

Today
Feb-3 1967.

Dear Don,

I find myself almost hateing you a little for making me remember things I have walled off for so long. If you weren't the sort of person you are I couldn't do it. Some days it makes me almost physically ill. But now I have started I want you to see things as they were, if possible. You are too young to get it from your own experience.

Did you ever watch the television serial of a few years ago called, " I Remember Mama?" I used to look at it and say to myself, "There I am. There were the same clothes, same ideals and problems.

I will try to list a few things.

No one ever talked about sex.

Among others, we were never allowed to see a Theda Bara picture. There was a great deal of discussion before we were allowed to see

B irth of a Nation.

A friend and I sneaked into a movie showing about social diseases. We were so ashamed to be seen coming out that we waited until dark, and hardly looked at each other.

I could never go on a hay ride, for I might sit too close to a boy.

We were told to never, never sit on a boy's lap, or sit close to them. I used to think, why in the world would anyone want to.

All books and movies were closely supervised. The things we could do or not do were well defined and we didn't over-step. No wonder we were so happy at the Bay where few things were off limits. The things we thought up to do our families hadn't thought of to say no about.

One morning Mrs Dilworth gave us a whole freshly baked blue-berry pie. We took it to the cottage, climbed thru a trap door to the attic room to eat it. The thin boards of the ceiling crashed thru and we barely saved ourselves from falling to the room below. Mr Dilworth scolded us, but not too hard. He just fixed the damage.

Sometimes we would swim late at night, if there was a moon. We called it swimming up the moonlight path. We often raided the kitchen at night. There were always good things to eat there. The Dilworths were wonderful to us and we loved them dearly. Ernest wasn't often there but when he was, he was always in on our fun. We could think up more crazy things to do than he could. Our uncle often got upset with us, but never really put his foot down until one time when we planned to go to a barn dance down the road. He said 'no' in no uncertain terms. He was a stern, strict man and we wouldn't have dreamed of disobeying him. However we stayed away from his cottage for several days to show our displeasure.

We used to take long walks. One year we collected and mounted wild flowers. We were often in bog up to our knees. One favorite walk was up an old logging ~~trail~~ rail road trail. It was thrilling when we found it. The old R.R. ties were there and some wooden rails. We would walk up the shore a ways at the left of the road (as you face the lake. When we got to the remnants of an old dock, we headed toward the woods, and there it began. It was fun to imagine the life there in the old days. Ernest must have known about it for it would have been a wonderful place for birds in the fall, but he never walked there with us. Carl Edgar did, and we would take others of our favorites among the guests. The guests used to say they were sorry when we "Younguns" had to leave for then the fun and the excitement left.

Another of our entertainments was going to the country church. (not the one where Ernest was married, but one more strictly for

the natives. The minister did a lot of loud talking about sin, damnation and the devil. Men and women who walked down the road together were doomed to a special kind of hell. It sounded very exciting, and we wondered why walking down the road would get them to hell.

You spoke of our having servants as tho that was special. When I was married, everyone had help whether they had money or not. They were paid very little. There was always help ^{in our} house and Grandmotherss. They were called the hired girl and were very much a part of the family. They ate at the table with us unless there were guests. Then they would serve. We learned many things from the hired girl and we loved her. I still hear from one who later went on to become a R.N. After my sister was born, a Catholic girl had charge of me. She would take me to her church, and I became acquainted with the nuns and monks. I loved everything about it. Once, later, when Grandmother took me to her Methodist Church, I told her I didn't want to go to her church because God wasn't there. God was at Gertrude's ~~ch~~ church. After that I was sent to Sunday School. Ever since then I have had a strong love for things about the Catholic service, tho I feel strongly that one should remain what they are born. Growing up with help made us children very helpless. I knew nothing about housework or a kitchen except what I learned at the Bay, and that wasn't much. After I married it came as a shock to me that when I left my nitie on the floor, it stayed there until I picked it up. It was the same for all my friends, but it wasn't because we had money. It was a way of life.

Once at the Bay we picked apples for the Charles's Our pay was to be invited to dinner as tho we were grown up guests. After dinner I am sure we shocked Mrs Charles by wanting to go to the kitchen to talk to her servant. She was a young country girl about out age. In our experience servants were friends. To Mrs Charles they weren't quite people. Later Olive took us to her home to meet her family. That would have shocked Bill too, I am sure, tho I don't remember that he was there.

My grandfather retired from business before I was born. Every winter he and Grandmother went to Florida or California. As soon as they came home I would move over to Grandmother's. It was my choice. She slept upstairs and I always slept with her. Grandfather slept in a bedroom downstairs. I learned many things from ~~grandfather~~ Grandmother. I would always have to kneel beside her to say prayers, and then we would talk over the problems of the day. When I would tear my dress, she would mend it so no one would know. When I would break my dolls, she would mend them as good as new. She was a very special person.

Grandfather had a horse and three carriages. One was for Sunday, one for week days, and one, a waggon to use when driving to his five acre farm, his hobby. I would sit on a stool at Grandmothers feet when we would go for a drive, and I would sit on the seat beside Grandfather to drive to the farm. Sometimes he would let me hold the reins. It was a big day when I could drive Nelly-horse alone. Grandfather was a kind man, but would take no nonsense. My chief memory was of having him shout, "Shut that door. I can't heat all outdoors."

About Partridges, did I tell you that Sidney took me Partridge hunting in the upper peninsula in the early years of our marriage. He was a wonderful shot, and was most surprised when I knew how to shoot. (Yes, Ernest taught me, but not in actual hunting. We used tin cans, at first stationary and then swinging on a light rope from a tree.) The first bird I hit was only winged. When it looked at me with its frightened eyes I cried and cried. Sidney and others in the party were disgusted, so I had to shoot another to redeem myself. After that I never went again.

I don't believe Ernest was as changed by his first war experiences as some people think. He was still under the influence of his family background. I think Paris changed him most and then his success. In Paris he was with entirely different types of people, and the rules of living were entirely different. He was too young to be able to carry his past with him and integrate it with the new. He turned his back on the past and gradually alienated all but a few. I did somewhat the same during the first years of my marriage, only in a different direction. I had golf, bridge, cocktail parties and babies. My past seemed far away and I walled it off. Perhaps I remember so clearly now because I did wall it off. I could cry when I think back about the vulnerable Marjorie, and yes, the very vulnerable Ernest.

I would like to take you on a conducted tour of our old haunts, but probably too much is gone or changed, and I would be truly sad. Ernest was only a small part of my love of the Bay, for most of my memories there don't include him. But his spirit is there, too for he loved it as much as I did. It is a place with a soul, and it is a part of everything I have become since.

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