

Ernest Hemingway, arguably the 20th century's best-known writer, was both a literary genius and a first class celebrity. This makes him a ready subject in my latest DD McGill Literati Mystery, *Hunting for Hemingway*. I read that in 1922 a valise filled with Hemingway's early manuscripts was stolen from his first wife, Hadley Richardson at the Paris railway station. In *Hunting for Hemingway* these lost manuscripts turn up in current day Chicago and, if authenticated, would be worth millions.

Much is known about Hemingway's later typewriters—his Underwood Portable, various Royal typewriters (one of which is still in his office at the Key West Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum), and his famous Swedish Halda typewriter (sold at auction in 2008) on which he typed *The Dangerous Summer*, but what model did Hemingway use during the early 1920s to type the missing manuscripts—11 stories and 20 poems? After much research, I determined that it must have been a portable folding Corona #3. It was one given to him on his 22nd birthday, July 21, 1921, by his then fiancée, Hadley Richardson. He and Hadley married in September and took it along when they sailed for Europe later that year.

The Corona #3 was the perfect typewriter for Hemingway, the foreign correspondent. Its carriage folded forward and down, so it fit neatly into its carrying case. Light, compact, and durable, Hemingway took it everywhere so he could easily send dispatches to his paper, the *Toronto Star*. Hemingway, I think, fell in love with this machine. He once declared to Ava Gardner that the only psychiatrist he would ever submit to was his Corona #3. He also sent this poem he'd written about it to Harriet Monroe in Chicago in February, 1922:

The mills of the gods grind slowly;
But this mill
Chatters in mechanical staccato.
Ugly short infantry of the mind,
Advancing over difficult terrain,
Make this Corona
Their mitrailleuse. *

*An old style machine gun.

The Corona #3 was an instant success when it debuted in 1912, replacing the Stan-

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dard Folding model of 1906. It was lighter and more compact, made mostly from aluminum. The #3 has three banks of keys and a double carriage shift: one for capitals and one for figures. It was one of the most successful machines in typewriter history, with more than 650,000 machines built and sold over a period of almost 30 years. This machine was so practical that it was chosen for use by the British Army in WWI. In 1926 the Corona factory merged with the L.C. Smith & Bros. Typewriter Company to form the Smith & Corona company.

Awhile ago, I purchased a Corona #3 from Hemingway's era on eBay. It's still in good condition, and I'm amazed at how light it is and how cleverly it folds into its case. I can easily see how Hemingway fell for it. I keep it in my office for inspiration.

Hunting for Hemingway, Diane Gilbert Madsen, *Midnight Ink*, September 2010, \$14.95