

February 4, 1917
Houston, TX
9:30 a.m.
2 cents

Miss Gainor Roberts
114 N. Winnetka Ave.
Dallas, Texas

Dear Gainor,

Speaking about it being cold. Well it has been pretty cold down here for the last few days, but before that it was awful warm. This old damp climate is what is so bad, and then the wind is generally always blowing. Yes, I think lots of nice things are going to happen this summer, just so I get to take part in some of them at least.

Gainor, I don't know whether I'm going to Austin or not. I haven't had a letter from there in about two weeks. I've been looking for one every day so I could find out, but it hasn't rolled in yet. You know I've just been thinking about how it would feel to be home all the time and know that I could see you or phone you at least once in a while. Of course, I couldn't come out as often as I did Christmas. Do you know it was only two nights that I either didn't see or didn't phone you. I sorter felt funny towards the last. Whenever, I would come out because it just seemed like ----- . Oh well, as though I were living out there. But Gainor dear, you know there's a reason. You know the night after you all were down to (supper ?) I had a date with Ethel and that I believe was the first night that I didn't phone you, and I told Ethel then that I bet you thought I was sorter off because I was making so many dates. Sometimes I feel like I would like to have my high school days to live over again. I certainly would change my last year especially the last part of it. I never will regret though the time that I have spent here. There are things that you learn away from home like this that never will be put in books, and then it is the friends you make, not only from all over your own state but from others as well. A person who has never been off to college can't appreciate the life, and it is now more than natural that he shouldn't.

Gainor, do you remember when we were in Mr. Thomas's Latin class, our junior year, and that's University inspector came around. Every question Mr. Thomas asked me I would miss. No more Latin for me.

I think just about everybody I know is going to get married, but George Dorman, that is the best I've heard in a long time. Wonder what they are going to live one. I certainly am sorry about Will Berners. That's one boy who certainly has changed since I first knew him. He hardly knows me anymore, but then A&M doesn't like Rice a bit any way.

I don't know whether you know that Rice beat Texas in basketball or not, but she sure did. We lost the first game, but beat them the second 24 – 18. Next Saturday night, also Friday night, we play them here, so we've got a good chance to do it again. That is the first time that a Ric team has ever beat Texas in anything, so to celebrate we marched down to Eagle Ave.

because we couldn't get a car here and then rode to town and there we certainly did stage a snake dance. Every body from the school was in it, from senior to freshmen and I'll have to admit that I enjoyed it more than any I've been in except the first one last year when I was a Freshman.

I am going to tell you something now that sure sounds fishy, and I'm afraid that I can't tell it so it will sound interesting, but here goes. Do you remember me telling you about having a big Owl down to the second A&M game, the one we lost. Well we went off that night and left our Owl down there. When they went after it the next day it was gone. A&M had swiped it. Well, to keep the boys out here from knowing it another one was made and brought out here, but not until A&M had sent a nice long write up to the Houston papers. Well, this sorter picked up out here. About two days later we had a student body meeting and then we were told that our owl was gone. In the meantime 15 of the boys had sent a detective to A&M to locate the Owl and those boys were coming after it. The detective went up posing as a farmer, but it seemed as only about four of the A&M boys knew where it was and he was unable to locate it. The boys went up but had no results except to get the lay of the land. Last Sunday there appeared in the paper a picture of our bird surrounded by A&M cadets. Well, things got busy again. Last Monday another detective went up and he was supposed to be a newspaper reporter and he told the A&M students that he would give them a good write up. Only about six of the fellows knew where it was kept, but the detective found out and telegraphed back to the waiting boys 17 of them left in autos Tuesday afternoon and got into College Station that night. They started to work on the door with a Jimmie a little after twelve but couldn't get it open. The owl was kept in the Arsenal on the third floor of the main building. Finally, they decided to rush it, so six of them went up and broke the door down, grabbed the owl and beat it. Just as they were leaving the nightwatchmen came up. All of the Rice fellows were dressed in Khaki uniforms so the watchman at first thought that it was some A&M boys, and the fellows told him that they were only playing a joke. Well, he was so bewildered that he didn't know what to do. When he did come to his senses he fired three times and then every thing was up. The boys say that A&M students came pouring out of those dormitories by the bushels. They put the owl in one of the Fords and that one ran out of gas and the other one was already out of whack. They finally put it in the Hudson. It was then a little bit after three and that is when the "Owl" from Dallas generally comes thru. As luck would have it, it was on time, and immediately became loaded with A&M boys. They had already telegraphed ahead and told the authorities that some one had broken into the US Arsenal and stolen some things. Of course, they didn't say what. So the fellows could hardly have got through there. Well, to get back to the train. It went ahead of the autos and stopped and off came A&M. So it was A&M in front of them and A&M behind them. The fellows turned off and went on some side lane. This so-called lane had a very abrupt ending. Rather than let A&M recapture our mascot, it was burned. Well, the fellows say that it wasn't long before the words were full of cadets. They caught all of the Rice men except four and they happened to see these four beat it off thru the woods with a white sweater under one of their arms. Well they thought and still think that that was the cover of the Owl We are going to let them think it because they won't believe that it was burned. The four that escaped finally through necessity split into two parties, and the story they tell of how they got by is some story. Had it not been for some men from Houston whom they happened to meet out hunting, they would probably have also been caught. A&M had every road guarded. They searched

every auto and watched every train that came through College Station and Navasota. They were getting all of the telephone messages. Oh, they were guarding close. They took these 13 men and the detective back to the college and cut the detective's hair. They wanted to catch all the Rice men and shave them, but they couldn't do it. The men were kept there all day Wednesday, but slipped off one by one until finally they turned the rest of them loose. Last night, several A&M men were seen in town here and we all think that A&M is going to try to come back at us in some way. Besides swiping the Owl, they painted the football score all over the grandstand. We have already formulated plans for a rapid gathering should anything happen. They couldn't get our Owl now even though we told them where it was. (I mean the new one). Now doesn't that sound like a dime novel. I can't write like I can tell it.

Would it be alright with you if I came as your partner next Wed. night? I had a whole lot rather do that. But child I can't tell you what to give them to eat. Feed them on toast, crackers and onions.

Tonight is the night that the sophomore girls have their dance out here. I broke my date because I'm afraid to dance. I'm going over after while. It's about time they were starting. I've been wearing that blooming old arch support all week again. Alright, honey, I won't run on my foot until it gets well. What do I get? I'm feeling so lonely tonight. You know it is just one month since I left, and oh how I hated to go.

Listen you'll have to explain something in the last part of that letter when you said I don't and I did. I can't make it out I've almost forgot Billy's advise (sic). I know it sure hit me. But I'm going to learn. You just watch me.

Goodnight dear and lots of love from

Otto