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Ernest Hemingway

INSIDE

"Conversation Piece, Just Leisure or Hemingway and Duñabeitia" (1957) by Bilbao artist José María de Ucelay (1903-1979). Duñabeitia is mariner Juan Duñabeitia, aka "Sinbad the Sailor," described by A.E. Hotchner as a "salty, roaring, boozing, fun-loving Basque sea captain." The Hotchner Collection at the John F. Kennedy Library includes tapes of Duñabeitia singing at the Finca Vigía. (Courtesy: Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao).

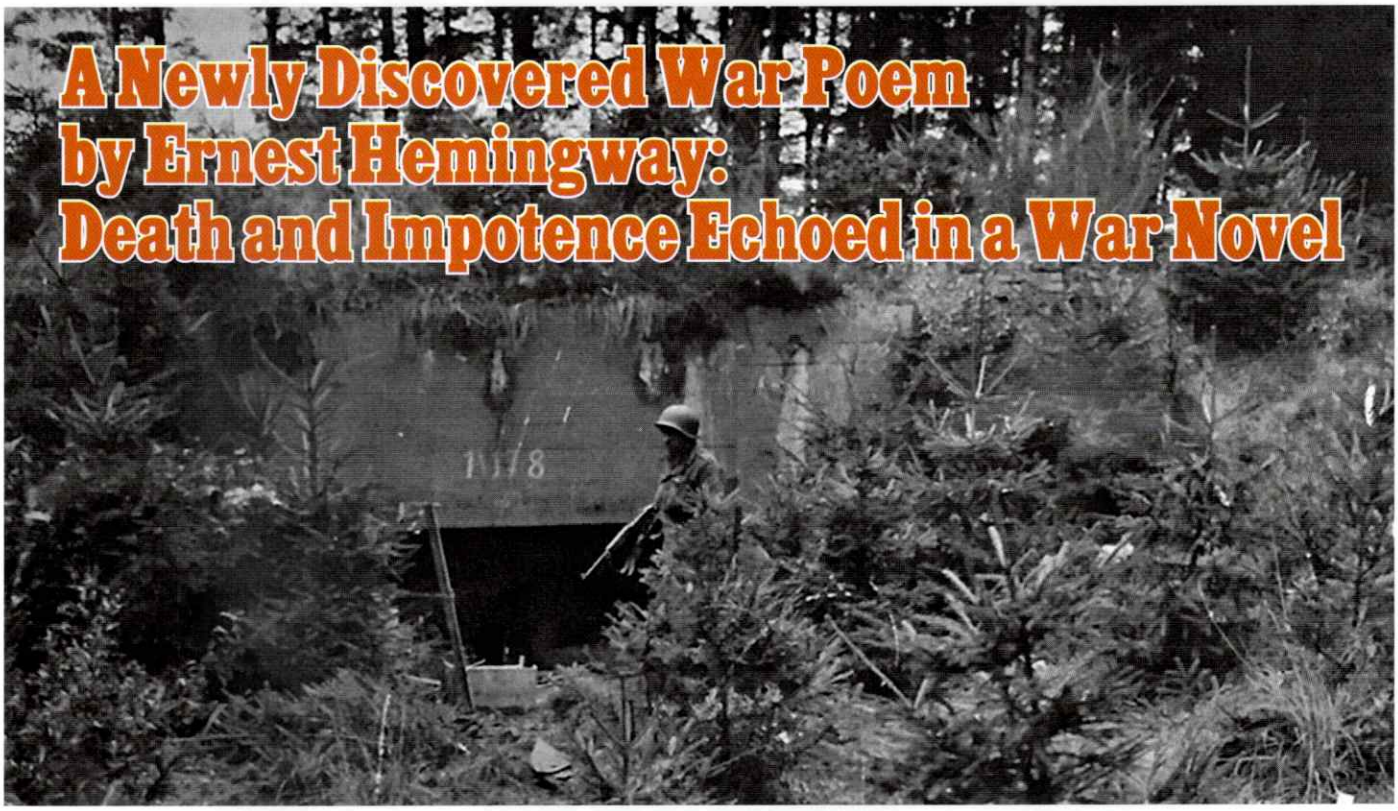
EH²: Hemingway Society Members Prepare to Head to Basque Country in Spain to Explore the Familiar Terrains of *The Sun Also Rises* and the Underappreciated *Dangerous Summer* Era

As summer 2024 arrives, final arrangements for the 20th International Hemingway Society Conference are now in place. To date more than 250 Hemingway scholars and aficionados from twenty-five countries have registered for the event, which will be held July 14-16 in San Sebastián and July 18-20 in Bilbao, with the 17th as a travel day between sites.

At this point, attendees should have booked lodging in both cities, which are located roughly one hour apart. Potential venues are available on the Society website at *https://www.hemingwaysociety.org/2024*. Anyone planning to join us who doesn't yet have a room who would like to share, or if you have a room and would like a roommate to minimize costs, please email conference co-organizer Verna Kale (vlk123@psu.edu), your unofficial matchmaker. She will need your explicit permission to share your contact information with potential roomies.

Please remember that the cutoff date for registration is June 14. Registrations after this date will be processed only if space is available and with an additional late fee. We have been able to accommodate the waitlist for the Laguardia excursion on the 17th, except for the Marques de Riscal stop (though we will be able to lunch together). Those making their own way to Bilbao can take a bus: buses are affordable and should be booked ahead of time—keep in mind we're in the northern part of the country right after the Pamplona festival when tourism is at a peak. For more information on booking buses, see page 7.

A Newly Discovered War Poem by Ernest Hemingway: Death and Impotence Echoed in a War Novel



by Eileen Martin and Greer Rising

An entire company of dead soldiers.
Assault orders not issued.
A suggestion of impotence.
Sorrow and resentment. Repetition, not particularly rhythmic.

These impressions and more are reflected in four lines scribbled in an outhouse by Ernest Hemingway during World War II. The previously-unpublished verse by Hemingway from 1944 on death and impotence has been discovered at the Princeton University Library, embedded in a letter penned by Hemingway four years later. Hemingway's words in the verse reflect his time on World War II battlefields and the brothers in arms he met there, and evoke his views on the tragedy of fallen warriors and needless death. Some of the exact words appear in the novel Hemingway would publish in 1950 about an Army colonel who witnessed his infantry regiment destroyed as his soldiers gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Hemingway cited the poem in a freewheeling, four-page November 1948 letter to his friend General Charles T. "Buck" Lanham. Hemingway's letter, written over two days after ceding the typewriter to his fourth wife, Mary, mentions books he planned to order; complains about his former wife Martha Gellhorn's new book, expressing outrage in a proprietary way about the battles she wrote about; digresses to the American Civil War; and notes that he has read C. S. Forester's 1936 novel *The General* at least five times.

Hemingway then proceeds to mention Hitler, the British, Poland, Hürtgen, Passchendaele and Grosshau before reminding Lanham of his "old doggerell." In the letter, he anonymously cites a general who imperiously called and ordered an assault with a parenthetical "(name omitted)," aware that Lanham would recall the circumstances and understand to whom he was referring.

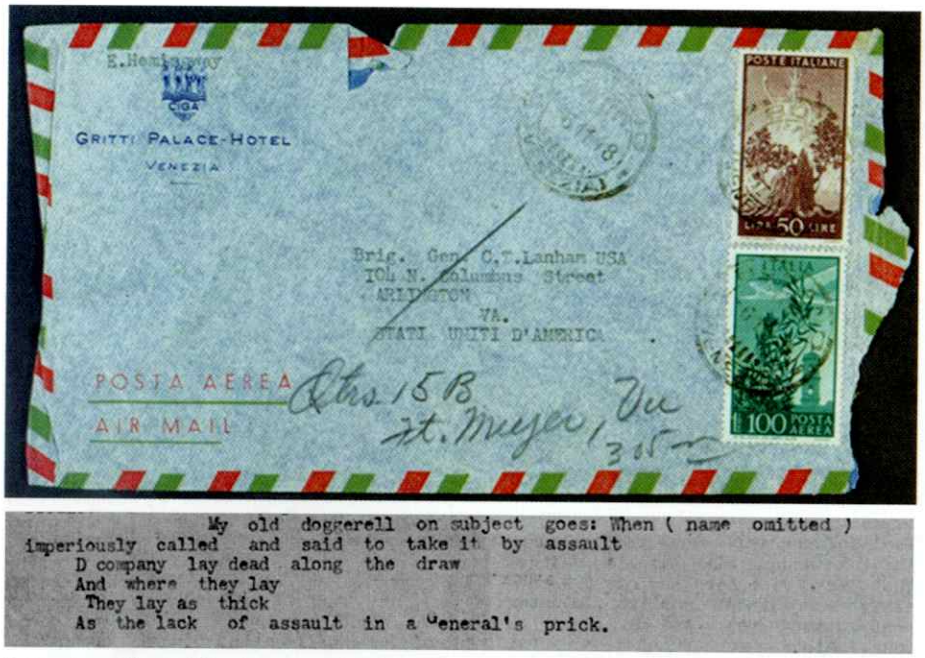
The verse reads:

D company lay dead along the draw
And where they lay
They lay as thick
As the lack of assault in a General's prick

Outlines of the poem were visible in Lanham's unpublished *Memoirs* from the early 1960s, in which he recalled his reaction to the crumpled piece of paper when Hemingway showed it to him (38). Lanham provided clues to the poem's contents, noting it was about dead soldiers lying "thick," implying that the rhyme would be "prick." Lanham was a man of his time in eliding a word not uttered in polite society, but the rhyme confirms the scenario Lanham described about the poem's origins.

In a rare, present-at-the-creation glimpse of Hemingway at work, Lanham remembered that when he read the poem, he assumed it was a joke until he saw that Hemingway was sincere. Lanham wrote that Hemingway came into his command post trailer one morning in 1944 as the Hürtgen Forest battles were winding down, and shared a poem the writer said he had written while in the john:

> When I came to the passage "The dead were as thick…" and the following line, I was convinced that this was a gag. I looked up at E.H. with laughter in my throat, but when I saw his intensity, I suddenly realized that this was no joke at all; that he was in deadly earnest. After all these years, I still believe that if I had laughed at that time, it might have done something very serious to our friendship. Those two lines in particular delighted him despite the palpable fact that a general's impotence can scarcely be equated with the number of dead. (38)



My old doggerell on subject goes: When (name omitted)
imperiously called and said to take it by assault
D company lay dead along the draw
And where they lay
They lay as thick
As the lack of assault in a General's prick.

Letter from Ernest Hemingway to Buck Lanham quoting his 1944 poem. (Courtesy: Princeton University Library).

American soldiers fighting in Germany's Hürtgen Forest, 1944. (Courtesy, U.S. Army Signal Corps).

In 1944, Lanham was a U. S. Army colonel and commander of the 22nd Infantry Regiment, the first unit to breach Germany's Siegfried Line, the Westwall the enemy believed was impregnable. Hemingway the *Collier's* correspondent attached himself to the unit, earning the men's admiration for his easygoing humor, battle sense and bravery. Hemingway was with Lanham's unit off and on from July to December, and wrote Lanham on October 8, 1944 that while awake during the night and on the can, he had written a fine poem, and would show it to Lanham.

In these months with the soldiers, Hemingway observed the full arc of human behavior in days and nights of grueling combat. Many of Hemingway's grief-torn observations would appear in his later writing. Lanham was a published poet whose work was featured in prominent American magazines throughout the 1920s; his pedigree may have given him the confidence to critique the work of a famous writer mentored by esteemed poets Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound. While he did not view the latrine verses as poetry, Lanham acknowledged Hemingway's intensity of emotion and said "as a capsule statement of what one man felt who had lived with this horror, it will stand despite its defects. Indeed, its power may well rest in those very defects which speak in themselves of the rage and horror that engulfed E.H. as he tore these lines out of his heart" (39).

Further examination of the verse tells a grisly tale: a full company has been decimated. Scores of soldiers lie dead on low ground—"the draw," one body on top of another in deep piles. Three times we read that soldiers lay fallen. The imagery of the first three lines allows the reader to visualize the carnage, evoking sadness or empathy for the abandoned dead. The simile of the last two lines assails the senses with an abrupt change of tone, implying blame for the deaths and ending with jolting, uncouth innuendo. In juxtaposing the thick pile of dead with a general's failure, the last line indignantly tells us the men's deaths were attributable to their leader's cowardice or lack of manhood.

According to Anne Marie Blum, a poet and former poetry instructor at Johns Hopkins University, Hemingway uses the meter of the lines to emphasize his points. The first three lines of the poem are iambic, with the exception of the first foot of the first line (D com), which could be an iamb (stress is on the second syllable in the foot) or trochee (stress is on the first syllable in the foot), depending on how the line is read. The iambic meter gives the reader a sense of military marching, decisiveness, and forward movement, and this meter coupled with the preponderance of monosyllabic words conveys a sense of trudgery. The meter changes completely in the final line to all anapests (two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable per foot). The stressed syllables are lack, sault, Gen, prick. This change emphasizes indecision, lack of force, minimal strength. Essentially the meter is limp, flaccid.

In his 1979 introduction to Hemingway's *Complete Poems,* editor Nicholas Gerogiannis observed that Hemingway's earliest poems reflected his associations with Stein and Pound and served as "vehicles for quick satire," as does this new verse (xiv).

The Hürtgen Forest battles, ongoing when Hemingway wrote the privy poem, were among the bloodiest of the war, especially considering the Allies' miniscule territorial gains. Although the actual numbers of casualties have been tallied in different ways given the churn of replacement troops sent in to fight, historians such as Robert Sterling Rush agree the numbers of dead, wounded and shellshocked were extraordinarily high (282).

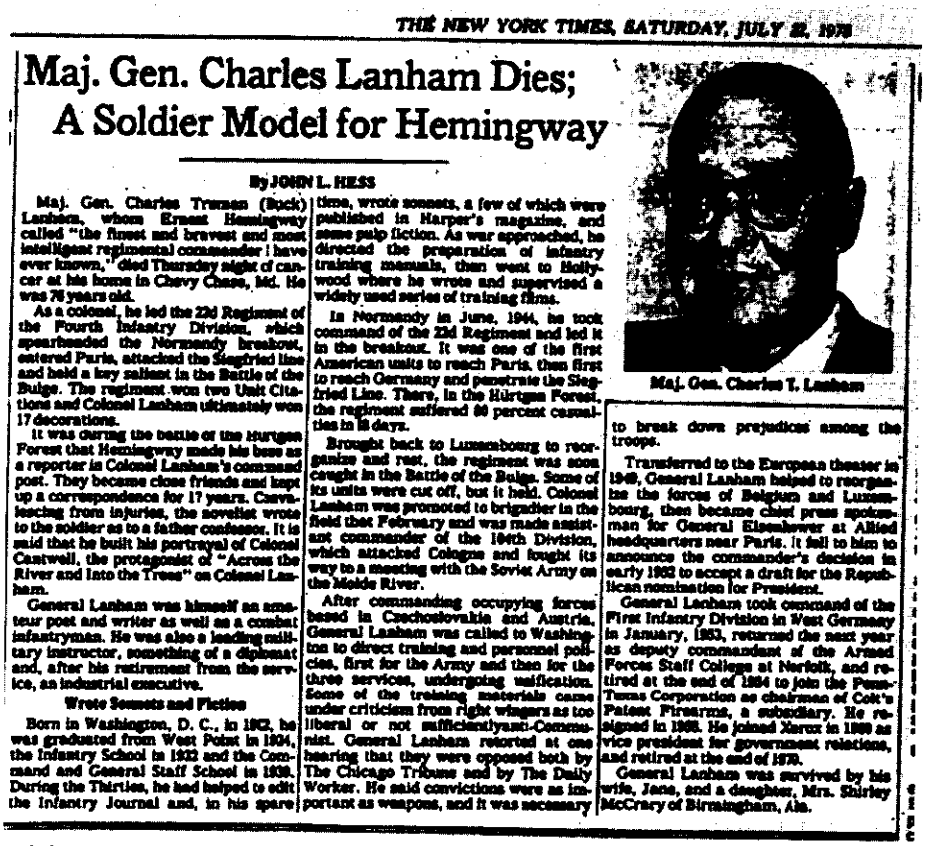
Hürtgen Forest's terrain was an unforgiving death factory: cold and dark, with trenchfoot-producing mud, trees that ricocheted burning shrapnel, exploding mines, Germans attacking relentlessly from their camouflaged concrete bunkers and hidden foxholes. The hostile terrain forced infantry teams to fight their ground war unsupported by air power, tanks or artillery.

Hemingway and Lanham were together in the latter's tiny mobile command trailer during many of the battles, the writer and the colonel alert to persistent shelling from

small arms fire and heavy mortar rounds that rocked their post and cratered the ground (Lanham 26). Both men saw their comrades killed and had multiple brushes with death, and Lanham was wounded in action and decorated for valor.

Lanham was devastated by the near total decimation of his brilliant, beloved regiment, writing that his "mental anguish was beyond description," but even so he was full of admiration for his men and the "miracles on top of miracles" they performed (34). For his part, in a September 1947 letter to Lanham, Hemingway gave his frank opinion that the Hurtgen Forest battles were bollixed up, noting that perhaps they were necessary, but he had nothing but disgust for the way they were ordered to fight. In his 1950 novel *Across the River and Into the Trees*, Hemingway immortalized the battles with his description of Hürtgen as "Passchendaele with tree bursts" (249, 254), which continues to be quoted by military historians to link the steep World War II losses to earlier World War I trench warfare featuring similar ghastly fighting conditions and disproportionate deaths. Like other vigorous Hemingway expressions, his Passchendaele quote is used as a shorthand to connote something very specific.

D or Dog Company, cited in the first line of Hemingway's verse, was a heavy weapons company under the 22nd Infantry's First Battalion, and its soldiers were attached to other companies in the fight. Hemingway's poem citing decimation of D Company is not fact-based. Michael Belis, the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society Historian, said records do not support Hürtgen casualties afflicting the entire D company, leading him to believe that Hemingway used his literary and romantic license to paint an image he had in his mind, reflecting his aversion to the horror of war. Hemingway also used creative license to choose the alliterative name of D company "dead upon the draw," a death knell marking his witness. William Boice, the 22nd Infantry Regiment's chaplain, said "a part of us died in the forest, and there is a part of our mind and heart and soul left there" (Rush 282). In both his letters to Lanham and his fiction, Hemingway's mind returned to Hürtgen Forest, where the dead lay thick upon the draw, and he gave a piece of his heart to Lanham's regiment, supporting their annual reunions with money and gifts, which the men reciprocated with signed greetings from



THE NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1978

Maj. Gen. Charles Lanham Dies; A Soldier Model for Hemingway

By JOHN L. HESS

Maj. Gen. Charles Truman (Buck) Lanham, whom Ernest Hemingway called "the finest and bravest and most intelligent regimental commander I have ever known," died Thursday night of cancer at his home in Chevy Chase, Md. He was 76 years old.

As a colonel, he led the 22d Regiment of the Fourth Infantry Division, which spearheaded the Normandy breakout, entered Paris, attacked the Siegfried line and held a key salient in the Battle of the Bulge. The regiment won two Unit Citations and Colonel Lanham ultimately won 17 decorations.

It was during the battle of the Hurtgen Forest that Hemingway made his base as a reporter in Colonel Lanham's command post. They became close friends and kept up a correspondence for 17 years. Convalescing from injuries, the novelist wrote to the soldier as to a father confessor. It is said that he built his portrayal of Colonel Cantwell, the protagonist of "Across the River and Into the Trees" on Colonel Lanham.

General Lanham was himself an amateur poet and writer as well as a combat infantryman. He was also a leading military instructor, something of a diplomat and, after his retirement from the service, an industrial executive.

Wrote Sonnets and Fiction

Born in Washington, D. C., in 1902, he was graduated from West Point in 1924, the Infantry School in 1932 and the Command and General Staff School in 1938. During the Thirties, he had helped to edit the Infantry Journal and, in his spare time, wrote sonnets, a few of which were published in Harper's magazine, and some pulp fiction. As war approached, he directed the preparation of infantry training manuals, then went to Hollywood where he wrote and supervised a widely used series of training films.

In Normandy in June, 1944, he took command of the 22d Regiment and led it in the breakout. It was one of the first American units to reach Paris, then first to reach Germany and penetrate the Siegfried Line. There, in the Hürtgen Forest, the regiment suffered 80 percent casualties in 18 days.

Brought back to Luxembourg to reorganize and rest, the regiment was soon caught in the Battle of the Bulge. Some of its units were cut off, but it held. Colonel Lanham was promoted to brigadier in the field that February and was made assistant commander of the 104th Division, which attacked Cologne and fought its way to a meeting with the Soviet Army on the Molde River.

After commanding occupying forces based in Czechoslovakia and Austria, General Lanham was called to Washington to direct training and personnel policies, first for the Army and then for the three services, undergoing vilification. Some of the training materials came under criticism from right wingers as too liberal or not sufficiently anti-Communist. General Lanham retorted at one hearing that they were opposed both by The Chicago Tribune and by The Daily Worker. He said convictions were as important as weapons, and it was necessary to break down prejudices among the troops.

Transferred to the European theater in 1948, General Lanham helped to reorganize the forces of Belgium and Luxembourg, then became chief press spokesman for General Eisenhower at Allied headquarters near Paris. It fell to him to announce the commander's decision in early 1952 to accept a draft for the Republican nomination for President.

General Lanham took command of the First Infantry Division in West Germany in January, 1953, returned the next year as deputy commandant of the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, and retired at the end of 1954 to join the Penn-Texas Corporation as chairman of Colt's Patent Firearms, a subsidiary. He resigned in 1958. He joined Xerox in 1959 as vice president for government relations, and retired at the end of 1970.

General Lanham was survived by his wife, Jane, and a daughter, Mrs. Shirley McCrary of Birmingham, Ala.

Maj. Gen. Charles T. Lanham

While Lanham's 1978 obituary emphasized his friendship with Hemingway, it also noted the general's own literary interests as a poet and story writer.

all present. In a July 1948 letter, in an echo of his lavatory poem, Hemingway wrote Lanham that he did not mind dying, but he minded people getting killed stupidly more than he hated anything.

Building on phallic themes from his verse while rehashing war stories, in an October 1948 letter from Cortina d'Amprezzo, Hemingway told Lanham that "we were all impotent" in Hürtgen woods, and says he is a prick to criticize the decisions taken. When discussing the war, Hemingway had a habit of associating himself using possessive pronouns to suggest he was an official member of the fighting forces, wistfully recalling his time with the men. He wrote Lanham in September 1945 that "we" were a great unit, had good fights and always took the objectives. This familiar association may have brought the writer that much closer to the dead men he mourned and the command decisions he questioned. The affinities were in both directions: the Twenty Second Infantry Officer's Association granted Hemingway a perpetual membership card, and to this day, according to its president Mark S. Woempner, the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society continues the tradition of serving a "Hemingway Turkey" at its annual reunion dinners.

Portions of Hemingway's short verse, particularly the words company, dead, and draw, echo in *Across the River and Into the Trees*. In chapter XXX, protagonist Colonel Richard Cantwell lies with his Italian countess girlfriend Renata and answers her question of how one loses a regiment: by taking orders from a commander who has read about an enemy-controlled town and calls up with orders that it be assaulted. Following these orders, "you leave one company dead along a draw," just as in the first line of the new verse (233).

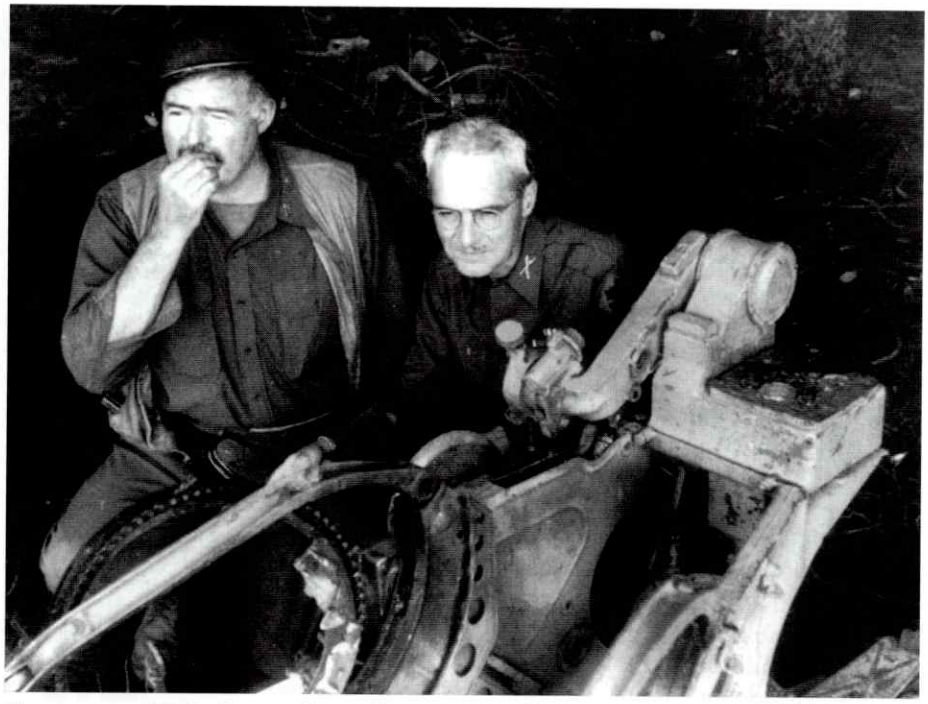
In chapter XXXV, Cantwell recalls to himself the losses his infantry regiment suffered during Hürtgen: the first day, his regiment lost three battalion commanders, and he lost company commanders many times over. With grim logic (and sounding very much like Hemingway), Cantwell suggests that it would have been more effective to just shoot the replacement troops when they detrucked to fight, rather than having to bring them back from where they were killed to bury them (255). Cantwell tries to pull himself out of this dysphoria, done with the subject. But then, mirroring the line "D company lay

dead along the draw," he asks: "But what about that company dead up the draw? What about them, professional soldier? They're dead" (258). Putting his immediate emotions on the page in scribbled lines of verse apparently helped Hemingway keep them alive, pocketed for later use in vivid scenes. That some of the words from the outhouse poem's four lines landed in Hemingway's novel gives them prominence beyond their humble origins.

The last line of the newly-discovered verse has only nine words, but they speak volumes about military credo: leaders lead by example, leaders lead from the front, leaders display courage and inspire their troops, leaders do not leave the fallen behind. In his 1987 book *If You Survive*, George Wilson, a lieutenant reporting to Lanham's unit in his first duty assignment in July 1944, wrote that Colonel Lanham wasted no time in "scaring the hell out of us": he briefed that the German resistance was very tough, losses were high, and machine gun fire made advances difficult. Nevertheless, Lanham expected his officers to lead their men, and he expected his platoon leaders to be right up front (9-10).

Hemingway the non-combatant journalist was also right up front. Biographer Carlos Baker quotes several of Lanham's senior staff members on Hemingway's fearlessness and calculated risk-taking, with one battalion commander impressed that Hemingway freely chose to remain "well forward in the combat zone" (436). This is where Hemingway wanted to be, demonstrating through his actions that he believed those in charge of leading the war effort must show up in forward positions.

When Lanham and Hemingway were taking fire as they pressed east through the forest, there was a general in theater whom they viewed as reluctant to visit the front lines; Lanham opined that the man was "terrified of death or injury" (30). Hemingway scornfully nicknamed this general the "Lost Leader," and he and Lanham would refer to him as "L.L." for years to come. This is the same "(name omitted)" general in Hemingway's letter citing the poem. While the identity of the Lost Leader is not difficult to find, this article employs the same discretion as Hemingway and Lanham, leaving him anonymous. In his October 1948 letter to Lanham, Hemingway mentions an invitation from the Italian Minister of War to join him in duck hunting, and smirks that to avoid publicity, he will stay sixty miles from the capitol, "Estilo L.L." meaning in the style of the Lost Leader.



Hemingway with Lanham on September 18, 1944, after the breakthrough of the Siegfried Line in Western Germany.

Four years after the war, writing from his hotel in Torcello, Italy, Hemingway holds firm in his censure of generals issuing orders at a remove while their men are in harm's way. Lanham and Hemingway were both strong personalities with forceful opinions that they sometimes expressed using bitter sarcasm. While each acknowledged their own human failings, they held themselves and others to the highest professional standards, at times sharing a lofty perch from which they issued acerbic judgements on their fellow men.

World War II provided Hemingway a full catalogue of stories featuring courage, cowardice and everything in between, drama and tension heightened by the injustice of fighting men in foxholes risking their lives while their out of touch bosses issued orders from distant positions. In *Across the River and Into the Trees*, Cantwell resents the "no-fight generals" (227) and blames "other people's orders" (210, 242) for needless deaths, implying that a general leading from behind has neither the *cojones* nor the situational awareness to deserve his position.

Gerogiannis wrote in his 1992 afterward to the revised edition of Hemingway's *Complete Poems* that he had fully expected other Hemingway poems to appear, but "new" poems had not been plentiful (162). Some of Gerogiannis's words characterizing Hemingway's poems may apply to this new verse: profane, obscene, with rough satire and references to sexual difficulties (xx). On the question of whether other Hemingway verse may emerge in the future, the answer is probably yes. When two of Hemingway's poems to her were published in *The Atlantic* in 1965 (96-100), Mary Hemingway told *The New York Times* (30) that she had other poetry snatches from her husband that remained private.

Whether Hemingway wanted his emotional words from a 1944 battlefield to remain private may never be known. The four short, intense lines of newly-discovered verse written nearly eighty years ago trace a complex story of loss and bitterness. Lanham, a fellow warrior-poet and Hemingway comrade in arms, gave his interpretation of the lines at the time they were written, and Hemingway carried the words into his 1950 World War II novel. Others seeing the verse for the first time may have their own interpretations. ■

2023 in Facts and Figures

Membership: *(up due to conference registration)* 644
Total income from memberships: $18,137.18
(by the time all conference memberships are calculated the figure will be nearer to $23,000)
Number of monthly membership inquiries: 15
(most of which can be resolved by logging into the website at www.hemingwaysociety.org)
Society and Foundation checking: $112,650.10
Foundation funds:
Vanguard Life Strategy Conservative Growth Investor Cl $628,645.57
Vanguard Balanced Index Admiral Cl (Blake Fund) $26,347.16
Vanguard Federal Money Market Fund $27,634.26
Total Foundation Holdings in Vanguard: $682,626.99
Our combined Foundation funds are up ..... $50,101 from $632,435.99 in 2022
Combined Foundation and Society funds: 795,277.09
(way up by 115,437.55 from $677,533.69 in 2022)
Total earned in permissions in 2023: $2,500
Total earned in royalties in 2023: ..... $30,666.06 *(way up from 2022's $7,897!)*
Number of monthly permissions requests: 8
Number of 2023 submissions to *The Hemingway Review*: 28
Number of 2023 acceptances: 10
Cost per member to print and mail *The Hemingway Review*: ..... $18.16/ year or $9.08/issue
Online *Review* sales of content through ProjectMuse: $140
Total *Review* royalties: ..... $27,316.32 *($22,919.18 from Project Muse)*
Total *Review* Permissions: $2,600
Total Non-member subscriptions: 60
Total *Review* income: $31,110
Cost per member to print and mail *The Hemingway Newsletter*: $8
Website hosting and maintenance charges for the website: $300
Website renovation: $13,000
(for new futureproofed version of Drupal and Wild Apricot migration for membership management and payment processing)
Additional website expenses for conference management: ..... None!
Because new update allows us to do this ourselves
Email blast services: $547
(last time we will pay this expense! Our website update allows us to do it ourselves)
Dropbox account: $199
Zoom costs for 2023: $250
(We now share the Fitzgerald Society Zoom account to save expenses)
One True Podcast production costs for 2023: ..... $1,000 from the Hemingway Society
Number of One True Podcast episodes in 2023: 27
Total number of downloads/streams/listens in 2023: 67,071
way up from 2022's 32,129; 197,593 (total to date)
Number of unique monthly visitors to the website: ..... 2,600 *(down from 3,000 in 2022)*
Number of Twitter followers at @theehsociety: ..... 1,208, up from 1,021 in 2022
Number of Tweets from @theehsociety so far: ..... 1,210, up from 1,082 in 2022
Number of Facebook "Likes" on the Hemingway Society Page: ..... 4,720 up from 4,505 in 2022
Number of Facebook Followers: ..... 4,756, up from 4,527 in 2022
Number of Kennedy Library grants for 2022-23: 2
Number of 2022-23 applicants for the Lewis-Smith-Reynolds Founders' Fellowships: 7
Number of Founders Fellowships awarded in 2023: 3
(Marija Krsteva, Martina Mastandrea, Krista Quesenberry)
Number of Hinkle Scholarships awarded in 2024: ..... 27 for $1,000 each
Number of Stoneback Awards in 2024: ..... 4 for $1,000 each
Blake Award Scholarship: ..... 2 for $500 each
2023 donations to the Hinkle Fund: ..... $1,300 *(down from $2,100 in 2022)*
2023 donations to the Lewis-Smith-Reynolds Founders' Fellowship Fund from members: $10
(way down from $715 in 2022)
2023 donations to the PEN/Hemingway Award fund from members: $735
(down from $1,831 in 2022)
2023 donations to the Stoneback Award: ..... $10 *(way down from $610 in 2022)*
2023 unspecified donations to the Society: ..... $480 *(down from $1,955 in 2022)*
Number of pages published in the *Letters* Volume 6 (2024): ..... 701 *(366 letters)*
Number of items to be published in the *Volume 6* Appendix (letters newly available for publication that would have otherwise appeared in chronological sequence in previous volumes): 48

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