

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

3/20/86

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Edgar Allan Poe House

AND/OR COMMON  
Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

530-532 North Seventh Street

N.A. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

03

STATE

Pennsylvania

N.A. VICINITY OF

42

CODE

COUNTY

Philadelphia

CODE

101

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

N.A. IN PROCESS

N.A. BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER NPS quarters  
(532)**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Region

STREET &amp; NUMBER

143 South Third Street

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

N.A. VICINITY OF

STATE

Pennsylvania

19106

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

City Hall, Broad and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania

19107

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

Data: 1962; Photographs: 1967

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

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U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. The National Survey of  
Historic Sites and Buildings Theme XX: The Arts and Sciences  
LITERATURE, DRAMA AND MUSIC. (Washington, D.C.,) 1962.



## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is a rectangular property of .517 acre, the major components of which are three interconnected buildings constructed in the 1840's in what was then the extreme eastern portion of the Spring Garden District of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. In 1854 the City and County of Philadelphia were consolidated. Today, the Site is located in lower north central Philadelphia, just north of the city's downtown section. The modern street address of the Site is 530-532 North Seventh Street.

The three interconnected buildings consist of the following: (1) the Poe House, originally a free-standing 3-story brick house with shed roof, whose south facade is parallel to the former Wistar, later Minerva, and most recently, Brandywine Street, and whose former east facade was parallel to North Seventh Street, and which is situated at the rear of No. 530 North Seventh Street; (2) No. 530 (originally No. 234) North Seventh Street, a 3½-story brick house fronting on North Seventh Street; and (3) No. 532 (originally No. 236) North Seventh Street, another 3½-story brick house fronting on North Seventh Street, immediately north of No. 530. The grounds north, west, and south of the complex are landscaped. Behind (to the west of) the Poe House is a small one-story brick utilities shed, which represents a conjectural privy. Directly south of No. 530 and the Poe House is the site of the former Wistar/Minerva/Brandywine Street, which is marked with wood chips. Standing south of the south wall of No. 530 is "The Raven," a modern bronze sculpture mounted on a steel pedestal. A modern iron fence encloses the Site on the north, east, and south sides. The sidewalk in front of Nos. 530-532 and the site of Wistar Street is brick; around the rest of the east side and the north and south sides of the Site, the sidewalk is concrete. There are trees, utility poles with wires, and traffic poles along the sidewalks. To the north of the Site is Green Street; to the south is Spring Garden Street; and to the west is the Guild House, a retirement community, and its maintenance building and grounds.

(For illustrative material see the accompanying Boundary Map (478/80,000), Existing Conditions Map (478/80,003), with structure numbers keyed to the following text, "Map 5 Poe's Neighborhood, 1844," by Jacqueline Thibaut, building plans/elevations, and photographs.)

### Structures and Sites Contributing to the Character of the Property

#### 1. Poe House

A 3-story brick house with 2 rooms on each floor, constructed sometime between September 1840, and August 1842 (but most likely early in that period), by William M. Alburger, a plumber and real estate investor. Edgar Allan Poe and his family lived in this house as renters from sometime between September 1842 and June 1843, until April 1844, when they left for New York City.

The front (originally side) door is flanked by 2 6-over-6 windows on the east and one such window on the west. There are 4 such windows on the second floor, and 4 3-over-3 windows on the third floor. There are shutters on the windows of the first floor, and louver blinds on the windows of the second floor, all painted cream. The roof, originally of cedar shakes, is red-painted metal. There are 2 brick chimneys. The rear (west) porch, which replaced the original kitchen, has a shed roof projecting from the west wall at the first floor level, supported by 3 wooden posts. There

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is a door at the south corner of the west facade, and a cellar entrance near the north corner. The porch patio is brick. There are 3 small basement windows on the south facade. A cream-painted 4-foot tall wooden picket fence encloses the Poe House. Within the fence is a small grassed area. There is a brick walk to the south and west. This area has been very heavily disturbed during various rehabilitation projects. The Park Service installed an underground irrigation system in 1984.

The four most important changes to the original physical appearance of the Poe House are (1) the construction of the rear wing of No. 236 (now 532) against its north facade; (2) the incorporation of its front (east) facade into the piazza of No. 234 (now 530); the removal of the west kitchen; and (4) the replacement of the cedar shake roof. The construction of No. 234 resulted in the disappearance of the Poe House front porch and the garden walk which approached it from Seventh Street. The east wall of the Poe House became the west wall of the piazza. Extending from this wall was a shed porch roof running the full width of the facade. The porch deck was about two steps above grade. The construction of No 234 resulted in the conversion of the rear kitchen into a general service area when the shed itself was removed.

During the Richard Gimbel Foundation proprietorship (1933-71), the building was replastered and repainted, new window sashes were installed, and a high weatherboard fence was erected between the house and Brandywine Street. This fence was later replaced by a chain-link fence, which, in turn, was replaced with a picket fence in 1963, during the refurbishment program which included the landscaping of the lots to the north and south sides of the property, the permanent closure of Brandywine Street to traffic.

From early 1978 to early 1980 the Poe House, by then owned by the City of Philadelphia, with administrative control exercised by the Free Library of Philadelphia, was closed for renovation. Subcontractors for John Lloyd Associates replaced window sashes, replastered and painted the interior, replaced door hardware, substantially altered the fireplace in the ground floor west room, repointed the exterior, created a new third floor door opening from No. 532, and installed a fire tower.

The Park Service, which acquired the property in March 1980, did not retain the furnishings which were present during the Gimbel and Free Library periods, choosing to interpret the period of the Poe family occupancy by means of white-painted rooms and a few pieces of white painted representative furniture. Even these few pieces have recently been removed because they confused visitors.

2. 532 North Seventh Street (originally No. 236)

A 3½-story brick house, with a 3-story rear wing, built by John Evans, Jr., circa 1841. It is possible that No. 236 and the Poe House were erected at approximately the same time. No. 236 was standing at the time the Poe family resided in the Poe House. The east facade features a door at the south corner, with marble steps and water table with 2 sets of double windows cut into it. There are 2 large 6-over-6 windows on the first and second floors, and 2 smaller 6-over-6 windows on the third

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floor. There are shutters on the first floor windows, and louver blinds on the other windows, all painted cream. There is an arched head 6-over-6 dormer window projecting from the center of the gable roof. The north facade of the front portion is stuccoed; there are no windows. Two brick chimneys project above the roof line, one on each side of the front portion. There is a 3-story piazza and a 3-story rear wing. The piazza has a door with marble steps, a large 6-over-6 window with shutters on the second floor, and a smaller 6-over-6 window with louver blinds on the third floor. The rear wing, on its north facade, has 2 large 6-over-6 windows on the first and second floors, and 2 smaller 6-over-6 windows on the third floor. There are shutters on the first floor windows, and louver blinds on the second floor windows. Also, there are single small 2-over-2 windows on the easternmost portion of the rear wing, on the first and third floors. There is a brick chimney in the middle of the shed roof of the rear wing. On the west facade of the front portion there are single windows in the same pattern as on the front elevation; the rear dormer has a gable rather than an arched roof. On the west facade of the rear wing there is a door at the south corner, and there are single 6-over-6 windows on the second and third floors on the south side only, adjoining the rear of the Poe House. There is a brick walk on the north side of the rear wing.

In December 1935 Richard Gimbel acquired No. 532, which was then very deteriorated. The building was refurbished to provide office space and living quarters for the curator and his wife. The curator, Anthony Frayne, did much of the repair work. Extensive restoration and rehabilitation work was performed at No. 532 as part of the 1978-80 project. This included demolition of a one and two-story rear frame addition, and construction of a new stairwell at the rear. In 1981 the Park Service installed a flue liner in the west chimney of the front portion. This required the north wall to be opened, and the rebricking and restuccoing of the opening.

3. 530 North Seventh Street (originally No. 234) <sup>1-</sup> front portion

A 3½-story brick house apparently built sometime after November 1845 and before May 1849 (most likely later in the period), postdating the Poe family's occupancy of the building at the rear of the lot. James and Henry Jones, brass founders, were the owners, having purchased the entire property from William Alburger in 1845. They may have already owned the whole lot, or at least were paying taxes on it, <sup>at</sup> the time of the Poe family's occupancy of the rear building.

The east facade is similar to that of No. 532. The door, surrounded by a marble frontispiece, is in the north corner, adjacent to the door of No. 532. There are marble steps and a water table, which lacks windows. The pattern of windows and shutters is identical to that of No. 532. The gable roof also has a dormer, but with a gable rather than an arched roof. The south facade features a curtain wall connecting the 2 brick chimneys. There are single 6-over-6 windows with louver blinds on the easternmost portion at the second and third floor levels, plus a basement window. The piazza is shorter and wider than the one joining the front and rear portions of No. 532. The piazza has a door, and single 6-over-6 windows



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with louver blinds at the second and third floor levels. The west facade features a gable dormer with a window pattern unique to the property, and 6-over-6 windows with the usual shutter pattern. An oddity is that the northern set of shutters fit into niches on the south facade of the piazza. There is a brick walk on the south side, extending around the Poe House to the rear of No. 532.

Richard Gimbel acquired the entire No. 530 property, then a rooming house, in 1933, and by December 1935 he controlled the entire complex of buildings. The front portion of No. 530, like the Poe House and No. 532, underwent a restoration and rehabilitation program in 1978-80.

No. 532 and the front portion of No. 530 are adaptively used for visitor services/interpretation (first floor), administration/protection/living quarters (second and third floors), and restrooms and mechanical equipment (basement).

4. Site of Wistar/Minerva/Brandywine Street

In the early and mid-1840's, Wistar Street was a narrow (20' wide) street running east-west, bisecting the square block bounded by North Seventh Street on the east, Green Street on the north, Franklin Street on the west (all 50' wide), and Spring Garden Street (120' wide, with a market in the middle), on the south. The street was paved (with stones) in 1841, a dozen years after the adjoining portion of Seventh Street. In 1841 William Alburger, owner of the lot on which the Poe House had just been built or was nearing completion, would have had a good reason to join his neighbors in petitioning that Wistar Street be paved, for that would have made his new building a more desirable rental property. Alburger was assessed for a portion of the bill he owed for the paving of his 78'11" frontage on Wistar Street. Thus the street was paved at the time the Poes lived there. In 1854 Wistar was renamed Minerva Street; and about 1895 it was again renamed, becoming Brandywine Street. In 1963 Brandywine Street was permanently closed to vehicular traffic. Its paving stones gone, the 97' by 20' site is marked by wood chips. Portions of curbing remain. Ultimately, it may be restored as have been Dock Street and smaller streets in Independence National Historical Park in downtown Philadelphia.

5. North Lawn

The grassed area bounded on the east by North Seventh Street, the north by Green Street, the west by the Park boundary (the rear wall of the Guild House maintenance building), and the south by No. 532, enclosed on the east and north by an iron fence, was cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority beginning in 1963. It extended 78'8" south from Green Street, and 88'6" west along Green Street. This parcel encompassed the sites of the houses originally numbered 238, 240, and 242; the latter also had an attached stable in 1844. These properties were later renumbered 534, 536, and 538, respectively. By 1930 a 5-story brick building used a broom factory had replaced 536 and 538. In 1984 the Park Service installed an underground irrigation system. There are 3 trees on this parcel.

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6. South Lawn

The grassed area bounded on the east by North Seventh Street, the north by the site of Wistar Street, the west by the Park boundary (a brick wall beyond which is the Guild House grounds), and the south by Spring Garden Street, enclosed on the east and south by an iron fence, was cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority beginning in 1963. The Richard Gimbel Foundation purchased the North and South Lawn parcels in 1966. This parcel extended 134'8" north from Spring Garden Street and 77'6" west from North Seventh Street. Unlike the North Lawn area, this parcel was apparently not fully developed in 1844. At its extreme southeast corner there was a large 2-story brick building with a wood addition to the north. The first floor was a tobacco shop; the second floor a school room. By 1854 the First Dutch Reformed Church occupied the property, and by 1930 a gasoline station operated at this site until it was demolished in the 1963 redevelopment program. In Poe's time there apparently was a vacant lot to the west, allowing the Poes to look directly from their house south to Spring Garden Street. Thus, this parcel, after being cleared, is partially representative of the presumed scene in Poe's time. An underground irrigation system was installed by the Park Service. There are four trees on this parcel.

Nonhistoric Structure Contributing to the Character of the Property

7. "The Raven"

An imposing bronze sculpture of an open-mouthed raven, commemorating Poe's most famous work, was added to the property in October 1979. "The Raven," painted black, is about 3½' high, with an 8' wingspan, and rests on a black-painted 1' x 1' x 12' high steel pedestal emplaced 5' south of the south wall of No. 530. The Free Library of Philadelphia wanted such a sculpture to serve as a striking symbol of the property. It was to be clearly visible from Spring Garden Street, and was to be emplaced in such a way as to cast a large shadow against the south wall of No. 530 on sunny days, and be floodlighted at night to cast an even larger shadow. Sculptor David Caccia, of Sewell, New Jersey, a Philadelphia native, was commissioned to create the statue. It replaced two previous ravens, one of lead, the other of wood, which had been stolen.

Nonconforming Intrusions Detracting from the Integrity of the Property

8. Utility Building

A small 1-story brick structure with a shed roof, located west of the Poe House. Erected during the 1978-80 rehabilitation program, it replaced an older privy shed. It houses utilities and represents a conjectural privy.

9. Fence

A 6' tall iron fence encloses the Site on the east, north, and south sides. The fence forms a gate which can open at the site of Wistar Street. The fence jogs inward at the extreme southeast corner of the Site, where the Park's sign is mounted. The fence is painted black.

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10. Utility Poles and Wires

There are wooden utility poles and overhead wires along North Seventh and Green Streets, plus 2 small metal traffic poles at the extreme southeast corner of the Site.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD                                        | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |                                                 |                                                 |                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE  | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|                                               |                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |                                                 |                                              |

SPECIFIC DATES Poe Cottage: c. 1840-41 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Poe Cottage: William Alburger  
 532 N. 7th St.: c. 1841 530 N. 7th St.: c. 1848 532 N. 7th St.: John Evans

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park System which has been designated by Congress as the official memorial to "the literary importance attained by Edgar Allan Poe," one of America's premier literary figures. The Site preserves the only surviving residence of the four which served Poe during his years in Philadelphia (1838-44). During this period he attained his greatest successes as an editor and critic, and he published some of his most famous tales, including "The Gold Bug," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and may have written an early version of "The Raven." The Site, in particular the Poe House, represents a tangible link with Poe and his accomplishments in Philadelphia.

In terms of National Register criteria, the Site (A) is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; and (B) is associated with the life of a person significant in our past. It represents the "Area of Significance" of "Literature" for the "1800-1899" period.

The Poe House is one of the many places where Edgar Allan Poe resided, and is one of several memorials to him. These include the Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum in Baltimore, Maryland (his home from 1832-35), the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage in The Bronx, New York, New York (his final home), and the Poe Museum in Richmond, Virginia. Poe also lived briefly at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, and four U. S. Army posts, including the Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Edgar Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1809. His parents, David and Elizabeth, were itinerant actors. The father left the family, and the mother died when Edgar was only two. He was raised as a foster child by John Allan, a Richmond tobacco exporter, and his wife, Frances. Edgar took Allan's surname as his middle name. Part of his childhood was spent with the Allans in England. After returning to Richmond, Poe later matriculated at the University of Virginia, but soon withdrew due to Allan's refusal to support Poe's gambling habit. At the age of eighteen Poe went to Boston, where he published his first volume of poems. Using the name "Edgar A. Perry," he enlisted in the Army, serving for two years in the First U. S. Artillery at Ft. Independence (Boston), Ft. Moultrie (Charleston, S.C.), and Ft. Monroe (Hampton Roads, Va.), where he was regimental sergeant-major. Poe secured an appointment to West Point in 1830, but was dismissed in 1831. Allan's remarriage ended Poe's hope of his foster father's continued support. Plagued by poverty and debt, Poe lived mostly in Baltimore with his aunt, Maria Clemm, and her young daughter Virginia, from 1831 to 1835. He published more poems in 1829 and 1831, and sold tales to Baltimore and Philadelphia journals.

Poe's life took a turn for the better when he became editor of the Southern Literary



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Messenger in Richmond in 1835. He was an editor, critic, and contributor to a series of flourishing journals. In that year Poe married thirteen-year-old Virginia. The following year they and Mrs. Clemm moved to New York, and in 1838 moved again to Philadelphia, where Poe enjoyed his best years, although the family continued to be troubled by poverty, Poe's dissipation, and Virginia's tuberculosis. In 1844 the family returned to New York, where Poe briefly published his own journal. Virginia died in 1847, and Poe and Mrs. Clemm barely survived the winter. His physical and mental conditions rapidly deteriorating, Poe traveled, drank, pursued women, and attempted suicide, dying under mysterious circumstances in Baltimore in 1849. Mrs. Clemm died in 1871.

In the spring of 1838 the then-unemployed Poe and his family relocated from New York to Philadelphia. At that time he was best known as a literary critic, whose goal was to improve the quality of American literature. That year the book Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym was published in New York, and Poe's first work written in Philadelphia was published, the tale of terror ("arabesque") "Ligeia". After about six months in one or more boardinghouses, the Poes moved to a rented house on South Sixteenth Street, near Locust Street (also known as "Schuylkill Seventh Street," which could account for some confusion with his later residence on North Seventh and Wistar Streets). Late in the year two burlesques were published, and in 1839 an article, a poem, and a popular tale, "William Wilson."

Having failed to secure a Navy Department clerkship in 1838, Poe successfully applied for an editorial position at Burton's Gentleman's Magazine, published by a flamboyant English actor, William E. Burton. Ironically, Burton had written a scathing review of Pym. Poe began his new job as co-editor in May 1839, at a weekly salary of \$10. Poe and Burton had incompatible personalities. The perfectionist Poe was mainly concerned with literary quality, while the frequently-absent Burton was mainly interested in operating his journal as a business. Poe lasted about a year, during which Gentleman's Magazine published the tale, "The Fall of the House of Usher," a reprint of "William Wilson," "The Journal of Julius Rodman," plus numerous reviews and other pieces. All of Poe's tales written as of September 1839 were published in December as Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, by Lea and Blanchard, the city's most prestigious publishing house. It received widespread, if mixed reviews. At the beginning of 1840 Poe began publishing his works in other Philadelphia outlets. At the end of May Burton fired Poe, who was planning to establish his own journal, "The Penn Magazine." During his tenure at Gentleman's Magazine, Poe was attaining national recognition, his poems and tales receiving considerable attention.

In October Burton sold his magazine to Philadelphia publisher George Rex Graham, who combined it with his own journal, The Casket, to create Graham's Magazine, beginning in December. Graham, who also published the Saturday Evening Post, intended his new venture to be one of the most influential publications in the country, and he succeeded. Poe, whose effort to establish "The Penn" was getting nowhere,

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published the tale "The Man of the Crowd" in the first issue of Graham's Magazine. In February 1841 Poe was hired as the book review editor of Graham's Magazine at a yearly salary of \$800. Poe lasted just over a year in his new job. Among his contributions in the April issue was "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," a prime example of Poe's fascination with "ratiocination," the process of exact thinking. Next came "A Descent into the Maelstrom," followed by other tales. He corresponded with most of the leading American authors, and met Charles Dickens when the eminent Englishman visited Philadelphia.

Meanwhile Poe continued trying to secure a Federal appointment and to promote "The Penn." In April 1842 Poe resigned from Graham's Magazine, but he stayed on good terms with Graham, and contributed to the journal. His works at this time included a short story, "The Masque of the Red Death."

In the spring of 1842 the Poes left their rented house, possibly spending the summer in a boardinghouse. By September they were renters in a house on Coates Street (later Fairmount Avenue) near North Twenty-Fifth Street in the western portion of Spring Garden District, close to the Fairmount Water Works.

In that year "The Mystery of Marie Roget" and "The Pit and the Pendulum" were published. "The Tell-Tale Heart" appeared in the first volume of James Russell Lowell's magazine, The Pioneer, followed by the poem "Lenore," in 1843.

Having failed to receive an appointment in either Washington or at the Philadelphia Custom House, Poe continued trying to start his own magazine, now named "The Stylus." A drunken sojourn in Washington hurt Poe, but he bounced back with a new tale of ratiocination, "The Gold Bug," which won Poe a \$100 prize and publication in the Dollar Newspaper in Philadelphia. Also appearing was The Prose Romances of Edgar A. Poe.

Sometime between September 1842 and June 20, 1843 (when he wrote to Lowell), Poe moved to the opposite end of Spring Garden District, to William Alburger's recently-built house at 234 North Seventh Street. This location was more convenient to Poe than was Fairmount. It was within walking distance of the publishing district on Dock Street and the U. S. Post Office in the Merchants' Exchange Building. The Spring Garden market was just one-half block away. The bustling neighborhood teemed with shops, offices, houses, and also with taverns.

In August "The Gold Bug" was presented as a dramatic production at the Walnut Street Theatre, but it was a flop. That month the Saturday Evening Post published the tale "The Black Cat," whose setting, it has been observed, may well have been Poe's new residence. Late that year and continuing into early 1844 Poe successfully lectured on "American Poetry" before large audiences in Philadelphia, Delaware, Baltimore, and Reading, Pennsylvania.

Sometime in 1843 Poe wrote "Morning on the Wissahickon," which was published in The Opal for 1844. This was one of the very few of Poe's works to have an overtly Philadelphia setting. A few more pieces were published just before or after Poe's

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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move to New York, including "The Balloon Hoax" in the New York Extra Sun. He may also have been working on "The Raven" and "The Purloined Letter."

On March 30 Poe wrote to Lowell, without mentioning his impending return to New York. Having failed to establish his own magazine in Philadelphia, he may have hoped for better opportunities in New York. On April 6 Poe and Virginia went to New York via train and steamboat. Mrs. Clemm stayed behind temporarily, to dispose of items in the house.

During his years in Philadelphia Poe wrote at least 25 of his 70 tales, some of his 79 poems, and a large number of his 250 reviews and articles. He was poorly paid for this output, and worked regularly as an editor for only about two years. Although some of his best fiction was produced in this period, Poe was best known as a critic, and an increasingly savage one at that. It may be speculated that his bitterness at failing to establish his own journal or to secure a government job contributed to his ever-more critical view of his contemporaries.

Poe made major innovative contributions to several genres, among them the murder mystery, the treasure mystery, the horror story, the psychological portrait, and the science fiction tale. As a critic, he insisted on "the application of a rigorous method in all forms of thought," and that a poem must be short as well as extraordinarily crafted. Stressing the concept of "condensation," Poe argued that the short story must be designed for "a single effect," and that every word had to be written to contribute. To Poe it was the author's work of art, not the author, which was paramount.

History of the Poe House as a Memorial

From 1844 to 1913, there was a strong neighborhood tradition that the rear portion of No. 234/530 North Seventh Street had been the residence of the Poe family. But it was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a European-inspired revival of interest in Poe, that anything which could be called a "preservationist" idea emerged. In New York, Richmond, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, interest in Poe-related sites increased. In Philadelphia, however, this renewed concern failed to save any of the buildings associated with Poe except, ultimately, No. 530 North Seventh Street. According to the former curator's wife, Mrs. Anthony Frayne, who died in 1985, a Mrs. William Owens, apparently a renter, lived at No. 530 in the 1920's; for a fee of five cents, she showed Poe buffs the rear portion of the property on the annual anniversaries of Poe's birth and death. In the 1920's and 1930's the house appeared in Philadelphia guidebooks. But with its neighborhood in decline, No. 530 seemed destined to follow other Poe-related sites into oblivion.

It was Philadelphia entrepreneur and collector of manuscripts and rare books Richard Gimbel, who saved the Poe House. Gimbel amassed a great collection of "Poeana," which is now housed at the Free Library of Philadelphia. In 1928 Gimbel began negotiating for No. 530, and he founded the Edgar Allan Poe Club by 1930. His Richard



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Gimbel Foundation for Literary Research concluded the acquisition process by December 1933. Much of Gimbel's collection was initially stored at the Poe House under the care of Anthony Frayne. By November 1933 Frayne was giving group tours of the house. After their marriage in 1936, Mrs. Frayne shared her husband's duties.

Gimbel publicized the Poe House by means of radio and newspaper interviews, talks, and press releases, and cooperated with colleagues engaged in similar activities in the other East Coast cities. On January 19, 1934, to mark the 125th anniversary of Poe's birth, Gimbel staged a formal dinner for 1,300 people at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel. The program included the dedication of the Poe House. In December 1935 Gimbel acquired No. 532 to increase storage space and to provide quarters for the Fraynes. Gimbel bought a safe for this building. The property, now consisting of the three buildings, was maintained and operated by the Gimbel Foundation and the Poe Club until 1971, following Gimbel's death. (For physical work, see Section 7, Description.)

In 1962 the National Park Service's National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings categorized the Poe House as a "Site of Exceptional Value" under the Theme "The Arts and Sciences," Subtheme "Literature." As a result, the Poe House was declared a National Historic Landmark on December 29, 1962, under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The following year, the property was refurbished, and the adjacent properties to the north and south cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. In 1966 the Gimbel Foundation purchased the two lots.

Following Gimbel's death, his foundation donated the site and the Poe Collection to the City of Philadelphia in 1971. The authorizing legislation gave jurisdiction over both the real estate and the collection to the Free Library of Philadelphia. The Fraynes continued as resident curators/guides. In 1972 the National Trust for Historic Preservation granted the Free Library \$400 to hire an architectural consultant. In 1973 John Lloyd Associates of Philadelphia submitted their report.

It was not until 1977 that funds to implement the recommendations were available. In that year the City received a grant of \$469,000 from the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, under the Public Works Employment Act of 1976, plus another \$50,000 from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. John Lloyd Associates was the winning bidder, and the 1978-80 renovation program was implemented by Lloyd's subcontractors. The site was closed to the public.

Meanwhile an effort was underway to add the property to the National Park System. In 1974 U.S. Representative Joshua Eilberg of Philadelphia introduced a resolution to establish the Poe House as a National Historical Park. This effort culminated in the inclusion of a provision in the National Parks and Recreation Act of November 10, 1978 (Public Law 95-625), which authorized the establishment of "Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site," "in recognition of the literary importance maintained by Edgar Allan Poe." On March 17, 1980, title was transferred to the



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National Park Service, the Site to be administered by the Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park. By that time the City's renovation program had been completed. On August 22 the Secretary of the Interior officially established the Site. In that month the Park was opened to public visitation, with Park Service personnel giving tours (Mrs. Frayne remained in residence in No. 532 until her death in 1985). On June 18, 1981, a dedication ceremony was held at the Site, with scholars, representatives of the other Poe-related sites, and members of the Gimbel family participating.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Holm, Alvin. The Edgar Allan Poe House in Spring Garden, #530 North 7th St., Philadelphia: A Historical Structures Report prepared for the National Park Service, May 1982
2. Thibaut, Jacqueline. Edgar A. Poe The Years in Philadelphia 1838-1844: Historic Resource Study Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site/ Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, October 1981

(Draft)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.517

UTM REFERENCES

Quadrangle Name Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J.

Quadrangle Scale 1: 24,000

A 18 4 8 7 1 6 0 4 4 2 3 3 1 0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                                            
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                                          

D                                          

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is as described in the attached boundary description of Tract 101-01, dated December 4, 1978, and is so recorded on the Deed transferring the property from the City of Philadelphia to the United States of America, executed on September 27, 1979.

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE N,A, CODE N,A, COUNTY N,A, CODE N,A,

STATE N,A, CODE N,A, COUNTY N,A, CODE N,A,

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Clifford Tobias Regional Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Region

STREET & NUMBER

143 South Third Street

CITY OR TOWN

Philadelphia

DATE

March 10, 1986

TELEPHONE

(215) 597-9970

STATE

Pennsylvania 19106

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

### STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ NONE \_\_\_\_\_

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is \_\_\_\_\_ National \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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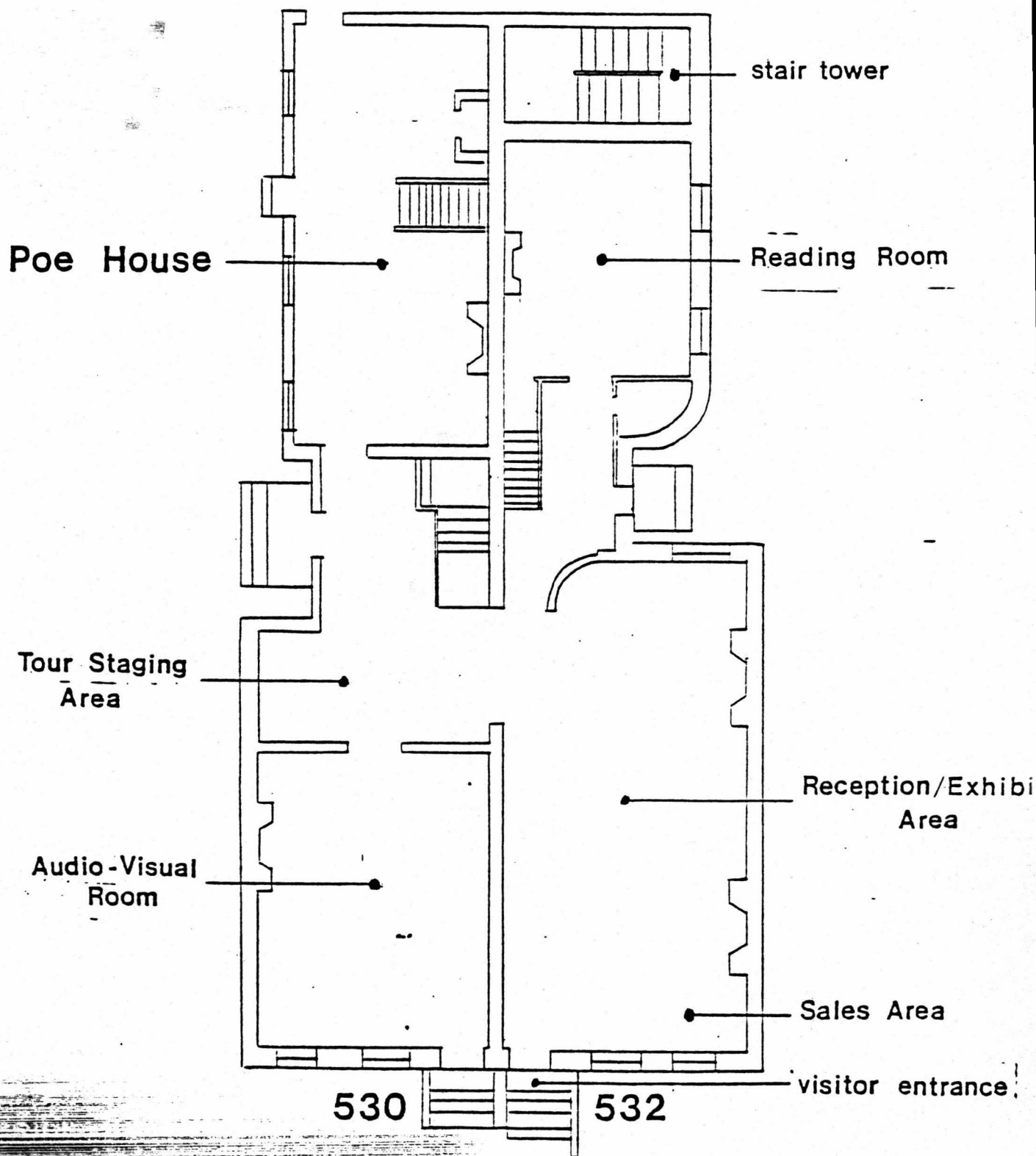
9

PAGE

2

3. Thomas, Dwight Rembert. "Poe in Philadelphia, 1838-1844: A Documentary Record."  
Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia,  
1978.

# First Floor Plan - Poe House Complex





WASO Form - 177  
("R" June 1984)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEETEdgar Allan Poe National Historic Site  
Philadelphia County  
PENNSYLVANIA

Substantive Review

Working No. MAR 20 1986

Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Due: 5/4/86Action: ACCEPTRETURN 6/4/86REJECT

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ resubmission  
☐ nomination by person or local government  
☐ owner objection  
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

## Reviewer's comments:

*Form is well done. One substantive comment - the building at 530 N. 7th St. postdates Poe's occupancy of the site - this building should not be listed as contributing to the national significance of the site. It would be fine to recognize that it might have local significance as a good example of a Philadelphia (over)*

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Patrick AndrusDiscipline HistorianDate 6/4/86

\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below  
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

## 1. Name

## 2. Location

## 3. Classification

| Category | Ownership          | Status     | Present Use |
|----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
|          | Public Acquisition | Accessible |             |
|          |                    |            |             |

## 4. Owner of Property

## 5. Location of Legal Description

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

## 7. Description

## Condition

- ☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

- ☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

## Check one

- ☐ unaltered  
☐ altered

## Check one

- ☐ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph  
☐ completeness  
☐ clarity  
☐ alterations/integrity  
☐ dates  
☐ boundary selection

## 8. Significance

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

mid-19th century row house, but it does not  
meet National Register criterion A (associated with events  
related to literature) or B (associated with life of Poe).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national \_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

## 13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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7/24/86

SEP 5 1986

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Edgar Allan Poe House

AND/OR COMMON

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

530-532 North Seventh Street

N.A. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

03

STATE

Pennsylvania

42

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Philadelphia

CODE

101

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

N.A. IN PROCESS

N.A. BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER NPS quarters (532)**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Region

STREET &amp; NUMBER

143 South Third Street

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

N.A. VICINITY OF

STATE

Pennsylvania

19106

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder of Deeds

STREET &amp; NUMBER

City Hall, Broad and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania

19107

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

Data: 1962; Photographs: 1967

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

District of Columbia

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT      ☐ DETERIORATED  
☒ GOOD      ☐ RUINS  
☐ FAIR      ☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is a rectangular property of .517 acre, the major components of which are three interconnected buildings constructed in the 1840's in what was then the extreme eastern portion of the Spring Garden District of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. In 1854 the City and County of Philadelphia were consolidated. Today, the Site is located in lower north central Philadelphia, just north of the city's downtown section. The modern street address of the Site is 530-532 North Seventh Street.

The three interconnected buildings consist of the following: (1) the Poe House, originally a free-standing 3-story brick house with shed roof, whose south facade is parallel to the former Wistar, later Minerva, and most recently, Brandywine Street, and whose former east facade was parallel to North Seventh Street, and which is situated at the rear of No. 530 North Seventh Street; (2) No. 530 (originally No. 234) North Seventh Street, a 3½-story brick house fronting on North Seventh Street; and (3) No. 532 (originally No. 236) North Seventh Street, another 3½-story brick house fronting on North Seventh Street, immediately north of No. 530. The grounds north, west, and south of the complex are landscaped. Behind (to the west of) the Poe House is a small one-story brick utilities shed.

Directly south of No. 530 and the Poe House is the site of the former Wistar/Minerva/Brandywine Street, which is marked with wood chips. Standing south of the south wall of No. 530 is "The Raven," a modern bronze sculpture mounted on a steel pedestal. A modern iron fence encloses the Site on the north, east, and south sides. The sidewalk in front of Nos. 530-532 and the site of Wistar Street is brick; around the rest of the east side and the north and south sides of the Site, the sidewalk is concrete. There are trees, utility poles with wires, and traffic poles along the sidewalks. To the north of the Site is Green Street; to the south is Spring Garden Street; and to the west is the Guild House, a retirement community, and the maintenance building for the nearby Spring Garden Homes Public Housing Project.

(For illustrative material see the accompanying Boundary Map (478/80,000), Existing Conditions Map (478/80,003), with structure numbers keyed to the following text, "Map 5 Poe's Neighborhood, 1844," by Jacqueline Thibaut, building plans/elevations, and photographs.)

### Structures and Site Contributing to the Character of the Property

#### 1. Poe House

A 3-story brick house with 2 rooms on each floor, constructed sometime between September 1840, and August 1842 (but most likely early in that period), by William M. Alburger, a plumber and real estate investor. Edgar Allan Poe and his family lived in this house as renters from sometime between September 1842 and June 1843, until April 1844, when they left for New York City.

The south (originally side) door is flanked by 2 6-over-6 windows on the east and one such window on the west. There are 4 such windows on the second floor, and 4 3-over-3 windows on the third floor. There are shutters on the windows of the first floor, and louver blinds on the windows of the second floor, all painted cream. The roof, originally of cedar shakes, is red-painted metal. There are 2 brick chimneys. The rear (west) porch has a shed roof projecting from the west wall at the first floor level, supported by 3 wooden posts. There



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U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. The National Survey of  
Historic Sites and Buildings Theme XX: The Arts and Sciences  
LITERATURE, DRAMA AND MUSIC. (Washington, D.C.,) 1962.

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is a door at the south corner of the west facade, and a cellar entrance near the north corner. The porch patio is brick. There are 3 small basement windows on the south facade. A cream-painted 4-foot tall wooden picket fence encloses the Poe House. Within the fence is a small grassed area. There is a brick walk to the south and west. This area has been very heavily disturbed during various rehabilitation projects. The Park Service installed an underground irrigation system in 1984.

The four most important changes to the original physical appearance of the Poe House were: (1) the construction of No. 236, the rear wing of which abutted the Poe House's north facade; (2) the incorporation of its front (east) facade into the piazza of No. 234; (3) the removal of the west room; and (4) the replacement of the cedar shake roof. The construction of No. 234 resulted in the disappearance of the Poe House front porch and the garden walk which approached it from Seventh Street. The east wall of the Poe House became the west wall of the piazza. Extending from this wall was a shed porch roof running the full width of the facade. The porch deck was about two steps above grade. The construction of No 234 resulted in the conversion of the rear room into a general service area when the shed itself was removed.

During the Richard Gimbel Foundation proprietorship (1933-71), the building was replastered and repainted, new window sashes were installed, and a high weatherboard fence was erected between the house and Brandywine Street. This fence was later replaced by a chain-link fence, which, in turn, was replaced with a picket fence in 1963, during the refurbishment program which included the landscaping of the lots to the north and south sides of the property, and the permanent closure of Brandywine Street to traffic.

From early 1978 to early 1980 the Poe House, by then owned by the City of Philadelphia, with administrative control exercised by the Free Library of Philadelphia, was closed for renovation. Among the tasks accomplished by subcontractors for John Lloyd Associates were the replacement of window sashes, patch plastering and repainting of the interior, alteration of the fireplace in the ground floor west room, repointing of the exterior, creation of a new third floor door opening from No. 532, and the installation of a fire tower.

During the periods of Gimbel and City ownership the building contained furniture. However, no documentation linking the Poes to specific items has ever been found. Initially, the Park Service interpreted the period of the Poe family occupancy by means of white-painted rooms and a few pieces of representative furniture painted white. Even those few items were recently removed because they confused visitors. Research to determine original wall color and floor treatment is currently underway.

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2. 532 North Seventh Street (originally No. 236)

A 3½-story brick house, with a 3-story rear wing, built by John Evans, Jr., circa 1841. It is possible that No. 236 and the Poe House were erected at approximately the same time. No. 236 was standing at the time the Poe family resided in the Poe House. The east facade features a door at the south corner, with marble steps and water table with 2 sets of double windows cut into it. There are 2 large 6-over-6 windows on the first and second floors, and 2 smaller 6-over-6 windows on the third floor. There are shutters on the first floor windows, and louver blinds on the other windows, all painted cream. There is an arched head 6-over-6 dormer window projecting from the center of the gable roof. The north facade of the front portion is stuccoed; there are no windows. Two brick chimneys project above the roof line, one on each side of the front portion. There is a 3-story piazza and a 3-story rear wing. The piazza has a door with marble steps, a large 6-over-6 window with shutters on the second floor, and a smaller 6-over-6 window with louver blinds on the third floor. The rear wing, on its north facade, has 2 large 6-over-6 windows on the first and second floors, and 2 smaller 6-over-6 windows on the third floor. There are shutters on the first floor windows, and louver blinds on the second floor windows. Also, there are single small 2-over-2 windows on the easternmost portion of the rear wing, on the first and third floors. There is a brick chimney in the middle of the shed roof of the rear wing. On the west facade of the front portion there are single windows in the same pattern as on the front elevation; the rear dormer has a gable rather than an arched roof. On the west facade of the rear wing there is a door at the south corner, and there are single 6-over-6 windows on the second and third floors on the south side only, adjoining the rear of the Poe House. There is a brick walk on the north side of the rear wing.

In December 1935 Richard Gimbel acquired No. 532, which was then very deteriorated. The building was refurbished to provide office space and living quarters for the curator and his wife. The curator, Anthony Frayne, did much of the repair work. Extensive restoration and rehabilitation work was performed at No. 532 as part of the 1978-80 project. This included demolition of a one and two-story rear frame addition, and construction of a new stairwell at the rear. In 1981 the Park Service installed a flue liner in the west chimney of the front portion. This required the north wall to be opened, and the rebricking and restuccoing of the opening.

4. Site of Wistar/Minerva/Brandywine Street

In the early and mid-1840's Wistar Street was a narrow (20' wide) street running east-west, bisecting the square block bounded by North Seventh Street on the east, Green Street on the north, Franklin Street on the west (all 50' wide), and Spring Garden Street (120' wide, with a market in the middle), on the south. The street was paved (with stones) in 1841, a dozen years after the adjoining portion of

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Seventh Street. In 1841 William Alburger, owner of the lot on which the Poe House had just been built or was nearing completion, would have had a good reason to join his neighbors in petitioning that Wistar Street be paved, for that would have made his new building a more desirable rental property. Alburger was assessed for a portion of the bill he owed for the paving of his 78'11" frontage on Wistar Street. Thus the street was paved at the time the Poes lived there. In 1854 Wistar was re-named Minerva Street, and about 1895 it was again renamed, becoming Brandywine Street. In 1963 Brandywine Street was permanently closed to vehicular traffic. Its paving stones gone, the 97' by 20' site is marked by wood chips. Portions of curbing remain. Ultimately, it may be restored as have been Dock Street and smaller streets in Independence National Historical Park in downtown Philadelphia.

Structure and Sites which Contribute to the Character of the Property but Not to Its National Significance

3. 530 North Seventh Street (originally No. 234) -- front portion

A 3½-story brick house apparently built sometime after November 1845 and before May 1849 (most likely later in the period), postdating the Poe family's occupancy of the building at the rear of the lot. James and Henry Jones, brass founders, were the owners, having purchased the entire property from William Alburger in 1845. They may have already owned the whole lot, or at least were paying taxes on it, at the time of the Poe family's occupancy of the rear building.

The east facade is similar to that of No. 532. The door, surrounded by a marble frontispiece, is in the north corner, adjacent to the door of No. 532. There are marble steps and a water table, which lacks windows. The pattern of windows and shutters is identical to that of No. 532. The gable roof also has a dormer, but with a gable rather than an arched roof. The south facade features a curtain wall connecting the 2 brick chimneys. There are single 6-over-6 windows with louver blinds on the easternmost portion at the second and third floor levels, plus a basement window. The piazza is shorter and wider than the one joining the front and rear portions of No. 532. The piazza has a door, and single 6-over-6 windows with louver blinds at the second and third floor levels. The west facade features a gable dormer with a window pattern unique to the property, and 6-over-6 windows with the usual shutter pattern. An oddity is that the northern set of shutters fit into niches on the south facade of the piazza. There is a brick walk on the south side, extending around the Poe House to the rear of No. 532.

Richard Gimbel acquired the entire No. 530 property, then a rooming house, in 1933, and by December 1935 he controlled the entire complex of buildings. The front portion of No. 530, like the Poe House and No. 532, underwent a restoration and rehabilitation program in 1978-80.

No. 532 and the front portion of No. 530 are adaptively used for visitor services/interpretation (first floor), administration/protection/living quarters (second and third floors), and restrooms and mechanical equipment (basement).

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5. North Lawn

The grassed area bounded on the east by North Seventh Street, the north by Green Street, the west by the Park boundary (the rear wall of the Spring Garden Homes maintenance building), and the south by No. 532, enclosed on the east and north by an iron fence, was cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority beginning in 1963. It extended 78'8" south from Green Street, and 88'6" west along Green Street. This parcel encompassed the sites of the houses originally numbered 238, 240, and 242; the latter also had an attached stable in 1844. These properties were later renumbered 534, 536, and 538, respectively. By 1930 a 5-story brick building (then a broom factory) had replaced 536 and 538. In 1984 the Park Service installed an underground irrigation system. There are 3 trees on this site.

6. South Lawn

The grassed area bounded on the east by North Seventh Street, the north by the site of Wistar Street, the west by the Park boundary (a brick wall beyond which is the Guild House grounds), and the south by Spring Garden Street, enclosed on the east and south by an iron fence, was cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority beginning in 1963. The Richard Gimbel Foundation purchased the North and South Lawn parcels in 1966. This parcel extended 134'8" north from Spring Garden Street and 77'6" west from North Seventh Street. Unlike the North Lawn area, this parcel was apparently not fully developed in 1844. At its extreme southeast corner there was a large 2-story brick building with a wood addition to the north. The first floor was a tobacco shop; the second floor a school room. By 1854 the First Dutch Reformed Church occupied the property, and by 1930 a gasoline station operated at this site until it was demolished in the 1963 redevelopment program. In Poe's time there apparently was a vacant lot to the west of the brick building, giving the Poe family a view south to Spring Garden Street. Thus, this parcel, after being cleared, is partially representative of the presumed scene in Poe's time. An underground irrigation system was installed by the Park Service. There are four trees on this parcel.

Nonhistoric Structure Contributing to the Character of the Property

7. "The Raven"

An imposing bronze sculpture of an open-mouthed raven, commemorating Poe's most famous work, was added to the property in October 1979. "The Raven," painted black, is about 3½' high, with an 8' wingspan, and rests on a black-painted 1' x 1' x 12' high steel pedestal emplaced 5' south of the south wall of No. 530. The Free Library of Philadelphia wanted such a sculpture to serve as a striking symbol of the property. It was to be clearly visible from Spring Garden Street, and was to be emplaced in such a way as to cast a large shadow against the south wall of No. 530 on sunny days, and be floodlighted at night to cast an even larger shadow. Sculptor David Caccia, of Sewell, New Jersey, a Philadelphia native, was commissioned to create the statue. It replaced two previous ravens, one of lead, the other of wood, which had been stolen.



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Nonconforming Intrusions Detracting from the Integrity of the Property

8. Utility Building

A small 1-story brick structure with a shed roof, located west of the Poe House. Erected during the 1978-80 rehabilitation program, it replaced an older privy shed. It houses utilities.

9. Fence

A 6' tall iron fence encloses the Site on the east, north, and south sides. The fence forms a gate which can open at the site of Wistar Street. The fence jogs inward at the extreme southeast corner of the Site, where the Park's sign is mounted. The fence is painted black.

10. Utility Poles and Wires

There are wooden utility poles and overhead wires along North Seventh and Green Streets, plus 2 small metal traffic poles at the extreme southeast corner of the Site.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

|                                               |                                                 |                                                 |                                                 |                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE  | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                    | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE               | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-     | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS         | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|                                               |                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |                                                 |                                              |

SPECIFIC DATES Poe House: c.1840-41 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Poe House: William Alburger  
532 N. 7th St.: c. 1841 530 N. 7th St.: c. 1848 532 N. 7th St.: John Evans

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park System which has been designated by Congress as the official memorial to "the literary importance attained by Edgar Allan Poe," one of America's premier literary figures. The Site preserves the only surviving residence of the four which served Poe during his years in Philadelphia (1838-44). During this period he attained his greatest successes as an editor and critic, and he published some of his most famous tales, including "The Gold Bug," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and may have written an early version of "The Raven." The Site, in particular the Poe House, represents a tangible link with Poe and his accomplishments in Philadelphia.

In terms of National Register criteria, the Site (A) is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; and (B) is associated with the life of a person significant in our past. It represents the "Area of Significance" of "Literature" for the "1800-1899" and "1900-" Periods, the latter including the commemorative period since the 1930's. The Poe House is one of the many places where Edgar Allan Poe resided, and is one of several memorials to him. These include the Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum in Baltimore, Maryland (his home from 1832-35), the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage in The Bronx, New York, New York (his final home), and the Poe Museum in Richmond, Virginia. Poe also lived briefly at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, and four U. S. Army posts, including the Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Edgar Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1809. His parents, David and Elizabeth, were itinerant actors. The father left (or died?), and the mother died when Edgar was only two. He was raised as a foster child by John Allan, a Richmond tobacco exporter, and his wife, Frances. Edgar took Allan's surname as his middle name. Part of his childhood was spent with the Allans in England. After returning to Richmond, Poe later matriculated at the University of Virginia, but soon withdrew due to Allan's refusal to pay Poe's gambling debts. At the age of eighteen Poe went to Boston, where he published his first volume of poems. Using the name "Edgar A. Perry," he enlisted in the Army, serving for two years in the First U. S. Artillery at Ft. Independence (Boston), Ft. Moultrie (Charleston, S.C.), and Ft. Monroe (Hampton Roads, Va.), where he was regimental sergeant-major. Poe secured an appointment to West Point in 1830, but was dismissed in 1831. Allan's remarriage ended Poe's hope of his foster father's continued support. Plagued by poverty and debt, Poe lived mostly in Baltimore with his aunt, Maria Clemm, and her young daughter Virginia, from 1831 to 1835. He published more poems in 1829 and 1831, and sold tales to Baltimore and Philadelphia journals.

Poe's life took a turn for the better when he became editor of the Southern Literary

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Holm, Alvin. The Edgar Allan Poe House in Spring Garden, #530 North 7th St., Philadelphia: A Historical Structures Report prepared for the National Park Service, May 1982
2. Thibaut, Jacqueline. Edgar A. Poe The Years in Philadelphia 1838-1844: Historic Resource Study Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site/ Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, October 1981

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

(Draft)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.517

Quadrangle Name Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J.

UTM REFERENCES

Quadrangle Scale 1: 24,000

A 18 4871610 4423310  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C         

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D         

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is as described in the attached boundary description of Tract 101-01, dated December 4, 1978, and is so recorded on the Deed transferring the property from the City of Philadelphia to the United States of America, executed on September 27, 1979.

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

|       |      |      |      |        |      |      |      |
|-------|------|------|------|--------|------|------|------|
| STATE | N,A, | CODE | N,A, | COUNTY | N,A, | CODE | N,A, |
| STATE | N,A, | CODE | N,A, | COUNTY | N,A, | CODE | N,A, |

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Clifford Tobias Regional Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Region

DATE

July 8, 1986

STREET & NUMBER

143 South Third Street

TELEPHONE

(215) 597-9970

CITY OR TOWN

Philadelphia

STATE

Pennsylvania 19106

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

### STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES   

NO   

NONE   

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is    National    State    Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Edwin C. Brown*

TITLE

*Chief Historian, National Park Service*

DATE

*July 13, 1986*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

*9/5/86*

ATTEST:

*FOR CONFIRMATION*

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*ALREADY LISTED*

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Messenger in Richmond in 1835. He was an editor, critic, and contributor to a series of flourishing journals. In that year Poe married thirteen-year-old Virginia. The following year they and Mrs. Clemm moved to New York.

In the spring of 1838 the then-unemployed Poe and his family relocated from New York to Philadelphia. At that time he was best known as a literary critic, whose goal was to improve the quality of American literature. That year the book Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym was published in New York, and Poe's first work written in Philadelphia was published, the tale of terror "Ligeia." After about six months in one or more boardinghouses, the Poes moved to a rented house on South Sixteenth Street, near Locust Street (also known as "Schuylkill Seventh Street," which could account for some confusion with his later residence on North Seventh and Wistar Streets). Late in the year two burlesques were published, and in 1839 an article, a poem, and a popular tale, "William Wilson."

Having failed to secure a Navy Department clerkship in 1838, Poe successfully applied for an editorial position at Burton's Gentleman's Magazine, published by a flamboyant English actor, William E. Burton. Ironically, Burton had written a scathing review of Pym. Poe began his new job as co-editor in May 1839, at a weekly salary of \$10. Poe and Burton had incompatible personalities. The perfectionist Poe was mainly concerned with literary quality, while the frequently-absent Burton was mainly interested in operating his journal as a business. Poe lasted about a year, during which Gentleman's Magazine published the tale, "The Fall of the House of Usher," a reprint of "William Wilson," "The Journal of Julius Rodman," plus numerous reviews and other pieces. All of Poe's tales written as of September 1839 were published in December as Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, by Lea and Blanchard, the city's most prestigious publishing house. It received widespread, if mixed reviews. At the beginning of 1840 Poe began publishing his works in other Philadelphia outlets. At the end of May Burton fired Poe, who was planning to establish his own journal, "The Penn Magazine." During his tenure at Gentleman's Magazine, Poe was attaining national recognition, his poems and tales receiving considerable attention.

In October Burton sold his magazine to Philadelphia publisher George Rex Graham, who combined it with his own journal, The Casket, to create Graham's Magazine, beginning in December. Graham, who also published the Saturday Evening Post, intended his new venture to be one of the most influential publications in the country, and he succeeded. Poe, whose effort to establish "The Penn" was getting nowhere, published the tale "The Man of the Crowd" in the first issue of Graham's Magazine. In February 1841 Poe was hired as the book review editor of Graham's Magazine at a yearly salary of \$800. Poe lasted just over a year in his new job. Among his contributions in the April issue was "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," a prime example of Poe's fascination with "ratiocination," the process of exact thinking. Next came "A Descent into the Maelstrom," followed by other tales. He corresponded with most of the leading American authors, and met Charles Dickens when the eminent Englishman visited Philadelphia.



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Meanwhile Poe continued trying to secure a Federal appointment and to promote "The Penn." In April 1842 Poe resigned from Graham's Magazine, but he stayed on good terms with Graham, and contributed to the journal. His works at this time included a short story, "The Masque of the Red Death."

In the spring of 1842 the Poes left their rented house, possibly spending the summer in a boardinghouse. By September they were renters in a house on Coates Street (later Fairmount Avenue) near North Twenty-Fifth Street in the western portion of Spring Garden District, close to the Fairmount Water Works.

In that year "The Mystery of Marie Roget," and "The Pit and the Pendulum" were published. "The Tell-Tale Heart" appeared in the first volume of James Russell Lowell's magazine, The Pioneer, followed by the poem "Lenore," in 1843.

Having failed to receive an appointment in either Washington or at the Philadelphia Custom House, Poe continued trying to start his own magazine, now named "The Stylus." An erratic sojourn in Washington hurt Poe, but he bounced back with a new tale of ratiocination, "The Gold Bug," which won Poe a \$100 prize and publication in the Dollar Newspaper in Philadelphia. Also appearing was The Prose Romances of Edgar A. Poe.

Sometime between September 1842 and June 20, 1843 (when he wrote to Lowell), Poe moved to the opposite end of Spring Garden District, to William Alburger's recently-built house at 234 North Seventh Street. This location was more convenient to Poe than was Fairmount. It was within walking distance of the publishing district around Dock Street and the U. S. Post Office in the Merchants' Exchange Building. The Spring Garden market was just one-half block away. The bustling neighborhood teemed with shops, offices, and houses.

In August "The Gold Bug" was presented as a dramatic production at the Walnut Street Theatre, but it was a flop. That month the Saturday Evening Post published the tale "The Black Cat," whose setting, it has been observed, may well have been Poe's new residence. Late that year and continuing into early 1844 Poe successfully lectured on "American Poetry" before large audiences in Philadelphia, Delaware, Baltimore, and Reading, Pennsylvania.

Sometime in 1843 Poe wrote "Morning on the Wissahickon," which was published in The Opal for 1844. This was one of the very few of Poe's works to have an overtly Philadelphia setting. A few more pieces were published just before or after Poe's move to New York, including "The Balloon Hoax" in the New York Extra Sun. He may also have been working on "The Raven" and "The Purloined Letter."

On March 30 Poe wrote to Lowell, without mentioning his impending return to New York. Having failed to establish his own magazine in Philadelphia, he may have hoped for better opportunities in New York. On April 6 Poe and Virginia went to New York via train and steamboat. Mrs. Clemm stayed behind temporarily, to dispose of items in the house.



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In New York, Poe briefly published his own journal. Then Virginia died in 1847, and grief and illness plagued Poe for a time. But he returned to work and published several pieces, including "Annabel Lee" and "The Bells." He continued to seek support for his magazine, gave lectures, and became engaged to a woman who had been his childhood sweetheart, Sarah Shelton. His physical and mental conditions rapidly deteriorating, Poe died under mysterious circumstances in Baltimore in October 1849, at the age of forty. Mrs. Clemm lived on until 1871.

During his years in Philadelphia Poe wrote at least 25 of his 70 tales, some of his 79 poems, and a large number of his 250 reviews and articles. He was poorly paid for this output, and worked regularly as an editor for only about two years. Although some of his best fiction was produced in this period, Poe was best known as a critic, and an increasingly savage one at that.

Poe made major innovative contributions to several genres, among them the murder mystery, the treasure mystery, the horror story, the psychological portrait, and the science fiction tale. As a critic, he insisted on "the application of a rigorous method in all forms of thought," and that a poem must be short as well as extraordinarily crafted. Stressing the concept of "condensation," Poe argued that the short story must be designed for "a single effect," and that every word had to be written to contribute. To Poe it was the author's work of art, not the author, which was paramount.

History of the Poe House as a Memorial

From 1844 to 1913, there was a strong neighborhood tradition that the rear portion of No. 234/530 North Seventh Street had been the residence of the Poe family. But it was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a European-inspired revival of interest in Poe, that anything which could be called a "preservationist" idea emerged. In New York, Richmond, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, interest in Poe-related sites increased. In Philadelphia, however, this renewed concern failed to save any of the buildings associated with Poe except, ultimately, No. 530 North Seventh Street. According to the former curator's wife, Mrs. Anthony Frayne, who died in 1985, a Mrs. William Owens, apparently a renter, lived at No. 530 in the 1920s for a fee of five cents, she showed Poe buffs the rear portion of the property on the annual anniversaries of Poe's birth and death. In the 1920s and 1930s the house appeared in Philadelphia guidebooks. But with its neighborhood declining, the home seemed destined to follow other Poe-related sites into oblivion.

It was Philadelphia entrepreneur and collector of manuscripts and rare books Richard Gimbel, who saved the Poe House. Gimbel amassed a great collection of "Poe-ana," which is now housed at the Free Library of Philadelphia. In 1928 Gimbel began negotiating for No. 530, and he founded the Edgar Allan Poe Club by 1930. His Richard

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Gimbel Foundation for Literary Research concluded the acquisition process by December 1933. Much of Gimbel's collection was initially stored at the Poe House under the care of Anthony Frayne. By November 1933 Frayne was giving group tours of the house. After their marriage in 1936, Mrs. Frayne shared her husband's duties.

Gimbel publicized the Poe House by means of radio and newspaper interviews, talks, and press releases, and cooperated with colleagues engaged in similar activities in the other East Coast cities. On January 19, 1934, to mark the 125th anniversary of Poe's birth, Gimbel staged a formal dinner for 1,300 people at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel. The program included the dedication of the Poe House. In December 1935 Gimbel acquired No. 532 to increase storage space and to provide quarters for the Fraynes. Gimbel bought a safe for this building. The property, now consisting of the three buildings, was maintained and operated by the Gimbel Foundation and the Poe Club until 1971, following Gimbel's death. (For physical work, see Section 7, Description.)

In 1962 the National Park Service's National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings categorized the Poe House as a "Site of Exceptional Value" under the Theme "The Arts and Sciences," Subtheme "Literature." As a result, the Poe House was declared a National Historic Landmark on December 29, 1962, under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The following year, the property was refurbished, and the adjacent properties to the north and south cleared and landscaped by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. In 1966 the Gimbel Foundation purchased the two lots.

Following Gimbel's death, his foundation donated the site and the Poe Collection to the City of Philadelphia in 1971. The authorizing legislation gave jurisdiction over both the real estate and the collection to the Free Library of Philadelphia. The Fraynes continued as resident curators/guides. In 1972 the National Trust for Historic Preservation granted the Free Library \$400 to hire an architectural consultant. In 1973 John Lloyd Associates of Philadelphia submitted their report.

It was not until 1977 that funds to implement the recommendations were available. In that year the City received a grant of \$469,000 from the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, under the Public Works Employment Act of 1976, plus another \$50,000 from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. John Lloyd Associates was the winning bidder, and the 1978-80 renovation program was implemented by Lloyd's subcontractors. The site was closed to the public.

Meanwhile an effort was underway to add the property to the National Park System. In 1974 U.S. Representative Joshua Eilberg of Philadelphia introduced a resolution to establish the Poe House as a National Historical Park. This effort culminated in the inclusion of a provision in the National Parks and Recreation Act of November 10, 1978 (Public Law 95-625), which authorized the establishment of "Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site," "in recognition of the literary importance attained by Edgar Allan Poe." On March 17, 1980, title was transferred to the

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National Park Service, the Site to be administered by the Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park. By that time the City's renovation program had been completed. On August 22 the Secretary of the Interior officially established the Site. In that month the Park was opened to public visitation, with Park Service personnel giving tours (Mrs. Frayne remained in residence in No. 532 until her death in 1985). On June 18, 1981, a dedication ceremony was held at the Site, with scholars, representatives of the other Poe-related sites, and members of the Gimbel family participating.

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- 
3. Thomas, Dwight Rembert. "Poe in Philadelphia, 1838-1844: A Documentary Record."  
Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia,  
1978.



Purported Owner: City of Philadelphia

Edgar Allan Poe National  
Historic Site

Interest to be Acquired: Fee

Area: 0.52 of an acre, more or less.

Date: December 4, 1978 MARO

Tract 101-01

All those two certain lots or pieces of ground, situate in the Thirteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia, described as follows, to wit:

Premises "A"

BEGINNING at the intersection of the westerly side of Seventh Street (50 feet wide) and the northerly side of Spring Garden Street (120 feet wide); thence, extending North  $84^{\circ} 48' 42''$  West along the said northerly side of Spring Garden Street 77 feet 6 inches to a point; thence North  $5^{\circ} 11' 18''$  East 114 feet  $3 \frac{1}{4}$  inches to a point on the southerly side of former Brandywine Street; thence North  $84^{\circ} 48' 42''$  West along the said southerly side of former Brandywine Street 8 feet  $2 \frac{1}{8}$  inches to a point; thence North  $5^{\circ} 11' 18''$  East crossing the bed of the said former Brandywine Street, 20 feet to a point on the northerly side of former Brandywine Street; thence South  $84^{\circ} 48' 42''$  East along the said northerly side of former Brandywine Street 96 feet 11 inches to a point on the westerly side of said Seventh Street; thence South  $9^{\circ} 58' 17''$  West, recrossing the bed of the said former Brandywine Street and also along the said westerly side of Seventh Street, 134 feet  $8 \frac{7}{8}$  inches, more or less, to a point on the said northerly side of Spring Garden Street, being the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

AND

BEGINNING at the intersection of the southerly side of Green Street (50 feet wide) and the westerly side of Seventh Street (50 feet wide); thence extending South  $9^{\circ} 58' 17''$  West, along the said westerly side of Seventh Street, 78 feet 8 inches to a point; thence North  $80^{\circ} 1' 43''$  West, 100 feet  $3 \frac{1}{4}$  inches to a point; thence North  $5^{\circ} 11' 18''$  East 19 feet  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to a point; thence South  $80^{\circ} 1' 43''$  East 18 feet  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to a point; thence North  $5^{\circ} 11' 18''$  East 52 feet to a point on the said southerly side of Green Street; thence South  $84^{\circ} 48' 42''$  East along the said southerly side of Green Street, 88 feet  $5 \frac{3}{4}$  inches to a point on the said westerly side of Seventh Street, being the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

Premises "B"

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate on the west side of Seventh Street at the distance of 78 feet 8 inches southward from the south side of Green Street in the Thirteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia;

CONTAINING in front or breadth on the said Seventh Street 19 feet (including on the north side thereof the southernmost half part of a 2 feet 4 inches wide alley) and extending in length or depth westward between parallel lines nearly at right angles with the said Seventh Street on the north line thereof, 100 feet 3 1/4 inches and on the south line thereof 98 feet 8 inches and containing in breadth on the rear end thereof, 19 feet 3/4 inch.

TOGETHER with the free use and privilege of the said 2 feet 4 inches wide alley and of at least 7 feet 6 inches headway above the pavement extending from Seventh Street aforesaid westward to the depth of 37 feet to the square of said alley and then narrowing at each side to a point in the middle at the distance of 39 feet from Seventh Street for a passageway and watercourse and to lay pipes of conduit therein in common with the owners, tenants and occupiers of the lot next adjoining on the north.

BEING No. 532 North Seventh Street.

Premises "C"

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate in the Thirteenth Ward of the City of Philadelphia and described according to a survey thereof made by William H. Ogden, Jr., Surveyor and Regulator of the Third Survey District, July 8, 1929, as follows, to wit:

BEGINNING at a point at the intersection of the west side of Seventh Street (50 feet wide) with the north side of former Brandywine Street (20 feet wide); thence extending northward along the west side of said Seventh Street, 17 feet to a point; thence, westward through the middle of a party wall 98 feet 8 5/8 inches to a point in the middle of another party wall; thence southward at right angles to the said former Brandywine Street and through the middle of the last mentioned party wall, 25 feet 8 1/2 inches to the north side of former Brandywine Street aforesaid; and thence eastward along the north side of said former Brandywine Street, 96 feet 11 inches to the place of beginning.

BEING No. 530 North Seventh Street.

Containing 0.52 of an acre, more or less.

The above-described parcel, designated as Tract 101-01, Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is all of the same land acquired by the City of Philadelphia from the Richard Gimbel Foundation for Literary Research by deed dated October 20, 1971 and recorded December 31, 1971 in Deed Book 443, Page 247 in the Department of Records of the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and being all of the same land described by an ordinance of the Council of the City of Philadelphia (known as City Council Bill No. 2440) approved by the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia on September 29, 1971, which authorized the acceptance as a gift of the hereinabove described premises by the City.

GREEN

STREET

SPRING GARDEN

HOMES PUBLIC HOUSING  
PROJECT MAINTENANCE  
BUILDING

GUILD HOUSE

NORTH SEVENTH STREET

## BOUNDARY MAP

EDGAR ALLAN POE  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

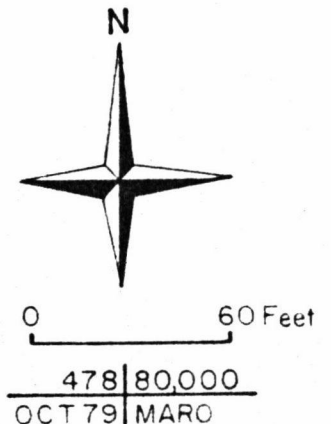
SPRING

GARDEN

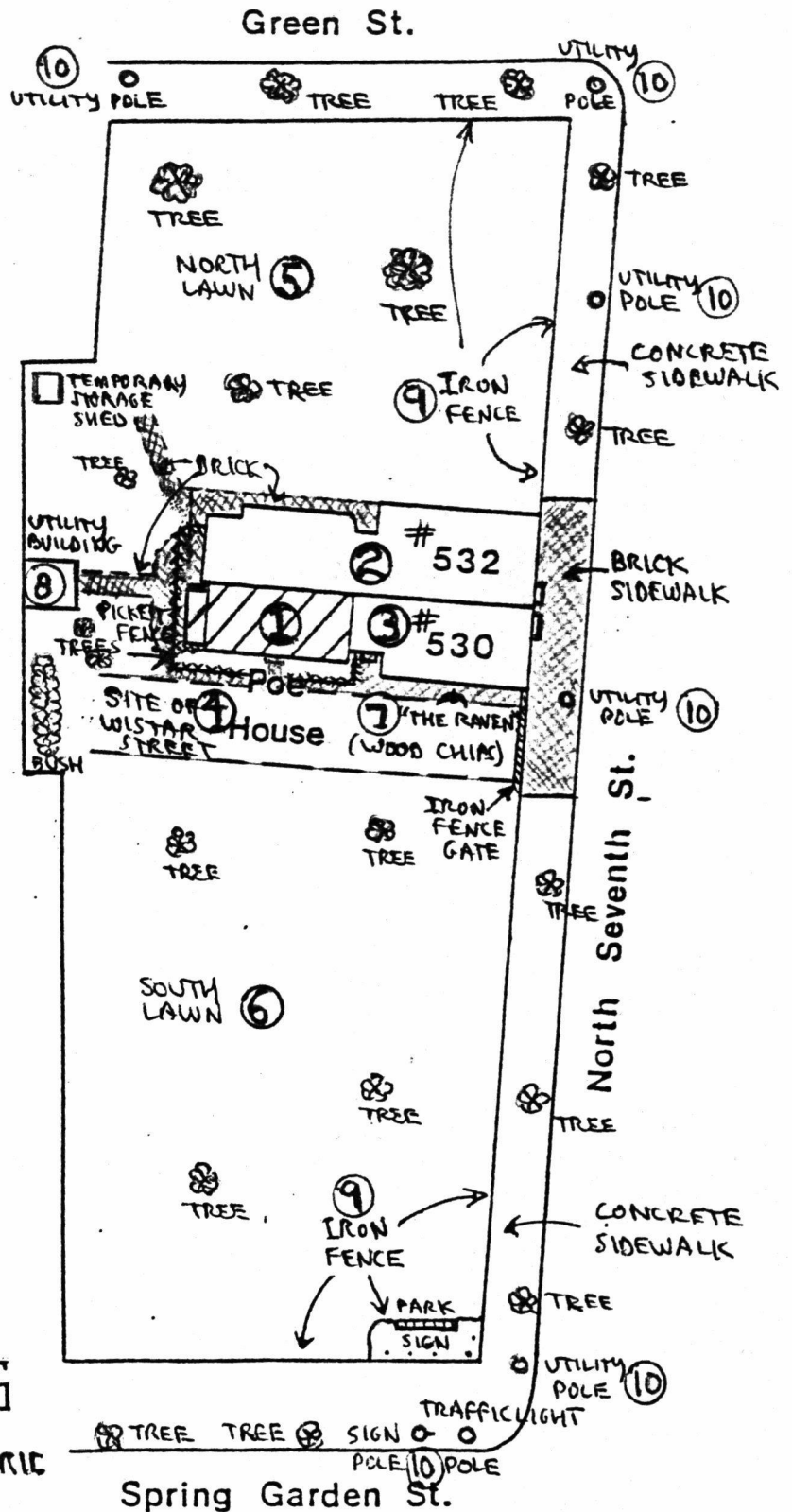
STREET

### LEGEND

--- PARK BOUNDARY



PHILADELPHIA  
PENNSYLVANIA



# EXISTING CONDITIONS FOR NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES DOCUMENTATION

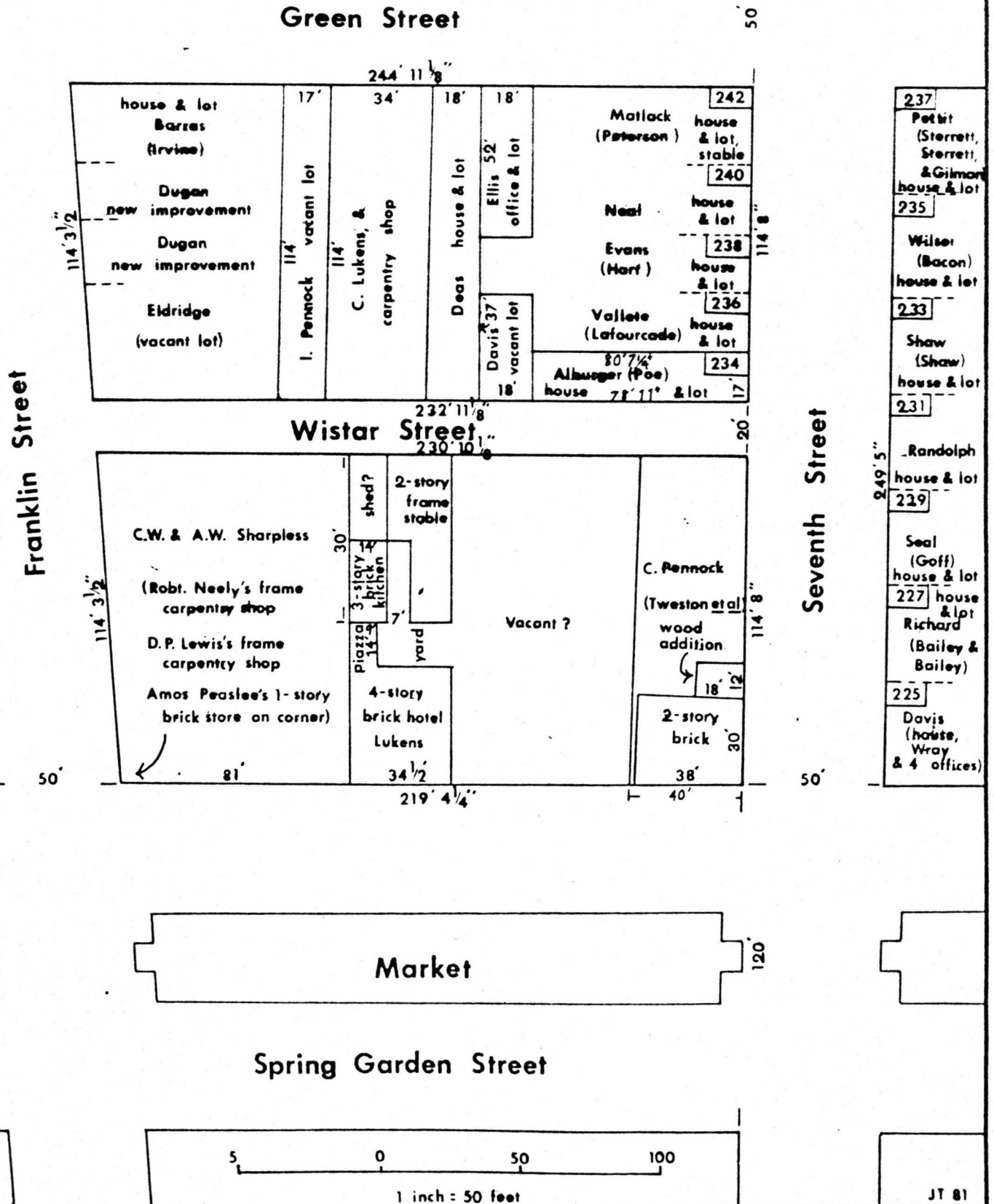
478/80,003  
MARCH 6, 1986 / MARCO / E. TOBIAS

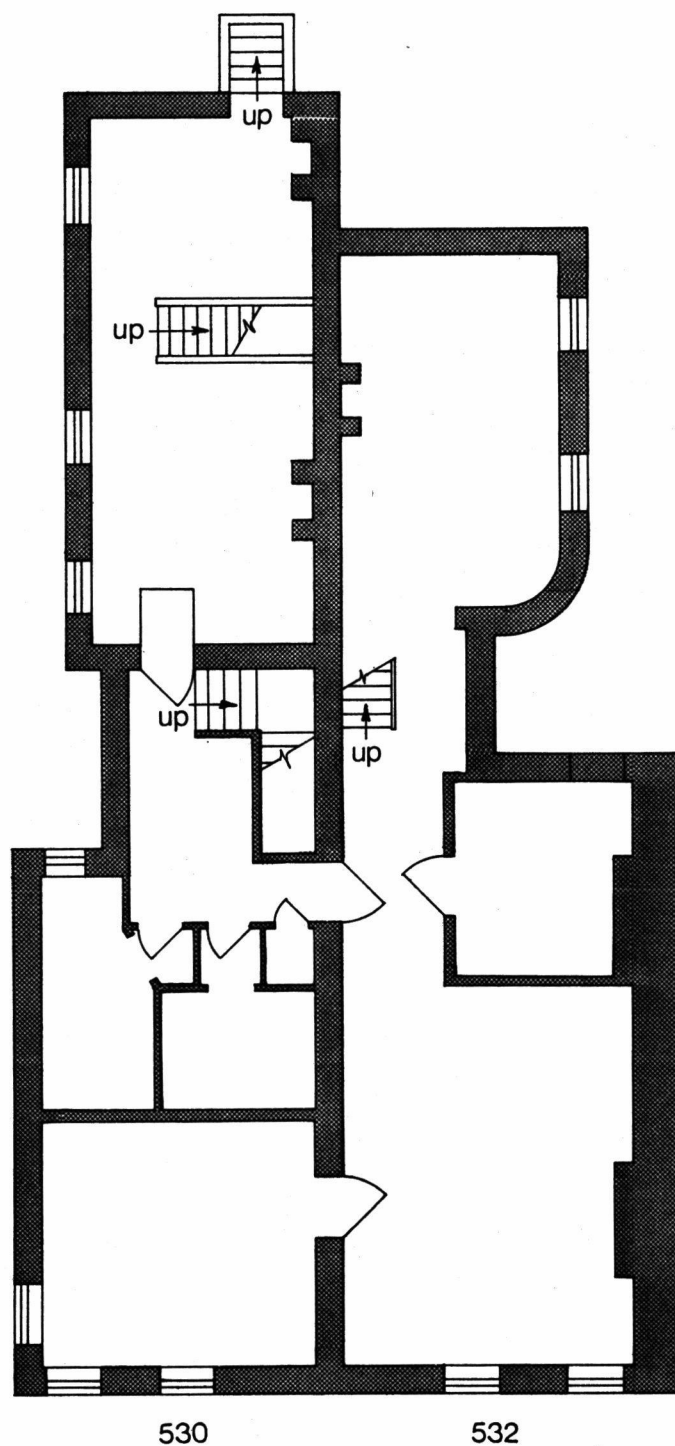
① NUMBERS KEYED TO TEXT NOT TO SCALE



# MAP 5

## Poe's Neighborhood 1844

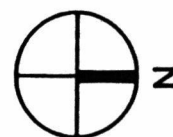




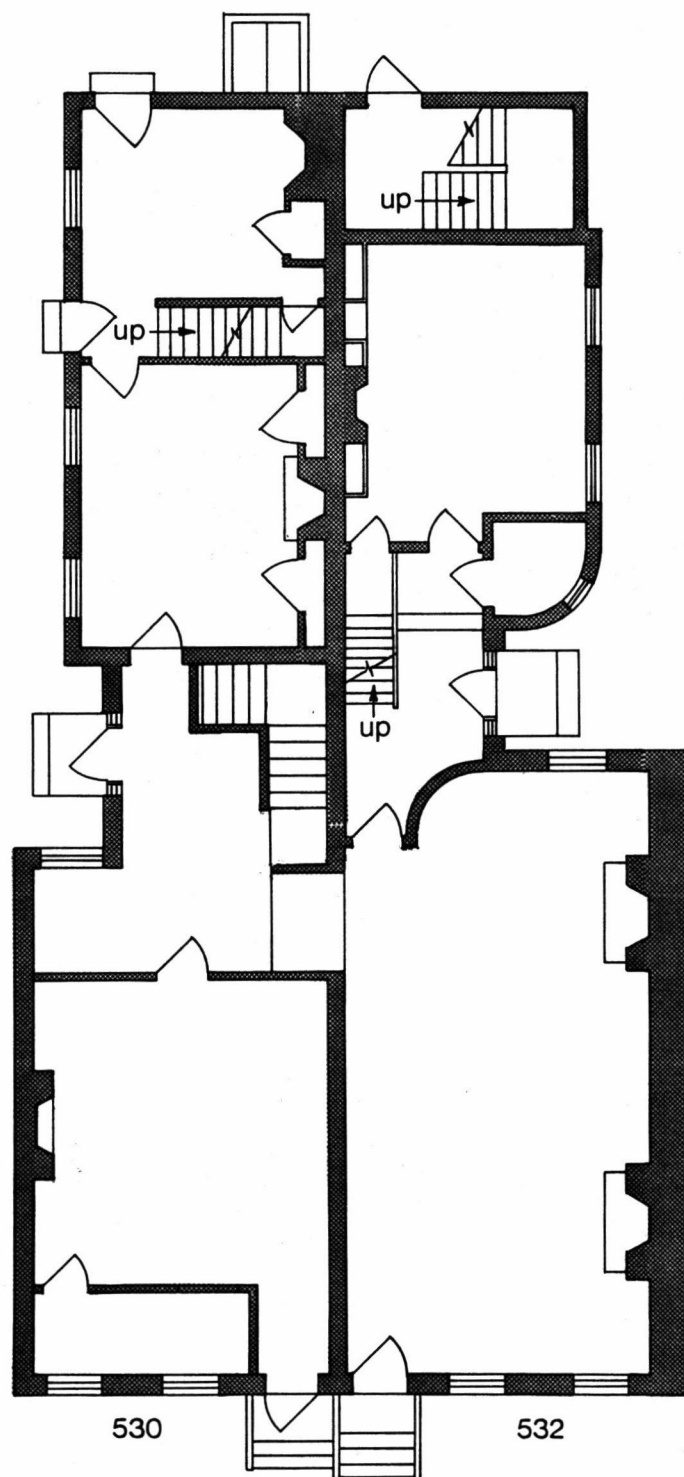
## CELLAR PLAN

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet



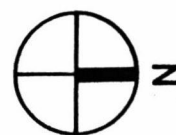
1985



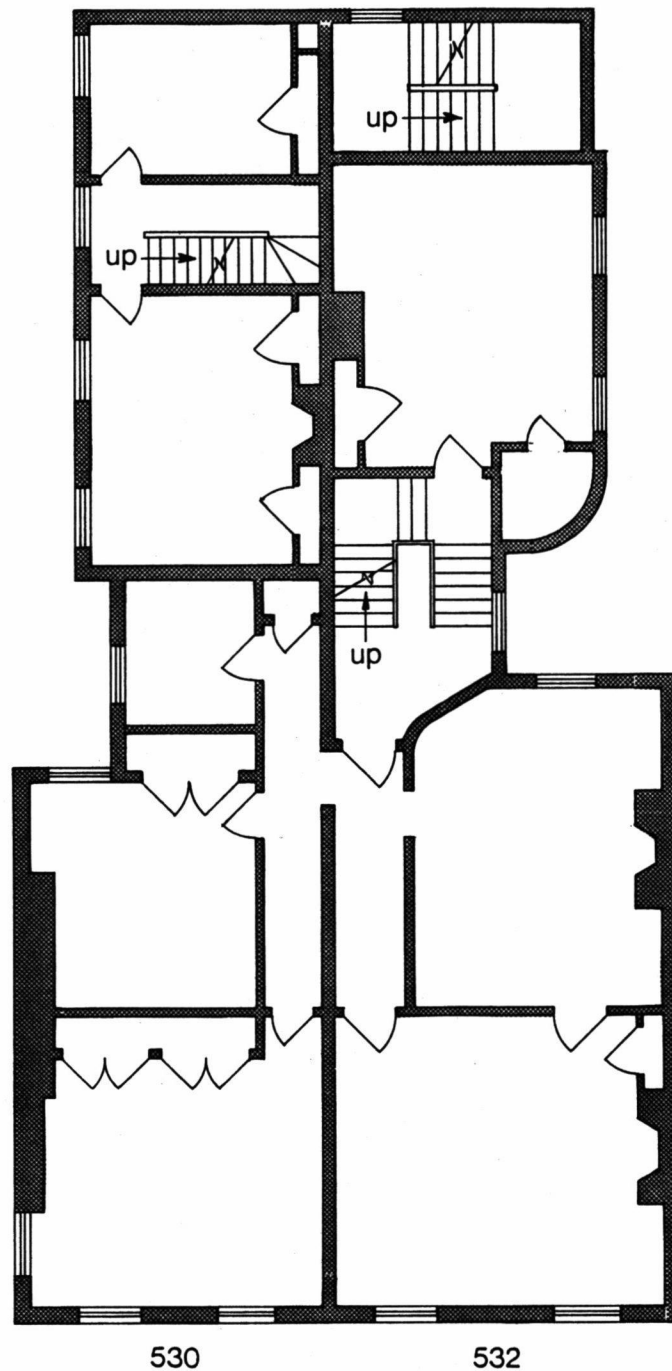
# **FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

**Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site** 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet



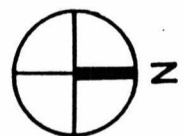
1985



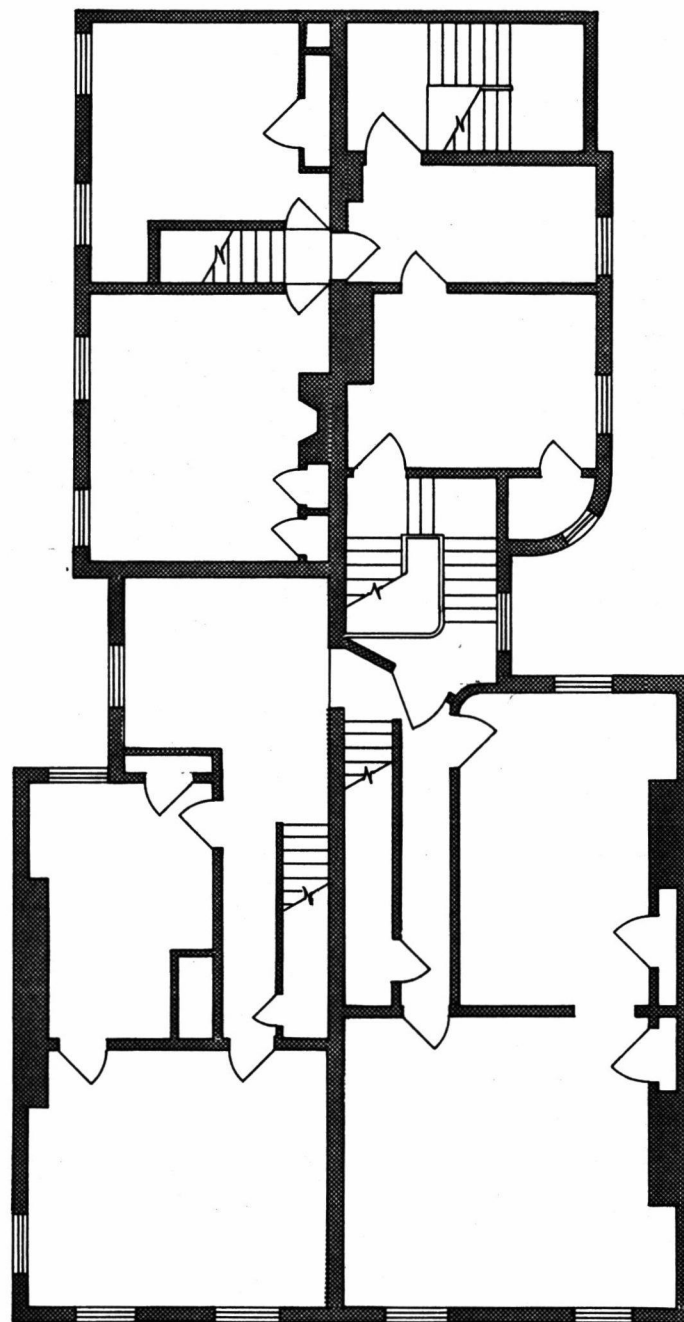
## SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet



1985



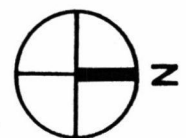
530

532

### THIRD FLOOR PLAN

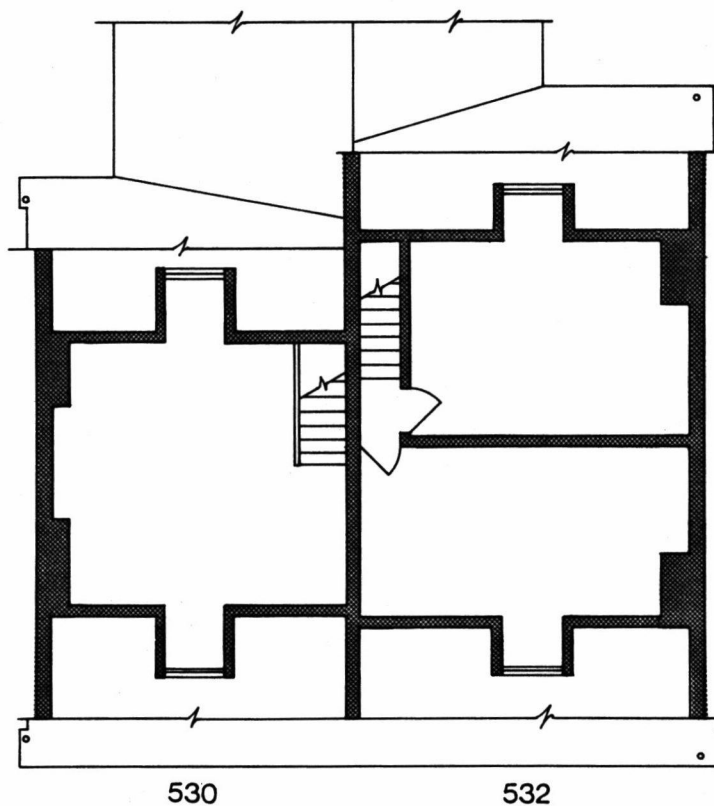
Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet



1985

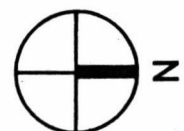




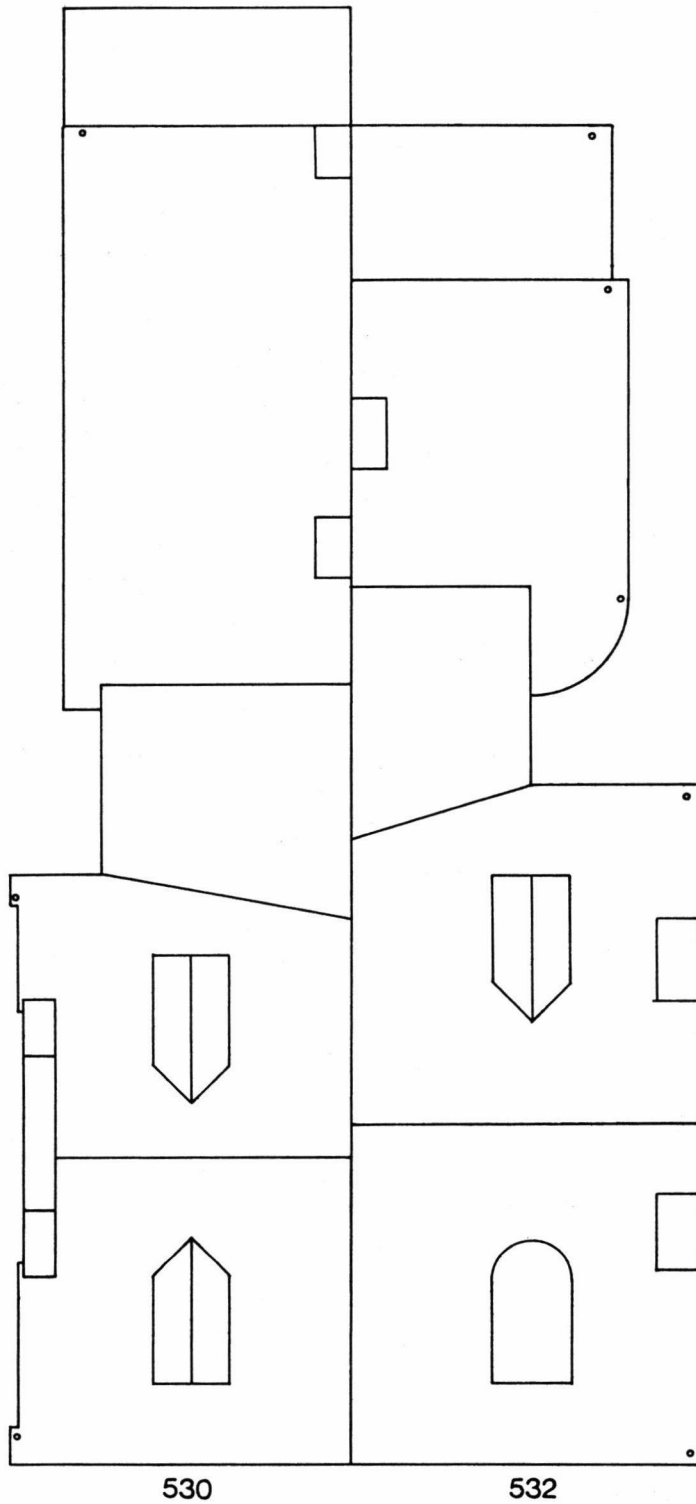
# **ATTIC PLAN**

**Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site** 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale : 0 5 10 15 20 feet

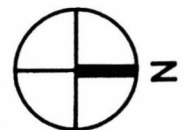
1985



# **ROOF PLAN**

**Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site** 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale : 0 5 10 15 20 feet



1985



## NORTH ELEVATION

**Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site** 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet

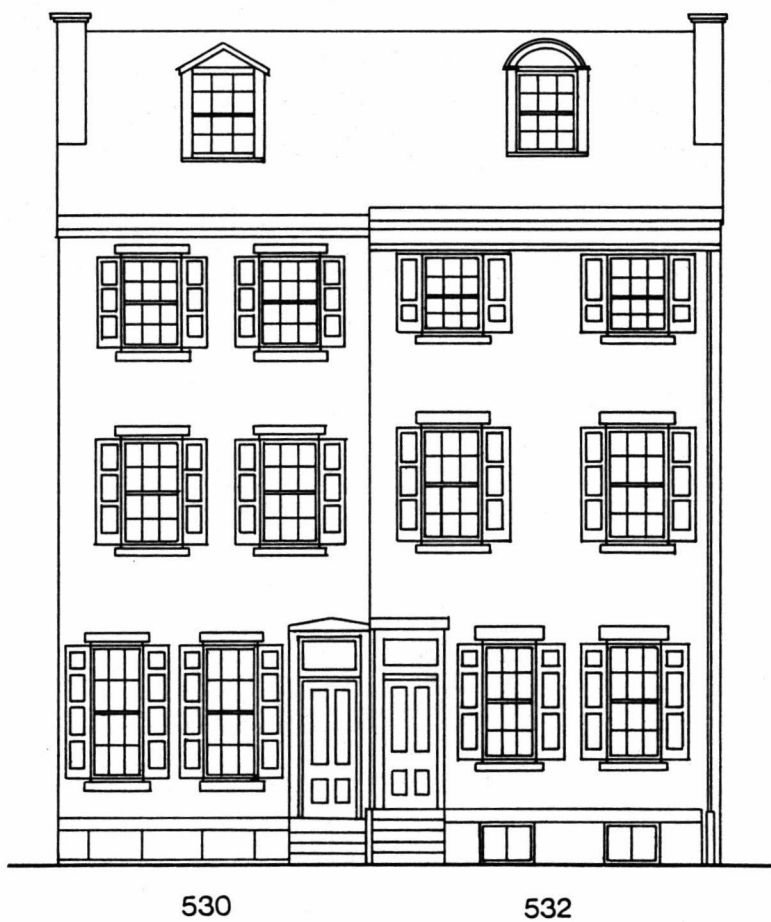
1985



**SOUTH ELEVATION**

**Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site** 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale : 0 5 10 15 20 feet



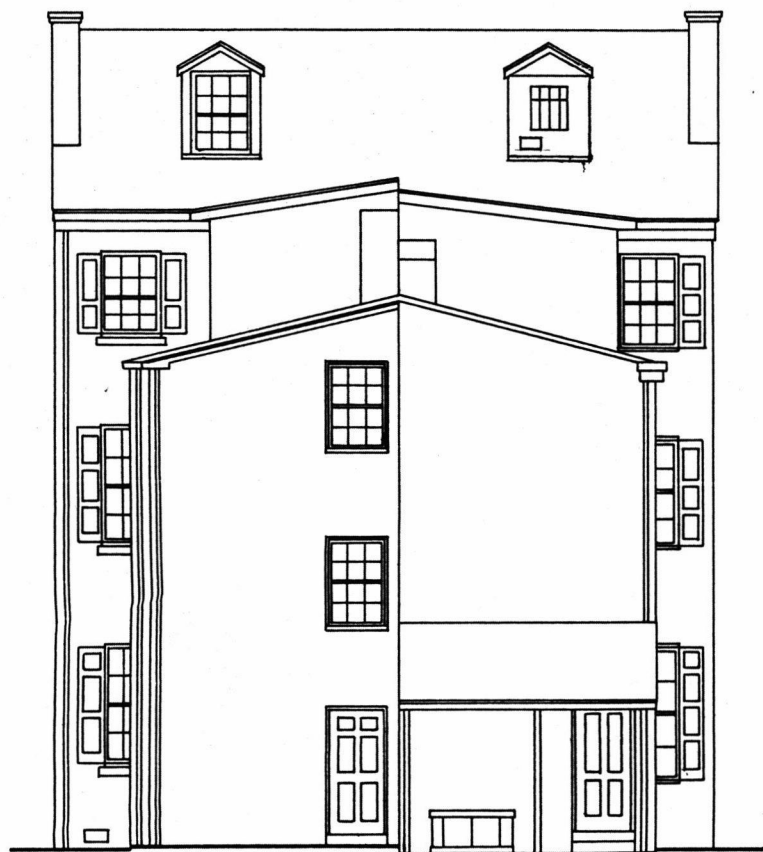
## EAST ELEVATION

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet

1985





## WEST ELEVATION

Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site 530 - 532 N. 7th Street

Scale: 0 5 10 15 20 feet

1985

*FEDERAL*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

CONFIRMATION

*ALREADY  
LISTED*

*66000689*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Poe, Edgar Allan, House  
Philadelphia County  
PENNSYLVANIA

*Substantive Review*

Working No. 7-24-86  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 9-7-86  
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-5-86  
☐ RETURN  
☐ REJECT  
Federal Agency: NPS

- ☐ resubmission  
☐ nomination by person or local government  
☐ owner objection  
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

*Form has been prepared in final - suggestions  
made by N.R. preliminary review have been  
incorporated into final version.*

Recom./Criteria accept documentation  
Reviewer Patryck Andrews  
Discipline History  
Date 9/5/86  
☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below  
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership          | Status     | Present Use |
|----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
|          | Public Acquisition | Accessible |             |

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good      | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair      | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |

Check one

- ☐ unaltered  
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph  
☐ completeness  
☐ clarity  
☐ alterations/integrity  
☐ dates  
☐ boundary selection

---

## 8. Significance

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

---

### 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title      date

---

### 13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_





EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
NOS. 530-532 NORTH SEVENTH STREET  
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSSELL SMITH, 1979  
NEGATIVE AT INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK

NO. 1 of 5





EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
NOS. 530-532 NORTH SEVENTH STREET  
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

VIEW LOOKING WEST

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSSELL SMITH, 1979  
NEGATIVE AT INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK

NO. 2 of 5





EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
POE HOUSE (REAR, NO. 530 NORTH SEVENTH  
STREET)  
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSSELL SMITH, 1979  
NEGATIVE AT INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK

NO.3 of 5





EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
NO. 532 NORTH SEVENTH STREET  
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

VIEW LOOKING SOUTH

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSSELL SMITH, 1979  
NEGATIVE AT INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK

NO. 4 of 5





"THE RAVEN," BY DAVID CACCIA  
EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
530 NORTH SEVENTH STREET  
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

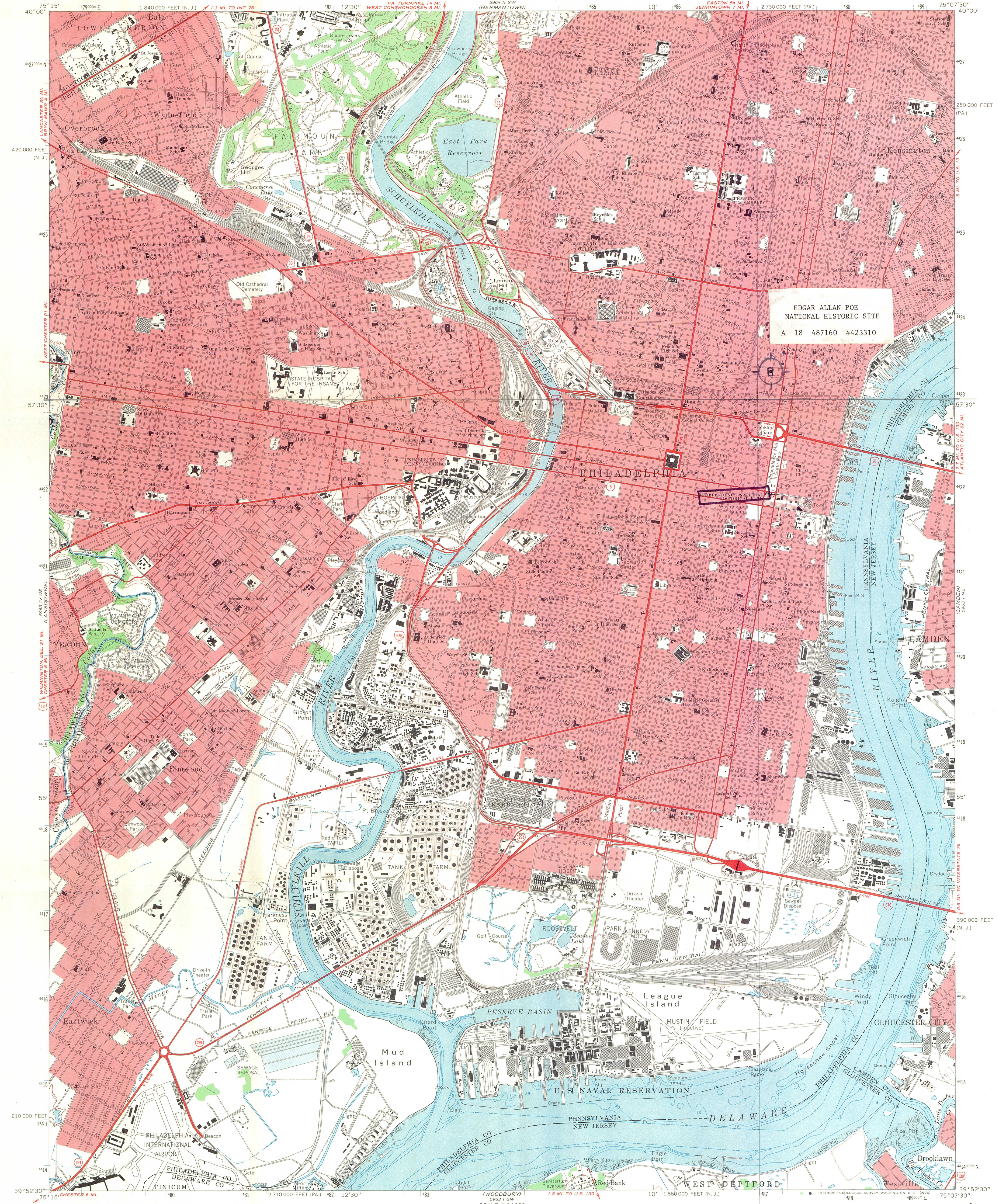
VIEW LOOKING NORTH  
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, 1980  
NEGATIVE AT INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK

NO.5 of 5



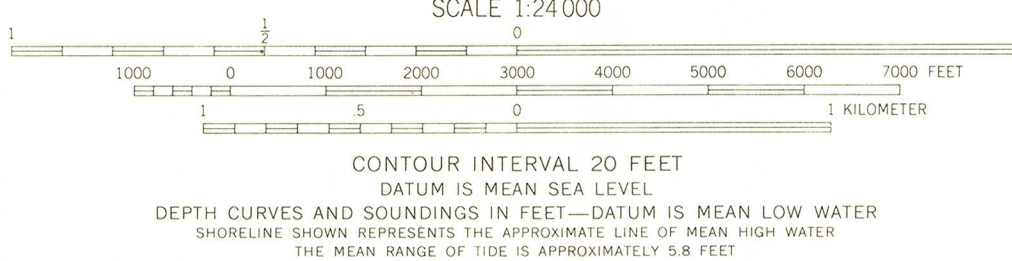
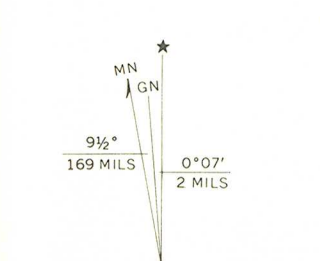
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

PHILADELPHIA QUADRANGLE  
PENNSYLVANIA-NEW JERSEY  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



EDGAR ALLAN POE  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
A 18 487160 4423310

Mapped by the U. S. Coast & Geodetic Survey  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE  
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1946. Topography by planimetric surveys 1947. Revised by the  
Geological Survey from aerial photographs taken 1965. Field  
checked 1967  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Chart 280 (1967)  
This information is not intended for navigational purposes  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone,  
and New Jersey coordinate system  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18,  
shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—N. J.  
N 3952.5—W 7507.5/7.5  
1967  
AMS 5963 1 NW—SERIES V831





# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
H32(418)

**MAR 19 1986**

Memorandum

To: Chief of Registration, Interagency Resources Division

From: Chief Historian

Subject: Preliminary Review of National Register Documentation, Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site, by Regional Historian Tobias

Attached for your preliminary review and comment is a copy of the subject form documenting to National Register standards the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site. This form was prepared by Regional Historian Tobias as a critical element in meeting his requirements for attendance at the 1985 Historians' Workshop.

My staff has reviewed the form and we wish to commend Dr. Tobias on the superior quality of the description and significance sections. Consequently, we have no substantive comments. In the margins of the draft we have identified a few minor editorial concerns.

*Edmund Reuss*

Attachment

*reid*  
**MAR 20 1986**



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H32(418)

JUL 17 1986

## Memorandum

To: Chief of Registration Shull, Interagency Resources Division

From: Chief Historian

Subject: Documentation to National Register Standards of the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site

Attached please find the form documenting the subject property to National Register standards.

The form was given a preliminary review by our offices and returned to the Regional Director, Mid-Atlantic Region in early June. The form has been revised and our comments have been assessed and addressed. A courtesy copy has been provided to the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Officer.

As federal historic preservation officer for the National Park Service, I have signed the form attesting that the park's cultural resources have been documented to National Register standards. The park was listed in the National Register on November 10, 1978.

Attachment

JUL 24 1986



Poe, Edgar Allan, House

(Resource Name)

Philadelphia

(County)

66000689

(Reference Number[s])

Pennsylvania

(State)

51 181 28

(Date form completed)

(Completed by)

STATUS:

1. MISSING \_\_\_\_\_ 2. REMOVED/ \_\_\_\_\_ 3. NHL ☒ 4. TR \_\_\_\_\_ 5. MRA \_\_\_\_\_ 6. OVER- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. NPS - \_\_\_\_\_ 8. DOE - \_\_\_\_\_ 9. RESTRICTED \_\_\_\_\_  
DEMOLISHED SIZED UNDOCUMENTED OWNER OBJECTION

EXPLANATION:

1. Missing Status: Entire Folder ( ); Nomination ( ); Map(s) ( ); Photos ( )  
Available on: Microfiche ( ); Optical Disk ( )

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Cause for removal)

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Removed)

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
(NHL Name, if different than NRHP Name)

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Designated)

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
(If multi-state/county TR, state/county where filed and location)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(TR or MRA Name)

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
(If multi-state/county MRA, state/county where filed and location)

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Location of oversize file)

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Current source of partial documentation)

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Target Date)

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Where found, or source of replacement)

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Found/Replaced)