



HEMINGWAY'S 'LOST' GUNS CUBA'S FINCA VIGÍA GIVES UP ITS SECRETS

BY SILVIO CALABI, STEVE HELSLEY, ROGER SANGER

As we were researching the second, expanded edition of our 2010 book *Hemingway's Guns*, co-author Sanger went to the 2014 Hemingway Festival in Ketchum, the mountain resort town in Idaho that Ernest Hemingway frequented throughout the 1940s, where he lived from 1959 until 2 July 1961, and where he lies buried. The Festival has taken place every September since 2005, but 2014 was the first time that Ada Rosa Alfonso Rosales attended. Ada Alfonso was then the director of Cuba's most revered and popular national attraction, the Museo Ernest Hemingway Finca Vigía—the man's home for 20 years. Sanger fought his way through the crowd, presented her with a copy of the first edition of this book and then, through her interpreter, asked the million-dollar question: By chance are there any guns still at the house?

Sí, sí, ciertamente, came the reply: Yes, certainly. We have several of Ernest's guns. And then: *Te gustaría verlos?* Would you like to see them?

Would we . . . ? Yes. Yes, we would like to see them. Very much. And just like that we were formally invited to Cuba to curate the guns that were left in the Finca Vigía, "Lookout Manor," when Ernest and Mary abandoned it after Fidel Castro's M-26-7 rebels finally toppled the dictator Fulgencio Batista on 1 January 1959.

Soon we had dates, reservations, visas, permits and a plan. Then we had to be patient till early February, when we would leave North America's winter for five days in the western Caribbean. Egyptologists invited into King Tut's tomb couldn't have been more excited.

We gathered in Miami, where Mike Wysocki, a Hemingway aficionado and contributor to this book, joined us for the brief flight to José Martí International Airport. Among the throng of people awaiting relatives from the US, we found our CET driver and guide/translator, and a spotless Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van. The highway into Havana was remarkably traffic-free, and dotted with billboards still proclaiming *La Revolución*, with heroic pictures of the Castro brothers, Che Guevara and the late Venezu-

elan president Hugo Chavez. Havana has a modern diplomatic quarter that resembles a Miami neighborhood, but the rest of the city truly is populated with relic Chevrolets, DeSotos, Buicks, Oldsmobiles and more. Many serve as taxicabs; most spew clouds of blue smoke, and it's anyone's guess what's now under those 60-year-old hoods.

Before Hemingway moved into the Finca Vigía, in May 1939, he lived for weeks in Room 511 of the Ambos Mundos Hotel in the center of Old Havana. Along with several short stories, he began to write *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, his novel of the Spanish Civil War, which was just ending. Today photos of him decorate the Ambos Mundos lobby, and Hemingway's room, largely untouched, is a shrine. Our hosts had arranged for us to have the adjoining rooms. There was no Internet access, a shock to modern *norteamericanos*, but the rooftop bar and the view toward the harbor, and the friendly staff, were fine compensation.



Figure 2 - The tower side of the Finca Vigía, an Italianate villa built in 1886 and bought by Hemingway in 1940 for \$12,500. With private help from the US, Cuba has been able to refurbish and stabilize the house, but in a tropical climate this is an ongoing campaign. The Finca contains Hemingway's library of 9,000 books as well as thousands of letters, manuscripts and photographs and most of Ernest and Mary's furnishings and belongings. (Steve Helsley)

Arriving at the Finca's 15-acre compound behind busloads of tourists from Europe and Asia, we were warmly greeted by Ada Rosa and her staff. We spent two full days there, using as our studio the room on

the ground floor of the house's tower that Ernest and Mary Hemingway had given over to their dozens of cats. (It had been cleaned.) We were given extraordinary access to the Hemingways' personal possessions and documents, including seven guns—two rifles, five shotguns—that now appear in this book:

- Adamy 12-gauge No. 29392
- L.C. Smith .410 No. FWE103621
- Liège 28-gauge No. 191024
- Mannlicher-Schoenauer Model 1903 No. 22108
- Springfield Model 1873 No. 13591
- Winchester Model 21 20-gauge No. 14866
- Winchester Model 42 No. 8781

We also found a pair of 10-gauge Winchester signaling cannons.



At the Finca Vigía, February 2015. Steve Helsley disassembles the .410-bore L.C. Smith shotgun, one of the seven guns remaining in the house that the authors were able to examine and photograph. Silvio Calabi checks a record on his laptop computer while museum vice-director Isbel Ferreiro Garit looks on. (Mike Wysocki)

There's an old saying that "guns have only two enemies: rust and politicians." These seven had been ravaged by both and were in poor condition. Cuba instituted gun registration well before the most recent revolution (there have been half a dozen since 1868), so it was easy for the rebels to seize private firearms—but Fidel Castro, a great admirer of Papa Hemingway, set aside the Finca as a museum. Nevertheless, the guns were crudely deactivated and the tropical climate has taken its toll. Sad as it was to see the damage, we were thrilled. Our long quest had brought us to Hemingway's home and put seven more of his guns—"lost" since 1960—directly into our hands.

Several were completely unexpected. The Adamy we knew from the records of Abercrombie & Fitch, where Hemingway bought it in 1942. The Model 21 we could trace to a hardware store in Boise, Idaho, in

1940, and from there to the Sun Valley Resort. Several were identifiable in photographs from various Hemingway collections. Two of them had been grabbed briefly by the Cuban army in 1947. From documents in the house we learned of more guns yet, or learned details about these guns and guns already in our records. It is significant that we did *not* discover Hemingway's English shotgun, the fateful W. & C. Scott & Son pigeon gun, but we finally found its serial number: 102793.

(Fateful because we believe that it was the Scott that Papa used to end his life—before breakfast on 2 July 1961, in Ketchum—and that his widow, Mary, handed it to a local welder to destroy, lest it become a curiosity; significant because finding the Scott intact would of course have deep-sixed our theory. The "CSI"-style investigation that led us to the Scott is detailed in the book.)

We were able to linger in each room of the house, which is closed to tourists, and examine such things as Papa's trophies and safari clothing, and even a copy of *The Old Man and the Sea* in Russian Cyrillic—in Braille. Author Calabi's iPhone captured 60 scratchy seconds of "Aida" played for us on Ernest and Mary's gramophone. As the music floated through the house, visitors gathered to peer in the windows and aim cameras at us—and we overheard speculation that author Helsley, with his beard and physique, must be a Hemingway relation!

Before traveling onward to Havana, we had spent a day in Miami with members of a family that left Cuba after Castro came to power. Brothers Harry and Bernie Macias are now successful senior executives living the American dream in Florida, but in 1961 they were frightened young refugees from another country. Back in Havana, their father was a manufacturer of aluminum cookware and furniture whose business, cars and home had been seized in the name of the Cuban people.

Señor Macias also had been a prominent member of the Club de Cazadores del Cerro, the "Hunters' Club on the Hill" in Rancho Boyeros, the last train stop southwest of downtown Havana. In those days, seemingly everyone who was anyone in the city gathered at the club to socialize and shoot, including of course Ernest Hemingway. Martha and Mary Hemingway, Wives Nos. 3 and 4, frequented the CCC too, as did sons Jack, Patrick and Gregory when they were visiting Papa.

Wingshooting games—trap, skeet and pigeons—were popular in Cuba. There were shooting clubs in all six provinces, and four (two public, two private) in and around Havana. Tournament results were reported in the major newspapers, and when the interna-



The Club de Cazadores del Cerro outgrew its original layout and in the mid-1950s the members built this new facility, twice as big and with a modern clubhouse and restaurant. When it was completed, the club secretary, Pepe Artecona, sent certified letters to the members asking them to empty their lockers at the old place. "Not many people responded," Pepe wrote in 2011, "so with two witnesses present and using our master key, we opened the lockers, inventoried the contents, and moved to our new place. When we opened Mr. Hemingway's locker we found two or three shooting jackets, a 500 case of Peters High Velocity shells with #6 shot and a shotgun. The shotgun was a 30 inch over & under with beautiful wood, 12 gauge . . . It was made in Belgium and the brand was Cordy.

"I made a phone call to Mrs. Hemingway and delivered the gun to her [Ernest may have been in Peru fishing for marlin] in a canvas slip. Took a receipt and went back to the car to get the shells, which she gave me for having been so helpful. I promised to shoot them in her name and went back a very happy young man. Whatever happened to that gun? I never knew." (Jose Artecona Collection)



Winchester Model 21 No. 14866 as it appears today at the Finca Vigía—a standard Skeet-grade 20-gauge gun built in the late summer of 1940. The gun was ordered from Winchester by a hardware store in Boise, Idaho, for W.P. Rogers, the general manager of the Sun Valley Co., and "Ernest Hemmingway" on 2 October 1940. It matches the specifications on the factory order sheet, but its stock is missing something. (Steve Helsley)

tional circuit arrived in Havana, even *The New York Times* provided coverage.

The Macias family's connection to the Club de Cazadores ran deep and wide. Harry and Bernie Macias's maternal grandfather had been one of the founders,

in 1907, and in addition to their father various uncles, cousins and friends shot there. Over the years their mother, Beba, kept scrapbooks of CCC programs, newspaper stories, photographs and letters, and collected shooting awards—pins, medals, jacket patches and trophies. Eventually, there was enough material to fill two large Tupperware bins and several boxes, which Harry Macias spread out on his conference-room table for us to examine. The day became an extended remembrance, sometimes emotional.



The Club de Cazadores, Cuba, c. 1942. Martha Gellhorn Hemingway is holding her 20-gauge Winchester Model 21. Three of the four over/unders, including the ones carried by her husband (center) and their friend Winston Guest (second from right), appear to be Browning Superposeds. Roberto Herrera Sotolongo, Hemingway's sometime secretary, called the club a "bastion of Cuba's intellectual bourgeoisie." According to a former club bird boy quoted in *Juventud Rebelde* (the Newspaper of Cuban Youth) in 2007, Fidel Castro secretly practiced at the club with one of Hemingway's guns in 1953. (John F. Kennedy Library)

The Macias brothers also introduced us to other Cuban expatriates: Elicio Arguelles III, whose father had accompanied Ernest Hemingway and a film crew to Peru, in April 1956, to try to catch a monster marlin for Hollywood's version of *The Old Man and the Sea*. Raimundo Menocal, grandson of "Mayito" Menocal (Elicio's cousin), who had gone on safari with Ernest and Mary in East Africa in the early 1950s and who was the son of Mario Garcia Menocal, President of Cuba from 1913 to 1921. And they rang up Jose "Pepe" Artecona, a friend of the family who became a world-class shotgunner, competing in international pigeon championships and the Pan-American and Olympic games. Artecona has lived in Puerto Rico since fleeing Cuba.

By extraordinary coincidence, author Calabi and Artecona had already met, many years before, while shooting in Spain. And then in early 2011—soon after the first edition of this book appeared but four years

before we met the Macias brothers in Miami and then traveled to Cuba—out of the blue Calabi had received a letter from Puerto Rico that began:

Dear Mr. Calabi,

I enjoyed Hemingway's Guns, which brings back memories of my youth in Cuba, since I knew some of the people mentioned in it. I was a member of the Club Cazadores del Cerro and shot many times with Mr. Hemingway. Also, my family had a vacation house in Cojimar, a small fisherman's town about 10 kms from Havana, where Hemingway's boat Pilar was anchored in the small but secure bay. I knew Gregorio Fuentes, Mr. Hemingway's skipper . . . I remember Mr. Hemingway in his green Lincoln Continental convertible, when he left it in front of La Terraza Restaurant. Like him, I started shooting very young; but my BB gun was a Daisy.

When I was about 17, I joined the Club de Cazadores del Cerro . . .

The letter, a long one, was signed "Cordially, Jose Artecona."

In early 1959, when the Cuban government abruptly changed, Pepe Artecona had been a young lawyer and the club secretary at the CCC. Each new letter from him provided more detail and background, and now he was on the telephone with his old friends the Macias boys.

Ernest Hemingway lived in Cuba for 20 years and two marriages—longer than in Oak Park, Illinois, where he was born, or in Paris, Key West, Ketchum or anywhere else—and his presence there is still nearly palpable. On the plane to Havana, after our day with the Macias brothers and their friends, our seatmate was a young man whose professor at UCLA had been one of Gigi's All-Stars, the kids who played baseball at the Finca with Pat and Greg Hemingway. In a straitened neighborhood of tiny houses in Havana we found ailing Fernando de la Nuez, who had been Hemingway's bird boy and then the caretaker of his guns at the Club de Cazadores. Restaurants, bars and hotels where Papa was a regular proudly hang photos of him on their walls. The Finca Vigía itself still looks and feels lived-in, as though Ernest and Mary and their friends will soon be back for cocktails.

Hemingway and his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, lived in Key West from 1928 to 1939. They had passed through Havana, just 90 miles to the south, briefly en route to and from Europe by ship, but Ernest's first lengthy visit to Cuba was made on his friend Josie Russell's boat in the summer of 1929. He wound up staying for two months, part of the time at the Ambos Mundos Hotel, soon his favorite in Havana. Trips to Cuba became more and more frequent as Hemingway became fixated on the Gulf Stream, which he

called "the last wild country there is left." The great warm current, 60 miles wide and three to four thousand feet deep, surrounds the island of Cuba; it is a feeding ground for predators that can be bigger, more aggressive and more challenging to hunt than even the great game animals of Africa. Over the next 10 years Hemingway surpassed Zane Grey as the world's foremost billfish angler.



Steve Helsley holds Ernest Hemingway's Springfield Model 1873, Serial No. 13591—originally a trapdoor cavalry carbine (note the saddle-ring swivel bar). Despite its Custer Range number, this is one of a relative handful of trapdoor rifles that was shortened and bored out by the Springfield Armory to serve as line-throwing and harpoon guns. Hemingway bought it from Abercrombie & Fitch in November 1928 for \$60. (Steve Helsley)

In 1934, just after his first safari, with a \$3,000 advance from a new magazine called *Esquire*, Ernest put down a deposit on a 38-foot fishing boat of his own. Christened *Pilar*, it arrived at Key West in early May, and then long trips across the Florida Strait to Cuba became more frequent. These were international crossings, and American boats had to file papers and clear Customs in order to land in Cuba. Arnold Samuelson, the 22-year-old kid from Minneapolis who signed on to live aboard *Pilar* in her first season as a watchman (in exchange for a dollar a day and writing advice from Hemingway).

Samuelson wrote about hiding guns and ammunition under *Pilar's* bunks, and how officials who met the boat on its first arrival in Havana, in July 1934, did not search her thoroughly:

They knew Hemingway as the American millionaire who the summer before had caught sixty-four marlin with rod and reel and had given away tons of marlin meat to the natives on the dock. They said they had

not recognized him in his new yacht, they were sorry they had made the mistake, they hoped he would catch many marlin against this year and they went away. . . . E.H. could have had a ton of dynamite under the cockpit deck without it being discovered. The doctor glanced at us and took down the yellow quarantine flag.



Ernest Hemingway (right) aboard his fishing boat *Pilar* in Cuban waters c. 1935. Hemingway has fired his harpoon gun at a small whale; now he and a crewman feed out line as the whale surges away. The plan was to tire the whale enough to bring it alongside, kill it with rifle fire and then tow it to market in Havana, where it was "worth a fortune." However, they never managed to get the penetration needed to hold onto a whale. (John F. Kennedy Library)

Hemingway, who'd allegedly dissed his upper-middle class hometown outside Chicago for its "wide lawns and narrow minds," liked to live in interesting places, and he needed an audience, a close circle of friends he could dominate. Tiny, isolated, Depression-hammered, tropical Key West was certainly one of America's most interesting communities, but when some of his "mob" turned cool as he demolished his marriage to Pauline, a strategic relocation to familiar and fish-y yet congenial and cosmopolitan Havana with his new girlfriend, in 1939, seemed like a fine idea.



L.C. Smith No. FWE103621, the Hemingway .410-bore double, as it appears today. When it left the factory, on 25 July 1928, its barrels were a lustrous blue-black, the frame and lockplates were color case-hardened, and the walnut stock and forend had a hand-rubbed oil finish. (Steve Helsley)

His next marriage, to Martha Gellhorn, lasted barely five years. She was happy to leave Cuba. Her successor, Mary Welsh, "fell instantly in love with the [Finca]" and moved in with Ernest in 1945. Despite Cuba's decades of political turbulence and resentment of Yankee Imperialism (and the development of Havana that Hemingway abhorred), had the Castro revolution not taken place, 15 years later, the Hemingways might have lived on at their beautiful hilltop villa overlooking Havana.

In *How It Was*, her autobiography, Mary Hemingway described a tense encounter at the Finca Vigía in October 1947:



Gregory Hemingway, early 1940s, coming off the shooting line at the Club des Cazadores with the L.C. Smith. The next shooter walks out to take his turn. For a boy with a .410 to take on grown men with 12-gauge guns in the pigeon ring compares to racing a Miata against Corvettes, but "Gigi" often did well. (Museo Finca Vigía)

As I moved down the front steps, Cuban soldiers emerged from behind a dozen different trees and shrubs and a young lieutenant, very shaved and polished, approached me, his rifle in the over-the-top position. I pushed its barrel downward. "Put that thing aside," said I in Spanish. "What kind of joke is this?"

No joke. The government—Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín was then President—had learned that an American writer who lived near Havana was stirring up political trouble. (A fuller explanation of this appears in "The .577 Nitro Express.") The Minister of Defense had sent a squad of troops to the likely culprit's home to search for guns, ammunition and other suspicious items. Ernest was in the US at the time, driving (with Toby Bruce, his factotum) his new Buick Roadmaster convertible—"royal-blue with bright red-leather lining and seats"—from Miami to Sun Valley for the fall hunting season. Mary did her best to repel the invaders, but they had a warrant. Then she assured the lieutenant that he wouldn't find anything. But she knew better:

[F]amily custom was to dump unused shotgun shells . . . into any convenient box, drawer or wastebasket after we shot live pigeons at the Club de Cazadores. Also that we practiced target shooting with .22 rifles and other calibers at bottles and tin cans set up on the steps of the abandoned vacaría on the hill behind the driveway. To my dismay the lieutenant found some .30-06 bullets in the drawers beneath the window seat in my room. . . .

A small truck had backed up the driveway and with surprising efficiency the little army unit filled it with rifles and shotguns, the Duke of Alba's shotgun which E. had somehow acquired during the Spanish Civil War and Ernest's favorite old Winchester pump gun among them, U.S. and German army pistols and hundreds, if not thousands, of shells and unopened boxes of rifle ammunition in various dimensions, our wicker wastebaskets of shotgun shells looking incongruous and cozy among the guns.

"You must come with us now," the lieutenant said.

Mary was able to convince the authorities that they had the wrong man, or woman, and was quickly freed. Mary was due to leave shortly to join her husband in Idaho, and bring some of these guns with her; a judge accepted her assurances that she would return to Cuba with the guns later in the year—but first he had to examine her husband's gun permit. From Idaho, Ernest "wired back his license number, 4278, assuring me that he would airmail the license, describing the pistols as war trophies never fired in Cuba."

The guns, ammunition and gear were returned, after Mary paid a fine of 100 pesos for having 13 khaki shirts, which to the Cubans looked like military uniforms, and a further 25 pesos for unlicensed firearms. (Surely an odd scale of values?) A copy of Report No. 476-947, filed by the officer who supervised the search of the Hemingways' property, is in the Museo Finca Vigía archive. It lists what was seized:

- 9mm DIML [sic] pistol No. 9266 with magazine and 5 cartridges
- 9mm DIML [sic] pistol No. 719 with magazine, no cartridges
- P-38 pistol No. 1653 with magazine and 8 cartridges
- HI-Standard Military Model .22 No. 157576 with 2 magazines and 19 cartridges
- 30 rounds of 9mm ammunition
- 89 rounds of 9mm ammunition marca Luger ["Luger brand"]
- 94 rounds of .22 Short and 60 rounds of .22 Long
- 93 rounds of .22-3000
- Pistol holster
- Unmarked, un-numbered shotgun con canón

- reventado ["with blown barrel"]
- Three Winchester 20-gauge shotguns, one marked MGH
- Winchester 12-gauge repetición ["repeater"]
- Winchester .22 No. 100981 [also a repetición]
- Steyr Mannlicher rifle
- 13 khaki shirts
- Three leather shotgun cases
- 7,911 rounds of shotgun ammunition of different calibers and makes

The report is signed by 1st Lt. Ernesto Ladrón de Guevara—not the Ernesto "Che" Guevara who was Fidel Castro's second-in-command.

Lt. Guevara's list is our only hard evidence to date of guns that Hemingway (and perhaps his oldest son,



No. 22108, the Mannlicher-Schoenauer Model 1903 at the Finca Vigía, as it looks today. (Steve Helsley)



Idaho, fall 1941. Hemingway in a promotional photo for the Sun Valley Resort, with cleaning rod in hand and looking down the bore of a battered Mannlicher-Schoenauer carbine. This is almost certainly No. 22108, the rifle now at the Finca Vigía in Cuba. (Lloyd Arnold/John F. Kennedy Library)

Jack) were said to have brought home from Europe after the Second World War. "DIML" is surely a misreading or mistyping of DWM, *Deutsche Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken*, the German arms and ammunition maker best remembered for introducing the famous Luger pistol and then the 9x19mm Parabellum (Latin: "for war") cartridge. (The letters DWM are typically intertwined and stylized on the pistol, and hard to read.)

Although DWM made other handguns, and 9mm ammunition has been made in other case lengths, it's highly likely that the two "DIML" pistols were Lugers, which were the most sought-after souvenirs among American servicemen. Lugers were produced for so long by so many companies and for so many armies and police forces—and for sale to civilians in Europe, the UK and the US—that these serial numbers tell us little. There may have been letter designations on the guns too, that the Cubans missed or ignored.

One of these pistols may not have been a WWII bring-back. Around 1970, Hemingway friends Charles and Lorine Thompson recalled that in the summer of 1932, when the Hemingway family was leaving Key West for its annual stay at the L-Bar-T Ranch in Wyoming, Ernest gave Jimmy Smith, his gardener, an "ancient German Luger" and told him to "guard the joint with your skin; but only if worse comes to worst."⁵

(One of many Hemingway legends is that when he and a young war correspondent named J.D. Salinger met in France, in 1944, Ernest shot the head off a chicken with a Luger in order to show him that it was more accurate than Salinger's US-issued M1911A1 .45 pistol. But this was no more likely than Hemingway's wild claim, often repeated, that he had killed 122 "Krauts" personally. His military friends and his biographers, wives and sons generally agreed that he'd never killed anyone.)

The P38 was another common German 9x19mm pistol, made by Walther and adopted by the Wehrmacht in 1938. In April 1945, just a couple of weeks after returning to Cuba from Europe, Hemingway wrote to his friend Buck Lanham—Col. Charles T. Lanham, West Point '24, commander of the US Army's 22nd Infantry Regiment and a key figure in the Battle of the Bulge. Hemingway had attached himself to Lanham while covering the European Theater as a journalist, and the two had become friends. Hemingway's letter, long and chatty, alternated between chest-thumping and flattery and ended with this postscript: "Now you over-running Krauts could [you] possibly get me 2 P38s for the Kids?" Perhaps Lanham did so, and perhaps No. 1653 was one of them.

Hi-Standard Firearms was a Connecticut manufacturer of .22-caliber pistols. The firm's Military model was a .22 semi-automatic made during WWII as a trainer for American soldiers who would then graduate to the much-harder-recoiling .45-caliber service pistol. We don't know where or how Hemingway acquired this pistol, but except for its exposed hammer it closely resembled the Colt Woodsman .22 that he was fond of. Late in the war, Hi-Standard produced a special run of pistols for undercover agents of the OSS, the Office of Strategic Services. Jack Hemingway, as a US Army

First Lieutenant attached to the OSS, had parachuted into occupied France in 1944 to help the Resistance—but he was shot in the shoulder and captured by the Germans, who certainly stripped him of his weapons. (They probably also took his fly rod, which he'd gotten past pre-jump inspection by claiming it was a disguised radio antenna.) In any case, the OSS version had an extra-long barrel with a built-in suppressor—a silencer—which might have confirmed the Cubans' suspicions of skullduggery. Also, this Hi-Standard serial number falls outside the range of the OSS pistols. . . but the story is too good not to tell.

The .22-3000 ammunition is the most puzzling item on the list. This was a high-performance smallbore American cartridge made in very limited quantities in the 1930s. It was usually chambered in single-shot or bolt-action rifles meant for shooting vermin ("varmints") such as woodchucks or prairie dogs at longer ranges. This wasn't Hemingway's sort of hunting, and we know of no such rifle in his hands.

Nearly 8,000 rounds of shotgun ammunition was remarkable even for a family that shot often—but we found four shotguns still at the Finca, and the family owned many more than that.

Here were four shotguns, too, including a 12-gauge Winchester Model 12 pumpgun, one of Ernest's favorite guns. The three 20-gauge Winchesters—including one marked MGH, for Martha Gellhorn Hemingway—were double-barreled Model 21s. They also get



Martha Gellhorn's Winchester Model 42, Serial No. 8781—a plain, field-grade gun probably made in 1933, the first year of production. Retail price was \$34. Along with the four-digit number, it has the pre-war rounded forend with 18, not 16 grooves. (Steve Helsley)



The bottom of the grip of Winchester Model 42 No. 8781. In 1939, when she was using this gun, Martha Gellhorn was not yet Mrs. Hemingway III, hence MG and not MGH (as on one of the Model 21s, a year later). Martha Gellhorn was willing to learn to shoot as a way of participating in her husband's life. But of Ernest's four wives, Martha—a war correspondent, travel writer, novelist and personal friend of Eleanor Roosevelt—was the only one who refused to subordinate her career to his, and when she'd had enough, around Christmas of 1944, she left behind her guns as relics of an unsuccessful marriage. Mary Welsh, Mrs. Hemingway IV, adopted Martha's Model 21 in Idaho, but this .410 was left behind in Cuba. (Steve Helsley)



Adamy 12-gauge over/under No. 29392. Adamy's gunmaking records did not survive World War II, but Helmut Adamy, who manages the company today, believes that the Beal/Hemingway gun dates back to his grandfather Albert and granduncle Franz and the very early days of Gebr. Adamy. On the other side of the receiver is inscribed "For Wm. F. Beal." (Steve Helsley)



Another shotgun at the Finca Vigía is this 28-gauge Belgian side-by-side boxlock with a 191024 serial number. The right barrel is marked FAUSTINO LOPEZ (most likely the retailer) and the left HABANA. The rib (between the barrels) reads: MANUFACTURE LIÈGEOISE D'ARMES A FEU, LIÈGE, FONDEE 1866, GRAND PRIX PARIS 1900 (Made by Liège Firearms, founded 1866, winner of a Grand Prize at the Paris Exposition of 1900). In front of the barrel extension is a crown with ML below; then ACIER SPECIAL (special steel), then another crown with XL below. It has 26-inch barrels and a Greener-style safety catch and crossbolt; there are holes in the stock and the under-rib for sling eyes. Based on a note in Hemingway's handwriting in the margin of a list of guns, it belonged to Thorwald Sánchez, one of Ernest and Mary's well-to-do Cuban shooting and fishing friends, who owned an ice-cream factory. (Steve Helsley)

their own chapter (one of them was still at the Finca Vigía when we visited), as do the Winchester .22 No. 100981 and the Mannlicher rifle, which also remains in the house today.

Of the guns on Lt. Guevara's list, the pistols, the unknown shotgun with the bad barrel and the Model 62-A have disappeared. (The Model 12 has too, but we know it "escaped" from Cuba—its last known appearance was in Jeffersonville, New York, in about 1980.) The military pistols may have been too troublesome to keep in a shaky dictatorship, and perhaps Hemingway got rid of them somehow. None of them appears on his Cuban gun permits from the 1950s. His Colt .22 pistol(s) are not listed there either, nor the Mauser pistol that Mary occasionally mentions in her biography of her life as Mrs. Hemingway.

However, these permits are no sure evidence that a particular gun was *not* in the Hemingway household. Ernest and Mary's firearms licenses from 1949, '50 and '51 and 1953 through '58 (all in the Finca Vigía archive) show many inconsistencies. Several of the guns in the house in February 2015—guns that were in use in the 1940s and '50s—do not appear on any license. Other guns that are listed on one license are missing from another license a year or two later, although they were still in the family; and there are strike-throughs and later additions on the forms, as well as mistakes in spelling and serial numbers.

There is an intriguing possibility, however, in Havana: the *Armera de Cuba*, a storefront firearms museum on a cobblestone street in the city's Old Quarter. It is a fascinating, nearly spooky place, a long, dim space lined with glass-fronted cabinets of dark wood. Standing in mute rows within are hundreds of rifles and shotguns of every description, none newer than about 1960. Floor counters hold handguns and cased long guns. Che Guevara's M2 carbine is there, along with a fancy multi-barrel double rifle set that the Soviets presented to Fidel Castro long ago, but most of these are ordinary sporting guns that were seized after the revolution.

Stern-faced women in blue uniforms caution visitors away from behind the counters, but some of these guns could have been Hemingway's.

Along one wall stands an ancient cash register. A cabinet in the far corner bears a decal for Peters-brand shotgun ammunition and DuPont powder. (Hemingway favored Peters Blue cartridges loaded with No. 6 shot.) Before 1960 this was the *Compañía Armera de Cuba*, a popular gunshop that belonged to Fernando Sainz de la Maza—the maternal grand-uncle of Harry and Bernie Macias, who hosted us in Miami. To them he was *Abuelo Fernando*, Grandfather Fernando. Later Bernie wrote in an e-mail:

I remember the day [the rebels] assaulted the gun shop. Grandfather was there alone with his brother and a gentleman who used to fix guns. Abuelo Fernando never drove a car and so our dad had to go in and get him because he was in quite a state of shock.

A few days earlier they had blown the polvorin [magazine] where he stored gunpowder in Guanabacoa outside of Havana. We heard the noise at our house in la Loma de Chaple and we also saw the smoke.



For his 50th birthday (July 21, 1949) Hemingway ordered an odd assortment of items by mail: signal flags, cases of Mexican food, a US Navy ship's clock, a waterproof flashlight and more. But his favorite gift to himself was this pair of Winchester 10-gauge blackpowder signaling cannons, posed here on the garden wall at the north side of the Finca, looking toward Havana. (Silvio Calabi)

Abuelo Fernando was our mother's godfather and we were extremely close. My first gun was an AYA 410 and then Abuelo Fernando gave me, at the end of 3rd grade, a Bianchi 20-gauge.

Those display windows are the ones I recall as I spent many afternoons there especially in summer vacations after lunch. What great memories.

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