

**JILL TO AL JUNE?, 1942**

My darling--

I have just finished performing such wifely tasks as removing the cufflinks from your shirt prior to sending it to the laundry, and it has made me very mindful of your absence and of my profound wish to be with you. This is Sunday. I'm sure I can get used to living alone, but being used to something makes it no less undesirable.

I have been coerced by my office, more specifically, by the city administration, into marching in the great parade today. I have to march at ten tonight and needless to say, I am sore as a boil about it. Never let it be said that my patriotism was stronger than my dislike for ceremony, or, for that matter, my dislike for being budged.

Since you left Thursday night, I haven't done anything out of the ordinary. I thought (sic) two dresses yesterday afternoon that weren't too expensive and that I'm sure you will like. Also a white hat. Last night I went to Rosable's mother's house for dinner and then we drove, in Buss's [*Rosable's friend*] car, up to your mother's, to say hello and to pick up the junk I've left around up there. Buss is in Peoria in a sanatorium and I'll be damned if I can fathom Rosable's feelings in re him.

Considering what holy hell she raised last Saturday night, she certainly has been acting very conciliatorily toward him. She must have, to have his car. I guess she just can't get over the thrill of being the beloved of a man who has written a book, even though said man is in every other respect le wreck humain. Anyway, we were going to bring my dear sweet bike back south, but it wouldn't fit into car with the top down and Rosable wouldn't permit the top up because she has a cold, she says, and it is cold out, so the bike still remains on the north side, to my great sorrow. I went looking today for a bike for Vic. Saw one at that bike store on 58th and Stony for 26 bananas and it was quite dreadful indeed. They are selling rebuilt bikes with balloon tires at \$45 and with lightweight tires at \$50! Isn't that awful? I'm going over to the place where I bought mine and

see if I can't do better.

That was such a sweet little card you left me. I love those old-fashioned prints of Never-Never-Lands. Or maybe they really didn't have wars in those days.

It's a gorgeous day for sailing today. An absolutely clear sky, very windy and cool. God is smiling on the Allies and Mayor Kelly, at least this day.

Sweetheart, I am hungry as a fox. I slept til noon today and haven't had the energy to eat more than a cup cawfee, and here it is thrice o'clock. I'll mail this and run to Int. house.

All my love to you, my dear one.

Jill

Monday

The defect with my letter-writing is not that I don't write them, but that I forget to mail them. Which is the greater fault I don't know. You may well say that it is no great sin to not write a letter, since there is possibly a very good excuse for it. But to write a letter and then care so little about it or its recipient as to not mail it is very culpable, and I fully expect a sharp note from you, or a lawyer, in the morning.

Anyway, the only nice thing that can be said for today is that the parade is over. The Sun man did a much better job of describing it, for purposes of general consumption and public morale, than I am going to do. His prose was richer, his Weltanschauung a more lovely thing than mine. But maybe I saw more, in my weasely way. You may caption the following a worm's eye view of the Great Chicago Parade of fawty-two.

I can state officially that it was a fine parade, undoubtedly, bigger, longer, better, with more floats, legionnaires and labor unionites than the New York Parade. It lasted twice as long (14 hours to New York's seven). And it probably got started twice as late and got behind schedule twice as easily.

We arrived at the appointed meeting place at 10 o'clock. That

was on Superior over by Lake Shore Drive. We milled around for about two hours, advancing two steps every ten minutes, until we finally reached Michigan Avenue about 12:30. Naturally there was plenty of opportunity in that time for members of our little band to detach themselves and forage in search of women, beer and sandwiches. I was pleased to note that none of the Corporation counsels got tight, unlike Some Other municipal employees I saw (Sewers, Election Commissioners). Several of them hugged women, others joined Licenses (Bureau of) in song. The latter department had several good Irish Tenors. Naturally, your own unique wife foraged and found in her own unique way. I admired several participants from either Mines or Health, I couldn't figure out which, who in turn admired me and allowed me to clap an oxygen mask on my face and inhale pure oxygen. It was a device used in mine rescue work, which they saw fit to carry in the parade. I got kind of high on the oxygen but it wore off very rapidly.

When we finally got started it wasn't so bad, and it was singularly uneventful. Kelly was still in the reviewing stand at Congress St. when we passed by there at one o'clock. Little Hodes led our contingent manfully; it was a gallant thing to do, considering what a sloppy crew we were, in colorless civilian mufti, red-eyed from sleepiness and the big spot lights on Michigan Avenue. Our float was a lot of flowers and a girl from the stenographer's division who has very long platinum hair (natural) whom they dressed up in a white robe to represent Justice or maybe it was Sex. We got to 12th St. finally and Lundy and I started towards the I.C. We walked past our float to congratulate the stenographer, and at that moment, the driver emerged from wherever he was in the flower-covered truck and fell unconscious to the pavement, poisoned by carbon monoxide. Somebody gave him artificial respiration and they finally took him away in an ambulance. I hope he lives. I'm sure the Law Department was the only contingent in the whole parade whose driver got poisoned. And they're probably the only body in a position to fend off lawsuits successfully.

That was the great parade of Chicago, from where I was sitting.

The floats were elaborate, the women beautiful, the men heroic, but the best thing in it was a sign on one of the Sewer Department trucks, namely:

United We Stand

Divided We Fall

If You Want a Sewer

Call the City Hall

I forgot to tell you in my other letter that Ed came down Saturday morning, carsick naturally, and I took him over to Cobb. He said later in the day that the exam was tough but that he thought he did all right in it.

Much love,

Jill

**R**EPUTABLE historians have said that Allied Victory in the War was foreseeable by the fall of 1942, at which time the Cadet was ushered out of officer's training at Camp Davis, which is situated not far from the Atlantic Ocean and Wilmington, North Carolina. However, it was not foreseen at the time by our enemies, who appeared to be doing fairly well; they would have to let many millions of people die and many more millions suffer through hell and many fine cities be devastated before they would concede, by which time they were bunkered down in Berlin and Tokyo.

Projections of victory were not, I hasten to say, founded upon the fact that Our Hero had been enduring a grim regimen up to this time and was about to project himself upon our enemies, but rather upon statistics of manpower and production, allowing a fair margin -- say, 10% -- to the probability that the generals and soldiers of one nation were more effective than those of another nation. In a particular case, such as himself, if he was becoming a better soldier, the probability of victory coming sooner rather than later would be enhanced by one fourteenth-millionth or so, much less if you counted

the industrial soldiers who labored mightily in the War Effort -- perhaps one thirty-millionth.



At Camp Davis, N. Carolina.

He did not think along these lines. If he was to suffer the tortures of the damned, it was in order to make A Significant Contribution to the War Effort. He had declared, you will recall, that the Japanese and Germans, not to mention the Italians and several other nationalities, were insane to go to war with the United States. If he was so confident of victory, why didn't he play cornet in the Camp Grant Band and let it go at that? His  $1.4 \times 10^{-7}$  or  $3 \times 10^{-7}$  of the required heft was hardly needed.

Instead, exaggerating his potential role and unaware of what was confronting him, he signed in and took up his bunk space at this Officer Candidates School of the Anti-aircraft Division of the Coast Artillery Corps, graduates of which were called Lieutenants in the Army of the United States and given a new Army Identification Number. They were also termed "Ninety-day wonders." The road to graduation was one of the rockiest of anybody's army career, not excluding direct combat.

***AL TO JILL JUNE 9, 1942***

Dearest Jill,

Expert tho I am in moving targets, I can hardly hold your flitting

image leaping from tub to sink while I pen these few lines. I'm really rushed for time. Rifle inspection 7 A.M. tomorrow. Full inspection Sat., etc, etc. Oh well, you still love me & that's all that matters.

But the letters, dear. I've been writing daily. I guess they all came on Wednesday. Maybe if I wrote you twice a day you'd be sure to get a daily missive.

Tonight as I walked home from class a frail, haggard figure accosted me. It was Bill Prendergast. Remember the Irish tenor at Salk's party? He's suffering thru his first week and is properly miserable. You poor civilians can never appreciate the true conditions of a life such as this. I'll have many tales to regale you with one of these days. I can see you now, cuddled on my arm in our quiet rooms, listening all agape to my version of fantastic story magazine.

We're getting gadget after gadget thrown at us 9 hours a day. Our minds are whirling with wheels and meshing with gears. What a fate for a social scientist! From the most abstract to the most concrete. Such is man's fate in this damned war.

My sunglasses are functioning well, and I have good use for them, in addition to the fact that they hide my drooping eyelids.

There is nothing to do of a week-end around here. A good number of the fellows go away, thinking thereby to ease the strain. I suppose it does but I can't afford it & probably wouldn't enjoy it. It costs about 10 bucks to get away overnight and do anything. I've got to keep expenses down as much as possible, spending my money mostly on cigarettes, cokes, ice cream & candy bars to ease the pangs of hurried and bad meals, and shoe polish. Going to show Sat night and perhaps the beach on Sunday are sufficient pleasures. I'd as soon cut out all weekends and get this damned grind over sooner. But then again I wouldn't be able to write you a long weekend letter such as I plan every sat. & Sun.

Time's a-pressing, sweetheart.

I love you, Al

**AL TO JILL JUNE 17, 1942**

Sweetheart,

A ten-minute break brings you a letter, but it is perhaps a sad one. For I am hopelessly morose without you. And this is a hell of a life. Really darling, you can't imagine how much I love you because you can't see the feelings under the skin.

We are all dead tired. No sleep and nagging officers every minute of the day. My baggage with everything in it hasn't come yet and I run to one place to borrow a razor and another to borrow a pin. My papers haven't arrived to give me the travel money owed me, tho I can neither get the time to cash a check or spend any money. So don't send me one yet.

I know I can adjust and it will get easier but I refuse ever to let any environment please me that doesn't include you. And that, my dearest, is the loyalty you long ago saw in me. I refuse to accept anything in place of you whether it be a generalship or a chorus girl. I have been unhappy every single day that I have not been with you since the day we met. But there is no Int House for me now to which I can hurry after work in hopes of meeting you. I know you may be bothered by the idea but please try to write me every day. It is the only way I can wake up without a sick feeling, knowing that there will be something from you.

This is supposed to be the toughest officers' school in the country. I can well believe it. My back is almost broken from arching it to the tune of an officer saying "Get your chin in, Mister. Stick your chest out Mister. Guide that rifle, Mister." Well, I'll write more details later. Be good and please try and write those letters.

Your loving husband,

Al

P.S. on envelope: No letter from you yet. (Wed. nite).

**AL TO JILL JUNE 19, 1942**

Dearest Jill,

Thursday nite

I'll write a note which may be the last before Sat. nite or Sun. Your first letter came today and I was so happy to receive it. I'm awfully glad you've settled down to a more or less regularly "existence without Al" for the time being. Your wisdom sometimes startles me into realizing that I hardly even commend you for it. You hit the proverbial nail on the trite noodle when you said "I can get used to living alone, but being used to something makes it no less desirable." Exactement!

I'm sorry I wrote you such a glum letter the other day. But you know how conditions must be here, no sleep, terrific heat during the day, overcrowding and a host of petty details. There is another side that brings a real sense of accomplishing things. You will never for the rest of your life reproach me for poor posture. Nor will you ever have to fear my nagging you for petty details. I'm sure I'll be quite tolerant of petty vices for having suffered from them myself. Seriously, since we spend about ten hours in classrooms and five in intensive drill I'm learning a hell of a lot & should be a much better man for it. So much the better to deserve you.

It makes me glad to realize that with Buss & Mir [*Al's brother Sebastian and his wife Miriam*] visiting Chi & Johnny coming home for a few days & with a few other interesting things to do, that this absence of mine will go the quicker for you.

All I can write now is written dearest, except to tell you again that I love you indescribably much. Al

**JILL TO AL JUNE 20, 1942**

Darling--

Friday

I've gotten three of your letters to date, and I very much appreciate what it means for you to write that much, busy and oppressed as you are. Honestly, darling, in a way I feel awful for you. I know you resent such feelings, and that objectively you are fortunate to be at CSO but I still think it's awful for you to be so overworked, and I would give anything to be with you and see that you got nine hours' sleep & were well-fed, well-washed, and cooled off. And how can you ask me to write of my trials! I'll never complain again -- my life is so infinitely easy compared to yours, and probably always will be - except that I probably will complain.

Your mother called & said she got the record from Buss & Mir's you spoke of. Also, I got a table linen set from Cousin Adele which she opened by mistake. She says it's quite pretty. I guess we need something like that, for guests & such. I'm going up there tomorrow & will probably spend the night, or will bring the boys back if I can get Rosable's apt to stay at, except that I can't because I think she's mad at me because I was snippy to her about not putting the top down on Buss's car so as to fit my bike in. If you can follow that. The purpose of bringing the boys down is to effect the Big Deal of Vic's bike. This week your mother heard of a big bargain in a girl's bike - some woman she knew - so after inspecting it & finding it not wanting, Vic bought it with the \$18.50 I gave him. We've tripped all the trimmings off -- lights, baskets, etc. & we're going to try to swap it at Ace where I got mine for a boy's bike. I spoke to the guy at Ace & he said he'd take it off our hands. Meanwhile Vic has something to ride & I've got some working collateral in getting him the kind of bike he wants. I know it sounds complicated & I shall probably come out very much worsted in the deal.

I came home after lunch today. I've had this sore throat for two days & today I started feeling dizzy, or, as Mr. Rubin corrected, dizzier, so I went to bed. I've been sleeping every since, & just got up now (8) to write this & to eat a meal I don't much want. I'll

probably go to work tomorrow. All I need is sleep & orange juice.

I've been reading Machine Politics, etc. So far it's very interesting. I hope it doesn't get too statistical, however. These days I read for fun, not edification.

I think they've rigged up a public address system just recently for the sailors across the Midway. Did you hear any untoward noises when you were here? Anyway, they talk to the boys every 5 minutes -- telling them everything from orders to report to their C.O. to go to Pearl Harbor to enjoinders to wash their socks. Needless to say, every word uttered wafts in here, & I find myself leaping out of bed at 6:15 and hurriedly Lux-ing out my summer whites, before my higher centers have a chance to say "boo".

That last sentence, incidentally, is a very good example of early Perlman (i.e., before he started to write scripts like Larceny, Inc.) and if I could write that way all the time I should probably not be thine, or even Chicago's, but lying in a gold-plated swimming pool somewhere in Los Angeles County.

But that wouldn't be 3/4 as nice as being your wife.

I'll try to write more often, dear. Certainly, if you can write three letters a week, I can beat that.

Oh, Janice fell in the other night with Bill and his disgusting dog Maggie, a Kerry Blue who does tricks. Apparently Maggie has been Bill's life work, & he runs her through her routine at the slightest provocation, employing a patter that hasn't been heard since they tore down the Orpheum. Janice smirks and deprecates. I don't see how she brought herself to marry him. He's so repulsive and she certainly knows it. Also, the fact that he's Jewish preys on her mind -- they both made several remarks about Jews, self-consciously, of course.

Darling, I'll have to eat if I ever want to get back to sleep. All my love to you, & the family & Coony send theirs too.

Jill

I'm giving your Dad a tie and a boutonniere made of defense stamps from us for Father's Day. I figure the former can be from you (I'll get it at Fields & spend something) & the latter is sufficiently frivolous and neutral to come from a daughter-in-law.

What does AAA stand for?

Anti-Aircraft Association

Ack-Ack-Ack?

Did you get my letter of Monday?

***AL TO JILL JUNE 20, 1942***

Dearest Jill,

Sat. June 20, 1942

Here goes for a leisurely lengthy discourse on the tribes and tribulations of your beloved, and, believe me, darling, they are many. If someone offered me the post that rather vague cousin of yours has for the duration, I think I would accept and also apologize to him for criticizing his tastes. For frankly, minute by minute I am being tortured by the harshest (tho not physical) discipline a man can possibly conceive of.

You probably are wondering about this all since I don't think I impress you as the gushing moe type. Now that I have a little time I'll tell you what is happening.

The foremost thing to keep in mind always is that I have a chip on the shoulder against anything that keeps us apart and since I can't take it out on the real culprits, the Japo-Nazis, I am very restless and unhappy. For truly I love you as much as any mortal could possibly love.

But first the training and then the reactions of the men. Here's the set-up. The directors and officers are out to get the men. The tools are constant and close supervision, most exacting demands, perpetual driving and criticism, a terrific program of activity which I have told you a few things about in earlier letters.

You can't really appreciate the terrific pace unless you have to go thru it, and I do not underestimate your fine powers of imagination. There is scarcely a free minute from dawn (or before) to midnight. The officers are out to make life as miserable as possible to see if the candidates can take it. Perfection is demanded though there is no time in which to achieve it.

I've learned a good deal and relish these new things. The first week was composed of miscellaneous subjects such as these: map-reading and aerial photography, customs of the service, court-martial, motor transportation characteristics of American, British, German and Japanese planes, anti-tank defense (we use anti-aircraft guns against mechanized & armored units, you know), first aid, and math. About the latter: I've learned a lot now that I must buckle down to it. My knowledge right now is average in the class. Four subjects are tested, algebra, trig, logs, and coordinates (directions, azimuths, & a combination of trig, logs, etc.). I think I'll hit off the math all right in enough time and expect to catch on fast now that I have to. Maybe then I can hold my head up in speaking to you on the subject. There is quite a bit required. Some of the firing mechanisms are marvelously intricate. Next week we study searchlights and they are beauts, then later machine guns, 90 mm. anti-aircraft guns (long, sinister-looking cannon), 37 mm. guns, Garand rifles, and so forth.

Meanwhile every day we stand rigid inspection which gets on the nerves of the men like nothing else. Such things as these cause demerits: bedding not folded to perfection, shoes not properly aligned, books on shelf slightly askew, a piece of broom straw beneath the bed, a smudge of dust anywhere, a button unbuttoned.

Today was the climax of the worst week of the course. At 110° a full dress inspection was held. We had between four & five hours' sleep last night and before dawn were polishing and scrubbing the barracks. The whole morning we spent in rigid drill and classes, bolted lunch in 5 instead of the customary 10

minutes and changed to our clean khakis. Then we began to march, a whole battalion of over a thousand. The chief of the school was reviewing us. We walked at strained attention with our rifles for a mile, lined up on the concrete parade ground and stood for an hour while being inspected. From where I stood I could see the splotches of sweat appearing and growing on the backs of the men in front of me. Some looked as if they had wet their pants. I couldn't raise my hands to stop the sweat pouring down from my face onto my collar. I tried everything to take my mind off the agony of waiting, I thought of you, I thought of cold drinks, I tried to pick out the man who would collapse first, I tried to take my mind off the idea that I perhaps couldn't stand it myself. I tried to rid myself of the mutinous idea of yelling "go to hell", throwing away my rifle, and walking into a cold shower. Later, I asked several of the men what they thought of and they said they too were wondering how long they could last. Finally the colonel came before our rank. I shot the rifle up but gripped it a little below the balance. Giggled! Well, so were a lot of others, I thought. The rifle was a Springfield, and you remember that I formerly had an Enfield. I'm not quite used to a perfect manual of arms off this one (i.e. without glancing down).

We marched back again and had barracks inspection, short & sweet. When finally we were set free, I felt like a new man. Now, after a dinner with a couple of other guys at the Service Club, a weekly luxury I plan, and a cold shower, with a thunderstorm outside & the barracks comparatively quiet and thinking about you I feel very comfortable and relaxed. Since dismissal, I've had four cokes, 2 iced teas, at least a gallon of water (really), a bottle of milk, a glass of lemonade and a glass of beer.

Have you heard the records that Buss, Mir, and I made in Washington that evening yet? Buss promised to send them off right away. I hope you like them.

I got a card from Olie today. He still is at Dix and gives us congratulations. Incidentally there is a big anti-aircraft training center at Fort Sheridan. Who knows, eh, my love? It might be nice there for a while.

How is Eddie coming along with the 4-year college, dear?

I'll write more later. I'm going to get a luxurious sleep tonight. Come quick oh day that I can sleep with Jill again! You'll have to take good care of me, darling.

Fondly with Love, -- Al

***JILL TO AL JUNE 23, 1942***

Sweetheart--

At least you can't say I'm not resourceful.. Somebody seems to have filched all the writing paper around here and the only think I could find was this shelf paper. The thing is, if I started to shop for paper now I wouldn't get this letter finished in time to go out in the ten o'clock mail.

I even went looking for paper in that pink box you brought down here and naturally got side-tracked into reading all your mail and gazing with renewed wonder at those alleged pornographic pictures. I read that letter you got from Yvonne which you so cagily had her address to faculty exchange and I must say she has nice handwriting. Hope you didn't mind! I am assuming all kinds of prerogatives now that I am your spouse.

I got both your letters [*one of them seems to be missing*] today and really and truly, darling, I will try to write every day. There's actually no reason that I shouldn't except that I'm lazy about finding the proper time and place and materials -- mostly the latter -- because I certainly have enough to say. I feel no qualms about boring you with the veriest details of my existence, an existence fraught with pleasant trivia, even though its *modus vivendi* [I really meant *raison d'etre* but couldn't think of it in time], or is it *disputandi*, is absent.

I had an awfully nice weekend. I roused myself to go to work Saturday morning, despite the sore throat. Buss Brown and Rosable, the former being temporarily out of the hoosegow, drove me down so it wasn't so bad even though it was raining.

Rosable left ostensibly for New York Saturday. Actually, she went somewhere else, I don't know where, but she told everybody New York to throw Buss off her track. Buss, presumably appeased, also presumably went back to Peoria. He wasn't drunk Saturday morning but he still acted crazy.

Anyway, my throat getting no better or worse, I went to work and then to your family's, where I loafed around. Mostly I spent the day listening to your and Buss's incomparable recording. My that was a cute show you gave, but couldn't you stop giggling, you silly fool? Your singing voice is no better than it should be, whatever that means, but you are a fine m.c. and should stick to your trade. Once in a while Cooney reacted to your calling him but I think he was pretty bored. Your dad was delighted and played it over and over again. I got him a very pretty tie, I'm told, and a boutonniere, or however you spell it, made of defense stamps (9) for Father's Day. He said the latter charmed all the ladies and if he wore it again (he wore it on a job Sunday) Mom could kiss him goodbye.

Sunday Vic and I rode the bikes down to the south side, and it was really a very pleasant easy ride. The Ace bike store was closed and we went to another one run by a venial Greek, I think, who tried to sell us a rebuilt bike for \$55! We got him up to \$25 on ours for a trade-in and then left. I told Vic it was too much money to spend. So the matter of Vic's bike is still pending. The girl in the building here would like to buy it, maybe, but it is such a lousy bike, a lot of defects having showed up in the short time we've had it, that I discouraged her. What a lousy entrepreneur I am. I'd rather sell it to a dealer and stick him than a nice girl like that.

So Vic and I went swimming off the rocks for a while and then went back around five to a delicious dinner at your mother's. The water was pretty cold still, incidentally. Actually, the weather has been very cool for June, a fact which ought to make you burn even more with envy. Lorraine came for dinner and sends regards to you. All the ladies came over afterwards and made pests of themselves.

I am getting very virtuous. I worked til almost six tonight and hardly smoke at all, except at night. I have been trying to get the maps done because Rubin said he wished I were finished with them so he could get me started writing propoganda. Although I distrust my own judgements of people because I so often get rooked on them, I think he is a wonderful guy. He is so easy to get along with and so much fun. The office rings with our gay laughter and also with my cursing, since I am always swearing at the Tribune and expressing violent opinions. He hardly ever takes a firm stand on anything, which would annoy me except that I suppose that is the prerogative of middle age and also of a person with an apparently thorough-going angelic disposition. I don't like Lundy so much, thinking him a bit of a young snot, given to bad jokes.

Nothing has come of my sore throat to date except I got what looked to be a boil on my chin. That is going away, and with it my sore throat, which was an odd combination, I must say. In fact, today I feel fine and walk with a bounce in my step or maybe it is those heels the shoemaker put on.

The charming laddie Eddy passed his test and is due for an interview with Wickham and Smith some time this week. At least I told him this morning before I left the house to call school today. Cooney has taken to running away for several hours at a time but always comes back just as somebody starts to eat. I think he can smell it for blocks away.

I got a fatuous letter from Walter. They are going to sell their car and the boat is in dry dock for the summer. Even financially and materially I am now better off than they, being in a city that permits recreation at your doorstep.

It's nearly ten so I had better stop this monologue and mail it. Darling, I just wish to hell I were with you.

All my love, always,     Jill

I had lunch with Dietz today but I'll have to save the details til tomorrow. Also I got paid today.

Enclosed please find address which your mother said you'd want.

**JILL TO AL JUNE 24, 1942(A)**

Sweetheart--

Wednesday

I got your letter today that you probably wrote Saturday, and it makes me so mad [*this letter seems to be missing*]. Just because you don't often complain, I know how tough your life must be now, and it all seems so damned unnecessary. I can't think of any reason why they think the only suitable training ground for officers is a concentration camp. Certainly other second lieutenants, the ones that get civilian commissions and the ones, possibly in the camps, don't have to go through hell. It makes me mad, too because there is so little I can do about it. At least if we were together and you were training 18 hours a day, I could comfort you or you could let out some of your aggressions and sorrows on me.

I guess by now you have got your barracks bags, which should make life a modicum easier.

Although I have no heavenly reason or right to do this, I shall submit this daily account of my trials and tribulations -- as per your instructions before yours mounted to such gigantic proportions. I am getting sleepless and jittery; it's funny, but as soon as I start to lose sleep the effect is cumulative, and I never seem to be able to get enough. Last night I spent at your folks, and Coony always gets in the room, even if I shut the door, and then when dawn breaks he gets restless and jumps on the bed and sighs loudly, and generally ruptures the peace. Then I get so annoyed I can't get back to sleep, or I develop a swift headache, and spend the rest of the day in a fog of irritation. Today the Hon. Ed Kelly had to give a speech before some boys on inventions, which Rubin wrote. I had to run down to the library and pick up a lot of dull books on inventions. I was laboriously and sleepily reading them back in the office, when Rubin utters a little sigh of satisfaction. He had written the whole

damn speech in less time than it took me to look through one book, right out of his head. I read it and it wasn't bad at all, although it dwelled excessively on those humorous times when people used outhouses, as contrasted to the benefits of modern plumbing. What a card that fellow is. I hope the mayor wears it in good health.

Vic came down south today and went around the various bike stores looking for bikes. I got home about 5:30 and cooked him dinner, and then he went back up north for a first-aid class. Their school is over with today. Next week Ed has that appointment with Wickham and Smith. He had originally made it for tomorrow but for some reason didn't want to keep it, so I called up, representing myself as his mother, and changed it. Vic, incidentally, didn't find any bikes he liked, but I'll look again Saturday when I have some time.

I am having dinner at Janice's tomorrow night. She came downtown Tuesday for lunch with me, and gave me a long story of marital woe. In the first place, she hates the Windermere. They just have a room there, for which they pay the colossal sum of 100 a month, just so Bill can be near his mother. They don't even have a kitchen, but eat with his mother. Janice doesn't want to get into an argument, which would surely ensue if she insisted on moving. Furthermore, she doesn't know a damn thing about Bill's finances yet; he obviously doesn't work. She says she feels like a child bride. Furthermore, she dislikes all the girls she has met through him and there isn't much else to do during the day but see them or see him. They are very Hyde Park-ish and Jewish middle class. She said at the last minute she didn't want to get married at all and suddenly developed a great affection for that Billings doctor she had been seeing on and off and who wanted to marry her also. But she just had to go through with it. She apparently went through a severe emotional conflict, for Janice, and although she avers to the contrary, I don't think she is having the happiest of married lives. I know she made her bed, to coin a phrase, but I still feel sorry for her.

I am not the best of little housewives while you are away. Considering how I nag you to pick up your clothes when you are here, and how much I like a neat place, I certainly let things go to seed in your absence. It's just so boring to keep things straight when you have nobody to talk to while you're doing it. I have to do the dishes now and the floor is littered with old Daily News's.

Rosable called me long distance this morning. She is staying at Palos Heights by herself. Buss went to New York, thinking she was there. How he expected to find her is another question, strictly for psychiatrists. Anyway, when he couldn't find her in Times Square or wherever he looked, he called up her father long distance and sent that poor man into a tizzy. I think Mr. Joseph is getting his lawyer after him. What can a lawyer do in a case like that?

I hope you don't mind being regaled with all this gossip but I just don't have any pure or noble thoughts tonight. Except for my ever-lasting conviction that I love you more than anything else in the world.

I dood,

Jill

Now that I am writing you regularly I might as well use three-cent instead of airmail stamps, setting aside what I save into a Scotch Whiskey fund, or some equally worthy cause. For when you come home..

***JILL TO AL JUNE 24, 1942(B)***

Darling,

In continuation of the one-a-day policy started yesterday, I submit the ff.: But first, you must accept certain qualifying conditions if you are to reap the great joy of receiving a daily letter from me:

1) You must promise not to save my letters. Obviously, very few

of these missives will contain much that is beautiful, true, enduring or touching. Most will be compendiums of the iconoclastic rubbish that passes daily through my mind, of my faulty actions, of my ephemeral observations on life as it is lived by a 9-to-5 gal. You would hardly want to carry these jerky missives through the Sturm und Drang [What the hell does that mean?] of battle. And I certainly don't want to envision our little love nest of the future, with one room devoted to the De Grazias and their four or was it six pups, the other ten piled to the ceiling with beribboned packages of early Oppenheima.

2) You don't have to write everyday, much as I would like it.

3) Don't expect fancy stationary every time or a finely penned script in the manner of the early Jesuits. But I know you don't.

Like this stationary. I am spending the night at your family's & your poor overworked mother (well, I did do the dishes for a change) is vacuum cleaning my feet. The boys are out playing & Coony is chewing a nylon stocking. Good doggie!

Did you get your barracks bag yet? How about weekends? Are you able to rest up on them at all? I hope so. I am getting insomnia again, probably because I miss you so much, & am edgy as a fox. I got very disgusted with map making today & told everybody so & in general was disagreeable. I wish I had a job in the outdoors. I get so sick of being at a desk. I hope we'll be able to live in the country when you come back. I don't think that being a housewife would be so bad in the country. I would bike to market everyday & buy sharply & well. Then I would paint the furniture, tend a garden, & maybe type your PhD thesis at night. I don't see why that isn't a good way of living, even tho I have at times intellectually rebelled against being dependent on a man. But despite all my intellectual protestations to the contrary, I'm not a careerist; at least, every job I've ever had I've viewed as a stopgap, certainly not as a career, & always end up setting up some other object (you!) as the end of life. I've got the brains, I guess, but not the temperament of a career girl. And I just don't like being indoors all the time.

Your mother is having some ladies over tomorrow night and a Fuller Brush man. What a racket she's running! The deal is this -- she gets a group of ladies over -- it had to be over 10 -- & then this jerk demonstrates the brushes to the enchanted assemblage, and then your mother gets a commission in the form of \$3 worth of brushes. Considering that she's going to bake at least that much worth of dainties & she's sweating blood to get the house clean now, I don't see how she's going to come out ahead much. However, she has fun.

Well, I'd better mail this. It's 10 now.

Best of love to you, my darling,

Jill

Malena is here & sends love..

***AL TO JILL JUNE 23, 1942(A)***

Dearest wife,

Sunday night

Just a note to say hello and to ask you for a little money. My baggage has not yet arrived and won't probably until next Sunday. That won't be too bad; I'm getting used to it. But I am down to a few cents & would appreciate a \$5 bill tucked in a little love letter and sent air mail.

I went down to the ocean today for a wonderful two hours of relaxation. The army provides a convoy of trucks to bring the men down & back. The ocean was pretty calm, the water not quite cold enough, and the beach very pleasant.

I've just come from a study class, this time on electricity. In a week they propose to make electrical engineers and searchlight operators out of us. I wish them well.

I'm really starving for news of home - you and the family - not Rosable especially since we agree that she isn't quite the healthy type of boon companion that dear old dad is. Pursuant to that is the enclosed cartoon. I've only had one so far, but

expect one tomorrow. I'm still hoping for that daily letter knowing that tho you may have only little things to write about you do them so delightfully. I've always been your appreciative audience as you've been mine, & so be it ad infinitum.

Love,

XXX AI

P.S: WAD = Wife of Alfred DeGrazia

***AL TO JILL JUNE 23, 1942(B)***

Dearest love,

Just a note before lights go out to tell you how much I love you and how you are inherent in my visions of the life ideal.

How about a picture, darling? A new one, showing the latest lovely contours of your figure. Little & cheap, I care not.

Last night I dreamt about a very romantic episode in Switzerland & you were the girl and I was very happy. Came 5 A.M. and out I leapt out to carry on as supply sergeant.

Tomorrow we learn more about searchlights and the giant ears you are always seeing in movies ( & in dreams, if you don't eat well).

I guess it's pretty certain that I'll be given leave towards the end of August. Spending Indian Summer together would be just about the swellest thing in the world.

I thought you were wonderfully clever about the sailor siren tho I regret your crediting Perlman. You were like that before you read him, I'm sure.

Harvey Sherman is graduating this Friday & will return here to teach after his furlough in which he is meeting Maw in Washington.

There is lots more of interest to write but I won't have time just

now.

Love

Al.

***JILL TO AL JUNE 26, 1942***

Dearest--

My god, haven't you got your baggage yet? And why are your checks held up? Our bank account hovers perilously close about the 200 mark, or at least when I pay off all the etcetera of my existence it will be. Anyway, I'll send you the fiver tonight as soon as I get over to Stineway's and get a check cashed. Presumably you don't want a check because of the time it takes to get it cashed.

Incidentally, this is Thursday and the letter you wrote Sunday just got here. I hope you realize how long it takes and don't think that I've been negligent about sending you the money.

I had dinner at Janice's and Bill's tonight and then they dropped me off here early because they were going down to Armour Tech to see about some defense course they both plan to take. In some of the women's courses the government pays at the rate of \$1440 a year for the nine weeks' training period. For inspection jobs. It sounds very alluring but I am disenchanted enough to know that any job would lose its romance after two weeks for me. I think I would like welding or taking apart machines; both tasks are sufficiently exotic in my estimation. But hell, I can make \$2000 a year as a statistician and I would hate to waste the government's time taking a course to prepare me for a job that I would quit after two weeks.

I just called your mother and she has another deal on the fire in re bikes. As the matter now stands, Joe Ensign may buy the girl's bike from me for his wife, and your mother found a lady who will sell a boy's bike for \$13. It's awfully complicated and I am profoundly convinced that I am going to get stuck with it

anyway it comes out. I was also telling your mother how much I was impressed with Vic's behavior last night. In many ways Vic is much more mature than Ed. It occurred to me that it took considerable initiative for him to come all the way down to the south side to look for bikes, particularly since several of the stores he went to were in totally unfamiliar neighborhoods. When Ed comes down here you have to give him a written diagram as well as a bribe to get him here. Furthermore, Vic, with all his brattiness, has a natural tact unusual in a kid his age. Part of it of course stems from his natural enthusiasm for living. Vic can have a swell time with practically no trouble at all. But he's extremely well-mannered when he's away from home about such things as my cooking, for instance. Last night, as always, I was somewhat embarrassed about the paucity of the food, compared to what he has at home, and the manner of preparation. But Vic makes you feel as if he were eating at the Waldorf, and if he sees there's not enough, or if there is a question of dividing something, he is very insistent about the other person getting his share. All these things, of course, are manifested when he is away from home. He's still a big lug around the house, with everybody. He treats me with a lot more respect, I note, when he's at my house than when I'm at his. I think these things are important for you to know, since perhaps your intelligence can figure out the things about the home situation that make him oafish around the home, yet pleasant company when he's outside of it. Of course, Sunday I can remember being thrown into a rage all over 60th Street because he put the bike lock on backward and we had to get two men to bend the key so that we could unlock the damn thing. But that was a natural error, and if I hadn't been so bad-tempered it would have gone unnoticed, more or less. He is, of course, lumbering and precipitous in his actions, and for that reason does things wrong sometimes. Like running into a Good Humor wagon on the bike, and bruising his hip considerably. But I can hardly talk. Last weekend I fell off my bike once, with no casualties because I landed on my seat, and nearly ran into a car another time.

Eddy on the other hand is quite withdrawn and non-activist. It's

a charming quality from a distance -- you know how I'm always sniping at your aggressiveness -- but it's an awful bother when you want to get things done. And he practically never registers enthusiasm. I know I'm not very enthusiastic naturally, and I used to dislike the gushing girls who were, but still when you suggest things to do, it's nice to have an appreciative audience. In that respect, Ed's something like you. Anyway, he is unenthusiastic about some of the same things you are, like swimming. Of course, I don't blame you for that. If I were as water-logged as you are, I wouldn't like it much, either.

Well, sweetie-pie, I have to go and get envelopes and your check. I think somebody came in here and stole all my envelopes. They left a copy of the Socony Vacuum News instead. At least that's the only way I can account for its being on my desk, and the envelopes not.

The war news looks terrible, doesn't it?

All my love, dear, and please don't call me WAD. I don't like it.

Your

Jill

***JILL TO AL JUNE 28, 1942***

Sweetheart

Sunday

All my good intentions seem to have gone a-cropper in re the daily letter. In the first place I have been soaking up sunshine and Lake Michigan water like a thing gone mad all weekend. I am read as a beet and twice as ragged. I have water in my nose, ears & throat, & if squeezed I should probably go squish & collapse. Fortunately, nobody squeezes me these days.

As you can gather, I've been down at the point with my numerous Hyde Park girl friends. The water's been still pretty cold & rough but good. I did take the stationery down today, but got nowhere. Rosable got home from the country Friday (Brown got put in an asylum in Kansas, where his family are legally

committing him I guess) and has been regaling me with the awful tale ever since. We have been cooking together, which is good, since I eat more & well. (Had zucchini tonight, & finally stocked in some canned goods yesterday, after all these weeks. It makes the place seem a littler homier.)

Last night R. & I went to the movies & saw The Invader & The Fleet's In (D. Lamour). Not a very good double feature, despite what you may think.

Vic got a swell bike from a boy your mother found for \$13. Apparently your mother hypnotized this boy and his family, because immediately after the sale was consummated the boy regretted it. That still leaves me the girl's bike to sell. God, why did I ever get into this. I'm so bored with conversation about bikes I'd just as soon walk the rest of my life.

I am enclosing a picture of me with a little friend of my early years. You can't see much of me except my hands, which, as you may note, were large and well-shaped even then. Anyway, large. That was taken on the lawn in back of our house in the country.

For some reason, I guess it was the exercise, I am coordinating simply terribly & find it hard as hell to write. What do you think of this paper? Would you mind if I stopped writing now? I don't think you can be enjoying it very much. I certainly would never be able to transcribe this back.

Anyway, the nice thing about seeing all these girls is that they lend a willing ear when I talk about you. Which I do early and often. I really love you darling --

Jill

John's address is Cand. J. D. Hess

1st Co., OCS

Armored Force

Fort Knox, Ky.

**AL TO JILL JUNE 25, 1942**

Dearest Jill,

The effects of your letters are truly amazing. They give me the morale of the Light Brigade and, believe me, baby, we really need it here. Some day you are going to write if I have to stand guard over you with a club to make you produce (at least one short story a year -- you don't have to worry - I'm tired of mounting guard).

It looks like you're in for a lot of technical education too. These devices of war are the most marvelous things. The AAA happens (Anti-Aircraft Artillery) to be an especially complicated branch, and day after day we pore over blueprints and photographs and maps which I never thought about before. I'm sure the training will be most useful when it comes to formulating a social science of some sort. Cause and effect and the nature of science are never so quite well illustrated as when working with a lot of motors, electric currents and gears. But then again one must avoid becoming like Pareto who seems to have slipped into the gears himself.

Every little detail of your letter was most interesting, and I'm waiting for more time to answer it well. You seem to have plenty to do, just as I have, and I'll bet you'll like your job even much more when you start writing the propaganda. Remember, my dear, the fine tradition of propagandists in the De Grazia family and do not slip into the scum of journalese & high-toned publicity.

You don't know how much I appreciate the fortitude with which you are accepting this temporarily separate condition. Being under a considerable emotional strain myself to knuckle under to this discipline, any buckling on your part would be fatal to me I think. I would hate, for example, to have you beseeching to come down to live here, tho I want you more than anything. One fellow here is perplexed no end by that problem. His wife wants to come down but they would have so little time to spend together. And you owe it to yourself to possess some independent activity.

Here is something that should be done immediately. I have asked for a wife's allotment of \$28 per month for the time I am an enlisted man - June to September approximately. But since my marriage is not on my service record, I must produce the marriage certificate for the personnel office. So please send it to me as quickly as possible. Retroactive payments from June on will be paid in November. Therefore you will get about 3 months of \$28 + \$22 taken from my pay. It is a nice sum to help build our nest, as the Victorians put it. I am also having \$15.

Darling, the more I have officers' training & see what is supposed to constitute leadership, and have to endure the million minor things which become major when done everyday in every way with the utmost intensity, the more I feel that I want to be an enlisted man once more.

For example, and this is almost the limit my patience can endure, our officer has been riding me on my bounce step. I can conceal it for a period with some effort but it crops out again. Now you would think that very unimportant in determining a man's future in leading men. I've found that my step is of no consequence whatsoever, and even of positive value, as was Napoleon's hand in coat, and Lincoln's lean stoop. But not here. Such a little thing like that can start the ball rolling and before long I'm liable to forget I'm in this army and give a few *[words missing]* unasked for suggestions regarding leadership. A little trait like that bounce which can inspire a certain smiling fondness in acquaintances is a glaring flaw by the outmoded standards used here.

Really, I don't give a damn about the school's judgements on anything except academic standards & I have no fear of them (the standards). But judging a man by the way he folds his sheets, fixes his bunks (not just fix it in general but to the most unnoticeable and irrelevant detail) disturbs me emotionally almost beyond endurance.

Why am I driveling on at this rate? It is easy for anyone else to say: "Oh, Al, you shouldn't be bothered by these little things." But just try doing these little things day after day and have to put

off doing real worthwhile things because you have to shine this or search everywhere for a place to put a cigarette butt because trays aren't allowed or get a jagged haircut in 2 minutes (timed it!) after waiting in line an hour because it must be done & there is no time to do it. See men who can't shoot or lead men willingly get good grades for "leadership" because they shuffle along unnoticeably and then see others who are fine men get giggered and after that decide for yourself.

It is too early to say. I may lead the class or end it up or blow up and out. I don't care much, especially since we'll be together sooner if I do leave and get stationed elsewhere.

I have a lot of cheerful things to say which I'll save for my next letter. Please don't get depressed by thinking about my problems. I think the mood of your letters since I've been here has been just swell - Your love, always -- Al

Just a little P.S. June 26

Your letter stipulating conditions came last night. Darling, I'll save your letters because they are the most precious things in my life for this summer. I'll build the rooms to hold them with my own hands. What if they are drivel to you. To me they are gems. I appreciate you're not at your best just as I tolerate your rages and you mine.

Don't bother sending me my watch. I won't need it here.

Well, I must get to work.

You'll get your country life, dear. All I want is you and the

wilderness and I might even dispense with the latter.

More Love - Al

**JILL TO AL JUNE 29, 1942**

Darling -

I am sitting outside on the Midway watching the sun go down in an eruption of pink clouds. Which puts on obvious time limit on my writing you since any minute it will get dark with a bang.

My eyes are rolling around in my head like a pair of loose Brussels sprouts. I was over at Rosable's for dinner (part of our joint drive to live well at a price) and afterwards she starts to talk about psychological testing, so I says why not, and proceed to waste my time and substance in an exhibitionistic display of test-taking. I took a mechanical aptitude and an intelligence test. The results of both of which surprised me, in opposite directions. I ranked in the 98 percentile in both, which was funny, because I thought I was low in mech. ability & high in intelligence. Really, whenever I take a general int. test I am always sure I am going to get 100 and feel aggrieved at anything less. The source of this astonishing instance of self-confidence I can't explain, certainly I'm not so sure of myself in other spheres of activity. I guess I've just got into the habit of knowing a little about everything and nothing about anything, and so feel that my territory is being invaded when I miss out on a piddling detail.

All three of your letters [*two letters seem to be missing*] came today and I can't understand the postal system that allows such a maldistribution of the goods of life. It's funny about your bouncy walk being such a bone of contention. I guess it must be annoying as hell to be carped at that way, though I, for one, would not grieve at your losing it.

I do grieve, however, for the fact that you're unhappy and uncomfortable. So many times - particularly recently - I've felt like descending on you and taking us away from it all. Obviously impractical, but it's funny that you should have mentioned that, i.e., my wanting, or rather, not wanting to come down there, in your letter today. Of course I've wanted to. Part of it is my eternal desire to run away, particularly as I get more bored and aggravated with my job every day, despite what you say about

how lucky I am. And then the other part is, of course, wanting to be with you. But I never seriously consider it, of course.

It's getting dark as hell and the mosquitoes are biting. It was really hot today and everybody in the loop smelled badly. I think working in the loop is the shit, anyway. The advantage of shopping at lunch hour is no advantage at all, since I never have the time & I get ulcers when I try. Everybody elbows you in the street, and State Street is full of what appear to be 50-ton tanks that need oiling. They've got all these devices on caterpillar treads that move slowly up and down, not doing any work and not stopping for anybody. And then there are the drillers of the pavements. I don't know why they can't pry the sidewalks up with a crowbar if they must see what's underneath. No, they've got to pulverize it with a drill.

It's really dark now. Wish you were here. All my love, as always,  
Jill

***AL TO JILL JUNE 28, 1942***

Dearest love,

Sunday June 28

I wake up thinking of you and continue those thoughts every waking moment that I don't have to think of something else. You are the only one in the world I need and want and I almost cry in grief time and again because we are apart. Only the world catastrophe can keep us apart and even then it has little success in making the separation convincing. Even a matter of a few weeks seems horrifying.

Now to give you a few answers & comments on your last letter. They were all peaches, especially the one on shelf paper. It was very sweet of you to think of Dad and the presents were very appropriate. I hope he got my telegram too. The affair of Buss & Rosable is just too goofy for words. Please don't get mixed up in it any more than you have to. They'll have you in court before you know it. Re the letter from Yvonne. I know not which one you mean. I haven't heard from her, I don't believe - or maybe I

did - since she met you. Anyway the poor girl didn't have a chance. The competition was too tough and clever - even tho unplanned. The same thing for Pat Johns and several others I might name. It didn't work this way: my taking out one girl one night, another another night & then comparing them. Why go thru that bother? I just took you out and looked them over at a fair distance. I could tell whether they offered as much without making them "steadies" for a couple of months. Dearest, you have everything, and I don't want to share it. I am jealous about you though I've tried never to exhibit it.

You're right about Rubin & Lundy, I think. Rubin wrote the Mayor's speech the way I would have written it. It takes nerve and verve. You have the verve but aren't quite as calloused about emitting symbols as the hard-minded publicist is.

Dietz' case is slightly tragic. I can hardly get upset about it because she had our example and word to go on for two years. She'll end up in the divorce courts perhaps and be a lot better for the experience.

I thought your words about Vic were acute and showed a real feeling for human behavior. Vic is all you say he is. He is a prodigious individual. About Ed and me, well. You say I am aggressive and yet withdrawn and unenthusiastic? You are wrong in saying either is exclusive in me. I am very contradictory, am both aggressive and withdrawn. I would like to relax in your arms and not be aggressive, yet react very energetically against obstacles & people who disturb me.

The bike situation has all the earmarks of a crack business deal as revealed to date. I appreciate your apprehensions but don't give a damn if you do gyp us. It's rather amusing to hear about you in the bargaining world.

Please take care of yourself while bike-riding. If you get hurt, I'll feel terrible even tho I know you would be smothered in care by my family. You have never seen the boys quite so considerate as when someone is ill, and my mother, too, of course. You could be around all day giving little orders which would be

executed with the greatest dispatch.

The money came and I'm very thankful for it. Could you repeat the mission of mercy in another week and a half. My financial matters are tied up and I may not get paid for another month. However, I intend to arrange something this coming week. When I do get paid, I'll be able to send you at least seventy-five dollars, after all the deductions to you and Dad are paid.

I would like to write you airmail but can't get the stamps for reasons of convenience and money. If you care to get airmail letters you might send me some stamps. N.B. *[in margin]* Please write air mail. The time saving is nice & to hell with the Scotch. I'll have enough to see that you bathe in it regularly.

My baggage arrived last Monday. Another detail settled!

Oh, and this means a lot to me. I want to hear about your state of well-being, preservation, & digestion, but I don't want unnecessary dogs invading your privacy in the wee hours. Can't the damn hound realize you're above the animal level. You need sleep and should get it. These are trying times and it's only understandable that you get sleepless & irritable now & then. You're just another casualty of the Great World War and I'm going to make all those petty symptoms disappear as soon as I can get around to nursing you.

You rant about officer's training, dearest, and you have my sublime agreement. Yesterday was a Saturday, the likes of which I hope to see never again. The usual early rising was followed by exercises, breakfast, furious polishing, and an examination in searchlights, sound locators and electricity. After that we were lectured and given a demonstration on 268, the highly secret radio locator which can spot planes at tremendous ranges. It is no secret that with it planes can be shot down in utter blackness, to the surprise & dismay of the pilots. Following this, we had a bite of lunch, and rushed to form for inspection.

For hours we stood on hot pavement that burnt right through our shoes. I was actually below ground level when the inspection was ended, so soft was the cement and so still did

we have to stand. Every agony and despondent thought passed through my mind as the hot sun beat down. It hurt me so much and exasperated me so thoroughly because, though I have the same physical resistance as other men, I knew that such a procedure wasn't any good for anyone and probably positively harmful, whereas the other fellows for the most part thought nothing of the idea or assumed that it must be good for them. That's the gist of much of my resentment of this training. It hurts my spirit and my mind almost unbearably. After all, if they must teach patience to the soldier, why not let him knit and .. do something constructive while his patience is being tried.

The situation is now roughly this: I may decide soon to resign myself from this training center, giving my opinion that I will feel more unhampered in my convictions & attitudes if I am an enlisted man, and request my transfer to Fort Sheridan to orient selectees and teach military fundamentals.

Or another possibility is some action being taken in Washington to bring my transfer to there about. I am waiting for a letter from Lasswell on this score.

For, really, the influence a second lieutenant can muster isn't worth the certificate of commission. Your attitude on the subject is really wonderful. If I could get into the right type of work I would feel that I have accomplished more than by forging ahead just in any direction. I feel that you agree with me, not only because you love me, but because you have those ideas I so much admire and which made our inseparable devotion almost inevitable. \*

I saw the first movie last night since our last one together. It hurts to see one without you. But it was Humphrey Bogart so you were with me in spirit. It was a poor show, however, surprising for Bogart. The supporting cast was terrible, the plot corny, the dialogue stumbling & dull, the title Big Shot.

There was a short with community singing & I thought how you would have laughed to hear our falsetto voices singing the girls' part when the voices were separated.

It seems I have been dribbling on for some pages. This must stop. Your letters have a tremendous mark-up value, from your hasty inscriptions on crumpled sheets to my ecstatic reception of them as jewels of the Madonna, so keep 'em coming darling.

Give my love to the family and help the kids along their adolescence as I would be doing were I there. No one in the world would do as marvelously as you have been doing anyway. Just another example from infinity of my great luck in love.

Many kisses and gestures d'amour.

Al

\*P.S. I would like your opinion on this. Don't let the flattery conceal any disagreement, but I know you won't. I'll probably do whatever you want anyhow.

*End of June 1942 letters*

