

Well, Mother,

Father's telegram and your letter just received. Thank you for both.

I sent one last night because I thought it might be in the papers and you know how they exaggerate. It was a bad fire, about \$300,000 loss. One whole wing is gone. It started last night about half past five, and they reported a peculiar smell but as they were cooking steaks, it wasn't investigated. It was a defective flue. While the girls were at dinner about six, or a little after, the fire bell rang and every ^one got out of the building immediately. I was reading to one of the girls about quarter of seven, and noticing that the chapel bell hadn't rung, looked out of the window. Everybody was running & so we put on our coats and tore. We smelled the smoke before we got out of the building. It was burning fiercely then, a big red glare. The fire was in the east wing where the assembly hall, dinning room, maids rooms etc. were. The maids lost everything. About nine they got the fire in control and I wish you could have seen the men working. I watched two men walk along inside the burning rooms and brake the windows to get the draft away from the rest of the building. They climbed back and it wasn't 5 seconds later that that floor fell in! The girls stood in lines & handed things along from Main to Rocky and got a good deal out. Clothes were thrown by men to girls below who carried them first anywhere near. No girls were allowed in the building and of course no unauthorized men.

Poughkeepsie swarmed there, however. It was a few minutes before the Poughkeepsie fire engines got there because there were two small fires in town that night. Of course no girl was allowed to return to the building and as it holds four hundred it was quite a task to house them elsewhere but it was handled wonderfully. Glad came here and another girl, too, but I could place her in a room near by. There was no panic through it all and quite a lot of organization. In Davison we got to bed pretty early but heard parts of Main crashing down all through the night. I just talked to Motty who lives in Strong and she said that they made coffee for the men until five this morning.

Did I say that no damage by fire was done to the students part of the building, where the rooms were, although there is a good deal thru water. Glad's ^things however escaped unhurt as she is in one of the side wings. Today has been quite unusual. We had classes but we have spent all free time carrying clothes & for two hours this afternoon carried books & paper back into the bookstore.

One thing that was quite cute. Caroline Brewer, who stayed with me last night had charge of a gate to look over everybody who went out ^last night. If there were any suspicious ones, she stopped them, searched, and really found quite a lot of stuff. She

is such a sort of timid, fluffy haired girl, that it is hard to picture her accosting a rough-neck and searching him!

This certainly is a confused account of the fire but I feel just that way myself. It is going to make quite a change in our life here but

although several men were hurt, no [crossed out: one] girl was injured or killed.

Have 2 quises tomorrow besides a lot of other work & simply must start it.

Heaps of love,

Do

(Dorothy (Prentiss) Schmitt, '20 ,

[Feb. 13, 1918]