

Thurs. March '69.

My dear, Don,

Oh me! Oh my! How strange that past things can get so far out of focus. How strange to get a view of them from someone like Dutch P. I was living on such a different level of consciousness that Dutch, to me, was a shadowy character from a different almost adult world. My contacts were high school level. I knew Ernest only where he touched that level. When he came back from Toronto he went with an older group, the few times he came in to Petoskey. I wouldn't have been comfortable with them or they with me. I think it proves how easily that situation was accepted when E. could feel comfortable and free to stay at Grandmother's house. If E hadn't written that story about me, which wasn't really about me at all, few people would have remembered him, and certainly all the memories would have been kindly. People have blown up little things in memory, trying to fit them into what E wrote. E. wanted to hurt my mother. He felt she was in some way responsible for breaking our easy companionship. Also he had a thing against mothers. Yes, I suppose I could have been called a "Christer". Ernest was somewhat of a "Christer" himself. I don't have a single ugly or sordid or messy memory about him. I can't ~~re~~ relate those memories to some of the things he wrote or to things written about him. I believe the acceptance speech he wrote for the N.P. is more nearly the E I knew. Of course the things he wrote about me have left a scar.

I can't remember having ice cream with him. I didn't like ice cream. He had no extra money. It was frowned on by my family that we should go down town after school. Sometimes after ~~school~~ dances we got cold drinks. Which reminds me that in those days a coke was considered as bad as drugs today. I remember the expression, "They are dope." My mother was then Mrs Graham, not Mrs Bump. Ernest could very well have not wanted to see her. But all of it had to be casual, and not important to anyone.

Stray thoughts.

I don't believe there was an experience like in ~~FAREWELL~~. E. would have been so much more sophisticated, and I would have sensed it.

I am glad I wasn't at that party at the Ramsdell cottage in Bay View. It was late fall 1919. E asked me to go with him, but I am sure he was glad that I didn't want to go. We both knew that it was over my head, but neither of us said so. I am sure it was a tame affair, blown up by small talk. He told me about it.

I am positive that E. didn't have an affair with Irene or G.E. or anyone in those days. I rather doubt that Dutch carried on as much as he likes to say.

Grandmother's house was not grey or shingled in those days. That came much later when a section of the back came off and a few porches. The house was brown, and like the picture I sent you.

I wish I knew the real reason why E. wrote about me as he did. We didn't reject each other. We remained friends, on a basis of memory. There was no love affair, so there could be no end of one. Perhaps you can figure it out.

You have my curiosity aroused about your future. You shouldn't bait. Hurry and tell me.

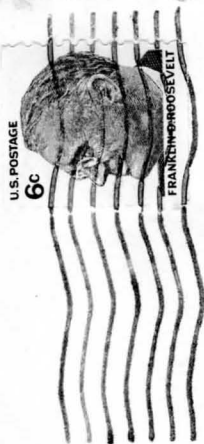
The flu is still passing from one to the other and then back again, round and round, So far I am immune, but this morning I have three boys in bed with various degrees of temp.

Yes, it is nice to talk. I can see the places you describe, and know the feelings. I am torn between wanting to see it all again, and not wanting to see it. I like remembering better.

Love to you and Ruth.

Marge -

Mrs J. Davis
2030 Via Tassonia
Monteury, Calif
93940



Mr & Mrs St. John
Francisco

New Hampshire
03050