

**JILL TO AL AUGUST 2, 1944 V-MAIL**

Darling -

To vary the old refrain, so little has happened the past couple of days I hardly know where to begin. Mr. Churchill is optimistic about the end of the war, which may sound pretty funny to the guys who are fighting it, like you, and still don't know when they'll be back. I don't know as how I approve of so much optimism. It makes for too much disappointment in the end. To be sure, they can't hold out much longer, but that much longer still isn't today or tomorrow, which is when I want to see you.

To retrace my dull path, I went to the beach yesterday and then took Kathy to the doctor. She weighs the incredible amount of 19 pounds, 6 ounces. I don't see how she can keep gaining so much for she doesn't eat much in the hot weather and besides, she doesn't look so big. That's because of her graceful proportions. A lot of her colleagues get huge, bulky and remain immobile at this stage, whereas she has rather adult proportions, both the cause and effect of her being able to get about so easily. I put her on the dining room floor this evening while I was preparing dinner, because I knew she'd cry in her playpen, and before I knew it she has scuttled into the kitchen and was playing with the garbage. I guess that's Cooney's prenatal influence on her. We didn't do much today because I had rather a hard night. She had another whooping cough shot yesterday and as a result she was restless all night long and kept waking me up. Mac and Diana and Diane's baby all dropped in around lunch time today and so we all had lunch. It was rather crowded in the kitchen, to say the least. This afternoon I took Kathy over to the Midway and she had a wonderful time crawling around the grass and watching the sailors march by. The drum fascinated her and she beat time against her legs in response to it. It's amusing how responsive babies are to rhythm, anyway this baby. Maybe we can make a trumpet player out of her too, perish forbid.

Oh, this is news. Liz Evers called me from Boston the other

night. She's coming out next week, leaving the baby with her mother. She is very anxious to set up housekeeping with me. I really don't know what to do. I'd like to live with her but it seems rather late in the game to start making other arrangements. Anyway, if she comes out we can survey the situation together and at least, have some fun. Maybe she could stay here with me until you come home, only I think she would rather make a more permanent arrangement. The trouble is that Bill will probably come home later than you, although there's no predicting anything about this war. What do you think I should do, anyway? Keep this place and wait until you come home to make other arrangements - I think it's a little small for our lavish tastes although plenty of other couples in the building have children - or move into a larger place with her, except that when you come back we wouldn't want to share quarters - or what? I'm in a tizzy. And then Paul and Ann would like me to come out in the fall, which I would like to do if you're not back because it would break up the wait. Quel dilemma. While I don't have any great attachment to Ridgewood Court it's livable and less trouble than moving. Anyway, one sure thing is that I love you with all my heart.

Jill

P.S. I sent you cigs, coffee and lousy candy today.

***AL TO JILL AUGUST 2, 1944 V-MAIL***

Dearest Jill,

I've spent much time looking for a typewriter but must resign myself to writing you again by pen. I just wrote Ed and Vic a letter, the first to the Addison St. family in a long time. I again urged Ed to get into uniform, rather than play around Lincoln Park. It's not that I am sadistic, militaristic or happy in giving him such advice. Only in very deserving cases do I wish the army life on a man. But I think he will always feel better and that being in uniform during a war is more fun than in peace. And his

year is inevitable.

My life these days is very inactive. I more or less live from one meal to another, doing a few little tasks in between times. Nor am I even impatient with events in the petty sense of fretting, though I realize the irreplaceable loss of every hour without you. I'm resigned to events taking their damned time about unfolding. I feel fairly sure that the war can't last very long any more, and I think that even the Japs will last only as long as it takes us to gather our amphibious forces from the European theater in the Pacific theater. The Japs are something like the Italians in their ability to only equip a few divisions well. The rest is more or less persistent rabble which can't hold out long. The Germans are getting to that stage.

they use their few crack panzas and paratroop divisions for strategic points and for counterattacks. They hold places like Caen, Cassino and Valenstart. The ordinary German defense divisions are a flagrant insult to the Aryan Creed of the Nazis.

I am staying at the unit's villa, here where I stayed from time to time in the past number of months. It has mostly a beautiful view to recommend itself. That is no small matter. it is a great tragedy that as much human misery should be confined to the most beautiful setting of any city in the world. Jim Clark commented yesterday, when we were loading down from on high, that the people were perhaps the least deserving of rejuvenation. I agreed to that for I do dislike a large part of the population, an unimaginable demoralized mass, but I put in that the people who are most in need of saving in the world are exactly those who are most repulsive, immoral and recalcitrant in their stupid sort of way. The reformer who likes to think of reform as the lending a helping hand to an equal who is just down and out is completely superficial and can never succeed. There is the difference between the Russian Bolshevik reformers and the women's club charities. They approach the problem from completely different angles. They have nothing in common and have entirely different results. I don't have sympathy for most of these people though I'd like to help them.

That is, I don't have the sort of sympathy that means doling them gifts (though that form of charity has its place where "equals" are down and out) or allowing them immigration. I would like to root out the whole basis for the human tragedy that is this city. And that I'm afraid won't be done for a long time.

But here again, one would have to go on for many pages to really describe the problem and its solutions.

I got a V-letter from you dated June 23 yesterday: I can't understand its comparative antiquity, but it was nice. It was about Ed's graduation and about Kathy's superhuman endurance and joie de vivre. Please send her latest pictures in a hurry. My audience is getting bored with seeing the same ones over and over. But they'd better.

I'm off to eat now, hungry as hell. I'll eat you out of house and home when I return, but I'll help you cook up some of it so it won't be too bad. All my love, dearest.

Al

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 3, 1944 V-MAIL***

Sweetheart --

I'm really bushed, and must confess that my motivation for writing you tonight is partly so I can sit down and take the weight off my tired pins. It was in the high nineties today, which I wouldn't mind particularly except that we not only took a trip to the point with Diane and Oliver and their small one but also toured up through the park to Int. House, where I got some of my growing topknot clipped. It's funny how much more tired one gets in hot weather, even if you don't actually feel hot. Anyway I need sleep, which seems to be impossible to get these days: dancing attendance as I do to fussy old Kathy. She never feels quite right, I guess, for several days after her shots, though I don't know exactly why or where she is bothered. I fear that if

you were here tonight I'd ask you to do the dishes (politely, though, and with no recriminations if you refused) so maybe you should be grateful you're in Rome.

I got a long amusing letter from Rosable today. I guess I told you she's married to Brown and he's teaching at Conn. College for Women. She said she's very happy and in love with him, now that he's stopped drinking, but that she hates housework and has to lie down for an hour every time she sweeps a rug. I'd like to see her in the role of a housewife, and don't feel at all patronizing about it, because frankly I too feel like being hospitalized after a stint of housecleaning. She also said that Cousin Julian, who is in London, got married to an English girl. Westel Hawking is still in the Navy, sailing around Pittsburgh, poor guy.

Anent your own observations about the redistribution of property in areas re-taken by the Allies, there was a story in tonight's News, also saying it was quite a problem. They mainly brought out the point that there had been some looting about in France already by Allied troops. I guess I'll cut out the story and send it to you (not being able to remember any more).

Bill Evers is in Guam, captain of a rifle company, Liz said. I hope to hell he comes through it all right. Liz is the last person in the world who should be widowed in this war. She doesn't have any place to go, and is possibly a little too sheltered to strike out on her own. But then I guess no one ever gives any one else credit for the amazing inner reserves of strength that people do have.

But my reserves are fast dwindling from their already zero level and I'd better get out and mail this before I fall apart completely. I think I'll haul the bike out. I couldn't bear to walk another step. Anyway, I don't have shoes on and it's not so noticeable when you ride a bike. My last pair of comfortable shoes fell apart and it makes me so mad I'm not going to buy any more for the duration and six months. Old paddle foot they call me.

So goodnight darling. I hope I'll be kissing you goodnight pretty soon.

Always with love,

Jill

*Cartoon: Woman with baby carriage.*

**AL TO JILL AUGUST 5, 1944 (A)**

Jill, Darling,

I am enclosing in this envelope a letter just received from the Vets. Administration showing that you are now the sole beneficiary of my insurance, bad cess to you. I'm also enclosing the foot size of that woman. I doubt whether I'll see her again in a long time unless we go to Rome someday, but she will be eternally grateful for the shoes and I'll be able to forward them properly from wherever I am.

I've been sorting through all my mail for the past three months, prior to sending most of it back to you for safekeeping. I find that I owe several people letters and, worse, have been returning bad letters for good. Such ingratitude will not go forever unpunished.

Anyhow you can expect the package of pictures (one large, the other an envelope containing a few that might possibly (don't ask me why) be censored for military reasons, and a package of your beautiful letters, the despatching of which gives me a slight twinge of the Samson & his hair-cut variety. I am somewhat shorn for the time being. I'll be seeing you, dearest.

Al

**AL TO JILL AUGUST 5, 1944 (B) V-MAIL**

Dearest Jill,

I didn't write you yesterday and have already gathered in two of your letters to answer. Not that there is any particular question in either. I liked your description of the convention very much. I knew nothing at all about it, having been on a trip when it took place. Your letter of July 24 shows that you're reconciled to giving me huge meals and I'll keep it to bludgeon you if you ever feign weariness or suggest salmon and salad for supper. The whole letter, in fact, sounded like a proposal for marriage, the first paragraph devoted to how beautiful and glamorous you are, the second to how eager you are to cook for me and most of the rest to what wonderful children you produce. Lest you forget, I am married to you, dammit all. I hope to cash in on you someday too. Such a waste of a lovely body and sundry other abilities is the biggest irk of my life.

Another one just now is my health. I'm feeling a little low and generally lethargic. I find myself hating everyone and the doctor yesterday said I have an abdominal cold and gave me pills to take and told me not to work for a couple of days. So I'm in my room now taking life easy, admiring the beautiful scenery and wishing the war were over. I've got to make a quick recovery for the job coming up.

All my love, darling. You are always in my thoughts of the better side of this life.

Your,

Al

**T**HERE will be no "D Section" in the campaign to come. It will remain in Italy. Almost no Brits are called for in the invasion of Provence. It will be American and French. However Captain Foster hitches on. He is Artillery, not Intelligence. The old group will always

be part of Alfred. They have marked his attitudes toward war, a way of receiving its experience, not self-pitying, but strongly ironic, as something expectable and contemptible. He has shared their respect for wit and humor and the comfortable life; they were raised as *bon vivants*, educated to the tastes of a higher class in a society of social classes.

They have had little awareness of a movement called Social Science and regarded it as tolerable aberration of his, a habit of mind, an eccentricity with which they, such eccentrics, could sympathize. Their respect for him, which with Robertson and Greenlees expanded into an avuncular affection and indulgence, given their large age differences, was for qualities that were American but which were unexpected and indeed would not be highly regarded in the American Army, of intellectualism, of regard for the arts and a quick adaptation to the art of living. With them he became more human, broader, more tolerant, more skeptical, strangely more frank, less aggressive within a group of acquaintances. He came to regard war as less of a monopoly of the bomb and bayonet. Perhaps this was actually a better way to win wars; it was certainly a way of enduring them.

They have given him a new attitude toward Europe. The American, whatever his origins, tended to regard Europe all the way from Cork, Ireland, to Omsk, Russia, and from Trondheim to Sicily, reproachfully and contemptuously. Their folk had to leave Europe (and the same would apply for Africa) and they were unconsciously resentful at having been removed, rejected, and at the same time having left under their own will, but now they felt superior to the oppressors and fools that remained. He did not hear General George Patton's speech to the American troops on the eve of their landing in Sicily, where he reminded those of German and Italian descent, a large proportion of his force, how their forefathers has chosen a superior kind of life and possessed a superior virtue and spirit; Alfred de Grazia had not heard it because he was with the British Eighth Army; its reading came later. The speech received much criticism as representing prejudice and arrogance; Lieutenant De Grazia thought that it was well-suited to the occasion.

But this typically American attitude that he had possessed was



heavily overwritten by the attitude of the small group of British with whom he had campaigned. They led him to an attitude toward Europe which was more affectionate, hardly superior, and enveloped happily in the process of cultural exchange on a fully personal as well as general political level.

When he arrives at his camp one night -- when he chose, that is, not to stay out at the Pozzuoli PWB Hotel -- he finds that he has been assigned a French roommate, who is enormously excited at thoughts of *La Patrie*. They drink toasts to his homecoming -- Alfred's homecoming, too, for didn't Jefferson say that every American had two countries, his own and France? -- the land of Lafayette, the *Rive Gauche*, too. He feels like his Dad, who would never go to bed until everyone in the family had gotten home and he could then lock the door. To usher everyone home free. It was the *noblesse oblige* of Alfred's Twentieth Century America.

The Lieutenant is optimistic. It must have been deeply imprinted upon the Chicago Babe from infancy. He should now know better. He writes -- we have the proof of this in black on white -- that all the moves of war, no matter how costly, are just sloppy chess, where the players exhaust all of their pieces and finally one player will end the game with a checkmate. Yet he arises from the table and his first thought is, let's get about winning this damned war! So it is time to take up one's pack and climb up the gangplank.

He bears an illicit extra bag with him, containing a cotton khaki uniform, a novel of Turgenev, extra cigarettes and soap and chocolates and whiskey. He thinks, I shall never see half of my possessions and half of my friends again. At least I shall have these creature comforts. If I can get it all ashore, all to the good, if not, the sailors or the sea will have it -- *Kismet*.

**AL TO JILL AUGUST 5, 1944 (C)**

Dearest,

Here are a few old pictures that are probably better off home than here. I'm engaged in the age-old process of slimming my

baggage.

More are on their way, including most of those you've sent from home in the last year. I'm keeping my favorites.

Many big kisses to you both.

Al

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 6, 1944***

Angel,      Sunday?

I know I'm a dog. I haven't done a thing for two days except engage in my routine mad whirl, and yet I haven't found time to write you. And now I frankly confess I'd much rather lie down and take a nap, having just eaten a huge Sunday chicken dinner, but Kathy has just arisen from her nap and the prospects of peace are scant. At the moment she is crawling under my feet, trying to eat my shoes. She is getting to be quite a crawler, graceless but fast and purposive. She has practically a fixed route, given the right time of day. usually, when we return from the beach or the Midway about five in the afternoon, I set her down on the living room floor because, after the high stimulation of the day's activities, she is in no mood for the confinement of the playpen. She then makes a silent sneaky beeline for the bathroom, and the next thing I know she is rattling ecstatically with the foot pedal of the diaper pail. I consider this rather a depraved taste, but then, she is seemingly and irrevocably sunk in depravity. if she were a dog, she'd be the kind who'd eat his own outpourings. She eats grass, dead leaves, shoes, wet diapers, carpets (shades of Berchensgarten) and electric cords. She shuns the rattle and the washable bunny, the sterile cup and the spotless spoon. At the moment she is trying to pull down the curtains.

Virginia came back from her long vacation and I just had the afore-mentioned tasty and unaccustomed noonday mess at her

house. It's been a nice grey day so far, though it's clearing up now which portends a trip to the beach. I got the house cleaned and the papers read. Yesterday I made an early trip to the lake and met Laura and Ruth Brody Corcoran down there. The gals came over for dinner and we had chow mein from the corner. Then we went to the movies (sad sacks on a Saturday night), where we saw half of an excellent documentary on the Italian campaign. It really is blood-chilling to a mild civilian like me to see the extent of the destruction and the hardships of our troops. They showed a closeup of the leaflet sent to the Cassino Abbey which I'm convinced you wrote. That's my boy who said that! I screamed. Anyway, I felt like screaming that. Then the main feature came on, a Humphrey Bogart opus called *Passage to Marseille*. If you saw the picture, you'll know what I mean and praise me for the wit I am when I say it gave me a case of hot flashbacks. About three-sevenths of the way through, somewhere along the fourth flashback within a flashback within a flashback, Humphrey Bogart has just been beaten up by an enraged mob (at this point in the flashback he is pursuing his career of an anti-Fascist French editor). So his girl, Michele Morgan, says, "Darling, I think you need a vacation." and next we find them in a daisy field and he is saying "I remember you the first time we met. You were wearing a big floppy hat and ..." At that point, Mrs. Alfred J. de Grazia, jr., prominent in Hyde Park nursing circles, gave a strangled cry and went home to bed.

Where I have been ever since, taking light nourishment and heat packs on my spine.

Here are five more of the baby's pictures. Aren't they daisies? I'll send the rest in tomorrow's letters. I was going to send you the News article on looting by Allied troops in France but the gem-like Flossy tossed out the paper before I could get around to sending it.

Liz Evers and I have been tossing back and forth in frantic correspondence. She was supposed to come out here next week to apartment hunt. But I am fast losing my enthusiasm for

moving. For one thing, even as lugubrious a soul as I can't help feeling that the war will be over soon, in which case I would rather be waiting for you without the involvements of a roommate. Anyway, Liz can't make it next week so the next move is to explain to her why I don't know if I want to move.

Kathy is sitting in her bed, crying over an orange rattle. Since I started this letter I went down to the lake with the Bredindicks and had a nice swim in the roaring, north-windswept surf. Kathy ate a slice of orange at the beach, which possibly accounts for her dislike of the color at the moment. It was very cute to watch. I handed it to her and she knew exactly what to do. It went right into her mouth and she sucked it busily until only the outer husk was left. She gets juice in the morning so there's no particular objection to its addition in this form to her diet, as a confection I guess.

I have a stomach ache and have to make supper, a seeming contradiction to anyone but you and me, who regard food as therapy for anything. Oh, I met this German Klaus I was telling you about at the beach and he said he was going to New York next week, did I want anything, and I said yes, my husband. he thought it was the most charming thing he had ever heard and is bringing me back a bottle of shampoo instead. But come the day when I don't have to accept any substitutes, no shampoo bottle for you, no movies on Saturday night with the girls for a drunk with Al, no soup out of cans instead of dinner at a French restaurant with you. That will be the day. You see, I still love you terribly and undoubtedly will until the day I die.

Always,

P.S. Got a nice long letter from Juni King. Bill's still at Pal's, she's learning Spanish, kids fine, Bob can't go overseas after learning Chinese because he's rapidly getting deaf. Isn't that a shame. It may account for his extreme taciturnity.

PPS. The maid Flossie insists the baby looks like some U.S. Senator but I can't think which, can you?

**AL TO JILL AUGUST 6, 1944**

Dearest Jill,

Another very dull Sunday without you, darling, utterly unlike the ones we used to pass together, days of sweet peacefulness from morning until night, of quiet talks and meals the way we wanted them, of walks and movies and hours in bed, of very good coffee with plenty of cream. Now we're very far apart, you've had a bad bite from Coonie and my stomach is upset from taking pills which were supposed to cure an intestinal condition. I'm sure that I could dispense with any pills if I could only kiss you often like I used to, or even feel your hair or touch your hand. It's a bad life without you, no joy that is joy all the way through. You used to help me filter the world before ingesting it. Now I must take it crude and it's not half as nice. I don't have any home. I've slept in a million beds. I always have too much baggage to carry. I can never keep interesting objects with me because there is no room for them. The I.S. army ration is the best in the world but that's like saying only that Sing Sing is a model prison. I would like to try some of your flights of fancy. All in all, Kathy doesn't know how lucky she is and I am as jealous as can be of her. Mom says you are a better mother than she which is in the ultimate category of compliments. I would never be so bold as to brag that you are the best wife in the world but I can think it and suggest it in vague, indirect ways.

Your V-letter of the 12th of July, describing Coonie's delict, arrived today in its original form, with a P.O. Stamp saying the letter was in too mangled a condition to photograph it. You must have chewed on it while the doctor was cauterizing the wound. I am very sorry for you. That dog has rough teeth. I've always been suspicious of him and his past record proves the point. The same thing might happen to Kathy. Coonie is always friendly, save once. And then he does damage. It's of no use whatsoever to say how much he really likes her or avoids her. Keep him away entirely. Coonie's past is a long record of bad bites of people whom he "really loved."

Jim Clark, cutting his baggage last night, gave me to read a huge omnibus called *The Heart of Europe* which is edited by Klaus Mann (who is up north at the moment). It looks wonderful and I'm delighted to add its great weight to my burden because of the happy times it should contain. We should have a copy of it at home, I think. We in America know practically nothing about modern European literature and this book is a fine survey and introduction. Its compass is huge, with all the European nations included, practically, including Russia and excepting England which is just as well since we have ready access to the English business.

I still have Beard's *The Republic* with me and am getting through it fairly slowly. My second little edition of the *New Yorker* came yesterday. Is my subscription to *Time* mag up, do you recall? The two together do give a sort of civilized subsistence standard of intelligence to one out here, using "intelligence" in the military sense of information.

The trouble with this damned war, you know, darling, is that it takes too long to play out all the moves. A chess player would have conceded by this time but we're not playing chess. So the Americans are galloping South to knock off a few more German pawns, make the whole thing more of a cinch, and the Russians have to bother taking Cracow and Riga when everyone knows they'll be taking Koenigsberg and Berlin in due time. I suppose there's nothing much we can do about it either.

However, I love you, today and a couple of months from now I'll love you as much and desire you so much more. We shall certainly have things to do when this is over.

Love to the family and a kiss to Kathy,

Always your,

Al

P.S. Please use the new address. XX

**JILL TO AL AUGUST 7, 1944**

My darling Al --

Once more my feeble imagination stretches and strains. I got your letter of July 31 this morning, referring to Rome as a past location. The last previous letter I'd gotten from you was dated July 20, so either you haven't written in the interval between because you were busy and moving, or else you did write and I haven't heard, leaving in both cases, great gaps in the narrative of the picaresque lieutenant.

Not the fancy, professional adjective. I've just finished Joseph Andrews and am re-reading the rather technical English-professory foreword, and plan to haul Samuel Richardson's Pamela out of the local library at my first opportunity. So today I am playing the role of the English scholar (God wot what tomorrow shall bring -- or bringeth to stay on key).

Anyway, my sweet sweetheart, where the hell are you and what are you doing. Is that Dystell you referred to so casually the same loathsome ex-editor of Coronet who held me in such contempt? Is he nicer now? I know he's working in OWI overseas so it probably is the same man. I got quite a start reading his name in your letter. Do you know Laura is now an associate editor of the same nasty little sheet and she really is way up there? But envy is not in my heart, though there for the grace of God, etc. Nobody with a Kathy-baby and the fame and even notoriety there attending need envy anybody.

God yes, I feel the same way about opera as you do. Wouldn't it be awful if one of us had turned out to be an opera-lover (or a horse-race lover, or an ice hockey-lover, for that matter)? When you really start to think of it, we have an exceeding harmony of tastes, considering that we didn't plan it that way. I do think you should have more money, though, and if my good intentions hold out, I'll send you either a certified check or a money order on the morrow. I'd obey my impulse of the moment and send you a personal check now but I think you'd have difficulties cashing it. Mom has a big salami for you and is plotting ways of

sending it. I told her she should pass it off as a Yom Kippur present at the mails.

I didn't see the Readers' Digest article of sheep-raising, one reason being that I never see the Readers' Digest if I can help it, but since I always associate sheep-raising with sodomy, there is little chance that we'll spend our future doing that. Betty Grable yes, but I don't think I could out-rival a flock of sheep in any man's affections.

I started writing this during Kathy's afternoon nap again, but she woke up and we went to the beach. Now darling, when you wrote me telling me not to ride down the streets wildly with Kathy in the basket, I interpreted it as meaning just that, i.e., that I shouldn't ride wildly, not that I shouldn't put her in the basket. Now that she sits up so nicely I thought I might try her bike-riding again, and we did. I padded the huge basket nicely with a blanket, but in a bottle and some diapers, and off we went. I rode very slowly and stopped at every intersection and looked both ways. It is a lot easier than pushing a buggy for just a short afternoon trip and I am so careful and such a skilled rider to begin with I cannot see much harm in it. Nevertheless I expected to be lynched at every crossing. Kathy enjoyed the unobstructed view exceedingly. She stands all the time now, in her bed, on the floor next to the bathtub (this afternoon I left her for a moment on the dining room floor and when I came back she was in the bathtub again, I mean bathroom, peering into the bathtub like that awful cat Truman we used to have. She will stand up on sunbathers, pulling herself up on the hair of their chests or the skin of their rumps. She is a great stander all right. Everybody says she is most remarkably developed for a seven-month-old child. Take a look at some of the local children or ask fathers of your acquaintance. People have even said to me, "When you write how wonderful she is to your husband, he probably thinks it's just the natural enthusiasm of a mother. He'll never know how remarkable she is." Well, I guess I have exhausted for all time the remarkableness of Kathy.

It's funny that you look for female characters that might possibly



bear a resemblance to me in the books you read, because I've done that too. About you I mean, not me of course. I guess I've told you often enough the great identification I made between you and Prince Andrey in War and peace. I think the only other fictional character I've done that with even remotely is Sam Spade in The Maltese Falcon (still the best picture of the decade for this kid). He was that wild and unpredictable fellow who be-deviled Mary Astor if you recall.

I'm getting mildly hungry and had better do something about it, with the meager stocks of foods at hand. All my love to you, darling.

Jill

P.S. You can see how dark Kathy is -- note the difference between the color of her legs and the soles of her feet.

***AL TO JILL AUGUST 7, 1944***

Jill darling,

This is my first typewritten letter to you in a long time, and I can already see that if it doesn't improve rapidly it may not even be that. At least it isn't V-mail, and I can trust your busy blue eyes that can ferret out the most minute animals to make out these dim letters as well. I am typing the letter under a tree amidst my impedimenta. The machine is resting half on my sleeping bag and half on my knees. it is about eleven o'clock in the morning and I am fairly hungry already.

The news in the Stars and Stripes this morning is again very good. I am happy, among other reasons, to see a real American mechanized army doing what it is designed to do and twice as fast as the Germans ever did it. We should have enough ports now to unload half of America in Europe. And the Russians now are approaching Germany in the South where few people really expected quick action.

As for your most beloved part of the war, I am feeling better this morning and will even speak occasionally when I'm not forced to. I've been thinking a great deal about you lately in a vivid sort of way. It seems that in spells, I recall your features, acts and our life together much more sharply and strongly than at other times. There is never lacking that persistent, confident feeling of love for you but in these periods my imagination must be stronger, somehow, and my memory keener and I feel refreshed and broadened as if my emotions have been diverted in a rivulet from the main channel of my life and have now rejoined the deep stream.

But, typically, I can't continue to write thoughtfully because the sun has put in an appearance and has inspired a great fleet of gnats to put in an appearance. They have surrounded me now and are a great nuisance. Remind me to screen ourselves from the world well in times to come. I appreciate your views on your basement apartment, incidentally. I shall approach it as sacred, hallowed ground when I return but we probably won't live there very long. And why should we, when the world is full of sun, and air and space, when there are beautiful views and heights and trees?

But the gnats give me no peace. Give Kathy a kiss for me darling, and many long ones to yourself.

Always your, Al

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 8, 1944 (A)***

To my sweetheart

For wine women and chuckles

All my love

OOOXXX --- Jill

P.S. Upon returning home I discovered that I not only forgot to mail this but also left at the bank one of my two fountain pens - the priceless Eversharp which nearly annulled our marriage. Perhaps it is just as well I didn't let you take that pen with you, or rather, that I didn't refuse to give you mine. I can just hear you coming back and saying "... And the whole trip was spoiled by that darn pen. I can never go anywhere without your doing something to ruin my fun."

Honey lamb, I love you. Just think of all the fun we'll have when you come back. But I must confess, I've lost my taste for sweets, fudge sundaes included. I guess I never had very much of a one except during pregnancy and some time after. But BEER -- ah, that's a different story.

P.P.S. I hope the enclosed is negotiable. I know you wouldn't ask me for it but it would be nice for you to have some extra cash and I was having reprehensible dreams about a VL & A suit. Now I'll have to put it off -- which I really want to do. It will be so much fun for us to go together and buy us both lush clothes.

I love you some more.

B. J. O. de G., DDS, A.B.

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 8, 1944 (B) V-MAIL***

Darling -

I've just finished re-reading your wonderful and welcome V-mails of the 27th and 29th under the most extreme stress. Kathy was wriggling all over my lap and the couch, trying to eat the Duke Ellington record which I am trying to keep playing to keep her happy. It's about four in the afternoon, a time we are normally at the lake, and she is very restless. Joan and Vesta are coming over at five -- I haven't seen them for ages -- which

is why we are home one this lovely day. I did take her over for a brief swim this morning. Honestly, I feel like the slaves must have felt when Lincoln came along. The bike and basket idea is simply marvelous. I can get her down to the lake in five minutes or less (still pausing discreetly at intersections and riding on the sidewalk most of the way) as opposed to the tedious half hour walk pushing the heavy old buggy. This means I can go down for just short periods --no more frantic lunch packings. And best of all, Kathy can have her nap at home, where she sleeps much better, and we can still have a pleasant afternoon at the lake. I hope you wouldn't object to this procedure if you were here. As it is rather atypical maternal behavior in this neighborhood, I thought I was going to be lunched the first time I did it, but actually people are more amused than anything else. Kathy of course loves it, as she loves anything that will take her out of the house and in view of all those wonderful new people and dogs. It's the funniest thing. She is becoming a real member of the rather large community of children on the block. She is just as real a person to them as most of the adults they know are. When we walk along the street they (ranging from three to eleven) say "Hi Kathy" and I, as Kathy's interpreter, answer "Hi" back. This afternoon I got all loused up at Kroger's -- I forgot my ration book and money, so instead of wheeling the buggy home and back, I left it, or rather, her, with this wonderful little boy Nick while I went home and back to pick up the load. When I came upon them again, Nick and three of his little eight-year-old friends were sitting with Kathy on the lawn in front of the house, all scuttling around frantically on all fours, with Kathy shouting with glee. Nick is a very reliable and hard-working little boy. He collects newspapers, works as a bootblack and God knows what else. He is dark and big-eyed and somehow reminds me of the kind of little boy you might have been -- you know, terribly conscientious, and of Mediterranean origin.

I hope you'll be able to get more food and rest now. I wish to hell we could do it together. I don't think the housewives were meant to swim a half a mile every day. yesterday afternoon I swam from the tip of the promontory to the rocks at 54th and

back again. I was down there with a large group of people, like Priscilla and the Bredindicks and they watched Kathy. Then I made formula and ironed last night and I'm beat down to the socks. But I think I'm awfully lucky that I can get all this exercise and sunshine, don't you? Most girls with babies just never get out. When we have lots of children we'll have to devise some sort of system so we can all get out and have fun all the time. Like paper plates.

Goodness, I love you so much.

Jill

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 9, 1944 V-MAIL***

Darling Al --

Two very fine V-mails from you today, the 30th and August 2nd. And I forgot to mention yesterday that I got the cartoon book of Mauldin and enjoyed it very much. It's not as foreign to me as you may think, because your letters and Ernie Pyle's reports when he was in Italy have educated me a little on mountain fighting.

I'm glad you can have a little rest and quiet for a change. I gather you're in Naples from your allusions to the beauty of the scenery and the miserable state of human life in the city. It's amazing that you can get any mail from me at all, the way you move around. Arff-arff on your humorous evaluation of my politics. But I can't deny it. I'm a Democrat strictly from my mother's milk. But if you like, I won't embroider slogans on Kathy's diapers.

I'm absolutely bushed. I went down to the lake before ten this morning with Kathy and Priscilla and swam a great stretch. Then we went home for lunch and a short nap and were back again at three, for more swimming and sunning. Actually, we stayed in the shade pretty much, the temperature being up in

the late nineties again today. But Jesus, swimming gives one an appetite and a lust for sleep. I made an awfully good supper for myself tonight, veal simmered with a dash of wine. I guess it's a bastard Jillish version of veal scallopini, and awfully easy to do. Joan and Vesta came for dinner last night and we had veal Hungarian style, with sour cream, paprika and tomatoes, and some raw veal was left over. I'm certainly eclectic in my style of cooking. I wish I could work up enough interest in desserts to learn how to bake. Meat comes really easy to me because I like it and there's really nothing much to do with it except refrain from burning (a job in itself when you are cooking with one hand and keeping Kathy happy and out of mischief with the other). But I guess I'll never be a good cook until I can bake pies like Mrs. Wagner used to make.

I started telling people to drop over and see me and suddenly I have a party on my hands this Saturday night. It had started out to be a little get-together with Steinbrecher and Laura and now it looks as if half of the university will be there. I guess I'll get a lot of beer and salami and cheese and let everybody amuse themselves. All my mortarboard friends and their friends are coming, and I called Earl since he knows some of those people and so on and so forth. I shall be glad when Sunday is here, in a word.

The next day -- I stopped writing out of sheer exhaustion, and went to bed, where I found I could not sleep. so I read a long while an old book of Arthur Koestler (his later ones you may have heard of -- *Darkness at Noon* and *Arrival and Departure*). This one is called *Scum of the Earth* and details his experience in a French prison camp for foreigners after the war broke out in 1939. He is a Hungarian, a bitterly critical ex-Communist, and was detained because of France's sudden hysterical policy towards all foreigners and what we in this country call premature anti-Fascists during the months following September of 39. He is one of the most lucid writers and thinkers of the European journalists, so this is no mere *Saw France Fall* or *"Horrors of an Internment Camp"* opus. As a result, one is all the more overwhelmed by the corruption, venality and brutality

of European civilization. The title refers to the prisoners themselves, who for the most part are mere citizens ranging from mildly to strongly leftist leanings -- not to their captors. Europe is, as you say, in a great mess, and the tragedy of it is that there is no group or nation fit to deal with it, or to impose standards of decency from the top. The most vocal and therefore powerful elements in this country are still looking back to a Nirvana of Hardingian normalcy. That group even includes some of our better-fed labor leaders. Yet we are as a nation charitable, if rotten, so perhaps the material assistance we can give Europe after the war may set it on the path towards regeneration.

I got the insurance policy from you today which I shall stow away safely under my pink pants. And the pictures came too, those old ones you referred to. They are very good although they don't show enough of my favorite subject, guess who. The lady's foot came too and I'll see what I can do. Needless to say, mine is mammoth by comparison and it's a good thing I didn't send any one of my shoes, if I had any to send. At the moment I'm looking for a comfortable pair for myself and it's amazing how hard it is to get flat-heeled ones that will stand up under the beating I seem to give them. I've worn holes in a pair of rubber-soled ones that I got only six months ago. I think women's shoes are lousy anyway, never meant for women to walk in.

Kathy stands at every opportunity and moves her feet around as if she would like to take a few steps. It's amazing how she has changed in bodily type. She was such a big fat little baby, but now, while she is still above average in weight for her age, she has a small boned dainty yet sturdy aspect that I guess is characteristic of both our builds. her head is relatively small and very well shaped too. All in all, she hasn't got the great-headed puffiness of the average bouncing baby her age. She had a rather tough day today. It's been hot and her appetite is poor and I guess she is all tired out, because she hardly could finish her bottle tonight before falling asleep. I feel so sorry for her afterwards, but when she is crying I get as cranky as she and start cursing the roof down. I wish you were here to comfort us

both.

I have to do all thinks of things now, like take off my wet bathing suit and lock up the bike. Darling, I know it can't be much longer but I still miss you unbearably and pray for the day when you'll be back. It's been three summers already that we've spent apart -- it just doesn't seem right that we have to be alone in these years. But next summer I'm sure we'll be together, even if Kathy and I have to go to Italy as tourists to visit our old man. Kathy is convinced that she would love you and I know I do.

Always, with all my love,

Jill

***AL TO JILL AUGUST 9, 1944 V-MAIL***

Dearest Jill,

I have a fine opportunity to get a letter sent off in half an hour. Naturally I can't say much but I have under way a longer letter which says more than just "I love you." I am feeling well, have been getting enough sleep and have been improving my chess game. The food is good, so there is really nothing for you to worry about as the divinely chosen protector of my health. I've been reading detective stories too, mostly because there is nothing else to read. The days are practically all as bright and sunny as the war news. I'll be happy when it gets dark and cold around five o'clock in the evening and I can be inside with you looking out. I like the happy contrast we can build against the elements. You must promise not to make me leave it to go out to buy baby cereal. Then I'll love you even more if possible and won't think a single bad thought of Kathy.

Always your, Al



**AL TO JILL AUGUST 12, 1944**

American Red Cross

Jill, darling -

Everything is waiting here. The greatest fleet you can imagine stretches out on all sides, tranquil, smokeless, like toys, or if you will, like painted ships on a painted ocean. The weather is hot. Just now, for the first time, we have a cool breeze blowing. Everyone is restless and bored to distraction. Our ship, like the rest, is packed as only a troops transport can be packed, and there is hardly anything to do save to contemplate the crowd of humanity.

We are, of course, waiting to invade more of the Fortress of Europe, and I suppose this waiting and discomfort will invoke in us the desire to attain the beach at any cost, once we arrive there. So, within a very few days, you should be cheered by the big news and you will probably think, like I do always, that we are so much nearer to being together. This letter has no chance of being mailed preliminary to the invasion, and will probably be preceded by a V-mail of mine which will be written as soon as I am firmly on the ground. But it does give me something to do for a small part of the time and if I write enough, I may be able to hit on something of interest.

I am cribbed, cabined and confined with three other officers, in a room which would make my little place at Goff's which only we lovers could tolerate appear cathedral. But we at least have bunks, more than most of the EMs have got. And we have a sink in which water runs two or three times a day., On the doll's dresser is your picture, your gaze averted modestly from the scene of four men who are always dressing or undressing.

The food is good, though the British sabotage the coffee with the result that I have to drink the tea. With naps here and there, I manage to get plenty of sleep, though at night, with the blackout in full force, there is no fresh air at all entering the room. For the last two days I have taken a bath in the morning

from a big bucket of tepid water the Indian steward has provided, but I learned at the meeting this morning that a drastic reduction of the water consumption is necessary and I suppose I will have to forego that refreshing method of waking up and spending a pleasant half hour. Various drills, a little talking, lots of reading of mostly bad literature, and a few chess games account for the day.

I always think a lot of you, in both senses of that ambiguous phrase. I think I am incorporating in my mind a more optimistic vein because I let myself think fairly specifically of what I'd like to do and imagine ourselves doing a number of things together. When I first came overseas, though I may have spoken optimistically, I found it depressing to think of my return because of the long interim there would be. But now, it is more pleasurable. My return, you might say, is in the now realizable future rather than in the unbearably remote future.

The last letter I have from you is July 24 and it will probably remain the latest for another two weeks at least. I shall not love you or think of you any the less for it. And I believe you will realize when you get word of the invasion that that is the reason for a pause of a week or so in letters from me. About your last letter, now that I read it over again, you ask me two rhetorical questions that are so illogical as to prompt a retort. You can't understand how she can stand if she isn't strong enough. Of course she can. A weak beam will take an overload and bend and stay bent. Likewise a child's legs. That's what I meant to say. Secondly "The mere desire to stand must signify that she is quite ready for it, don't you think?" No, I don't. The desire to end the war doesn't end it, unfortunately. And many little children have been rudely shocked and injured thinking they could fly and taking off from some height. But such is life, that probably by the time you get this letter, she'll probably be scampering all over the place and I'll look like a silly fool. I will bet anything she won't fly, however.

Later -- I think I'll finish this page and get this letter ready for mailing when or before I hit shore. If there is any delay, I can

write another one.

We have been under way for some time now. Tomorrow is D-Day. yesterday the ship's loud-speaking system gave the troops the message of the Commanding General preliminary to the invasion. The news from Northern France was very good this morning and they tell of great bombardments of the Southern coast. The sea is very calm. it hardly feels as if we were moving though the convoy is a fast one.

It's time for lunch and a few other details. Many kisses to you and Kathy, darling, and all my love, as always.

Al

**T**HE assault ship is British, and the cabin, which contains bunks, gear and tea mugs, lodges for the nonce three officers. Captain Foster of His Majesty's "Lancaster Foot" is still looking like an old hound dog, although his winter of dysentery along the Rapido River has long past. The third man is a stranger, a lieutenant of the Third American Infantry Division on his first voyage into the unknown. Then there is Lt. Alfred de Grazia, AUS, apparently in fine fettle, splashing himself sloppily from the two pots of hot bath water brought him by an Indian steward. That's the British: blah food but good personal service.

The sea breeze cools the sense of mid-August. He dresses comfortably in the cotton uniform he had brought along in violation of orders. He had collected a lot of cigarettes, four cartons more than prescribed, and brought them along, too. A list of what must and might be carried had been issued from on high; all else was to be left behind. No gas mask: "That's something, Foster, what?" He would have in any event mailed off the thick pack of letters from home. He stuffed them into the wooden cigar box he had acquired in Sardinia. Several he kept to represent his beloved until the next mail should arrive, if ever. He wondered whether he should have brought along the lovely 12-gauge shotgun he had confiscated but had left behind for an illusory safe-keeping. He hefted everything he had to carry, including his tommy-

gun and 45-calibre sidearm, plus a German Walther 38-cal automatic, each with its special heavy packets of ammunition, jumped up and down a few times and folded in a couple of more cotton things and several indestructible English chocolate bars; hot woolens made his tender skin itch. He figured that if things got tough, he could dump the extras, but, if not, they could boost life's pleasure-pain ratio.

Calm seas, with many streams from many ships of different forms: he studied them through his binoculars and wished he might see them from the air. Hardly any friendly planes in the sky: they were probably routed off the flanks to preserve them from Friendly Fire. No signs of an enemy at sea or in the air. Two years earlier a quarter of the Allied Fleet would have been blown from the water. Now they sail through the Straits of Bonifacio between Sardinia and Corsica, where once they would have been clobbered from both sides.

Word passes that they have been joined by an equally large fleet from Africa. He is not sure where they'll go ashore; it would be near a resort village called St. Tropez. Doesn't matter much. So long as it's not heavily defended. It'll be largely a matter of luck as in Normandy, one beach blasted, another abandoned quickly.

The lounge is crowded with officers all day and night, smoky, blacked out. He has finished the Turgenev novel in his bunk. He writes a long letter to his wife on deck. It carries slight overtones of a finale, appropriate to the circumstances. He plays chess with Captain Foster, his old friend. He has just come to know his Team commander, a Major Erik Roos. Roos is a blonde civil engineer in his thirties with an unbecoming down-turned mouth. The Lieutenant is to be his Executive Officer; they have only a half-dozen going in on the first wave, but a hundred more men and thirty vehicles will arrive to join them over the next two weeks -- if all goes well. Then more later.

This is Roos' first experience of close-in warfare. Nor has he education or experience in propaganda or public opinion or psychology. Nor of Germany; he had worked once in the Middle East; he speaks Danish. He had been sent up from Africa for the expedition; Mike Bessie, an American civilian who had been a book editor, a dark skinny little guy, pleasant enough, together with a British counterpart, had chosen Roos from the PWB pool, and put him in charge of the

operation. The team had not trained at Naples; Roos hardly spoke at all, and could hardly impart such knowledge as he conceivably possessed. There was no use asking him about anything. What is more shocking, or should be, is that the Lieutenant and the Captain are neither surprised nor indignant. Being badly commanded is ordinary in the US army, whether infantry or intelligence, and you might as well throw in the British Army on the balance.

The night of the Fourteenth of August, 1944, before landing, the saloon is jammed with officers. He and Foster are hunched over their tiny chessboard room, breathing befouled air, concentrating fiercely, for they are well-matched, both poor players. All of a sudden the ship's guns blast into action and as by a word of command, the officers stampede from the lounge. The chess players lift their heads and slowly return from the game to awareness. They look about the empty room. They've lost their moment to panic. An ineffectual air raid apparently -- lucky if nobody is clipped by Friendly Flack while out on deck. Since there is nowhere to go, the officers straggle back in abashedly.

They are up at dawn; amidst heavy firing, they are served breakfast. They clutch their packs and guns and go out on deck where the early light has the shore well in sight, no batteries firing from it, a calm surf, a fine prospect. Puffs of smoke appear where the shore is being struck by naval gunfire. The landings begin at eight o'clock, the first assault boats motoring in without immediate opposition, striking no mines. His group watches for a signal to disembark from their loading master, the particular one who has them on his list. The sun is well out before they jump into the landing craft and go ashore. They trot up the beach, over rocks, through brush, always following a path marked by the sappers, hastening because of the lines of men converging upon their path from the beach. After a mile or so, the line becomes a fan as the soldiers go off into their own units at their assembly points.

Since his mission is not to seize terrain from the enemy, he leads the group in search of a billet. No civilians are to be seen; they are off the roads, hiding back of the coast in the hills. They find a partially destroyed villa. A cursory inspection detects no booby traps:

"Remember Catania," he thinks. They take it over. The furnishings are largely gone. The water and light do not function. The garden is overgrown. They could do better, but a colonel might come along and turn them out of a luxury dwelling at this point, or a whole company might descend upon them. They no sooner settle in than their two jeeps and drivers arrive. Several sleep in, several outside.

There is no telling if the enemy is still about, they may have assembled to attack the beachhead from somewhere out yonder. He takes a jeep and goes in search of an operations intelligence officer, some S2 of a task force or battalion, who may have heard some news from the flanks and ahead. There is little for them to do, they discover. The Germans are retiring generally and are not waiting for messages inviting their surrender or exhorting retreat. There are reconnaissance units out searching for them, picking up contact, cornering them. The Lieutenant picks up souvenirs that the Germans have left behind, a fur-lined pack from the Russian campaigns, a flat canteen that he considers superior in design to his rounded one. They had left in a hurry, probably as soon as the first shells from the boats began to come in.

Their conquerors are eating K-rations, with some C-rations thrown in. There is little food to be seized or scrounged. General Washington's surprise crossing of the Delaware River at Trenton found Hessian tables laden with a Christmas banquet. Here, five generations later, everybody eats badly. It will take a while for the better grade of ration to come ashore, and he'll be gone by then. He walks Foster down to the beach road and says good-bye; the Lancastrian hitch-hikes on an armored weapons carrier; he is going to work the Eastern end of the Front, over by Italy.

The night is not too noisy: the artillery has already moved beyond its position and the enemy has withdrawn his pieces. Not the distant sounds, but the passing vehicles and men going this way and that, to and from the beaches, disturbs your sleep. Major Roos awakens him; I hear noises from the garden, go see if it's the enemy, he orders. No use arguing: he puts on his boots and takes a walk outside, sees nothing and pisses in the starlight. Nothing to worry about, Major, maybe some of our men looking for a place to sleep.

The next day the Lieutenant takes off by himself to drum up

trade and to make observations. The pattern for future activity is set. Roos is a homebody. He likes to be by himself in a corner. The Lieutenant does not think much about the reasons for this, not yet. He is making himself at home in France and keeping up with the front, which presents an intriguing panorama, kaleidoscopic, because it changes so much with every shake of the hour-glass. He is looking for a place to plunge in and do a job. "Make yourself useful," is his mission.

Overnight the situation has radicalized, no thanks to him. They are now as deep into France as Naples from Salerno, Messina from Syracuse. In the beginning, there were these four to six great convoys converging off Corsica, one from the heel of Italy at Taranto, another south of Naples (that's the Lieutenant and company) and the Salerno area (so therefore really two), then a couple out of Africa, and some boats and a large airborne armada from Corsica. They land in five main bodies, Alpha in two branches, on the peninsula of San Tropez, his own being closest to town; and then all along the Coast. Map 13.0 shows the large scene, and where they were within two days. On Alpha's right flank are Delta, Camel (split into three) and Rosie, close to Cannes. On the left flank, Romeo goes ashore at Cap Negre. Airborne troops drop near them by Saint Tropez and inland at Le Muy. The Twelfth Tactical Air Force is operating out of Corsica and Sardinia; some flights are running out of Foggia, a long ways off. For lack of target, their planes are not much in evidence along the beaches of Alpha. Franco-American Special Forces tackle some coast artillery positions only to find that they are dummy emplacements. So much for the perspicacity of aerial observation prior to the invasion.

Confronting the Seventh Army with its several divisions and task forces, American and French, is the Nineteenth German Army, a shapeless conglomerate which has a number of elements stretched out between Toulouse in the West and the Italian frontier in the East. The Allied Forces advancing into France from the West have emerged from the Normandy beachheads and are engorging large sectors to the East; they do not threaten in the next several weeks to sweep East across France, for they are driving northeast in a giant envelopment strategy, designed to liberate Paris, crush the main German armies in France and drive toward the industrial Ruhr. For the time being and in

the minds of its soldiers, the Seventh United States Army is fighting its own isolated war.

The Germans knew they were coming. The 19th German Army Group of Southern France was headquartered at the marvelous medieval Papal city of Avignon, up the Rhone River from Marseilles. There, General Wiese, Commanding, was told on August 11 that an armada was heading in his general direction and that it might strike the Italian Coast around Genoa or the Riviera-to-Toulon area. He received gratefully an order that transferred the 11th Armored Division over to him from the Toulouse region. His other troops included seven divisions of infantry, most of which are under strength; one was made up largely of disemployed Luftwaffe personnel. Since a large number of units had been engaged in coastal defense they had to spike and abandon their cannon, leaving the troops merely with small arms. The Germans had far too much territory to cover and could not resist strongly at any point, not in the beginning.

Formally, at first, they did not appear determined upon the logical tactic, which would be to get out of southern France as quickly and neatly as possible, suffering only the losses demanded to prevent their total capitulation. This tactic called for a quick retreat North, where they might join their retreating comrades from the West to set up a line of resistance across France, anchored upon Lyon. Some troops, at least a division of them could escape easily into Italy, closing the mountain hatches behind them. But the Fuhrer hated retreats and would not approve of an immediate turning of tail.

The whole movement from Southwestern France should have been initiated even before the landings. A week and more was lost, enough of a delay to make a fully successful retreat and defense impossible. When the orders did go out, they were reasonable enough: The Nineteenth Army will converge from all sides upon the Rhone Valley. It will then proceed up the Valley. It will pause on the way to Lyon at seven phases of resistance, starting with a line at the Durance River. The Order of August 18 commands a general withdrawal, to begin on the evening of the 21st of August, with one division covering their Riviera flank, and a second the Eastern Alpine foothills. Their right flank (facing to the Mediterranean Sea) will be pulled in and



assist in the defense of Marseilles and Toulon, where some help can be expected from French Vichy forces. The 11th Panzer Division will protect the reassembly and withdrawal.

But it took the 11th Panzer a week to get to the Rhone and cross it. The Lieutenant could watch its progress on the G-2 maps that he studied when he visited Advance Headquarters of the Seventh Army. The 11PD had to suffer continual air attacks. Many a repair job was necessitated by the wear and tear of the trip, too. It would have taken them longer and cost them more if the Twelfth Tactical Air Force had been able to destroy all bridges in the Division's path. It tried but failed. Too, a strong uprising of the French resistance might have interposed delays; it did not occur.

Various hearty messages had been beamed out to the French resistance fighters, and they were encouraged to harass the German columns. French units of the underground did spring into action. Much of the effort went into subjugating Vichy police and troop units and chasing down individuals. Still one must wonder whether the *résistants* or partisans or *maquisards* did not serve to galvanize the Germans into hurrying up their assembly, into pulling themselves together. An unforeseen disadvantage, unspoken, unmentioned, unconsidered even by G-2 and G-3 analysts, Counterintelligence, OSS squads, and combat propagandists, who were so enthused over helping the partisans, even by Our Hero, was this: that the Germans as individuals become terrified at falling into the hands of armed partisans, so that the large number of desertions and straggling that one might expect from demoralized, too young and too old, under-equipped and under-fed soldiers scattered over a large area and now thrown together, ill -controlled by the SS military police, beset by the Americans, did not ensue. They preferred to take their chances on the long haul to the Heimat, even if they had to walk and be shot at by enemy planes and artillery along the way. The strong German togetherness trait, raised to a peak in its armed forces, was now reinforced by the fear of being killed if they turned themselves in or let themselves be captured by anyone save an American soldier. Even then, of course, the fear of being butchered remained, but it was less. An obstacle in psychological operations against the Germans was that they would like to surrender only in a group, but, once in a group, they

acquired a high morale against surrender.

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 13?, 1944 V-MAIL***

My darling --

A veritable landslide of letters today -- the 5th, 6th and 7th from you. You certainly changed your address fast again. One day you are complaining about a stomach ache in Naples, I presume, and the next day you're getting fresh air and sunshine in the open field. I think, and guess from your letters, that that kind of life must give you a detachment about living quarters that is a decided advantage in this underbuilt overcrowded city of ours. When you come back, there will probably be a housing shortage still and I can just hear you saying, "What the hell, let's go someplace else if we can't find anything here." At least I hope you'll say that, and not make us continue to be prawns (no, that's shrimps) of the Chicago Real Estate Board. I just resigned my leave "Nor shall the lessor harbor or maintain dogs, cats, birds or reptiles or any other wild life, nor shall he in any wise infringe on the rights of the lessee, those rights to be defined by the lessee, who will at all times fuck the lessor." and am feeling particularly strong on that point.

And though it's been said before, I would indeed follow you everywhere and anywhere and will do the packing too. Alaska might even be fun although I hear they have mosquitoes. But there will be lots of places we can go -- after all, if people can find fairly cute little houses around an overcrowded place like Camp Ritchie there's no limit to what we can do with freedom of choice.

I didn't write you yesterday for the shameful reason that I had a terrible hangover, my first since the early days of our courtship. The thing that turned out to be a party Saturday night was eminently successful, if you can judge by the number of people who showed up and the amount of liquor consumed. I got a case of beer and two fifths of bourbon and other people got

three other fifths and it was all gone by one o'clock. The people you know who were there were the Kerners, my Mortarboard friends, Steinbrecher who assisted me and was the instigator of the whole thing, Klaus Ollendorf who brought quite a few people that I didn't know very well and George Hussar who came with Syb, I think. Everybody fitted in pretty well with everybody else despite the wide variety of types, Bill becoming enamored of Mac. I guess I'm not used to drinking because I didn't think I drank so much and certainly didn't want to. I felt very penitent the next day. Bill says that kind of thing is good for one once in a great while -- it sets parts of your body in motions and strains them that ordinarily aren't. I whooped, so that must be what he meant. Everybody was so enamored of one another that the next day people like the Berquist and the guys they came with and Bill, who came south again, all went swimming in the afternoon, all loudly describing their symptoms. But it certainly would have been a lot of fun to have you be the host, a lot more fun I mean, and also to cart me off to bed. Syb spent the night so at least I didn't have to face the ash trays and glasses myself in the morning, nor the prospect of feeding Kathy egg and cereal (a vile-looking mess in combination) without the thought that somebody would take over when I started gagging. But it was a nice party in the sense that it was very talky and jazzy -- Oliver brought records -- and nobody tried to steal anybody else's wife or girl, and only one boy climbed in Kathy's playpen. You may remember him, Howie Hawkins, a rather stuffy boy from the law school. Amazingly, there were no uniforms, although a couple of the guys were paid by the war department to do something hush-hush. The bedroom was turned over to babies -- the Kerners brought little Lize who behaved wonderfully. Kathy slept through it all until people started leaving and then she woke up and amidst scenes of utter degradation and ruin I had to give her a bottle.

I went to the beach again today and am very tired. I am leading a horribly social life. Priscilla was over for lunch, Bill's been here for supper two nights in a row. However, I didn't cook. Last night we had chow mein from the corner and the night before we

found a can of gefilte fish at the corner delicatessen and Bill insisted in trying it. He has very catholic taste in food, as well as girls. He is a good guy. I find myself respecting and looking to his judgements though he is distressingly stern. He is the only guy I know except you who has any standards.

I got a letter from Carol, my friend from Smith today. She is having a baby and is going to vote for Roosevelt, very pleasing news.

Oh, I like to have people over, I was going to say, like Priscilla anyway, because it gives me a good excuse to haul out your pictures and talk about you which I did today. Priscilla is a very good audience. I can go on for hours. It's worth the half-pound of salami she puts away every day. She is a much sweeter, more All-American girl than Laura who, to the astonishment of the people, including you, who knew her in her undergraduate days, has turned into a terrific siren, low-cut dresses and all that. But she's a good kid around women still, though willing enough to pounce on any impressionable male in sight. Hsst.

I don't know if you are terribly bored, interested or just plain disgusted (because they are civilians) with tales of the people still around here. It is amazing how large a nucleus is left of university people, though. I guess the holes in the Army screens are smaller than one would think.

Darling, I love you and love to write to you but I really am terribly hungry and tired. Kathy incidentally thanks you for that dearest of little cards you sent her. But I'm not going to let her play with it. I think we should keep it for her for a while.

And darling, I want you so much. We'll be together soon, I know, and the whole world will be ours.

Always,

Jill

**AL TO JILL AUGUST 14, 1944**

D-Day

Dearest,

There isn't much to do at the moment. The naval bombardment and air bombardment is finished and the infantry is in. No doubt by this evening you will know more about what is happening than I do here. We're still aboard ship, waiting our call from the beach master.

I realize with remorse this morning that I've written no one besides yourself in a long time. It's not because I'm not interested in the rest of my family or yours. I think of Mom with affection often, and of the rest of the family too. I like to think that we'll see everyone together shortly after I get back, if only to show off Kathy to them and to have ourselves shown their children. It is very sad to see how families dissipate themselves, leaving a host of early pleasant memories with nothing new to refresh them. And yet the family does remain. There is a tradition and occasional renewals and some communication. By the very fact that there is something to regret and remind us the family is shown to be alive. For example, one never thinks of the childhood friends who were as close as life itself in those days, even in the case of myself who was every bit as egoistic as you were. But I get a picture of Ed or a letter from Buzz or Vic and I think of how nice it would be to spend time together with them. I know that you feel towards Paul even more strongly. I certainly learned what sisterly love could be from you. It all helped make our struggle for mastery of our situation more wild and woolly. The difference between our first correspondence and our present letters is enormous. yet I know our characters haven't changed much. It's the whole adjustment that has brought order out of what threatened to descend into chaos, you might say.

I would love to talk to you now, as we used to talk together, about all the problems of those times. over a chocolate soda or coffee, perhaps, until far into the night. We never lacked material, did we, though sometimes when the conversation took

place in bed, I dropped off to sleep before you had made all your telling points. It is on the tip of my tongue to say that I shall never fall asleep with you again, but now that I recall it, it wasn't so much boredom as just downright happiness at my immediate environment.

I'm going to see what's up on deck now. Thousand of soft kisses.

Your Al

***JILL TO AL AUGUST 15, 1944 V-MAIL***

My darling --

Today brings good news of the new invasion from the south of France and also the possibility that you might be in it. Mom said that your letter to the boys said you were waiting for something big to happen and your address was changed recently, so you can see where we might have some suspicions of that sort. So I'm sending up my daily prayer that you're all right with renewed vigor. I don't see how the Germans can keep on fighting, the way they're being trapped and attacked from all sides, but the bastards keep on, which I naturally consider a personal affront. But at the outside they could only keep it up until winter. It's clear now they are no supermen, and only a superman and his family could face the prospect of another winter of cold and deprivation, with now not even the remotest possibility of victory. But no matter how reasonable and optimistic are our hopes for the future, they don't change the fact that we must still wait for each other, and it's a lonely thankless job. I can't complain about the physical conditions of my existence very much, but dammit, it's a lonely life. Unless you're neurotically gregarious, friends can't possibly fill the need for a primary relationship. I was thinking back today to our days together on University Ave. It was a grubby little place and we may have had our arguments, but I can never recall being lonely. I remember the titillating pleasure I used to have on Thursday nights when you

went down to Harvey or wherever it was. I would be alone and indulge in the forbidden fruits of loneliness -- in my case, baked beans out of the can and Henry Aldrich -- with the comfortable knowledge that you would be back at ten o'clock. That's the only time when it's fun to be alone -- when it is for a fixed short period of time, and when it is terminated by bedtime. And yes, there's that other required condition too -- that you have something definite and routine to do during the time you're alone, like ironing or washing hair and listening to the radio. Although there is nothing I can do about terminating the period of being alone now, I find that I am somewhat happier if I have a rather rigid routine to follow in the evening hours after Kathy leaves me --like eating, writing a letter or two, doing the dishes while listening to some corny mystery and then reading in bed. It actually is a lot more satisfying than engaging in mad mad fun, for after the movie or the short beer is over with, the contrast between all that extroversion and going to bed alone is a lot more painful than just getting into bed alone in the first place.

Somebody from the Sun called up today and said they'd heard that I rode my baby in a bike down to the lake and they'd like to get a picture of me and quote, the little feller. I was in a terrible mood and said I was too tired and they gave up rather more easily than I had expected. I suppose it would have been nice to have such a picture to send you but I would have felt like an awful fool so it's just as well that my after-lunch spleen got the best of me. I think that Klaus Ollendorf, the old fool, was the perpetrator. Anyway, the man next door took pictures of us Sunday with his fancy Contax so I'll have more to send you when they are developed.

OOOXXX

I love you.

*End of August (first of two parts) 1944 letters*

