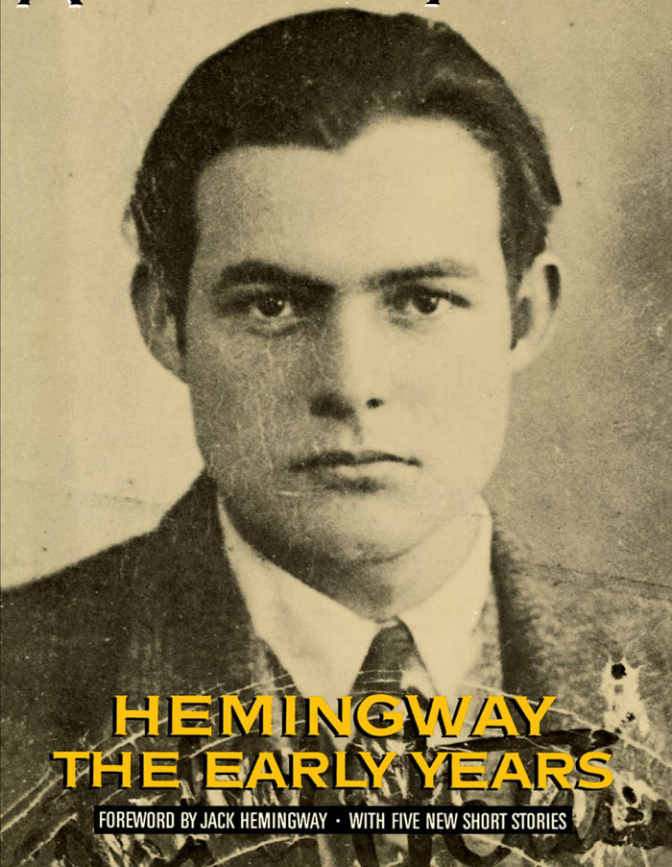


PETER GRIFFIN

ALONG WITH YOUTH



HEMINGWAY THE EARLY YEARS

FOREWORD BY JACK HEMINGWAY • WITH FIVE NEW SHORT STORIES

Along with Youth

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ALONG WITH YOUTH



*Hemingway,
The Early Years*



PETER GRIFFIN

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Foreword

Readers of this book by Peter Griffin are in for a pleasant surprise, whether they are Hemingway buffs who have read every available word on the subject or merely the curious who want to know what recent scholarship may have revealed about a famous writer dead almost a quarter-century. I have been fortunate to have been in close touch with Peter since he first obtained Mary Hemingway's permission to attempt what he told her he thought he could do, bring life and feeling to a thoroughly researched and accurate biography of Ernest Hemingway. I believe he has done just that, and I believe it sorely needed doing. If this first volume is an indication, we will have a work significantly different from the first officially authorized biography which, while a monument to tireless research and hard work, seems to me to be about someone I never knew, someone without humor and, in short, without life.

If I need to check some date in Hemingway's life, there is no better tool than Carlos Baker's biography. It sometimes turns out to be inaccurate or incomplete, but on the whole it is a priceless reference work, and I am well aware of the toll its writing took on Professor Baker. Griffin's biography, while I believe it to be as accurate as anything I have ever read about my father's early years, is not written as a reference work. It has been written by a young man who has shown me insights into my own father's character and behavior I would not have thought possible in view of the time lapse between Hemingway's death and the research Griffin has accomplished. These insights and his innate skills have enabled him to bring a far different view of Hemingway as a developing human being. There aren't as many of the players around now as there

were fifteen or more years ago, not as many witnesses. There are, however, fewer constraints as well. Ruffled feathers have for the most part been smoothed. Truths which would have caused pain then can now be voiced. Peter Griffin has voiced many of them, and some of them surprising in the extreme.

For my part, I made my mother's correspondence, which is now at the Kennedy Library, available to him early on, and he has skillfully quoted and translated their content into a rounding out of the courtship between my mother and father which portrays them and their time as truly as I think it can be done.

I was pleased to see Griffin's use of some examples of my father's early writing done at different times in those early years. They graphically illustrate what we should all realized, that good writing is not a gift but is arrived at by a combination of intelligence, clear thought, intuition, and hard work, as well as single-minded determination. That the young Hemingway had a long way to go is all too apparent, but there are indications, even then, of some of the requisite qualities. Furthermore, they are quite funny.

At the risk of seeming like Hemingway's good 1940s pal, Winston Guest, when he said halfway through reading "The Life of Christ" aboard the *Pilar*, "Papa, this is a wonderful story. I can hardly wait to find out how it ends," I will end by saying that this is a wonderful biography because it reads like a story, and you will very likely join me in wondering how it will all end in a future volume.

North of Ketchum
1985

Jack Hemingway

Preface

On October 28, 1977, I wrote a six-line note to Mary Hemingway. I told her I wanted to write my dissertation at Brown University on her husband because his works had meant a lot to me during the hardest times of my life. I said I knew most scholars agreed that Hemingway had been “done.” But I said I could not find the author of *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises*, and *A Farewell to Arms* in the biographies I had read.

Nine days later I found in my mail a small blue envelope, boldly addressed, with Mrs. Hemingway’s address embossed in white on the back. She wrote, “I must regretfully report that my program of various commitments is so full between now and early December that I cannot say something such as ‘Come whenever you like.’ I’ll be here from late November onward. Why don’t you ring me for a specific date?”

My wife and I visited Mary Hemingway six times the following year. During our hours of conversation, Mary told fascinating stories and made me understand I was not at work on a project—I was trying to learn about her husband, the most “decent” and the most complex man she had ever known. Mary also mentioned a friend who she knew had been close to Ernest when he was a boy during the First World War. His name was Bill Horne, and he lived outside Chicago.

I called Bill Horne on the night of July 3, 1979. He was eighty-eight years old at the time. There was a holiday celebration going on at his home, and it was hard for each of us to make the other understand. Eventually Bill was convinced that I appreciated Ernest Hemingway and suggested I come to Chicago. He had a lot to say.

My wife and I got to Bill and “Bunny” Horne’s home in Barrington

Hills on July 7. Bill's beautiful black dog Lena sniffed around us as we rolled out of our rented Toyota. Bill, with twenties-style steel-rimmed glasses and a lifeguard whistle hung around his neck (to call Lena, I was later told), stood at the weather-worn screen door. A half-hour later, sitting on the veranda, sipping cocktails Bunny Horne brought in, the tape recorder turning away, I asked Bill my prepared questions: What were his first impressions of Ernest? What was life like for them in New York before embarking for Italy in 1918? Could we talk about Schio? What was life like in Milan at the American Red Cross Hospital? And how about Agnes von Kurowsky, Ernest's first love? I had read Bill's letters to Ernest (now with the Hemingway papers at the John F. Kennedy Library) and, with a bit of priming, Bill's memory started to flow.

During his reminiscence of the Chicago years when he and Ernest lived together on North State Street, and then later when Bill lost his job and went home to New York and Ernest moved in with Kenley and "Doodles" Smith, Bill made a remark he immediately regretted. Then he said, "Speak only well of the dead," more to himself than to me. Bill denied the remark was true. "I was showing off for your wife, Pete, that's all." An hour later the interview came to a comfortable end, and my wife and I left for our hotel. But eight o'clock that night Bill Horne called. Could we come out to Barrington Hills the next day?

The eighth of July was overcast and threatened rain. The dog Lena greeted us at the car again, and Bill was at the door. This time though, after Bunny served us delightful cocktails, Bill said he was "going down cellar." A few minutes later he came back with a copper-coated tin box that looked as if it had once been a Whitman Sampler. Bill opened up the box and brought it over. "Take a look at this, Pete," he said. There was a cardboard-covered photograph album, some yellowed, sharply creased pages of typing, and, pressed flat by the weight of the album, letters that began "Horney Bill" and ended "Hemmy," "'Oin," or "Hemingstein." He had been keeping this stuff, Bill said, because he once planned to write his own story of Hemingway. But it was too late now.

In his letters to Bill, Ernest opened his heart as he never had before, and, with the exception of his letters to his first wife, Hadley, never would again. He wrote of his love for Agnes von Kurowsky, of his home in Oak Park, Illinois, of his parents, Clarence and Grace Hemingway, and of what he hoped to do with his life. (I noticed a letter dated March 13, 1919, the day Ernest heard from Agnes that she was engaged to an Italian duke.) As I looked at the photographs, Bill chuckled at the Fiat ambulances (they were top-heavy, threatening always to roll off the narrow mountain roads) and at the outside shots of the mess at Schio (Ernest, overweight,

fooling with a bayonet against the chest of a friend). Bill sang an Italian air; he saddened at the photo of a town, shell-pocked and cratered, in the Dolomite hills. Take it all with you, Bill said. But my wife and I and Bunny Horne said no.

Bill spoke also that afternoon of Ernest Hemingway's funeral in Ketchum, Idaho. He was very proud to have been a pallbearer for his friend. Bill said he remembered many of the mourners with affection, but most of all he remembered Ernest's first son. Bill called him Bumby or, sometimes, Jack.

I met Jack Hemingway in Boston on July 29, 1979. He and his daughter Joan had come East for the internment of Jack's mother's ashes in Vermont. (Hadley Hemingway Mowrer had died in Florida in January, at eighty-eight.) As we sat talking in the bar of the Hilton Hotel at Logan Airport, Jack sipping a Campari, the sense of interview evaporated. Jack told some extraordinary stories. When he had worked for Merrill-Lynch in the mid-1950s, he said, he went through a time of severe depression. His father asked him to the home in Ketchum, Idaho. They would both work on what to do. Late one afternoon, after father and son had gotten purposively drunk, they bought a goat, slaughtered it, and Ernest, the goat on his back, climbed to the roof of his house and tied the carcass to the chimney. As the vultures flapped down, Ernest and Jack gave them twelve-gauge shotgun blasts instead of an evening meal. In an hour the rooftop was littered with the birds. Then Jack and his father made a pact about suicide. Each promised to call the other, first. But, Jack said, his father didn't keep his word.

I asked Jack about the early years. He said the great tragedy for his father was the broken heart Ernest's wartime love affair with his nurse in Milan, Agnes von Kurowsky, had given him. How did Ernest feel about his mother, Grace? I asked. He always claimed he hated her, Jack said. Did Ernest love anyone in his first family? Yes, Jack said. Clarence, his father, and his sister, Ursula. Did Ernest really learn to box? He wasn't much in the ring, Jack said. (The trouble with Ernest's left eye had come during father-and-son bouts with the scoring Ernest's cornea had received from the lacing of Jack's glove.) But Ernest was a splendid bar fighter. He knew all the tricks, and he could hit very, very hard. Did your mother love your father all her life? I asked. Yes, Jack said. But when they were divorced she felt as if a millstone had dropped from her neck.

My meetings with Mary Hemingway, with Bill Horne, and with Jack Hemingway were the highlights of my two years of research. But only Bill Horne could give me details of Ernest's early life, and he knew only of the wartime experiences and of their months together in Chicago in

1920. For the rest I had to go to Oak Park, Illinois, where Ernest spent his first eighteen years, to Ernest's boyhood summer home, Windemere, on Walloon Lake in northern Michigan, where I talked for hours with his sister Madelaine, and my wife and I lived in "The Annex," the small cottage Clarence Hemingway built for his children, and to Horton Bay four miles across the hills from Windemere where, after his ambulance service in Italy in World War I, Ernest lived in a little summer inn called Pinehurst.

I was fortunate to read, when the Hemingway collection at the John F. Kennedy Library was still a stack of boxes in a drab federal building in Waltham, Massachusetts, letters and diaries and manuscripts. As all of this was uncovered, I was struck by the early letters, ingenuous and sentimental; the diaries Ernest's mother kept, too old and dry to be musty, filled with happy and sad family pictures, annotated in a lovely 1890s scroll; the manuscript fragments, one an unpublished 300-page novel from 1928, harshly edited by Ernest himself; and the story of Ernest's courtship of Hadley Richardson told in a thousand pages of Hadley's letters. After the dedication of the Hemingway Room at the new John F. Kennedy Library on Columbia Point, Dorchester, Massachusetts, I spent a delightful morning with Ernest's youngest sister, Carol.

Ernest Hemingway died in 1961, but as with all truly famous men, he lived on in the public imagination. In the glare of his personality, pioneering interpretations were done by Charles Fenton, Philip Young, and Carlos Baker. Now Hemingway is almost history. In the twilight of his "life" a biographer might see him more clearly.

Fall River, Massachusetts
December 1984

P.G.

*To my wife,
Penelope*

Acknowledgments

In writing this book, I enjoyed the generosity and kindness of many people. I am grateful to them and wish to acknowledge them adequately. But, as anyone who has read—or written—an acknowledgment page knows, that is impossible. Of the best fiction, Hemingway wrote, “The dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water.” The best this book has to offer is due to what is inexpressible here.

My thanks to: Jack Hemingway, Mary Hemingway, Bill and “Bunny” Horne, Curtis Church, George Monteiro, the late Milton Griffin, Anna Griffin, Arthur Lothrop, Theodore Voorhees, Henry M. Watts, Robert Rosenberg, Bertram E. Howard, George O’Brien, Robert A. Haley, Louise Keane, Rose Simons, Randy Kryn, Edward Wagenknecht, Lewis Clarahan, Susan Crist, Mrs. Ernest J. Miller, Carol Gardner, Wendy Warren Keebler, Bill Olhe, Carlos Baker, Maxine Davis, Polly Dow, Carolyn Raynor Scott, Warren Miller, Joan Ponton, Mrs. Arthur Burns, Al Gini, Rudy Clemen, Leslie Morris, Pat Julian, James Dilworth, Joseph Sciarra, Janice Motta, Eleanor Caton, Waring Jones, and Robert Martin.

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Along with Youth

He was the sort of boy that becomes a clown
and a lout as soon as he is not understood, or
feels himself held cheap; and, again, is ador-
able at the first touch of warmth.

D. H. LAWRENCE
Sons and Lovers



Disorder and Early Sorrow

When he was six years old, Ernest Hemingway sat through a memorial service for his maternal grandfather, Ernest Hall. The First Congregational Church in Oak Park, Illinois, was hot, the organ seemed loud, the minister droned on and on. Reading from the obituary Grace Hemingway, Ernest's mother, had herself composed, he made Ernest Hall a cultured English gentleman, a lover of the arts, a student of history, a Christian of "fervent piety and a disciple's faith." Ernest Hall had "the dignity of a lord and the simplicity of a child," the minister said. "He was soldierly like Cromwell and saintly like Wesley. . . . He influenced men more than he was influenced by them." Confused no doubt by the service and by what he had seen at home, Ernest, that morning, told his mother, "I'm the son of the son of a better one."

Ernest Hall was born in Sheffield, England, in 1840. His father, Charles, was a silversmith, and the family well-to-do. When Ernest Hall graduated from St. Saviour's, an artisans' public school in London, he looked forward to university life and a professional career. But, in 1852, electroplating was invented, and the Sheffield silverworks went into a sharp decline. In 1854, Charles Hall packed up his family and emigrated to the United States. Instead of enjoying a freshman term at Cambridge or Oxford, young Ernest found himself tending sheep and cattle in Dyersville, Iowa.

For two years Ernest Hall worked hard on the family farm and, it seemed to his father at least, enthusiastically. Then late one afternoon, after they had been plowing all day, Charles Hall told his son to water the team before supper. That night Ernest Hall ran away, but not before he had driven his father's horses so far into the Little Maquoketa River that they were carried off and drowned.

Ernest Hall spent the next four years working all along the Mississippi. He was a common hand on riverboats; he hired out for day labor; he enjoyed the pleasures of the St. Charles, a fine New Orleans hotel. With the start of the Civil War, however, he returned to Dyersville—the patriot and the prodigal son. As soon as he could, he enlisted in the First Iowa Cavalry and bought a good horse. He was made a corporal because of the horse.

While Mark Twain rode with his rebel irregulars in Marion County, Ernest Hall soldiered in Clinton, Missouri, across the state. In April 1862, according to his commanding officer, H. H. Heath, he received “a gunshot wound . . . during his term of service, but not in the regular discharge of his duties; though from an enemy in arms against the authority of the United States.” (This last phrase kept him from being court-martialed.) The ball lodged on the inner side of the left femur. After five months in a hospital at Butler, Missouri, Ernest Hall was “still incapable of riding.” He was given an honorable discharge. He sold his horse to the army for seventy dollars and went home.

Three years later, in 1865, Ernest Hall married Caroline Hancock. She was English-born, had been to the Australian gold rush with her sea-captain father, and with him had sailed around the Horn. She wrote poetry and played the piano well. Like Ernest Hall, she hated rural life. Immediately after the wedding, Ernest and Caroline moved to Chicago where, with his brother-in-law William Randall, they began a cutlery business. In October 1871, the Halls lost almost everything in the Great Chicago Fire. Nine months later, and after seven years of marriage, their first child, Grace, was born.

Perhaps because Ernest and Caroline Hall had once had dreams of their own, Grace became a willful and precocious child. She had blue-gray eyes, a sturdy little figure, blond hair, and fine “English” skin. At three years old, Grace could harmonize with the family quartet; at seven, she learned “by ear” to play the parlor organ. Once she took her brother Leicester’s bicycle, a penny farthing, and, wearing a pair of his pants, shocked the ladies on the neighborhood streets.

Two illnesses did mar Grace’s childhood. First, she had scarlet fever, and the disease left her blind for months. Then, one day while her parents were at church, Grace saw the outline of her fingers on the parlor organ keys. She prayed to God “very hard,” and suddenly she could see. Grace never forgot the hug her father gave her and the feel of her mother’s tears on her cheeks.

At fourteen, Grace contracted chorea, St. Vitus’ dance. During her six-month convalescence she grew half a foot, none of her clothes fit her, and

her mother, four feet ten inches tall herself, was alarmed. Yet Grace had also developed perfect pitch and a lovely contralto voice. Ernest Hall envisioned a career in opera for his daughter. He hired the finest voice instructors in Chicago and took Grace to every performance of the Chicago Opera Company.

As the years passed, Grace Hall became a local celebrity (she was the showpiece of the church choir) but nothing more. She would have to go to New York, Ernest Hall said, if she wanted serious study and a chance at real success. Four years after high school, when Grace seemed ready, fate intervened. One winter afternoon, Dr. William Lewis, the best internist in Oak Park, told Ernest Hall his wife Caroline was dying of cancer and had only a few months to live. Grace would of course nurse her mother. She must even learn to administer morphine.

Dr. Lewis, who visited his patient almost every day, brought with him a tall young man with thick crow-black hair, black piercing eyes, and a chin that Grace felt needed a beard. Dr. Lewis explained that Mr. Clarence Hemingway, who coincidentally lived in the gray house right across the street, was a student at Rush Medical College and that he had taken him under his wing. If all went well, Dr. Lewis said, Mr. Hemingway would be Dr. Hemingway next year.

In time, Clarence Hemingway took to stopping at the Halls' residence at 439 North Oak Park Avenue on his own. He and Grace sat in the mid-Victorian parlor—all plush and fringe—and drank her father's English tea. Clarence said he had heard her sing many times in the First Congregational Church and regretted that they had not been introduced before.

When it got warm enough in Oak Park to bring out the buds on the tree-lined streets and turn the broad lawns a tint of green, Clarence in his black, ministerial suit took Grace on afternoon walks. It would be good for her strained nerves, he said. Grace wore a picture hat to keep the sun off her skin and the glare from her fever-damaged eyes.

At first Grace did most of the talking. She asked questions about her mother's condition that day. How much was she suffering? Was there anything else after morphine? Then the talk turned to Clarence's own parents, Anson and Adelaide Hemingway. It was just the reverse in his family, Clarence said. His mother, Adelaide, with her bright agate eyes and curious serenity, was as healthy as a schoolgirl. She was six years older than his father, Clarence said, but Anson suffered from "pigeon breast" and had a bad heart. Was it from the war? Grace asked. Her father had been in the cavalry; he'd been wounded and was a hero. Anson Hemingway was no hero, Clarence said, but he had carried a fifty-pound pack for the Union infantry all over Mississippi and raised

six children and had worked for the YMCA. Now his father was a realtor. Grace must have seen the office in the "Merchants' Block" downtown: "Hemingway Real Estate" the gold letters on the window read. Also, she must remember the tiny old house where their gray mansion, as he called it, now stood. Her father had graduated from a London public school, Grace said. He was a man of letters, turned to business by bad luck. Clarence remembered Grace in high school, though she was a class behind, and Grace said she thought she remembered him.

On some of their walks, Clarence took Grace Hall out to the prairie, where quail would at a stone's throw burst from cover or a red-tail fox would be prowling. Clarence told Grace he was a collector of arrowheads and spearheads, clay bowls and stone axes of the Pottawatomie Indians, all taken from the earthen mounds over by the Des Plaines River. He spoke of Indian friends he had made on a two-month visit to a mission school for the Dakota Sioux. Because of his extraordinary vision, the Indians called him Nec-tee-ta-la—"Eagle Eye." Why, Grace asked, was Clarence still in school at twenty-four? That's easy, he said. After three years at Oberlin College, he had failed and come home in disgrace.

Caroline Hall died on September 5, 1895, and by that time Clarence and Grace were engaged. Clarence asked for an early wedding, while he was still a student. But Grace had other commitments. Soon after the death of his wife, Ernest Hall had urged his daughter to try a season at the opera in New York; she was twenty-three; she might not get another chance. Clarence returned for his last term at Rush Medical College, still a bachelor. Grace headed east to the "famous" Madame Capianni and took the stage name "Ernestine."

Grace Hall's months in New York the winter of 1895-96 were a heady experience. She met and was accepted by the cosmopolitan students of the Arts Students' League (Stephen Crane frequently visited there); she earned the confidence and support of Madame Capianni; she had a flirtation with a young painter who did her portrait in a low-cut satin gown. Best of all, Grace had a successful debut at the old Madison Square Garden. Even her picture on the program, all flowery curls, was a hit. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1896, Grace returned to Oak Park. She told her father the harsh stage lighting hurt her weak eyes terribly. To console Grace, Ernest Hall at once proposed a European tour. Although she would not see Clarence Hemingway graduate, they did agree on a date for their wedding—October 1, 1896—and did decide where to live: with Ernest Hall.

On July 21, 1899, Grace Hemingway, attended by Dr. Lewis with Clarence handling the chloroform, gave birth to a second child. (The first,

Marcelline, had been born eighteen months before.) He was a robust, red-cheeked boy with his mother's complexion, her thick blond hair, and her blue-gray eyes. Dr. Lewis pronounced the baby perfect. Yet one Sunday in September while Grace was in Chicago, Clarence, without anesthetic, circumcised his son. At the First Congregational Church on October 1st, his parents' third wedding anniversary, the boy was named for Grace's father, then for her great-great-grandfather—Ernest Miller Hemingway.

In the Hall-Hemingway household, there was no doubt who was head of the family. Ernest Hall read the morning prayers, gave the five servants their orders, and sat down to a breakfast of crisp bacon, toast from an open rack, and Dundee orange marmalade, long after Clarence had begun his rounds. In the afternoon, Ernest Hall, who had retired at fifty, walked his Scottish terrier Tassels downtown to "see about my investments," he said. Like John D. Rockefeller, he wore a top hat and immaculate gray gloves and walked with his toes pointed out. He told Clarence, "Only red Indians walk toes straight ahead." At supper, "Abba" the biblical word for father as he insisted on being called—gave the blessing: "For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful, for Jesus' sake, amen." Then, before dismissing the family (Clarence was "excused" if he had an emergency call), Ernest Hall would kneel at the center table in the parlor. His favorite, dark-eyed Marcelline, watched his gray mutton-chop whiskers and the pink baldness of her grandfather's head. Opening a small, thick book with gold-edged leaves bearing the inscription "Daily Strength for Daily Needs," he would read and read. Then all would rise, turn, and kneel down on the flowered Brussels carpet in front of their chairs—young Ernest, his hands folded on the black leather seat. Abba Hall would raise his head, his eyes looking upward, and through thin, pale lips speak "as though he were talking to God." Grace, stirred by emotion and habit, always thanked Abba for these performances with a "bear hug" and a kiss.

In a "Memory Book," leather-bound, the size of a family bible, Grace Hemingway kept a history of Ernest's first five years. (By his eighteenth birthday, she would fill four others.) Besides the conventional remembrances—Ernest weighed nine pounds, eight ounces at birth; he said "Papa" at five months and walked across the room at one year—she recorded, mostly without comment, some unusual behavior: "He sleeps with Mama and lunches all night. . . . He is *so* strong and well and loves his Mama *so tenderly*. . . . He plays 'Peek-a-boo' all by himself with the sheet . . . and cries with such heart broken sorrow when we all put on our things in the morning." After his grandfather led the morning prayers, Ernest would "play clown and turn summersaults to amuse

the family." At night, after the inspirational ceremony, he would sing as loud as he could "Me!" each time the phrase "Jesus loves even me" occurred in the hymn. "If things were taken away from him, he would submit without a word," Grace noted. But later on he would "rush up" to his mother "and smile and in his rich, loving voice say 'Fweetie, Fweetie.' " Even if he were hurt severely, Ernest would not cry so long as "Mama would kiss it and make it well." If he displeased his "Mama," Ernest would "put away from his mouth sweets, puddings, and pastries" and ask for "plain bread and water instead." When he had done something he thought very wrong, Ernest would give himself a "whippy" "so Mama won't have to punish." Asked if he were afraid of the dark or of walking in the woods alone, Ernest would claim he was "afraid of nothing." But then he would cuddle around Grace's neck, asking to play " 'Kitty,' where Mama be the Mama kitty and strokes him and purrs." "He pats my face in the night," Grace wrote, "and squeezes up so close . . . and sings 'Ah' which is the way he loves."

When he was old enough to share a room with his sister Marcelline, Ernest sometimes asked his mother to stay with him and sing to him. Grace usually chose "Onward Christian Soldiers," the song she did first in choir. "When I get to be a big boy," Ernest would say, "I don't want to be an Onward Christian Soldier; I want to go with Dad and shoot lions and wolves." Yet, one Sunday at the First Congregational Church, Ernest waved "wildly" because the collection plate passed him by. When it returned, he dropped something in. On the walk home, Clarence Hemingway asked his son what he had been so anxious to contribute. "My gold penny, Daddy!" Ernest replied. "It was all that I had and I just had to give it." Grace knew that "this gold penny was so choice to him [it had been his father's Christmas gift] that he had cried bitterly when it was mislaid."

Grace called Ernest her "dutch bish dollie" and sometimes she dressed him in her own baby clothes. But when he insisted he was "Bobby" or "Punch" or "that Jake," she was pleased. "A boy's a boy for a' that," Grace would say. One morning, when he was five years old, Ernest crawled into Grace's bed. She told him the "happy secret" of the coming birth of his sister Madelaine. "He wanted to know all about it," Grace wrote, "so I explained and he felt the little one move." For weeks Ernest would smile slyly at his mother and whisper to her, "We know, don't we?" Yet a year later there was a curious brutality in the first letter he wrote:

Dear papa

today Momma and the rest of us took walk We walked to the school house, Marcelline ran on ahead while we stopt at Clauses in a little wile

she came back she said thaat in the wood shed of the school house the[re] was a pocaipine, so we went up there and looked in the door, the pocaipine was asleep I went in a gave I[t] a wack with the axx. then I cave I[t] another and another, then I crouched in the wood. We came to Mr. Claus and he got his gun and . . . [the manuscript ends here].

The letter is on Windemere stationery. In the upper right-hand corner Ernest wrote to his father, "Hear [sic] some of the quills."

The Hall-Hemingway house in Oak Park had many rooms, and each family member seemed most comfortable in his own. For Grace it was the high-ceilinged parlor, with its fireplace, her upright piano, and windows so large the sidewalk oak seemed part of the room. For Ernest Hall it was the library behind mahogany doors, where he and his brother-in-law, Tyley Hancock, a jovial traveling salesman of brass beds, traded stories and smoked imported cigars. Clarence Hemingway also took one room for himself. Above the second-floor bedroom where Ernest was born, it was a turret attic with five windows and the brightest room in the house. Besides his Pottawatomie artifacts and the leather vest and moccasins he had gotten from the Dakota Sioux, Clarence kept a recent collection there. On shelves he had put along the walls, dozens of Ball jars held snakes and toads and salamanders bleached white in alcohol. One larger jar held a two-months' human fetus, still showing the primordial gills. After repeated trips with his father to the attic, Ernest could read the names on all the jars. He had a wonderful memory, Clarence thought, and the eye of a natural scientist. Because he showed no revulsion at the disgusting shapes in the jars, Clarence thought perhaps his son could be a doctor someday.

During these years, two more children were born to Clarence and Grace: their third, named Ursula, on April 29, 1902; their fourth, Madelaine, on November 28, 1904.

In August of 1898, the year before Ernest was born, Clarence and Grace Hemingway vacationed at a cottage owned by Grace's cousin, Madelaine Randel Board. The cottage was located on one of the small, many-armed lakes in the Petoskey region of northern Michigan, some eighty miles from the Canadian border at Sioux St. Marie. The lake, then called Bear but later Walloon, was spring-fed, cold, and very clear. Along the shore were birches and cedars; farther back, maples, hemlocks, and stands of pine. Twenty years earlier some of the land had been cleared by lumber

companies. But in 1898 only one small sawmill and a settlement of Ojibways, who peeled hemlock bark for tanning, remained. On sunny days the birches shone against the dark pine hills, and the lake turned a luminous pale blue.

Clarence loved the good fishing in Bear Lake (pike, perch, and large-mouth bass), the cool nights for sleeping, and the sound of wild ducks calling across open water just before dawn. Before he and Grace left for Oak Park, they bought one acre of land by a small bay on the north shore. Two years later, Clarence built a cottage of his own on a part of the lot cleared the summer before. To enjoy pure, fresh water while it was still very cold, he had a well driven down directly from the kitchen sink. Grace, in appreciation of her favorite author, Sir Walter Scott, named the cottage Windemere.

When Ernest was old enough, he and Clarence swam and fished in the lake, searched for bird nests and wildflowers in heavy foliage, made campfires with flint and steel in the rain, and hiked along Indian-fashion, toes straight ahead. (At five years old, Ernest hiked seven miles with his father and blistered his feet so badly there was blood in his socks and shoes.) On the last day of each season, when, as usual, Clarence awakened Ernest by holding onto his foot, there was always a long list of chores they wanted to do together before the wood-burning lake steamer took the Hemingways to the train at Walloon Village for the trip back to Oak Park.

Seven years after his father's death, when Ernest had two young sons of his own, he remembered Clarence in one of his finest short stories, "Fathers and Sons":

His father came back to him in the fall of the year, or in the early spring when there had been jacksnipe on the prairie, or when he saw shocks of corn, or when he saw a lake, or if he ever saw a horse and buggy, or when he saw, or heard, wild geese, or in a duck blind; remembering the time an eagle dropped through the whirling snow to strike a canvas-covered decoy, rising, his wings beating, the talons caught in the canvas. His father was with him, suddenly, in deserted orchards and in new-plowed fields, in thickets, on small hills, or when going through dead grass, whenever splitting wood or hauling water, by grist mills, cider mills and dams and al-ways with open fires.

On August 22, 1904, just before the Hemingways returned to Oak Park, Ernest Hall applied to the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, for the remittance his cavalry service had earned him. On the notarized form, "Declaration for Original Invalid Pension," he wrote that he suffered from "Sluggish circulation, disease of the kidneys, or

weak, and heart trouble." He assured the pension officer, "My disabilities are permanent and in no way due to vicious habits. I am disqualified for any occupation involving manual labor."

On October 15, 1904, Ernest Hall was granted six dollars per week for "partial disability." Three weeks later he left for his usual vacation with his son, Leicester, in Bishop, California. But in March, a month early, he returned to Oak Park a very sick man. Dr. Lewis made the diagnosis. It was Bright's disease.

For the next six weeks, Ernest Hall suffered the effects of kidney failure: he vomited; his skin turned brown; often he was delirious with fever. On cool spring nights, with the windows closed, the stench from his room filled the house. When he died on May 10, 1905, the Hemingways had lived with him for nine years.

In mid-June 1905, the Hemingway family made their annual trip from Oak Park to Windemere. But this summer there was a different family mood. Grace Hall-Hemingway, as she now signed her name, had inherited the bulk of her father's estate, and she intended to make some changes.

First of all, Grace knew that for the past few years Clarence had had his eye on a forty-acre former tenant farm directly across the lake from Windemere. The meadow was all quack grass, the orchard girdled trees. But in the summer of 1905, the farm was up for taxes, and this made it a bargain Grace could not refuse. She named the property Longfield Farm and bought the second rowboat Clarence said he needed.

While her husband worked hard replanting the orchards (he and Ernest would row across the lake together, Ernest sitting amid saplings of Jonathan apple and plum), Grace turned to more serious matters. For seventeen of her thirty-two years, she had lived in the house on North Oak Park Avenue. But the gables, the veranda, the turret were all irretrievably passé. Another resident of Oak Park, Frank Lloyd Wright, was creating new designs everyone was talking about. They called them his "Prairie Style." Now that Grace had her patrimony, she would have the old house listed with Anson Hemingway's real estate office; buy a prized corner lot at North Kenilworth Avenue and Iowa Street, one block away from Wright's spectacular home; and hire the best builder in town. For the rest of the summer at Windemere, Grace set to work designing her own "modern" home.

When the Hemingways returned to Oak Park in September, Grace directed a general clearance of the furnishings her family had accumulated over the years. Besides her mother Caroline's oil landscapes of the Des Plaines River and Ernest Hall's small library—several Scott novels, an illustrated Gray's "Elegy," and a set of expensively bound "classics" still

looking new—Grace kept only her upright piano. One afternoon, as Ernest watched from the pantry window, a bonfire roared in the backyard. Twenty years later, he wrote of what he saw that day in “Now I Lay Me” for his book of short stories, *Men Without Women*:

I remembered, after my grandfather died we moved away from that house to a new house designed and built by my mother. Many things that were not to be moved were burned in the back-yard and I remember those jars from the attic being thrown in the fire, and how they popped in the heat and the fire flamed up from the alcohol. I remember the snakes burning in the fire in the back-yard.

In mid-August 1906, Grace and Clarence Hemingway, Marcelline, Ernest, Ursula, and Madelaine moved into their new house. It was three stories high, covered in light gray stucco with stark white trim. There were many windows, some with latticework of the diagonal Elizabethan design. As in the Frank Lloyd Wright homes, there were large sheltering overhangs at the edge of the roof, above the second floor and covering the broad enclosed porch. Compared to the dark, mansard-roofed house across the street, Grace thought her work looked strikingly alive.

In addition to some small flourishes (the living-room door, half in leaded glass, had a family crest: a light blue H, the center bar of which was two hands clasped, with a rising sun above, and a calla lily below), Grace was most proud of the thirty-by-thirty-foot hall she called her music room. There was a rug-draped platform in the center, to its left stood a Steinway grand piano. There were large radiators painted bronze, with galvanized water-filled pots. Halfway up one wall, a balcony complete with folding chairs faced an eighteenth-century portrait—full-length and life-sized—of Grace’s great-great grandfather, William Miller Hall. He had been a pupil of Paganini, she believed.

In early September 1906, Grace enrolled Ernest at the Oliver Wendell Holmes School on Chicago Avenue in Oak Park. It was a short walk from the Kenilworth house, less than half a block away. Grace also insisted that Ernest, at seven, and Marcelline, at eight and a half, should begin school together.

About this time, Grace undertook her children’s “cultural education.” There were trips to the opera, the symphony, and the theater in Chicago. Grace did not discriminate among *Romeo and Juliet*, *Faust*, *La Bohème*, *Aïda*, the operettas of Victor Herbert, and the “well-made” plays of Eugene Scribe. On Saturday afternoons and sometimes after school, she took Ernest and Marcelline, and later Ursula, to see the fine collections at the Chicago Art Institute. On these visits Ernest saw works ranging from El

Greco's *Assumption of the Virgin* to the romantic landscapes of George Inness (*Home of the Heron* was one). Later Ernest recalled being impressed most by the lifelike bronze lions that stand at either side of the entrance to the Chicago Art Institute on three-foot-high pedestals.

During these years too, Grace was the director of the children's vested choir at the Third Congregational Church in Oak Park. She was pleased to discover that two of her daughters, Marcelline and Ursula, could sing. Ernest for a long time was a disappointment to her because, as she once said, "I needed a good voice and Ernest was a monotone." One day when he was twelve, however, Ernest was suddenly able to sing in a clear, pleasing alto. Grace was delighted, and she promptly made him a soloist in the vested choir. But a few months later his voice changed abruptly once again.

Because of his failure in the choir, Grace insisted that Ernest learn to play the cello for the family orchestra. To this end, she sent him to the music room to practice an hour every day. Unhappily, both Ernest and Clarence, who for several years practiced his cornet in the cellar, failed to become the musicians Grace had hoped for and always played the hymns and the Gilbert and Sullivan songs she preferred slightly off-key.

As Ernest moved up through the elementary grades at the Holmes School, he had to endure a special strain. He had to compete in the same grade with his older sister Marcelline. Since she was taller and stronger than Ernest and "predictable" in a way the teachers approved, he was usually second-best. When he developed myopia in the fifth grade, Ernest kept the problem to himself.

Perhaps because of his nearsightedness, Ernest read every chance he got. He advanced from the moralistic but frequently well-written tales in the popular boys' magazines (*Might and Main* or *Rough Riders' Weekly*, which contained "Stories for Boys Who Succeed") to works like Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (received as a gift from his Uncle Leicester), Charles Dickens's *Christmas Stories for Children*, and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Later on he read Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Books*, and, over and over again, Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*. From Twain, Ernest caught a bit of diction ("screed" for letter), a style of humor ("me trusty birch bark viacle"; "You have to part your hair in the middle to balance it"); and learned that with the mastery of technique courage can be acquired. In his thirties, Ernest would write his own *Life on the Mississippi* and call it *Death in the Afternoon*. The only friend he had in Oak Park during these years was Harold Sampson, a boy who was a year older and half a head taller. While Ernest was still hesitant, shy, and inarticulate, "Sam," as Ernest

called him, was clever and playfully verbose. When Ernest felt the need to act grown-up, he usually tried to emulate Sam's style. And he invited him to Walloon Lake several times.

Of the seven years Ernest attended the Oliver Wendell Holmes School, he stood out from his class in only one. When he was in the seventh grade, in the 1911-12 school year, he was chosen for the lead in the class play (a production of *Robin Hood* just after the Christmas holidays) and to write the class prophecy in the spring. Unfortunately, *Robin Hood* was an ordeal for Ernest. He had to wear a wig, a velvet cap and tunic, and, despite his disproportionately large feet, velvet-covered shoes. Worst of all was the lip and eye makeup made necessary by the weak lighting. For both performances he carried a pitiful stage bow.

The class prophecy, however, was another matter. In this performance Ernest had the audience at his mercy. He himself could choose the victims and control the impression he made. A stridently independent Caroline was to be "President of a South American Woman's Suffrage Republic"; an idealistic Mary would become "a reformer who is trying to free the slaves and the school children"; an all too obvious Gertrude would someday write on "how to tell crows from crocus, fords from flowers, grass from trees."

Despite his demanding schedule, Clarence spent a surprising amount of time with his children during the nine months out of each year when the Hemingways were in Oak Park. In winter he took Ernest and his sisters to the Field Museum of Natural History, housed in the only remaining building of the Columbian Exhibition of 1893. Like his father, Ernest always found something exciting about the carefully assembled prehistoric skeletons, the fine examples of taxidermy, and the collections of semiprecious stones and antique coins. In spring, with warmer weather, there would be an annual trip to the Ringling Brothers Circus at the Chicago Coliseum. Ernest once infuriated the three-legged man by demanding that he show where the third leg was attached. On sunny Saturday afternoons, they all visited the Lincoln Park Zoo. One year Clarence took Ernest and Marcelline to see the state prison at Joliet, Illinois, and warned them that children who did not obey their parents ended up there. But occasionally Clarence took Ernest to the Forest Park Cemetery to visit the Black Angel Monument marking the Haymarket Square anarchists' grave. Ernest would ask to ride the "chute-the-chute" in the amusement park across the street on the way home. Clarence would always say no.

On July 19, 1911, Grace Hemingway, now thirty-nine years old, gave