

## Book Lovers' New England: A Guide to Literary Landmarks

**Sheila Moeschen**

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Sheila Moeschen's celebratory travel guide *Book Lovers' New England* tours through the homes, museums, and sites that inspired local poets and writers.

New England has fostered numerous talents, including Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, J. D. Salinger, Rachel Carson, and Louisa May Alcott. On their legacies, the book builds a fun itinerary for history and literature enthusiasts, organized around the region's six scenic states.

Captivating profiles of homegrown and transplanted writers are accompanied by tasteful photographs that reveal their essences, as with sculptures of Dr. Seuss's famed book characters and of Edith Wharton's resplendent interiors. Reading lists conclude each state's section with suggestions for further exploration. Free of practical tips, such as websites and map directions, the focus is kept on people's lives.

The conversational prose threads quotations with biographical highlights to introduce each writer with sometimes startling flair. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, for instance, is likened to a "rock star," and Edgar Allan Poe's scandals "would make a reality-TV show seem like a Disney cartoon." Curious tidbits about the writers' families and career milestones are included, too. Glimpses of people's desks and details about their notable works link several entries. Others share further commonalities: Several Transcendentalists lived near one another. And occasional setbacks, including of critiqued novels that later became classics, such as *Moby Dick*, undergird how writers sometimes trod unknowable paths.

Noteworthy passages tie specific authors to locales that remain iconic: Henry David Thoreau's walks around Walden Pond can be retraced, and H. P. Lovecraft's work drew upon various Providence buildings. Elsewhere, light remarks about varying styles elucidate bright photographs of cozy family homes and elaborate estates, thus doubling the book's value as an architectural tour.

*Book Lovers' New England* is an inviting travel guide and a refreshing, encyclopedic introduction to regional writers.

KAREN RIGBY (May / June 2026)

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