2014

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

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Recommended Citation

Strauch, Bruce (2014) "Bet You Missed It: What do hamburgers and gimlets have in common?," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 26: Iss. 5, Article 51.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6885>

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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**

RED MEAT FOR THE LITERATE

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Well, if you're like me, you've always wondered how **Ernest Hemingway** composed a hamburger. And the recipe's a doozy: capers; then minced ham, cheddar, tart apple, parsley, garlic, scallion, carrot, onion; Beau Monde seasoning; egg; India relish; soy sauce. All kneaded directly into the fat meat patties.

See — **Helen Rosner**, "A Writer's Beef," *Saveur*, June/July, 2014,p.18.

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.

See — **Kelly Crow**, "The Smithsonian Turns to the Crowd," *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 12, 2014, p.D1.

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 **William S. Burroughs** and the **Rockettes**.

He came from distinguished line, one **Eliot** founding **Washington University**, and another, **Charles William Eliot**, a longtime president of **Harvard** who tried to abolish football. **Daddy Eliot** founded a chemical-manufacturing company, married a poet and social reformer who published two books on medieval religious figures.

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.

See — **Kevin D. Williamson**, "Looking For Tom," *The National Review*, Sept. 22, 2014, p.45.

TOUGH GUY NOVELS

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Let's read about hard men. (1) **Frank Norris**, *McTeague* (1899) (dim-witted dentist and depraved miser wife; became 1924 silent classic "Greed" done by **Erich Von Stroheim**); (2) **Abraham Cahan**, *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917) (Jewish immigrant takes to unscrupulous capitalism with a vengeance); (3) **Charles Brockden Brown**, *Edgar Huntly* (1799) (Note the date. Bizarre psychological novel in which man searching for a murderer slays a cougar and a passel of Indians. Wakes to find he's sleepwalking in pursuit of his own fears. Influenced **Poe**, **Hawthorne**, **Melville**.); (4) **Raymond Chandler**, *The Long Goodbye* (1953) (**Philip Marlowe**, P.I. Probably the weakest of **Chandler's**, in my opinion, other than the last lines: "So they went away and I never saw any of them again. Except for the cops. Nobody's figured out how to say good-bye to them."); (5) **Dashiell Hammett**, *The Glass Key* (1931)(Personally, I prefer *The Thin Man*).

See — **Leonard Cassuto**, "Five Best," *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 6-7, 2014, p.C10 (Cassuto is author of *Hard-Boiled Sentimentality: The Secret History of American Crime Stories*).

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."

See — **Megan Abbott**, "Message in a Bottle," *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 6-7, 2014, p.D6.

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."

See — **James Ellroy** interviewed by **Marc Myers**, "'You Love, You Lose,'" *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 6-7, 2014, p.C13.