

# POE RETURNING TO BOSTON

## Stefanie Rocknak, Sculptor

For my little son Edgar, who should ever love Boston,  
the place of his birth, and where his mother found her  
best and most sympathetic friends.

The inscription on a watercolor of  
Boston Harbor painted by Eliza Poe

Although Eliza Poe hoped that her son would grow up loving Boston, Poe's feelings about the place where he was born on January 19, 1809, were more complex. After a brief period here as an infant, he was raised in Richmond, Virginia, and London, England. But he moved back to Boston at the age of 18 and published several of his major works here. These include his first book (*Tamerlane and Other Poems*, 1827), his most famous story ("The Tell-Tale Heart," 1843), and many of his last works (including "A Dream within a Dream," "Hop-Frog," and "To My Mother," 1849). Still, Poe's advocacy of poetry for the sake of poetry led him to denounce members of the Boston literati as "Frogpondians," who used literature to convey moral and political lessons. In the Rocknak statue, Poe is returning to Boston. Just off the train, he is walking south: away from the Frog Pond and toward 62 Carver Street where his parents were living around the time he was born. With a trunk full of ideas and worldwide success, he is finally coming home.



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