impressed by the lack of a table of contents, index, and bibliography. Far from accurate also is the claim that "the material augments rather than repeats the numerous biographies and studies about him," though some of the selections, to be sure, are reprinted "for the first time in generations." Yes, one welcomes as documents the reprints of John Ingram's long article in *Temple Bar*, June 1874, Jules Verne's 1864 essay on Poe as the leader of the cult of the unusual, Lafcadio Hearn's 1883 appreciative comments on Doré's illustrations of "The Raven," Thomas Gibson's 1867 account of Poe at West Point, Charles Graves' 1904 report of Poe in Richmond, along with others of this kind. At the same time, one deplores the inclusion of Alfred R. Wallace's proud narrative of how he came into possession of "An Unpublished Poem by Edgar Allan Poe" entitled "Leonaine" [sic], a "little poetic gem" of "rare descriptive beauty and pathos." The double irony here derives from Haining's remark that "scholars like Professor Mabbott have devoted much time and effort to the study of such material," as if Mabbott had confirmed this "discovery," rather than identified it as "Leonainie," a

hoax poem (in weak imitation of Poe) by James Whitcomb Riley published in 1877 and shortly after acknowledged by Riley to be a hoax.

Some of the historical essays—those by Griswold, Whitman, Neal, Tasistro, Dostoevsky, and George Bernard Shaw—are easily available elsewhere (in my *The Recognition of Edgar Allan Poe*, 1966). And the reader might have been spared such cheap trivia as the Poe-imitation by Gernsback and "Out of Dickinson by Poe" by Ray Bradbury. The concluding fifteen pages present useful surveys of Poe films since 1909 by Denis Gifford and Ron Haycock, the latter admitting that the Corman-Price films, chiefly of entertainment value, were not so much adapted from as suggested by Poe's tales of terror. The numerous illustrations, chosen to popularize as well as to accompany the text, range from poor, undated sketches to interesting facsimiles, photographs, engravings, and snatches from comic books. In short, this *Scrapbook* is a mixture of old and new, good and bad, and reliable and unreliable material, largely from the nineteenth century. It is highly ironical, to say the least, that this popular mix intended for the general reader and the Poe fan requires a good deal more familiarity with Poe biography and scholarship than is provided by the headnotes in order to sort out the dependable and the usable and place it in meaningful historical and critical perspective. Lacking such a perspective, this book offers the general reader little more than scraps in trying to keep the old dying "legend" alive.

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