

Jan. 16, 1969

Dear Marge:

Thanks for your latest with all the clarifications. You must remember, however, that some of my boners merely mean I have not checked my notes or old letters and do not mean that I am permanently in a slump about a certain thing. You must also remember, I suppose, that nothing by someone other than yourself will ever seem exactly right. That is a remorseless, implacable fact I'm afraid. I think what one does in these matters is get it as truly as one can and if the philosophical result is essentially valid the niggling nuances or errors of fact will undoubtedly be overwhelmed.

Ruth and I were very glad to have the Ohle letter, although being both a lazy and a dumbkopf I had to scratch my head a little. Bill is the son of Uncle Ernie Ohle isn't he? But I don't recall having anything on him in the old Horton Bay Days. I wonder if he was part of that crowd. Speaking of the Ohles I recall that Uncle E. was anti-Hemingway, I forget where I got that but could find it if forced, probably from you. What I'm getting at is I forget why Uncle Ernie was so disposed. Of course in all these things it is difficult to separate the periods. Bill Smith told me his Aunt Charles was anti-Hemingway but that must have been later, in 18, 19 and 20; certainly Aunt and other adults could not be anti-Hemingway as a young teen-ager.

Speaking of Uncle Ernie, I suppose you may have heard that Sunny's son, Ernest Mainland visited Hem down in Key West and drove the old master wild by his constant Uncle Ernie. Yes, as I write, I remember now, that came from Hem's old driver, Toby, he's the one who remembered how irritated Hem was. You will recall Toby was the driver who was with Hem when he stopped at your place in 1939. I saw Toby and had a long interview but he is not a writer; have not had a single letter from him, which is something I expect and am not bitter about. Your own correspondence, it seems, has made up for some of these gaps in my study.

Have you been keeping abreast of the Carlos Baker doings? Or have I told you yet. Baker is coming out with the biog of Hem in April, a Book of the Month club selection. Two chapters were carried in the January Atlantic, and I must say I was somewhat disappointed. It read more like a diary or revelation of who was who than a profoundly searching study. But the Atlantic account may be drastically cut. A second episode is due in February. The first began in 1939 (I think) and has him blithely swinging back from Ketchum right past Barge Mump without stopping; which may seem minor to some but let's face it it is not a minor matter to visit characters in fiction on your way someplace. I have corresponded with Baker; he is very bright and kind (in what he has said to me) but Les, (brother) has no expression for him but pompous ass and I don't really know why except that Les was sore at the searching way he interviewed Pauline's boys some years ago.

I'm writing to Pudge today and will have the pix to return in two or three days. My reference to Pudge writing merely referred to short stories she kept speaking of writing in her diary. Love to you,