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## Letter, Virginia Brainard to Dudley and Merl Brainard [February 3, 1943]

Virginia Brainard

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### Recommended Citation

Brainard, Virginia, "Letter, Virginia Brainard to Dudley and Merl Brainard [February 3, 1943]" (1943). *Dudley Brainard Family Letters*. 90.

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Wednesday

Dear Mother and Daddy,

This is my "night editor" picture taken ~~Sunday~~ Jan. 31, 1943. It happened to be Sunday so I had on my red dress.

Sunday a.m.

I got your letter and check Friday and thank you very much. ~~OK~~ So I went to Des Moines yesterday and tramped all over town trying to find a brown suit. I couldn't find a thing under \$19.95. They had cheaper ones that were tailored but this had to be dressy. So I didn't get anything, of course, and will try to find something in Ames. Then I tried to get some shoes and again I couldn't find a thing. I wanted dark brown and couldn't get it for less than \$8.95--so I didn't get shoes, either. It was terrible and I had to sit for quite awhile before I could get a shoe ~~like~~ clerk to wait on me. What a day. I don't know what I'm going to do. I'll have to look around here and then probably go back down to ~~Ames~~ Des Moines.

I went over to see Lillian about 5 yesterday afternoon and we had dinner. She would not let me take her to dinner so I'm going to buy her a box of candy this week and send it to her. We had dinner about 6 and then Fred arrived about 7:30. He couldn't get away from camp before that and was simply dead on his feet. He was sent to St. Petersburg, Florida, last week and got back about Thursday. He had more than 100 men under him and they had to travel in ~~car~~ chair seats ~~and~~ and sleep in them all the way down.

But when he got there, he went swimming in the ocean and had a pretty good time.

~~Fred thought~~ I wrote Fred all about ~~Hayes~~ Kay's wedding plans and that I was shopping for clothes for it and he didn't quite understand what I was talking about. He thought it was my wedding and that I was trying to break the news to him that I was marrying someone else. So he was in a dither when he came in to see me last night. He didn't say anything because we sat and talked to Lillian for quite awhile. Then Lillian decided to go out for a walk and when

*I spent the night with Lillian again, of course.*

she left, Fred said, "All right, I'm waiting for you to tell me." And I said, "Tell you what?" "That you're going to marry someone else." So I straightened him out on that. Pretty soon Lillian came ~~back~~ back and we finished the evening talking to her. We had a swell time. I think she enjoyed it, too. After Fred left, she said to me, "My, I do think he's the sweetest thing." I almost laughed, thinking what a way to describe Fred. But, come to think of it, under his calm, practical, cool exterior, he is pretty sweet.

He hasn't been rejected for Officers Candidate School yet. I said in my last letter that he hasn't been before the board yet so he hasn't ~~been~~ been neither accepted nor rejected. This week end he is studying hard on his officers handbook because he expects to be called before the board without any previous warning and he wants to be sure and know everything he has to know. He wants to get into a medical administrative school. There's one at Camp Barkley, Tex. ~~and another~~ one in Virginia--lots of others, I guess. If his application isn't acted upon before he's transferred ~~for~~ from Camp Dodge, he'll ~~have~~ have to start all over again and put in another application.

The Hales invited us to come out there last night but I had to regret because Fred wouldn't go--military courtesy, he said, it's just one of those things you don't do. He went on to explain that he couldn't go around visiting at lieutenant's homes. "You can't tell who might drop in during the course of the evening," he said. "If his captain should happen to drop in and find me there, it wouldn't do me any harm but it wouldn't be embarrassing for Hales because officers aren't supposed to have anything to do with enlisted men. And it might hurt his reputation." Rank means so much in this army. So we didn't go out, of course. ~~But~~ I think it was pretty nice of the Hales to invite us out anyway, under the circumstances, ~~and~~ but at the same time I'm glad Fred had the discretion not to go.

There isn't much ~~news~~ that's new as far as I'm concerned. I came back on the 9 a.m. bus this morning because I have some mid-term exams to study for. Lillian is going up to Minnesapolis this next week end for a short vacation. She's going to stay at the Curtis.

Lover,

Virginia