

To: Marjorie Bump Main

From: Donald St John

Date: December 6, 1966

Mrs. Sidney G. Main
c/o Dickinson
2030 Via Taormina
Monterey, California.

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Dear Mrs. Main:

Just a quick note to say how grateful I am for your marvelous letter. It was as cogent as a difficult letter can be and I must say you were decent about writing it to a stranger. There is only one thing that puzzles me. In Constance Montgomery's Hemingway in Michigan in which her references to you seem to rely principally upon Ursula and Mrs. Dilworth, the impression is given that Hemingway met you when you worked as a waitress at Dilworth's where she stayed, from time to time, with his God parents. This would account for the fishing off of Horton Bay Point, etc., but I gather from your own account that your friendship with Hemingway was based on the family cottage on Walloon Lake. I am left wondering if both versions are more or less correct and that you saw him on both lakes or whether your orientation was limited to Walloon Lake. (Aside: I got a letter from Y.K. Smith, Hem's great Horton Bay and Chicago friend, who is now about 80 years old, and he wanted to know what I was talking about. It was Pine Lake in my day, know nothing about Lake Charlevoix, I guess the name was in a state of change as Walloon had been a few years before when it was changed from Bear Lake.

Another item. After writing you before, I ran into the man at Key West who was Hemingway's principal driver in the old days and he very vividly remembered Hemingway's visit to you in Ormond Beach. He remembers helping you cook some liver (Dr. Main having to go out for it) and he remembered meeting your daughter and everyone getting along and about it being Ernest's Spanish period. He remembered the Spanish part, he said, because Hem was beating his way down the coast to Key West to "clobber" Harry Sylvester, a writer, for having had the film Spanish Earth banned in Maine. The end of this will amuse you. Apparently Hem was most irate about the matter and talked about nothing else for hours. The next morning they went out and found Sylvester fishing off a quay. "I waited for the explosion", the driver said, "and watched Pop walk up to Sylvester. Then all he did was say hello and talk a few minutes and leave. I was very dis-appointed."

Thanks again, and Sincerely,

Donald St. John

Olde Lang syne nugget: By coincidence, my wife's childhood friend, John McCune heard we were doing some Hemingway research, he said his grandparents, the Jennings lived next door to the Bumps and that he had heard that Hemingway used to visit there.