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Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Editor's Note: Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

READING IN THE RUINS

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

When **Walker Percy's** parents committed suicide, he and his brothers went to live with a planter-poet bachelor uncle in Greenville, Miss. Young **Walker** became best pals with a neighbor boy named **Shelby Foote**. The two went to college at **UNC** (now **UNC-CH**), **Shelby** dropping out and **Walker** going on to **Columbia** to become a doctor. But by then both had vowed to become writers. **Shelby** found fame with his three-volume work on the Civil War.

Said **Foote**, "I think the superiority of Southern writers lies in our driving interest in just ... two things, the story and the people."

Walker read the proofs and wrote his friend. "Yes, it's as good as you think. It has a fine understated epic quality, a slow measured period, and a sustained noncommittal, almost laconic, tone of the narrator. I've no doubt it will survive; might even be read in the ruins."

See — **Jon Meacham**, "Shelby Foote's War Story," *Garden & Gun*, April/May, 2011, p.35.

MURDER WILL OUT

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

In 1830, an octagenarian sea captain — ex-slaver and general crabby old tyrant — was savagely murdered in his bed in Salem, MA and his will destroyed so his wealth would pass intestate to the family heirs. A subsequent trial of four conspirators became a national sensation with **Daniel Webster's** spell-binding summation for the prosecution joining legal legend.

On the literary level, a confession by one of the four became the inspiration for the compulsive confession in **Edgar Allan Poe's** *The Tell-Tale Heart* and **Nathaniel Hawthorne's** *Arthur Dimmesdale* in *The Scarlet Letter*. Hawthorne scholars also claim echoes of the murder can be found in the opening chapter of *The House of Seven Gables*.

See — **E.J. Wagner**, "The Tell-Tale Murder," *Smithsonian*, Nov. 2010, p.61.



CHOCK FULL OF AUTHORS

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

In a series of articles on "The South's Most Creative Small Towns," our author dubs Hillsborough, N.C. the most literary town below the Mason-Dixon Line. Resident authors: **Michael Malone**, **Allan Gurganus**, **Lee Smith**, **Jill McCorkle**, **Randall Kenan**, **Craig Nova**, **Annie Dillard**, **Frances Mayes**, **Hal Crowther**.

See — **Nic Brown**, "Hillsborough, N.C.," *Garden & Gun*, April/May, 2011, p.68.

DAUGHTER OF BRONX PUB OWNER MAKES GOOD

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

The prolific **Mary Higgins Clark** has sold 100 million copies in the U.S. alone and is still going strong. **Simon & Schuster** is so confident of her that she is factored into their budget. Her 43rd book *I'll Walk Alone* will come out on Mother's Day, the biggest book buying day of the year behind Christmas and Father's Day. She has owned the holiday for 20 years with her books front and center in every book store.

Slammed by critics as formulaic and hokey, she gets more than a million per book, owns a Central Park South apartment as well as houses in Saddle River, NJ, Spring Lake, NJ, and Cape Cod. **Michael Korda**, formerly editor-in-Chief of **Simon & Schuster**, is retired but still edits **Mary**, **David McCullough**, and **Larry McMurtry**.

See — **Alexandra Alter**, "The Case of the Best-Selling Author," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 2011, p.D1.

BIBLIO FEVER

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Five Best on obsessive collectors: **Nicholas Basbanes**, *A Gentle Madness* (1995); **Larry McMurtry**, *Books: A Memoir* (2008); **Harold Rabinowitz** and **Rob Kaplan**, Eds., *A Passion for Books* (1999); **Edwin Wolf**, *Rosenbach* (1960); **Rick Gekoski**, *Tolkien's Gown* (2004).

See — **Allison Hoover Bartlett**, "Extreme Book Collecting," *The Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 9, 2010.

Rumors

from page 10

awesome **Lynn Sutton**, Dean of the Library at **Wake Forest University**. **Bill**, y'all might remember, organizes the **Charleston Chase** every year during the **Charleston Conference** at the ungodly hour of 6:30 AM. I slept through my alarm last year. Oops!

Anyway, as I was writing **Rumors** this time, guess who I got an email from? **Bill Kane** himself (and he says we can call him **Billy** in his online profile ;). Anyways, **Bill** has been appointed **Director of Digital Publishing** at

continued on page 14



Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

	Preconferences and Vendor Showcase	Main Conference
2011 Conference	2 November	3-5 November
2012 Conference	7 November	8-10 November
2013 Conference	6 November	7-9 November
2014 Conference	5 November	6-8 November
2015 Conference	4 November	5-7 November