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Contact: Leslie C. Levy, Executive Director

llevy@willacather.org

866-731-7304

Fragments from Willa Cather's Lost Work Published for the First Time

At her death in 1947, famed author Willa Cather was working on a story -- or perhaps a novel -- set in medieval Avignon titled "Hard Punishments." By all surviving accounts, the writing Cather had completed was destroyed upon her death, the only known exception being a short fragment owned by the University of Virginia.

Two new fragments of the story have recently surfaced, in the collection given to the University of Nebraska Foundation by Cather's nephew, Charles E. Cather, who died in March 2011. In the Fall 2011 issue of the *Willa Cather Newsletter & Review*, the Willa Cather Foundation published complete transcriptions of all three fragments for the very first time. They are designed to give readers a clear reading text, with missing characters added in brackets and Cather's own deletions omitted. Readers who may be interested in full diplomatic transcriptions, retaining every feature which can reasonably be reproduced in print, can find them on the Willa Cather Foundation website at www.WillaCather.org.

"We are proud and honored to have the permission of the Willa Cather Literary Trust to share these glimpses of Cather's last major creative work," said Leslie C. Levy, Executive Director of the Foundation.

The Fall 2011 issue of the *Newsletter & Review*, which also features an essay on the "Hard Punishments" fragments as well as manuscript images can be purchased from Cather Books & Gifts by calling 402-746-2653 or online at www.WillaCather.org.

Willa Cather has been regarded as one of the greatest American novelists of the 20th century. Her first volume of poetry, *April Twilights*, was published by a vanity press in 1903. Over the next several decades, Cather wrote prolifically; her later works include *Alexander's Bridge* (1912), *O Pioneers!* (1913), *My Ántonia* (1918), and *A Lost Lady* (1923), all of which explored the pioneering experience on the Plains. In 1923, *One of Ours* (1922) received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Her other well regarded works include *The Professor's House* (1925), *My Mortal Enemy* (1926), *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), *Shadows on the Rock* (1931), *Lucy Gayheart* (1935), and *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* (1940). Cather died from a cerebral hemorrhage on April 24, 1947 and was buried in the Old Burying Ground in Jaffrey Center, New Hampshire.

Over the past 56 years, the Willa Cather Foundation has worked to preserve and promote the art, literary, and historical collection relating to the life, time, and work of Willa Cather; one of America's-and the world's-most beloved and respected authors. The Foundation is based in Red Cloud, Nebraska, where Willa Cather moved when she was 9 years old. In total, the Willa Cather Historic Site comprises the largest number of national historic-designated buildings devoted to a single author in the United States. With the addition of the Cather Second Home in 2011, the Foundation owns four historic sites related to Cather's life and work, a 608-acre native prairie, and manages six historic sites owned by the Nebraska State Historic Society.

