

Feb. 19, 1980

Dear Marge:

It is very odd how your latest letters have sent my mind whirling back, and now I find myself digging into my records and reflecting back on our long correspondence. I have all your letters, you know, although they were not very well organized when I began poking among them.

It all started in November of 1966 when someone in Petoskey told me that you were still alive and approximately where you had been living. But it wasn't until Ruth and I went to Florida to visit an old Red Cross friend of hers that I learned where you actually lived. And it was on November 27, 1966 that I wrote you my first letter.

You answered, rather warily considering my pushiness, on Dec. 3, 1966. By November of 1974 you had written a total of 159 letters or cards, & this does not count the packages of pictures you sent me several times. The banner year, of course, was 1967 when you wrote 74 letters, most of them in answer to my insufferably impertinent inquiries in re Hemingway - and really it makes me blush now to see how severely I plied you with questions. Once I even had the temerity to send you a long questionnaire which, in retrospect, embarrasses me very much. But you always came through, tentatively at times, to be sure, but always with something, graciously said, why, I will never know.

I notice that I said I expected to produce something in writing, as I had in the past, on the general subject of Hemingway and his friends in Michigan. I'm not altogether clear why nothing actually resulted. How long has it been now - 14 years, a long time. Partly, I suppose, at least in the beginning it was what I have come to call projectitis, that is the project itself becoming more important than the completion of same. Partly it was our going into business, partly it was growing older, partly it was growing a little less intense about Hemingway, partly it was the common crud and partly, & perhaps most importantly, it was that friendship set in & I didn't really know how to handle that aspect in relation to all the information that I had acquired. It was a tough thin-iced pond to skate across. So I suppose that is why nothing happened.

I did publish additional Hemingway material after my correspondence with you began, but nothing about you. Actually all of my Hemingway material ceased probably about ten years ago. I tell you dealing in old books is a business consumed with mountains of detail. That helped a great deal to put the quietus on my Hemingway efforts. As an old boss of mine once said: you can put just so much coal in a coal skuttle.

Be all that as it may my interest has awakened again somehow. I find it all very interesting. I read a four-page diary-like account of chasing after your address on a glaring hot day in Florida on Nov. 19, 1966. It sounded like some private-eye hunt. Both of us had forgotten the details completely but the account brought it all back rather vividly. After that I found maybe 30 typewritten pages or more on my telephone conversations and interviews with you at the Issina. So you see what you have stirred up. But don't be alarmed. I am not about to do anything precipitate. I am writing this now just to let you know how well you are remembered. All the best, and my love,

The Driftwind Press

PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS

North Montpelier, Vermont

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Dear Margie:

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