

Dec. 8, 1967

Dear Marge:

It is so good to get one of your letters. As you may know letters mean more overseas. You are overjoyed to be where you are all right but it seems important to know what is going on, and of course this is all the more pleasurable in the land of Hemingway and books in general. In my case, as you may have gathered, I can't seem to make up my mind whether I am a student or a collector; a little bit of both I guess.

And both have had to take a backseat, I'm afraid, to Italy in these last months. I've collected so little, a few things in Italian, that's about all. And the things I wanted to write haven't been written at, if at all. To answer your question, I had done a lot of research in Michigan and Florida on the early Hemingway days, hoping to write it down over here. Well of course, first I had to go over the Venezia bit and the Maggiore bit and the Switzerland bit, etc. etc. and in between I examined Italy with my wife. So the net result is I simply have more notes than ever.

I'm really not on paper, Hemingway-wise. I was a late starter, starting from the death really, before that being just a general liker. Gradually I got more and more interested until I had to go out and look at the cottage et al on Walloon, and walk up the tracks of Kalkaska and go over the Big Two Hearted and chose around after Marge of The End of Something, and have a long interview with Leicester in Miami and with Charles Whompsen in Key West and a few other people. Also so Bill Smith and, as you know started a casual correspondence with Harold Loeb and this turned into Harold deciding to come to Taormina for the winter. I've been busy getting things ready for him. Did you see the piece he wrote in the first issue of the new Connecticut Review, saying once more and in more detail the way it really was. He sent me a copy and of course it's great reading for the likes of me. Seems as if you ought to have a copy or two since there aren't many of the old gang left and you are lucky enough to be in on the ground floor of SUN: THE CONNECTICUT REVIEW, Vol 1, No. 1, Oct. 1967, (published by the Board of Trustees for the Conn. State Colleges) (editor: Bertram D. Sarason. Southern Conn. State College, New Haven, Conn.) (Semi annual) Added note on this: Harold had included his letters which would have made this a good first, but the editors got cold feet and left the letters out.)

Thanks for info on your husband's book. It happened that Hem and Hart Crane wrote articles for FORTUNE in 1930, Hem on bull fighting, crane an interview with pres of Standard Oil Co. Crane's was not accepted, and I thought it odd Hem should have written on same general subject in same year. I'll believe the bib when I see it. All the best to you these holidays.

Sincerely,

Don St. John