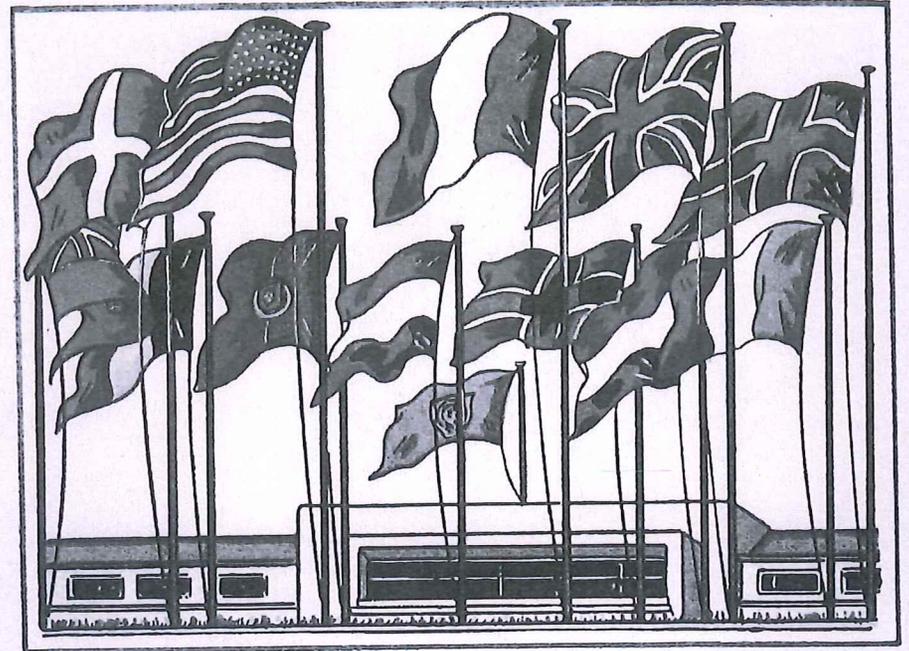


the HEMINGWAY REVIEW

THE ERNEST HEMINGWAY FOUNDATION AND SOCIETY



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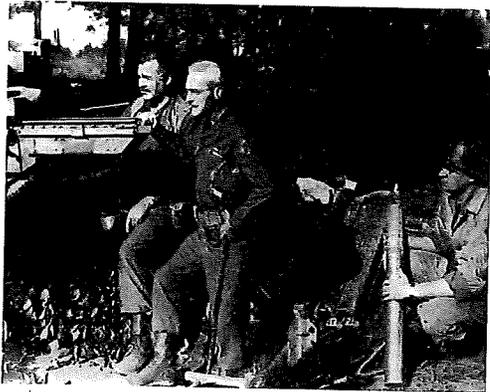
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Hemingway's Driver in Wartime France: A Matter of Loyalties

Eileen Martin and Greer Rising

Independent Scholars

French Resistance member Jean Decan was Ernest Hemingway's fearless driver and bodyguard during fighting in World War II who in late 1945 was denounced as a German collaborator, setting off an agitated exchange of letters between Hemingway and his friend General Charles T. "Buck" Lanham about their teammate. Hemingway scholars describe Decan as a jack-of-all-trades sidekick who accompanied Hemingway from Rambouillet through the battles of Hürtgen Forest. When Decan needed help, Hemingway came to his aid, but would discover that Decan had committed a criminal betrayal before they met, leaving Hemingway feeling angry and duped. The case of the trusted driver convicted as a Nazi collaborator presents a morality play featuring bravery, deception and impossible choices. Despite his anger and sense of betrayal, Hemingway remained concerned about Decan's situation for years after the war. When a prominent journalist researched a book featuring Decan's plight, Hemingway did all that he could to prevent it from being published. In a tangled web of allegiances, Hemingway's fierce loyalty to his wartime friends stands apart.



Hemingway, Lanham and an unidentified soldier during World War II. Some internet search results identify the soldier as Decan, but the John F. Kennedy Library photographic holdings do not name Decan. Courtesy of John F. Kennedy Library.

On 22 December 1945, Hemingway declared an emergency. Writing to his good friend Lanham, Hemingway reported that his bodyguard Decan had been accused of collaborating with the Germans.¹ In the letter, Hemingway explains that he plans to attest to Decan's character and service during the war and seeks Lanham's help. Hemingway, Lanham and Decan fought together in France in 1944 against the Germans. Then-Colonel Lanham was commander of the 22nd Regiment of the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division, where the gregarious war correspondent Hemingway found a warm reception and developed a brothers-in-arms relationship with Lanham and close ties with Decan. In late 1945, neither Hemingway nor Lanham knew the full truth about Decan. His predicament would make Hemingway's blood boil and place Lanham in a potentially compromising position.

Decan was Hemingway's driver, scout, bodyguard and general factotum during many World War II skirmishes. He accompanied Hemingway across battlegrounds, driving and fighting and making himself useful with myriad duties. In *Hemingway: A Life Story*, Carlos Baker wrote that Decan had been in the French underground and had twice been arrested and tortured by the Gestapo; Decan's hatred for the Nazis was "fanatical." In Rambouillet, Hemingway and Decan had developed a "master-and-man relationship," and after that Decan became Hemingway's faithful sidekick (419). Decan was at Hemingway's side during dangerous encounters, and both Hemingway and Lanham attested to his bravery.

In describing the emergency to Lanham in his 22 December letter, Hemingway wrote that he understood a crook who was actually a Gestapo spy asked Decan for the address of a friend. Decan, in good faith, provided it, and ended up being accused of secretly working for the Germans. Hemingway explains that Decan is asking for a testimonial about his views toward the Germans. Hemingway plans to write one and asks Lanham to do the same. Specifically, Hemingway asks Lanham please to write that Decan accompanied the U.S. Army's 4th Division as a French volunteer in the advance toward Germany, staying on as Hemingway's bodyguard after other volunteers returned to France. Hemingway reminds Lanham that Decan conducted reconnaissance missions, fought alongside Hemingway in Hürtgen Forest, and attended the wounded. He asks Lanham to write an honest testimony of Decan's actions that he personally witnessed and send it immediately to care of Madame Decan in France. Hemingway is angry that a good, cool, dependable guy, who would do anything he is asked without question, and whose sentiments toward the

2E 600, Pentagon,
Washington 25, D.C.,
December 28, 1945.

Monsieur Jean Decan,
c/o Mme. Decan,
3 Avenue de la Papimiere,
Fontenay-Sous-Boise,
Seine, France.

Dear Jean:

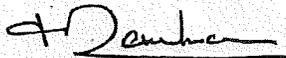
I have just received a letter from Mr. Hemingway in which he tells me of the absurd charge that has been placed against you. I am very happy to give you the inclosed testimonial as to your conduct while you were with my regiment.

I am sure you can find someone who will have it translated for you. I hope it will help to clear you of the difficulty in which you find yourself.

I might add here that I am deeply grateful to you for all you did for me, for Mr. Hemingway, and for the 22nd Infantry. Those of us who knew you, and who fought with you, will never forget you.

Good luck, and do let me know if I may be of any assistance to you now or in the future.

Faithfully,



C. T. LANHAM
Brigadier General, USA

Incl.

Letter from Lanham to Decan. Courtesy of Decan family.

Germans were clear, was framed like this, and suggests a letter from Lanham will be valuable in Decan's cause.

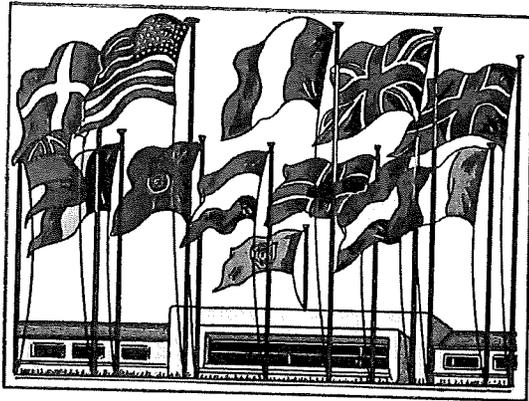
In response, on 28 December, Lanham wrote Decan a testimonial from his Pentagon office, with a cover note saying "I have just received a letter from Mr. Hemingway, in which he tells me of the absurd charge that has been placed against you. I am very happy to give you the inclosed [sic] testimonial as to your conduct while you were with my regiment." Lanham wrote he is deeply grateful to Decan, "for all you did for me, for Mr. Hemingway, and for the 22nd infantry. Those of us who knew you, and who fought with you, will never forget you." Lanham's enclosure notes that many in his regiment had remarked on Decan's courage and hatred of the Germans.

From Cuba on New Year's Eve 1945, Hemingway thanked Lanham for his letter on behalf of Decan, and for his good heart and promptness. He recounts that he sent his own letter attesting to Decan's service the same day he wrote to Lanham. Hemingway also conveys his annoyance at the red tape. He had to visit the U.S. Consulate in Havana to legalize his signature, the French Legation to vouch for the U.S. Consulate signature, and the French Attaché to legalize the paperwork on behalf of the Vichy government; he sees it as a farce to guarantee to Vichy German collaborators that Decan fought the Germans.

Despite testimonials and character witness from both Hemingway and Lanham, Decan was sentenced to fifteen years hard labor in a French prison for collaborating with the Germans, according to the Christmas Day 1948 edition of French newspaper *L'Humanité*. Baker describes how the injustice of Decan's imprisonment contributed to Hemingway's Christmas 1945 holiday funk (453), and notes thoughts of Decan still languishing in a French prison two years later in 1950 added to Hemingway's disquiet during a turbulent time in his life when his father-in-law was ill, and he was annoyed with an assortment of fellow novelists (495).

After serving six years of his sentence, Decan emerged in 1951 to tell his story, and his case would continue to occupy Hemingway and Lanham. It also captured the interest of American journalist Cyrus L. ("Cy") Sulzberger, whom Lanham enlisted to help Decan. The narrative unfolds in letters discussing Decan beginning in 1945 among Hemingway, Lanham and Sulzberger; via letters sent by Decan to Hemingway and Lanham from 1951 and 1952; and in Sulzberger's published writing about Decan's fate.

In May 1951, General Lanham was serving at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Paris as Chief of Public Relations for Gen-



SHAPE PARIS

1951 SHAPE logo. Authors' collection.



General and Mrs. Eisenhower with General Lanham. Courtesy of Princeton University Library.

eral Dwight D. Eisenhower. SHAPE was still in its temporary headquarters at the Hotel Astoria in central Paris while multinational commands were being set up under the new North Atlantic Treaty Organization. On 17 February that year, Lanham had groaned to Hemingway that his public affairs job for Supreme Commander Eisenhower was a thankless meat-grinder, and quoted for Hemingway from *Life of the Caesars*, saying "I who am about to die salute you." Lanham likely was not expecting an actual life and death story from his past to be brought before him just a few months later.

As Lanham recounted to Hemingway in a 30 May 1951 letter, on 28 May he had an office visit from "our old friend" Jean Decan, whom he described as "gray with the unmistakable grayness that comes only from a prison," highly emotional, and nervous. For Decan, the decision to visit Lanham must have seemed an intimidating mission: the former prisoner would have had to identify himself to the guards at SHAPE, ask to see General Lanham, and be permitted through the command's security. The general officer's spaces in the former luxury hotel would have had imposing trappings, perhaps a young adjutant in the anteroom, American and European representational flags, Lanham in his decorated uniform shaking hands formally. Noticing Decan's trembling hands or downward gaze, the inveterate smoker Lanham may have offered his visitor a cigarette before proceeding with the debriefing at his massive desk, Lucky Strike in one hand and pen in the other.

What was going through Lanham's mind? Undoubtedly curious, perhaps Lanham's mind jumped between memories of the chaotic fighting in 1944, empathy for the broken ex-prisoner, ideas about what he would relay to Hemingway, all while being prepared with an imperious reply if anyone on his team dared ask about the gray visitor. Lanham wrote to Hemingway that he spent an hour with Decan. The first thing Decan said was that he had not written to Hemingway as he was not allowed to from jail. Decan said he had been sentenced to fifteen years in prison for collaboration and had just been released after completing six years. When he got home, his wife had divorced him and married one of his best friends, taking his child with her. Lanham told Hemingway that some of the tale was confusing, especially given Decan's emotional state.

In essence, Decan said he had been working for the French Resistance when he was outed and detained for several weeks by the Germans, beaten, and interrogated. At some point a fellow Resistance member entered the room and told Decan the Germans knew all about his activities, but he would be

released if he would sign a statement agreeing not to work against the Germans in any way. Decan said he agreed to do so, saying such a statement was meaningless to him. There was one other condition: the Gestapo was holding Decan's wife, who was Jewish, and their baby. Both would be sent to a concentration camp and killed unless Decan agreed to finger another Resistance figure. Decan agreed to do this, and the man was arrested, sent to a camp, and killed, while Decan's wife and child were spared. Decan said he then went back to working for the Resistance until D-Day, after which he linked up with the Americans, and met Hemingway and Lanham.

Lanham arranged a dinner with Decan for the next day, but duty called, as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army was visiting Paris. Lanham wrote Hemingway that this was just as well, since meeting with Decan was unwise given his position working for General Eisenhower. Lanham asks Hemingway to imagine the ruckus the French Communists would make in newspapers such as *L'Humanité* and *Ce Soir* should they learn of a meeting between Eisenhower's press officer and a convicted collaborator. "God knows what will happen to the poor devil" Decan, Lanham wondered to Hemingway, adding that he did not believe Decan would be eligible for papers to leave France, but suggests Hemingway may have some ideas for how he might start over again in Central or South America.

In his 1962 book *The Resistentialists*, Sulzberger provided the background to his involvement with Decan (5). Introducing the chapter "The Bravest Collaborator," Sulzberger described a June 1951 luncheon with Lanham in Paris during which the General talked about Hemingway, the war, and his awkward position vis-à-vis Decan the convicted collaborator. Lanham cited Decan's courage during the war and said both he and Hemingway wished to help him, passing the hot potato of Decan's situation to his friend Sulzberger (11-13). Separately, letters between Hemingway and Sulzberger detail their exchanges about Decan. On 14 June 1951, Sulzberger wrote to Hemingway saying he wanted to publicize Decan's story to show the "psychological scars" still present in Europe after the war. Sulzberger also wanted to help Decan find work, noting that Lanham best not become further involved with a convicted collaborator. In the letter to Hemingway, Sulzberger asks for an account of Decan's behavior as a soldier while they were together and sets forth parameters under which Hemingway might allow himself to be quoted, asking the latter to mark certain passages of his response that he would sanction. Sulzberger argues that it would help present Decan's "intricate and sad" story if words from

Hemingway's "distinguished self" were allowed to be used. He seeks Hemingway's thoughts on Decan's behavior in his dual role as a member of the resistance and a collaborator. Sulzberger acknowledges that he and Hemingway are strangers but implores Hemingway nevertheless to write as "fully and frankly" as possible on this "delicate matter," signing off as a someone who has "known many of your friends and admirers" and who modestly wishes "to include myself among the latter."

From Cuba, Hemingway replied to Sulzberger on 23 June 1951. Clearly uncomfortable, Hemingway explained it was difficult to write about Decan because his actions were intertwined with Hemingway's own, which although already investigated, remained far from being clarified. Hemingway said he had received written orders for his actions but had torn them up to spare embarrassment because the commander who had issued them lacked the authority to do so. Hemingway referred Sulzberger to Lanham several times, indicating the General would be able to say more in confidence, if he wished. Hemingway said Decan's role was driver, bodyguard and scout; he distinguished himself in fights against the Germans in locations from Rambouillet into the Siegfried Line; he was very brave and acted with little concern for his own safety. Decan wore an American Calvary uniform taken from a dead soldier and was nearly always under Hemingway's command. Hemingway asked Sulzberger to refrain from using Decan's name when he writes his story, as he had served his time and publicity would bring him harm. Hemingway suggested Sulzberger identify any passages from this letter that he would like to quote, and Hemingway would approve or deny them, and proposed that Lanham could be Sulzberger's never-to-be-named source on this delicate topic.

On 7 August 1951, Lanham wrote to Hemingway that he had taken his advice and broken off contact with Decan. In the letter, he reports that Sulzberger is back in the States and may or may not write a story about Decan, but that he still hoped to help Decan find a job. Lanham also reports that he has learned from Sulzberger's research that the official French records support Decan's story, including that he identified a senior Resistance leader and that the Germans used Decan's family as leverage, and also that prior to his arrest Decan had engaged in other unspecified activity "hostile to the Germans." Lanham believes Sulzberger is a "hell of a good man and a smart one" too and will likely help Decan in any way he can. He also explains that incriminating background on Decan has emerged; Lanham tells Hemingway that Decan "got himself into this jam to start with by getting a snootful and then indulging in

a lot of boasting and bragging in public in a notorious bistro.”

By August 1951, Hemingway has had second thoughts since his June letter to Sulzberger. In a 10 August letter, Hemingway explains to Sulzberger that he has been pondering the situation and believes it would be bad luck for all concerned if Decan's story were published. Hemingway begins his letter to Sulzberger by transcribing a four-line telegram he sent to him earlier that day, and proceeds to offer a more detailed explanation, believing this airmail correspondence should reach Paris from Cuba in three or four days. In sum, Hemingway relates that he is concerned about Decan and repercussions from any publicity, that he had delayed writing while waiting to hear from Lanham for his advice, and that he does not authorize any quotations. Hemingway is clearly in an agitated state; in the letter he also shares that his mother had died, and his father-in-law is incurably ill and his wife has gone to be with her father.

Hemingway acknowledges that a piece about Decan saving his soul and skin is a great story, but he appeals to Sulzberger as a fellow writer to recall how many wonderful stories each did not write due to the damage they would inflict on people, arguing that Decan's story falls into this category. If Sulzberger does not write about it, all he loses is a good story, while Decan stands to lose much more, particularly if his real name is used. Admitting he may sound overly sensitive, Hemingway fears Decan's story would inevitably become intertwined with his own, in ways that would make Hemingway sound like he had heroic pretensions. With trademark wry humor, Hemingway surmises that at the end of the day, he himself would be labeled a collaborator. Taking still another tack, Hemingway suggests Sulzberger write about Decan in a work of fiction, describing a remarkable man he knows without naming names. Hemingway is definitive: he does not want to be quoted and would do nearly anything rather than have Decan's story published as non-fiction. Hemingway signs off apologetically before saying, actually, this is a story he should write himself, but he would never do it in a way that would harm Decan. In a hand-written postscript, Hemingway invites Sulzberger to show Lanham this letter if he wishes. In September 1951, Hemingway wrote Lanham that he was still worried about Sulzberger's story on Decan and wants Lanham to see his response to Sulzberger's letter. Hemingway thought Sulzberger sounded like a good, capable guy.

More than a year later, Hemingway continued to discuss Decan with Lanham. In December 1952, Hemingway wrote to congratulate Lanham on taking command of the Army's 1st Division, saying he would love to command a Di-

vision, more than anything in the world; he did not give a hoot about being a writer. Hemingway is appreciative of the letters Lanham has sent about Decan, but still furious. If he had known what Decan had done, he would have had to shoot him personally. In retrospect, Hemingway can recall at least five occasions when Decan appeared to be making amends for his betrayal through his bold fighting. Once he realized Decan was a traitor, Hemingway refused to write him even though they had been such good friends. Hemingway registers his complexity of feelings about Decan, noting that when he next visits France he plans to send him some francs, but never wants to see Decan again because he might kill him.

In the letter, Hemingway reflects on how his relationship with Decan began, and wonders what he might have done differently. At the start of their relationship, Hemingway wrote Lanham, he had asked Decan if he had done anything wrong, and Decan had stated categorically he never had. After that Hemingway found Decan to be brave, reliable and as loyal to him as a good hunting dog. An anguished Hemingway asks Lanham how could he have known about Decan's crime, which took place before they ever met? Hemingway suggests there is no need for Lanham to answer Decan's letters. Lanham's previous testament about Decan should stand with no possibility of back-firing, as it described Decan's services performed and courage in combat. Further pondering this issue, Hemingway ruefully shares with Lanham that his other friends in the Resistance have also had run-ins with the law, with thirty percent of those who worked for him in the clink. Hemingway concluded that when the heat is on you have to work with what you've got, and there is no time to check church records or business credit ratings of the forces being assembled to fight. Hemingway tells Lanham he is glad Sulzberger is no longer planning to publicize Decan's story...or so he thought.

For his part, in 1951 and 1952, Decan wrote to Hemingway, and receiving no response, appealed to Lanham. Writing to "My dear Papa" Hemingway on 4 June 1951, Decan says he is a new man starting a new life. He is divorced, and his wife has taken their two daughters and remarried, to a Jewish man Decan "hided [sic] during four years." Decan is currently in the fishing business selling caviar but asks that Hemingway help him work for his "country of election," the United States, perhaps in a secret capacity under Colonel David K.E. Bruce, who led the American efforts with the French Resistance. Receiving no reply to this letter, on 5 August 1951, Decan wrote to "Dear Sir" Hemingway, asking if he has done something so bad that Hemingway no longer wishes to

know him, and assuring the writer that once he knows the whole story he will understand there was no other way for him. Decan professes that he is still a “good boy” after his six years in prison, although he wonders if it would have been better to have been “killed in action than to live in this hell.” Decan beseeches Hemingway that a response from him would rebuild his morale and asks Hemingway to believe in his devotion to him.

In September 1952, Decan asked Lanham to intervene with Hemingway. On 30 October, Lanham wrote Decan, indicating he had received Decan’s letter concerning Hemingway, expressing annoyance that Decan had not provided his full address, and noting he is writing to his old Paris address hoping it will reach him, curtly telling Decan this matter was between him and Hemingway. After some back and forth about the proper address to give Hemingway, in December 1952 Lanham forwarded Decan’s letter to Hemingway, writing that he was enclosing a letter from “your old boy” Decan requesting a one-year loan of \$3,000 (equivalent to nearly \$35,000 today), that Decan said he would use to open his own bar in France, and would repay Hemingway \$4,000 with interest. Lanham wrote Hemingway that Decan was “putting the bite” on him because it is well known that Hemingway had a “private gold mine in his front yard” where his serfs haul up money.

Meanwhile, Sulzberger continued to research Decan’s story, and between 1962 and 1973 wrote three books featuring Decan. The first one, *The Resistentialists*, was pulled from publication for various reasons. The second, a 1969 memoir titled *A Long Row of Candles*, contained only fragments of Decan’s story, and the third, *Unconquered Souls: The Resistentialists*, would ultimately be published in 1973. Sulzberger outlined his interactions with Decan, Hemingway, and Lanham in all three books. Following his sumptuous Paris lunch with Lanham in Spring 1951 where Lanham introduced Decan’s situation, Sulzberger would be taken with Decan’s case and continue puzzling out his circumstances for decades to come.

In his 1988 book *The True Gen*, Denis Brian outlines what Lanham had told him about Sulzberger’s first book featuring Decan. Brian does not mention Decan by name, imprecisely terming him a “poor benighted Frenchman in the slammer on a bum rap” (8). Brian’s methodology for his book, which aimed to separate Hemingway the man from the myth, included interviewing all those still alive who had known Hemingway. Meeting with Lanham at his home, the General offered Brian cautionary advice: be wary about Mary Hemingway and her protectiveness over Hemingway’s words, be mindful of

Mary’s legal action against published works by A. E. Hotchner and Sulzberger in this regard, and be ready for lawsuits by “fast buck” lawyers ready to pounce (8). Brian writes that Lanham explained that his friend Sulzberger’s book *The Resistentialists* “was in the stores when Mary found it contained letters from Hemingway and threatened to sue Sulzberger and his publisher unless they immediately withdrew it,” which cost Sulzberger and the publishing house “a pretty penny” (8). Denis also interviewed Sulzberger, who said the story Lanham had told him was “exactly correct. I was an innocent in those days, more than thirty years ago [sic], and did not realize that letters belonged to the sender and not the receiver. I learned the hard way” (295).

Some background about Sulzberger and why Lanham enlisted his aid in *l'affaire Decan*: Sulzberger was the chief of foreign correspondents for the *New York Times* until 1954 and based in Paris. Sulzberger’s datelines spanned the globe and his interview subjects included presidents, kings, dictators, generals, diplomats, peasants, pandits, strongmen, witch doctors and refugees. Sulzberger’s memoirs and diary covering 1934-1954 published in *A Long Row of Candles* bring to life his career and personality, presenting him as an energetic, peripatetic intellectual fully at home on the world stage. Sulzberger had boundless curiosity and savoir faire, with a gift for being at the right place at the right time as he engaged the luminaries of his day.

Like Hemingway and Lanham, Sulzberger had a front row ticket to twentieth-century history, with more than occasional backstage access to powerful leaders. Sulzberger was fascinated by Decan’s circumstances and the choices he was forced to make and would have been well aware of the splash his writing on Hemingway’s



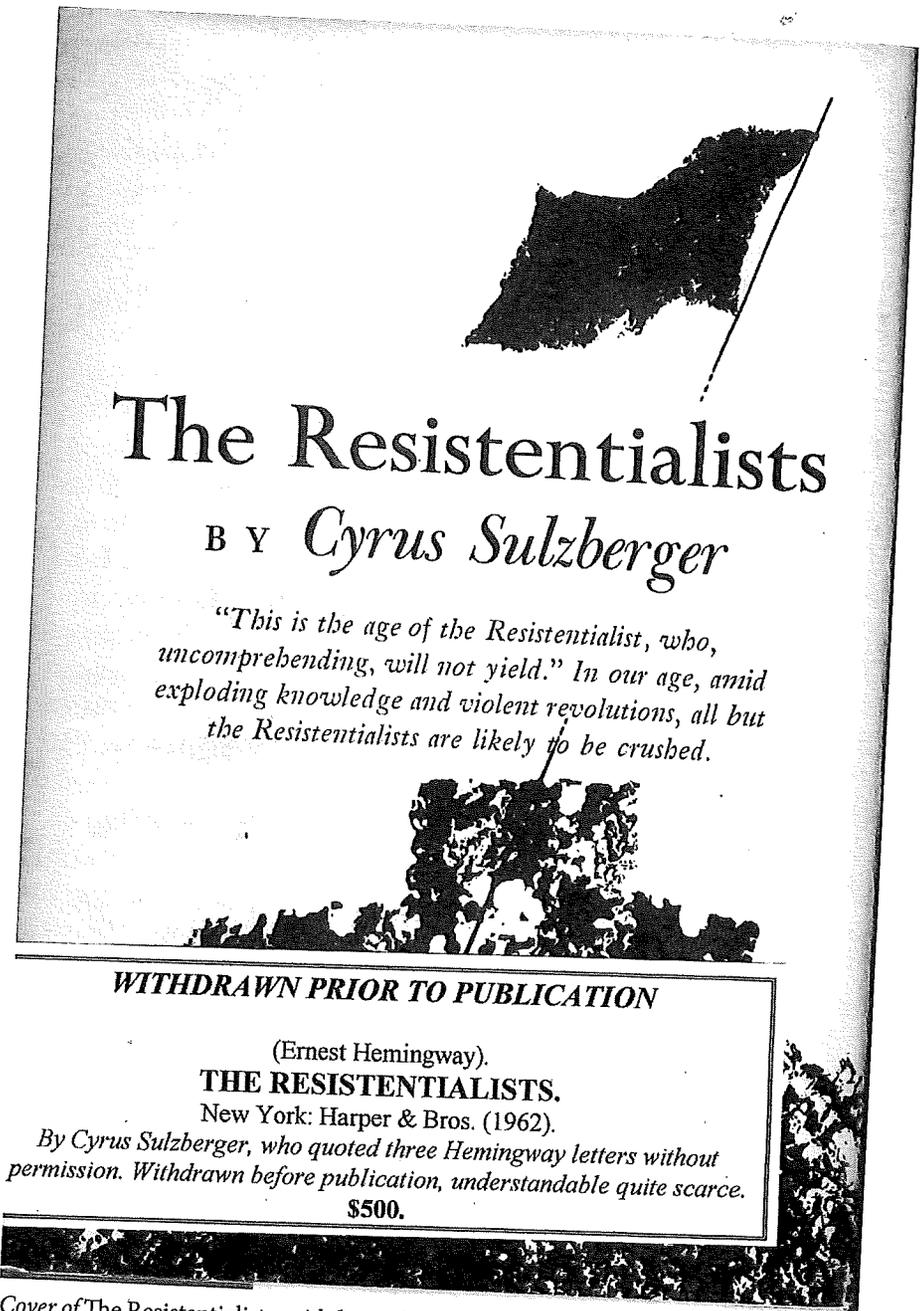
Cy Sulzberger in 1952, age 40.
Courtesy of David Sulzberger.

wartime driver now convicted German collaborator would make on both sides of the Atlantic. Sulzberger was friendly with Lanham, who as public information officer for the SHAPE command was the natural press conduit. Sulzberger knew of Lanham's friendship with Hemingway and his decorated war service and wrote in *Unconquered Souls* that Lanham was charming and had "much wider interests" than most American military men (81). They also had poetry in common. Sulzberger wrote that despite his family connections to the *New York Times*, in his college years he had no intention of entering any branch of journalism and fancied himself a poet. One of Sulzberger's professors at Harvard was T.S. Eliot, who in 1933 predicted that Hemingway would be "regarded as the Kipling of his time" (4). Nearly twenty years later, as we have shown, Sulzberger would have his own interactions with Hemingway.

In *Unconquered Souls*, Sulzberger explained why "top aide to Eisenhower" Lanham's involvement with "convicted collaborator" Decan would be seen as scandalous; it also explains Hemingway's attempts to distance himself from his once trusted aide. In 1951, "collaborator" was "the foulest label one could fasten on a Frenchman, and the French language is a precise language with a vocabulary rich in foul appellations" (85). Basically stripped of their nationality, these collaborators could not vote, had neither legal nor civil rights, and were jobless, because employers feared hiring them, and friendless, because their former companions were ashamed to associate with them (106). Besides the dishonor, friends dreaded a shakedown: Decan told Sulzberger that his former matés turned away if they saw him coming, afraid he would ask them for 1,000 francs (127).

In seeking out Sulzberger, Lanham knew that in addition to his senior position at a premier American newspaper, the journalist enjoyed access to influential world leaders. Sulzberger's memoir cites dozens of morning-until-evening engagements with Eisenhower, with golf outings leading to lunch and stretching into cards after dinner. Sulzberger held interviews with scores of top-level American national security officials who swept through Paris as they built the post-World War II transatlantic alliances still in place today. In 1952, Sulzberger's diary entry noted it was "extraordinary how Paris has become the magnetic center of American politics" (*Candles*, 736). Hemingway and contemporaries could rightly have noted in the day's vernacular that *the place was lousy with swells*.

Thus, Sulzberger became the point man for Hemingway and Lanham in the case of Decan, whose story has been overlooked, the records of who he



Cover of *The Resistentialists*, withdrawn before publication. Authors' personal collection.

was and what he did opaque at best. Hemingway spent weeks with Decan in intense front-line combat, and while Hemingway's World War II actions have been dissected by biographers and historians, apparently Decan's observations about his "boss" Hemingway never were recorded. Sulzberger's treatment brings Decan to life, but in accordance with Hemingway's wishes, it refers to him by pseudonym and employs other narrative techniques to obscure identities and details, so that even readers of three books highlighting his role as a brave collaborator may not know Decan's real name.

The Resistentialists was set to be published a year after Hemingway's death, and it covered Decan's experiences along with chapters about two others, an artist and a Yugoslav communist, who had faced misfortune and survived. Sulzberger explained what he meant by Resistentialists, whose slogan was "Things are against us" (1). These people play life's game with a deck of cards stacked against them: dropped toast lands butter side down; a lone fly in a café lands in one's beer; seats for a film are filled just as one reaches the front of the ticket line. *The Resistentialists* tells the stories of three men who played vigorous roles in the movements of their day, but ultimately were destroyed by them. Decan's story is followed by that of Vladimir Dedijer, who was a "Communist who fought some of communism's bloodiest battles and rose to great eminence in communism ranks — and then was destroyed by communism" (3). Dedijer's life story is outside the scope of this article, but he was Sulzberger's friend from when they were both in their 20s, and Sulzberger followed his partisan struggles as a Communist who opposed the German occupation of Yugoslavia and his later fallout with Josef Broz Tito's regime and banishment from the party. During these difficult years, one of Dedijer's sons took his own life. Following this tragedy, the government granted exit papers to allow Dedijer to leave Yugoslavia.

Sulzberger chose the pseudonym *Michel Dupont* for this and future published references to Decan. Rare copies of *The Resistentialists* remain in circulation and allow for comparison between portions of the book quoting Hemingway and Hemingway's actual letters (21-24). Sulzberger did not include Hemingway's objections to publishing Decan's story. Hemingway's 10 August 1951 letter quoted in the withdrawn book does not include the transcribed telegram included at the top of his letter to Sulzberger indicating Hemingway's worry about the story, concern for repercussions on Decan, and instruction that he does not authorize quotations. By sending a telegram and then repeating its contents in a letter, Hemingway was reaffirming his concerns about the

project and the use of his statements; Sulzberger's redaction of this portion of the letter thus underplays Hemingway's concerns.

In *Unconquered Souls*, Sulzberger addressed what happened, indicating the 1962 book was pulled from the shelves after "being written, edited, almost formally published," for multiple reasons (13). One reason he agreed to withdraw *The Resistentialists* was the risk the book's story posed for Dedijer's ability to return to Yugoslavia. Also, Sulzberger learned from Lanham that Mary Hemingway "contemplated making difficulties if Ernest's letters were textually reprinted" (13-14). Sulzberger acknowledged his and his publishers' naïveté for not realizing Hemingway's letters to him remained Hemingway's property. Those writing about Hemingway may empathize with Sulzberger's view: pity that Hemingway's words may not be fully reproduced, "for all the warmth and vigor of his personality emerges in them. And no one, in recollection or in paraphrase, can recapture the uninhibited originality of his style" (94).

In a 23 April 1962 letter to Baker, Lanham addressed his interactions with Mary Hemingway in seeking permission to publish Hemingway's letters; with his own stash of private letters from Hemingway, Lanham had a stake in the outcome. Lanham reported to Baker that in a recent letter he had received from Mary, she suggested that it might be useful for Baker and Lanham to join her for a "long evening of talk." He relayed to Baker that other news in this letter shook him to his boot heels: Mary wrote that Ernest "had left written instructions dated May 20, 1958, in which he forbade her to give consent to the publication of any of his letters." Mary conveyed these instructions in connection with Lanham's appeal to her to allow Sulzberger to quote several Hemingway letters for his "excellent book, *The Resistentialists*," which was in print with pre-publication copies already mailed. Lanham reminded Baker that as he had mentioned earlier, Sulzberger had used "several Hemingway letters and several of mine without permission. This enraged Mary." Lanham told Baker that meanwhile Sulzberger had frantically cabled him stating neither he nor his publisher Harper's had realized this permission was necessary, occasioning a pleading phone call from Lanham to Mary, who said there was nothing she could do in light of Ernest's instructions. Lanham opined to Baker there "is no question at all why Hemingway left these instructions. He was indiscreet as hell in many of his letters."

During late 2023 and early 2024 discussions with the authors, Sulzberger's son David Sulzberger shared several recollections about *The Resistentialists*. He remembered speaking with his father, who died in 1993, on the subject of

courage. Cy Sulzberger had said there are different versions of courage, but one of the bravest people he had ever met was Hemingway's driver. Never mentioning Decan's name, Cy Sulzberger said that while in the French Resistance, the driver was caught by the Germans and faced unbelievable pressure that caused him to betray his unit. Sulzberger senior said he figured the driver had a death wish, which was why he later took such huge risks in fighting the Germans. David Sulzberger understood the reason *The Resistentialists* was withdrawn from publication was that the Yugoslav Dedijer had threatened to kill young David if the book were published, and so the author had it pulled. David recalled his father saying that after Dedijer's son committed suicide, he had become unbalanced, and threatened to find David at boarding school in England and kill him so that Cy would know what it was like to lose a son.

And so Sulzberger's first Decan book was quashed in 1962. But he would return to write about Decan two more times. In 1969, Sulzberger mentioned his correspondence with Hemingway about Decan in the 1,024-page doorstopper *A Long Row of Candles* (641). This memoir by an itinerant foreign correspondent covers much territory. Sulzberger shares expansive, contemporaneous accounts of top-level private conversations: ("This morning I had an audience with His Imperial Majesty, Haile Selassie I, the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God, and Emperor of Ethiopia" (812) or "This morning I drove out to Castel Gandolfo and saw the Pope at his summer residence") (697). In this globetrotting work Sulzberger is uncharacteristically succinct on Hemingway's responses to his letters about Decan:

"Paris, June 27, 1951

Today I had a long letter from Ernest Hemingway about "Michel Dupont." He called him exceptionally brave, battle-wise, not silly." (646)

"Paris, August 14, 1951

Long letter from Hemingway on "Dupont" dated August 10 from Finca Vigia, San Francisco de Paula, Cuba. He said Michel had been no angel except in bravery." (665)

"Paris, September 20, 1951

Another letter from Hemingway about "Dupont." He said he had heard stories in his life that made him feel awful, but this made him feel worse than any of them." (670)

Sulzberger's continued preoccupation with Decan is evident: driving back to Paris from golf at Morfontaine one evening in December 1951, with Eisenhower, Sulzberger asked him three questions: "What does a man deserve from his country if he is an acknowledged hero? What does a man deserve if he's a collaborator with the enemy? What does he deserve if he is both?" Eisenhower was puzzled and asked what Sulzberger was getting at, at which time he shared Decan's tale. Eisenhower responded, "Well, I'll be damned." And so was Decan, Sulzberger reflected sadly (*Unconquered* 139).

Nearly thirty years after the war ended, Sulzberger included the Decan story for a third time in his 1973 *Unconquered Souls: The Resistentialists* which chronicles the lives of three such "Resistentialists" whose situations affected him. These were unlucky but ordinary men who endure with an inner courage that helps them overcome odds and prevail. The Decan chapter, again called "The Bravest Collaborator," comprises sixty-three pages sandwiched in a 219-page work encompassing the three life stories. Other than paraphrasing Hemingway's words, rearranging the chapter order, and publishing under the C.L. Sulzberger version of the author's name, the Decan portion of *Unconquered Souls* is nearly identical to the first *Resistentialists*.

In both books, Sulzberger shared extensively from Decan's criminal file, via a dossier he states was passed to him under the table by a former head of French Sûreté. Although *Unconquered Souls* gives this security chief the pseudonym *Hervé Tillion*, he is identified by true name in both the first *Resistentialists* book (13) and in *A Long Row of Candles* (642): Pierre Bertaux, about whom there are public records, unlike for the fictitious *Tillion*. The veteran law enforcement chief Bertaux, who "possessed a splendid wartime resistance record" (*Unconquered* 89), was suspicious when Sulzberger told him about Decan, believing that anyone not killed in Gestapo custody but released following detention would be a suspected double, secretly working for the Germans. Bertaux told Sulzberger Decan was probably a plant: "I don't care what he did afterward, how agreeable he was, how courageously he behaved, how sad his tale may be, how reasonable his case may sound" (*Unconquered* 90). Bertaux was more impressed by Hemingway and Lanham deciding to distance themselves from Decan. Sulzberger wrote that he shared the dossier with Hemingway and asked him to destroy it after reading; Sulzberger doubts the dossier is 100 percent accurate and is likely incomplete (*Unconquered*, 101-02), although in the rest of the book Sulzberger does not adopt Bertaux's wariness or add many grains of salt to Decan's stew. Of course, Sulzberger met the

downtrodden Decan after he had served his sentence and was introduced to Decan's moral dilemma by two people he respected, Lanham and Hemingway.

Unconquered Souls devotes eight pages to summarizing the contents of the dossier shared by Bertaux, including Decan's previous criminal history, as well as that of two others he refers to as *Jacques* and *Blanc* (128-36). *Jacques* is the Resistance figure Decan betrayed; *Blanc* is the Nazi informer who threatened to have Decan's family sent to the death camps if Decan did not deliver *Jacques*. The dossier also quoted the affidavits about Decan's bravery in the war provided in 1945 by both Hemingway and Lanham, including the latter's comment that had Decan been an American soldier, he would have cited him for valiant conduct.

Critics gave *Unconquered Souls* considerate reviews, with the *Miami Herald* suggesting that Sulzberger had been masquerading as a foreign correspondent but was also a "first-rate novelist." The review termed *Unconquered Souls* a novella-like portrait of Hemingway's hard-luck but brave wartime driver faced with impossible choices who became a German collaborator, electing to save the lives of his Jewish wife and child in exchange for delivering a fellow Resistance member to the Germans. Few readers would realize that the real name of this bravest collaborator was Jean Decan. But there is no mistaking it is Decan's story. Despite the false name and other disguises, facts in the book align with Decan's biography and track with the letters exchanged among Sulzberger, Hemingway and Lanham about Decan.

The details also match up with Decan family lore, according to two men descended from Decan's first marriage who discussed this history with the authors in exchanges between February 2023 and February 2024. Decan's grandsons, cousins from separate branches of the family tree due to divorce and remarriage, were aware that Hemingway had intersected with Decan, although both indicated that the convicted collaborator case was a delicate subject, awkward and perhaps impossible to raise with elderly surviving family members. One of Decan's daughters was alive when dialogue began for this piece; she is now deceased. A grandson descended from Decan's marriage to his first wife Hannah Raphael recalled his grandmother telling him several times that had her marriage to Decan not dissolved, Hemingway would have been his mother's godfather, which he said emphasizes the friendship between Decan and Hemingway.

Another grandson, descended from Decan's first wife's marriage to her second husband—the man Decan had claimed he hid during the Nazi occupa-

tion—said he understood from family oral tradition that in 1943, his grandmother was reported as "from Jewish heritage" and arrested by the French police. She was jailed and waited to be deported to Auschwitz, but Decan, through his connections, managed to get her out. Decan went to jail after the war, and his grandmother divorced him in 1946 and remarried in 1949. Family history indicated the grandfather was indeed hidden/protected during the war, but the grandson was unaware that his grandfather's protection had any connection to Decan. This branch of the family still has in its possession a 1945 letter from Lanham testifying to Decan's contributions to the Allied war effort, reproduced above. The privacy of the grandsons is preserved here.

In *Unconquered Souls*, Sulzberger took pains to explain why he was writing about Decan and the other Resistentialists; he wanted readers in 1973 to understand and remember the lessons of World War II. Sulzberger wished the next generation to know about the hideous dictatorship that caused millions of people to be "slaughtered, tortured, starved, imprisoned or simply deprived of their humanity" (14). Sulzberger aimed to remind of the "terror that clanked down upon this world, and the excruciating cost paid by those determined to survive" (16). Standing by his sympathetic view of Decan, Sulzberger wished to keep memory alive by sharing the heroism of three ordinary men.



Cy Sulzberger with his dog Christopher Beagle, 1980's. Courtesy of David Sulzberger.

Hemingway's interest in helping Decan was in character with his man-of-the-people outlook, defending someone who had been loyal to him and sticking up for the little guy. Decan had shown the Hemingway hero traits of honor, courage, and endurance during the war. The writer did not believe someone he had witnessed perform admirably under pressure would have violated this code. Hemingway, the expert on war and valor and competent judge of character, was appalled when the truth came out and infuriated at both what Decan had done and how he had been duped. Hemingway expressed his outrage to Lanham and decided to split the difference between sending money to help a former brother-in-arms and wanting to wring his neck.

Hemingway was polite and generous with details when Sulzberger contacted him, trusting Lanham's judgment on Sulzberger's uprightness. Initially forthcoming about Decan and their exploits together, Hemingway later regretted that he had shared so much about Decan's fighting that placed himself at the same battle scenes. Hemingway appealed to Sulzberger as a fellow writer to let this story go in order to protect Decan, offering nearly anything not to have the story published. Hemingway put his strong feelings on the page, but remained courteous and reasonable when noting that, by the way, this is his story to tell, not Sulzberger's. In a 1971 article in *The World*, Sulzberger wrote that when he encountered Hemingway in a Paris bistro in January 1957, the latter thanked him "for all the assistance I tried to give to D, his former bodyguard, later jailed as a collaborator. He agreed there was nothing to do for the poor fellow; he had thought about it a great deal, and was trying to imagine writing about him; but in the end, when he boiled it down, there was nothing to write."

Lanham's attempts to help Decan demonstrated fulfillment of his duty to his fighters and several aspects of his friendship with Hemingway: Lanham was a hop-to-it mate who would comply immediately with what Hemingway asked if it was within his power; he would provide Hemingway with colorful status updates; and he would go out on a limb for his dear friend if he thought he was doing the right thing. Lanham was a taskmaster: if asked to write something he would swiftly put pen to paper, and if he thought someone else could contribute, he would move with alacrity to enlist that person as well, as he did with Sulzberger. The writers Hemingway and Lanham were equally cautious in confining their supportive affidavits to the period of their association with Decan, hewing to first-hand declarations about what they had witnessed.

Summing up a story in which he had been engaged for decades, in *Un-*

conquered Souls, Sulzberger wrote that Decan told him he would take the "same horrible road" if again faced with such an impossible choice. He knew he would have to pay for it but thought it unfair he should have to pay forever (106). Sulzberger said he last saw Decan in late 1951, giving him a drink and a cigarette. In 1954, Decan wrote a long letter to Sulzberger in fractured English, saying he had "been in a lot of troubles, working like a slave all the time" (139-42). Sulzberger's postscript says he never saw Decan again: "If he exists, in some obscure and almost certainly miserable heaven, I fear he is haunted by more ghosts than any man should have to face" (213). Decan lived for 71 years, dying in Aisne, France in 1982.

NOTES

1. Due to permissions status, Hemingway's words may be paraphrased but not quoted directly. There is no copyright on the Charles T. Lanham Papers held at the Princeton University Library. In the Works Cited, abbreviations for unpublished letters used in the Works Cited are as follows: The Charles T. Lanham Papers, Public Policy Papers, Special Collections, Princeton University Library (Lanham, PUL); The Ernest Hemingway Letters to Charles T. Lanham, Manuscripts Division, Department of Special Collections, Princeton (Hemingway, PUL); The Ernest Hemingway Personal Papers at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (EHPP, JFK); The Bernice Kert Personal Papers at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (BKPP, JFK).

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Lost Love in the Jazz Age A Comparative Analysis of Hemingway's Three International Divorces

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Ernest Miller Hemingway was divorced from three wives in three countries over an eighteen-year period from 1927 to 1945. Each divorce occurred during a time of social and legal upheaval in matrimonial law as many countries moved away from conservative anti-divorce church canons toward more lenient civil statutes. Surprisingly, Hemingway the journalist--and the eternal seeker of one essentially true sentence--was willing to construct increasingly brazen fables to orchestrate his legal segues from one wife to another. Hemingway likewise displayed an increasingly glib attitude toward the law, culminating in testifying untruthfully to the Cuban court about residency requirements having been met for his third divorce. Somehow, he avoided sanction by the courts in that pre-internet age.

Hemingway's romantic adventures are an essential element of contemporary lore. However, French, American, and Cuban divorce court documents reveal his willingness to lie and manipulate the courts for personal expediency illuminating, at least in part, what Carlos Baker called "an approximation of what Hemingway actually was." Hemingway famously did not want his biography to be written while he was alive, and strongly discouraged would-be biographers, who may have unearthed these facts and ironies about his divorces during his life. Baker notes that Hemingway was "known in his day to millions though very well known only to dozens...". This essay uses documentary evidence to, in Baker's words, "reassemble the fragments" of a life vigorously lived.

In his romantic maneuverings, Hemingway suffered both the fortune and misfortune of timing. For example, had he been alive and married in the late 1800s, Hemingway's divorce from his first wife in Paris would have been impossible, and had he divorced her after 1934 it would have been harder to obtain in France due to crackdowns on a burgeoning divorce mill for foreign spouses. But when he and Elizabeth Hadley Richardson divorced in 1927, France was a favorite destination for migratory divorces.¹ More than 300 American couples divorced in France in 1926 alone. Spouses routinely cooperated—or colluded—on a shared set of facts, shaded to obtain the court's decree. Hemingway's French divorce was no different.