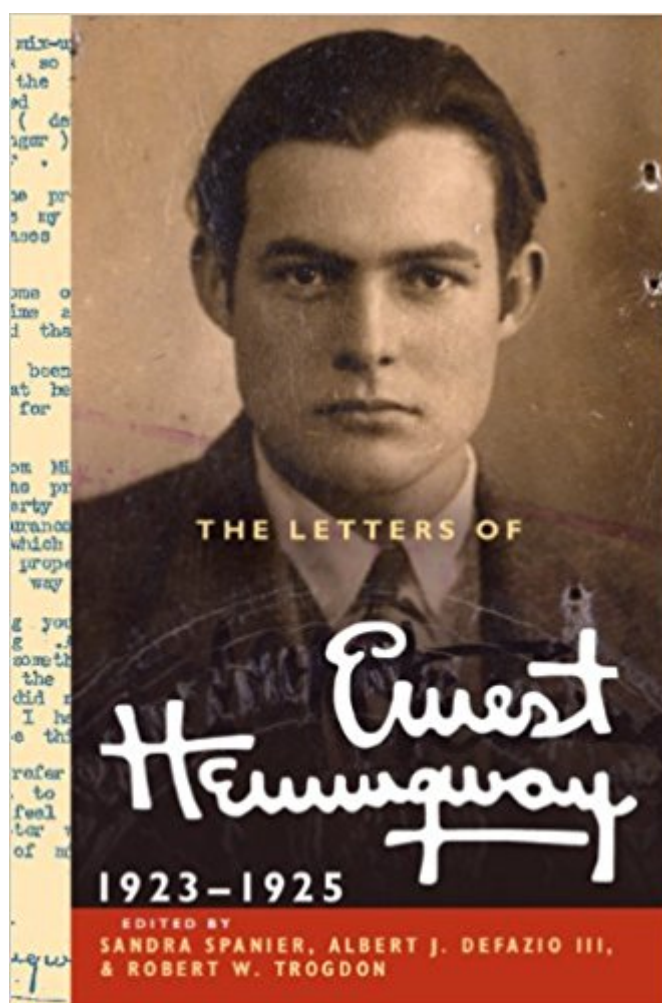


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# The Letters Of Ernest Hemingway: Volume 2, 1923-1925 (The Cambridge Edition Of The Letters Of Ernest Hemingway)



## Synopsis

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 The volume features many previously unpublished letters and a humorous sketch that was rejected by *Vanity Fair*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nobel Laureate of Literature Ernest Hemingway was a talented and gifted writer. For anybody seeking to know more about Hemingway, the author and journalist, in the 1920s, this second volume of his letters between 1923 and 1925 is a treat in understanding this literary genius. Ernest Hemingway was also a leading member of the Lost Generation of American ex patriates who lives in Paris, France between World War I and World War II. He was friends and mentored by fellow American, Gertrude Stein. He was so close to Stein and her partner, Alice B. Toklas, that they were godmothers to Ernest and his wife's son. Hemingway is painfully human in his letters. He was a

prolific letter writer to friends, family, and colleagues. Be prepared for offensiveness and prejudices. He might come across as homophobic and Anti-Semitic. The editors are wise and daring to keep this language in the text. After all, his letters are honest, candid, and very personal in nature. His letter writing isn't revised. You can tell his relationships with his family versus friends and colleagues. I most enjoy his letters to Stein and Ezra Pound. The book begins with a detailed introduction and information regarding the letters' origins and current location in college libraries and collections. The editors here display the letters as they are actually. They have footnotes to help fill the answers to your questions. If you are not familiar with the Lost Generation, you will find the footnotes necessary in understanding context. The book features a chronology of Hemingway's years (1923 to 1925). The book also offers maps; general index and a recipient index; a roster of his correspondents featuring brief biographies; and calendar of letters. I found this particularly useful.

Scholars of literary modernism, of twentieth century American literature, of Paris in the Twenties, and some other specialties will have many reasons for reading this book. In one sense, they are the proper reviewers of it, since it is a meticulously edited scholarly edition of the letters of Ernest Hemingway written during a brief but extremely important period of time, from 1923 to 1925, important both in Hemingway's development (he was writing some of his most important fiction, including *The Sun Also Rises*), and in the history of literary modernism. Hemingway's friends and associates--Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Robert McAlmon, Sylvia Beach, and many others are central to the literary developments of that period, and there are letters from Hemingway to those friends, mostly worth reading. The scholars will find the work to be a valuable addition to the Hemingway record, or they will judge it from their positions of authority for the quality of its editing and presentation. For the rest of us, for those who are Hemingway fans or just admirers of some of his fiction, but not professionals, the interest is nonetheless pervasive in the collection, and the editors have made it all wonderfully accessible by providing careful annotation, informing us of the identities and relevance of many obscure and some famous persons, the locations and qualities of many places, even the meaning of some of Hemingway's playful slang and neologisms. (It's a comfort, for example, to find a note explaining his sentence to Ezra Pound": "It was good to lamp the underwooding again. I thought you were offa me." The editors remind us of that brand of typewriter.

The Ernest Hemingway remembered today is a kind of bloated caricature of the brilliant young man who wrote the unmatched description of entering Pamplona in "*The Sun Also Rises*." This was the

man who was considered the intellectual equal of James Joyce and Ezra Pound even though he had only a high school education. Discerning readers have always realized Hemingway was far more than the macho lover of bull fights and boxing, and these letters clearly reveal the sensitive artist as a young man, and the writing is playful, experimental, satirical, and amazingly insightful for someone only in his 20s. This was a critical period in Hemingway's development as a writer and many of the letters, sent to Ezra Pound, his parents, the premier American critic, Edmund Wilson, and even Scribner's editor Maxwell Perkins, discuss his first major publication, a collection of short stories, "In Our Time," brought out by Boni and Liveright. An example, "Dear Mr. Wilson....yours is the only critical opinion in the States I have ant respect for." Hemingway's insight for poetry belie's his gruff reputation as a narrative writer with shallow female characters. "E.E. Cummings' Enormous Room was the best book published last year that I read." The following excerpts of a December 9, 1923 letter to Pound expresses his frustration at laboring as a reporter in Toronto and betrays his desperation to return to Paris where he he would write so well by breathing the artistic air of the gorgeous city in the Roaring 20s. "Esteemed General Pound---Canada is the s\*\*\*...I cannot write anything but a dull letter. Too damn dull here. I have tried to get away before Jan 19 but sailings are spotty...We are tentatively booked on Antonia. M. Cunard's Antonia bound for Cherbourg...

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