The Authorship of the "Paulding-Drayton Review"

Editor's Note: With the appearance of recent studies that assume Poe's authorship of a controversial defense of slavery in the 1836 Southern Literary Messenger, we thought it an opportune time to review the conflicting claims and evidence for and against ascribing this review to Poe. We therefore asked I. V. Ridgely, currently at work on an edition of Poe's contributions to the Messenger, to address once more the matter of Poe's authorship. Professor Ridgely, rather than writing a conventional review of the two books under discussion, focuses on the issue of attribution. Readers of the newsletter should note that since the solicitation of Professor Ridgely's essay, other publications have appeared that bear relevance to the discussion below: a reprinting of Sidney Kaplan's introduction to The Narrative of Arthur Pym in his American Studies in Black and White: Selected Essays (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1991) and essays by John Carlos Rowe and G. R. Thompson in the recently published proceedings of the 1988 conference, "Arthur Gordon Pym and Contemporary Criticism."

Both of these wide-ranging studies contain sections on Poe, with particular attention to the ways in which his views on race and slavery may be reflected in his fiction. In the first, Joan Dayan, writing a chapter on "Romance and Race," traces her interpretation of his racial views through several tales and the Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym. In "Ethnocentrism Decentered," a section of her study which focuses on Pym, Dana D. Nelson sees a "recent trend to sweep Poe's politics under the rug" and considers how such a "trend toward a depoliticized and dehistoricized reading of the Poe oeuvre concomitantly 'saves' Poe for a canon increasingly skeptical of texts that support human oppression." She adds: "I am not suggesting that acknowledging the racist dimension of Poe's work should remove his works from the canon, but I think we must at least consider the cultural work performed now by masking that aspect of his work."

What both Dayan and Nelson see as among the acts of "masking" is the disinclination by most scholars to accept as Poe's the review of two books on slavery which appeared in the April 1836 Southern Literary Messenger (SLM 2: 336-39), of which he was editor. Why is assigning to Poe authorship of this review so crucial to them? Clearly it is because, accepted as evidence, it can provide the critic with a more extended, more theoretical, and more emotional defense of racism and slavery than can be found in the few comments that are unquestionably his. For Dayan, who has no doubt about Poe's authorship, this review, emphasizing the master-slave bond, is revelatory because it is "what could be called Poe's most disturbing, because most authentic, 'love poem'...." As support for the attribution to Poe, both critics cite approvingly an article by Bernard Rosenthal, "Poe, Slavery, and the Southern Literary Messenger: A Reexamination," published in the December 1974 Poe Studies (7: 29-38). Before the persuasions of Dayan and Nelson lead us toward a new orthodoxy, it would be well to look again at the strength of Rosenthal's "reexamination."

The review in question is headed simply "Slavery"; below this caption are listed two works: James K. Paulding's Slavery in the United States and the anonymous The South Vindicated..., now attributed to William Drayton. A reader of the "Paulding-Drayton Review" (Rosenthal's title) quickly sees that this is less a book review than it is an excuse for a proslavery essay. As Rosenthal notes, it was printed as Poe's by James A. Harrison in his Virginia edition (8: 265-75); but, after the publication in 1924 of a letter from Poe to the prominent proslavery spokesman Beverley Tucker (to which I will return), it was credited to Tucker by William Doyle Hull in his 1941 dissertation on the Poe canon. Rosenthal's apparently inclusive article is devoted to rebutting this widely accepted attribution and to returning authorship to Poe.

Rosenthal is concerned first with demonstrating that the proslavery ideas expressed by Poe in other notices are

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"Paulding-Drayton Review"
(continued from page 1)

compatible with those in "Paulding-Drayton." He cites four, all in the SLM; those of (1) Joseph H. Ingraham's The South-West (2: 122-23); (2) Anne Grant's Memoirs (2: 511-12); (3) R. M. Bird's Sheppard Lee (2: 662-67); (4) Thomas R. Dew's Address (2: 721-22). (He also instances a later unpublished review by Poe of John L. Carey's Domestic Slavery; the text does not survive.) Now, there should be no doubt that Poe shared in the racism and proslavery sentiment of his time and place; he also expressed contempt for abolitionists. But Rosenthal's extrapolations—his quotations from the texts reviewed—have the effect of obscuring the actual extent of Poe's remarks. In (1) there is most of one paragraph; in (2) one sentence, introducing a quotation; in (3) one paragraph, referring to abolitionist activities; in (4) praise for Dew, a leading proslavery spokesman and president of William and Mary; the review deals with the College's curriculum, and there is no reference to slavery except in a quoted excerpt from Dew's address. In short, all of Poe's printed comments on slavery would fill no more than a longish paragraph. But the issue here is not the fact of Poe's racist attitudes. And it is not whether Poe could have written "Paulding-Drayton," unique though such a long piece promoting the "positive good" theory of slavery would be in his canon. It is, simply, what proof is there that he did?

There is only one piece of documentary evidence, and it is one which Rosenthal must convincingly challenge if the rest of his brief for Poe is to have any weight. This is a letter from Poe to Tucker, dated May 2, 1836 (full text in John Ward Ostrom, ed., Letters [New York, 1966] 1:90-91). Two paragraphs are relevant. In the first, Poe, speaking for the owner of the SLM, Thomas W. White, writes: "At Mr. White's request I write to apologise for the omission of your verses 'To a Coquette' in the present [i.e., April] number of the Messenger. Upon making up the form containing them it was found impossible to get both the pieces in, and their connection one with the other rendered it desirable not to separate them—they were therefore left for the May number." In the second paragraph, Poe refers to his own editorial duties: "I must also myself beg your pardon for making a few immaterial alterations in your article on Slavery, with a view of so condensing it as to get it in the space remaining at the end of the number. One very excellent passage in relation to the experience of a sick bed has been, necessarily, omitted altogether." As Rosenthal notes, both Hull and Tucker's biographer, Percy W. Turrentine, assigned "Paulding-Drayton" to Tucker on the basis of this comment, but both had problems. Turrentine observed that it does not come at the end of the number (it is followed by another review and a long supplement of notices of the the SLM). Both also felt that Poe's remarks about "a sick bed" were inconsistent with what is printed in the text; he must, therefore, have changed his mind about about omission of the passage just before publication. Rosenthal seizes upon this last point. He argues that by the date of the letter the April SLM had already been been issued, since it was reviewed in the New Yorker for May 7; for Hull's and Turrentine's suggestions of last-minute changes to be valid, a harried Poe, after quickly resetting forms to alter the text, would have needed incredible luck with mail-

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The Poe Studies Association Newsletter provides a forum for the scholarly and informal exchange of information on Edgar Allan Poe, his life, works, and influence. Please send information on publications and completed research. Queries about research in progress are also welcome. We will consider scholarly or newsworthy notes, which bear relevance to the PSA membership. Send materials to Kent Ljungquist, Department of Humanities, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-2287. We welcome suggestions designed to make the newsletter a more stimulating and useful publication.

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carrying boats for the SLM to have arrived in New York in time for this review. We should be aware of what Rosenthal has done here; with a kind of patter about timetables he has diverted our attention from Poe's own words and has refocused it on Hull's and Turrentine's mistaken interpretations of them. He then caps his verbal ledgerdemain with an unwarranted conclusion: he triumphant-ly announces that, with "the basic explanation of the inconsistencies found by Hull and Turrentine rendered implausible, if not impossible, there is scarcely anything left to suggest that Tucker wrote the Paulding-Drayton review."

What is actually left, however, is the plain sense of Poe's letter. Of course, it was written after the April SLM had appeared; Poe is telling Tucker not what he plans to do but what, as makeup editor, he has already done: he has made "a few immaterial alterations in your article on Slavery," including omitting a "passage in relation to the experience of a sick bed," "with a view of so condensing it as to get it in the space remaining at the end of the number" (italics added). In the the printed text there are, as Hull and Turrentine noted, two anecdotes about "sick beds." But there are also four other unelaborated allusions to sick beds; Poe's cut could have been made in material "in relation to" any of these "experiences."

A fuller understanding of Poe's explanation to Tucker requires some knowledge about the physical makeup of the March and April issues of the SLM. An "Advertisement" on the cover of the March number informed readers that its publication had been delayed because of the Proprietor's (i.e., White's) desire to get in a long address by Thomas R. Dew (2: 261-82), which is on the "Federative Republican System of Government." (It is is not, as Rosenthal misleadingly calls it, "an essay on slavery.") The notice continues: "To counterbalance this delay, 16 pages of extra matter are given. The April Number...will contain, therefore, 16 pages less than usual." (italics in original; full text given in Dwight Thomas and David K. Jackson, The Poe Log [Boston, 1987], p. 196). This is accurate: the March issue consisted of ten eight-page (quarto) signatures; the April issue had only six, the last being a self-contained (and self-puffing) "Supplement" of critical notices of the SLM. (The point is that the supplement has no textual connection to the preceding signature and was probably set before it.) Space was thus tight in April, but Poe managed nevertheless to get in his own "A Tale of Jerusalem" (a reprint), "Maelzel's Chess-Player," and the long "Drake-Halleck" review. The latter led off the final section of "Critical Notices:" the space now "remaining at the end of the number" (i.e., in the last eight-page signature which he had to fill) was slightly more than four pages. What Poe placed in the form were the "Paulding-Drayton review" (captioned with the single word "Slavery") and another headed "Brunnens of Nassau." Rosenthal points to a puzzle here: why would Poe have made cuts in a review by Tucker when Tucker could see that the final notice is largely quotation and therefore a better candidate for shortening if space was limited? The question is unanswerable: we can guess but we cannot know why Poe resolved his space problems as he did. But is our lack of explanation grounds for canceling out his unambiguous statement to Tucker?

Rosenthal, of course, wants to argue that it does, but his tactic is so weak that even he admits its inadequacy. He speculates that what Poe is talking about may be an earlier SLM article by Tucker refuting Blackstone's views on slavery. Perhaps Tucker wanted Poe to have copies of this article reprinted as a pamphlet. Or perhaps it's some other essay. But Rosenthal's own comment leaves us little to debate: "My own speculation has the serious weakness of postulating that an offprint would be called a 'number,' and I am not ready to defend a guess as a fact. Nor have I been able to locate an actual offprint."

In the rest of his long essay, Rosenthal dodges further mention of Poe's letter and goes on to present what he takes to be other evidence for Poe's authorship. He also makes a brief (and unproductive) attempt to show specific parallels between "Paulding-Drayton" and passages in Poe's works. He does not tell us whether he made the same sort of comparison for Tucker beyond the weak claim that Tucker's prose shows a heavy reliance on colons and semicolons and the review does not. I have space here only to suggest what a more enterprising (and necessary) demonstration for Tucker would show. Confining myself to what Tucker had published thus far in the SLM, I would instance first his "Note to Blackstone's Commentaries...on the Subject of Domestic Slavery..." (1: 227-31; identified as Tucker's in the volume index). This article and "Paulding-Drayton" share these specific points (first page reference to "Blackstone," second to "Paulding-Drayton"): (1) masters' care of sick slaves (1: 230; 2: 338-39); (2) reference to slaves as "property" (1: 231; 2: 337); (3) citation of Edmund Burke on emancipation (direct in 1: 231; inferen-tially in 2: 337, in a discussion of the French Revolution); (4) attacks on "philanthropy" (i.e., the movement for ending slavery on humanitarian grounds) (1: 231; 2: 338-39); (5) allusion to recent events in the West Indies (i.e., slave revolts) (1: 231; 2: 337). Not one of these references can be found anywhere in Poe's known comments on slavery. I would add one more point—a small and curious item, but one which offers a link between Tucker and "Paulding-Drayton." This is the background: In December 1834, before Poe had any connection with the journal, the SLM published the text of a "Law Lecture" given by Tucker (1: 145-54). This was directly followed by a short anonymous piece entitled "The March of Mind," a conservative's discussion of human progress (1: 154-56). Tucker makes a direct allusion to it in his SLM review of George Bancroft's History of the United States (1: 587-91;

(continued on page 6)
The Essential Poe: Tales of Horror and Mystery, illustrated and with an introduction by Ronald Porcelli.


The striking dust jacket of this book, with the "Stella daguerreotype reproduced on the front and a picture of the illustrator on the back, calls Mr. Porcelli "the art world's master of the macabre." While I have been able to find no corroboration for this designation—in art indices, book reviews, lists of modern illustrators—the twenty-six full-page pictures for a like number of tales certainly entitle him to praise for some ingenuity and originality. We must overlook the considerable originality in Mr. Porcelli's spelling and sense of biographical details in the eight-page Introduction, nor is this "the definitive Poe anthology" promised by the jacket. It is, however, a fine example of the enthusiasm engendered in popular illustrators of magazines and books for teenagers—the target, I believe, of The Lantern Press's publishing efforts.

The contents circumscribe the Gothic, detective, and grotesque fictions, such as "Metzengerstein," "Berenice," "Usher," "Red Death," "Gold-Bug," "Hop-Frog," and "Black-Cat." The style used for most of the illustrations gives the effect of a woodcut: a background of fine line patterns which vary from one large area of the picture to another and therefore permit striking contrasts of gray tonalities. Probably the artist first used scratchboard and much larger dimensions for his illustrations. These were then markedly reduced, to judge from the tiny signatures of the artist in the corners. The delicacy of the lines and the cross-hatching, then, is partly the result of the severe diminution, but still much credit is owed him for the variety of the patterns, which differ in their sizes, shapes, and directions; there is great technical skill displayed in their organization and arrangement. The decorative effect of these masses and backgrounds may have derived from well known works by Harry Clarke, who, however, makes use of intense and contrasting black, which is missing here. The "Maelström" swirl is closest to Clarke's in image-composition.

Of course, other Poe illustrators come to one's mind: his black cat on the head of the murdered wife, seen through a broken heart-shaped hole in the brick wall, is like Albert Schindehütte's in the beautiful Edgar Allan Poe's Album (Hamburg, 1982). [See Burton R. Pollin, Images of Poe's Works, article 650.] The "let-out" effect of irregular openings for varying glimpses, as in his "Cask of Amontillado," may be a heritage from Magritte; likewise, his mirror reflections for "scenes within the scene," as in the "Rue Morgue" and "Purloined Letter." His "Hop-Frog" view of the king and his ape-like courtiers burning alive while suspended by their chains from the chandelier recall the well-known 1884 picture of Frederic Church, widely reprinted.

Sometimes the spirit of the tale is perverted through the illustration, as in "The Assignation," which emphasizes Egyptian decorations on the wall, but generally there is a direct and effective pictorial comment, as in "Metzengerstein" with its anguished baron and mechanistic, feral horse, or "Usher" with a small figure of Madeline entering through a portal topped by a large bust of the brother over the door (as in the "The Raven"). The "Oval Portrait" shows the pensive wife enframed by bones and skulls. Marie Rogêt, picturesquely strangled, floats in a decorative watery element of interlocking, white-capped freeforms. The old man in "The Tell-Tale Heart" cowers under a grotesque reflection of the murderous intruder on the wall over the bed. In "The Gold-Bug" the two private skeletons, starkly white against a pebbly background, seem to be gaily dancing around the embraced coffer in our directly overhead view. For "The Premature Burial," white scratch marks made by two clutching hands speak eloquently. The husband is shown peacefully tied to and at rest on "The Oblong Box," amid decorative marine life. "Thou Art the Man" is accorded a rare illustration—a lone, forlorn horse returning from the murder scene. [There are only twenty-eight for this tale among the thousands of images catalogued in Images of Poe's Works.] "Valdemar" keenly shows a period-type picture of a "flashy" mesmerist.

The identical title-page and penultimate page borders bear elaborate decorations of the central images from the illustrations plus a face of Poe balanced by one of Mr. Porcelli, perhaps another intimation of the latter's self-recommendation. Quite candidly, the artist shows great originality and skill and well demonstrates the ever-increasing popular enthusiasm for the works of Poe. The book therefore belongs in public libraries and in specialist's collections for its naive charm and technical facility.

Burton R. Pollin, Emeritus
CUNY


Walter Kendrick’s *The Thrill of Fear* examines the appeal of what its author refers to as “scary entertainment.” The title of Kendrick’s work might lead readers to suspect that his book will explore the Gothic domain of fear in a manner similar to that employed by Stephen King in *Danse Macabre* (1981) and James B. Twitchell in *Dreadful Pleasures: An Anatomy of Modern Horror* (1985). Kendrick, however, makes clear in his introduction that he is concerned less with meanings and more with feelings. Consequently, he offers us more of a survey of horror’s appeal that an in-depth analysis of the horror genre and, for the most part, presents a lively, entertaining discussion.

Kendrick posits that all forms of horror entertainment arise as a result of the human aversion to death and decay. While this viewpoint will not surprise many readers, Kendrick does provide his audience with an informative historical survey of fright literature. Tracing the development of the Gothic from the eighteenth-century Graveyard Poets to the contemporary horror film, he sees scary entertainment as an art form dedicated to satisfying the human desire to be scared. Kendrick acknowledges that dread and fascination go hand in hand (p. 75), yet he mentions Edmund Burke only once in his study and, perhaps assuming that his readers are familiar with Burke’s *Enquiry*, says virtually nothing about Burke’s notions. He does, however, discuss how the past seems to haunt humans, a fact which has resulted in the contemporary passion for collectibles and memorabilia (p. 265). Other remarks shed interesting light on such topics as M. R. James, pulp magazines, and film.

Kendrick’s attitude toward Poe appears ambivalent. At one point he categorizes Poe’s tales as works that “don’t encourage reflection in the reader” (p. 174), and he seems to agree with Henry James’s oft-quoted assessment of Poe. After referring to Poe as “the most derivative of horrid writers” (p. 175), however, Kendrick goes on to praise as ahead of its time Poe’s method of employing a psychologically troubled narrator. The reader is left to wonder what Kendrick really thinks of Poe’s Gothic writings.

The most glaring weakness evident in Kendrick’s book is the lack of detailed analysis of the specific fears that affect readers; he fails to address adequately the psychological and societal bases of fear. Numerous examples from his text demonstrate his lack of interest in the deeply-rooted, diverse origins of fear. For example, discussing Anne Radcliffe, Kendrick remarks that all she attempted was to scare her audience by using carefully constructed scenes. The important point for her (and, Kendrick believes, for modern horror mavens as well) is not why people become frightened, but merely the fact that they are frightened (p. 91). Later he comments that audiences during the Great Depression loved to be scared, but he concludes that the reasons for such misgivings “remain . . . hard to account for . . .” (p. 219). Does this statement help to explain why he fails to analyze the genesis of particular fears? Near the book’s conclusion, Kendrick makes another statement that might be intended as a justification of the book’s paucity of in-depth discussion. He writes that “scary entertainments never did call for experience and reflection on the part of either their makers or their audiences; all they require is knowledge of their conventions, which can easily be gained without any reference to meaning” (p. 258). Is Kendrick suggesting that fear is barely skin deep, and that horror writers do not concern themselves with anything more than cheap thrills?

The reader searching for a detailed treatment of the varied origins of fear and the numerous meanings lurking beneath the surface of Gothic poetry, fiction, drama, or film will be disappointed with *The Thrill of Fear*. For the horror fan who longs for a fine survey of scary entertainment’s development, however, Kendrick’s quite readable study might be just what the mad-doctor ordered.

Michael L. Burduck
Tennessee Technological University
Current Research and Publications

Valery and Poe: A Literary Legacy by Lois Vines (Ohio University) has been published by New York Univ. Press ($40).

From Bow Street to Baker Street: Mystery, Detection, and Narrative by Martin Kayman (Univ de Coimbra, Portugal) has been published by St. Martin's Press ($45).

Jeffrey Myers's Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy ($30) has been published by Scribners.

Poe's 'Pym': Critical Explorations, edited by Richard Kopley (Pennsylvania State Univ., DuBois), has been published by Duke Univ. Press. The volume presents papers, revised or expanded from the conference on Arthur Gordon Pym, held on Nantucket in 1988.

Thomas Hansen (Wellesley College), in Poe's German Source for 'The Fall of the House of Usher': The Arno Schmidt Connection, Southern Humanities Review 26 (1992): 101-129, analyzes and reprints a story from Blackwood's that clarifies the chain of connections from Poe's German sources. Hansen also evaluates previous scholarly claims about Poe's knowledge of the German language.

Terence Whalen (College of William and Mary) is preparing a book-length study, Edgar Allan Poe and the Masses.

Kent Ljungquist (Worcester Polytechnic Inst.) edits and attributes an uncollected review to Poe in Poe's 'Autography': A New Exchange of Reviews, American Periodicals (Fall 1992).

American Renaissance Literary Report (1992) contains "Poe as a Writer of Songs" by Burton R. Pollin (CUNY, Emeritus). Professor Pollin's edition of Poe's Imaginary Voyages, out of print for several years, will be reprinted (with corrections) by Gordian Press ($75).

The Spectator and the City (Cambridge Univ. Press, $39.50) by Dana Brand ( Hofstra Univ.) contains a chapter on Poe.

PSA at MLA

PSA vice president and program chair J. Gerald Kennedy announces the following program, to be held in conjunction with the 1992 convention of the Modern Language Association in New York City:

Monday, December 28
1:45-3:00 Murray Hill Suite B, Hilton
NEW FACTS IN THE CASE OF M. POE (I)
Presiding: J. Gerald Kennedy (Louisiana State Univ.)
"William Wilson' and Poe's Ambivalence Toward Life Narrative," Jennifer DiLalla Toner (Johns Hopkins Univ.)
"William Wilson': The Poe Poe Invented," Charles Nicol (Indiana State Univ.)
"Edgar Allan Poe and Cryptography," Terence Whalen (College of William and Mary)
Respondent: Daniel Hoffman (Univ. of Pennsylvania)

Monday, December 28
7:15-8:30 Madison Suite A&B, Hilton
Screening of the film "Edgar Allan Poe: Architect of Dreams" by Jean McClure Mudge
Members interested in a social gathering after this screening should contact Liliane Weissberg, Dept. of German, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6305 (215-242-3664; Fax 215-898-0933).

Wednesday, December 30
3:30-4:45 Room 520, Hilton
NEW FACTS IN THE CASE OF M. POE (II)
Presiding: Liliane Weissberg (Univ. of Pennsylvania)
"Poe's 'Siope' and the Author," Timothy H. Scherman (Duke Univ.)
"Melancholia, Not Mourning: Voyaging to Poe's Heart of Darkness," Sybil Wueltich-Brinberg (Hunter College, CUNY)
"Life Writing, Death Writing: Biographical Versions of Poe's Final Hours," Scott Peeples (Louisiana State Univ.)
Respondent: Kenneth Silverman (New York Univ.)

"Paulding-Drayton Review"

(continued from page 3)

attributed to Tucker by Poe in 2: 283). A second allusion occurs at the very beginning of "Paulding-Drayton" (2: 396).

Here is the sequence of relevant quotations: (1) "The March of Mind": “nearly approaching the idolatrous reverence of a Hindoo, for the fabled virtues of his bloody Juggernaut" (1: 154). (2) Tucker's Bancroft review: "How long it shall be before 'the march of mind,' as it is called, in its Juggernaut car, shall pass over us..." (1: 587-88; italics in original). (3) "Paulding-Drayton": "Nulla vestigia retrosum, " is a saying fearfully applicable to what is called the 'march of mind'" (2: 336). The Latin phrase, derived from Horace, Epistles, I, means "no stepping back again"; it introduces a turgid disquisition on the vagaries of human progress that echoes the "March of Mind" piece. Tucker's concern with "The March of Mind" is obvious. That Poe on his own would have decided to refer directly to the same obscure article seems to me beyond probability.

Other strong arguments against Poe's authorship of the review could be adduced in regard to its rhetoric and vocabulary. But I have offered enough information to show that Rosenthal's thesis is, at best, deeply flawed. Future critics should ponder this contradictory evidence before proclaiming his article an "excellent argument" (Dayan) or "impressively thorough" (Nelson).

J. V. Ridgely
Columbia University, Emeritus
American Renaissance) appeared as a 1992 special issue of the v American Review. It included the following papers: Benjamin D. J. v. Ridgely's essay on p. 1.

The American Literature Association has published a special issue (San Diego, May 1992), the PSA sponsored a session on the relationship between Poe and American Studies.

A special issue of the The Columbia History of the American Novel, with the mission of the Baltimore Daily Progress and of the Carnegie Library, has been published.

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The Edmunds Eddings (Western Oregon State College) has been re-elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Poe Studies Association. His term will run from January 1993 through December 1995.


Weissberg is also working to form a nominating committee to choose a slate of officers (president, vice president, members-at-large) for their new terms of service. The membership can expect special mailings to handle these two important items of business.

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The Poe Catalogue: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stephan Loewenthal Collection of Edgar Allan Poe Material ($25) has been published by the 19th Century Shop. The catalogue describes 706 items in the following categories: first editions of Poe's works, including original periodical printings (and reprints); editions and facsimiles; letters; bibliography; biography; criticism; secondary material and ephemera; illustrated editions; collected works; and responses from Poe's contemporaries. Materials for sale have been assembled from the Maier, Blumenthal, Newton, Streeter, Pettit, Doheny, and Martin collections, as well as from other sources. Direct inquiries to the 19th Century Shop, 1047 Hollins St, Baltimore, MD 21223.

As reported in The Trumpet: An Occasional Newsletter from Swann Galleries (Spring-Summer 1992), an archive of newspapers with works by Poe, including some first printings, sold for $12,100 at a 5 March auction.

Gerry Ballantyne, a metallurgist, has cast a Poe bell, a full figure of the author six inches high. For information on the bell ($120 plus shipping), write to Ballantyne Specialties, 12442 W. 110th Terrace, Overland Park, KA 66210.

Dr. Stovall was a specialist in American and early 19th-century English literature. His major publications include: Walt Whitman: Representative Selections (1934); American Idealism (1942); Transitions in American Literary History (joint author, 1955); The Development of American Literary Criticism (editor, 1955); Poems of Edgar Allan Poe (editor, 1965); and Edgar Poe the Poet (1969).

For his two most recent works, he was awarded the University of Virginia's 1964 and 1968 Phi Beta Kappa prizes for the best work of scholarship produced by a member of the University. In January, 1966, he became honorary consultant in American cultural history at the Library of Congress. He retired in 1967.

Editor's Note: This obituary on Floyd H. Stovall, one of the first Honorary Members of the Poe Studies Association, is reprinted with the permission of the Charlottesville Daily Progress and of Claude Stovall of Kerrville, Texas.
J. Albert Robbins, 1914–1992

Readers of the PSA Newsletter will be saddened to learn of the death of J. Albert Robbins, Professor Emeritus of English at Indiana University, on March 4, 1992, in St. Petersburg, Florida, at the age of 77.

Al Robbins will live on in the memory of Poe scholars as the author of a number of solid scholarly works: his Merrill Checklist of Edgar Allan Poe, his ALS surveys of Poe scholarship, and his opening salvo, “The State of Poe Studies,” in the first issue of Poe Newsletter (1968), which helped set the direction and tone of Poe scholarship for many years and can still be read with profit today. But Al was more than a Poe scholar; he was a quiet but effective force in American literary scholarship for his entire career. His wide interests included Robert Frost and Ezra Pound, as well as Whitman, Hart Crane and Fitzgerald. As chair for eleven years of the American literature committee of the MLA International Bibliography, he brought his meticulous love of detail and thoroughness to a job that demanded these qualities. He insisted on the highest standards of accuracy and completeness in the reporting of items for the bibliography. He also devoted years of effort to compiling the two editions of American Literary Manuscripts: A Checklist of Holdings in Academic, Historical, and Public Libraries, Museums, and Authors' Homes in the United States, a unique and invaluable research tool.

As editor of the nineteenth-century poetry chapter, and later the Poe chapter, of American Literary Scholarship, Al combined his formidable bibliographical talents and his Poe expertise to produce fair and balanced surveys of the year's work in these fields. And as general editor of ALS from 1968 through 1973 and then alternating biennially with Professor James Woodress from 1976 through 1988, Al was demanding but not dictatorial; when I was writing the Poe chapter he never called into question any of my judgements or choices, but he would frequently supply me with additional citations that I had overlooked.

One of my lingering memories of Al Robbins goes back to early graduate school days, when I would encounter him in the library: always moving quickly, always intently manipulating card catalog drawers, always with a sheaf of bibliographic entries to be checked. At such times he was gruffly pleasant, but was clearly unwilling to engage in small talk when he was busy stalking his prey. Later, however, when he became my dissertation director, I came to appreciate how much time he was willing to devote to my own efforts to become a Poe scholar: correcting inaccuracies, adding information, rewriting passages, suggesting additional reading. When I moved away from campus and had to continue writing at long distance, his advice was contained in 4 or 5 single spaced pages, to which I was expected to reply point for point. It was through him that I learned what true scholarship is, that it is based on accuracy, precision, thoroughness and sheer doggedness.

Al was not only a superb mentor, he was a model of the humane scholar— toiling in the sometimes dreary vineyards of bibliography not for fame, but for the love of scholarship, and in the pursuit of knowledge to be put to the service of deeper understanding.

He will be missed.

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