



Caxtonian

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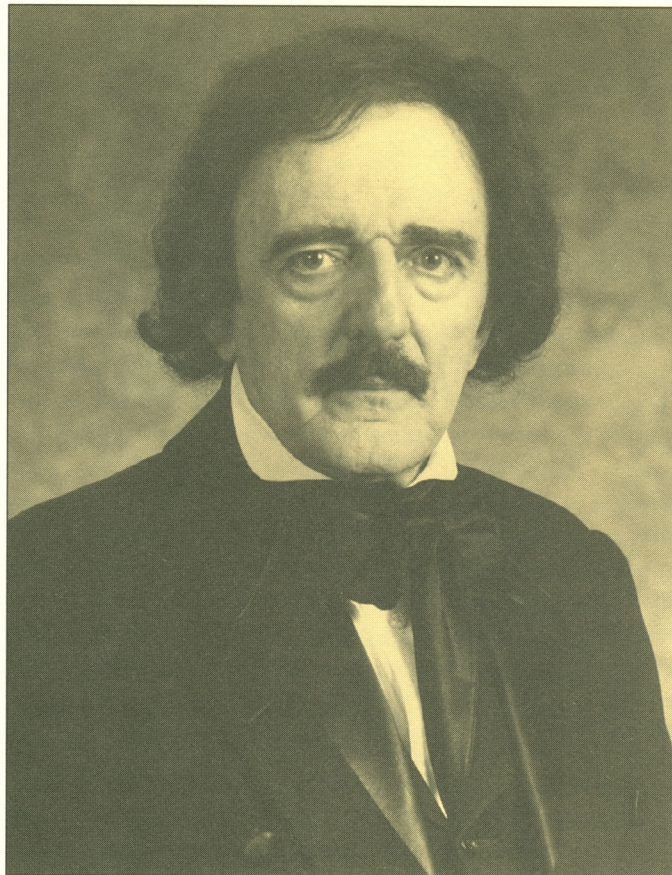
May 1998

Poe's Magnum Opus, *Eureka: A Prose Poem*

by John Astin

Until recent years, if you wanted to become one of the scant few who have actually *read* Edgar Allan Poe's masterwork, *Eureka: A Prose Poem*, it would generally have been necessary to purchase not just an anthology of Poe, but his complete works. Otherwise, *Eureka* didn't make the page. Oh, in the early 1950s, W.H. Auden put out a modest anthology including this astonishing composition, but by the second edition, it was gone, probably yanked by a commercially-minded editor.

Poe regarded *Eureka* as his Magnum Opus, the culmination of his life's work. Written out of the tragedy of his young wife's death from consumption in 1847 after an oppressive five years of suffering, *Eureka* is Poe's inspired view of life and the universe. Amazingly, Poe seems to anticipate some of the theories of modern science: the time/space continuum, the expanding and contracting universe, a general proposition akin to chaos theory and an explanation (still a valid theory) for why the sky is dark at night. Professor Edward Harrison, in *Darkness at Night* (Harvard University Press, 1987), an astronomy book, devotes a chapter to Poe, saying "The first clear and correct solution to the riddle of darkness, though only qualitatively expressed, came from Edgar Allan Poe, the renowned poet, essayist, critic and amateur scientist...in [his] imaginative masterpiece, *Eureka: A Prose Poem*."



Edgar Allan Poe as portrayed by John Astin in his one-man performance, "Edgar Allan Poe: Once Upon a Midnight," at Chicago's Mercury Theater in the fall of 1997. Astin, the veteran television, film, and stage actor, has been called a "pop-culture icon" from his work as Gomez Addams, television's lovable, slightly-crazed patriarch of the original "Addams Family." He is, as well, a director and writer, and is a specialist in the writings of Poe. He has in his possession one of the original first editions of Eureka (1848).

Many modern scholars see it as the key to all of Poe's writings: It has been said that if one understands *Eureka*, one can unlock the mystery of all Poe's work.

Yet when it was published by Putnam in May of 1848, (the poverty-plagued Poe received a \$14 advance) only 500 copies were printed, and barely any of those were actually sold. Why has this

"prose poem" been so hard to find and had so few readers?

Why has it encountered so much derision, even from as august a poet as T.S. Eliot, who, sadly, is prominently quoted in Kenneth Silverman's otherwise generally splendid biography, as saying that *Eureka* "makes no deep impression...because we are aware of Poe's lack of qualification in philosophy, theology, or natural science?"

Well, it's a tough read for most, and I would not exclude Eliot from that group of strugglers. Of the few who have started *Eureka*, I would guess that only a fraction have actually read it all the way through. I am reminded of G. B. Shaw's remark (through the Devil in *Man and Superman*) describing Milton's *Paradise Lost* as "a long poem which neither I nor anyone else ever succeeded in wading through." Unlike Milton's great

work, however, *Eureka* is by no means boring. It is a psychal journey through the origin, growth, maturation and death of the universe. It is also a deeply spiritual work (though non-sectarian) and presents an astonishingly sophisticated view of death, particularly when one considers when and where it was written. However, to arrange this journey for us, Poe challenges the limitations of the deductive reasoning of Aristotle, Euclid, and even Kant, along with the inductive reasoning of Bacon.

"We have attained a point where only Intuition can aid us..." One is reminded of Poe's great detective, Dupin, who

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Caxtonian

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Musings...

I had lunch the other day with Edgar Allan Poe. We met at the Rosebud on Rush Street in Chicago. He was in town performing in an extended run at the Mercury Theater, and I had seen his performance twice during the previous two weeks. A gothic figure close up, he has a dark complexion, wonderfully bright eyes, and a sombre, subtle wit that manifested itself throughout our conversation. He seemed preoccupied with people's perception of himself and his ideas, not in a self-serving manner so much as to ensure understanding and to have his remarkable intellect recognized as natural genius recreating itself into formulations worthy of consideration in our time.

Poe spoke: "I was quite frankly annoyed that a *Chicago Tribune* critic quoted that flippant James Russell Lowell assessment in "A Fable for Critics" of my work. We were feuding. Did you see my rejoinder? He was devastated by it: I said of him, 'No failure was ever more complete or more pitiable.' Is Lowell," Poe asked me with a slight smile that belied puzzlement, "performing in Chicago too?"

I asked him about the major themes of his writing. "There were two," he said: "Nothing ever really dies. And, everything is autobiographical." That is true of "Annabelle Lee"? I asked. Somewhat impatiently he replied, "It is true of everything!" He paused and caught his breath momentarily as if a sharp pain had pierced his very heart. Tears filled his eyes as he began to speak. "I was so destitute that I had to borrow..." He paused to compose himself. He breathed deeply and then whispered, "I had to borrow a dress in which to bury my wife. I, who knew better than any of my contemporaries that the nature of our hearts and our actions create the world in which we live..I had to wrap my beautiful Virginia in the gown of another to lay her to rest. 'And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side Of my darling — my darling — my life and my bride, In the sepulchre there by the sea - In her tomb by the sounding sea.' This is the autobiography of my soul grieving."

You wrote *Eureka* shortly after Virginia's death, I commented. He replied, "Her death brought me to the very frontier of understanding the material and spiritual worlds. I called it a 'prose poem,' for, though it was not stanzaic in structure, it was so spiritually philosophic that I thought it more than mere essay. The Poet in Western tradition is the voice of wisdom, and I believe *Eureka* approached as well as anything I ever wrote, pure wisdom."

I agreed with a nod, unwilling to interrupt his thought with words. He continued as if unaware of my presence. "The proposition around which I built the treatise was this: — 'In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation.' It is one of the great ironies of fate that in nearly everything I wrote — poems, stories, essays — I sought to clarify the 'Inevitable Annihilation' of all things and attempted to bring to the hearts of humankind an understanding of death as transition and not terminus."

You were, I told him, a prophet in *Eureka*, and in the very process of writing your understanding of death you initiated the world's first and one of its most intelligent discussions of the time-space continuum, which we're just now coming to understand. Perhaps you frightened people. "Oh, I frightened people, as I was frightened much of my life. In that book, I finally found peace, in the discovery of the essential respect for the dignity of all human lives. I learned that the Divine Heart is our own Heart. Without this knowledge, we have no civilization — we live tortured lives. The finest of our fine artists know this. I spoke for them.

Mr. Poe had other business — as did I — and we finished our lunch with the sort of talk old friends have when they have not seen each other in many years and pick up the conversation as if interrupted only by an evening at the theater. Leaving the Rosebud, we walked west on Superior to Wabash and south to his apartment building near the river. We bid each other goodbye with a handshake, and I walked to the Newberry Library and my car with a sense of buoyancy that only an alliance with great literature and the ideas of great thinkers can give the human heart.

Robert Cotner
Editor

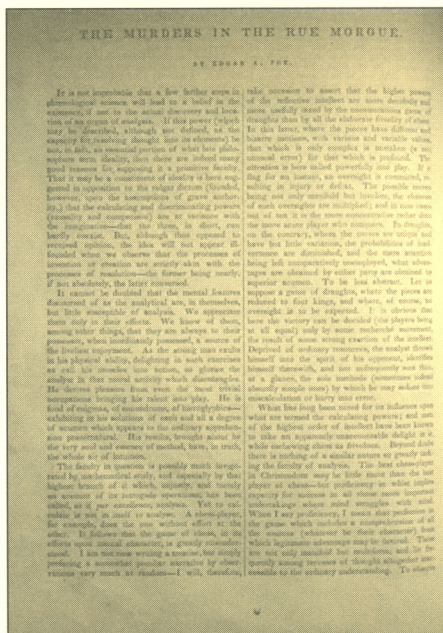
America's Storyteller, Edgar Allan Poe — 'Paying tithe to the Master'

Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson, readily admitted his debt to Edgar Allan Poe. In *The Magic Door*, a group of commentaries on great literature, Doyle wrote, "Poe is, to my mind the supreme original short story writer of all time. His brain was like a seed-pod full of seeds which flew carelessly around, and from which have sprung nearly all our modern types of story" ... "not only is Poe the originator of the detective story; all treasure-hunting, cryptogram-solving yarns trace back to the *Gold Bug* just as all pseudo-scientific Verne-and-Wells stories have their prototypes in the *Voyage to the Moon*, and *The Case of Monsieur Valdemar*. If every man who receives a cheque for a story which owes its springs to Poe were to pay tithe to a monument for the master, he would have a pyramid as big as that of Cheops." Poe's detective Dupin was the father of Holmes.

"It is not improbable that a few farther steps in phrenological science will lead to a belief in the existence, if not to the actual discovery and location of an organ of analysis." So begins the first detective story, written by E. A. Poe in April, 1841. As part of a somewhat ponderous and lengthy discussion, he includes the phrase "the faculty (of analysis) is possibly much invigorated by mathematical study..." placing the deductive faculties of the individual in the right side of his brain, the site of mathematical skills. In this, Poe was ahead of his time, as he was in many aspects of scientific hypothesis (see his essay entitled *Eureka*).

Edgar Allan Poe is universally, if at times grudgingly, acknowledged as the originator of the modern detective story. The definition includes the presence of a detective and a naive companion/listener. As Dorothy Sayers has so accurately pointed out (*Omnibus of Crime*, Introduction, Payson and Clarke, 1929): In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," the very first detective story published in *Graham's Magazine*, almost all of the elements of all subsequent detective stories are set forth. Poe's detective with the somewhat fanciful name of C. Auguste Dupin solves the case of the murder of two women. The story is preceded by a lengthy, intricate, prescient introduction concerning "ratiocination." There follows a horrifically violent story of death and destruction and a "locked room" mystery.

Why did this detective story, in its first



The first page of the first detective story, Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue," published in *Graham's Magazine*, April, 1841. (From the collection of Larry Solomon.)

appearance, start with a pedantic discussion of "ratiocination" and then proceed to the body of an exciting bloody story? It is precisely the dual character of Poe himself, the highly rational man who also wrote romantic poetry with Gothic atmosphere; a man emotionally torn by deep seated irrational feelings, who wrote stories such as "Fall of the House of Usher" yet delighted in cryptograms and puzzles, that explains the apparent dichotomy in the essence of his stories.

This duality also existed in, perhaps, the greatest American novel. In *Moby Dick*, Melville presents voluminous detail about the whaling process and industry while showing the great white whale as an infernal menace and Ahab as the quintessence of passion. In the end, the former and latter become one. It seems that these two examples are certainly not unique in literature but often demonstrate that genius is not simply located in one small part or even half of the brain, but manages to bring the two facets of human character, rational thought found in the right half of the brain and emotional and creative intensity found in the left half, together in one characteristic body of work which speaks in a single universal language.

Poe's three detective stories preceded almost all forms of detective fiction and contained the kernel of originality, which led to the practices

found in some of the most popular detective fiction writing currently practiced. This includes the "noir" form with its darkly menacing qualities (Cornell Woolrich). "The Murder of Marie Roget" led to the pathologist-detective (Rhode's Dr. Priestly, Freeman's Thorndyke, P.D. James, P. Cornwell, K. Reich, etc.). The docudrama (*Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by Behrendt). The violence-dominant school from Spillane's Mike Hammer to Harris' Hector the cannibal Lecter and Conan Doyle's "The Case of Lady Sannox." It spills onto the horror themes found in the work of a spate of contemporary writers dominated by Stephen King. One of Stephen King's short stories, *The Reach*, a magnificent ghost story full of Victorian atmosphere and human detail achieves well-deserved applause.

In contrast, Lovecraft's work seems relatively devoid of rational thought and his characters so lacking in warmth that his best efforts fall short of the standards Poe set. Only in his critical essays did Lovecraft come close to Poe the editor and critic.

Poe's influence spread far beyond the detective story he invented (for further details concerning his contribution to the genre, see Howard Haycraft's essay on Poe in his important reference *Murder for Pleasure*). The term "mystery fiction" (as opposed to detective fiction) encompasses a much larger reach to include not only horror fiction in which one never quite knows which turns the story will take or end — but also suspense stories (among the best written were those of Patricia Highsmith) such as the "Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Black Cat," and Cryptograms exemplified by those found in the "Gold Bug" and Conan Doyle's "The Dancing Men."

It seems incredible that Poe's short stories should have influenced the imaginative skills of authors at work almost 150 years after his death. More astonishing is the endless growth in readership and consumer demand for his work. But it is, I believe, the universality I mentioned above that is at the heart of his and his followers' success.

Larry Solomon

Editor's note: Caxtonian Larry Solomon is a medical doctor whose own education has been in both the medical sciences and literary studies. A Caxtonian since 1995, Dr. Solomon is a collector of Poe, detective fiction, and science fiction.

Harlem Renaissance Reached into the Past and the Future

(Final In a Series of IV)

Harlem Renaissance writers paid homage to earlier writers. Anne Spencer remembered, for example, Paul Lawrence Dunbar in a poem by that name:

*Ah, how poets sing and die!
Make one song and Heaven takes it;
Have one heart and Beauty breaks it:*

They wrote of Harlem the place before it was rediscovered by white folks during the Renaissance. Rudolph Fisher returned to Harlem during the movement, after a five-year absence. He couldn't believe its transformation. In "The Caucasian Storms Harlem," he reminisced about the old Harlem. There was Edmonds' "a sure enough honky-tonk, occupying the cellar of a saloon." That's where a "tall brown-skinned girl, unmistakably the one guaranteed in the song to make a preacher lay his Bible down, used to sing and dance her own peculiar numbers." She was known simply as Ether. Before long she escaped her "dingy cage" and became a vaudeville attraction known as Ethel Waters. He wrote of Connor's where "One of the girls there specialized in the Jelly-Roll song, and mad habitues used to fling petitions of greenbacks at her feet — pretty nimble feet they were, too — when she sang that she loved 'em but had to turn 'em down. Over in the corner a group of 'fays would huddle and grin and think they were having a wild time. Slumming. But they were still very few in those days." There were other places that were "Negro through and through. Negroes supported them, not merely now and then, but steadily, night after night."

Five years later, Harlem had changed. The best of the black cabarets, he wrote, "have changed their names and turned white." He was surprised when he entered a place where he and his friends once frequented. Upon entering, he wrote: "I drew a deep breath and looked about, seeking familiar faces. What a lot of 'fays! I thought, as I noticed the number of white guests. Presently I grew puzzled and began to stare, then I gaped — and gasped. I found myself wondering if this was the right place — if, indeed, this was Harlem at all. I suddenly became aware that, except for the



A 1925 publication from the Harlem Renaissance, featuring Roland Hayes, (Courtesy of the Newberry Library.)

waiters and members of the orchestra, I was the only Negro in the place."

Langston Hughes also wrote about the pre- and post-Renaissance Harlem and its people. Put down the 1920s, he wrote, "for the rise of Roland Hayes, who packed Carnegie Hall, the rise of Paul Robeson in New York and London, of Florence Mills over two continents, of Rose McClendon in Broadway parts that never measured up to her, the booming voice of Bessie Smith and the low moan of Clara on thousands of records, and the rise of that grand comedienne of song, Ethel Waters.... Put down the 1920s for Louis Armstrong and Gladys Bentley and Josephine Baker." Hughes' poetry of the era depicts Harlem Life. In "The Weary Blues" he wrote,

*Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard the Negro play.*

In "Jazzonia" he wrote,

*In a Harlem cabaret
Six long-headed jazzers play.
A dancing girl whose eyes are bold
Lifts high a dress of silken gold.*

Then white people began to come to Harlem in droves. In "When the Negro Was in Vogue" Hughes wrote that "Ordinary Negroes didn't like the incursion of whites into their community after sundown, "flooding the little cabarets and bars where formerly only colored people laughed and sang, and where now the strangers were given the best ringside tables to sit and stare at the Negro customers — like amusing animals in a zoo.... The lindy-hoppers at the Savoy even began to practice acrobatic routines, and to do absurd things for the entertainment of the whites, that probably never would have entered their heads to attempt merely for their own effortless amusement."

He was philosophic about the transformation, however. In one way or another, he concluded, "everything goes... and lots of fine things in Harlem nightlife have disappeared... since it became utterly commercial, planned for the downtown tourist trade, and therefore dull."

Renaissance authors wrote of all things. They wrote of mountains, Africa, rivers, migration, and the like. They wrote of human pain, courage, suicide, joy, and, always, hope. "I, too sing America," wailed Hughes:

*To-morrow
I'll sit at the table
When company comes
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
Eat in the kitchen"
Then.*

In "America" he wrote,
*Who am I?
I am the ghetto child,
I am the dark baby
I am you
And the blond tomorrow
And yet
I am one sole self,
America seeking the stars.*

The end of the Renaissance came when the Great Depression hit. Harlem was not the same afterwards. Unemployment kept blacks away from Harlem's night life. Financial despair also kept whites from spending their money in Harlem. But the

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Edgar Allan Poe Had Links to The Caxton Club in Club's Early Years

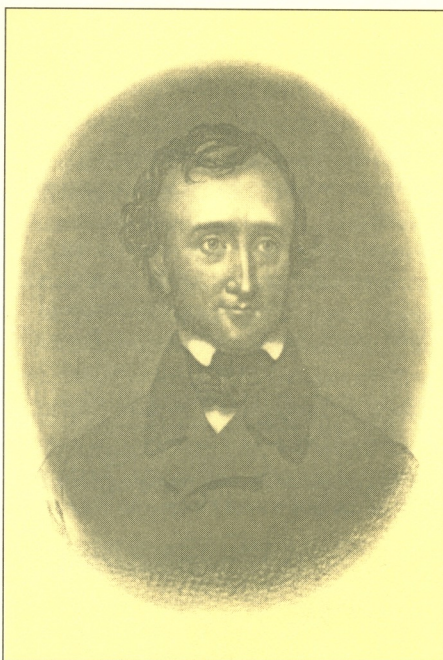
A popular encyclopedia refers to Edgar Allan Poe as "one of America's greatest poets, short-story writers, and literary critics." He certainly was for me in my youth, as evidenced by the worn pages of my copy of *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, published by the Modern Library in 1938. His short stories fascinated me. Although my reading tastes as a teenager did not include poetry, I read every one of his poems in the book, and I enjoyed them. My wife read "The Raven" to our daughter when she was still in diapers.

Poe led a checkered life. Born in Boston in 1809, he was given a classical early education in Scotland and England. At 17 he entered the University of Virginia but had to withdraw when his guardian withheld financial support because of his gambling. Biographers differ on details about his early life, some depicting him as dissolute, while others refer to him as an excellent student, the victim of a stern foster father, John Allan.

Poe chose a literary career. At age 18 he published a pamphlet of youthful Byronic poems, *Tamerlane, and Other Poems*, and six years later he launched his short stories with "MS. Found in a Bottle," for which he won a \$50 prize. His writings focus on Romanticism, the occult, and satanism. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* assesses his writings as follows: "His keen and sound judgment as appraiser of contemporary literature, his idealism and musical gift as a poet, his dramatic art as a storyteller, considerably appreciated in his lifetime, secured him a prominent place among universally known men of letters."

In addition to his poems and short stories, Poe wrote and published serious essays and literary criticism in various journals. His "Poetic Principle" relates his thoughts on poetry, and his reviews of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* define his insights into the nature of originality, allegory, and the short story.

Poe's later years were marked by a series of adversities. He died at the age of 40 under mysterious circumstances on October 7, 1849. The events that link Poe to The Caxton Club took place in the tragic last six months of his life. They began in December 1848 in Oquawka, a quaint Illinois town on the Mississippi River about 25 miles west of



Portrait of Edgar Allan Poe engraved by J. Sartain from the original picture in the collection of R. W. Griswold, *Collected Works*, vol. I.

Galesburg. Edward Howard Norton Patterson had just taken over management of his father's newspaper, the *Oquawka Spectator*. The ambitious young man set out to make a name for himself in the literary world. He wrote to Poe proposing that he come west and join him in founding a literary journal that would be published in his print shop. Poe did not receive Patterson's letter until the following April. When he finally got it, he was enthused by the proposal, responded favorably by letter, and initiated an exchange of letters that continued until Poe's death in October.

This incident in Poe's life went unnoticed by most biographers and publishers until 1889, when Eugene Field published an article in a Chicago journal, *America*. Field described the incident, printed the text of Patterson's three letters to Poe and of Poe's four responses, and added a description of later unsuccessful efforts by Patterson to publish the complete works of the poet he admired. Field did not mention how he came upon Poe's letters or where they resided. In fact, the letters were in the collection of a prominent Chicago bibliophile and philanthropist, Charles L. Hutchinson, whom Field no doubt knew as one of the Saints and Sinners at McClurg's bookstore.

Four years later Herbert Stuart Stone and Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, two young members of the class of 1894 in Harvard College, founded a fledgling partnership in a fine press in Cambridge, MA., that would become known as Stone & Kimball. They moved to Chicago in 1894 and by the next year had established themselves in Chicago's Caxton Building (see *Caxtonian*, Vol. III, No. 10, page 3). These two energetic publishers had produced no less than 34 works by the end of 1895, including the founding of The Chap-Book. Along with Charles L. Hutchinson, owner of the Poe letters, Stone found time to become one of the founders of The Caxton Club in January 1895.

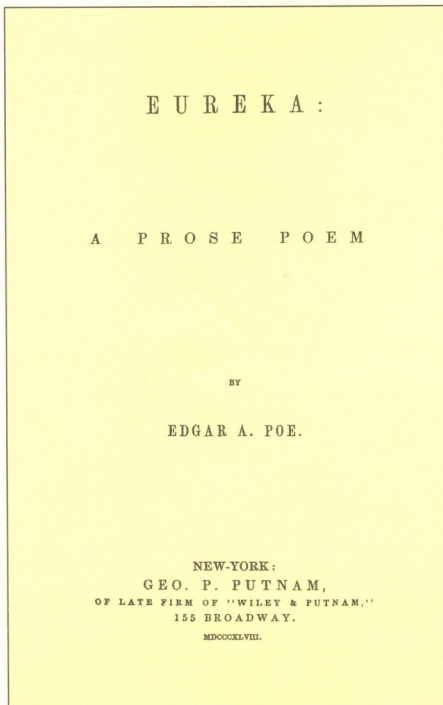
Stone & Kimball undertook their most ambitious publication in the same year, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, "newly collected and edited, with a memoir, critical introductions, and notes, by Edmund Clarence Stedman and George Edward Woodberry." It was issued in 10 volumes. The trade edition was bound in green cloth, stamped on the spine with gold lettering and floral decorations. The edition was illustrated with 12 portraits of Poe and his family, three engravings of Poe's homes, 20 plates by Albert Edward Sterner to accompany the poems and short stories, and one reproduction of a Poe manuscript. A large paper edition was also issued. According to Sidney Kramer, who wrote the history of Stone & Kimball, "this has remained the standard edition of Poe." My copy of the trade edition resides near my bed with my Eugene Fieldiana and other cherished books.

As these volumes were issued in 1895 and 1896, the newly-formed Caxton Club embarked on its own ambitious publication program. Hutchinson and Stone were both founding members of the club. Hutchinson was its first treasurer, and he was elected vice president in 1897 and president in 1899. He served on the Council for 30 years, from 1895 to 1925. Stone served on the Publications Committee from 1895 until 1903. The vigorous Caxton Club publication program during these formative years is related in our club history. No doubt Stone and Hutchinson collaborated in selecting the club's fourth publication, a reprint of the Field article in *America* about the Poe letters. It appeared in

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Eureka

(Continued from Page One)



Title page of first edition of Poe's *Eureka* (1848). From the collection of John Astin. Used through his courtesy.

employed both logic and intuition in solving his cases, or the gigantic, unfathomable intellect of the Lady Ligeia.

And here is a possible reason for the heretofore poor treatment of *Eureka*. Until recently, we in the Western world have been generally dualistic in our thinking, and have often had difficulty with ideas that were not "either this or that." Contrast the ancient Buddhist teaching, the Muryogi Sutra, which, in describing the "true entity of life," begins with what it is not: "The entity is neither existence nor nonexistence; neither cause nor circumstance; neither square nor round; neither blue nor yellow," and so on with over 30 so-called "negatives." Similarly, Poe attacks sole reliance on reasoning.

He is detailed in his definition of intuition: "...but now let me recur to the idea which I have already suggested as that alone which we can properly entertain of intuition. It is *but the conviction arising from these inductions or deductions of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason, or defy our capacity of expression.*"

In "Marginalia," Poe said, "The intuitive and seemingly casual perception by which we often attain knowledge, when reason herself falters and abandons the effort, appears to resemble the sudden glancing at a star, by which we see it more clearly than by a direct gaze; or the half closing the eyes in looking at a plot of grass the more fully to appreciate the intensity of its green."

Though he was rather well versed in the science of his day, and though he was expert in reason and logic, in expressing something as profound as the essence of life and death, Poe uses all the tools in his kit, going beyond reason and logic, ultimately to art, to poetry, for his expression. In the brief introduction to *Eureka*, he gives us the clue to its reading: "To the few who love me and whom I love—to those who

expresses the inexpressible. Because *Eureka* is so pure, and so honest, because it voyages so deeply into the inner world of instinct and intuition, it will resonate with human beings for centuries, as long as they read it not as science, not as theology, but "as an Art-Product alone."

Poe once wrote that a man could revolutionize the entire world of human thought by writing and publishing a very little book, "its title should be simple—a few plain words—My Heart Laid Bare. But—this little book must be true to its title..." No man could write this book, he says, even if he dared. "The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen."

In considering *Eureka*, it seems that Poe has written such a book.



John Astin, left, and Caxtonian editor Robert Cotner lunch together at the Rosebud on Rush Street, Chicago, during Astin's tour at the Mercury Theater, fall 1997. (From the collection of Robert Cotner.)

feel rather than to those who think—to the dreamers and those who put faith in dreams as in the only realities—I offer this Book of Truths, not in its character of Truth-Teller, but for the Beauty that abounds in its Truth; constituting it true. To these I present the composition as an Art-Product alone, let us say as a Romance; or, if I be not urging too lofty a claim, as a Poem."

It is through a work of art that the poet

Editor's note: We welcome John Astin to this issue of the Caxtonian, which features Edgar Allan Poe, America's important poet, short story writer, and critic. Astin, who holds degrees from Johns Hopkins University and the University of Minnesota, shares in this article his insights into what he considers Poe's most important work, Eureka.

Poe Links

(Continued from Page Five)

1898 under a new Caxton title, *Some Letters of Edgar Allan Poe to E. H. N. Patterson of Oquawka, Illinois, with Comments by Eugene Field*. Hutchinson made the original Poe letters available for reproduction in the Caxton publication. Originally published at a price of \$3, this book now commands \$200 in the antiquarian market.

The link between Edgar Allan Poe and The Caxton Club brings our attention back to the dedication of early Caxtonians to our primary objective, the publishing every five to 10 years of "a major publication that adds significantly to the literature of...subjects related to Midwestern literature and history, and the book arts."

Frank J. Piehl
Caxton Historian

Harlem

(Continued from Page Four)

artists did not stop producing. Writers continued to emerge. The editors of *African American Anthology* summarized the period: "The Renaissance was over, to be revived in significant different forms at later points in African-American history." They added, "The art of the Harlem Renaissance represents a prodigious achievement for a people hardly more than a half-century removed from slavery and enmeshed in the chains of a dehumanizing segregation."

In later years, of course, America reaped the benefits of the genius of the Harlem era of American literature. Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, Gwendolyn Brooks, as well as Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg all were inspired by and indebted to the writers of the Harlem Renaissance.

Sherman Beverly, Jr.

Chronology of Books by Richard H. Love

b. 1939

- Harriet Randall Lumis: An American Impressionist* (traveling exhibition, 3 November 1977- 19 March 1978).
William Chadwick, 1897-1962. American Impressionist (exhibition catalogue), Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1979.
Cassett: The Independent, R. H. Love Galleries, 1980.
John Barber, The Artist, the Man, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co, 1981.
Kenneth Noland, Major Works, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1986.
Helen Hamilton (1889-1970): An American Post-Impressionist (traveling exhibition, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1986.
Goodnough, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1987.
Louis Ritmann: From Chicago to Giverny, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1989.
Theodore Earl Butler: Emergence from Monet's Shadow, Haase-Mumm Publishing Co., 1985.
Carl W. Peters: American Scene Painter from Rochester to Rockport, University of Rochester Press, 1998.

Binder Elizabeth Kner Dies

Caxtonians note with sorrow the death on February 26 of Elizabeth Kner, noted bookbinder. She was 100 years old. Born in Gyoma, Hungary, she studied bookbinding in Germany, and started a bindery in Budapest, specializing in fine leather bindings. She remained in hiding in Budapest throughout World War II, came to the United States in 1949, and was employed in book restoration at the Newberry Library. She worked in her own bindery from 1953 until her retirement at age 85.

Her brother, Albert Kner, came from Hungary to the United States in 1940 and became a designer for R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company. He joined the Caxton Club in 1949 and served on the publications Committee for several years. Although Elizabeth Kner never joined The Caxton Club, she bound The Caxton Club's 49th publication, *Doctor Faust*.

Frank J. Piehl
Caxton Historian

A Chronology of the Books of Edgar Allan Poe

(1809-1849)

- Tamerlane and other Poems by a Bostonian*. Calvin F.S. Thomas, 1827.
Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and other Poems, Hatche and Dunning, 1829.
The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym, etc. [by anonymous], Harper and Brothers, 1838.
Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, Lea and Blanchard, 1840.
The Prose Romances. Uniform Serial Edition No. 1. William Graham, 1843.
Tales. Wiley and Putnam, 1845.
The Raven and other Poems, Wiley and Putnam, 1845.
Mesmerism "In Articulo Mortis," Short & Co. (London), 1846.
Eureka: A Prose Poem, Geo. P. Putnam, 1848.
 Collected Editions
The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe: with notices of his Life and Genius, 4 Vols., ed. N. P. Willis, J.R. Lowell, and R. W. Griswold, and J.S. Redfield, 1850 (vols. 1 and 2) and 1853 (vols. 3 and 4).
The Works of Edgar Allan Poe, 10 Vols., ed. E. C. Stedman and G.E. Woodbury, Stone and Kimball, 1894 (vols. 1-4) and 1895 (vols 5-10).

Most of Poe's stories, poems, criticisms, etc. made their first appearance in the literary newspapers of the day — such as *Southern Literary Messenger*, magazines such as *Burton's Gentleman*, *The Casket*, *Graham's Magazine*, *The Ladies Companion*, and *Godey's Ladies Book*; yearly holiday books such as *The Gift* and *The Opal*.

The most complete bibliography is probably *The Poe Log* by Dwight Thomas and David K. Jackson, G. K. Hall and Co., 1987. This volume contains a day-by-day account of all of Poe's work, correspondence, criticisms, and even details about his failures such as the *Penn Magazine*.

Assembled by Larry Solomon

Exhibition Committee Creates Collection Survey

The Caxton Council created the Exhibition Committee to promote the book arts through a program of public exhibitions. The Exhibition Committee will work in tandem with the Publications Committee to coordinate efforts and produce exhibition-related publications as appropriate.

The first initiative of this new committee is a club membership collection survey. The purpose of the survey, which will be sent to members in April, is to gain a better idea of what club members have in their collections and to compile a list of possible exhibition topics based on members' holdings and ideas.

Exhibition Committee members are: Kim Coventry (Chair), Kathryn DeGraff, William Drendle, Ed Hirschland, Susan Levy, and Alice Schreyer.

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Book Marks

Luncheon Programs

Your Special Luncheon Invitation. . .

Date: May 8, 1998

Place: Mid-Day Club

Speaker: Hayward Blake

Caxtonians have been waiting 38 years for this month's luncheon program. Hayward Blake, past president, and designer of some of our finest invitations and directories of recent years, will finally share with us from his lifetime of observation and collecting of arrows, in a program called "Reflection on The Arrow." In this unusual presentation, Blake will present a summary of his life-long pursuit of one of the oldest and most universally understood symbols. From cave drawings to the ubiquitous computer control, the arrow has engaged humankind in its use and symbolic mysteries, seeking direction and avoiding the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortunes."

After all these years of designing other people's books, Blake will, as of this meeting, begin an aggressive attack on his own book, "Head, Shaft & Tail," originally given as a final paper at the Institute of Design at Illinois Institute of Technology. He will inform and entertain us with slides and an exhibit of arrows – found, purchased, and received as gifts.

Admission to this luncheon program — other than the luncheon charge — is a literary reference to a book title or a phrase (i.e.: I shot an arrow into the air...), or an object that is an arrow or that uses an arrow as a visual and physical device. Caxtonians are urged "to be like fletcher" and shoot straight to this month's luncheon meeting!

*Edward Quattrocchi
Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs*

All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of the First National Bank of Chicago, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30 p.m. Dinner meetings begin with spirits, 5 p.m., dinner 6 p.m., lecture, 7 p.m. The First National Bank of Chicago's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5 p.m. to guests of the Mid-Day Club. When you leave, please tell the parking attendant you were at the Mid-Day Club, and your parking fee will be \$5.25. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 312/255-3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$35.

Internet users may visit The Caxton Club at the following address: <http://www.caxtonclub.org>

Dinner Programs

Your Special Dinner Invitation. . .

Date: May 20, 1998

Place: Mid-Day Club

Speaker: Richard H. Love

Caxtonian Richard H. Love is an institution as well as a person. Institutionally, we know him from the R.H. Love Galleries, one of Chicago's fine private galleries, featuring American painting, in one of the most beautiful facilities — the magnificent Nickerson House, at Erie and Wabash streets. Personally, we know him as scholar, artist, art historian, teacher, and collector.

In the managing of the R.H. Love Galleries, Love has assembled one of the most extensive libraries in the city, featuring American literature, American history, and American art history. He is a well-know personality on both radio and television in Chicago and beyond. In the mid-1970s he hosted a program, "Comments on Fine Arts," over WEFM and WBBM. He opened a new chapter in American art when he developed "R.H. Love on American Art" on Channel 26, Chicago. This program was later redesigned as American Art Forum with Richard Love and was nationally syndicated through the Central Education Network for public television stations.

A graduate of the University of Illinois Chicago and Northwestern University, he has studied in Europe and is considered a specialist in early Christian and Renaissance Art. His own scholarship led him into writing, and he has now 10 books to his credit, including his most recent, due off the University of Rochester Press later this year. This is a study of the great American Regionalist, *Carl Peters, Carl W. Peters: American Scene Painter from Rochester to Rockport*. An 800-plus-page book, Love's study of Peters will feature more than 100 full-color illustrations of Peters' art. (See page 7 for a complete list of Love's books.)

His presentation at the Caxton dinner meeting, "Carl W. Peters: On the Road to Publication," will give background for his biographical and critical study of the artist as well as trace the process of publication at a major university press. Copies of many of Love's books will be available to dinner guests when Love speaks.

*C. Fred Kittle
Vice President and
Program Chair*