

January 18, 1947

Major Julian Gist

Ft. Benning

Georgia

Dear Julian:

It was a great pleasure for me to receive your Christmas card and to learn of your present location and address. I lost track of you since the beginning of the Second World War. When I last heard about you, you were still on duty in the Canal Zone. It must then be some four or five years since I have heard from you and undoubtedly many things have happened to both of us. I am addressing you as Major with some trepidation because, no doubt, you have risen in rank during the year that have passed.

I put in the war period at the St. Cloud State Teachers College where I have now been president for a period of four years. During the war, the college was at a low ebb. The enrollment at one time falling as low as 290 students, 95% of whom were girls. For a fifteen months' period during the war, the college was extremely active because we had 250 pre-flight cadets of the Army Air Forces being trained on the campus. Beginning in December 1945 the college commenced to revive. This fall, like all other colleges in the country, we have a peak enrollment. This is a small college so the peak is not of enormous proportions. Nevertheless, the nearly twelve hundred students now enrolled utilize our limited resources to a maximum. We are expecting that construction will begin on a new main administration, auditorium, and classroom building sometime during the summer or early fall. However, two years must pass before this building can be completed.

The college has changed considerably in the character of the student body. Our students are now 60% men and most of these men are former soldiers. Before the war we gave only a B.S. degree leading to various types of educational work. Now we give a common professional B.A. degree and also give some 18 or 20 two-year pre-professional courses which are linked with the professional schools of the University of Minnesota. As soon as we get our new building, we look forward to a definite period of growth on the part of this college. I am anxious to see the construction of this building because I am ambitious to see this college develop as much as possible during the few years that remain before I am due to retire.

My oldest daughter, Virginia, graduated in journalism and home economics from Iowa State College in Ames in 1943. After a few months with the Clinton Daily Herald, she transferred to Minneapolis and is now on the copy desk of the Minneapolis Tribune. She has an excellent position and is greatly in love with her work. Constance graduate from the St. Cloud Teachers College in 1945 with a B.S. degree in education. For two years she has been teaching kindergarten in Walla Walla, Washington. Eleanor, the third daughter, is now a junior in the

University of Minnesota majoring in physical education with minors in health and home economics. The two boys who are now respectively sixteen and seventeen years of age are both in the Technical High School at St. Cloud. Charles is a senior and Ned a sophomore.

I haven't been in Osage, Iowa since November, 1944. My mother died at the home of my sister in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan on the 9th of November, 1944. She was interred on the family lot in the Osage cemetery a little later. There are now very few people in Osage whom I know outside of my cousin Grade who with her husband now lives on a farm just north of town. This is a farm whose name I cannot recall. You will doubtless remember that it once belonged to a man who was county treasurer of Mitchell County and who was believed to have stolen a lot of money. It could never be proved on him because somebody burned the books in the court house. Anyhow, this man used to own the farm where my cousin now lives. We built there a very large house and barn—both of which are too large for satisfactory living purposes.

I remember that before the war you were accustomed, on a good many occasions, to visit the Brainerd lake area in Northern Minnesota, during your vacation. If you are in Minnesota this summer, I would like to have you stop and see Mrs. Brainard and I at St. Cloud. I am planning to be away on a vacation during the month of July but will be here during all the rest of the summer.

With best wishes for a happy and successful coming year, I am

Very Sincerely,

D. S. Brainard