



## The Letters of Ernest Hemingway: Volume 2, 1923-1925 (The Cambridge Edition of the Letters of Ernest Hemingway)

By Ernest Hemingway

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The Letters of Ernest Hemingway documents the life and creative development of a gifted artist and outsized personality whose work would both reflect and transform his times. Volume 2 (1923-1925) illuminates Hemingway's literary apprenticeship in the legendary milieu of expatriate Paris in the 1920s. We witness the development of his friendships with the likes of Sylvia Beach, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and John Dos Passos. Striving to 'make it new,' he emerges from the tutelage of Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein to forge a new style, gaining recognition as one of the most formidable talents of his generation. In this period, Hemingway publishes his first three books, including *In Our Time* (1925), and discovers a lifelong passion for Spain and the bullfight, quickly transforming his experiences into fiction as *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). The volume features many previously unpublished letters and a humorous sketch that was rejected by *Vanity Fair*.

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## Editorial Review

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With more than 6,000 letters accounted for so far, the project to publish Ernest Hemingway's correspondence may yet reveal the fullest picture of the twentieth-century icon that we've ever had. The second volume includes merely 242 letters, a majority published for the first time. But they span the crucial early Paris years, and readers can watch Hemingway invent the foundation of his legacy in bullrings, bars, and his writing solitude. This is the Hemingway itching to get beyond the limits of journalism and to earn the respect of his literary elders. By the end, Hemingway's first story collection, *In Our Time*, has been published in the U.S. to admiring reviews. He's polishing his first great novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, and knocking out his nearly forgotten satire (and takedown of Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein), *The Torrents of Spring*. Some letters prefigure the cruelties he inflicted in his Paris memoir, *A Moveable Feast*. It's instructive to witness Hemingway's writing voice change with the moment, and it's cringe-making to watch him sling ethnic and racial slurs, especially to Ezra Pound. --Steve Paul

### Review

"Never is Hemingway more fascinating or in flux than in these letters from his Paris years, that dark and dazzling confluence of literary ascendancy and personal maelstrom. Bravo to Sandra Spanier for giving us this dazzling gem of literary scholarship, and the young Hemingway in his own words-unvarnished, wickedly funny, mercilessly human."

--Paula McLain, author of *The Paris Wife*

"This expertly edited and annotated volume will be devoured by fans eager to learn how the literary titan came into his own."

--Publishers Weekly

"Hemingway did not want his letters published, but this carefully researched scholarly edition does them justice.... devotees will find this and future volumes indispensable."

--Library Journal

## Five Key Insights from *Letters of Ernest Hemingway Volume 2*

1.) In 1923, thanks to a tip from Gertrude Stein, Hemingway witnesses his first bullfight—a discovery that would transform him and his writing. In a July 17-18, 1923 letter he writes: "It's a great tragedy—and the most beautiful thing I've ever seen and takes more guts and skill and guts again than anything possibly could. It's like having a ringside seat at the war with nothing going to happen to you."

2.) The letters in Volume 2 illuminate the ebb and flow of Hemingway's relationships with the luminaries of expatriate Paris in the Twenties, a storied group that included Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Ford Madox Ford, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sylvia Beach, Archibald MacLeish, and John Dos Passos.

3.) Volume 2 begins shortly after a suitcase containing nearly all of Hemingway's early writing was famously stolen from his wife Hadley at the Gare de Lyon in Paris. His first surviving mention of the theft appears in a January 23, 1923, letter to Ezra Pound: "I suppose you heard about the loss of my Juvenilia? I

went up to Paris last week to see what was left and found that Hadley had made the job complet [sic] by including all carbons, duplicates etc.... You, naturally, would say, 'Good' etc. But don't say it to me. I aint yet reached that mood. I worked 3 years on the damn stuff."

4.) Inspired by the 1925 Fiesta of San Fermín, he drafts The Sun Also Rises by hand in just ten weeks. On August 17, 1925, he writes: "Have done 48,000 words on a novel. A swell novel... It will be suppressed the day they publish it but its going to be a damn good one. It's about Paris and Spain."

5.) Although Hemingway's letters convey his deep love for Hadley and Bumby, by late 1925 they also hint at his growing attraction to Pauline Pfeiffer, Hadley's friend and a writer for Paris Vogue. In a December 3 letter he writes: "She is a swell girl. Her and Hash and I are together all the time. She and I have done some A1 drinking." In 1926 he would leave Hadley for Pauline, whom he married in 1927.

### About the Author

Sandra Spanier, Professor of English at The Pennsylvania State University, is General Editor of The Cambridge Edition of The Letters of Ernest Hemingway and co-editor of its first volume. Some of her publications include Kay Boyle: Artist and Activist (1986) and Martha Gellhorn and Virginia Cowles' rediscovered play Love Goes to Press (1995, revised edition 2010). Her most recent essay on Hemingway appeared in Ernest Hemingway in Context (2012), and she serves on the editorial board of The Hemingway Review.

Albert J. DeFazio III, Term Professor at George Mason University, is author of Literary Masterpieces: The Sun Also Rises (2000), editor of Dear Papa ... Dear Hotch: The Ernest Hemingway/A. E. Hotchner Correspondence (2005), and Associate Editor of Volume 1 of The Letters of Ernest Hemingway. He has contributed bibliographies in The Hemingway Review, served on its editorial board, and edits The Hemingway Newsletter.

Robert W. Trogdon is Professor and Chair of the Department of English at Kent State University. He is co-editor, with Sandra Spanier, of The Letters of Ernest Hemingway, Volume 1. He is the author of The Lousy Racket: Hemingway, Scribners and the Business of Literature (2007) and editor of Ernest Hemingway: A Literary Reference (2002). He is a member of the board of the Ernest Hemingway Foundation and Society.

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