

May² 1980

My dear Don,

In a nut shell — — —

In spite of the wrong that Ernest did to me and my family in using my real name for stories entirely false — my memory of the real Ernest remains a good one. He was as different from his stories as the real Margi was different.

From the time I first saw Ernest, when I was thirteen years old — until the end of the summer of 1919 —, our friendship was no more than mutual admiration and a few letters. The age difference was greater than because of the great difference in our experiences in life. During the time he spent in Petersburg, a real friendship grew. It was not a romance — but perhaps more rare than romance. He did not put me down because I was young, and he did not try to lead me into

something over my head. It was a rare idealistic experience - too rare and idealistic to last. It ended with the letter saying that the slate was clean. It shook my confidence in myself. If a slate could be wiped clean so quickly and for no known reason, why trust in the writing on any slate? I became superficial in my dealing with everyone. I had no trust in friend ships. Perhaps in some unknown way I ^{had} hurt him, too. Perhaps these stories grew out of some hurt.

The good memories have never left me. I have never been interested in the writer - but in the person he was in those early years.

Some of that Ernest must have remained some place.

So be it -

Marge.

Mrs I Quinn
1111 S. Independence
Winter Park, Fla.
32792.



Mr Don St John
Hamhill
New Hampshire
03765