

The Growth of Frederick Henry in  
Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms  
As Indicated by His Three Baptisms

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty  
Of Saint Meinrad College of Liberal Arts  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

David L. Brindle  
May, 1972  
Saint Meinrad College  
St. Meinrad, Indiana



## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Chapter I: Baptism by Fire .....	3
Chapter II: Baptism by Water .....	11
Chapter III: Baptism by Blood .....	19
Conclusion .....	26
Appendix .....	27
Footnotes .....	29
Bibliography .....	31

## INTRODUCTION

In 1929 A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway was first published. The First World War had been over for ten years and this book was Hemingway's attempt to relate the war in Italy to his readers. More importantly, A Farewell to Arms was to clarify and intensify the type of hero who had already appeared in The Sun Also Rises and was to appear again and again in Hemingway's later novels. Frederick Henry of A Farewell to Arms is the typical Hemingway hero.

As for typical characters, they are usually tough men, experienced in the hard worlds they inhabit, and not obviously given to emotional display or sensitive shrinking, men like Rinaldi or Frederick Henry of A Farewell to Arms, Robert Jordan of For Whom the Bell Tolls, Harry Morgan of To Have and Have Not, the big-game hunter of 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro', the old bullfighter of 'The Undeclared', or the pugilist of 'Fifty Grand'. Or if the typical character is not of the seasoned order, he is a very young man, or boy, first entering the violent world and learning his first adjustment to it.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Hemingway's own apparent uncertainty<sup>2</sup> the book was to broaden his readership to the general public, at the time of its appearance in "Scribner's Magazine",<sup>3</sup> and implant upon the mind of the reading public the image of the Hemingway hero.

It is the purpose of this paper to show the development of the character Frederick Henry in A Farewell to Arms into the complete Hemingway hero through the means of the character's three baptisms. The three baptisms, by fire, water and blood, point out the three stages of Frederick Henry's growth into a man of love, understanding and endurance. In order to completely understand this development, a look at the author's experience in

World War I will be a helpful starting point.

Ernest Hemingway went to Italy in 1918 as an ambulance driver. This to him seemed like an adventure and great fun as the ideas of honor and courage in war seemed not yet to have taken precedence in his mind. " 'I was an awful dope when I went to the last war,' said Hemingway in 1942. 'I can remember just thinking that we were the home team and the Austrians were the visiting team.' "<sup>4</sup> This was not to last however. "Around midnight on July 8th, in a forward listening post on the west bank of the river near Fossalta, Ernest had been severely wounded."<sup>5</sup>

Hemingway was to recuperate over a five month period and during this time he fell in love with a nurse, at the American hospital in Milan, by the name of Agnes Von Kurowsky.

...his wounding, his five months' convalescence, and the unconsummated love affair with Agnes had matured him faster than anything else he had done. Like the scaggia that remained in his legs, the memory of the north of Italy in 1918 would stay with him all the rest of his life.<sup>6</sup>

Upon inspection, the similarities of his own experiences and those of his character, Frederick Henry, are many and precise. The growth then of Frederick Henry can be seen as some clue to the growth of the author, Ernest Hemingway.

For convenience, all quotations from A Farewell to Arms are from the paperback edition of the Scribner Library Series, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, New York, 1957. Page references are in parentheses in the text, e.g. (AFTA 30) following each quotation from the novel.

## CHAPTER I

### Baptism by Fire

In Book I of A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway introduces the reader to Frederick Henry, an American ambulance driver in the Italian army, and the other men at war in Italy. Frederick is seen as a man thrown into a world of violence, caught between his appetites and the things he really wishes to do. In the third chapter, Frederick gives voice to this conflict while at mess sitting next to the priest.

That night at the mess I sat next to the priest and he was disappointed and suddenly hurt that I had not gone to the Abruzzi. He had written to his father that I was coming and they had made preparations. I myself felt as badly as he did and could not understand why I had not gone. It was what I had wanted to do and I tried to explain how one thing had led to another and finally he saw it and understood that I had really wanted to go and it was almost all right. I had drunk much wine and afterward coffee and Strega and I explained, winefully, how we did not do the things we wanted to do; we never did such things. AFTA 13.

This conflict is really inside Frederick but is manifested as a conflict between the priest and the other officers around Frederick. This struggle for his soul is real but unknown to any of them save the priest. The priest knows of the struggle going on inside Frederick but Frederick is not yet ready to put this conflict to the challenge. He only knows that he is unable to do what he really wants to do. He lives for the moment but is dissatisfied with it. The priest sees that Frederick is different, that he is a sleepless man or in Hemingway's terms a man haunted by Nada.<sup>7</sup>

Frederick, at the opening of the novel, lives in the world of random and meaningless appetite, knowing that it is all and all and all, or thinking that he knows that. But behind that there is a dissatisfaction and disgust. Upon his return from his leave, sitting in the officers' mess, he tries to tell the priest how he is sorry that he had not gone to the clear, cold, dry country--the priest's home, which takes on the shadowy symbolic significance of another kind of life, another view of the world.<sup>8</sup> The priest had always known that other country.

The day after his return from leave Frederick goes, reluctantly, with his friend Rinaldi to the British hospital. It is here that Frederick first meets Catherine Barkley. From the beginning he finds her beautiful but is unsure how to handle her. "Frederick's relationship to Catherine in Book I is like a game of bridge where you pretend to be playing for stakes, but do not know what the stakes are."<sup>9</sup> Step by step Frederick and Catherine initiate a love affair that has its foundations in the "rotten game" of seduction in war time.<sup>10</sup> Frederick is quite explicit about this fact.

I turned her so I could see her face when I kissed her and I saw that her eyes were shut. I kissed both her shut eyes. I thought she was probably a little crazy. It was all right if she was. I did not care what I was getting into. This was better than going every evening to the house for officers where the girls climbed all over you and put your cap on backward as a sign of affection between their trips upstairs with brother officers. I knew I did not love Catherine Barkley nor had any idea of loving her. This was a game, like bridge, in which you said things instead of playing cards. Like bridge you had to pretend you were playing for money or playing for some stakes. Nobody had mentioned what the stakes were. It was all right with me. AFTA 30.

It is obvious that Catherine also is aware of what is happening between herself and Frederick.

"This is a rotten game we play, isn't it?"  
"What game?"  
"Don't be dull."  
"I'm not, on purpose."  
"You're a nice boy," she said. "And you play it as well as you know how. But it's a rotten game."  
"Do you always know what people think?"  
"Not always. But I do with you. You don't have to pretend you love me. That's over for the evening. Is there anything you'd like to talk about?"  
"But I do love you."  
"Please let's not lie when we don't have to. I had a very fine little show and I'm all right now. I'm not mad and I'm not gone off. It's only a little sometimes."  
AFTA 31.

In Book I this is the character of the affair between Frederick and Catherine. In his early search for some meaning to life he has not yet been able to find anything to hold onto--not even Catherine. His search is not yet well enough defined for him to have a starting point. When he is going off to battle Catherine gives him a medal of Saint Anthony. Neither of them have any confidence in such artifacts but it appears to make her feel better. This gesture is to prepare the reader for the turning point in Frederick's life, his severe wound up above Plava; the first baptism.

Frederick, still unaware of the reality of the war around him or the reality of his own being, is forced to a realization in a startling manner.

I ate the end of my piece of cheese and took a swallow of wine. Through the other noise I heard a cough, then came the chuh-chuh-chuh-chuh--then there was a flash, as when a blast-furnace door is swung open, and a roar that started white and went red and on and on in a rushing wind. I tried to breathe but my breath would not come and I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind. I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that it had all been a mistake to think you just died.

Then I floated, and instead of going on I felt myself slide back. I breathed and I was back. The ground was torn up and in front of my head I heard somebody crying. I thought somebody was screaming. I tried to move but I could not move. AFTA 54.

As he looks around he sees and touches one of the men that was in the trench with him. He finds him to be horribly mutilated and tries to help him while calling for help. This is to no avail as the man dies. He still feels that he should locate the others that had been with him.

I sat up straight and as I did so something inside my head moved like the weights on a doll's eyes and it hit me inside in back of my eyeballs. My legs felt warm and wet and my shoes were wet and warm inside. I knew that I was hit and leaned over and put my hand on my knee. My knee wasn't there. My hand went in and my knee was down on my shin. I wiped my hand on my shirt and another floating light came very slowly down and I looked at my leg and was very afraid. Oh God, I said, get me out of here. I knew, however, that there had been three others. There were four drivers. Passini was dead. That left three. Someone took hold of me under the arms and somebody else lifted my legs. AFTA 55-56.

Frederick is finally given some minimal treatment and moved to the field hospital. There he is visited by his two friends, Rinaldi and the priest. The visit by the young priest is of great importance here at the end of Book I.

The priest's role is to indicate the next stage of the story, the discovery of the true nature of love, the 'wish to do things for.' And he accomplishes this by indicating a parallel between secular love and Divine love, a parallel which implies Frederick's quest for meaning and certitude.

The priest begins by saying,

"It does not matter. But there in my country it is understood that a man may love God. It is not a dirty joke."

"I understand."

He looked at me and smiled.



"You understand but do not love God."  
 "No."  
 "You do not love Him at all?" he asked.  
 "I am afraid of him in the night sometimes."  
 "You should love Him."  
 "I don't love much."  
 "Yes," he said. "You do. What you tell me about in the nights. That is not love. That is only passion and lust. When you love you wish to do things for. You wish to sacrifice for. You wish to serve."  
 "I don't love."  
 "You will. I know you will. Then you will be happy."  
 AFTA 71-72.

Book II of A Farewell to Arms opens with Frederick's arrival at the American hospital in Milan. Soon after his arrival, Catherine Barkley is transferred to the same hospital. Things have changed with Frederick since his wounding, his baptism by fire. He has learned something about his search for meaning, and with the help of the priest, that love can give meaning to a life. He is not clear about this change nor is he clear about the real meaning of love in his life, but he does know that something has happened. At this time he does not question his new feeling, he just accepts it. " 'Hello', I said. When I saw her I was in love with her. Everything turned over inside of me." AFTA 91. A short while later he says to himself,

She went out. God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. I had not wanted to fall in love with anyone. But God knows I had and I lay on the bed in the room of the hospital in Milan and all sorts of things went through my head but I felt wonderful and finally Miss Gage came in. AFTA 93.

Once the operation on Frederick's wounds is completed, Hemingway goes even deeper into the relationship between the young lieutenant and the nurse. The growth taking place in Frederick and given its first light by the priest in Book I

continues to a far greater degree with Catherine. Carlos Baker says,

By the close of Book I, largely through the agency of the priest, a complex connection has come clear between the idea of home and the combination of high ground, cold weather, love, and the love of God...But in the American hospital at Milan, following Henry's ordeal by fire at the front not far from Isonzo, the casual affair becomes an honorable though unpriested marriage. Because she can make a 'home' of any room she occupies--and Henry several times alludes to this power of hers--Catherine naturally moves into association with ideas of home, love, and happiness.<sup>12</sup>

As Catherine continues to build "homes" for the two of them she is increasingly credible, dainty and pleasant.<sup>13</sup> There are moments, however, of premonition, times when the future looks dark, premonitions of the incompleteness of Frederick's first baptism. Rain begins to take on a clear meaning. "She is afraid of the rain, she says, and when pressed by Frederick for an explanation, admits that it is because she sometimes sees herself dead in it. Frederick is unbelieving."<sup>14</sup> Later in the same scene Catherine says, " 'It's all nonsense. It's only nonsense. I'm not afraid of the rain. I'm not afraid of the rain. Oh, oh, God, I wish I wasn't.' She was crying. I comforted her and she stopped crying. But outside it kept on raining." AFTA 126.

Rain then has become a symbol of death. The first baptism, by fire, has led to an incomplete understanding of what makes life meaningful. Both Frederick and Catherine begin to feel a trap sprung by this incompleteness. Later, when Catherine tells Frederick that they are going to have a child, they speak of being trapped though neither of them know of what the trap

consists. It is Catherine who speaks first.

"You aren't angry are you, darling?"

"No."

"And you don't feel trapped?"

"Maybe a little. But not by you."

"I didn't mean by me. You mustn't be stupid. I meant trapped at all."

"You always feel trapped biologically."

She went away a long way without stirring or removing her hand.

" 'Always' isn't a pretty word."

"I'm sorry."

"It's all right. But you see I've never had a baby and I've never even loved any one. And I've tried to be the way you wanted and then you talk about 'always'."

"I could cut off my tongue," I offered.

"Oh, darling!" she came back from wherever she had been. "You mustn't mind me." We were both together again and the self-consciousness was gone. "We really are the same one and we mustn't misunderstand on purpose." AFTA 139.

In these few lines are all of the important elements of Book

## II. Earl Rovit sums up these elements in the following way.

Book Two records the consummation of the affair with Catherine and the idyllic union they share in the four or so months of Henry's convalescence. According to the priest's definition of love, there is little doubt that Catherine achieves it: 'I want just what you want. There isn't any me any more. Just what you want.' But Henry's position is more difficult to determine. He 'loves' Catherine, worries about not having married her when he learns that she is pregnant, and certainly enjoys her serviceable company. During his stay in the hospital, he centers on the island of pleasure and fulfillment which she fashions for him in the midst of the war. But his role is consistently that of the acceptor of services; nowhere is there any indication that he is moved to become servitor as well as master. She creates the various 'homes' they occupy, and at the termination of his treatment she remains outside the railway station, while he entrains to return to the front.

While Catherine has found meaning in her life in Frederick, he is incomplete. He does not truly understand the meaning of love and thus must face still another baptism. The time has come for Frederick to return to the front. The last conversation

between Catherine and Frederick at the train station points up the transition from home back to war and disruption. Once more the important symbol is rain. The rain is opposed to the light on Catherine's face as she waves goodbye.

"We might as well say good-bye."

"I can't go in?"

"No."

"Good-bye, Cat."

"Will you tell him the hospital?"

"Yes."

I told the driver the address to drive to. He nodded.

"Good-bye," I said. "Take good care of yourself and young Catherine."

"Good-bye, darling."

"Good-bye," I said. I stepped out into the rain and the carriage started. Catherine leaned out and I saw her face in the light. She smiled and waved. AFTA 158-159.

The importance of rain as the symbol of death prepares the reader for Frederick Henry's second baptism. Water now becomes the symbol for another kind of death, a death that leads to baptism and rebirth.

## CHAPTER II

### Baptism by Water

When Frederick Henry returns to the war in Book III, he finds things to be somehow different than they were at the time of his wounding. He speaks of the ground being muddy (from the rain) and the trees bare. When he gets to Gorizia he says, "It did not feel like a homecoming." AFTA 163. He does not yet realize it but his home is now with Catherine. Even as he lays on his bed he cannot help but think of her. It is at this time that he sees his friend Rinaldi once more.

"You act like a married man," he said. "What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing," I said. "What's the matter with you?"

"This war is killing me," Rinaldi said, "I am very depressed by it." He folded his hands over his knee.

"Oh," I said.

"What's the matter? Can't I even have human impulses?"

"No. I can see you've been having a fine time. Tell me."

"All summer and all fall I've operated. I work all the time. I do everybody's work. All the hard ones they leave to me. By God, baby, I am becoming a lovely surgeon."

"That sounds better."

"I never think. No, by God, I don't think; I operate." AFTA 167.

This change in Rinaldi from his previous light hearted cynicism shows that he too has passed through some sort of baptism of fire but to the worse. This is evident later that evening when Rinaldi refuses leave and worries about having syphilis.

Frederick asks the Major to try and keep Rinaldi from drinking so much, which in itself is an indication of the change taking place in him--he is worrying about someone besides himself.

His next reunion is with the priest. As he is left with the

priest the rain has stopped and they go upstairs. The priest seems to be more sure of himself now and is confident that the war must end soon or at least that the fighting will stop.

Frederick, however, does not share his optimism. This meeting between the two friends is much less satisfying than their meetings in Books I and II. The end of the meeting is more formal than any other talk between the two men.

"I sleep at 307 now," he said.

"I go out on post early to-morrow."

"I'll see you when you come back."

"We'll have a walk and talk together." I walked with him to the door.

"Don't go down," he said. "It is very nice that you are back. Though not so nice for you." He put his hand on my shoulder.

"It's all right for me," I said. "Good-night."

"Good-night. Ciaou!"

"Ciaou!" I said. I was deadly sleepy. AFTA 180.

It is clear that Frederick's dependence upon the priest has been transferred to a dependence on Catherine.

The reader is first shown just how far the baptism by fire has taken Frederick when his attitude towards those things held in reverence by the men around is made clear.

I did not say anything. I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain...Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates. AFTA 185.

This anti-idealism is the mark of the man set apart from society and part of a small group who follow the "code". Frederick is not yet a full member of a small group but the elements are there, ready to be nurtured by the retreat of the Italian army.

When the idea of a retreat is first mentioned, no one

actually believes that it will happen. When the retreat finally does begin the symbols of death are present once more, especially the rain. This is the beginning of the end for what is left of the old Frederick Henry.

The next night the retreat started. We heard that Germans and Austrians had broken through in the north and were coming down the mountain valleys toward Cividale and Udine. The retreat was orderly, wet and sullen. In the night, going slowly along the crowded roads we passed troops marching under the rain, guns, horses pulling wagons, mules, motor trucks, all moving away from the front. There was no more disorder than in an advance. AFTA 188.

As the retreat continues it becomes more and more disorderly. At last the column is moving so slow in the rain that it finally stops entirely. Frederick sleeps and dreams of Catherine. The war and Catherine become intermixed in his dreams as do the symbols of rain and love. "That my love Catherine. That my sweet love Catherine down might rain." AFTA 197. But Frederick is suddenly awakened by one of the drivers as the rain slackens and the column moves ahead a little. He knows that in order to reach safety, he and his trucks must move from the main column.

They have picked up two sergeants, who can help push if they get stuck in the mud, and leave the main road. It is on this road that they come across an empty farmhouse deserted by the family because of the war. This farmhouse serves as a symbol of the destruction of "homes" brought on by the war. This is much like the destruction of the "homes" made for Frederick and Catherine. No matter how strong and good the home in time of war

it cannot stand separate and out of sight of the conflict. "It was a fine, low, solid stone house and the ironwork of the well was very good. Ahead of us the road was narrow and muddy and there was a high hedge on either side. Behind, the cars were following closely." AFTA 201.

Frederick is later forced to kill one of the sergeants as both sergeants desert the stranded trucks. As they reach the river Tagliamento they finally see some of their own army in the form of battle police. The battle police, the shooting of the sergeant, the rain, the deserted farmhouse, and the loss of confidence in glory and honor all now contrive to make Frederick a deserter.

Frederick is taken as a suspicious individual and though he resists, it is to no avail. He now witnesses the idiocy and cruelty of the field courtmarshall. He watches as a lieutenant-colonel is led off to be shot. He then watches as the "judges" begin to question someone else.

They were questioning some one else. This officer too was separated from his troops. He was not allowed to make an explanation. He cried when they read the sentence from the pad of paper, and they were questioning another when they shot him. They made a point of being intent on questioning the next man while the man who had been questioned before was being shot. In this way there was obviously nothing they could do about it. AFTA 224.

This is, for Frederick, the final idiocy of a world gone mad. Ray West says of the military police.

The military police are firing but are not being fired on. They are like religious persons who have never been tempted, condemning the sinner who has succumbed; the police have the hollow shell of patriotism, using such phrases as 'the sacred soil of the fatherland' and



'the fruits of victory,' but it is punctured by the lieutenant-colonel's simple question: 'Have you ever been in a retreat?' The carabinieri's brave words have no relation to the reality of the situation, while the condemned man's question goes right to the heart of it... With the retreat at Caporetto, the Austrian front ceased to be 'the picturesque front'; it is no longer subject to the traditional rules of 'honorable' warfare.<sup>16</sup>

In this way Hemingway has covered the gammut of the war experience and leads to the conclusion of despondency. Everything has caught up with Frederick and now he must make his decision to either stand and die or flee and live. The total effect of this war and retreat is best summed up by Malcolm Cowley.

Hemingway describes not an army but a whole people in motion: guns nuzzling the heads of patient farm horses, munition trucks with their radiator caps an inch from the tailboard of wagons loaded with chairs, tables, sewing machines, farm implements; then behind them ambulances, mountain artillery, cattle and army trucks, all pointed south; and groups of scared peasants and interminable files of gray infantrymen moving in the rain past the miles of stalled vehicles. Lieutenant Frederick Henry is part of the retreat, commanding three motor ambulances and half a dozen men, losing his vehicles in muddy lanes, losing his men, too, by death and desertion, shooting an Italian sergeant who tries to run away--but in spirit he remains a non-participant. He had been studying architecture in Rome, had become a gentleman volunteer in order to see the war, had served two years, been wounded and decorated: now he is sick of the whole thing, eager only to get away.<sup>17</sup>

Seen in this light Frederick can make only one decision. He must escape and return to the world of light, home and Catherine. His final decision is made as he says "We stood in the rain and were taken out one at a time to be questioned and shot. So far they had shot everyone they had questioned." AFTA 224.

Knowing that his time for questioning is near, Frederick makes his break.

I looked at the carabinieri. They were looking at the newcomers. The others were looking at the colonel. I ducked down, pushed between two men, and ran for the river, my head down. I tripped at the edge and went in with a splash. The water was very cold and I stayed under as long as I could. I could feel the current swirl me and I stayed under until I thought I could never come up. The minute I came up I took a breath and went down again. It was easy to stay under with so much clothing and my boots. When I came up the second time I saw a piece of timber ahead of me and reached it and held on with one hand. I kept my head behind it and did not even look over it. I did not want to see the bank. There were shots when I ran and shots when I came up the first time. I heard them when I was almost above water. There were no shots now. The piece of timber swung in the current and I held it with one hand. I looked at the bank. It seemed to be going by very fast. There was much wood in the stream. The water was very cold. We passed the brush of an island above the water. I held onto the timber with both hands and let it take me along. The shore was out of sight now. AFTA 225.

Frederick Henry has passed through his second baptism. This baptism was by water and had an even greater effect on him than the first baptism by fire. He is now heading towards Catherine with a greater awareness of himself. He has become one of those who is cut off from the rest of the world.

The final awareness means, as we have said, that the individual is thrown back upon his private discipline and his private capacity to endure. The hero cuts himself off from the herd, the confused world, which symbolically appears as the routed army at Caporetto. And, as Malcolm Cowley has pointed out, the plunge into the flooded Tagliamento, when Frederick escapes from the battle police, has the significance of a rite. By this 'baptism' Frederick is reborn into another world; he comes out into the world of the man alone, no longer supported by and involved in society...

So Frederick, by a decision, does what the boy Nick does as the result of the accident of a wound. He makes a 'separate peace.' And from the waters of

the flooded Tagliamento arises the Hemingway hero in his purest form, with human history and obligation washed away, ready to enact the last phase of his appropriate drama, and learn from his inevitable defeat the lesson of lonely fortitude.<sup>18</sup>

Is Frederick Henry truly through with the initiation of baptism? He is free from the laws and world of the herd at this point in his story but has he found something upon which to base his life? This is an important question in considering the whole of Frederick's development through baptism. The question of love in a man's growth is still incomplete in the story. Frederick, in other words, must still gain a basis and must question whether secular love is enough to base one's life on. According to the definition of love given by Hemingway, Frederick is not yet complete. In 1963 Ernest Hemingway defined love in an article in "Playboy" magazine.

Love is the universal creator of man and the universe. Love is the universal instinct. Love enlarges the scope of the mind, enhances the mental faculties, clarifies emotion and gives poise to enthusiasm. Love lives and increases her store by giving. Her genius is in sharing all that she possesses and all that she is. Love is reciprocal. To understand another is one of life's richest blessings, and to be understood by another is perhaps love's sweetest and most satisfying gift. Love gives without thinking of return. Love is honest and patient, though all about her is faithless, dishonest and turbulent. Love recognizes neither time, space, nor outward separation. She multiplies joys, displaces friction and discord with harmony, judges not by appearances. Love is the ultimate of existence, the principle of brotherhood, the essence of character, the basis of fellowship. Love looks for the good everywhere and under all conditions, and finds it. Love reveals the plan of the universe and the character of a man at a single glance. And religion is simply love lived.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, Frederick must learn not to depend on one other person as his whole religion, his whole expression of loving.

In order for him to learn this he must pass through one more baptism. With the death of Catherine he will pass through the initiation, the baptism, of blood.

### CHAPTER III

#### Baptism by Blood

Frederick Henry, at the beginning of Book IV, is still on his way to find Catherine and "home". He says that he feels like a masquerader when he changes to civilian clothes to avoid being taken prisoner by military police as a deserter. The war is not yet behind him for he has not yet found Catherine. He must struggle to find his way. "He cannot escape the war until he escapes from Italy with Catherine, and to escape is to ~~struggle~~ struggle."<sup>20</sup>

Frederick finds Catherine at Stresa but it continues to rain as it had throughout Frederick's return to war, his experience with the retreat, and finally his desertion. That night Frederick realizes that how a man gets through the traps set for him depends on the kind of man he is.<sup>21</sup>

If people bring so much courage to this world the world had to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry. AFTA 249.

Frederick knows this from his experience with the retreat but it also serves as a premonition of the final baptism with the death of Catherine.<sup>22</sup>

The next morning the sun is shining. "I remember waking in the morning. Catherine was asleep and the sunlight was coming in through the window." AFTA 250. It appears that they are finally safe and out of the rain. The day passes in peace as the sun

continues to shine, but the peace is to be short lived. Their "home" in the hotel is not safe from the war and the rain. That night it rains and Frederick finds that he is to be arrested. The hotel barman comes to see him.

"What's the matter, Emilio? Are you in trouble?"

"No. You are, Tenente."

"Yes?"

"They are going to arrest you in the morning." AFTA 264.

The rain continues through the night as Frederick and Catherine flee to Switzerland, across the lake in a rowboat. They row until morning and are sure that they have reached Switzerland when they finally pull to shore. All during the long night Catherine has shown her concern for Frederick and has tried to make a "home" for him even in the rowboat. She continues to ask how he feels and gives him a drink when he is thirsty. Finally she insists on rowing, worrying more about Frederick than her own pregnant condition.

"Let me row awhile," Catherine said.

"I don't think you ought to."

"Nonsense. It would be good for me. It would keep me from being too stiff."

"I don't think you should, Cat."

"Nonsense. Rowing in moderation is very good for the pregnant lady." AFTA 274-275.

It continues to rain lightly when they put ashore in the Swiss country side town. Frederick remarks that it is still drizzling but that does not keep his joy from showing through. "It was a nice looking little town. There were many fishing boats along the quay and nets were spread on racks. There was a fine November rain falling but it looked cheerful and clean even with the rain." AFTA 278.

They are questioned about their strange arrival but the pressure is off as the officials who question them become more and more friendly and helpful. The rain continues lightly even as they receive help in finding a place to live. The rain will not stop until they are in their new home in the mountains.

Carlos Baker says of the cessation of the rain,

Not until they are settled in idyllic hibernation in their rented chalet above Montreux are they really out of the rain. As if to emphasize by climactic accompaniment their 'confused alarms of struggle and flight,' the rain has swept over them during their escape up the lake in an open boat. Once in the mountains, however, they are out of the lowlands, out of danger, out of the huge, tired debacle of war. Above Montreux, as in the priest's homeland of Abruzzi, the ridges are 'iron-hard with the frost.' The deep snow isolates them, and gives them a feeling of domestic safety, tranquility, and invulnerability.<sup>23</sup>

Book V thus begins with a feeling of ease and safety for the two lovers. Both feel that their life together is now complete with the war and rain all but forgotten and a child on the way to make their family complete. Neither realize that the child is to be the end of their 'family' and the cause for Frederick's final baptism.

The cold is particularly evident as a sign of peace when Frederick talks of the nights. But even then the war is in the background.

We slept well and if I woke in the night I knew it was from only one cause and I would shift the feather bed over, very softly so that Catherine would not be wakened and then go back to sleep again, warm and with the new lightness of thin covers. The war seemed as far away as the football games of some one else's college. But I knew from the papers that they were still fighting in the mountains because the snow would not come. AFTA 291.

As the time passes, Catherine worries that she is unattractive to Frederick but he dispells this notion when she brings it up. They speak of having a "fine time" and their happiness increases as the snow comes and the winter presses on. Catherine wants to be as much like Frederick as possible, she wants them to be one.

"...Oh, darling. I want you so much I want to be you too."

"You are. We're the same one."

"I know it. At night we are."

"The nights are grand."

"I want us to be all mixed up. I don't want you to go away. I just said that. You go if you want to. But hurry right back. Why, darling, I don't live at all when I'm not with you."

"I won't ever go away," I said. "I'm no good when you're not there. I haven't any life at all any more."

"I want you to have a life. I want you to have a fine life. But we'll have it together, won't we?"

"And now do you want me to stop growing my beard or let it go on?" AFTA 299-300.

He does not answer her question about their having a life together. He evidently does not have an answer to the question of permanency at this time; he only knows what is happening right then and that he is happy. They do not see anyone as a rule in the long winter of their stay in the mountains above Montreux. She asks him at one point, "You don't want to see people do you, darling?" AFTA 302. His answer is a plain no. It is shortly after this that their life begins to end.

We had a fine life. We lived through the months of January and February and the winter was very fine and we were very happy. There had been short thaws when the wind blew warm and the snow softened and the air felt like spring, but always the clear hard cold had come again and the winter had returned. In March came the first break in the winter. In the night it started raining. It rained on all morning and turned the snow



to slush and made the mountain-side dismal. There were clouds over the lake and over the valley. It was raining high up the mountain. Catherine wore heavy overshoes and I wore Mr. Guttingen's rubber-boots and we walked to the station under an umbrella, through the slush and the running water that was washing the ice of the roads bare, to stop at the pub before lunch for a vermouth. Outside we could hear the rain. AFTA 306.

The rain has started again and just as the farmhouse had not been a refuge from the war, the mountain is not a refuge for Frederick and Catherine. Time is catching up to the couple and they try to make the best of the change in the weather and the approach of their fate.<sup>24</sup> They have moved into town because the mountain is no longer a complete shelter and in order to be closer to the hospital. "We knew the baby was very close now and it gave us both a feeling as though something were hurrying us and we could not lose any time together." AFTA 311.

At three in the morning Catherine and Frederick go to the hospital and by noon there has been no progress in the birth except for the strain on Catherine. The final baptism of Frederick Henry is beginning. Later in the day Catherine is in much pain and she speaks of being all broken. This is a fulfillment of the premonition that Frederick experienced several months before.

"I'm not brave any more, darling. I'm all broken. They've broken me. I know it now."

"Everybody is that way."

"But it's awful. They just keep it up till they break you." AFTA 323.

A Caesarean is decided upon to try and save both Catherine and the baby. The baby is delivered but Frederick does not want to know about the child. He feels that it almost killed Catherine and she is his whole world, his religion. Frederick at the

beginning of the Caesarean had noticed that the rain had started again. Frederick, waiting to see Catherine, reflects on the "trap", baptism, the way the world breaks everyone, and his own feelings now that it is all but over.

Now Catherine would die. That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or gave you the syphilis like Rinaldi. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you. AFTA 327.

It is over. He sees her once more but it is like talking to one already dead. A short while later Catherine dies.

It seems she had one hemorrhage after another. They couldn't stop it. I went into the room and stayed with Catherine until she died. She was unconscious all the time, and it did not take her very long to die. AFTA 331.

Frederick says good-bye to the dead Catherine and then walks home in the rain.

Frederick Henry now has passed through his final baptism. He now is truly a man alone. Robert Penn Warren speaks directly to this when he writes;

In the end, with the death of Catherine, Frederick discovers that the attempt to find a substitute for universal meaning in the limited meaning of the personal relationship is doomed to failure. It is doomed because it is liable to all the accidents of a world in which human beings are like ants running back and forth on a log burning in a campfire and in which death is, as Catherine says just before her own death, 'just a dirty trick.' But this is not to deny the effort, or to deny the value of the discipline, the code, the stoic endurance, the things that make it true--<sup>25</sup> half true--that 'nothing ever happens to the brave.'

This code, which Frederick Henry must now live under and with, was expressed by Ernest Hemingway as, "Dans la vie il faut

(d'abord) durer."<sup>26</sup>

To learn these lessons completely Frederick had to pass through the final baptism, a baptism of blood. The baptism is complete not only with the death of Catherine but with the death of the child as well. In an earlier draft of the conclusion, Hemingway had thought to have the baby born alive, a boy.<sup>27</sup> This, however, would have left some vestige of Catherine for him to cling to, to keep him from accepting the code entirely. With this baptism Frederick Henry walks out in the rain a man alone who must continue to walk without Catherine no matter how hard the rain may fall. Now he can and will endure; he is a baptised member of the code.

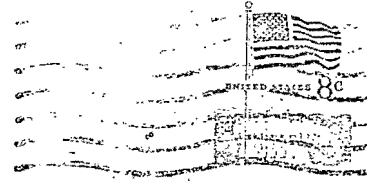
## CONCLUSION

Frederick Henry is now the complete man, the complete hero of Ernest Hemingway. By his three baptisms he has grown from a day to day appetitive man to a member of the "code." He has been baptised by the fire of war and wounding, as portrayed in Book I, which led him to a new realization of himself and his relationship to Catherine. His second baptism by water in the river of Book III led him to a belief in something "good and true." Finally, he has been baptised into the stoicism of the Hemingway man by the blood of Catherine's death in Book V.

Frederick had made a "religion" of a single individual - a woman whom he loved. By her death he is cut loose from what is for him a real meaning, home, "the mountain."<sup>28</sup> What does Frederick as Hemingway hero do? He continues. He walked from the hospital and out into the rain which he fears as a symbol of death and destruction of all that is of value. But now he has learned to endure.

Frederick is still a man in search of a home, something to make the pain of life worthwhile. Catherine would not break so she had to die. Frederick was broken but through his series of baptisms is stronger at the broken places. AFTA 249.

APPENDIX



David L. Brindle, Esq.  
Mail Box 31  
St. Meinrad College  
St. Meinrad, Indiana - 47374

MRS. ERNEST HEMINGWAY, 27 EAST 65TH STREET, NEW YORK 10021

Dear Mr. Brindle - There are various unfinished versions of A Farewell to Arms. I have seen several of them for Mrs. Mary Hemingway Ketchum, Idaho. I cannot see in your thesis. I'm sorry. I may say that one ending suggests that Ernest thought of baby born alive. a boy. Mary Hemingway

David L. Brindle  
Mail Box 31  
St. Meinrad College  
St. Meinrad, Indiana 47374

Dear Mrs. Hemingway;

I am a student at St. Meinrad College in St. Meinrad, Indiana. Since a thesis is required and I am an English major, I have decided to do work on A Farewell to Arms. I have been an admirer of your late husband for many years and this opportunity and task is rapidly becoming a great pleasure for that reason.

The reason I am writing to you is for help with a detail concerning the end of my thesis. Carlos Baker edited an anthology of international critics' writing, concerning Mr. Hemingway's writing, entitled Hemingway and His Critics. In this book there is an article by George Plimpton called "An Interview with Ernest Hemingway" reprinted from The Paris Review 18, (Spring 1958). Mr. Plimpton, early in the interview, asked "How much rewriting do you do?" Mr. Hemingway replied, "It depends. I rewrote the ending to Farewell to Arms, the last page of it, thirty-nine times before I was satisfied."

I have one of these early endings from Mr. Baker's Ernest Hemingway: Critiques of Four Major Novels published by Scribners in 1962. My question is whether or not there are any other endings which still remain and whether or not they are available?

I was encouraged to write to you concerning this matter by three things. First, an article in Paris Match mentioned you as a helpful source. Secondly, a Benedictine nun who teaches here mentioned your help to a fellow sister a few years ago. Finally, you are the executor of your husband's estate which makes you the proper source for permission on all unprinted material.

I hope that this letter reaches you since the address is limited and I also hope that you can be of some help with my question. I would like to thank you for your attention to this letter and also express my deep gratitude for your husband's writing which has been a wonderful experience for me. If my thesis can in some way express my admiration and respect for Ernest Hemingway and his work, then the effort will have been worth the time and patience that a thesis takes.

Thanking you in advance,

David L. Brindle

David L. Brindle  
St. Meinrad College

## FOOTNOTES

### Introduction:

<sup>1</sup>Robert Penn Warren, Introduction to A Farewell to Arms (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. xi.

<sup>2</sup>Carlos Baker, Ernest Hemingway - A Life Story (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), p. 199.

<sup>3</sup>Warren, p. vii.

<sup>4</sup>Baker, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

### Chapter I: Baptism by Fire:

<sup>7</sup>Warren, p. xxix.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. xxviii.

<sup>9</sup>Ray B. West, Ernest Hemingway: Critiques of Four Major Novels, ed. Carlos Baker (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 31.

<sup>10</sup>Carlos Baker, Hemingway: The Writer As Artist (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 104.

<sup>11</sup>Warren, p. xxix.

<sup>12</sup>Baker, Writer As Artist, p. 104.

<sup>13</sup>Sheridan Baker, Ernest Hemingway: An Introduction and Interpretation (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), p. 69.

<sup>14</sup>West, pp. 31-32.

<sup>15</sup>Earl Rovit, Ernest Hemingway (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1963), pp. 102-103.

### Chapter II: Baptism by Water:

<sup>16</sup>West, p. 33.

<sup>17</sup>Malcolm Cowley, Exiles Return (New York: The Viking Press, 1969), p. 45.

<sup>18</sup>Warren, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>19</sup>Ernest Hemingway, "A Man's Credo" (Playboy Magazine, January, 1963, Vol. 10, No. 1), p. 175.

Chapter III: Baptism by Blood:

<sup>20</sup>West, p. 33.

<sup>21</sup>Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway - A Reconsideration, rev. ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1966), p. 93.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>23</sup>Baker, Writer As Artist, p. 106.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>25</sup>Warren, p. xxxi.

<sup>26</sup>Baker, Hemingway - Life Story, p. 220.

<sup>27</sup>Mary Hemingway, Letter to David L. Brindle, March 12, 1972. (See Appendix)

Conclusion:

<sup>28</sup>Baker, Writer As Artist, pp. 94-116.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baker, Carlos, Ernest Hemingway - A Life Story. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Hemingway: The Writer As Artist. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963.
- Baker, Sheridan, Ernest Hemingway: An Introduction and Interpretation. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967.
- Cowley, Malcolm, Exiles Return. New York: The Viking Press, 1969.
- Hemingway, Ernest, A Farewell To Arms. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "A Man's Credo", Playboy Magazine. January, 1963, vol. 10, No. 1.
- Hemingway, Mary, Personal letter, March 12, 1972.
- Rovit, Earl, Ernest Hemingway. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1963.
- Warren, Robert Penn, Introduction to A Farewell To Arms. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.
- West, Ray B., Ernest Hemingway: Critiques of Four Major Novels. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962.
- Young, Philip, Ernest Hemingway - A Reconsideration. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1966.

ARCHABEY LIBRARY



3 0764 1002 8940 9