



## Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway's First Wife

*Gioia Diliberto*

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In the footsteps of the acclaimed Zelda and Nora comes this remarkable portrait of Hadley Richardson, Hemingway's first wife--and his first and most enduring love. When they met in 1920, she was 29 and he was only 20, but despite the age difference, they proved to be the golden couple of Paris in the '20s. 24 pages of photographs.

## Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway's First Wife Details

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## From Reader Review Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway's First Wife for online ebook

### Joanna Basile says

Can't get through the mundane family background.

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### Georgette says

This was really, really good. I had a difficult time getting into it at first. I believe if I had read this before Paula McClain's The Paris Wife, likely I wouldn't have had such a difficult time. McClain's book is great, this was also great, except I think I disliked Ernest Hemingway a lot more after reading this than after reading Paris Wife.

Hadley Richardson Hemingway was a strong woman who grew into her nature- meeting and marrying Hemingway brought out her life force, the only trouble was, he threw the marriage under the bus, and Hadley, despite trying to remain friends with the other woman (and even living with them both), couldn't do it, and they divorced. You get the feeling from the author and their interviews she conducted that Hemingway never recovered from and forgave his wife for losing his manuscripts on a train to see him. It seems as if he turned inward and that was the beginning of the end. I, myself, after reading this, just believe it was the nature of the beast of infidelity that did them in. I think there was enough love and mutual respect there, that if there had been marriage counseling and the like back then, maybe they could've made it work. All in all, Hadley's story has a happy ending. Hemingway, not so much.

It's good to read a book like this every once in a while, to get an idea of what drives the human and creative spirit. It's quoted several times through the book- from different sources- that despair drives the human spirit into creativity and success beyond their means. Hemingway's career took off, but not until after his marriage was already starting to sink. It makes you wonder.

Overall, a really, really great biography.

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### Julie says

After reading the Paris Wife I was interested in knowing more about Hadley's life particularly her life after Ernest Hemingway. The book did not disappoint. I liked her in the later years too.

The biography gave much insight into the nature of Hadley, warm and intelligent. She liked and is liked by people, did not hold a grudge and could not be sad too long. She was very good for Hemingway but was not big enough to "kill his lonesomeness". She had a happy second marriage to Paul Mower. "Hemingway helped her believe in herself and gave her the key to the world". She lived in that world with Paul and kept many of the exciting friends she first met with H.

Interest fact- Hadley's son Jack Hemmingway was the father of Margot and Muriel Hemmingway. She died 1979 at 87. After Hemingway's death, his biographers' were always after her for stories about their life together. She enjoyed the attention and the company, She laughed and said she practically wrote their books with all notes she supplied.. Her same warm nature was evident throughout her life, not so for the writer.

Liked the book. Liked Hadley

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### **Joanne says**

For the last couple of weeks, I've been reading *Paris Without End* by Gioia Diliberto. It's the true story of Ernest Hemingway's first wife, Hadley Richardson. As a fan of Hemingway's writing, I was very intrigued to learn more about his first wife, but what started out as an interest turned into a full blown fascination.

One of the most interesting things I learned reading this book was that Hadley was such an inspiration in Hemingway's writing. The more I learned about Hadley, the more I recognized her in some of his most famous female characters. In so many ways, Hadley represented the perfect woman to Hemingway- her naturalness, her strength of character, and her complete devotion to him. The life they created together was so beautiful, so full of love and joy. When they were together, it seemed as if they were one person instead of two and Hemingway drew extensively from that to create some of his most romantic couples. Hadley not only inspired him, she encouraged his writing and supported them both financially for the first years of their marriage. She never minded being poor, as long as Hemingway was writing, and write Hemingway did. Some of his best work, and certainly the work that defined his voice, was written while he was married to Hadley.

Sadly, their relationship dissolved. Hemingway fell in love with another woman, cheated on Hadley, and then left her and their son Bumby (Jack). It was very difficult for me to read these parts. Not only because of the heartbreak I felt for Hadley (she "loved" him through all of it), but also because I felt complete disdain for one of my favorite authors. Reconciling feelings I had because of his actions with the brilliance of his work was difficult. At some points, I never wanted to read Hemingway again (Gee, that would show him!). But, that's certainly not what Hadley would want. She always loved him and supported him, even after their divorce, and for his part, Hemingway always regretted leaving Hadley and if you have read *A Moveable Feast*, it's obvious how much he loved and idolized Hadley as well.

It was illuminating to learn more about Hadley and it gave me so much more insight into Hemingway's writing. Diliberto's writing is, at times, a bit on the dry side, however, she tells a pretty amazing story of Paris in the 20's with the Fitzgeralds, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and the Hemingways.

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### **Anmiryam says**

I am a bit old to be going through my lost generation phase, but I was always a slow learner. "Paris Without End" is a wonderful non-fiction account of Hadley Richardson's life, especially as it centered around Ernest Hemingway. It's written in a way that makes you root for them as a couple until their time together ends and then Gioia Diliberto does a brilliant job of helping you to understand it never would have lasted and that it was the best for both of them that it ended. A wonderful book to read during a cold and snowy trip to Paris and it eased the pain of leaving on the flight home.

I'm moving on to "Hemingway's Boat", "Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation", as well as Sylvia's history of Shakespeare and Company. There is, as you would expect, also the fiction from said post World War I authors that I haven't read since high school. It still resonates and forms a touchstone for all of us, even if we don't realize it.

I might even read more Hemingway after I finish "A Moveable Feast". Yes, really.

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### **Jill says**

Why should we, as readers, be the slightest bit interested in Hadley Richardson, Hemingway's first wife?

One might make a convincing case – and Gioia Diliberto certainly does – that Hadley is the archetype for all the women in Hemingway's literature: Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*, and Maria in *For Whom The Bell Tolls*. Hadley is the idealized Hemingway woman – stoic, smart, unpretentious, intelligent, devoted, romantic, and wounded.

Many of us received a tantalizing glimpse of her in Paula McLain's fictional book, *The Paris Wife*. Ms. Diliberto takes the portrait much further through her exhaustive research into their thrilling and doomed relationship.

In a finely-detailed depiction – to borrow Hemingway's phrase, one of the “truest” deconstructions of Hadley around, focusing strongly on “innocence lost” – Hadley emerges from the shadows of her far more famous ex-husband and reveals herself to be a fascinating person in her own right.

Ms. Diliberto reveals Hadley's dysfunctional upbringing, living with her anti-male, strong-willed, manipulative mother and sister, and exploring the commonalities that “twinned” Ernest and Hadley together – the desire to break free of domineering mothers, the fraternal suicides that haunted them, the bouts with depression, the lack of sexual experience, and the overriding love of art.

The author had access to more than one thousand pages of Hadley's letters to Ernest – as she reveals in her preface – and it shows. This book is not just interpretative but also a revelation of Hadley in her own words – from their separated courtship, their adventures in Paris at the center of the literary expatriates, their baby Bumby, and ultimately, the dissolution of their union as a result of Hemingway's self-destructive cheating.

“I would never have written any of them *In Our Time*, *Torrents*, or *The Sun* if I had not married you and had your loyal and self sacrificing and always stimulating and loving,” Ernest wrote to Hadley after he left, calling her “the best and truest and loveliest person that I have ever known.” The mind boggles in thinking what he could have created if he had remained with her. Hemingway himself realized it: ‘I wish I had died before I ever loved anyone but her.’”

As fascinating as fiction – but so much more powerful because it's fact – *Paris Without End* is riveting reading for anyone who wants true insight into Hemingway's psychodynamics and the female characters he creates. Hadley Richardson is as stunning as any character in fiction, including Hemingway's own.

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### **Laurel-Rain says**

In the early 1920s, a group of artistic and literary types congregated in Paris, forming a community of expatriates.

Hadley and Ernest Hemingway were among them.

They had met in the Midwest, in Chicago, after Hadley left her childhood home in St. Louis. They were drawn to each other immediately.

For Hadley, Ernest offered a boost to her battered self-esteem, after a troubled childhood in which she was the least favored daughter. To Ernest, Hadley represented the kind of calm and inspiration which he was seeking.

"Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway's First Wife (P.S.)" delves into the early years of their lives together, and how those were the years that defined Hemingway as a literary giant. His struggles were many, but he didn't give up. For years afterwards, long after he and Hadley had separated, their fondness for one another lived on, reminding them of that time in their lives. Toward the end of the book, this excerpt sums up that time:

"'A Moveable Feast' lovingly delineates the quiet, peaceful world Ernest and Hadley had created in their Paris flat. 'Like Huck Finn's river, the apartment over the sawmill is a place of renewal and purification. Hadley is both lover and mother, their Paris a garden and playground,' wrote Arthur Edelstein in a review of the book. The love story transcends the personal and seems to symbolize the dreams of the jazz era generation."

As I read this detailed biography of a unique time in the lives of both Hadley and Ernest, I was drawn to the richness of their lives, despite the many challenges. Money was not plentiful, but the two of them found many ways to enjoy their lives together.

And their lives were full of the joy of youth and the promise of a future.

Even though their lives did not turn out the way they'd planned, and, in fact, great sadness and loss would occur in later years, the memories of their idyllic time in Paris illuminated their lives in memorable ways. Five stars.

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### **Chrissie says**

Which is best to read ? A Moveable Feast or The Paris Wife or Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway's First Wife? I cannot say any of them grab be to 100%.

Different pov, different authors, different styles, fiction or non-fiction .....

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### **Stephanie says**

"Paris without End," is a new literary nonfiction biography of Hadley Richardson, the iconic first wife of beloved 20th century American author Ernest Hemingway. It was written by Gioia Diliberto, veteran author/journalist, who points out in her preface to the 2011 edition that once there was hardly a woman considered worthy of a biography, at all. And then, even when the lives of some outstanding women began to be studied, nobody thought, for a long time, of looking at the wives of outstanding men. Despite that familiar old adage, 'behind every great man there's a great woman.' It is only now being recognized that some wives

were indeed instrumental in their husbands' successes; and it's Diliberto's thesis, based upon Hemingway's copious writings, that Hadley Hemingway was one. Still, there's no question but that Hadley would not reward study were she not Hemingway's first, template-setting wife. And there's no question but that this book will most interest Ernest Hemingway fans. After all, although Hadley can be credited with inspiring her husband's writings, and creating an environment in which he could work, she never published a line.

The period after World War I, never mind that the generation that lived through that war chose to call itself the Lost Generation, was full of new developments. Suffragism — the fight for women's rights—was in the air, as was prohibition. Flappers emerged: women cut their hair and their skirts, took up smoke and drink, and danced on the tables of their favorite speakeasies. Paris was the world center of creativity. In the art world, greatly famous painters were there: the Spanish Pablo Picasso, and Joan Miro; Auguste Renoir, Marc Chagall. In the literary world, there were almost too many stars to count: Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, James and Nora Joyce, Sarah and Gerald Murphy, T.S. Eliot, John Dos Passos, Archibald MacLeish, Ford Madox Ford, and whoever: at one time Ford had a ménage a trois with his common law wife and the great 20th century female author Jean Rhys. And then there was Sylvia Beach and her book store, Shakespeare & Co. In fact, there were so many artistic and literary notables there that they kept Owen Wilson, the Woody Allen stand-in in PARIS AT MIDNIGHT quite busy.

Like so many others in the period, Hadley and Ernest expatriated themselves to Paris. And Hadley and Hem were certainly a golden couple while they were happy and poor, living on Hadley's trust funds, and in the home she made for them, exploring Europe, and playing with their little boy, known as Bumby, when he arrived. Everyone seemed to expect that Hem was bound for literary glory. Of course, there were some problems. In an act that may have foreshadowed the future, and was heavily influential at the time, Hadley lost all copies of her husband's first novel. And then there was the disastrous summer with the Murphys on the French Riviera. Bumby got whooping cough, had to be quarantined, and so was poor Hadley. Meanwhile, Ernest was creating a ménage a trois with another St. Louis native—Hadley was a St. Louis girl herself --Pauline Pfeiffer, editor at Paris Vogue, a woman whose name has gone down in villainy for breaking up the marriage. (Hemingway's third wife Martha Gellhorn, a noted journalist at the time, was also a St. Louis native: it must have been something in the water of the Mississippi.)

The author gives us an interesting look at all these women:" Among expatriates in literary circles, there was a prejudice against women who were merely 'wives'—a term ... that 'applied not just to legal spouses, but to all women who attached themselves to a dominant partner.' Many of the 'wives' like Stella Bowen [who lived with T.S. Eliot] and Ada MacLeish, a singer, had careers of their own. Those who didn't have talent and ambition nevertheless often adopted the trappings of artistic freedom, the most destructive of which...was the freedom to explore erotic and emotional relationships outside marriage.'" Hadley was a devoted mother and wife, "a conventional woman surrounded by hedonists, who... flaunted their promiscuity and joked about their abortions and venereal disease."

At any rate, the Hemingways had a passionate, affectionate marriage. Hadley was always faithful to her husband, and those who knew the couple thought Hemingway was always faithful to her, until Pauline came into the picture. And, in the posthumously published A MOVEABLE FEAST, Hemingway said, "I wish I had died before I ever loved anyone but her." The Chicago-based Diliberto frequently mentions the solid Midwestern values of Hadley and Hem. But Hadley was from St. Louis, and Hem from Chicago. Wouldn't these be considered major urban metro areas?

The author did a great deal of research to produce this work, Scores of interviews with those who knew the prime actors, she says, including the couple's son Jack, formerly known as Bumby, in his home in Ketchum, Idaho, Hemingway's last home. And Hadley's nieces Dodie Hess and Fonchen Lord; her nephew Richard

Usher. Furthermore, the writer found many hours of tapes made of conversations between Hadley and her friend, musician/writer Alice Sokoloff, who published the first, timid biography of Hadley, while she was still alive. Finally, the author had first look at more than 1,000 letters written by Hadley to Hem during their intense courtship: the famous man held on to them all his life. Although sometimes the extensive quotes from these materials are repetitive, and hold up, rather than advance, the narrative. Dilberto is the author of the biographies *A Useful Woman: The Early Life of Jane Addams* and *Debutante: The Story of Brenda Frazier*, and the historical novels *I Am Madame X* and *The Collection*. I liked this book much better than Paula Mc Lain's recent fictional *THE PARIS WIFE*, which was apparently inspired by it: it gives us a much deeper, more detailed picture of the woman at the center of one of the great literary storms of the 20th century. Worth reading, perhaps even for those not Hemingway fans.

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### **Edward says**

I was going to read *THE PARIS WIFE*, recommended by several friends, when I saw this recent biography and decided to read it instead. It reads like a novel and now I'm wondering if there's any point in reading the fictional *PARIS WIFE* which I understand hews closely to the facts.

I say it reads like a novel because hanging over every detail, especially the early ones when Hemingway was an unknown midwesterner, full of doubt about his future, is the reader's knowledge of whom he became – one of the 20th century's great writers. Hadley Richardson, a St. Louis native, eight years older than Hemingway, and the woman he would marry, is an inseparable part of the life he would grow into as a writer and it could be convincingly argued, as this biography does, that without her, he would not have succeeded.

Interestingly, their courtship was carried on mainly through letters, as she was living in St. Louis and Hemingway in Chicago. That kind of a relationship, one that today would exist on the internet, allowed each of them to appeal to the other's idealistic self, one made up of verbalized dreams and ambitions. Dilberto points out that Hemingway lied about "the hard facts of his life. Indeed, he lied to her about many things" such as why he hadn't gone to college and his war experiences. It didn't matter because she saw his better side, but it was a predictor of some of the events that would later break up their marriage, particularly his lying about another woman in his life.

The author stresses that Hadley was always more in love with her husband than he was with her. "She would live throughout her marriage in the shadow of his personality, but in the winter of 1921, there was little hint of dissonance, only the hope, as she wrote Ernest, of 'everything lovely and wonderful that is to come.' "

And “wonderful things” did come. The couple moved to Paris, both to escape what each felt was a stultifying family, and as an adventure in living as outsiders, as artists. It was a struggle at first, and the couple wouldn’t have made it without Hadley’s income from trust funds, so she supported him both financially and morally. Paris was exhilarating for a writer in the 20’s – Hemingway’s friends and acquaintances sounds like a who’s who of American literature, Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, John Dos Passos, to name a few. Hemingway persevered, first having some short stories and poetry published, and then with his first novel, **THE SUN ALSO RISES**.

Dilberto concludes her biography by commenting that “All his major novels are fundamentally love stories, centering on a couple who are so close that they are almost one. Ernest believed that love is life’s great redeeming force, the only “alliance” against inevitable death. When he wrote about the passions – some of the greatest romances in modern American literature, he was celebrating the power of true love, the love he’d had with Hadley.”

What went wrong with their marriage, given Hadley’s unquestioning support of Hemingway’s talent? A lot of things – Hemingway was full of self-doubt about his own worth, he had a compulsive need to be superior to everyone, leading to a corrosive anger which cost him friends, he drank far too much, his head was turned by women as he achieved a reputation, and he often felt frustrated by the domestic demands of marriage. All of this made him a hard person to live with, and yet Hadley could see past these faults to his virtues of sensitivity and generosity which emerge in his best writing. Hemingway at some level knew that no woman would ever match Hadley, and he profoundly appreciated her, even though their marriage didn’t last, and he went on to three more marriages. Hadley’s role in this tension and interplay between Hemingway’s creativity and his lurches toward self-destructive impulses (ones that led to his suicide in 1961) is what makes the book compelling reading.

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### **Maggie says**

I read *The Paris Wife* about a year ago, after several recommendations from friends, and I hated it. I thought Hadley was an annoying, high-maintenance, deeply troubled martyr and I still can’t believe I finished the book. I was curious how closely the novelized version of Hadley’s life followed Hadley’s actual life and I’m happy to say, after reading *Paris Without End*, that although the path was the same, the outcome was quite different. I very much enjoyed this story of Hadley’s life and came away thinking of her as a strong, brave, although slightly disturbed woman.

The research Gioia Dilberto did is remarkable. Because the book was published when several people who knew Hadley were still alive. The tapes Hadley’s friend in New Hampshire made provided incredible insight, as did the letters Hadley and Ernest sent to each other throughout their lives.

I would recommend *The Paris Wife* to anyone, as a novelized biography or as a novel, but I’d recommend *Paris Without End* to someone, whether they were expressly interested in Hemingway or not.

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### **Annie Garvey says**

I didn’t realize that Ernest Hemingway was so young when he married the first time . . . just 22. He was

divorced by the age of 27. From the perspective of my old age, I can see why he did the things he did. Alcohol made him an old man before his time and the nickname "Papa" didn't allow me to perceive him as ever young. The tragedy of Hemingway is most of the best of times as a human being and a writer were over before his 40th birthday, and, I believe he knew it.

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### **Nancy says**

I very much enjoyed Diliberto's non-fiction book about Hadley Richardson, Ernest Hemingway's first wife. She does a very thorough, well-documented job of fleshing out the person who served as muse to much of Hemingway's writing, right up until his death, at which time he was working on *A Moveable Feast: The Restored Edition*. There were parts in the beginning of their marriage, where their combined identity of bohemian starving artist and privilege European travelers living off trust funds was just annoying. And I'm just plain jealous! However, Hadley is a woman of more depth, sensitivity and intellect than she is credited for. Often overlooked for the inspiration she provided. Eventually I came to have a great admiration for the dignity and integrity with which she lived out her life, especially after the divorce. Theirs was a special relationship that continued on other levels during his subsequent marriages. They maintained a profound respect and affection, but she probably wouldn't have survived intact had they stayed married. Wonderful book.

*The Paris Wife* has been a very popular read, but given the choice, a non-fictional account is more appropriate to my tastes.

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### **Barbara says**

I'm not really a fan of Hemingway's writing, but I love reading about Paris, and the story of Hadley's and Ernest's youth together was wonderful. This was a great complement to *The Paris Wife* which I read a while ago. As a pianist myself, I was very interested in reading about Hadley's playing and wonder how accomplished she was. Nice to read that she kept playing duets for the rest of her life. The book made me homesick for Paris!!

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### **Dvora says**

I tend to find the artists and writers who lived in Paris in the 1920s endlessly fascinating. Although I am not a Hemingway fan, I did like his (*Fiesta*) *The Sun Also Rises* as well as *The Moveable Feast*, which I just read recently. He writes so longingly for his first wife Hadley in that book that I was curious to know more about her. If your curiosity is piqued as well, you will probably enjoy this book, as I did. The writing is good enough although some of the dates are out of order, and if you notice that kind of thing, it can be distracting. Not that the book was heavy with dates, but some were given and when they were not correct, it had me going back and forth, trying to get things straight. But overall getting dates straight wasn't the most important thing. What was important was to learn what kind of man Hemingway was, what kind of woman Hadley Richardson was, what they were like as a couple, and how and why it all turned out as it did. Someone could make a novel out of it, except that Hemingway, in a way, did, several times over.

