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Letter, Virginia Brainard to Dudley and Merl Brainard [July 1, 1942]

Virginia Brainard

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Wednesday, July 1, 1942

Dear Mother and Daddy,

Could I possibly have one of those dresses by July 4? How is Mrs. Lawrence coming with them? We are going to Des Moines to hear Will Osborne and I haven't anything to wear so far. Dr. Nickell has given me the day off and I probably won't have to be there Sunday either. She's going out of town.

My report on my foods project has to be in a week from Friday so it seems that the quarter is almost over. Dr. Nickell hasn't been home to dinner for the last two nights. Monday was her birthday and I baked her a cake and then she wasn't there to eat it. Lucille Manners sang here that night and I dashed over to here just part of her concert because my Chem. teacher had announced a test for the next day. So I stayed up very very late to ~~xxxxxxx~~ study and then ~~xxxxxxx~~ we didn't have the test.

I sent my silk suit home because I've had it almost two years and it hasn't been washed yet. So what do you think we should do? Maybe you'd rather have it dry cleaned but washing makes it so much fresher. It has that "hot weather ~~xxxxx~~ odor" and I made up my mind I just wouldn't wear it again until it had been washed. That yellow blouse is washable, too.

If you'll remember, I was the first one to write and say that I knew it would be ten years before Fred would be in a position to marry me. We talked that ~~xxx~~ over several months ~~xxx~~ ago and have talked ourselves hoarse about it several times since. And we won't know anything more until he finds out what his status is with the draft board. ~~xxx~~ He sent his questionnaire in today and will take his physical in 10 days or so. If they start to draft him right away he'll enlist in the Medical Corps. I know I have to graduate and get a job. Even if we weren't at war and Fred were through school I wouldn't think of doing anything else.

We know now that the only course I should rightfully be taking is a straight liberal arts course and that would have been a blind alley. I'm skating through home ec. with a 2.2 cumulative average. That's average and not very good I know. My journalism average is 3.7 which is very good. I could be an honor student here if I'd taken the science course, which is mostly liberal arts. I can always get a job and make a living.

The home ec. courses get more and more interesting and I'm fascinating by the work I'm doing for Dr. Nickell. But I've got to have some relaxation from this steady grind. Life is too darn short to spend even a fraction of it doing things I don't like to do. I'm going to read all I can. I can't stagnate and that's just what I'm doing when I cram all this science down my throat without anything to sweeten it. Everything I learn now will be valuable to me later whether it's formal education or not. I'm thirsty for the things I've gone without for 3 years and I've made up my mind I'm going to get them. What's the sense of denying myself---of all this frustration---when it's so easy to do the things I like. I can't see the

I'll let you know about the money by next week - as soon as I find out about a job.

P.S. Do there any chance of your drawing down here after July 14?

point of letting those things go until later. Now is when I need them. I've felt like this all year and now I'm doing something about it and I'm more satisfied ~~wix~~ than I've ever been.

I've finished "Farewell to Arms" by Ernest Hemingway and loved it. Now I'm reading "Old Wives' Tale" by Arnold Bennett but I haven't made up my mind about that, yet. I just got it yesterday.

In about 15 minutes I have to go over ~~xxx~~ to the Nursery School and assist with the children ~~xxx~~ as part of my Child Development course. I ~~xx~~ like it when I get over there but sort of dislike going. I also like chemistry very much. It's Physiological Chem. and has ~~xxxxx~~ alot of medicine mixed in with it. My prof., the head of the dep't., is wonderful. He is a great philosopher and I've had a long talk with him about my troubles in science. He was the one who said to me, "Get out of science as soon as you can. Life is too short to spend it doing things you dislike." He is a famous person in his field. is is one of the few really educated men I've talked to. By that I mean that his knowledge isn't ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ restricted to his own field alone.

If I could get one of those dresses by Saturday morning ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ it would be in time for wearing it to Des Moines. I would really appreciate that very much.

Do I have to get a new bathing suit? Did I send mine home? Please write some more. Please have Jo and Bonnie and El write me, too.

Love,

Virginia