The epilogue not chosen from *For Whom the Bell Tolls* … a series of love letters written from the front during the last months of WWII courting his fourth wife while married to his third … letters sent and received from more than 300 people including Marlene Dietrich, Ingrid Bergman, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Joan Miro, and Maxwell Perkins … Nobel Prize congratulatory telegrams from around the world … letters to his beloved sons … instructions in Spanish to the cook regarding preparation of favorite dishes and the day of the week he preferred to eat them … photographs of dinner parties, fishing trips, African safaris, and family celebrations … 9,000 book personal library.

These documents reflect just a fraction of the treasures that exists at Hemingway’s home, Finca Vigia, in Cuba. Some papers are more than 90 years old. The most recent are from 1960. All are fragile, deteriorating, in peril of being destroyed by time and climate.

**Background.** Finca Vigía (Lookout Farm), located on the outskirts of Havana, Cuba was Ernest Hemingway’s home from 1939-1960. It was there that he wrote standing at his typewriter, entertained, married twice, accepted his Nobel Prize for Literature, and pitched endless innings of baseball with the neighborhood children. Finca Vigía was the only one of his homes where the author put down roots, gathering the objects that he valued. He left in 1960 for medical treatment in the United States; in 1961 he committed suicide in Idaho. At the same time the Cuban government nationalized all property and Hemingway’s home was turned into a museum.

Over the next forty years, Finca and its irreplaceable collection fell into disrepair. More than 4,500 photographs, original manuscripts and galleys of his stories and novels, his correspondence and his journals, and a personal library of almost nine thousand volumes – many with his writing in the margins -- were in danger of destruction from heat, humidity, pests, mold, and the sheer passage of time. The Cubans cared for the museum admirably, but they did not have the resources to conserve their treasure.

**The Beginning of the Finca Vigía Foundation.** In 2002 Jenny Phillips, the granddaughter of Ernest Hemingway’s editor, Maxwell Perkins, became aware of the thousands of irreplaceable documents languishing in the tropical climate. With the assistance of Congressman James McGovern and the Cuban Ministry of Culture, Dr. Phillips established a US based non-profit organization in 2004, the Finca Vigia Foundation, whose mission is to preserve Ernest Hemingway’s legacy in Cuba.

**Past Success.** Despite a contentious political climate, the Foundation has successfully navigated the shoals of US/Cuban relations to create a bi-national project that has:

- Built trust and won the support of both the United States and the Cuban governments;
- Restored Hemingway’s home and yacht partnering with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Mystic Seaport;
- Conserved more than 6,000 letters, telegrams, and manuscripts, by sending renowned paper conservators from Northeast Document Conservation Center to Havana to train Cuban specialists in conservation techniques;
Preserved 5 rare scrapbooks created by the author;
Taught best practices in meta data, photo shop, and other digital imaging techniques;
Brought digitized copies of the conserved documents, representing many thousands of pages, out of Cuba to be archived at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston allowing access to US and international scholars;
Provided advanced training in photo and book conservation including digitization of the marginalia;
Oversaw the architectural design and consultation of an on-site archival storage workshop;
Began construction of a museum quality on-site archival storage facility with wet and dry conservation laboratories to ensure the longevity of the documents. This building is known as the Taller, Spanish for workshop.

Future Goals. Together with Cuban colleagues we are hard at work building the Taller. The first container of US building supplies arrived in May 2016; a second shipment arrived September 2017. We provide workforce development and training for the Cuban tradesmen who are working with new tools and materials. Not since 1959 have US materials been allowed in Cuba.

On going architectural preservation of the house is required annually. Many documents are waiting conservation. Completion of the Taller with modern conservation laboratories will launch a renewed conservation phase.

About The Finca Vigia Foundation

The Foundation is a U S 501 (c) (3) organization non-profit. All contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. The Foundation operates under a general license from the Department of Treasury, with oversight from the State Department. We meet regularly with the Chief of Mission of the United States Interests Section in Havana. In Cuba, we work in partnership with the Consejo Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural and the Cuban Ministry of Culture.

Leadership. The Foundation is governed by a ten member board of trustees, co-chaired by Jenny Phillips and Robert Vila of This Old House. The board is comprised of professionals from preservation, diplomatic, corporate, and academic worlds. Four members are Cuban-American. Board members are not compensated. Our legal team from Jones Day, Washington DC office is pro bono. Congressman James P. McGovern (D-MA) chairs the advisory board and author Russell Banks oversees the Literary Committee. The Foundation employs one staff member. Mary-Jo Adams has been the executive director since the organization began in 2004.

Budget. The annual budget is $175,000. We receive thousands of in-kind contributions from many of our consultants. This budget does not include programmatic expenses.

Awards / Distinctions.
2005 The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s “11 Most Endangered List”
2006 World Monument Fund “List of 100 Most Endangered Sites”
2008 Consejo Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural de Cuba “Premio de Preservacion”
First prize for Architectural Preservation of Ernest Hemingway’s home.
2010 US ICOMOS International Heritage Award for Excellence, Washington, DC
2011 Coloquio Hemingway, Premio de Distincion awarded to Jenny Phillips and
Congressman Jim McGovern, Havana, Cuba
2014 Finca Vigía Premio de Distincion from the Ministry of Culture, awarded to
Mary-Jo Adams, Havana, Cuba
2016 Finca Vigía Premio de Distincion awarded to William Dupont,
Leader of the United States Technical Team, Havana Cuba.

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