

THE JAPOS BULLETIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF JOURNALISTS, AUTHORS, AND POETS ON STAMPS

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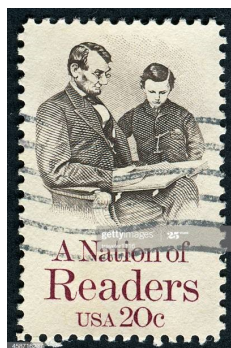
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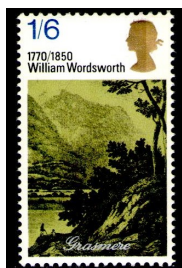
LINCOLN as Journalist, Poet, and Author by WILLIAM PEDERSON

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CONGRATULATIONS to our JEFF DUGDALE! His article "Inspired by . . .," published by Themescene in 2019, was voted winner of the Franceska Memorial Bowl, awarded annually to the author of the best article in Themescene for that year. (Themescene is the journal of the British Thematic Association which is similar to the American Topical Association's Topical Time.)



Jeff's award-winning article appeared in the JAPOS BULLETIN (Whole No. 158) back in the summer of 2015. The article involves stamps which show "a place, building, or object which was a specific or generic influence on that writer," whose portrait may or may not accompany the object on the stamp. Perhaps his best example is Great Britain Sc# 621, issued in 1970 to honor the bicentennial of William Wordsworth's birth. Rather than a portrait of the poet, the stamp depicts a scene of Grasmere in the Lake District. Wordsworth's poetry was greatly influenced by the early connections with nature he found there.

If JAPOS members would like to read Jeff's article, send Jeff a request at jefforbited@aol.com and he will email you that issue of the Bulletin. In fact, we should announce that Jeff has the ability to email JAPOS members any back issue of the Bulletin back to 2000. In order to help find particular back issues of the Bulletin, I will be emailing all online JAPOS members the current indexing by author maintained by JAPOS member JOYCE

Abraham Lincoln as Journalist/Author/Poet

William D. Pederson

Abraham Lincoln is unique among presidents from any perspective, including his innate way with words, a trait that he exhibited as a journalist, author and poet, well before becoming president. To compensate for his less than one year of elementary schooling, Lincoln, the lifelong autodidact, read voraciously. He devoured newspapers, journals (even from abroad) and books of all kinds. In addition to being a dedicated reader, he was a compelling writer. He holds the distinction of being a published poet before he became president. In his pre-presidential years he also authored numerous newspaper columns and eventually owned a newspaper. And, he compiled and edited the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates into a book that was a best seller in 1860. Given Lincoln's deep appreciation for books, it seems especially appropriate that more books have been written about him than any other democratic political leader in *world* history. Reflecting the continued scholarly and public interest in Lincoln is a recent contemporary tribute to him, located in Washington, D.C. It is a three-story-tall sculpture containing replicas of some of the books about Lincoln.

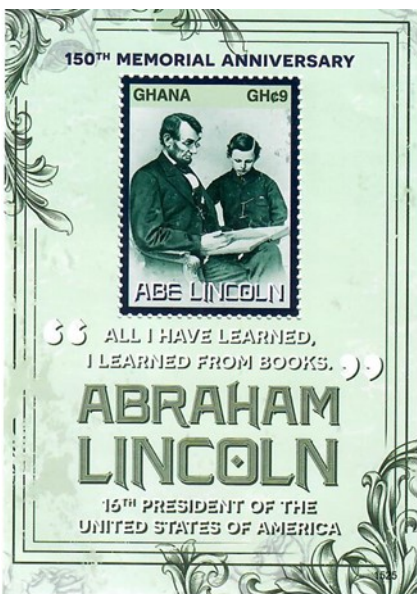
As an author, Lincoln's perhaps best known composition is the "Gettysburg Address." In his brief presidential remarks at the dedication of the historic Civil War battleground, Lincoln not only paid tribute to the troops who fought there, but he also defined the democracy he practised during the American Civil War. The venerated author and Great Emancipator's legacy extends far beyond the borders of the United States. Today, Lincoln continues to be honored virtually around the world for his democratic leadership. There are monuments and sculptures of him on public display in many countries, and more schools and streets abroad named for him than any other American president. In addition to such tributes to him, there are multiple nations outside the United States, especially those of the "Third World" (Global South), that have issued Lincoln postage stamps. Ironically, those postage stamps travel worldwide, figuratively transporting Lincoln, who never traveled abroad, to nations around the globe.

Given Lincoln's contributions as a writer, it is fitting that the first Lincoln stamp released outside the United States was issued in Cuba for the benefit of the Association of American Writers and Artists (in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Canada and the United States). That stamp was released in 1937 during the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista (1933-1958), who had grown up poor but through the military found a venue in which he could rise in prominence. He had read about Lincoln, who had "pulled himself up by his bootstraps." Batista displayed a Lincoln bust in his office, in part because poet Jose Marti (1853-1895) during his last exile had hung a portrait of Lincoln in his New York City office. Fidel Castro, the dictator who overthrew Batista, also displayed a Lincoln bust in his office.



Scott No. 350

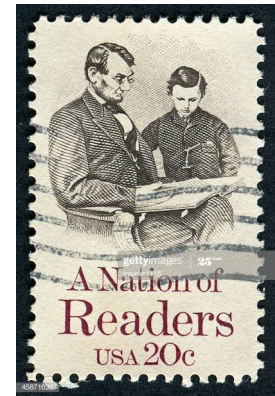
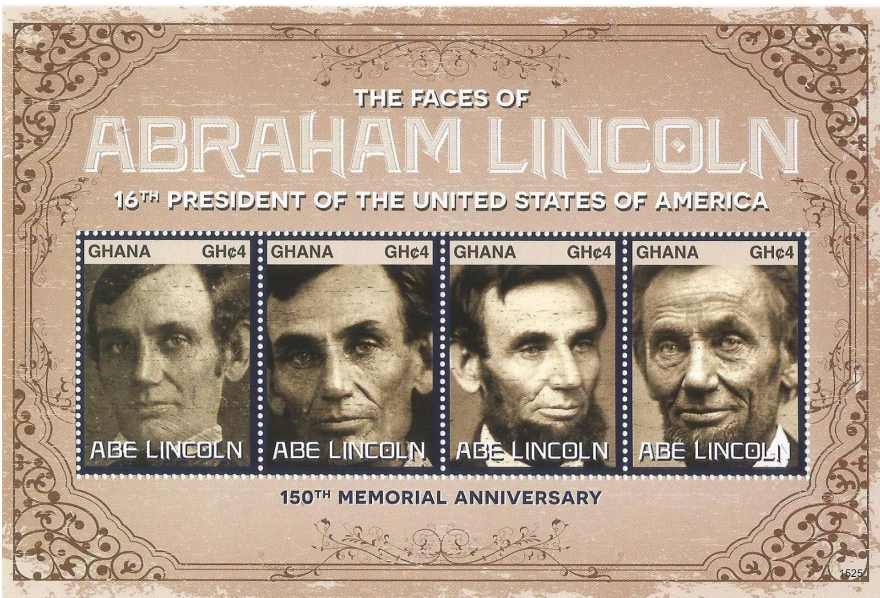
Admiration for the Great Emancipator transcends continental boundaries. For example, many African nations drew inspiration from Lincoln as they sought independence from European colonialism. Kwame Nkrumah (1901-1972), the first president of the independent Republic of Ghana and a graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, deliberately associated himself with Lincoln through actions like issuing Ghana stamps picturing him in front of the Lincoln Memorial.



Ghana (2015) Scott No 2866



Ghana (1959) Scott No 39-41



During the sesquicentennial of Lincoln’s death, (2015) Ghana issued a stamp that depicted Lincoln reading to son Tad. The Ghana stamp image, similar to a U.S. postage stamp released in 1984 (U.S. Scott No.2106) included the poignant quote: “All I have learned, I learned from books.” (Shown on page 2)



Nicaragua (1980), Overprinted on Scott No. 6442a (1959)

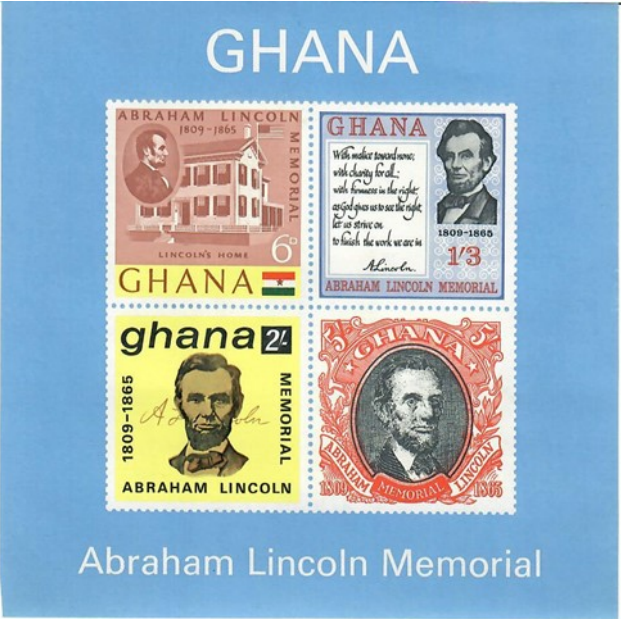
Central America joined the “Third World” in stressing the importance of education in development. A 1980 souvenir sheet from Nicaragua commemorated the “Year of Literacy,” the Winter and Summer Olympic Games and Abraham Lincoln.

The Nicaragua stamps featured six images of Lincoln with his quote, “It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in winning their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces, but let us judge not that we not be judged.”

South America, home to the largest city named for Lincoln outside the United States, also observed the sesquicentennial of Lincoln’s birth. The following year, Colombia issued a First Day Cover with a Spanish translation of Lincoln’s iconic definition democratic government as government of, by and for the people, words translated into Chinese by Sun Yat-sen and into Vietnamese by Ho Chi Minh and recited by protestors at the Hungarian uprising of 1956 and Tiananmen Square in 1989.



Colombia (1960) Scott No. 718, 6375-376



That Lincoln's presidency embodied his definition of democratic government is reflected in his decision to hold national elections in 1864, despite his belief that he would be defeated. Subsequent to his re-election, Lincoln delivered his Second Inaugural Address, his second most famous speech. Rather than reveling in the North's military dominance of the Confederacy or imposing genocide, common practice during civil wars, Lincoln preached a healing message of "with malice toward none," magnanimity lost on John Wilkes Booth and others who hated the president. In commemoration of the centennial of Lincoln's assassination, Ghana issued a stamp souvenir sheet.

Ghana (1965) Scott No. 211a



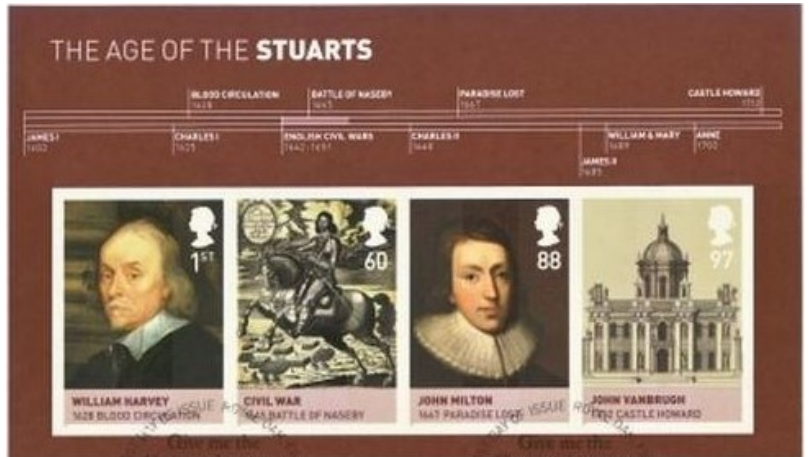
One of the newest sets commemorating Lincoln

Portraiture on GB stamps: Literature 2— C16th/C19th Writers



John Milton portrait, by an unknown artist, in the British National Portrait Gallery.

House of Stuart mini-sheet 2011



John Milton (1608-1674) was an English poet, polemicist, man of letters, and civil servant for the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious flux and political upheaval, and is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), written in blank verse.



2007 Bicentenary of Abolition of the Slave Trade (across the British Empire)

Hannah More (1745-1833) was an English religious writer and philanthropist. She can be said to have made three reputations in the course of her long life: as a poet and playwright in the circle of Johnson, Reynolds and Garrick, as a writer on moral and religious subjects, and as a practical philanthropist.

Her plays and poetry became more evangelical and she became part of a group of campaigners against the slave trade.

Painting by H.W. Pickersgill (1821)



2009 Eminent Britons

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), often referred to as Dr. Johnson, was an English writer who made lasting contributions to English literature as a poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer. Johnson was a devout Anglican and committed Tory, and is described by the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as "arguably the most distinguished man of letters in English history". He is also the subject of perhaps the most famous biography in English literature, namely *The Life of Samuel Johnson* by James Boswell.

Samuel Johnson c. 1772, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds



Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 -1797) was an English writer, philosopher, and advocate of women's rights. During her brief career, she wrote novels, treatises, a travel narrative, a history of the French Revolution, a conduct book, and a children's book. Wollstonecraft is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) - shown in background design— in which she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men, but appear to be only because they lack education. She suggests that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and imagines a social order founded on reason. Mother of Mary Shelley.

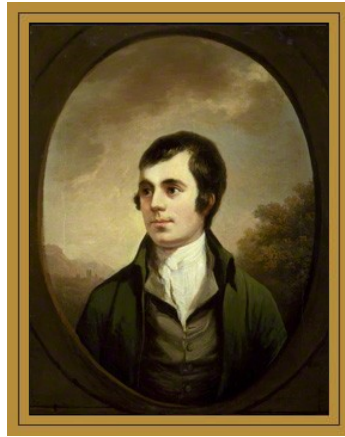
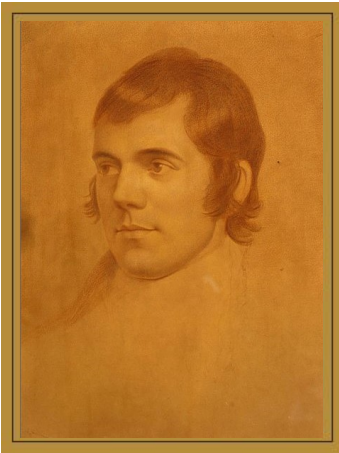
1966 Burns Commemoration

Left: Burns, by Alexander Nasmyth, circa 1821-1822, based on a work of 1787

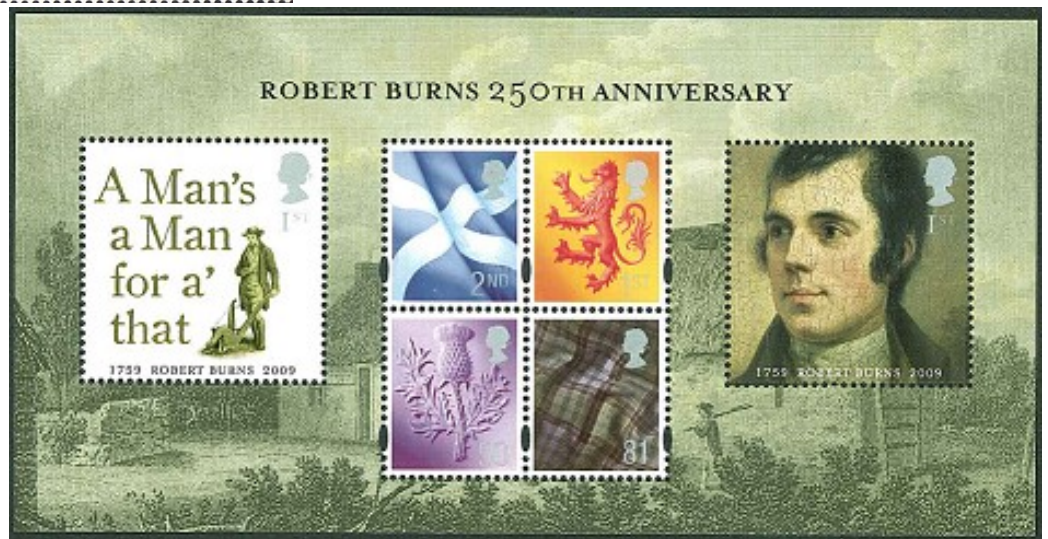
Far left: Burns. Poet Greeting Card by Archibald Skirving in chalk, 1798

2009 Burns 250th Anniversary

Detail of portrait by Alexander Nasmyth from the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (SNPG)



Robert Burns (1759–1796), was a Scottish poet and lyricist. He is the national poet of Scotland and is celebrated worldwide. He is the best known of the poets who have written in the Scots language, although much of his writing is also in English and a light Scots dialect, accessible to an audience beyond Scotland. He also wrote in standard English, and in these writings his political or civil commentary is often at its bluntest.



Virginia Woolf in 1902, photographed by George Charles Beresford



2006 150th Anniversary of The National Portrait Gallery

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) was an English writer who is considered one of the foremost modernists of the twentieth century, and a pioneer in the use of stream of consciousness as a narrative device. Born in an affluent household in Kensington, London, she attended the King's College London and was acquainted with the early reformers of women's higher education.

Her best-known works include the novels *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and *Orlando* (1928) and the book-length essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), with its dictum, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction."

2009 Eminent Britons

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle KStJ, DL (1859-1930) was best known for his detective fiction featuring the character Sherlock Holmes. Originally a physician, in 1887 he published *A Study in Scarlet*, the first of four novels about Holmes and Dr. Watson. In addition, Doyle wrote over fifty short stories featuring the famous detective.



The Sherlock Holmes stories are generally considered milestones in the field of crime fiction. He was a prolific writer whose other works include fantasy and science fiction stories, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction and historical novels. Photo unattributed.

1992 Death Centenary of Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Alfred Tennyson, 1st Baron Tennyson, FRS (1809-1892) was Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland during much of Queen Victoria's reign and remains one of the most popular British poets.

Tennyson excelled at penning short lyrics, such as "Break, Break, Break", "The Charge of the Light Brigade", "Tears, Idle Tears", and "Crossing the Bar". Much of his verse was based on classical mythological themes, such as Ulysses, although *In Memoriam A.H.H.* was written to commemorate his friend Arthur Hallam, a fellow poet and student at Trinity College, Cambridge, after he died of a stroke at the age of 22.

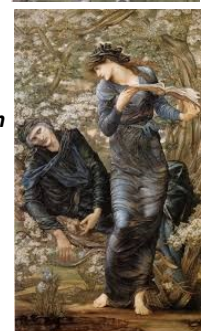
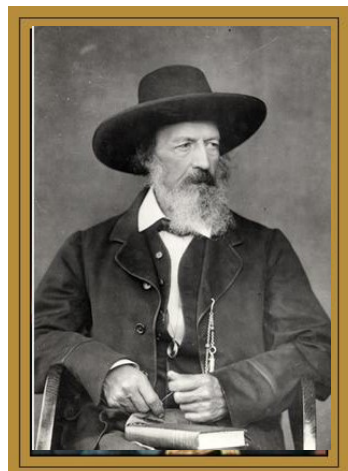
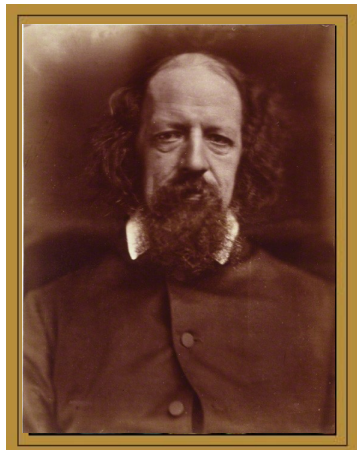
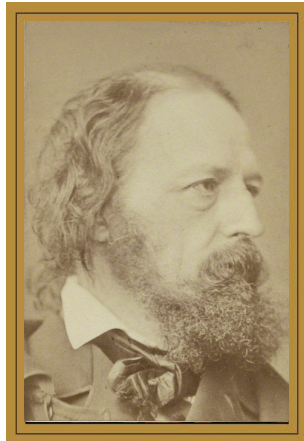
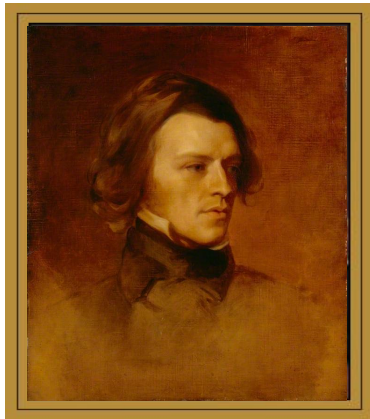
Tennyson also wrote some notable blank verse including *Idylls of the King*, "Ulysses", and "Tithonus". During his career, Tennyson attempted drama, but his plays enjoyed little success. A number of phrases from Tennyson's work have become commonplaces of the English language, including "Nature, red in tooth and claw" (*In Memoriam A.H.H.*), "'Tis better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all", "Theirs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die", "My strength is as the strength of ten, / Because my heart is pure", "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield", "Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers", and "The old order changeth, yielding place to new".

Top stamp and painting, showing Tennyson as a young man c.1840 from a painting by Samuel Laurence and part of *Mariana* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Second down, Portrait of the poet in 1864, when he was 55, photographed by J.E. Mayall and on display in The Boston Anatheum library with part of *The Lady of Shalott* by John W. Waterhouse.

Third down, portrait of poet in 1867, photographed by Julia Margaret Cameron for the London Stereoscopic Society, plus part of *April Love*, by Arthur Hughes, illustrating the poem *The Miller's Daughter*.

Bottom image, Tennyson photographed c 1888 by Herbert Barraud and *The Beguiling of Merlin* by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, representing the poem *Merlin and Vivien*



THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH by Clete Delvaux and Wikipedia

With the advent of the coronavirus pandemic, I was reminded of Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Masque of the Red Death," originally published in 1842 as "The Mask of the Red Death: A Fantasy."



The plot of the story (according to Wikipedia) follows Prince Prospero and 1000 other nobles who have taken refuge in Prospero's castle to escape the Red Death, a terrible plague with gruesome symptoms—sharp pains, sudden dizziness, and profuse bleeding at the pores—leading to death within half an hour. Prospero and his court seem indifferent to the sufferings of the outside population at large. They intend to await the end of the plague in luxury and safety behind the walls of their secure refuge, having welded the doors shut.

One night Prospero holds a masquerade ball to entertain his guests in seven-colored rooms in the castle. When a large ebony clock chimes the hour of midnight, Prospero and the revelers notice a figure in a dark blood-spattered robe resembling a funeral shroud. The figure's mask resembles the rigid face of a corpse and exhibits the traits of the Red Death. Prospero, trailed by his courtiers, follows the intruder through six rooms to the last black-colored room. When the figure turns to face him, Prospero screams and falls dead. (See Arthur Rackham's 1935 illustration to the right.)

The other enraged and terrified revelers surge into the black room and forcibly remove the figure's mask and robe, only to find to their horror that there is nothing underneath. Only then do they realize the costume is empty, and all the guests contract and succumb to the disease.



Poe's story follows many traditions of Gothic fiction including the castle setting. In this respect, it seems "directly influenced by the first Gothic novel, Hugh Walpole's "The Castle of Otranto." Some critics see The Masque as an allegory about man's futile attempt to stave off death. But others say it cannot be allegorical because Poe had a distaste for didacticism in literature, that is stating or inferring a moral in one's story. Just as in his other horror stories, there is no moral stated or otherwise.

Although the Red Death disease of his story was fictitious, some speculate it may have been inspired by the pandemics of Poe's day. One of these was tuberculosis called consumption in Poe's time). Poe's wife Virginia was suffering from the disease when the story was written. In addition, Poe's mother Eliza, brother William, and foster mother Frances—all died of tuberculosis. Others point out that the Red Death may refer to cholera, which ravaged Baltimore in 1831. Still others say Poe may have had the "Black Death" in mind. The Black Death (aka the Pestilence and the Plague) was the most fatal pandemic in human history, killing 75-200 million people in Eurasia and North Africa from 1347-1351.

All this is interesting, but judging from his other horror stories, my guess is that Poe just knew what the public would read and the magazines they would buy.