

**AL TO JILL JULY 2, 1943**

Dearest love,

I looked for the typewriter for I know you like typewriting & my type is better, but Birney is using it. Since I last wrote you, a couple of days ago, your V-letter of June 8 came. It may have been faster than regular air mail, but it certainly isn't as satisfying. Don't get in the habit of using it continually. Besides I have great doubts as to whether it really is faster than air mail. There are two schools on the subject. I figure them about the same myself. Vic's letter of the 7th arrived at the same time, and I realized that you had already spent a month in the East. They must have been anxious indeed to see you when you finally arrived. You seem to have recovered your liking for New York in short order. It is a question whether Walter is more tolerable than a train ride from N.Y. to Chicago. But why didn't you go by plane? I'm sure the bouncing boy in your bosom wouldn't mind. I was in to see Herz the other day. His crew is parked on a hot farm near the city, without the advantages of our fine sea here. I went mainly to say hello and to get a few supplies from them. I am still attached to them in name & use that as a wedge to pry loose odd bits of equipment. While we were there, Leone, a photographer, took a picture of Herz, Habe, Grigis & myself and I am sending you the print. It is rare, indeed, to be able to send back such a thing, & I trust you will treat it well, despite any resemblance to Tom Dewey on my part or to other animals or spirits on the part of the others. No matter what, you must admit the background of the old well is simple & lovely. I hope I'll be able to send home a trickle of films. Film is impossible to get, but if you have any, you can send it to me, and who knows, I may get it Hartley, for example, got a box of cigars yesterday, & they came in very handy for a bout we had last night at the Villa. The local PWB ead [?] was here and he knows all the bawdy lyrics in the British army. We had several bottles of wine, a big dinner (Robertson cooked rice & pepperoni) and some Scotch which comes on our British ration every so often. I am really in the British army now, as you will hear more about shortly. I've made two purchases for you so far

and am not going to send either home to you. Because I don't think you'll like them. One was an Arabian silver brooch, which I figured later you wouldn't really like at all. The second



Near Tunis: the writer Hans Habe; Al; Martin Herz (future US Ambassador); Grigis.

was a gaudy head kerchief which likewise I don't know what to do with them. I think I'll send the brooch to Mom since she may like that sort of thing & use the kerchief to make myself a pair of swimming drawers. My present ones (the tan ones) are slowly disintegrating & shrinking simultaneously. I drove into the city yesterday to see a couple of people and find it a dull place indeed. The public utilities are functioning just about as well as you'd expect a battered city's utilities to function. Goods are scarce & prices high. There are crowds of soldiers and only one or two big places for them to go. And during the day it is blazing hot. I expect to go out in our small sailing boat with the "Admiral" Hartley, later today and perhaps to visit the nearby ancient Ruins tomorrow. Coming through the interior of N. Africa some days ago I got a real thrill at the sight of a focalor [?] majestic, Roman aqueduct stretching out over the country. It looked so impressive and immortal, sort of like the Divinity that inhabits the humblest home. It seems that, with all the men working, you & Mom will have the house pretty much to yourself this summer. I wish so much, like you expressed it, that we could be together in this summertime. Without you, it is mostly heat; with you, it is a number of cool evenings and shaded streets. Believe me, darling, I have never recovered from the thrilling anticipation of calling on you when the heat of the summer's day began to wane. My summers with you have been studded with coolness & shadows I wish I had nothing to do, that's it, nothing to do, save call on you this evening and take

you out on the Midway or to the Park. Perhaps you might even be so kind as to buy me a soda later on. Now I can hardly write any more - I feel like day-dreaming. There isn't much. Habe was bitten by a dog and when last seen was hunting up some medic for an anti-rabies treatment. Hartley is so adverse to dishes (Eton, Harvard & Old Boston effeminacy) that I put him on KP with me today to make him work. And he's coming along OK under gentle coaxing. Robertson is lame, after dancing a Scotch step last night. Caskey, Stern & Anglin are trying to find themselves a useful (or useless) job far away where we last were. There is a lull in the news and a lull in our life. Next summer I'll buy you a triple rich soda, on this day, July 2.

All my love, Jill.

Al

***JILL TO AL JULY 3, 1943 V-MAIL***

Darling -

Saturday

Gosh it's hot and if that's restricted information the censor knows what he can do with this letter. I am feeling that-a-way. Today I went swimming with the dog & now I'm sorry I came home. Cooney dives in of his own accord now, after sticks & stones. So does Jill. Jill also got herself a job. What a good girl! I start Tuesday, it's at the Teletype Corp., the pay is \$34, the hours 48, the days six. The only advantage is that the plant's at 2600 Southport & I can bike there in 10 minutes. Oh yes, the job's in the engineering dept., making reports. They told me I could make more there than in the shop. Wednesday I got a complete physical, fingerprinted, etc. I was rather apprehensive that the medic would feel my stomach but he didn't. If I don't like this job I'll quit & loaf the rest of the summer until the fall renting season comes around & I fall to madly scrambling for a place on the South side. Meanwhile, I feel virtuous, patriotic & pecunious. Is there such a word?

I spent Thursday with Mac 'Eldowney on the South side. School

is just full of service people now. Naturally the first person we met in the Book Store was Stud. He is still with Arthur Rubin & 4-F. That stuff about his getting a commission was bunk.

Then I spent the night in Flossmoor & came back Friday to see our doctor, who is none other than Greenhill. He was very glad to see me & said Johnny has been cadred & is at Fort Something, Arkansaw. Good grief. He really does want to go over, too. Juliet is having her baby in October. I selected Dr. G. because he is universally considered the best man in Chicago for obstetrical work. He's charging us \$200 which is about \$50 more than the average for people in our income group but he's so good it's worth it. He said I'm healthy, naturally. He also said he'd have me go to Wesley, which is beautiful & new. I don't know how much the hospital will cost but we have plenty of money, or will.

I got your air mail letter telling about swimming around a sunken ship but never did get the dials. I did get notice of one (1) roll of film, waiting to be examined at the Office of Censorship in N.Y. I also got a short V-mail. Have you been receiving more mail from home? I hope so. Mom is mad 'cause you haven't written her.

I wish it were cooler & then I could be a little more entertaining. Oh! Tom Kelley is going into the army Monday. It's what they call voluntary induction now - he waived his 3A standing. Love and kisses, to you my darling. These V-Mail are all too short.  
Love - Jill.

***AL TO JILL JULY 6, 1943***

Dearest Sweetheart,

Scarcely any time passes after a letter to you, so keen is the edge of my passion for you, before my mind starts tugging at my sleeve: "Go ahead, my lad, write Jill another letter. You already have enough to excuse a couple pages of scribbling." And off I go. This should be something of a festive letter commemorating

the Fourth. It was indeed a quaint occasion. I succeeded in turning out a traditional dinner of roast beef, peas, and mashed potatoes, as good as cans can provide. The mashed business was difficult, the potatoes being canned, the butter oleo, and the cream canned, together with my only masher being a spoon and the single burner being overburdened with the rest of the cooking. But we had several bottles of wine, some little whiskey (carefully hoarded by "Admiral" Hartley) and cigars and were surrounded by a festive crowd of people from the PWB who came out to spend the afternoon and evening. There was no great demonstrations on Independence Day elsewhere, either. There was a baseball game played among some ancient ruins, a big spread in the French press and a more or less general resolution on the part of most soldiers that this was the last of this kind of Fourth of July if they had anything to say about it. We retired early, especially since Barney, Robertson and I were getting up early this morning to go out fishing. We decided we needed more brain food in our diet. Both Robbie and Barney are great fishermen in the Mediterranean milieu, Robbie, especially, having managed large tuna fisheries off the Island of Elba. Enthusiasm was not lacking, but our equipment lacked perfection. We depended on a local Sicilian fisherman for cooperation and he managed to provide us with rather crude devices to mount in our tubby little sail boat. But the weather was far less cooperative and we couldn't get a lick of wind all morning, a thing which was vitally necessary to drag our lines along. The nearest to the kill we got was the sight of a number of spanking big mackerel doing a Johnny Weismuller to the starboard, exasperatingly nearby. Without wind we couldn't reach them, and there is nothing more discouraging than to row one of those boats with those barbaric oars, which were probably handed down from family to family since they were requisitioned from a Christian martyr. Hunger drove us to row in and we decided to go out this afternoon again, there generally being a stronger wind in the late afternoon. We received [?] to greater success but there was action aplenty. The wind sent us scudding along at a great pace, drowning us every so often with tall sheets of water and knocking us about the little cramped

boards. We did work up an appetite, though, and took it out on pasta asciutta when we returned. The spaghetti was made by a neighboring woman with flour I gave her. She kept part of it for her services, which was a perfectly reasonable way of settling the matter. The people who come out from the city are a nice bunch for the most part. The Britishers are from MI and the Americans mostly former newspapermen with a couple of screen writers and radio technicians. This evening several came out for a swim and we had a round of war stories after dinner while they helped themselves to a little of our wine (7 francs per bottle). There were very good tales of sinkings and battles, of the German invasion of Norway and the Spanish Civil War. Capt. Robertson, the old misanthrope, tells about his last two torpedoings with great skill and humour. He vows he will sail on a German ship hereafter where "the wretched women and children come last." It seems that on his last incident, the boats were all crowded with females, and he and some other men had to stand magnificently on the sinking hulk giving cheery salutes to everybody. To save my writing a letter, would you please call Private Maroon and tell them to send me the present copy and the last couple of issues at my correct address. In case you are wondering, my finger has healed perfectly, leaving only a crescent scar on the top joint. I am quite healthy, perhaps too much so, since I have a constant desire to come to grips with you. The news from the States isn't too good and I wonder where future improvements will come from. Do you think people realize what stupid representatives they have in the Congress? They have managed to settle none of the great, pressing problems, save on reciprocal trade, and have generally mislegislated on things. The strike sounds bad but I don't think it is too important. The removal of price subsidies and the refusal to tax sound much worse, as well as those silly personal quarrels which take up time, energy, and news space. I won't bore you by getting too completely wound up on the subject. I love you darling, more than ever, if that is possible.

Al

**JILL TO AL JULY 7, 1943**

Sweetheart -

Wednesday

I am bushed as hell - too tired to change this ink from blue to black so I can write you V-mail. Apparently, according to your experience with it, V-mail isn't so hot. I'm surprised you've only gotten 1 letter from me so far (your 2 air-mails, which came yesterday, dated the 14 & 10th of June respectively, said that). Your V-mail, which isn't photographed takes from 10 to 14 days from the date of postmark.

You sound as if you're having a wunnerful time in the big city, which seems to be replete with everything but Hedy Lamarr. I assume we are familiar with the same movie. What nationality are the girls with the beautiful gams. They're surely not Waacs, who are apparently selected on the basis of their no having same.

I heard about Liz & Drake too, just the other day, from Vera Miller whom I bumped into with Art Lidow (4-F - he has a hideously burned leg - from a childhood accident) & a great crew of other grubbies. Sunday I spent South on the 55th St. point with Rosable. I miss the South Side very much, even tho only eccentrics & 4-F's remain. The North Side seems to me to be vulgar & inhospitable. You cannot buy The New Yorker any further north than Walken Place. I haven't seen my magazines of, quote, liberal opinion for ages. I am a soul in the wilderness. And particularly now that I've started working.

My job, although it's the first routine office job I've had, isn't much to write about. I started yesterday. The day drags out interminably, altho I have an hour for lunch - Pear sandwiches from home & then walk around the block with my co-workers while the factory workers (male) look at our legs. I'm in the tool-purchasing division of the engineering dept. & this little gal - a junior from Cornell college in town, very much on the type of Zemo's wife - & I keep records straight. We have two men over us: one is very good-looking on the order of Tom Marsala and

plucks his eyebrows. The other is just a crude big company executive-supervisor, like the rest of the men in the department. You need never worry about my being lured by any of the men I have contact with in my daily work. I presume the same would have held true if I'd been in the Waacs, despite the gals' reputation for getting around. There is something about the common man as a sexual object which dries up these particular springs of passion. As a political object I love him dearly (unless he reads the Tribune).

I haven't looked at the Trib funnies since I've been back. I'm so afraid I might read an editorial or news article (same difference) by mistake.

Anyway, I get home at 5, tired to death. I don't know how long this'll keep up. They think they're going to make a great tool-expediter out of me, i.e. somebody who can get the tools from the places they're being made or repaired, on time. My little chum goes back to college in the fall.

Other than all that I feel fine. Yesterday came a great rain which flooded the basement, causing more work for your already overworked mother. She is in a bitch of a mood today. Why don't you write her? I'm paying his rent in return for all the crap I eat & had to insist on it. They're doing pretty well with all the kids working.

What were you doing in a brothel? Not much, I presume, since you've gotten very choosy about women in these many years. I realize, darling, that our absence will be long, yet passion - itself as well as that which we have for each other - enduring. If you find a reasonable facsimile of me in some other color or style, I won't be offended. At least, I don't think I will & besides, I never could have the energy to bear a grudge for the duration. Perhaps this is totally unnecessary - you're truly a man of steel. Personally, I always thought men were essentially less sexy than healthy women like me, & that this is all in my mind. Only I'm getting so fat & am so damned uninterested in any of the men that I may possibly meet that I'm quite safe from myself, & have nothing left but to dream of pornography & you, & to kiss

Coony.

I have to eat. Spaghetti, oil & garlic. Don't be jealous. It's fattening & essentially unhealthy.

Loads & loads of love, darling.

Jill

P.S. I am worried silly about the housing problem. There are absolutely no unfurnished 3-4 room apartments on the South Side in the University district & there's no place else I want to live. I loathe it around here, the near North Side is too expensive, & South Shore inaccessible. Maybe by fall something will open up.

Rosable has brought me from her father's two stunning small scatter rugs & says she will sell me one of her easy chairs. I'll take the bed, desk & chairs, of course, & buy whatever else I need. Diana said I could have her day bed for nothing. Incidentally, Oliver is coming back from England. He hasn't been well or something.

I think we've finally hit the \$1,000 mark if your June check came in. (Your May allotment for \$200 did - 's funny you haven't gotten my money.) We have \$450 in bonds - that's their turn - in value, not maturity - & about \$500 in the bank less your June allotment. Also, the bonds are only thru December - there's a 7-month lag in the gov't issuing them.

Now that you've gone & presumably are not cashing any bum checks, I can finally make the bank statement check against my stubs, without spending more than two hours at it.

Love -

J.

**AL TO JILL JULY 8, 1943**

Dear Love,

There will be a reckoning some day with the P.O. Grigis and I are tied for all-time low in mail, but at least he has been jilted by his girl whereas I have a lovely creature writing faithfully. However, this afternoon, a shipment is due. I am sending you a picture again and hope it arrives safely, for it is a jolly one. Yesterday I bought you a ring I think you will like. It is silver with a pretty green stone, unusual about here, and I didn't pay too much for it, praise be to Allah. I got it in the local Casbah because it seemed to have enough simplicity about it without the taint of being souvenirish. I hope to send it out today along with the silver brooch for Mom. I had to take quite an automobile trip today thru several wrecked towns. It is remarkable what effect small arms and grenade fire has on a town of piddling size. All the buildings become plastered together and begin to look alike. Everything looks forlorn and the whole gives an appearance of hollow-eyed exhaustion with the deep, empty window sockets in the thick stone walls. Everywhere, the larger structures are taken over by the military & the sprinkling of inhabitants scoop themselves out the remaining quarters. We stopped off at one of the beautiful places taken over as general headquarters and at their mess, I ate two pieces of delicious apple pie and a cup of cold milk made from condensed milk, water, sugar & vanilla extract. The location is skillfully camouflaged and very peaceful. It was fairly cool, too, a remarkable thing these days. The mid-afternoon on the road had a ferocious heat about it. It is the Sirocco season, when the wind blows like a blast out of hell. There is nothing to compare with it. The other afternoon, to open the door of our place was like opening the door of a blast furnace. Temperatures range around 110 when it blows. You feel as if you will shrivel up & blow away in a cloud of dust. Of course, the natives, European & Arab, curl up for their siesta until it dies down, but we foolish foreigners work on the consecutive-hour work-day principle - and take the consequences. I am starved for local news - we get the big things but not the small ones

even *[one line illegible]* important I shall be all ears when I return for your rendition of the trend of events.

Al

(P.S. Could you save the back copies of the New Yorker. That would be a great intellectual feast.) As you might guess, none of the magazines or papers are coming through. Nothing much else to report save the sun, the sea, the eternal variety of people, and the rumblings of things the censor wouldn't appreciate. Also, I beg to report, miss, that I love you dearly.

Al

***JILL TO AL JULY 9, 1943***

Dearest -

Thursday

I meant to tell you last night, when I wrote, about the new income tax. All I know about it is definitely not what I read in the papers. In fact, when the bill was first passed, I read an explanation of it in the New York Times, & the next thing I knew I was flat on my back, my sister was chafing my wrists & placing little pellets of morphine on my tongue, and I was no better off than before.

Now the Teletype Corporation, of which I am a member, & which does not give me enough work to do in the morning, very kindly endeavored to simplify matters by giving me a card to fill out. I am supposed to check off whether I claim all (\$24), half (\$12) or 0 (0) of what they call a personal exemption for married folks. I make \$34 a week. If I claim all, the gov't only takes 20% of \$34-\$24, or  $(20\%)(\$10) = \$2$  of my salary. Similarly, etc. etc.

Now the question is - have you claimed any exemption at all, or do you pay any tax at all on your salary. I sincerely hope, dear friend, that the answer is no in both cases, since I consider this a son-of-a-bitch tax & anyway, I have already claimed all of the personal exemption & am liable to be up a certain creek with the Bur. Int. Rev. if we both claim all of the exemption.

Get it, dope?

I got Jerry Mangione's *Mount Allegro* out of the library for Dad & read it myself last night. It is all about Sicilians in Rochester, N.Y. & how this young man goes to Sicily to see what it's like. Not much story, none at all, in fact, very Saroyanish, nice if you like reading about Sicilians. Most of the stuff about Sicily - its beauty, poverty & hospitality - I've heard from Dad & you already. I liked or anyway was interested in a quote from D. H. Lawrence in the book - from memory I repeat - "The Sicilian is an over-cultured, sensitive, ancient soul and has so many sides to his mind he hasn't any mind at all."

I still have trouble sleeping when I know I have to get up in the morning. It isn't helped any by the July sun, which plays impishly about my face at 6:30 A.M., and Coony, who, at the first stir of consciousness from me, does likewise. You can say, reasonably enuf, that I should pull down the shades & shut the door. But the light comes thru the shades & Coony knows how to open the door.

Rosable has gone to Kansas to visit Buster. He had a complete collapse some time ago, & is back in Lawrence resting under observation. She doesn't want to marry him any more & sees a lot of other men, but still thinks he's wonderful, God knows why.

I haven't seen Joan for quite a while. She's working at the mill now as an inspector & likes it very much. The starting pay there is pretty good - 78¢ an hour. However, I wouldn't have wanted to live with her after all. Joan is really a very selfish girl, I think - more so than most of the people I know, including me. She isn't very happy about her baby, as yet. They're still broke, & I guess a baby is not to be greeted with unabated delight when one is stone-flat. I think Joan is a little jealous of me now - since in this emergency I am comparatively well-heeled. Anyway, she gets pretty snide at times.

We really have a very pleasant office to work in. There are a lot of people in it, but there are windows on three sides & a fine view of the blue sky. It ought to be fairly cool when the

temperature climbs back into the 90's. Right now it feels like autumn, but only a fool would expect it to last.

Later. Good grief, I've had to work at last. I've been running around like a mad thing all morning & afternoon.

All my love.

Jill

***JILL TO AL JULY 10, 1943 V-MAIL***

Darling Al -

Saturday

Like all those other eventful mornings - September 1st, June 22nd & whatever the day was that Paris fell, I was awakened this morning by the blare of the radio, telling of our invasion of Sicily. Of course it was expected, but it was still exciting - and excitement not unmixed with pain for me, because now, for the first time, I know there is a good chance for you to be mixed up with the news of the day. My first impulse this morning was to bawl, but reason, and my natural inability to sustain emotion, soon conquered all. Yesterday came two more of your wonderful letters from that unnamed city in the Eastern hemisphere which strangely enuf I know the name of. I feel awful that the mailman has dealt so harshly with you. He's been very kind to me.

Considering this day & the news it brings, you & your soldier confrères would say it was a helluva time for anybody to turn absentee. I confess, I blush, I smirk with shame, I am illegally absent from industry. I was so damn tired & the weather has been so beautiful - hot at noon, cool nights - that tho I woke early this morning, I just stalled around in bed until it was too late to go to work. Mom called & said I was sick. I am so irresponsible, particularly when I know I'm going to quit soon. But gosh, the amount of walking I have to do around the plant! I thought my legs would turn to lead yesterday. Right now I'm relaxing in the usual way - down at the Lake. I just emerged from a mixture of Lifebuoy soap, Cooney's fur & Lake Michigan.

The darn dog went out rutting this morning, & I had to remove the various effluvia of passion from him somehow. The water is warm & dirty. However, you'd enjoy sporting about the grapefruit rinds & Jillpill, I'm sure. I wish you were.

Vic says: You can't spell victory with an absent-ee. Get it?

I forgot to tell you - last week on the South Side I bumped into Bill Slumbrecher [*Steinbrecher?*]. Last night

*[end of July 10 letter missing]*

**O**N the 10th of July the first soldiers land in Sicily. The Eighth Army Team packs up, leaves the villa to Barney, Grigis and Hartley, and drives down to Sfax looking for their boat, any boat -- its not systematic or even formal. They find craft of all sizes and shapes, coming and going. It seems every unit has a tail that has to be curled up into the last bit of space. Enemy airplanes are rare.

He memorizes some old English songs croaked by Robbie and several tipling visitors from Army Headquarters. Thus,

*Frigging in the rigging, frigging in the rigging,  
frigging in the rigging, there's fuck-all else to do...*

and:

*Oh, I stuck my finger in the woodpecker's hole,  
the woodpecker said "God bless my soul!  
Take it out, take it out,  
Take it out--Remove it!"*

which, in the final verse, went "*Take it out, put it back, take it out, re-volve it!*" and then his favorite, "*They shifted Pa's remains, to make way for ten-inch drains,*" which after a couple of verses, proclaimed that

*Father in his life was never a quitter,*

*(all: never a quitter,)*

*I don't suppose he'll be a quitter now,*

*(all: quitter now,)*

*So when the job's complete,*

*he'll haunt that shit-house seat,*

*and only let them crap when he'll allow,*

*(all: cor-bli-mey)*

*Oh, won't there be some frightful constipation?*

*(all: fr..con..)*

*Won't those shit-bound, high-brow buggers rave?*

*(all: bu..rave)*

*Its no more than they deserve, for having the bloody  
nerve,*

*to bugger about with a British workman's grave,  
corblimey,*

*(all: to bugger about with a British workman's  
grave.)*

The sirocco blows like a blast out of hell. It penetrates the very wood of the doors and shutters. You cannot find words to describe it, it is awesome.

**JILL TO AL JULY 13, 1943 V-MAIL**

Sweetheart -

Tuesday

I got your letter yesterday, written from your new haven by the sea, which only a drooling idiot would not guess the name of. I wish I were with you, to disport in the sun & fix plumbing. Today after work I went down to the Lake - it was a very hot day - & I'm

sure the water was the color & temp. of the Med. - blue-green, warm, flat, & for a change, clean. It was divine, well worth the trip, & Coony & I swam for inches. I am not so tired after work now as I was last week, altho I'm terribly busy, devising new forms of records, keeping old ones, calling up delinquent suppliers. I really like it, despite the many irritations & pressure, or perhaps because of them, because I feel responsible. News - Howard is getting married to that girl with the rouged cheeks & they are going to live with Aunt Lillie because she can't bear to part with him. Further news: Coony is engaged to a red-headed bitch of the same breed, or lack of breed as he. Her name is Peggy & her owner is going to bring her over to get her acquainted. Then we are to bring Coony over there for the consummation. I hope there is a dowry.

Well darling, I have to help Mom.

Love

Jill

***AL TO JILL JULY 13, 1943 V-MAIL***

*[date approximate]*

Dearest Love,

Finally your letter of June 18 acknowledging my first letters on fishes and fingers and the one before that of June 13 and that ordinary air-mail letter just received after being sent with the V-mail one which I got several days ago. But what could possibly have happened to that great stream of correspondence directed at you previously? When I left the good ship that transported us across the deep, I had completed a sizable tome replete with many interesting things and of many, many pages. And then, besides these letters, there were several dispatched from my first days ashore. But now I find that my life to you is a succession of mal-manus and deep-sea diddling. However, I do have a feeling that they will arrive in due time, like the knife which I received several days ago just in time for the present

excursion. Apart from this, I was made a very happy man by your letters. I was a little anxious about the train ride and I was waiting for you to send me the latest from home. Do you really think you ought work what with everyone else in the family slaving away? It could only be a matter of two or three bad, hot months. There will be plenty of time for that later when your good-for-nothing loaf comes home. I think I shall be a beachcomber with all this army experience with beaches. I'm glad to hear that the baby is bumping right along. I promise to forbear embarrassing you by my presence until Dec. 28 or so unless you want me badly. I think I can endure five months more away from you if you keep loving me and I keep finding good hot jobs to occupy myself. Otherwise I shall dwindle away into a bubble of melancholia. I have already sent you a roll of films and two completely developed and printed pictures in separate letters - which is all any woman can ask, even you. I received a letter of May 9th from Adele Rose telling me that Bill McNeill was interested in getting into this field of work. He is in the West Indies, a Lt. (01080646, Hdqrs. PCAR, APO845, NYC). Would you please disillusion the poor fellow for me? He would like it, but it is an impossible job to effect any such transfer now. Even in America it would have been extremely improbable. Adele also sent love and a request for Sam Eisman's address to you. We have our receiving set going now and the war of the air-waves is quite in tune with the whole of the war tempo. Everyone is merrily jamming everyone else. There are some beautiful jamming sounds. One frequency has a weird whistle combined with an irregular beat that sounds exactly like the Big Noise from Winnetka. Several landings in Sicily have been announced and as you can gather, it is "good-bye, Villa". Very little opposition as yet, despite the Italian radio. We shall know the result soon, or rather feel it. All my love and lots of kisses under your right ear. AL

**F**INALLY a tank-landing craft comes in and the loading master gives it the word to take them aboard. The boat is of the design made famous in World War II for descending upon hostile or undeveloped shores,

with an armored forward prow to cut the waves; yet the prow is split to open up quickly as it nears the shore; a vertical water-tight door contained behind it then opens from the top and drops down to become a platform to let out the men and machines.

The sea is fairly calm and the voyage is undisturbed by the enemy. The several officers aboard eat together in a handy little messhall topsides. The enlisted men -- "other ranks" one should now say in the 8th Army -- eat here and there. It is a slow boat, the voyage surprisingly long, they sleep aboard. His bunk is the latest in over half a hundred different sleeping spots since he became a soldier, an average of one every ten days.

On the prow, he discovers that a ladder is fastened to the vertical door and goes down to a pit between the door and the false prow. With each dip of the prow the seawater rushes into the hole and is blocked from entering the hull by the door. He takes off his clothes, calling to the others, and descends the ladder into the pit. There he stands, and as each wave breaks into the false hull, it lifts him up and he thrashes about. The water rushes out as the bow rises and he stands in happy expectancy of the next surge. Heycock tries it out, once or twice, and gives his tight approving smile of the adventure. There comes another and another, all morning long.

The outlines of Sicily rise along the horizon. Not an enemy plane to be seen. The landings of the British had not been difficult. The problems encountered in the past forty-eight hours, some serious, were of their own making: confusion and amicide had begun to take their toll. The leading column has moved up from the beaches and passed through Syracuse.

The LST enters directly into the fine old harbor and sidles between a smoking sunken hospital ship and the Fountain of Arethusa. He scampers onto the quay. It has been about 2600 years since the first of his family had landed here with the Greeks, following upon natural disasters that had struck the natives. Here now it had been the Allied bombers. But the Fountain of Arethusa was still flowing and people of Syracuse were filling their jugs from it. They politely let him cut in, to fill his tin cup, and drink of the water.



Romantic Italian postcard, sent to jill.

***JILL TO AL JULY 14, 1943***

Al darling - Vive la République!

Thursday

I feel just awful, thinking that you may never be getting any of my letters. And the knife! We'll never get another like it, & I'm sure it's at the bottom of the Atlantic now. Did I explain to you that Dad sent it without the letter, he said he persuaded someone at the post office to take it.

Poor Coony is a married bachelor, I fear. His betrothed, Peggy, came over tonight with Rosina, Uncl. Willie & the two girls who are his owners & an unidentified young man. We all ate ice cream "on them," as your Mom would say. Peggy was playful but would have none of him. I must say Coony acted the part of the gentle, tender husband on the first night - but no go. Finally they took her home & Coony is now crying about the house, sniffing around like a deserted lover, left with nothing but a faded corsage of roses. MY job goes on - I'm busy, harried, ill-natured. I am so tired at night I go to bed at 9, & there is a grinding fatigue in my bones. It's a good thing you aren't here - I can't lift a leg after six.

If I had a leg. Last night I was riding home from work & ran into a parked car. You may well ask why I should, in a well-lit highway on a bright sunny afternoon, with no moving or stationary vehicles on either side of me, run into the rear end of an orange Pontiac while going a normal rate of speed. I can give you no answer. I was day-dreaming, specifically of the

latest crime committed by Victor, to wit, losing my bike lock. Anyway, there I was & there was the bike & there was the car, & not much happened to me, except my knee is somewhat bruised, but my poor bike is buckled up like a half-opened accordion & is now at the repair shop. On your way back, will you pick me up a new one in England? I marvel, tho, at the flexibility of the human frame even a foetus-bearing one, & the rigidity of bike ones.

Etiquette notes from all over: Why don't you call me by my right name, to wit, Mrs. Alfred J. De Grazia, Jr. At times it sounds more impressive & married than Jill. Your Mom says likewise about her, only make it Sr.

Other than that, I'm well & over-fed. I take my lunch to work & buy a pint (milk) there & we eat on the curbstone. Very proletarian.

To bed I go. I wish with you.

All my love, angel

Jill

***JILL TO AL JULY 17, 1943***

Darling,

Saturday

One of those unaccountable lulls in the day's work (Wordsworth) has occurred, leaving me with not a damn thing to do, yet incurring the risk of dismissal if I am caught writing letters. A polite nuts to Teletype.

Today, Saturday, is the end of the longest work week of my career, to wit, 48 hours. It wasn't too bad, however. The weather isn't good today so I don't miss swimming.

Last night we went over to Aunt Lillie's to see, guess who, your uncle Joseph. He had just arrived from Texas (no, not on a rail) with a woman he is alleged to have recently married. He looks somewhat like Jean Gabin, don't you think? His wife is rather

young, a Texan. They are both odd types, using the French sense of the word, in my narrow cosmogony. they are taking a furnished apt. in Chicago, for the nonce. Naturally, your father doesn't know he is here.

I haven't even heard that Arsenic & Old Lace was to be in the movies. You are lucky to see it. I saw it in El Paso with those two 1st Lts., & even thru the dismal acting I could see it was a very funny play.

Not much has happened lately so I am left to brooding about the news. As ever, & like John Bull, we are successful ultimately on the military front & louse up everywhere else. We have a son-of-a-bitch Congress if I ever saw one. Well, they are only representatives of the Pee-pul. And if the Pee-pul are anything like the middle western Babbitts I work around - the men who are half-engineers, half-clerks - let's get a place in Tahiti.

As you can guess, that sentence was left hanging in medias res, & finished a day later. I am in a much better mood now, especially after receiving two wonderful letters from you, in which you seem to be eating your way through the campaign &, also, coincidentally, substantiating my above views on the domestic situation. On the general subject of your letters, all of which I had to go through just now to find Mrs. De Lattre's address, let me say: they're wonderful.

I never enjoyed letters from you, or naturally, from anybody, so much. They're interesting, literate, affectionate, mouth-watering (when you talk about food or sex) and generally to be desired and cherished. In short, I shall keep them.

And on the subject of food and sex, I am convinced that I am turning into a beast of the field, possibly from close association with *Coonus Africanus* as Vic calls him. All I do is eat and in between, when there is time, I think about how nice it would be to be in bed with you. But it's awful, darling, the way these physical appetites sway the soul. And what is more, it dominates my whole philosophy, which is strictly for the eats and the laughs, somehow, through them, getting close to Christ.

I don't see how it can be done, exactly, but you probably can figure out a way. I've started to gain weight - about 125 now - and Mom and Aunt Lillie say the baby is beginning to show, although it wouldn't if you didn't know me. I can't wait til it comes. I dreamt twice it was going to be a boy, both times a baby with a very cheerful laughing nature but a funny nose. Isn't that funny? Have you thought of any other names besides Michele? All I can get is Michael (or Michele) Victor or Kathryn Michele. God knows, though, I don't esteem Victor enough to name a baby after him, for fear said baby might emulate him. However, I like the name. Vic is getting to be the biggest oaf in 10 states. His voice is gargantuan, coarse and ear-splitting. His form you are already acquainted with. He smokes a pipe in front of the house (not in it) and wears Bussy's [*Sebastian's*] hats and your white coats. He has all of Buss's sartorial vices and unfortunately none of Buss's leanness. (I still don't think Buss is an ideal dresser though I admit he's sharp.)

And for the first time I know what it's like to suffer pangs of conscience over food. I really shouldn't eat as much as I do, yet I can't stop. I'd feel awful, though, if I lost my figure permanently and was a great fat slob when you came home. Not to mention how you'd feel.

Oh yes, I got those pictures finally and am sending them to Mrs. De Lattre. We can't get film here either. These particular pictures were pretty awful. I don't see why you can't get good pictures with that camera. They're always out of focus or the composition is bad or too ambitious and nothing in the distance shows up. The one that came with your letters yesterday, however, showing the four officers in an affectionate embrace was a gem, though, in comparison. You look rather thin, though, darling. Are you getting enough to eat? How about sleeping, too? How much do you weigh now? I want to know! Don't lose your temper!

I'm awfully interested in the circumstances of your being with the British and in general, your work, but guess you can't tell me much.

Last night, Saturday night, Dad had his own concert at Rogers Park, so Mom and I went up on the El and listened. After the concert we went to the tavern across the street from here and Mom and I had fried chicken and beer and Dad and this Mr. Westermier who was with us tied one on. Coony was under the table, just gnawing at my leg. It's a regular family tavern, as Dad would say. The Greek people who own the vegetable store on Southport even came in with their little son.

Today I went down to the Lake with Coon and got a terrific burn and also met a girl - she introduced herself to me cause she's seen me there before with the dog - who lives on Addison between Halsted and Broadway. She was a very unusual girl for this neighborhood - the daughter of two artists, about 21, not at all dumb though naive. Anyway it was fun having somebody to talk to besides Cooney for a change and we are going swimming together again. She is very pretty, too, though that's sort of irrelevant. The girl I work with is about the same age and answers pretty much that description - fairly bright tho naive - though she comes from a considerably more Republican environment. I guess the Middle West is full of girls like that, I mean, if they have anything on the ball at all, they're like that. The gal I work with plays the cello, not at work, of course.

There are also some Germans over at the Lake with a lovely young mongrel dog. I can't figure them out. They are not the Germans of the type of Melina and the great north side, yet they're not Jewish, obviously. Well, anyway, it's nice to see the rocks getting such a good class of people, these days. I was getting so tired of little boys who said fuck.

Dad is very interested in knowing if Lucodea has been captured. So far the papers have made no mention of it, though all the towns around have been taken. He wondered if you would be able to find out, when and if you got there, if his sister was all right. He is convinced you will be there in a trice, eating spaghetti with his old compadre.

Buss and Mir are coming in two weeks if the mainland of Italy is not invaded by then. I asked him to send or bring the

linguaphone set as I would like to study during my confinement.

Darling, I wish you were with me every minute, but after all, we have a lot to wait for.

All my love,

Jill

I'd love a kerchief. Do you know how to make [coo ?] that kind of t[ ? ]. I knew a guy who had them & they were very effective looking.

***JILL TO AL JULY 22, 1943 V-MAIL***

Darling --

Thursday

After reading Vic's letter, which I hope to muster up strength enough to address for him after finishing this, I don't think there is much else to say. He seems to have covered the universe via a macrocosm, i.e., swing. If there was ever uncertainty that he wasn't the brightest in the family, it should flourish now. Personally, I think his mind is decaying rapidly. By the time he is twenty, he should be positively stupid.

I got your picture of you, company and the Nazi flag. For God's sake, trim that mustache! You look like a dentist. Maybe it was the angle the picture was taken from, but you certainly look like a man on the make for my right molar ... I agree with you about V-mail however. I abhor it, thinking it not a whit more rapid than Air Mail or a trip across the Atlantic via porpoise and camel. Furthermore, after a day of clerical work, I resent having to write our names ten or twelve times apiece.

Janice just called and we exchanged gossip. She is still married to that jerky man, why, I shall never know. Speaking of jerks, my boss gives me a pain and I am going to quit in a couple of weeks, to devote my energies to apartment hunting and sunbathing. He told the girl I work with that I must be pregnant, I am so irascible. Isn't that perceptive of him? As a matter of fact, I am definitely losing my lean loins, and it is anybody's guess



**JILL TO AL JULY 24, 1943**

Dearest --

Saturday

Much excitement reigned today when we got the Italian major's insignia. I can't wait to appear in some public place, like the office, wearing it, so that I can proudly explain what it's all about. Thanks loads. Not so much thanks for the letter that arrived simultaneously with it, berating me for not writing and referring to my relatives as banal. God knows they are not more so than yours; having just attended Howard's wedding party at the Ivanhoe, I can testify well to that. Anyway, you must realize the long time intervals between letters - between my sending them and your getting them and then replying. Like - the major's pin was sent the 20th of June and only got here now. Ditto, the air mail letter referred to above. So if you bawl me out, your reprimands arrive long after the sins referred to have been committed, and I only feel aggrieved and misjudged. Besides, I'm sure I wrote you more frequently than you say. I really don't understand how some of your letters only take 12 or 14 days to arrive and others, similarly air mail, take a month. Ah well, we'll be able to fathom all these mysteries after the war, as well as the prime one of what the hell you are doing.

Buss and Mir arrived yesterday and are staying at the Carlson's with little Joe. We haven't seen him yet, though they were over last night and were with us at the Ivanhoe tonight. We had a very mediocre dinner on Uncle Bill at the Ivanhoe, that fantastic place, consisting of shrimp cocktail, soup, chicken and some horrible white cake that tasted like air-conditioned air. Such a dinner may sound good to you, but after you are used to good home cooking the way I am, you expect more than that out of eating out. The very least being filet mignon or lamb shish kebab. Present at the dinner were the happy couple; Buss and Mir; Bill and Lillie; Uncle Joe and his Texas Bride; Laura and Art Peterson, those overstuffed superfluties; Bill Blencoe Jr. and his homely elderly (but sweet, Mom assures me) wife; and Mom and me. Dad was playing at the concert, fortunately, as he would have never attended otherwise, and to our great wrath, Ed and Vic were not allowed to go because that lousy dump

won't allow minors in on a Saturday night. Isn't that a gyp? Howard's wife is not the girl we met: I got her mixed up. She is a very pretty baby-faced bleached blonde, a sort of thin Betty Grable, anyway fully as dopey-looking. I am sure they will be very happy.

Today being Saturday, I had to work all day and it was interminable. I wore my maternity dress which is really just a shirtwaist with an elasticized waist, but it makes me look sort of pregnant, I guess, because one and all down there are beginning to fathom my little secret. I told my boss that I would see a doctor next week. Then I will have to quit because they don't allow pregnant women around a plant with machines out in the open; at least, this plant won't. I guess I am beginning to show it - mostly after meals, of course. Generally, I give the appearance of a well-rounded individual. I suppose I will get big. You just can't help those things. You should be glad you're not here to see it. I hope the weather is nice tomorrow so we can all go swimming. Joe (little) is coming over, we hope. He's cutting teeth now and is in a hell of a mood, Mir says.

I'll be glad to quit my job and devote myself to reading and writing letters and swimming. I've really had very little time to myself the past three weeks. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't mind working so much if it weren't for the hot weather and the desire to be out in it. It's also a lot harder to navigate all this unaccustomed weight up and down stairs and in and out of the machinery on a hot day. I've gained about eight pounds since I saw you. That wouldn't be so bad, except that it all happened in the past two weeks.

Well, it's eleven o'clock and I'm getting sort of sleepy, I'm ashamed to say. I wake up at about six or six-thirty these mornings - I just can't help it. It's a shame I couldn't have developed such salutary habits of living while we were together. Did I tell you I haven't smoked for nearly three months. Oh, about once a week I take a cigarette, usually on a Saturday night when I'm around someone else who's smoking, but I never have any real desire for one. I guess morning sickness made

me stop and I just haven't had any desire to start again. It really is a lot of trouble when you can view it objectively. Things like running into stores to buy a pack and grubbing matches off people and, if you're a woman, having to be careful of the time and place you choose to smoke in - why, I'm a free woman now. I also gave up coffee because I got so damn tired of messing around with those stamps everywhere I went, and now they've lifted the restrictions and here I am without the habit.

Yes, come to think of it, I felt very lousy the second month, or right after you left, and if I didn't write as much as I should have, I think I had a good excuse. There were times when I would just lie around and do nothing for hours on end. I guess I wasn't eating enough and it made me more apathetic than usual. Now that I eat more, I write more. My dear, you'll never know how I suffered, end. quote.

***JILL TO AL JULY 26, 1943***

Darling -

Monday

I just got a V-mail from you in typing, and it was reduced, the first one I've gotten, and my eyes are all red and bleary from deciphering it. It couldn't have been written more than ten days ago, because it tells of the Sicilian landings. I can't understand why the mails are so fast from you to me, and so slow from me to you. It should be the other way around, if only to maintain the balance of morale.

Anyway, I was delighted to hear that you're getting more of my letters, and the knife. I was worried that it might be lost, and it would cost a lot of money to replace it now, with the scarcity as it is. I'll write Bill MacNeil if you want, though I don't know him. I just finished writing Adele the news.

You know, we got an announcement of the birth of Hank's baby, so I wrote Unk to dig us up a baby spoon for the little gal, and you know what, he sent a whole little sterling spoon and fork set to them for us, and for free, because he said he had it in stock

anyway. Isn't that nice of him? But now I've lost Hank's address (though I sent it to Unk) so now he'll get the gift but no note from me congratulating them and all. Will you write him for me, explaining that I meant well, and also send me his address just for the record. You might also drop Unk a scenic view of Africa if you have the chance (I know I sound just like Daisy now, telling you to write this one and that one.) His address is 620 Fifth Avenue - Samuel Lauterbach.

Of course the big news is Musso's fall, which had direct reverberations in the De Grazia family, because poor Bussy had to turn around and go right back to Washington today. I'm disinclined to be optimistic over it, since Badoglio is apparently no staunch defender of the rights of man, and our State Department would just adore to make a deal with him and the little king, I bet.

Marion Gerson came up yesterday and met me at the rocks. Then, in the afternoon, Buss and Mir came over with the boys. We took a family dive in the water, which was incidentally very dirty - Mir, Buss, Vic, Ed, Cooney and Jill all dove in succession. I felt terrible that you weren't there to dive too. I think I could risk the shame and embarrassment of having you see me with a stomach, just to have you around. I was at the beach from ten in the morning til 4 p.m. and my nose is beet-red, despite frequent applications of noxious ointments and lotions. I woke up at 6:30 yesterday morning, which made me very mad indeed. Today I am thoroughly exhausted. Nobody is home, and ordinarily I would be glad for the opportunity to go to bed early but nobody includes Cooney and I am very worried about him. After supper he disappeared down the back stairs and hasn't been seen since. Mom is over at Aunt Lillie's. Uncle Bill is having his kidney removed tomorrow. He has been sick with it a long time, and the darn fools just stalled around with the operation until now. He will probably not recover.

I am going to quit work at the end of the week. It is very hard for me to spend such a long time every day sitting in a hard chair or walking up and down stairs over a hard floor, without getting a

chance to lie down every once in a while. Don't misunderstand. I'm in the best of health, but I just can't do as much as I used to, with all this added weight (about eight pounds) and the general acceleration of all my functions, bodily, I mean. Also, it has been 90 pretty steadily every day around afternoon time, which is pretty hot in a humid climate like this.

Darling, you know what? I got a letter from Mrs. Singleton which, among other things, said I had left three shirts at the Elite laundry, which she knew about because they sent a notice at her house, telling us to pick them up in ten days or they would sell them. She sent them today, and they are three very nice tan ones. Do you want them? I'll send them if you do. By the time you come back I hope I'll be a more efficient housefrau.

Marion brought all the back New Yorkers she could carry, so I'll send them to you soon. Then our subscription ought to start within a week or two. Tom went into the Army today and Joan feels very depressed naturally. Gosh, I hope you'll be home soon.

Everybody sends you their love, including Unk who said for me to do so when I wrote. And I love you too.

Jill

Do you still have my pen? Yours writes fine now. Don't you want it? I'll send you yours if you send me mine (after you, Alphonse).

***JILL TO AL JULY 29, 1943 (A)***

Dearest -

Gosh - either we are sweating the balls of our feet off in this place or we haven't a darn thing to do. The latter is the instance of poor planning, I call it. Not that I don't welcome the opportunity to write my poor post-forsaken darling.

The curios continue to flow in. Day before yesterday I got the dials, & very impressive they were, too. I shall make them the focal point of the decorating scheme of at least one room in our

little hot box of the future (the basement). Really, tho, they were, or are, interesting. Yesterday I got your feelthy French postcard, ooola-la, & I'm ashamed to say I couldn't read all the French on it.

Tomorrow I go to the doctor and have a list of at least 20 questions drawn up to ask him. You have no idea of the minor difficulties that beset la femme enceinte. Such as - am I eating too much? (I know I am), what pills should I take? can I bike & if so how long ? (I know I shouldn't); what is that blister on my foot? my dog doesn't like dog food, what should he eat? I can't wait to see him.

My letters must be monotonous at least one paragraph, consisting of 40 lines, is devoted to a sentence beginning "yesterday I went swimming ..." and this is it. You must think you are wed to a refugee from a sardine can. If the ordinary embryo of the human mother is supposed to resemble a fish, you can imagine - with what horror, I can guess - what a finny scaly individual must be our little bundle of. Anyway, Tuesday night I went down with my friend from Addison St., Doris, & last night before supper I went to the mouth of Diversey Harbor, right opposite the Gun Club, with a man from the office whose wife is away for the week. It was very rough & clean for a change. Then I went home & ate twice as much as usual, including all the cookies Mom had baked for her ladies. I love to swim before dinner, but it makes me so abnormally hungry that I am going to start swimming after supper instead. Everybody was out again last night, including Cooney who ran away while I was taking down the clothes in an emergency move before a thunder shower. It stormed frightfully again in the middle of the night, re-affirming my need for you at all times, particularly during thunder showers.

You know, dear, I wrote you I wanted to study Italian while I was waiting for the baby & after, & accordingly wrote Mir a while back for the Linguaphone set. Well, they didn't bring it with them or send it, Buss's attitude being that he needs it & therefore will keep it. Well I don't need it right now, but I do want it by the

middle of September or at the latest, October 1st. Mom suggested I write you to write Buss. She won't intercede, & naturally, I can't make them send it. So will you write him, please, & somehow use your golden techniques of propaganda to make him cough up? Sometimes I get damn sore at the royal screwing we take from our families & this is one of those times. We've always given them stuff - this goes for my side, too, specifically Paul & Ann, & we don't get a damn thing from them, not even letters or, in Buss's instance, our own property.

They say we should not burden our boys across the seas with domestic difficulties, but as every time, this time, I really need your help.

The president spoke last night & by this time you've probably heard what he had to say, including his proposals for helping home-coming service people. I hope you get a good hunk of severance pay so we can spend a couple of months in the Rockies together, leading the kid with some deserving friend or relative. You can take all the books you can carry with you. I'll take the dog & a fishing line & pole, & together I'm sure we can amuse ourselves adequately for a couple of years, much less months. Oh yes, I guess we ought to get a cabin, in case it rains.

Well darling, it looks as if somebody is going to make me work. Keep well & give a thought to camping in the mountains. Personally, I can't wait.

All my love to you, sweetheart.

***JILL TO AL JULY 29, 1943 (B)***

Dearest -

Gosh - either we are sweating the balls of our feet off in this place or we haven't a darn thing to do. The latter is the instance of poor planning, I call it. Not that I don't welcome the opportunity to write my poor post-forsaken darling.

The curios continue to flow in. Day before yesterday I got the dials, & very impressive they were, too. I shall make them the focal point of the decorating scheme of at least one room in our little hot box of the future (the basement). Really, tho, they were, or are, interesting. Yesterday I got your feelthy French postcard, ooola-la, & I'm ashamed to say I couldn't read all the French on it.

Tomorrow I go to the doctor and have a list of at least 20 questions drawn up to ask him. You have no idea of the minor difficulties that beset la femme enceinte. Such as - am I eating too much? (I know I am), what pills should I take? can I bike & if so how long ? (I know I shouldn't); what is that blister on my foot? my dog doesn't like dog food, what should he eat? I can't wait to see him.

My letters must be monotonous at least one paragraph, consisting of 40 lines, is devoted to a sentence beginning "yesterday I went swimming ..." and this is it. You must think you are wed to a refugee from a sardine can. If the ordinary embryo of the human mother is supposed to resemble a fish, you can imagine - with what horror, I can guess - what a finny scaly individual must be our little bundle of. Anyway, Tuesday night I went down with my friend from Addison St., Doris, & last night before supper I went to the mouth of Diversey Harbor, right opposite the Gun Club, with a man from the office whose wife is away for the week. It was very rough & clean for a change. Then I went home & ate twice as much as usual, including all the cookies Mom had baked for her ladies. I love to swim before dinner, but it makes me so abnormally hungry that I am going to start swimming after supper instead. Everybody was out again last night, including Cooney who ran away while I was taking down the clothes in an emergency move before a thunder shower. It stormed frightfully again in the middle of the night, re-affirming my need for you at all times, particularly during thunder showers.

You know, dear, I wrote you I wanted to study Italian while I was waiting for the baby & after, & accordingly wrote Mir a while

back for the Linguaphone set. Well, they didn't bring it with them or send it, Buss's attitude being that he needs it & therefore will keep it. Well I don't need it right now, but I do want it by the middle of September or at the latest, October 1st. Mom suggested I write you to write Buss. She won't intercede, & naturally, I can't make them send it. So will you write him, please, & somehow use your golden techniques of propaganda to make him cough up? Sometimes I get damn sore at the royal screwing we take from our families & this is one of those times. We've always given them stuff - this goes for my side, too, specifically Paul & Ann, & we don't get a damn thing from them, not even letters or, in Buss's instance, our own property.

They say we should not burden our boys across the seas with domestic difficulties, but as every time, this time, I really need your help.

The president spoke last night & by this time you've probably heard what he had to say, including his proposals for helping home-coming service people. I hope you get a good hunk of severance pay so we can spend a couple of months in the Rockies together, leading the kid with some deserving friend or relative. You can take all the books you can carry with you. I'll take the dog & a fishing line & pole, & together I'm sure we can amuse ourselves adequately for a couple of years, much less months. Oh yes, I guess we ought to get a cabin, in case it rains.

Well darling, it looks as if somebody is going to make me work. Keep well & give a thought to camping in the mountains. Personally, I can't wait.

All my love to you, sweetheart. Well, I must write a letter to the local dog-catcher, imploring them to send a new license to Coony, but will write you again tomorrow.

Lots of love,

Jill

Mrs. Singleton wrote that we left three shirts at the Elite laundry

in Washington. She will send them. Have you missed them?



Eighth Army News, July 14, 1943.

End of July 1943 letters

