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## **Letter from Donald D. Storms to Ann Hopkins, November 5, 1989**

Donald D. Storms

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1280 Sheep Bridge Road  
York, PA 17402

5 Nov 89  
0635 hrs.

B'mornin', Ann!

So you're an upgetter early, are you? I used to be, when I had to work every day, tho' not often in time to write letters at 5<sup>am</sup> - in fact, few letters got wrote on working days! They mostly had to wait for weekends. No! Not in this instance - your letter arrived only yesterday - Sat.

Those days I'm much more likely to be going to sleep about 5, or a bit later... after the first morning News. I've always been something of a night hawk, when other concerns made it possible, tho' not entirely of my own choice... I like the early morning, but few others do, so for any joint activity...! For several years, tho', when I was spending all my time out on the Porch ["in the Porsche" - don't I wish! So long as I didn't have to drive it in DC!"] - three years, once I got the Porch built, all Summer, from Warmup, Apr 1984 to resume, possibly next Summer), from last week of April to the late afternoon of 3 DE, I lived, worked (3), ate & slept on the Porch - and when I did move back inside and resumed a Project of many years standing, it was... let's leave it, politely, at quite annoyed to find that a cute little Lady Mouse - they ARE cute! And can be tamed if one wishes... which makes them no less a nuisance in general - had decided to raise a family in the back of where the file drawers for said Project are kept. Not troublesome in itself, but she'd tried to use some of the "cards" for bedding, which pleased me not one bit! Y'see, the 12,000-odd "cards" are in fact ordinary paper like this - 16 lb. or, perhaps 37, 20 lb rag - letter-sheets cut 6-on, 4x4, to 2 1/8 x 2 3/4", on which I get 12 to 14 lines of lettered data and info - the equivalent of 150 or so words if necessary, per side - with abbreviations, of course. So you can imagine that when Mme Mouse took off a corner, for euf. to delete the code for source of data - she's got a fair-to-middlin' memory for things she's interested in, but to remember which of some 150 books, one of them in 8 edition (Annual, but I've used

as it began to get the least bit light, by the Avian Chorus! If you don't think Birds can wake one out of a sound sleep - you don't know what you poor City Dwellers have been missing all your lives! And I loved it. From May and early June, a fine serenade every morning, rain or shine, at about 4 or 4<sup>15</sup> am, for about 20 minutes, after which the Chorus - surprisingly, perhaps, all species - knocked off to get their breakfasts for an hour or so, then a reprise for another half-hour, and sporadic Soles all day long (and a couple of big Hood Owls at night, if I was awake to hear them). I have no Mockingbirds here (tho there are some about a mile away - they don't like Woods), or I'd've been awakened during the night, as I frequently was when I lived in Fla. But there was a <sup>pair of</sup> Catbirds, a close relative, and nearly as good a singer, nesting in my Forsythia, and he gave me much pleasure.

Back inside for Winters, and all year for the last 4 or 5, good music on the Radio, from my local NPR station, more or less regulated my waking/sleeping time - from midnight to 5<sup>am</sup>, steady, with minimum talk - just identification of selections and a few words of comment thereon.

Now - I'm thoroughly irregular! No two consecutive days are alike, and I'm much more likely to be awake between midnight and day-break than between 8 o'clock and noon or 1 o'clock - except when I have to go to town for food + whatever - including library books - once a week, more or less.

All this from your remark re writing at 5<sup>pm</sup>! You'll have to be careful - if you care to continue this exchange, that is - what kind of leads you give me - and there's no way you can guess what'll set me going!

"... going through hysteria - no, historical paperwork, paying bills (be like me, and have only 3 or 4, monthly!)" and attending to administrative matters before getting my "6, or 8?" children off to school."

Excellent plan - one can work much more efficiently on getting up than at night. I'm lucky... I have little such to do, + have never had to get children off to school. Yes, I have 2 sons, in their 40's, but haven't seen them, nor the 2 daughters of one, nor had any

other direct contact with them since 1948 for one, early '49 for the other, since I walked - drove - out in June '48. I am not particularly proud of that, but... I rather think it worked out better for them, over-all. I was in renewed contact with my wife for 10 years - from March '77 till she died suddenly, of a heart-attack, in March '87, on a friendly basis, but the boys have an absolute aversion to me, for which, knowing what they were taught about me when they were growing up, and I can't honestly blame Kit (my wife) either, under the circumstances as they were from '48 to '77.

I won't bore you with that story. Sufficient to say that - I have realized since Retiring (time to really think, about a lot of things) that I should never have married, probably; should certainly not have had children. While I like kids (when they are reasonably well-behaved in not saints!), I was not cut out to be a Father, I'm afraid. I get that part of my make-up from my own father - Mom, tho they remained casually friendly, left him before I was two. If you're interested/curious, I have no objection to talking about all that, but unless you are, I won't force it on you.

My kind thoughts? I suspect many persons have the same sort; I'm just a bit more able to express them, and sufficiently uninhibited (& with the time) to do so. Support in your problems with PW? Damn fine what help I can be! If any, you're most welcome.

"... occasion(sp?)" you have the same habit I do... (sp?)! As it happens, that's a "21" word, as mo ca ssi o is a "12" - that helps me when I have trouble remembering which of 2 letters is the doubled one. And - I've noticed that when I have to use it, when I get around to checking the spelling, the one I'd was usually the incorrect one! Trouble is, there's no Rule about that, as there is about ie/ei... "I before E except after C" - except the exceptions, of course! Vein, etc etc.

I can well understand your problem become "wearing". I've never had one as big, luckily, but I know what any

sort of dispute with the Powers That Be can be. It seems as tho one is beating ones head against a brick wall, but if one keeps at it, and has reasonably good grounds, as it appears you have, it's a bit surprising how often one can "buck City Hall" etc. Govern- ment, + Big Business, have their feet firmly set against change, however ill-founded their stand, But - many years ago - I was 14 - there was an incident which may be responsible for my own... persistence... in such cases.

I was at Saugat Camp in Vermont, 20 miles or so from my boarding school. There was another boy, about 18, much heavier and stronger than the rest of the boys, an Assistant Councillor. One evening, for what reason I never knew, the Head of the Camp set up a sort of game - Ermond Pournau (Fr. Can. descent) stood, feet planted, in the open; a small Prize I think a couple of candy bars from the Canteen - would go to any of the ordinary boys, 12-15; could get him on the ground.

I was fairly tall - presently 6'2", 190 lbs + - but I've never been particularly "physical" - I avoid getting myself hurt, sometimes more than I should have, and Ermond was a good deal rougher, including in temperament, than the kids, so I stood back while 10 or a dozen tried to knock him off his feet, and instead themselves got "dumped," rather hard.

Finally a thought occurred to me, and I went in low and locked both arms around his lower legs, and down he went! (I thoroughly enjoyed the Candy - even Prof Prentice - the Head, + Scout Master of the Troop I belonged to - had not thought of me as the possible Winner!)

The point - even the biggest, toughest Bully can be brought down, if someone finds the right way, and brings on long enough.

If you know, I've never, till just now, made the connexion (British, and more philologically logical, spelling) between that incident 63 years ago, and my - persistence - in

more recent times, other types of situations.

I think I've run on long-enough for one time! Thank you for the invitation to call on you - you're reasonably safe! I am not, much as I'd like to get a good spell at the Library of Congress and that of the American Assoc of Railroads, I am very unlikely to get to Washington. At present Prices of cars which are fit to drive, and costs of running and maintaining one, I have no satisfactory transportation, and, on my income, certainly cannot afford the cost of decent quarters and restaurant meals, especially in Washington. I lived there nearly a year, in 1940, and have visited several times, beginning when I was about 6', so I am familiar with the town.

One incident may amuse you - and provide a little light on the somewhat unconventional workings of my mind. In the early Fall of 1962 I was driving the wife and daughter of a long-time (1950 to date) English friend of mine from Toronto to the Trailer Camp in Florida where I then lived. Except for a couple of months in 1960, about a week in Philly, the rest in Florida, travel by air, neither Peg nor her daughter Dee (Deirdre... Peg is North Irish) had seen any of the United States, so I showed them the major sights in the way South.

We arrived in Washington early on a Sat. afternoon, and the problem of parking while we sight-saw raised its head. One Saturday, even then - even long before then - casual parking in Washington, in "Tourist" areas was a real problem. But little 'Don didn't even try. I drove over to the Market area, east of the Capitol, where the streets were all but empty, but enough people around for it to be - in '62 - safe to leave the car with their possessions, walked a block or two, and took a Bus - ~~and others~~ <sup>no-walked</sup>, for 3 or 4 hours, for a quick once over from Lincoln Memorial to the Capitol, then back to the car and on our way!

Crazy? Mebbe. Not many Tourists, even with some knowledge of Washington, would think of the Market (good on any afternoon) as

(4) - such!

an alternative parking place. But it worked, Dee (then 13) and her mother enjoyed their "tour" - she always been a pretty good Guide, did very well at it in Florida, as a Cab Driver for Tourists from the Cruise ships - and I saved myself both headaches and, likely, some expense - 30cents Bus fare us Parking Lot Fee.

Just one thing more, and I'll shut up:

I was not born, nor christened (never was christened) "Mr." My name, for friends - and some others - is Don(ald) - oh, by the way, Donald D, not B! - and if this is to become a correspondence, which I would enjoy, if you're inclined, and once in a while have time to write, I would much prefer that to "Mr." That's so darned formal and less than friendly.

You may not agree, on such short acquaintance - if so, please forgive my brashness in using "Am" to open this, and tell me what you prefer.

And thank you for letting me know my effort was appreciated.

Sincerely,

Don  
(Donald D. Storms)

P.S. - You and all your children - have a lovely Thanksgiving - but don't you (kids can't!) eat too much Turkey!

Don