THEME: The Contemplative Society, Literature.

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Edgar Allen Poe House is three stories tall, one room deep, and two rooms wide. It is made of red brick, with white trim and has a pitched roof, and a central chimney. Formerly freestanding, the house is now enclosed on its north and east sides by a mid-19th century townhouse which faces on to N. 7th Street. The interior of the house is characterized by its simplicity. A narrow walled-in stairway separates each floor into two rooms which are outfitted with period pieces, none of which are associated with Poe. A portion of the original garden exists on the west end of the house. Today, the house is maintained by the Free Library of Philadelphia as it might have been in Poe's time, with a small museum on the first floor of the later house. A lawn extends from the front of the house south to Spring Garden Street, and behind the house north to Green Street.

Boundaries of the Edgar Allen Poe House

Beginning at the NW corner of Spring Garden and N. Seventh Streets, proceed N along the eastern boundary of the lot approximately 250' to the SW intersection of Green and N. Seventh Streets, thence W approximately 70' to the NW corner of the property, thence S approximately 250' to the SW corner of the property, thence E approximately 70' to the point of origin. These boundaries enclose the Poe House and garden, as well as the landscaped ground to the north and south of the house in an effort to indicate the suburban appearance of the land in the time of Poe's occupancy in view of the current state of urbanization. The later house constitutes an intrusion and do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark.

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PERIOD (Check One of More as .	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	18th Century	🔲 20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	🗙 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicabl	le and Known) 1842	-1844	
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Che	ck One or More as Appropri	iate)	
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Of the small brick cottage at 530 North Seventh Street in Philadelphia Hervey Allen, Edgar Allen Poe's outstanding biographer has stated: "No other house occupied by the poet during his manhood is so closely related with the intimate joys and tragedies of Poe's life as this brick cottage. It was under its roof that the last vestiges of his prosperity disappeared and that the swift descent into the whirlpool of despair took on an accelerated motion."¹ The house today is surrounded by commercial developments and public housing units of downtown Philadelphia, whereas during Poe's residence, 1842-44 the Spring Garden neighborhood was suburban. However the house is maintained in good condition, is open to the public, and is furnished with period pieces.

History

Edgar Allen Poe lived in Philadelphia from 1838 until the spring of 1844, dwelling for the last two years at the cottage at Brandywine and North Seventh Streets. The years in Philadelphia saw the publication of some of Poe's greatest tales, and it was during this period that he perfected the short mystery story into the distinctive prose form which continues to characterize this mode of fiction. Among the products of the Philadelphia years were: "The Fall of the House of Usher," "William Wilson," "The Gold Bug," "The Mystery of Marie Roget," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and "The Raven," the latter four of which were produced while living at North Seventh Street. Poe was employed at this time largely in contributing to various magazines. From 1841 to 1842 he served as literary editor on Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine which at that time grew to be the most popular magazine in America, and Poe's influence and fame increased as well. In 1841 however, Poe parted from Graham's, and attempted to found a magazine of his own. The magazine never materialized and in the spring of 1844, Poe left Philadelphia for New York, with his ailing wife, and his aunt and mother-in-law, and only \$4.50 in his pocket.

Hervey Allen, Israfel, The Life and Times of Edgar Allen Poe, 2 vols. (New York, 1926).

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