

February 8, 1917  
Houston, TX  
8:30 a.m.  
2 cents

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

Dear Gainor,

I forgot to tell you in my last letters that, that was a continued story, but it was. I am sending you the "write up" that appeared in local Sunday's paper. I don't know whether I told you or not that there was a bunch A&M boys in town last Saturday night. Well, there sure was. I went over to the dance at about 9:30, but I didn't dance any. Of course, most of the bunch was over there and we found out just about how many A&M boys were in town. More than 50 were registered at one hotel. Well, that made things look pretty bad. We knew that they couldn't get our owl, but we didn't know what they were up to, so we decided to watch for them. Whenever we have a dance out here, the three main gates are left unlocked. Well, that night just numbers of autos came through the grounds and every now and then they would flash a light on one of the buildings. After the dance there were at least 75 or 100 of us who were prepared to give A&M a warm reception should they come out. We had 8 squads with four men in each squad doing guard duty along the Boulevard and then out on the Athletic Field. "Butter", Brick, McFarland and myself were out on the athletic field. Law, Gainor, if they had ever caught us out there, provided there was enough of them, we would have been blowed up. In case anything went wrong, 3 shots in rapid succession was signal for general assembly. Some one in one of the dorms was to turn in the fire alarm, so as to wake the rest of them up. It was impossible to get into the Institute grounds after 12:30 with an automobile. About 12:15 one came in. That was just before the watchmen closed the gates. We decided to see who was in it and so locked them in. You should have seen the poor fellows trying to get out, every gate they went to was locked. Finally, we stopped them and saw that it was only four men, about half drunk who claimed they were the last. Of course, we didn't know but what A&M was trying some of our own stuff, like we did with the detective. Anyway we let them out. At 3 o'clock we changed watch and I went in to get a little sleep. Nothing happened during the remainder of the night.

Sunday night, I wasn't figuring on watching because I was simply all in and I have mid-terms all this week. I went to bed at nine o'clock, just a little before norther "blew up". At 10 o'clock I was waked up, one of the fellows said, come on and watch the field with me. Gee, but I hated to go out in that cold, and it was cold. Went down stairs and found out that they A&M were figuring on stealing our donkey. One of the A&M boys had phoned a girl and told her if they couldn't get our Owl, they were going to get the donkey. Well, she turns right around and phones out here and tells us. So instead of going to the Athletic field we started out after Emma. She was about 1 ½ miles from here, towards town. We had given her to an old man to keep for us. Cold, Gainor, I was never so cold in all my life. Anyway we got Emma, and still have her. We don't expect any trouble now until Saturday or Friday night

when we play Texas. Our Owl has got to be at that game, and A&M wants it pretty bad. That was shown when the president declared a holiday, the day the boys recovered the Owl, and then when so many of them headed by their own coach came down here. I think they were figuring on catching us napping but were fooled. They certainly will be fooled Friday and Saturday too because we are ready for them. 50 – 100 – or 1500. I know all of this sounds like it was a wild goose chase and also as if we were over confident, but, Gainor, you just ought to be “one of us” now and things would sure seem different. I only regret that I didn’t go to A&M with them when they ask me to. Had I known that the fellows were going to take a holiday the next day and that I wasn’t going to have an exam I would have gone, but if you miss a mid-term it goes pretty hard with you.

We sent a telegram to A&M telling them that the “hide” (meaning the cover) roosts safely at home. Of course, maybe they have decided by now that the whole thing was burned. We “put one by them” and they hate to admit it.

Well, I sure am sorry that I can’t be there Saturday, but I am afraid that I will be badly needed here. Not that I count for much, but every little bit helps, and if I was up there, Gainor, you know I would want to come for you. You did have the courage to ask a boy to go some where with you once that I know of, do you remember when.

Why certainly I’m going to war. All that I am waiting for is for a boat to come up the Bayou. Then I’m going to get on it and go back to Europe. About every body down here has told me the same thing that Gib said. They sure have been having lots of fun out of me. But I’m not a German, but an American.

You know what you told me about Ethel just shows, me at least, how foolish half of this church stuff is. What difference does it make whether you are a professed Catholic or whatnot, so long as your heart seeks to do and does do right. It’s not what you claim to be, it’s what you are. Simply because I write my name on the church roll doesn’t make me any better. I went down to the Methodist church last Sunday and, Gainor, I heard a sermon that was so full of dogmatism that I really believe that an irrational man could have done better. I got disgusted and wanted to leave, but Jack wouldn’t let me.

Say I wish you would please send me Billie’s advise (sic). I want to read it again. I can’t remember hardly any of it, and it’s worrying me.

Well, I must stop and try to learn some Biology. We have an exam tomorrow. This ends my mid-terms, thank goodness.

With love, Otto