Faulkner Newsletter and Yoknapatawpha Review

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Article 1

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Vol. 15, No. 1 (1995)

Arthur F. Kinney

Dean Faulkner Wells

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Vol. XV, No. 1

January-March 1995

A Checklist

3 New Modern Library Volumes Are Published

Headlining this new Checklist along with three new Modern Library printings of Faulkner are works by John Egerton, M. Thomas Inge, and Faulkner and Psychology, edited by Donald M. Kartiganer and Ann J. Abadie:

The Double Dealer Redux, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall 1994). Rosemary James, ed. Essays and reviews include "William Faulkner's Pylon," by W. Kenneth Holditch, and "Faulkner: The Great Questioner," by Noel Polk. The magazine is published by the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society, 632 Pirate's Alley, New Orleans, La. 70116. Subscription is free to paid members of the Society. Dealer retail price of DDR is \$4.50.

Egerton, John. Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994. Numerous references to Faulkner in this major new study of the era. As noted in FN for October-December 1994, the title is drawn from Faulkner's speech at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association in Memphis in 1955: "We speak now against the day when our Southern people who will resist to the last these inevitable changes in social relations, will, when they have been forced to accept what they at one time might have accepted with dignity and goodwill, will say, 'Why didn't someone tell us this before? Tell us this in time?" "Photos include a 1931 picture, previously unknown to FN, of Faulkner and Milton Abernethy, owner of the Intimate Bookshop in Chapel Hill. The photo is courtesy of Wallace Kuralt, through the North Carolina collection, University of North Carolina. 704 pp. \$35.

Faulkner, William. Absalom, Absalom! The Corrected Text. New York: The Modern Library, 1993. This latest printing of the novel follows the text as corrected in 1986 under the direction of Noel Polk. ix + 405 pp. \$15.50.

Faulkner, William. Selected Short Stories. Included are "Barn Burning," "Two Soldiers," "A Rose for Emily," "Dry September," "That Evening Sun," "Red Leaves," "Lo!" "Turn-about,"

(Continued Page 2)

Marriage License

MARRIAGE RECORD, LAFAYETTE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI		
Malliam Fankner and mrs Estelle Oldham Frankling STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, Latayette County. AFFIDAVIT		
Personally apeared before me, the undersigned, Clerk of the Circuit Court of s who has applied for a Marriage License, and makes oath that there is no legal cause	who has applied for a Marriage License, and makes oath that there is no legal cause to obstruct his marriage with	
a resident of said County, whom he intends to marry, and that he has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and said		
at the	William Fanker Applicant	
Sworn to and subscribed before me, this the day of day of day of day of	1929 HW HVS Circuit Clerk. PB Fare Deputy Clerk.	
Here enter, when necessary, the Consent of the Parent or Guardian, if persona	lly given; or Certificate of Consent duly given.	
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STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, MARRIAGE LICENSE. Lafayette County.		
You are hereby licensed to celebrate the Rite of Matrimory between and for a Given under my hand and official seal, this the our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Mulany (L. S.)	o doing this shall be your warrant. day of	
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, Lafayette County. Marriage License issued and recorded this	1929. Circuit Clerk. Deputy Clerk.	
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FAULKNER signed on the Applicant line on the license for his June 20, 1929 marriage to Estelle Oldham Franklin.

Cultural Context Theme of 1995 F&Y Meet at the University of Mississippi

"Faulkner in Cultural Context" is the theme for the 22nd annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference next summer at the University of Mississippi. The dates are July 30 - August 4. "Recent criticism has continued to emphasize the extent to which the literary text is the agent and product of the very large and complex cultural context in which it appears," reads a Call for Papers from the Ole Miss Department of English. "Neither the purely passive result of predetermined forces nor an autonomous language impervious to them, text participates with context in a reciprocal relationship: culture shaping text, text shaping culture." Full particulars on the 1995 conference are available from Ann J. Abadie, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677, 601-232-5993.

At Church or Home?

Faulkners' Wedding Site Is Questioned

By ARTHUR F. KINNEY

The green, white, and yellow state highway marker outside College Hill Presbyterian Church just north of Oxford concludes, "Wm. Faulkner married here, 1929."

Biographers such as Joseph Blotner and Frederick Karl agree. According to Blotner, on June 20, 1929, Estelle Oldham Franklin and William Faulkner went to see the Reverend Edward McCrady, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Oxford, shortly after he began what would be an 11-year term as rector. This was the Oldham family church, but they would not be married there because Estelle was divorced.

So, Blotner narrates, they went on to see Winn David Hedleston, professor of philosophy and ethics at Ole Miss and "one of the best-liked ministers in the county."

He was at home, but he agreed to marry them at College Hill Church and, summoning his wife, who "was in the kitchen...making blackberry preserves," they "drove to the stately tree-shaded church a mile away. Its white Corinthian columns lent it strength and dignity, and its bright white interior, with the old slave gallery in the back, showed the care its builders had lavished on it nearly a century before. Dr. Hedleston's words sounded clearly in the near-empty church as he read the simple ceremony. Afterward he signed the marriage certificate...and the tiny wedding party departed with the Hedlestons' congratulations."

This received account of Faulkner's marriage, widely known and frequently reported, is not, however, the Hedleston family version according to Dr. Hedleston's granddaughter, Anne Hedleston Danough, who heard about that particularly famous marriage often when she was growing up. She recalls that her grandfather, surprised at his home at Sunset Hill, a short distance from the church, told the anxious and insistent Faulkner, "Bill, I don't know anyone who needs to be married more than you do. But not in the church."

At that point, Mrs. Danough relates, her grandfather called her grandmother from the kitchen where she

(Continued Page 3)

A Checklist

New Modern Library Volumes

(From Page 1)

"Honor," "There Was a Queen," "Mountain Victory," "Beyond," and "Race at Morning." New York: The Modern Library, 1993. xi + 310 pp. \$14.50.

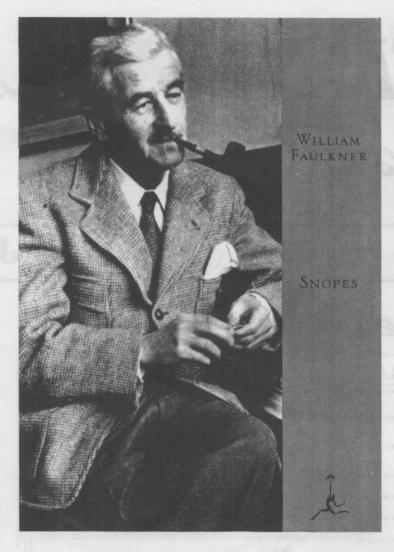
Faulkner, William. Snopes: The Hamlet, The Town, The Mansion. Introduction by George Garrett. New York: The Modern Library, 1994. "A great deal has been written by scholars and critics about Faulkner and about this trilogy," Garrett writes. "Some of it is extremely valuable to a fuller and deeper appreciation of his work. But my strong suggestion to readers coming to these novels for the first time...is to plunge in and fare forward, allowing the experience of the story to happen as it does, without any additional mediation or guidance. Experience the story before turning to or trusting the opinion and judgments of others, myself included." Garrett goes on to state that one exception to that rule is Joseph Blotner's biography of Faulkner, preferably the revised, one-volume 1984 edition. Also enhancing the reader's experience, Garrett adds, are Faulkner's words and thoughts about the Snopes trilogy as found in Selected Letters of William Faulkner (1977). xvi + 1065 pp. \$21.

[Faulkner, William] Mississippi Observed. Photographs from the photography collection of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, with selections from literary works by Mississippians. Photographs selected and edited by Sheree Hightower and Cathie Stanga. Text selected and edited by Carol Cox. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994. Faulkner is among 36 writers represented in the volume, with selections from "Delta Autumn," The Sound and the Fury, Light in August, "That Evening Sun," "The Courthouse," "Mississippi" and Letters. 146 pp. \$45.

Hamblin, Robert W. "No Such Thing As Was": William Faulkner and Southern History. An address delivered at the 1994 Southern Literary Festival. "No American writer surpasses William Faulkner in dramatizing the cacophony of voices, both past and present, that impinge upon the modern consciousness," Hamblin says. "No American writer better dramatizes the individual's search for order and values among these multitudinous voices. And no writer more than Faulkner recognizes the insistent demand that this quest be successfully resolved." Cape Girardeau: Center for Faulkner Studies, Southeast Missouri State

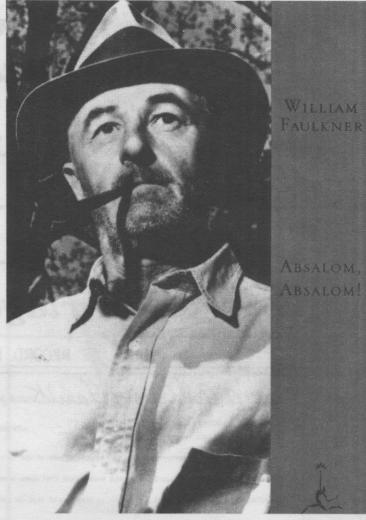
Inge, M. Thomas. Perspectives on American Culture: Essays on Humor, Literature, and the Popular Arts. Included among 18 essays collected here are "Yoknapatawpha on the Don:

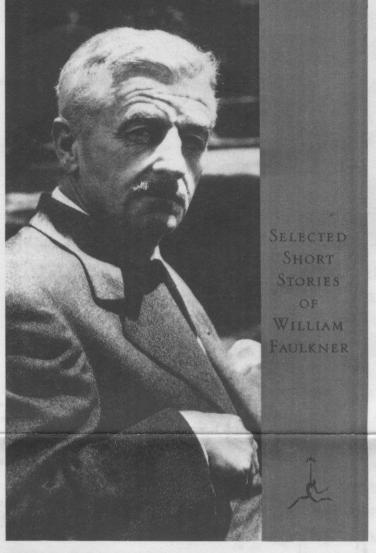
University. 16 pp. Wrappers.



Faulkner and Sholokhov," and "Faulkner and Mo Yan: Influences and Confluences," both of which appeared in 1992, respectively, in Faulkner, His Contemporaries, and His Posterity, Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, ed. (Tübingen: Francke Verlag) and The Faulkner Journal, 6 (Fall 1990, published in 1992). The essays are arranged in three parts: Comic Perspectives, Popular Perspectives, and International Perspectives. Others whose works are discussed include Washington Irving, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, Fitzgerald, Edward Albee, James Baldwin, Miguel de Unamuno. Locust Hill Literary Studies, No. 16. West Cornwall, Conn.: Locust Hill Press, 1994. xiv + 276 pp. \$32.

Kartiganer, Donald M. and Ann J. Abadie, eds. Faulkner and Psychology. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994. Papers delivered at the 1991 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at the University of Mississippi by Doreen Fowler, Anne Goodwyn Jones, Deborah Clarke, Carolyn Porter, Jay Martin, Jay Watson, Lee Jenkins, Michael Zeitlin, John T. Irwin, David Wyatt and Donald M. Kartiganer. Except for three or four of the essays, Kartiganer writes in an Introduction, "this collection has little to say or imply about William Faulkner's own psychology or his acquaintance with the development of that discipline as a science, a therapy, and a general school of intellectual inquiry in the twentieth century...The texts of Faulkner are unquestionably rich in psychological material—personalities and relationships of great depth and complexity, with histories ample enough to be plotted and probed—yet the life and mind of the writer is seldom invoked, to corroborate an interpretation or to be itself interpreted. What Faulkner was, what he read, what he thought, yield almost entirely to what he wrote. His language, in other words, is the object of investigation, with the man behind the language replaced by various theoretical structures, none of them his own, which comprise the critical entrance." xviii + 320 pp. \$45, cloth; \$19.95, softcover.





The Washington Post, Oct. 5, 1994, C3. Romano reports in her "Reliable Source" column that George Plimpton, emceeing a PEN/Faulkner gala, "revealed that at a recent dinner with novelists Gabriel Garcia Marquez,

THE A FAULKNER NEWSLETTERS & Yoknapatawpha Review

> William Boozer Editor

Dean Faulkner Wells and Lawrence Wells

Publishers

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Faulkner Society

The annual meeting of the William Faulkner Society will be held during the sixth annual conference of the American Literature Association May 26-28 at the Stouffer Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore. ALA offers Faulknerians the largest national conference venue other than the weeklong Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at the University of Mississippi each summer. Stephen M. Ross, author of Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice: Speech and Writing in Faulkner (1989), is president of the Faulkner Society Executive Committee.

Romano, Lois. "One for the Books." Carlos Fuentes and William Styron. Bill Clinton entertained the guests by reciting from memory 'vast swatches' of Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury." Said Plimpton: "I don't think

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Sixth Annual

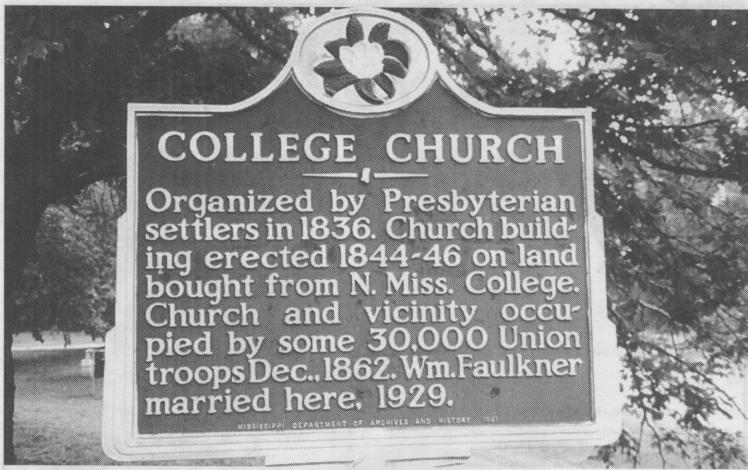
American Way Faux Faulkner Contest

Win a trip for two to the annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at the University of Mississippi.*

All you need do is write the best bad Faulkner, no longer than 500 words, drawing on Faulkner's style, themes or plots. Each entry must be typed and double-spaced. Entries in the sixth annual contest are being received until Feb. 1, 1995. Contest sponsored by American Airlines' American Way magazine, the University of Mississippi's Department of English and Center for the Study of Southern Culture, and Yoknapatawpha Press and its Faulkner Newsletter. Contestants grant publication rights to American Way, Yoknapatawpha Press and FN, and the right to release entries to other media. Send entries to The Faulkner Newsletter, P.O. Box 248, Oxford, MS 38655.

*Winner gets two round-trip tickets to Memphis, transportation to Oxford, free lodging and complimentary registration at the 1995 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at Ole Miss.

Whether the Faulkners were Wed at Church or at Sunset Hill is Questioned









UNRESOLVED ARE QUESTIONS of whether Faulkner and Estelle Oldham Franklin were married at the College Hill Presbyterian Church north of Oxford, as the historical marker states, or in the parlor of the nearby Sunset Hill home of Dr. and Mrs. Winn David Hedleston. Dr. Hedleston was professor of philosophy and ethics at the University of Mississippi and minister of College Hill Church. (Photos of the historical marker and the Sunset Hill exterior and parlor are by Robert Dale Parker; the portrait of Dr. Hedleston is from College Hill Church archives, courtesy Sidney Johnson.)

"A William Faulkner newsletter could easily be absolutely dreadful and pretentious. It is, in your hands, readable plus being lively and informative..."—Ben Wasson

"Faulkner Newsletter just arrived and I want to tell you what a fine job you've done with it. Difficult to do but you certainly did it!"

—Carvel Collins

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(From Page 1)

was making jelly, and called his son, Mrs. Danough's father, from out back where he was riding his horse, and these two alone stood witness to the ceremony, held in the front parlor of Sunset Hill before the fireplace. They never went to the church.

Each version of the story depends on recollection, but which is actually correct? The church minutes and church records show no marriage ceremony performed for Faulkner at the church—but they were not likely to do so, since Faulkner and Estelle Franklin were not members of College Hill Church. The marriage license, signed by Faulkner, by Estelle, and by Dr. Hedleston, has no other signatures—so there is no written official record of who witnessed the event. We have no documentation whether one witness was Dorothy Oldham, Estelle's sister (in the church, as Blotner records) or Dr. Hedleston's son (in the parlor, as the family continually maintained).

That the Hedleston family story may have been more accurate, however, is supported by some slender evidence. Sidney Johnson, a present elder of the church, whose family were church members for over a century, says that the Presbyterian church permitted no divorced woman to be married in the sanctuary of the church; his

grandfather, then clerk of the session, reported that the marriage took place on the church porch.

The Fred Taylors, who have owned and resided at Sunset Hill since 1958, say they have no knowledge of where the William Faulkner marriage took place. They can, however, confirm the fact that Dr. Hedleston did perform marriage ceremonies in his home, as they were told in person by two longago brides whose weddings he performed as the Presbyterian minister at Sunset Hill. One recalled her marriage ceremony on the large screened north porch, and the other remembered that she stood in front of the parlor fireplace for her wedding ceremony.

No mention was made by either about witnesses.

(Arthur F. Kinney is the Thomas W. Copeland Professor of Literary History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Adjunct Professor of English at New York University. He is the author of three books of critical essays on Faulkner's families (the Compsons, Sartorises, and McCaslins); the fourth, The Sutpen Family, is now in press. He has written a forthcoming book on Go Down, Moses entitled The Miscegenation of Time and, with Stephen Hahn, is preparing for the MLA a book on Approaches to Teaching "The Sound and the Fury.")

Meta Wilde, Author of "A Loving Gentleman" with Borsten, Dead at 86

By DEAN FAULKNER WELLS

Meta Carpenter Wilde died of pneumonia on Oct. 18, 1994, while visiting relatives in Kansas City, Mo. She was 86. She is survived by her husband Arthur Wilde.

Meta was the author, with co-writer Orin Borsten, of *A Loving Gentleman*, the 1976 memoir of her 18-year love affair with Faulkner which began in 1932 when they met at MGM in Hollywood.

Variety's Todd McCarthy recalled that the first time he met Meta, he thought, "How easy it must have been for [Faulkner] to fall in love with her." I had exactly the same feeling, last March, when I had the good fortune of meeting Meta in Los Angeles.

My husband Larry arranged a lunch date at Jimmy's Restaurant in Century City with Meta, film director Jerzy Kromolowski and Carol Sue Lipman, of Miramax Productions. Larry had met Meta in 1983, when Faulkner scholar Carvel Collins introduced them. Kromolowski was working on "As I Lay Dying," hoping to film it in Oxford. Lipman had been given a script adapting Meta's book for film. Both were almost as excited as I was to meet her in person. "She's a legend," Jerzy whispered to me.

Meta was Howard Hawks' secretary at MGM in 1932 when she and Faulkner met. She soon became a



META CARPENTER WILDE (right) AND DEAN FAULKNER WELLS at Jimmy's Restaurant in Los Angeles, March 1994.

script supervisor and worked on dozens of films for such directors as John Huston ("Stagecoach," 1948) and Mike Nichols ("The Graduate," "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?," "Catch-22"). For 25 years she was a member of the Motion Picture Academy, and in 1985 received the lifetime achievement Crystal Award from the Los Angeles-based Women in Film.

Meta looked dashing in red beret and pearls. I felt an immediate closeness with her. We had Pappy to thank for this meeting and each of us, I think, conjured up his presence for the

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Checklist

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there's a president who had the inclination or the mental ability to do that since Thomas Jefferson."

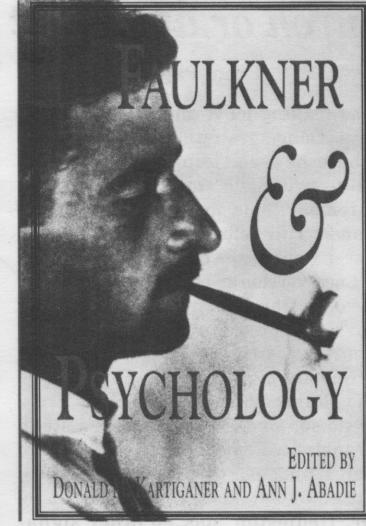
The Southern Review, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Summer 1994). Contents include an essay, "As Me and Addie Lay Dying," by Nanci Kincaid, and a Don H. Doyle review of Joel Williamson's William Faulkner and Southern History.

Teaching Faulkner, No. 4 (Winter 1994) and No. 5 (Spring 1994). Robert W. Hamblin, ed., Charles A. Peek, associate ed. Contents of No. 4 include "Faulkner Celebrated at Penn Charter," by Ralph West of the William Penn Charter School, Philadelphia; "Faulkner as a Framework for Studying the Civil War," by Dan Holtz of Peru State College; and a poem, "Humans in Art: A Tribute to William Faulkner," by Hannah Fischer. Included in No. 5 are "Telling Stories, Teaching Narrative: A Progressive Writing Assignment," by Barbara C. Ewell, City College, Loyola University of New Orleans; "A Pilgrimage to Faulkner Country," by Charles Chappell, Hendrix College; and "Faulkner's Map of Yoknapatawpha: The End of Absalom, Absalom!" by Robert W. Hamblin, Southeast Missouri State University. Teaching Faulkner is published twice yearly by the Center for Faulkner Studies, Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau 63701. Subscriptions are \$5 a year. The editors invite brief articles and notes, news items, queries, and suggestions pertaining to the teaching of Faulkner works at high school, college, or university levels.

'comeback' with newsletter's limited return." The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, July 25, 1994, Al,4. Thomas reports on publication by Yoknapatawpha Press of The Faulkner Newsletter: Collected Issues.

Thomas, William. "Queen Elizabeth: Ladybird hits 100, reigning still with wit, charm, esprit." The Commercial Appeal, July 12, 1994, A-1,14. Thomas writes of the 100th birthday of Elizabeth 'Ladybird' Yawn of Memphis, who was Miss Ole Miss of 1918. Among her dancing partners at campus social functions in those days was one William Faulkner. "He didn't have a good reputation," Mrs. Yawn recalls. "I had to make him sit down once because he was drunk. He kept bothering me, and I had to refuse to dance with him. After that, he left me alone." Mrs. Yawn told Thomas that she has never read any of Faulkner's books. "I guess I just didn't think they were worth reading," she said. "I did dance with him, though, and I can tell you this: He was not that hot."

Welty, Eudora. A Writer's Eye: Collected Book Reviews. Edited, with an Introduction, by Pearl Amelia McHaney. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994. Collected here are 67 book reviews written by Welty over 42 years, mostly for the New York Times Book Review. Included are "In



Yoknapatawpha," her review of Faulkner's Intruder in the Dust, from the Winter 1949 Hudson Review, and her review of Selected Letters of William Faulkner, Joseph Blotner, ed., from the Feb. 6, 1977 New York Times Book Review. xxviii + 280 pp. including two Appendixes, Notes and Index. \$27.50.

Meta Wilde

(From Page 3)

other. Sitting next to her in a corner booth, I felt as if I had known her all my life.

I asked her, right off, about her first memory of meeting Pappy. She was sitting at her desk in Howard Hawks' office, she said, the day Pappy reported to work, having been hired as a contract script writer at MGM. "I Thomas, William. "Faulkner makes looked up," she recalled, "and a man was standing in the doorway, the handsomest man I had ever seen. He was wearing a tweed jacket and there was something British about him, his politeness, the way he carried himself. 'I'm Faulkner,' he said, and that was how it began."

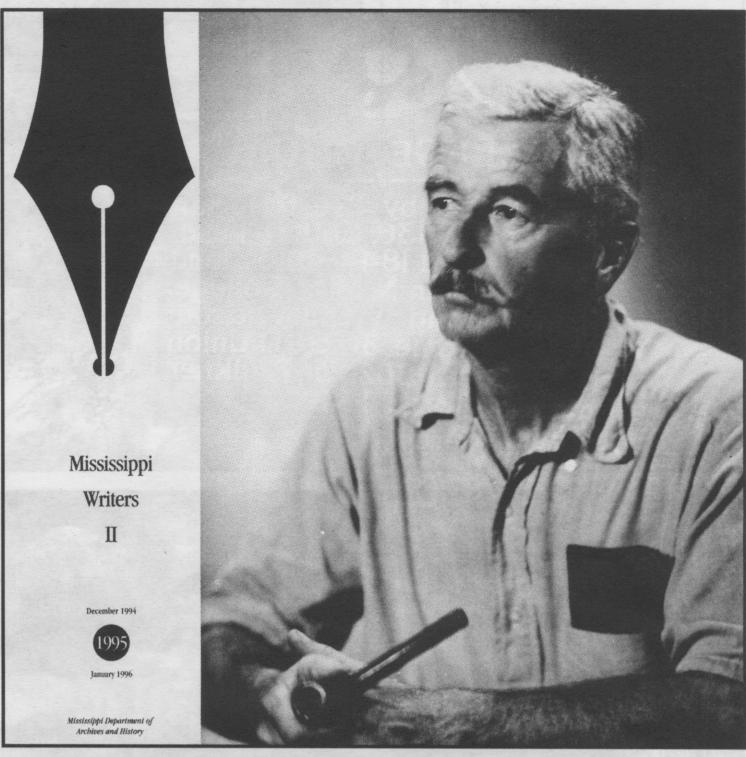
> Sitting beside her I could understand how Pappy was drawn to this beautiful woman whose candor and forthrightness was softened by a spontaneous smile and graceful manners. Meta was born in Memphis and trained to be a classical pianist. She and Pappy had much in common. I could see how it had been, indeed, love at first sight.

> She recalled that the first time they went out together, Pappy wanted to give her a book. He rushed into a book store which luckily had a single copy of one of his novels. Later he inscribed it for her and Meta, smiling mischievously, declined to say what he wrote, saying only, "It was very personal and a little erotic."

> I told her I was glad she had made Pappy happy. We hugged each other and blinked away tears and promised we would see each other again soon, and regretted all the time and memories we might have shared.

Lunch lasted four hours. If Meta and I had had our way, it would have been a lifetime.

Mississippi Writers Calendar



FAULKNER ADORNS THE COVER of Mississippi Writers II, the 1995 sequel to last year's initial calendar offering from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Featured for January through December in photos and capsule biographies, in this order, are Beth Henley, Richard Ford, Frederick Bartheleme, Eudora Welty, Barry Hannah, Rebecca Hill, Richard Wright, Larry Brown, Ellen Gilchrist, Willie Morris, Beverly Lowry and Lewis Nordan. Also featured up front with Faulkner are Tennessee Williams and, for December 1994, Al Young, with John Grisham bringing in January 1996. Many of the 16 black-and-white photos are from MDAH's collections, with others supplied by the authors themselves or other archives. Chrissy Wilson is calendar editor, with design by Marie Owen. Proceeds from sale of the calendar go to support programs of MDAH. Copies may be ordered from MDAH, Old Capitol Shop, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, Miss. 39205-0571 at \$12.95, plus 91 cents in-state sales tax and \$2.50 postage and handling (\$16.36 in-state; \$15.45 out-of-state).

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