

<http://www.thehemingwayproject.com/hemingways-bay-view-a-guest-post-by-mary-jane-doerr/>

Hemingway's Bay View: A Guest Post by Mary Jane Doerr



In the summer of 2012, I had the pleasure of attending my first Hemingway Society Conference in Petoskey, Michigan. It was delightful to meet new people and put names to the faces of individuals with whom I had been corresponding. I also had the opportunity to sit down and chat with the conference's scholars and attendees, and that is how I met Mary Jane Doerr. Mary Jane gave a presentation about her beautiful book, *Bay View: An American Idea*, in which she described how the vibrant social and intellectual discourse brought to Northern Michigan by the Chautauqua Movement, which had a part in shaping Hemingway's life, travels, and career. A big thanks to Mary for sharing her careful research with us!

Allie Baker

"Hemingway's Bay View" by Mary Jane Doerr



Ralph Connable Jr was a very handsome man

Journalist Trumbull White was returning from Cuba where he had covered the Spanish American War when Ernest Hemingway was born in Chicago in 1899. About this same time Ralph Connable Jr. was moving his Lake Superior fishing operation to Upper Minnesota.

White and Connable were just the kind of dogged adventurers that Hemingway liked but their influence on the great author needs to be recognized. Carlos Baker casually referred to White as “a journalist of some renown” who advised young Hemingway to “write what he knew.” (1) Connable is considered the wealthy, upscale head of F. W. Woolworth’s of Canada who spent his time playing golf (he was the Canadian amateur champion) and introduced Hemingway to the *Toronto Star*. End of story.



Trumbull White was the writer who told Hemingway to “write what he knew.” Here the White family is shown in 1908 camping at Murphy's woods near Windemere Cottage at Walloon Lake (Bear Lake). (Courtesy of John Sanford)

The lives of these two free spirited opportunists who changed the course of the life of American’s greatest novelist were bold and daring. White covered not only the Cuban crises but the Russo-Japanese conflict as well. He reported on major disasters like the San Francisco Earthquake and by some estimates wrote as many of 47 books. Innovative with a hand on the country’s pulse, he was the founding editor of *The Red Book Magazine*, *Adventure Magazine*, *The Blue Book*, and an editor of *Appleton’s Magazine*, *Boy’s Life*, and *Everybody’s Magazine*. He was also at one time a managing editor of the Chicago *Daily News*. Today, his books are being reprinted.

Ralph Connable Jr. of Petoskey was the son of a business entrepreneur. His mother, a fine organist, was fluent in Odawa and five other languages and had the working knowledge of seven more. She spent time in the Indian camps around Petoskey helping Odawa women. Ralph Jr, who was kicked out of Albion College, worked on his father’s commercial fishing fleet hauling whitefish in the 1880s until Lake Michigan was fished out. He then ran the boats in Lake Superior from Grand Marais until 1897 when he moved the operation to Crane Lake in the upper Minnesota wilderness. There he lived among the criminals and Indians with his wife Harriet, also of Petoskey, and baby

daughter Dorothy. (2) Both the White and Connable families owned cottages in the Bay View camp meeting/cultural community near Petoskey. That community was founded in 1875 resonating out of the camp meeting Chautauqua assembly movement that captured the American spirit after the Civil War.



Eminent Hemingway scholar H. R. Stoneback was a keynote speaker at the 2012 International Hemingway Society Conference in Bay View, Michigan. (Photograph by Mary Jane Doerr)

H.R. Stoneback, the eminent Hemingway scholar, addressed the International Hemingway Conference last year in Bay View. In his keynote address, he captured the essence of the community's progressive nature as only he can do. He cited the names of Indians, Jews, suffragists, and numerous black groups on the Bay View roster indicating his new found respect for the leadership of the Methodist movement in American history.

The Bay View campground was literally a hotbed of ultra-liberals (even by today's standards) and tea-totaling Bible thumping conservatives – very alive politically. Wilson's Vice President Thomas R. Marshall summered every year in Petoskey along with Teddy Roosevelt's Vice President Charles Fairbanks who had family in Bay View. In 1916, Republicans Fairbanks and Hughes nearly won the White House away from Democrats Wilson and Marshall. Even the Anti-Saloon League had its representatives on the grounds.

White taught journalism at the Bay View Summer University in 1895 and may have influenced the Hemingway family to purchase a lot in Henry Bacon's addition to Illinois Park on Walloon Lake (Bear Lake) in 1898. Grace Hall Hemingway was deeply interested in the women's movement and would have been aware that sixteen of Chicago's internationally famous women leaders such as Jane Addams and Frances Willard were featured Bay View speakers.



Grace Hemingway with children at the beach. (Courtesy of John Sanford)

While Hemingway was growing up summers in Northern Michigan, Laredo Taft, Helen Keller, William Jennings Bryan, Booker T. Washington, Vice President Thomas R. Marshall were just a few of the eclectic group of celebrities on the Bay View platform – along with the Williams Jubilee Singers (1914), the Fisk Jubilee Singers (1915), and the Dixie Jubilee Singers (1917). Madame Schumann-Heink, the great German contralto, was in Bay View twice (1910 and 1913). It is hard to imagine that an accomplished vocalist like Grace Hall Hemingway would have missed her. Opera lover Ernest would have been just as interested.

In 1917, Ernest's sister, Marcelline, spent the summer with the Whites when Trumbull White took over the directorship of the Bay View Assembly. She joined the Bay View Orchestra as a violist, playing next to Herbert Butler of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Howard Barlow, America's first great conductor, led that orchestra and the concertmaster was Leon Marx who was also the concertmaster of the Chicago Opera Orchestra. (3) Dorothy McVittie (later Mrs. Stanley Kresge), and Ruth Kresge were in the chorus and Dudleigh Vernor, composer of *The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi*, was the orchestral pianist.

Ernest must have taken the opportunity to show war correspondent White his stories and seek advice. Realizing his talent, White told him to pursue writing. The next thing Hemingway did was to march off to Italy and World War I. (4) Trumbull White had quit college to take a writing position in Chicago and this might have influenced Hemingway to skip college.



A party at Windemere. Pictured in the top row is Ernest 2nd from the left, Sterling Sanford next to him with Sunny (Madelaine) and Carol. (5) (Courtesy of Sterling Sanford)

Marcelline met Sterling Sanford that summer. He was the grandnephew of the late John M. Hall, former director of the Bay View Assembly (1887-1914). When Sanford was orphaned as a small child in the 1890s, his great uncle Hall supported him financially and Sterling spent summers in Bay View. Through his inheritance, Sterling earned an engineering degree from the University of Michigan. Marcelline and Sterling were smitten with each other and later married. Sanford believed that Hall was a distant relative of Marcelline's mother, Grace Hall Hemingway. (6) Ernest considered Marcelline to be rich as Sanford inherited money from the Hall estate. Sanford paid Dr. Hemingway's funeral expenses in 1928. That was one of the last times Sterling and Marcelline saw her brother. (7)

All of the Hemingway women were in Bay View at some time. Ernest's aunt Grace Hemingway traveled the US giving story presentations to children at summer assemblies. In the winter she went into city schools and worked with underprivileged children. In Bay View in 1909, she taught stories to children at Epworth Hall. Ernest's mother Grace Hall Hemingway studied painting at Loud Hall and became a fine artist. (8) In the early 1950s, his sister Madelaine, a fine harpist, performed on the Bay View stage.



Charles Ditto was the mayor of Petoskey and groundskeeper for Bay View. He gave Ernest permission to use the little room on the back of Evelyn Hall. The room had a wood burning stove, a lavatory and windows for lots of light. Mrs. Ditto is seen here in front of the room. (Courtesy of the Bay View Association)

When Ernest returned from World War I in 1919, he chose to recuperate in his beloved Petoskey where he spent his childhood. He loved the sunsets over Little Traverse Bay and the views of the water. His cottage at Walloon Lake, Windemere, was not winterized for the cold months so he rented a room in Petoskey. He talked Petoskey's mayor and Bay View groundskeeper Charles Ditto into allowing him to write in the heated room in the southeast corner of Evelyn Hall, the building where the women's groups met. (9) After several hours he would head back to Petoskey via the "high road" or Arlington Avenue as he was able to walk. He obviously liked the boarding houses "The Florence" No. 2 and 3 since he stayed there at times if he didn't stay in the room at Evelyn Hall. Once while staying at No. 3, he received a scathing letter from his mother about his slovenly ways.



At times Hemingway slept in the room at Evelyn Hall as it had a bed.

Later that fall, Ernest threw a party at the newly renovated Ramsdell cottage three doors down from the Florence cottages. In the spring of 1918, four cottages along that row burned and Dr. Ramsdell rebuilt his summer home. Ernest met the lovely, refined and very athletic Irene (Goldstein) Gordon at the party or she was his date and an admirable relationship developed. (Several decades later he returned to Petoskey and saw her.) Irene was a very stately, beautiful lady who had a "Princess Grace" look about her when this author met her in the 1980s. People in Petoskey loved her because she kept her clothing store open through the winter months when the other stores closed. (10)

During that fall, Hemingway also connected with the Connables. Ralph Jr. landed the top position at F. W. Woolworth in Canada in 1912. He was working for the Chicago Seibert family, Seibert Good Co. The Petoskey Seibert family built the wooden structures on the Bay View grounds and numerous buildings in Petoskey. Records are sketchy and inconclusive but there is some evidence

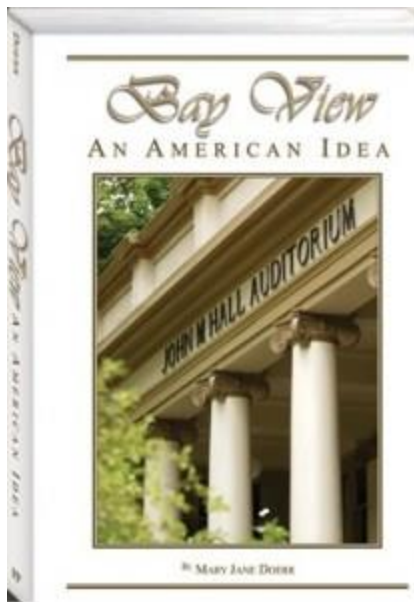
that F. W. Woolworth and Seymour Knox families, who were Methodists, briefly owned property in Bay View. In Chicago, Seibert, Knox, and Woolworth joined forces to form F.W. Woolworth Company. Thus young Ralph got the Canadian job and ended up taking Hemingway to Toronto along with his friend Dutch Pailthorp.

Ernest made lots of friends in Northern Michigan. Captain Jim Gamble's family summered at Harbor Point. Harold Loeb had family who built the Loeb estate on Lake Charlevoix where Ernest's Uncle George worked. (11) In Bay View, his contemporaries included formidable individuals like Dorothy Connable (who aided the fight in World War I), Irene Gordon (who ran her own business and could beat Ernest at tennis), Marion Rombauer (who helped her mother make *The Joy of Cooking* the bestselling cookbook of all time) Paul Blanshard (who wrote four New York *Times* bestsellers and was the chief prosecutor for Mayor LaGuardia), Brand Blanshard (American philosopher and one of America's first Rhodes Scholars), Homer Larsen (who was illegally educated at black schools in Alabama and was accepted into Oberlin College), Stanley Kresge (who played centerfield for the Bay View baseball team before his career as a retailer), and, finally, Dr. Charles Swift (who headed the Department of Anatomy at Rush Medical School where Ernest's father graduated). One of his dearest friends was Dutch Pailthorp. Pailthorp's father, Judge Charles Pailthorp, had done the legal work for the formation of the Bay View Association in 1875 and his Petoskey office was above Little Will which Ernest frequented. During the 1930s when Dutch was out of sorts and Emmet Country had an unemployment rate far above 40%, Ernest wrote to him. "Remember the voice is older than the economic system and that the Y.M.C.A was once a noble movement as was the Methodist Church...." (12)

His meaning has several levels but reflects the influence of both groups in American life. The Methodist Church and the YMCA were very active around Little Traverse Bay. Ernest's marriage to Hadley took place at the Methodist Church in Horton Bay. That statement also deeply reflects Hemingway's concern for his friend and echoes his knowledge of American history and the leadership of the Methodist Church. Hemingway loved Northern Michigan and respected what the Bay View community was doing and, like H.R. Stoneback, valued his time there.

Taking a closer look at the lives of Trumbull White and Ralph Connable reveals glaring similarities with Ernest Hemingway. All skipped college but had successful careers. All took advantage of opportunities even at great personal risk – unafraid of danger. We can imagine how future war correspondent Ernest heard White discuss his Cuban experiences and the war in the Far East. We can't help but speculate what fisherman Ernest learned from Connable who spent 25 years fishing with the Native peoples and certainly knew a great deal about living off the land. The Bay View community's role as a conduit for bringing these people together cannot be underestimated. Sterling

Sanford said that it opened up a world culture and education for him. It sent Ernest Hemingway off to a life of “writing what he knew.”



Bay View, An American Idea, by Mary Jane Doerr, was published in 2010 by Priscilla Press. The photographs are by Robert Cleveland. It is distributed by Wayne State University Press.

- (1) Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, Page 44.
- (2) Ralph Connable, *Stepping Stones of Connables, 1870 to 1937*, Bentley Library, University of Michigan. Digitized by Google.
- (3) Hemingway attended the opera when he was in Chicago.
- (4) In a 1930 *Petoskey Evening News* article June 26, 1930, White addressed the local Kiwanis Club about the many great writers that once lived in and around Petoskey. Hemingway topped his list, even ahead of author and editor Edwin Balmer, whom Hemingway also consulted here in Northern Michigan. Hemingway visited White in New York before he left Italy. (*The Letters of Ernest Hemingway, 1907-1922*. Edited by Sandra Spanier and Robert W. Trogon, Page 101.)
- (5) Marcelline Hemingway Sanford, *At the Hemingways*, Page 152.
- (6) *The Graphic*, July 11, 1985.
- (7) Carlos Baker, Page 257.

(8) Bay View had a 30-year relationship with the Art Institute of Chicago and one of their instructors always taught the art classes.

(9) Marion Stark, the source of this information, was the daughter of Charles Ditto and longtime member of Bay View. Evelyn Hall was built by millionaire lumberman Richard Peters for his wife Evelyn who was active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. It was built for Frances Willard as the summer headquarters for the WCTU. The Michigan Federation of Women's Clubs was founded at the hall in 1893 and many women's clubs held their meetings at Evelyn Hall. Later it became the women's dorm for Albion College Summer School.

(10) Interview with Cameron Okeefe of Harbor Springs July, 2012. Cameron grew up at the Perry Hotel where Hemingway stayed and her family, the Reycrafts, owned property to next Windemere at Walloon Lake. Her grandparents owned the cottage next to the Ramsdell cottage in Bay View.

(11) The infamous Leopold-Loeb murder trial in Chicago certainly would have had a dramatic impact on Harold Loeb.

(12) Letter from Collection of Marti Manti. Marti's family bought the Dutch Pailthorp home from Pailthorp. Used with Permission.

Won the 2011 State History Award, Historical Society of Michigan

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This book can be purchased through Wayne State University Press. It is available on-line at Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble Book Stores, Better World Books, Alibris, McLean & Eakin Booksellers, Horizon Books, Schuler Books and other sites. Further information is available at <http://www.maryjanedoerr.com/>

Mary Jane Doerr has been a freelance writer for the Petoskey *News-Review* since 1979 and various other publications in Michigan and through the US. She owns a cottage in the National Historic Landmark of Bay View and is on the Board of the Little Traverse Historical Society. She can be contacted at mjdoerr@sbcglobal.net

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Post tags: [Bay View](#) • [Grace Hall Hemingway](#) • [Mary Jane Doerr](#) • [Michigan](#)

13 Comments

1. **Mary Dearborn**

Fascinating essay. Really rounds out our knowledge of the Hemingway family's experience in the Petoskey area, and the meaningful influences on Ernest. It gives his story (and his stories!) rich context.

2. **Jane Blanshard**

Mary, This is absolutely fascinating! You are amazing! Love, Jane

3. **Virginia Selanik**

Great review of Bay View and its influence also on Hemingway. The next time I am there, hopefully summer 2014, I will reflect on these famous people who visited Bay View. Just walking amidst the trees and buildings is awe-inspiring, and if you hear a soprano singing her do re mi's....it's even moreso.

4. **John Hiler**

One of the things this story brings out is how much Hemingway liked to rub elbows and maybe bend elbows with higher society. Sometimes he is thought to be the 'everyman' but he still liked society, and money in his personal and public life. That being said this is a very nice addition to the Hemingway Story. It would be interesting to know how much he kept in touch with these people throughout his life.
JH

5. **H. R. Stoneback**

Excellent piece, Mary Jane! I was just stressing to my graduate students the other night the importance of local knowledge for students of Hemingway—and I recommended your superb Bay View book to them. —Stoney

6. **Mary Jane Doerr**

Thank you everyone for your kind comments. John, you wanted to know if these people kept in contact. Yes. Hemingway wrote to Irene and Dutch throughout his life. Sterling of course was in contact with Ernest and wrote to Brand Blanshard throughout

his life. Brand was Sterling's son John's professor at Yale University. Blanshard also was James Michener's professor at Swarthmore – interesting. Sterling and Dudleigh Vernor was in contact the rest of their lives. I was a small child but I remember my adopted grandfather Dr. Charles Swift talking about Clarence at Rush Med. School. I am sure I will learn about more in time. It was an extraordinary group of young men and women who made their mark on American society.

7. Jo Ellyn Clarey

Not only is the detailed and new information here about Hemingway in Northern Michigan fascinating in itself, it is testimony to how much is still to be learned “on the ground” and how important tenacious local historians remain. Good job, Mary Jane Doerr!

8. Marianne Miller

Wonderful post! I am so sorry I missed your talk about Bay View at the Hemingway Conference. I don't live too far from the Connable House here in Toronto. I just ordered your book and can't wait to read it.

9. <http://comfortableguy251.wordpress.com/>

Howdy! I could have sworn I've visited his blog before but after going through a few of the articles I realized it's new to me. Nonetheless, I'm certainly delighted I discovered it and I'll be bookmarking it and checking back frequently!

10. Elouise

WOW just what I was searching for. Came here by searching for bay view site (Elouise)

11. Tiffany

Thanks for sharing your thoughts on grace hall hemingway. Regards

12. Mary Jane Doerr

I have recently gotten to know Trumbull White's grandson Sheldon White. His father Kenneth was an editor and literary agent in NY. He remembers Ernest Hemingway coming to their home in the 1930s to work with his father. His parents Kenneth and Jo White owned a Bay View cottage where he and his sister spent their summers.