

Cambridge University Press  
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Ernest Hemingway , Edited by Sandra Spanier , Robert W. Trogon  
Excerpt  
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THE LETTERS  
1907–1922

July 1907

### To Clarence Hemingway, [c. early July 1907]

Dear papa.

I saw a mother duck with seven little babies.

how big is my corn?

Ursula saw them first

We went strawberry piking and got enough to make three short-cakes.

Ernest Hemingway

Meeker, A Postcard S; letterhead: Walloon Lake, Mich. / "Windemere," with printed photograph of EH and his sisters Marcelline and Ursula as very young children.

The conjectured postcard date is based on Clarence's response in a letter from Oak Park, dated 8 July 1907: "I received your card and you and Ursula keep very quiet about the wild ducks, so when I come you two can go hunting ducks with me and we will have a glorious time" (JFK, Scrapbook III). Under his image in the printed photograph, EH wrote "Ernest" in pencil. Windemere was the Hemingways' summer cottage on the shore of Walloon Lake, Michigan. Another copy of this photograph is in EH's grandparents' scrapbook (JFK), labeled, "Ernest, 3 years, laughing at little sister Ursula."

### To Clarence Hemingway, 28 September and 4 October 1908

Mon. Sep. 28, 1908

Dear papa—.

last night an inch of rain fell.

thank you very much for the postal card.

Oct 4 1909

I put sone fresh staw in flossys nest

All the squabs died

I went to gampas for dinner<sup>1</sup>

Your loving Son

Ernest M. Hemingway

Meeker, ALS; letterhead: CLARENCE E. HEMINGWAY, M.D. / 600 KENILWORTH AVENUE. / CORNER IOWA STREET / OAK PARK, ILL.

Grace noted on verso of the letter: "Keep for Ernest." Clarence was away from home in the summer and fall of 1908, taking a four-month course in obstetrics at the New York Lying-In Hospital (Baker *Life*, 10). EH misdated the second portion of the letter as 1909.

October 1908

1 EH's paternal grandparents, Anson Tyler and Adelaide Edmonds Hemingway, lived a few blocks away in Oak Park.

### To Clarence Hemingway, [19 October 1908]

Dear papa—

last Friday in our equiriam in School the water was all riley I looked in a clam that I had brought to scool from the river.<sup>1</sup>

Had shut down on one of our big Japinese fantail gold fishes tales  
 On Sat Mama and I went across the ford at the river It is very much higher.

I got six clames in the river and some weat six feet tall.

Your loving son  
 Ernest M Hemingway

Stanford, ALS; letterhead: CLARENCE E. HEMINGWAY, M.D. / 600 KENILWORTH AVENUE. / CORNER IOWA STREET / OAK PARK, ILL.

Grace dated the letter, "Oct 19th.08," and enclosed it with her own letter to Clarence of the same date. Clarence was returning from New York via New Orleans, and Grace wrote that she hoped he was getting a good rest there (Stanford). He took a steamboat up the Mississippi River and arrived home in November (Baker *Life*, 10).

1 The Des Plaines River, about 2 miles west of the Hemingways' Oak Park home.

### To Grace Hall Hemingway, 18 December 1908

Dear Mama—

I got your nice letter Aunt Laura was here for dinner:  
 I gave her a squirrel skin to give herald for Christmas.<sup>1</sup>  
 I have got all my Christmas presents bought.  
 Thank you for your nice letter.

Your loving son Ernest M. Hemingway.  
 Dec. 18 1908:  
 Oak Park

Schnack, ALS

June 1909

- <sup>1</sup> Where Grace was traveling at the time is unknown, but Clarence also wrote to her on 18 December 1908, reporting that EH was very pleased with his letter from her and that “Aunt Laura Burr Gore” had come for dinner (UT). Alfred W. and Laura Burr Gore (both b. circa 1873) were family friends who lived in the Chicago area with their children, Harold (b. 1901) and Josephine (b. 1904). The Gores appear in several Hemingway family photographs taken at Windemere (PSU, Madelaine Hemingway Miller scrapbooks; M. Miller, 24).

### To Marcelline Hemingway, 9 June [1909]

Wed June 9

Dear Marc.

Our room won in the field day against Miss Koontz room.

Al Bersham knocked two of Chandlers teeth out in a scrap and your dear gentle Miss hood had Mr. Smith hold him while she lickt him with a raw hide strap.<sup>1</sup>

Lovingly, Ernest

Cohen, ALS; postmark: OAK PARK / ILL., JUN 9 / 10-PM / 1909

Grace and Marcelline were spending the month of June visiting friends and relatives on the island of Nantucket, Massachusetts, a trip Grace intended to make with each of her children during his or her eleventh summer.

- <sup>1</sup> Marcelline recalled that she liked Miss Mary L. Hood, principal of the Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School in Oak Park, but “Obviously Ernie did not” (Sanford, 115). Flora Koontz and Warren R. Smith were teachers at the school.

### To Grace Hall and Marcelline Hemingway, 9 June 1909

June 9 '09

Dear mama and Mash—

I helped papa clean out his closet and saw him send you group they are just fine. I got a lot of pictures for my map.

Thank you very much for the stamp you sent me. Marcellines mothers magazine came today with the Youths companion.<sup>1</sup>

I have been doing the dishes this week.

Lovingly Ernest.

June 1909

UT, ALS

- 1 *The Mother's Magazine*, published monthly 1905–1920 by David C. Cook, Elgin, Illinois, and *Youth's Companion* (1827–1929), founded in Boston by Nathaniel Parker Willis (1806–1867) as a religious publication for children and acquired in 1857 by Daniel Sharp Ford (1822–1899). Ford transformed it into one of the most popular magazines in the United States, with a weekly circulation of more than a half million by the 1890s. An editorial piece in the 3 June 1909 issue of *Youth's Companion* described the magazine as “edited with a conscience,” aiming “not merely to be entertaining, but to be beneficial” for the entire family (267).

## To Grace Hall Hemingway, [c. 10 June 1909]

Dear mama—

Ruth just came home from the “Servant in the house.”<sup>1</sup> “Ted” and “sonny” went to the “wee folks band” and “Ted” spoke her piese.<sup>2</sup>

Franklin and Jane have been here and papa gave Franklin a gun like mine only better.

They went to there summer home on lake Chautauqua in New York.<sup>3</sup>

“Bill” cant write just now but sends her best toosey this is it (B). (B) to (G)<sup>4</sup> will right later.

Lovingly Ernest H and Bill

P.S. Bill enjoind the play very mutch.

JFK, ALS; letterhead: CLARENCE E. HEMINGWAY, M.D. / 600 KENILWORTH AVENUE / CORNER IOWA STREET / OAK PARK, ILL.

The letter is laid into EH’s scrapbook on the same page as a pasted-in envelope, postmarked 10 June, that contains the following letter to “mom and marse”; however, internal evidence dates this letter as 10 June, pointing to the likelihood that it was originally mailed in that envelope (JFK, Scrapbook IV).

- 1 *The Servant in the House*, a moral drama by Charles Rann Kennedy (1871–1950), opened at the Savoy Theatre in New York in 1908 and ran at the Bush Temple theater in Chicago 31 May–19 June 1909. Ruth Arnold, Grace’s live-in voice student and household helper, wrote to Grace on 8 June 1909 that she would be seeing the play that Thursday, 10 June (UT).
- 2 Wee Folks’ Bands were organized by the Woman’s Board of Missions of the Interior, of the Congregational Church, to teach preschool-age children about missionary work around the world and to contribute funds for that work. (EH’s name appeared on the roster of the Wee Folks’ Band for the First Congregational Church of Oak Park in April 1901.) In her 8 June letter, Ruth told Grace that she was taking Ursula and Sunny to the church that afternoon to rehearse (probably for the annual June “Children’s Day” program).

June 1909

- 3 Franklin White Hemingway (1904–1984) and Jane Tyler Hemingway (1907–1965) were EH's first cousins, children of Clarence's brother Alfred Tyler Hemingway (1877–1922) and his wife, Fanny Arabell Hemingway (née White, 1876–1963), of Kansas City, Missouri. Aunt Arabell's parents, Arabell White (née Bowen) and John Barber White, a prominent Kansas City lumberman, were natives of Chautauqua County, New York. Their summer home was across the lake from the Chautauqua Institution (originally the Chautauqua Lake Sunday School Assembly), founded in 1874 as an educational experiment in vacation-time learning.
- 4 "Tooseys" or "toosies" was a family term for "kisses," usually represented by circles surrounding a dot or other symbol. "Bill" may be a nickname for Ruth Arnold, also known as "Boofie," "Bobs," or "Bobby" (Reynolds *YH*, 79, 105). In a 12 August 1909 letter to Grace at Walloon Lake, Ruth promised to be "Billy" on the spot when the Hemingway family returned home in September (UT).

### To Grace Hall and Marcelline Hemingway, [c. 17 June 1909]

Dear mom and marse.—

I Passed to 6 grade so did marse.

Papa and I got some wild Roses and wild Strawberrys. Ursula passed too. the sundy School picnic is tomorow ST. Nicholas came and did not have marces thing in it about the bird.<sup>1</sup>

Emily Harding sent you a brass bowl for birthday<sup>2</sup>

We went to Forest Park and went down the Grand Canon it is just like the jiant coaster<sup>3</sup> Sunny and ted were very scared.<sup>4</sup>

Lovingly Ernest.

P.S. Pa gave me 5 Silver dollers for passing.

JFK, ALS; letterhead: CEH [Clarence Edmonds Hemingway]

Grace noted on verso of the letter: "Written to Mama at Nantucket June 17th '09 by Ernest Hemingway" (perhaps the date she received it). The letter is preserved in EH's scrapbook, folded and enclosed in an envelope addressed in EH's hand to "Mrs. CE Hemingway / Nantucket / Mass. / care of A. C. Ayers / 45 peral [Pearl] St." and postmarked Oak Park, 10 June 1909. On a postcard from Nantucket picturing a sperm whale hunt, Grace replied, "Hurrah for the 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Thanks for your nice letter" (JFK, Scrapbook IV).

- 1 *St. Nicholas: Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls*, published monthly in New York 1873–1943, first by Charles Scribner's Sons, and from 1881 by Century Company. A competitor of *Youth's Companion*, *St. Nicholas* was distinguished by its high-quality illustrations, articles, and fiction by leading writers, including Louisa May Alcott, Rudyard Kipling, and Mark Twain. Marcelline may have entered the magazine's monthly competition for best original

*July 1909*

poems, stories, drawings, photographs, puzzles, and puzzle answers by its young readers. The May 1909 issue featured winning poems on the topic of “The Growing Year” and prose on the subject of “My Garden.”

- 2 Grace would celebrate her thirty-seventh birthday on 15 June.
- 3 The popular Forest Park Amusement Park, in operation 1907–1922, was about a mile southwest of Oak Park in the neighboring suburb of Forest Park, Illinois. It boasted three roller coasters: the Giant Safety Coaster (then billed as the nation’s highest), the Leap the Dip, and the Grand Canyon.
- 4 Nicknames for EH’s sisters Madelaine and Ursula.

### **To Clarence Hemingway, [23 July 1909]**

Dear papa

today Mama and the rest of us took a walk.

We walked to the school house.

Marcelline ran on ahead.

Wile we stopt at Clouse’s.

In a little wile she came back.

She said that in the Wood Shed of the Scool house there was a porcupine.

So we went up there and looked in the door, the porcupine was aslleep.

I went in and gave I[t] a wack with the axx.

Then I cave I[t] anthor and another.

Then I crald in the wood.

Wrane to Mr Clous and he got his gun and Shot It.

Hear some of the quills.

JFK, AL; letterhead: Walloon Lake, Mich. / “WINDEMERE,” with printed photograph of a very young EH and Marcelline splashing in lake next to a docked boat; postmark: [WALL]OON LAKE [MICH.], JUL / 23 / 9 AM

While the month and day appear in the postmark, the conjectured year of the letter is based on the young EH’s account of the same incident in “An Adventure with a Porcupine.” That story is bound with string into a one-page homemade “book,” the paper cover of which bears the lettering “SPORTS-MAN / HASH EDITED / by E. M. and T. H.” (probably “Ted Hemingway,” nickname for Ursula) and is dated in EH’s hand, “Oct. 10. 1909” (CMU). Another copy of the photograph printed on the stationery is found in EH’s grandparents’ scrapbook (JFK), where it is labeled, “Ernest 2 years / in swimming.” The envelope, addressed to Dr. C. E. Hemingway in Oak Park, bears the handwritten notation “For Ernest.”

August 1910

### To Ursula Hemingway and Ruth Arnold, [30 August 1910]

Dear Ted,

I am writing this on the train after we have left the Depot. Our trunk is on the train with us. We had breakfast this morning at Hoollsoats because the other restaunt had moved away.

Yours truly  
 Ernest H.

Dear Ruth,

There are only three people in our sleeper beside ourselves. We are now just coming in to Pullman Ill. We will have dinner on the dining car. I will write again when we get to Albany N.Y.<sup>1</sup>

Yours truly  
 Ernest.

IndU, A Postcard S; postmark: DETROIT & CHI / [R.P.O.],<sup>2</sup> AUG / 30 / 1910

The prepaid one-cent postal card is addressed to "Ursula Hemingway / Care of Dr. C.E. Hemingway, / Walloon Lake, Mich." (with Dr. Hemingway's name and address rubber-stamped on the card and Ursula's name handwritten by Grace).

- 1 In EH's scrapbook Grace wrote, "Mama and Ernest left 'Windemere' for Nantucket by way of Chicago Aug 29. We spent the month of Sept. 1910 on the island; boarding with S'annie Ayers" (JFK, Scrapbook IV). For details of the visit, see Susan F. Beegel, "The Young Boy and the Sea: Ernest Hemingway's Visit to Nantucket Island," *Historic Nantucket* 32, no. 3 (1985): 18–30. On the return trip, mother and son toured historical sites in and around Boston, as had Grace and Marcelline the previous summer (*Baker Life*, 11).
- 2 Railway Post Office, a U.S. postal station housed in a train car in which mail could be received and sorted en route.

### To Clarence Hemingway, 10 September 1910

Sept. 10. 1910.

Dear Dad,

I went fishing by my self yesterday morning off the jettie. I caught 13 sea Trout. They are very gamy fish and fight like black bass. The four biggest ones supplied our table of six people. The meat tastes better than speckkled trout we think.



*September 1910*

I am trying hard to get The Whittlesey \$50 of ice cream.<sup>1</sup> I lost a big eel that a fisherman said would weigh four pounds.

I went to the Hutchinson's with mama while she practiced with Mrs. H, and played games with Katherine and Lucy.

I am going fishing this morning.

Your Loving Son  
 Ernest Hemingway

IndU, ALS; letterhead: house and garden scene with caption, "HOME, SWEET HOME, NANTUCKET, MASS."

1 Probably a reference to Walter Whittlesey, an Oak Park grocer. The Whittleseys belonged to the same church as the Hemingways, and their son Robert visited Windemere.

## **To Clarence Hemingway, [11 September 1910]**

Dear Daddy,

Last night mother got Mrs Hutchinson to play for her and sang to the people at Sannie's<sup>1</sup> grandly. How is my weasel? I can get an albatross foot here for two dollars for the agassiz.<sup>2</sup> Is it worth it?

Your Loving son Ernest H.

IndU, A Postcard S; postmark: NANTUCKET MASS, SEP 11 / 1230PM / 1910

In the upper right corner, Grace wrote "Sunday Morn." The prepaid one-cent postal card is rubber-stamped on the verso with the address, "C. E. Hemingway, M.D. / Kenilworth Ave. & Iowa St. / Oak Park, Illinois."

1 Probably a contraction of "Miss Annie," Annie Ayers, in whose guest house Grace and EH were boarding. Grace wrote this word in ink over EH's original attempt and added the question mark after "weasel" in the next sentence.

2 Clarence Hemingway founded the Oak Park chapter of the Agassiz Club, a nature study organization for children named after naturalist Louis Agassiz (1807–1873). In his response of 13 September 1910, Clarence cautioned his son to ask questions before buying the specimen. He also reported the results of an Agassiz election, in which he was chosen as president and EH as assistant curator of the club (JFK, Scrapbook IV).

September 1910

## To Marcelline Hemingway, 13 September 1910

Sep 13 1910

Dear titty mouchouse,

I went sailing up to Great Point,<sup>1</sup> which is fourteen miles. I[t] was fine and rough so we went out in the open ocean and shipped water grandly. I have bought a large sword fish sword for the agassiz of an old salt by the name of Judas.<sup>2</sup>

Mama and I went to the suffrage meeting, thru wich I slept soundly, and did not get to bed till eleven ten oclock.<sup>3</sup>

Today is Lucy's birthday. We are going to the historical society this afternoon and morning.<sup>4</sup>

Your loving brother  
 Ernest Hemingway.

UT, ALS; letterhead: house and garden scene with caption, "HOME, SWEET HOME, NANTUCKET, MASS."

1 Northernmost tip of Nantucket Island.

2 Possibly Judah Nickerson, a retired fisherman who passed the time telling tales on the docks and who had once caught an exceptionally large swordfish (Beegel, "The Young Boy and the Sea," 27).

3 Marcelline, who also attended these meetings with her mother, recalled that they were held in Annie Ayers's parlor (Sanford, 113).

4 EH and Grace likely were going to view a whaling exhibit of the Nantucket Historical Association (founded in 1894) at its Fair Street Museum.

## To Charles C. Spink and Son, [c. 1912]

Mr. Chales C. Spink & Son  
 gentelmen—

Enclosed find \$.35 for which send me the following baseball action pictures—

Mathewson—Mordecai Brown. Sam Crawford. Jas. P. Archer. Frank shulte. Owen Bush. Fred Snodgrass.<sup>1</sup>

Yours Truly  
 Ernest Hemingway  
 600 N. Kenilworth  
 Oak Park. Ill.