Bet You Missed It: What do hamburgers and gimlets have in common?

Bruce Strauch

The Citadel, strauchb@citadel.edu
CROWDSOURCING THE ARCHIVES
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Libraries, universities, museums are eager to preserve fragile, dusty files by scanning them and putting them online. And they're using crowdsourcing technology to get them transcribed.

The University of Iowa created “DIY History” to let people transcribe pioneer letters. 42,000 pages have been done.

The Smithsonian, sitting on 20 million documents, has created a new Transcription Center. Anyone with a yen for the subject matter can go through scanned, handwritten documents and submit a transcription online.

Irv Cantor, a retired pharmaceutical scientist, has devoted six months to transcribing a 641-page field book written by an archaeologist traveling in 1920s China.

Two twin sisters in New Zealand love the Smithsonian’s eclectic collection. One is working on bumblebee specimens collected in the 1800s; the other a field book of a scientific couple who criss-crossed the West in the early 1900s.


VESTIGES OF PRUFROCK
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

The T.S. Eliot family home is preserved in St. Louis. And he has a star on the St. Louis Walk of Fame along with 1800s; the other a field book of a scientific couple who criss-crossed traveling in 1920s China.

They had five sons. One took over the family biz and was a research fellow in Mesopotamian archaeology for the Peabody Museum, published a novel. Another became the “most consequential poet and critic in the English language of his time.”

Gone is the Prufrock Litton Furniture Company whose seven-story commanding presence once occupied an entire block. But T.S. did preserve the name in poetry.


BENDING AN ELBOW WITH MARLOWE
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

And speaking of Raymond Chandler, in The Long Goodbye, Marlowe is introduced to the gimlet by a drinking buddy Terry Lennox, who in the first scene falls out of his Rolls blind drunk. Terry says: “A real gimlet is half gin and half Rose’s Lime Juice and nothing else. It beats martinis hollow.”

Novelist Megan Abbott (The Fever is latest) reviews small-batch gin Langley’s No. 8. She says the Langley’s gimlet is sweet and “infused with melancholy.”


SONG OF LOVE AND BETRAYAL
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Author James Ellroy (The Black Dahlia, L.A. Confidential, Perfidia [Knopf]) was devastated as a boy by the unsolved murder of his mother. His father gave him The Badge by actor Jack Webb (Dragnet. Dum-da-dum-dum.) about L.A. crime cases too gruesome for his show. He read about the Black Dahlia murder and made it part of literary history.

His latest is inspired by “Perfidia” by Alberto Dominguez. He says the Glenn Miller version knocked him out. It “always takes me back to a time I never experienced — when L.A. had big gleaming cars and there wasn’t a particle of smog in the sky.”