

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



F. SCOTT
FITZGERALD

Edited by Ruth Prigozy

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F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

EDITED BY
RUTH PRIGOZY
Hofstra University



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The Cambridge Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald

In this volume, eleven specially commissioned essays by major Fitzgerald scholars present a clearly written and comprehensive assessment of F. Scott Fitzgerald as a writer and as a public and private figure. No aspect of his career is overlooked, from his first novel published in 1920, through his more than 170 short stories, to his last unfinished Hollywood novel. Contributions present the reader with a full and accessible picture of the background of American social and cultural change in the early decades of the twentieth century. The introduction traces Fitzgerald's career as a literary and public figure, and examines the extent to which public recognition has affected his reputation among scholars, critics, and general readers over the past sixty years. This is the only volume that offers undergraduates, graduates, and general readers a full account of Fitzgerald's work as well as suggestions for further exploration of his work.

RUTH PRIGOZY is Professor of English at Hofstra University and Executive Director and co-founder of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Society. She is the author of *F. Scott Fitzgerald: An Illustrated Life*, editor of *The Great Gatsby, This Side of Paradise*, and co-editor of *F. Scott Fitzgerald: New Perspectives*. She has also written many articles on Fitzgerald, Hemingway, J. D. Salinger, D. W. Griffith, and Billy Wilder among others.

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For Frances Kroll Ring

With affection, gratitude, and respect from everyone who reveres
F. Scott Fitzgerald as man and artist

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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PREFACE

There have been many collections of essays on F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose reputation has grown steadily since his death in 1940. This particular volume takes note of Fitzgerald's career in terms of both his writing and his life, and presents the reader with a full and accessible picture of each, against the background of American social and cultural change in the early decades of the twentieth century. Fitzgerald's reputation, in the new millennium, is firmer than it has ever been, and we believe that this volume will serve as a guide for all readers who wish to make or renew their acquaintance with the work of this great American writer.

I am grateful to Jackson R. Bryer and Milton R. Stern, who provided some extra help along the way, to Hofstra University for research leave which helped me complete the work, and to Maria Fixell, who helped locate the cover image.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>Afternoon of An Author</i>
ATSYM	<i>All the Sad Young Men</i>
B&D	<i>The Beautiful and Damned</i>
B&J	<i>The Basil and Josephine Stories</i>
F&P	<i>Flappers and Philosophers</i>
GG	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>
LT	<i>The Last Tycoon</i>
LOTLT	<i>Love of the Last Tycoon</i>
PH	<i>The Pat Hobby Stories</i>
TJA	<i>Tales of the Jazz Age</i>
TITN	<i>Tender is the Night</i>
TSOP	<i>This Side of Paradise</i>
Apprentice Fiction	<i>The Apprentice Fiction of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> (ed. Kuehl)
As Ever, Scott Fitz	<i>As Ever, Scott Fitz: Letters Between F. Scott Fitzgerald and His Literary Agent, Harold Ober 1919–1940</i> (ed. Bruccoli and McCabe Atkinson)
Bits	<i>Bits of Paradise</i>
Correspondence	<i>The Correspondence of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> (ed. Bruccoli and Duggan)
Crack-Up	<i>The Crack-Up</i> (ed. Wilson)
Dear Scott/Dear Max	<i>Dear Scott/Dear Max: The Fitzgerald–Perkins Correspondence</i> (ed. Kuehl and Bryer)
Ledger	<i>F. Scott Fitzgerald's Ledger</i> (ed. Bruccoli)
Letters	<i>The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> (ed. Turnbull)
Life in Letters	<i>F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Life in Letters</i> (ed. Bruccoli)
Notebooks	<i>The Notebooks of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> (ed. Bruccoli)
Price	<i>The Price Was High: The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i> (ed. Bruccoli)
Short Stories	<i>The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald: A New Collection</i> (ed. Bruccoli)
Stories	<i>The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i>

CHRONOLOGY

- 1896 Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald is born on September 24, the first surviving child (two others having died) of Edward Fitzgerald and Mollie McQuillan, at 481 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- 1898 Edward Fitzgerald's wicker furniture business fails, and the Fitzgerald family moves to Buffalo, New York, where Edward Fitzgerald is employed by Proctor & Gamble as a salesman.
- 1901 The family moves again, to Syracuse, New York. Later that year, Fitzgerald's sister, Annabel, is born.
- 1903 The family moves back to Buffalo.
- 1908 After Edward Fitzgerald loses his job in Buffalo, the family returns to St. Paul where F. Scott Fitzgerald enrolls in St. Paul Academy.
- 1909 Fitzgerald's first story, "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage," is published in the St. Paul Academy's *Now and Then*.
- 1911 Fitzgerald enrolls in the Newman School in Hackensack, New Jersey. From 1911 to 1913 he writes and produces four plays and publishes three stories in the *Newman School News* before his graduation in 1913.
- 1913 Fitzgerald enters Princeton University as a member of the Class of 1917. He meets Edmund Wilson and John Peale Bishop. He begins to participate in literary and dramatic activities. He writes the book and lyrics for a Triangle Club show and contributes the lyrics for two others. His stories, plays, and poems are published in the *Nassau Literary Magazine* and *Princeton Tiger* between 1914 and 1918.
- 1914 Fitzgerald meets and falls in love with sixteen-year-old Ginevra King, from a wealthy Lake Forest, Illinois, family, while on Christmas holiday. He would correspond with and see her on occasion until she ends their relationship in August 1916.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1915 Fitzgerald leaves Princeton, citing illness, but actually because of his poor grades that resulted from his concentration on extracurricular activities.
- 1916 Fitzgerald returns to Princeton, planning to graduate in 1918.
- 1917 Fitzgerald joins the army as second lieutenant in October, reporting to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in November for training. He starts work on a novel he calls "The Romantic Egotist."
- 1918 Fitzgerald is transferred to Camp Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, in February; some weeks later he completes a first draft of "The Romantic Egotist" and sends it off to Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers. In April, he is stationed at Camp Gordon, Georgia, and in June is transferred to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama. He meets Zelda Sayre, popular daughter of an Alabama Supreme Court Associate Justice, at a Montgomery Country-Club dance in July. Scribner's rejects his novel in August; Fitzgerald then revises and resubmits it, but that version is also rejected in October. He is sent to Camp Mills on Long Island, New York, in November, to await overseas duty, but the war's end prevents his departure.
- 1919 After his February discharge from the army, and now engaged to Zelda, Fitzgerald finds work in an advertising agency in New York City. On a visit to Zelda in June, she breaks their engagement because his future seems insecure to her. Fitzgerald resigns from his job and leaves for St. Paul, where he lives at his parents' house while rewriting his novel. His novel, now called *This Side of Paradise*, is accepted by Scribners in September and he begins to find acceptance for magazine stories that were earlier rejected.
- 1920 Fitzgerald and Zelda Sayre become engaged again in January. Between January and March, Fitzgerald publishes three short stories and a play in *Smart Set* and two stories in the *Saturday Evening Post*. On March 26, *This Side of Paradise* is published. Fitzgerald and Zelda Sayre are married on April 3 in the rectory of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. They live in Westport, Connecticut, from May to September. *Flappers and Philosophers*, his first short-story collection, is published in September. The couple move to New York City in October.
- 1921 The Fitzgeralds travel abroad in England, France, and Italy from May to September. In August they return to St. Paul, where in October their daughter Frances Scott (Scottie) is born.

- 1922 Fitzgerald's second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned*, is published in March and his second collection of stories, *Tales of the Jazz Age*, appears in September. In October, the family moves to a rented house in Great Neck, Long Island, a wealthy community about twenty-five miles from New York City.
- 1923 In April, Fitzgerald's play, *The Vegetable*, is published, but in November it fails in a try-out production in Atlantic City, New Jersey.
- 1924 The Fitzgeralds embark for France in April, and reside in St. Raphael on the French Riviera. During that summer, Zelda and Edouard Joze, a French aviator, are romantically attached, which Fitzgerald sees as a serious betrayal. In late October, the family travels to Italy where Fitzgerald revises his new novel.
- 1925 On April 10, *The Great Gatsby* is published. A few weeks later, the Fitzgeralds rent a Paris apartment. In May, Fitzgerald meets Ernest Hemingway at the Dingo Bar in Montparnasse. In July, Fitzgerald meets Edith Wharton at her home outside Paris.
- 1926 A third collection of short stories, *All the Sad Young Men*, is published in February. The Fitzgeralds return to the Riviera where they reside until they sail back to America in December.
- 1927 Scott and Zelda leave Scottie with his parents and travel to Hollywood, where he has been hired to write a screenplay for a flapper film, "Lipstick," which is never produced. He meets a beautiful young actress, Lois Moran, to whom he is visibly attracted. In March, the Fitzgeralds rent a large home, Ellerslie, near Wilmington, Delaware, and Zelda begins to take lessons in ballet.
- 1928 In April, the Fitzgeralds return to Paris, where Zelda continues her ballet lessons. They return to Ellerslie in September.
- 1929 In March, the Fitzgerald family returns to Europe, traveling to Italy and the Riviera before renting an apartment in Paris in October. Zelda resumes her ballet lessons in Paris.
- 1930 The Fitzgeralds travel to North Africa in February and then return to Paris, where in March friends notice Zelda's intense concentration on ballet. Fitzgerald tries to focus on his new novel, and writes a number of short stories that defray their expenses. In late April, Zelda suffers her first nervous breakdown and enters the Malmaison Clinic outside the city. Several weeks later, she is moved to Valmont Clinic in Switzerland and in June to another Swiss clinic, Prangins. Fitzgerald lives in Switzerland during the summer and fall.

- 1931 Fitzgerald returns to the United States for his father's funeral in February. He visits Montgomery to inform Zelda's family of her condition. On his return to Europe at the end of the month, she is considerably improved, and by September, after her release from Prangins, they move back to Montgomery, where they rent a house. In the fall, Fitzgerald accepts Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's offer to go to Hollywood to work on a screenplay for Jean Harlow.
- 1932 Zelda's condition deteriorates at the beginning of the year and in February, she is admitted to Phipps Clinic at Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore. Fitzgerald returns to his daughter in Montgomery. In May, Fitzgerald rents La Paix, a house near Baltimore, where Zelda, on her release from Phipps in June, joins him. Her novel, *Save Me the Waltz*, which she completed while at Phipps, is published.
- 1933-4 After completing his novel, *Tender is the Night*, Fitzgerald moves from La Paix to a town house in Baltimore in December 1933. His novel is published the following April. Zelda has another breakdown in January 1934 and is admitted to Sheppard-Pratt Hospital outside Baltimore. In March she enters Craig House in Beacon, New York, but is sent back to Sheppard-Pratt in May.
- 1935 Fitzgerald, ill, stays at a hotel in Tryon and then in Asheville, North Carolina. *Taps at Reveille*, his fourth collection of short stories, is published in March. In September he moves to an apartment in downtown Baltimore, and then moves to Hendersonville, North Carolina, for the winter, where he starts writing the *Crack-Up* essays.
- 1936 Zelda is hospitalized in Asheville in April, and in July, Fitzgerald returns to the Grove Park Inn in Asheville where he had stayed previously. Fitzgerald's mother dies in September.
- 1937 Fitzgerald moves to the Oak Park Inn in Tryon for six months; in need of money, he accepts an offer from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios for a six-month contract in Hollywood. In July, he meets gossip columnist Sheilah Graham, and they begin a relationship that lasts until his death. In the summer he starts the script for *Three Comrades* (the only screen credit he would receive). The studio renews his contract in December for another year.
- 1938 Fitzgerald moves several times in California, from the Garden of Allah Hotel, to Malibu, to Encino, where he lives in a cottage on the estate of actor Edward Everett Horton. His MGM contract is not renewed in December.

- 1939 In February 1939, producer Walter Wanger hires him to work with writer Budd Schulberg on a script for a new film, *Winter Carnival*. The two go to Dartmouth College where Wanger fires Fitzgerald for drinking. He recovers in a New York City hospital, returns to California, and works as a freelance scriptwriter. In October, he begins work on a new novel about Hollywood.
- 1940 Zelda is released from Highland Hospital in North Carolina in April and returns to Montgomery to her mother's home. Fitzgerald dies of a heart attack on December 21, 1940, at Sheilah Graham's apartment in Hollywood. He is buried in Rockville Union Cemetery, Maryland, on December 27.
- 1947-8 Zelda reenters Highland Hospital in November and dies in a fire there on March 10, 1948.
- 1975 F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda, were reburied in the cemetery of St. Mary's Church in Rockville, Maryland. In 1986, their daughter Scottie was buried with her parents.