

**THE LAST LETTERS OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE TO
SARAH HELEN WHITMAN**

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The last letters of Edgar Allan Poe to Sarah Helen Whitman by Edgar Allan Poe & James A. Harrison

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EDGAR ALLAN POE & JAMES A. HARRISON

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Edgar Allan Poe

To
Sarah Helen Whitman



Edited by
James A. Harrison

*In Commemoration of
The Hundredth Anniversary of Poe's Birth
January 19, 1909*

Published under the Auspices of
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Dedicated
To the Three Ladies
Whose Generous Loan
of
Pictures and Valuable Poe MSS.
Has rendered this work possible:
Miss Charlotte F. Dailey
Mrs. Henry R. Chace
and
Miss Amelia F. Poe

731226



PREFACE

IT is the custom in foreign countries when the jubilee of any distinguished writer, poet or inventor occurs, to celebrate the event by a *Festschrift* or Literary Memorial of some kind containing unpublished data, original research or memorabilia of a notable kind bearing on the life, the career or the works of the author or inventor concerned.

It seemed appropriate that the Alma Mater of Edgar Allan Poe should carry out this graceful custom in honor of his Hundredth Birthday, January 19, 1909, and to do this the editor of the Virginia Edition of Poe's Complete Works has undertaken to print for the first time in their entirety, from the original MSS., the celebrated correspondence between the poet and Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, whose Anniversary is also January 19th. These glowing letters rival the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" or the letters of Abelard and Héloïse in interest and eloquence.

Poe matriculated at the University of Virginia on the 14th of February, 1826, and his Alma Mater might

almost be said to send him this belated *Valentine* in honor of that signal event.

The editor's warmest acknowledgments are due to Miss Charlotte F. Dailey and Mrs. Henry R. Chace, of Providence, Rhode Island—Mrs. Whitman's heirs—for permission to print these letters; and to Mrs. R. L. Traylor, of Richmond, Va., for the use of the miniature of Poe. This rare likeness belonged to the late Robert Lee Traylor and is painted in oil on an ivory disk. It represents the poet at twenty-six years of age and is the earliest known portrait of him.

Acknowledgment is also due to the Century Company for permission to reprint the banns of matrimony and the marriage contract between Mrs. Whitman and Poe, and also for permission to reproduce the portraits of Poe and Mrs. Whitman.

J. A. H.

University of Virginia,
January, 1909.





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