

Monday

Oct 6, 1941

Dear Daddy and Mother,

Thank you for the lovely birthday. It wasn't like being home but I'm getting used to that. The slippers are adorable and my room mates are also crazy about them! The cake was luscious and we had a spread at midnight Saturday. My room mates gave me a darling wooden doggy pin – the heads move and its just as cute as it can be. And Ginny Richter and her room mates sent me a telegram. And does that money ever come in handy! I must write Grandma and Auntie Carla. It was a lovely day and thanks so much for everything.

Our first fashion column will be out in tomorrow evening's paper. I'll send you a copy. We did this one on costume suits and it took us three hours to write up! But it was fun. Its twelve inches long and that means I've had 62 inches printed so far. I still love that course. Every day there is some new person to talk to and become acquainted with – heads of departments and other faculty members as well as students.

There is a girl next door to me who's a P.E.O and she's one of my best friends. She's a transfer from St. Theresa's in Winona but is from a small town here in Iowa. She said all the "daughters" went in last year and that its just wonderful. There's quite a large group of P.E.O.'s on the campus and they are active enough to be put on the "beats" for the Student. They had a reciprocity tea last week-end and I guess they really have fun. This girl's name is Harriet Coon and I like her so much.

Dorothy has moved into a little apartment in the Lincoln Way App't House. She's living with a young girl that's also working in town. She's only 19 and she's been worried two years and has a baby 7 months old! Her husband works on the railroad. Dorothy's boyfriend from Louisiana walked in on her last night about 7:00 and so there's been quite some excitement around here. He's on furlough for 10 days and then his company goes to South Carolina on some more [momevers?]. Marlow hopes for a furlough around Christmas and I hope so, too. Helen's boyfriend has joined the Air Corps and she's not feeling so good about it. That makes three out of the four of us with men in the United States Army. Ginny Richter is the only one of us still in the clear and the boy she was going with got married three weeks ago so that's that.

Eloise (my other room mate) Martin's parents come to visit her a week ago. Her mother was quite broken up because she didn't go Gamma Phi – it seems Eloise's sister was president of the house when she was here several years ago. Judging from what they said, this sorority deal has come to be an awful racket. The Pi Phi's pledged nearly all Des Moines girls in order to please their chapter there. And left out girls from outside the state who had Pi Phi legacies. The $\Delta\Delta\Delta$'s weren't interested in any girls outside of Iowa and in Des Moines and some of the $\Delta\Delta\Delta$ mothers from Des Moine raced up here and raised the devil cause their daughter's weren't pledged. The Gamma Phi's took nearly all Ames girls. And there's a tale to that, too. There are two big banks in Des Moines. The daughter of the president of one of the banks was dropped by $\Gamma\Phi\beta$ through the influences of an active who was the daughter of the president of the other bank.

It sounds like a rat-race to me and I'm glad I'm well out of it without ever having had to go through that mill.

Eloise doesn't care much. Her mother is much more disappointed than she is and I think that's the way it often is. Mothers are ambitious for their daughters and can't understand how they can be perfectly happy without some Greek letters after their names. Eloise said "But jolly, I don't care" and her mother said "Oh! But I don't want you to take like that!" I s'pose she's afraid of "sour grapes."

Goodness, I've been completely happy down here without a sorority. It's just that when I go home it'd be fun to be wearing a Greek pin. (But I'll wait til I get a fraternity pin!) I don't know anything about the deeper mysteries of Greek life – all I know is what it stands for superficially and I don't like it. I like the girls in them but the life isn't for me. Poor Eloise. Her mother wants her to go through rushing winter quarter!

It's time I was out after stories again. Thank again for the lovely presents and cake!

P.S. could you send my bookends please?

All my love,

Virginia