



Ernest Hemingway

This Nobel Prize-winning author was prone to manic-depressive behavior throughout his life, a family trait shared by his parents, his son, and his granddaughter Margaux. Despite his larger-than-life personality and novels like *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, Hemingway had bouts of depression and paranoia. Obsessed with death, he eventually shot himself in the head in 1961.

Ernest Hemmingway was born on July 21, 1899, in the city of Oak Park, Illinois, the western suburbs of Chicago. In public school, he became a distinguished scholar, athlete and was popular. His father was a country doctor, he accompanied him on some professional calls and hunting trips. These experiences and his subsequent suicide, had great influence on him and were reflected in some of his later novels. His mother was religious and musical woman, who influenced him to play the cello and join a choir. He was not always happy at home and ran away twice.

In 1916, age 17, Hemingway began writing articles for the Kansas City Star newspaper, starting a career as a journalist, rather than attending university. The following year in 1917, when the USA entered World War I, he tried to enlist in the army, but because of eye trouble had to work as an ambulance driver for the Red Cross Medical Service. After he was wounded in action, he required knee surgery to remove shrapnel fragments, fell in love with a nurse, Agnes and managed to enlist in the Italian infantry until the end of the War. He received a decoration for bravery before returning home to Michigan, where he worked as a foreign correspondent for the Toronto Star,

In 1921, age 22, he moved to Paris with his first wife, Hadley Richardson, starting to write and spending his time with other American and British expatriates, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. In 1926 Hemingway published his first major novel, "The Sun Also Rises", which depicts what Stein called the "lost generation." In 1927, he had an affair, and wrote "Men Without Women", his marriage broke up, and he married Pauline Pfeiffer and moved to the West Indies. In 1928 the couple moved to Key West, Florida, USA, where he finished his World War I novel, "A Farewell to Arms". In the early 1930's, Hemmingway was chasing adventures such as big game hunting, bull fighting and fishing in various countries.

In 1937, age 38, Hemmingway became war correspondent for the Spanish Civil War, which became the background to his 1939 novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls". There he also met and married his third wife, Martha Gellhorn, together they purchased a winter residence in Cuba. In 1941, during World War II, he served again as a war correspondent, met and married a colleague, Mary Welsh.

In a 1945 car accident, he "smashed his knee" and sustained another deep wound on his forehead. A 1947 car accident left Patrick with a head wound and severely ill. Hemingway sank into depression as his literary friends began to die: in 1939 William Butler Yeats and Ford Madox Ford; in 1940 Scott Fitzgerald; in 1941 Sherwood Anderson and James Joyce; in 1946 Gertrude Stein; and the following year in 1947, Max Perkins, Hemingway's long-time Scribner's editor and friend. During this period, he suffered from severe headaches, high blood pressure, weight problems, and eventually diabetes, much of which was the result of previous accidents and many years of heavy drinking

In 1951, Hemmingway wrote "The Old Man, and the Sea", after which he became winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1953, and the Nobel Literary Prize in 1954. While this was the pinnacle of his literary career, Hemmingway suffered increasing effects from physical injuries, excessive alcohol use and depression, leading to suicide by shotgun in Ketchum, Idaho, July 02, 1961.

In 1954, while in Africa, Hemmingway was almost fatally injured in two successive plane crashes. Hemmingway's injuries included a head wound, burns and another concussion. When a bushfire broke out, he was again injured, sustaining second degree burns on his legs, front torso, lips, left hand and right forearm. Months later in Venice, Mary reported to friends the full extent of Hemmingway's injuries: two cracked discs, a kidney and liver rupture, a dislocated shoulder and a broken skull. The accidents may have precipitated the physical deterioration that was to follow. After the plane crashes, Hemmingway, who had been "a thinly controlled alcoholic throughout much of his life, drank more heavily than usual to combat the pain of his injuries."

In 1960, Hemmingway was constantly worried about money and his safety. He worried about his taxes and that he would never return to Cuba to retrieve the manuscripts that he had left in a bank vault. He became paranoid, thinking that the FBI was actively monitoring his movements in Ketchum. He was checked in at the Mayo Clinic and was treated with electroconvulsive therapy as many as 15 times in December 1960 and was "released in ruins" in January 1961.

Hemmingway was back in Ketchum in April 1961, three months after being released from the Mayo Clinic, when Mary "found Hemmingway holding a shotgun" in the kitchen one morning. She called Saviers, who sedated him and admitted him to the Sun Valley Hospital; from there he was returned to the Mayo for more electroshock treatments. He was released in late June and arrived home in Ketchum on June 30; he then "quite deliberately" shot himself with his favorite shotgun in the early morning hours of July 2, 1961