

JILL TO AL MAY 1, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling - Three great lovely letters from you today, the 17th, 18th, and 22nd. I was glad to hear that you are well and lapping up the domestic vintages. At least, my chief impression of your activities, after only one reading (tho a careful one - I sat on the curb outside and poured over them, to the mild dismay of local folk, because the mailman brought them at the moment I was about to take off with Kathy and carriage for a walk). I too have just had a mild snort of a palatable domestic claret. I bought it for the christening, but we never got to it, there being much chianti and vodka in the way, so as Fritz was down for one of my inimitable stews, I opened it up. Bernice is away again, to help settle the affairs of her deceased father. I must say that I'm not a bad cook. With some peculiar section of lamb, the only meat on the market currently besides pork - I mean this section was the only meat, not lamb itself which for all practical purposes is an extinct beast - and a lot of garlic and red ink, I really made a very tasty dish. It's too bad I hate desserts so - I might be a good all-round cook if it weren't for that. And there's absolutely no way of achieving technical facility in cooking unless you like to eat - anyway that's the way it works with me. I'm not the type of person prone to technical efficiency in all matters anyway, like such soulless creatures as Adele Rose. I have to love what I'm doing. Which is why you might as well resign yourself to a cakeless life, long after you have passed the stage where you might enjoy my technical proficiency in other matters. Or perhaps then, like the horrid old folk that inhabit the Shoreland and Windermere dining rooms, I shall turn the full force of my libido to cake-eating, and ergo, cake-baking.

It's a wonderful spring night and I hope I can get a walk in before I turn in at the austere hour of 9:30. I have suddenly taken to leading a good healthy life. Last night I fell asleep at 10:30 and it would have been a good night's sleep if I hadn't wakened up mysteriously at 5:30 and been unable to get back to sleep. Kathy is pretty regular about arising with a smile about a quarter of seven, and I'd like to conform my sleeping habits to hers, now that she has her last feeding around six PM, except

that I seem constitutionally unable to get eight hours' sleep, no matter at what end you look at it. Maybe I just don't need that much sleep, since I feel very well withal, although that seems odd, considering how gluttonous I used to be. Anyway, I do think that if you're outdoors a lot and doing a lot of physical work the way I do, you really don't need as much sleep as if you were sitting on your fanny in a hot stuffy office. Today I scrubbed the kitchen floor and waxed it, but I have such sharp rubber-soled new shoes - gosh knows why they have rubber soles, but they do - that they immediately left impressively athletic looking footprints all over the virgin floor. This is my new maidless era. I am making absolutely no effort to get a new cleaning woman and it is really a lot pleasanter, waking up on a Wednesday morning and knowing that I won't be plagued by an ignorant black face for eight hours. I don't mind the work because I have resigned myself to doing it on a non-logical basis, i.e., I clean the house in the morning, it matters not what day, and what I haven't done by noon, I just let go until the next day. In other words, I don't reserve Monday for washing floors, Tuesday for laundry, etc. I just do things as the mood falls upon me. I figure there is enough routine involved in taking care of Kathy without imposing the additional routine of doing household tasks regularly. The results to date are that I will have to buy a lot of new clothes because I haven't gotten around to washing my old tired and dirty frocks. Anyway, now I have a lot more time to do my own housework, with Kathy so obligingly going to bed about seven and also eating her food with considerable more alacrity than she did in the earlier months of her existence. The doctor upstairs, the refugee one whose son plays that weird clarinet, claims she is absolutely the most beautiful baby he has seen on either continent. I know he means it, but if he by chance thinks that will soften me up in regard to his son's clarinet, he is sadly mistaken. He made this adulatory statement last night at the Steele's confirmation party for their daughter Kay. I just dropped over for a moment, had a bourbon and shortly afterwards a headache so went home to bed. I had forgotten that about bourbon. It always made both of us deathly ill as I recall. I wore my new raincoat over there - not that it was raining - and it

without doubt is the sharpest thing on the South side. People drop in their tracks when they see me coming. I'm sure you'll like it.

Are you strong on dates or is it a military secret anyway? I think just a year has passed since we said goodbye but I'm not sure, that particular day being far too traumatic for me to remember the date. It seems fantastic, doesn't it, that it's been a whole year? You're right about Kathy providing continuity for our love. I can't imagine what I would be doing without her. I suspect I would have been very unhappy at this time. And, leave us face it, both as cause and result of that possible unhappiness, our marriage would not have had the excellent chance of surviving for all eternity that it does now.

The weather is so wonderful now. I wish you were here to walk me to the mailbox to mail these and thence to the park, except that if you were here there wouldn't be any need for my writing you. But as it is, I shall have to take my solitary dull walk to the mailbox by myself. I have evolved a policy of not leaving Kathy alone for more than half-hours intervals. I can't always be with her - there have been times in bad weather when I simply had to dash out for a can of milk or something - and I figure that nothing much can happen in a half hour. Even if she wakes up and cries for that time, it won't kill her, and as for covers crawling up around her head, she is too little now for that to happen, and anyway, she rarely has that many covers on. Oh this is big news, last night she drank some of her sloppy cereal out of the cup. I got tired of spooning it down her reluctant maw so tipped the cup to her lips and she actually caught on and furthermore grasped the cup in her hands. I realize, this is pretty much flash in the pan stuff since they usually don't do it till they are a year old, so I won't try it again, on purpose anyway. All my love to you dearest.

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 1, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

My mind and heart are doing a Maypole dance together over about eight letters from you that arrived today. I won't pretend to answer them all in these bare two pages. Perhaps the bigger points can be touched on. I want first to tell you that the lonesome little plaint of one letter becomes a deafening love call in several and I feel quite ragged with heavy emotion as a result. Do my letters have the same effect when they bunch up? Some day I'll get a record number at one time and it'll be more than the human frame can stand. There's no doubt that in a week's writing you can relate more collected woes, mishaps, cute baby behavior and sexual desires than ever decorated the pages of Havelock Ellis's work on True Love. I can only say weakly in answer: "Hold tight, the war can't last forever." If you bounce I'll bounce them right back. If your tax taxes you, I'll give away our money. It's friendship, friendship. You said at least twice you were mad at me and Kathy for no particular reason. Before the fatal third time, I want to tell you not to sell my filing cabinet. Let not your rage lead you to that. I like to amuse myself sliding the drawers in and out and I'll bet Kathy will too.

I am puzzled and dismayed by the second page of your April 18th letter, in which you mention a doctor's expected arrival, drew a picture of a coffee-colored silver thief and otherwise hinted darkly that the situation was SNAFU. Being of a fatalistic disposition, what with past army experience, etc., I'm waiting for the first half in order to become worried about your health. In the future, though, please describe your ailments on the same sheet. The drawings were appreciated as were the one entitled the "horrors of war" which had the touch of the mad genius about them. Honestly, they were superb, the feeling, the fantasy, the economical drawing, the intuitive grasp of the important points. I liked them much better than your attempts to copy my picture. I can't draw portraits either. They weren't exactly spitting images of me even on the morning after. What did happen to your finger though? I've bitten them often and not

once did one of them become sore. And I remember March 21 when you missed the bus at Falls Church, too and can describe my wait in great detail. I bought pies and wrapped bad sandwiches while I waited, walked along the street for quite a ways, phoned Mir twice, couldn't get her once and in short was as persistent as I always was and always will be to get to you first with the mostest love.

Your devoted

Al

HE is in Sardinia, endowed with a jeep and driver. He looks up his new bearded acquaintance, Guido, who seems to know everything happening on the Island. Siepman is just a nice chap in the uniform of a British Major. Guido fills him in profusely, takes him to the military club, shows him the sights, and tells him about an Italian parachute division, intact, in bivouac not far away. The idea of fresh cannon-fodder occurs to him and he asks Guido to take him to visit the outfit. It is agreed.

He then bumps into a couple of acquaintances from the Columbia University Law School, guys he had known in 1940. They are Naval officers now and their gunboat sits in the harbor of Cagliari. It is exceedingly mysterious how such people find themselves. They move among hundreds of thousands of uniformed men, here, there, and everywhere; then, with a frequency that cannot be random, like homing pigeons or penguins finding their families, they come upon one another and recognize their kinship. It is a kind of "Old Boy" network, but it isn't fully that, because the network is defunct as such, they are not looking for each other in particular.

Next afternoon, he goes with Guido to the large encampment, full of alert young soldiers. This is the famous Folgore Division, sister of the Nembo Division that had fought and finally surrendered in Tunis. The two parachute divisions of the Italian Army. Here intact. Unsurrendered except by protocol. They go to the Headquarters

barrack, meet the top officers, are invited to dinner and to a show that night, and taken on a tour of the camp. He is secretly excited. He watches everything closely. Everywhere there appears to be a high morale, coming from the type of elite unit, persisting despite being on the losing end of the War, despite the division's being forgotten by the outer world.

The dinner is excellent, and after dinner a musical comedy is put on by soldiers of the division, men playing the parts of women, just as they did in Blackfriars at the University of Chicago, riotously funny, well rehearsed one can imagine, given the ample time at their disposal. Meanwhile, he has been asking a hundred questions on the morale of the unit, attitudes toward Mussolini, the King, the American, the British, the Germans. He has begun to feel that he may have made a great discovery: here is a division of troops, well trained, already under arms, knowledgeable about all that concerned the German enemy, that could, reequipped with American arms, be put almost immediately into the line in Italy.

Early in the morning he composes a report to "D Section" recommending it be forwarded for the consideration of the Commanding General of the Fifteenth Army Group in Italy. The Division, he declares, has all the earmarks of good unit morale. On the general level, their attitudes are favorable. They are monarchical at the high officer level, but this should not be confused with Fascist. They are also nationalist, which should not be confused with Fascism, either. The Division is ready to fight for the liberation of Italy, and it numbers about fifteen thousand men and officers with basic equipment. (This is not all inference, for he has spoken directly to the Commander and Chief of Staff, to other officers, to several men, alone and in groups; he works fast and knows how to phrase a good question; this is one thing he has been trained for, after all, at University.)

The failure to put a great many Italian troops into the line in Italy in the middle and later stages of the Cassino and North Italian campaigns was a costly error, ascribable to the incompetency of the Allied Generals and the fearful weak Italian Government that the Allies had installed. Speaking not so much of Britain, which by this time was taking more of its cues from the USA than it was giving

back, but of the Americans, the generals thought of war and planned the War -- though there were limits to fighting it so -- in non-human terms: so many men, so many planes, so many tanks, so many boats, so many bullets and rations. Anything special, different, or protruding, including outstanding, they were at a loss to handle. An instance of the opposite kind of risk, rashness instead of caution, was sending the Polish Corps into a blunt frontal attack at Cassino. The Allied Command, not realizing the heroic psychology and towering morale of the Polish Corps, or, worse, failing to see its dreadful consequences, did not restrain the Corps and was willing to let the Poles be practically annihilated in successive engagements. For that matter, this was the same kind of mistake that Navy Admirals and Marine Generals were making with their splendid divisions in the atolls and islands of the Pacific Theater.

Then he pounced on the report and headed North for Sassari. Sardinia is Sicily without people, without the major riches of the Sicilian plain, without Mt. Etna, without the profound high culture, without the large intellectual and artistic class, without the industries. But it has less of the *lumpenproletariat*, less of the crime, less deviousness of mind, and more straightforwardness, beautiful simplicity, uniformity of conduct, and a more than respectable level of artistic creativity. It reveals to him planned mining towns of a pleasing modernity not to be found in that empire of mining, the United States. When he arrives at Sassari, he finds a small city that compares favorably with any in the United States for order, beauty, serenity, modernity, architecture, and setting. There it is, at his California ranch-style house, that he finds Mario Berlinguer, chief of the Republican Party, an anti-Fascist who has had to stay home and managed to do so without being drawn out to be murdered, or losing face, or being imprisoned. They talk for a long time, the Lieutenant telling him of conditions in Italy from the Allied point of view, Berlinguer telling him in turn what he had in mind for Italy.

He bids him goodbye and good luck, returns to his hotel, and types out a report urging that Berlinguer be brought back, if he would come, and placed into the Italian Cabinet immediately. He heads then back south, his self-imposed missions finished. On the way he spots a radio tower for aircraft guidance. He drives up the mountain, curious

to view these isolates. They are happy to have him for dinner, talking the while about their poker game that is coming up. Every night they start up their electric generator and play poker into the night, and that's about all they do with their time.



Sassari, Sardinia.

He tries to refuse, pleading that he has only several dollars to lose, and it would not be fair of him to play, but they insist desperately. To his dismay, he begins to win, he rakes in more and more money, he draws one good hand after another. He tops a hundred dollars and will soon begin to break them. They are sweating. He is afraid of leaving them with no money at all until the paymaster next arrives. So, as in a nightmare, he tries to lose, without insulting them or himself. Finally the chance arrives. He has a good hand. The three others have decent hands. Fine. He can bid high. They will hang in. They do. He notes that at least one of them must have a very hot hand. He doubles into it; the others double as well. He redoubles. Two stick. One redoubles. That's it. He lays down. He loses. He is happy. Over half his money is gone. They are happy. They finish their drink and close down the memorable evening.

JILL TO AL MAY 2, 1944

My own darling --

Tuesday

Honestly, the worst things happen to me. I just spilled a bottle of ink in my haste to sit down and write to you. Anyway, whatever I write now must be in haste, since this is the witching hour --
Kathy

Well, I didn't get very far on that. I was about to say Kathy was about to feed, but she did and then I did, with Fritz again, and then I listened to the radio while shortening, no lengthening, several dresses, which I had previously shortened but decided were too short. Not that I should care. I have been roving around all afternoon in shorts which were too small for me four years ago when I got them. What a treat for Ridgewood Court. But the startling fact is that I am a Victory Gardener. There is a vacant plot of ground several houses from here, and the man who owns it lets people stake out victory gardens in it. Virginia got the last plot from him and now we are collaborating. As we said, privately of course, probably nothing will come out except cutworms but it satisfied our pathetic desire for a little lebensraum and if we make a point of looking busy, the man will never know that we are just using the space to keep her two daughters out of trouble and my little one in the sun and fresh air, without having to walk her all over the place. Today we spent about a half hour spading up some dirt which looks a lot more like the stuff that lines drain pipes than that good stuff so heralded in our more starry-eyed works of fiction. Incidentally, my first act when we get it all fertile and fallow (I laugh when I say it) is to sprinkle a few petunia seeds about in an out-of-the-way corner where no censorious eyes can spot them and accuse me of sabotage. I still haven't gotten over the frustration of being in California when our petunias blossomed that long ago summer.

I also went over to school today to see if I couldn't dig up some information for Ed, like when would he hear about the aptitude test (which he doesn't think he did well in) and what about A-12 and V-12. I drew a blank on the latter, from everybody from Hoepfner on down. Tomorrow I'll try calling a man who wasn't there today, whose secretary thought he wouldn't know much but I could try. Kathy enjoyed the walk very much and I had lunch at Stineway's with a neighbor, Clare Oppenheim, who works part-time in Benton's office and who also plays the violin in the orchestra, and who remembers you from then. She is of the class of '31 or so, but has a decent fondness still for

university life. Her husband was regional OPA attorney here but is in private practice again.

[possibly a page missing here - see ref. below to janitor.]

The Next Day

I repeat, my darling, the worst things happen to me. I started that letter to you last night and just got to a rather long pointless diatribe against the janitor when Virginia dropped in for some cleaning fluid, of all things. By the time she left it was time to go to bed. Then, and this is the worse of it, I was going to write you nice and early tonight, to give me time enough to dilate philosophically on life and stuff, when Fritz arrived with two chickens Bernice had sent him from Nebraska. Naturally they had been too long en route, and they needed more loving care than I care to describe before they could possibly be edible. So I just spent an unpleasant hour cleaning and stuffing them and they are now crackling away in the oven. You are probably acquainted with the depths of my ignorance re chicken cookery. Well, my reward will be one of the chickens, hardly a sufficient one considering how they will taste.

I spent a long hard day fixing formula and doing an enormous wash. I even sent half of it to the Chinaman, but there still was an incredible amount after two weeks. Fortunately three of my eight-year-old male chums suddenly took to playing hide-and-seek in the basement, and one, Nick, tiring of the sport, decided to stay on watch me work the machine. He finally ended up helping me hang clothes, although he could reach the line only with difficulty, for which I gave him an unsolicited dime. He is a nice little kid. I really am reaping the rewards of my be-kind-to-children-and-dogs policy. These four little girls who hand out together, two of them Virginia's children, take care of Kathy for me when I am doing things like the laundry. They wheel her around and hang over the buggy and make her laugh. A possible disadvantage is that she may get horribly spoiled and an actual one is that they keep running in and out the apartment with silly questions like "The Baby has hiccups, what shall we

do?" (answer -- nothing) or "the baby just kicked off her covers, what shall we do?" (answer, ditto) or "We are tired of the baby -- what shall we do?". To that I answer with a stern enjoiner to them to stick by their guns until I finish whatever I am doing. In a way, perhaps I am doing them a big favor to let them do this and also to watch occasionally when I feed, bathe or dress her. It will probably give them a good opinion of motherhood to watch somebody who enjoys that state as much as I do, and therefore instill in them good attitudes to the tasks that will eventually be theirs. I know I never saw little babies when I was a child, or played with dolls for that matter, and therefore was unsympathetic to the problems of motherhood until I got mine.

My diatribe against the janitor was not quite so pointless, as a matter of fact. It seems he has a fondness for making passes at little girls, it was revealed to me rather shockingly. He hasn't raped anybody yet but I think something should be done about it, I don't know what. The little girl in question was the elder of Virginia's children, who is eight, and although Virginia was horrified, both she and her husband, who was an alien at the time, didn't want to do anything about it when it happened last summer. I think it's just awful and hope we are away from this place when Kathy starts toddling around. He is only about three feet tall and apparently doesn't like adult females so you don't have to worry about me. But I wish you were here to tear him from limb to limb.

I got the enclosed letter today from Capt. Heycock which I thought was rather sweet and naturally, I got a big bang from hearing from one of our allies.

The chickens are crackling away in the oven, filling the apartment with an odor which I have always found abominable. Sometime I think having friends is a positive disadvantage. You always find yourself doing the weirdest, most unpleasant things for them. You must come home and help me suppress these regrettable social impulses. Well, anyway, Kathy doesn't bother me at this hour at least, although now she manages to stay awake most of the day, alternately laughing and crying. She

sleeps about twelve hours at night now and apparently doesn't feel inclined to sleep much more during the day, so I must spend my twelve waking hours during the day trying to keep her amused and fed. She is getting phenomenally strong and is easier to carry around now, even though she is heavier, than she ever was before because she knows how to balance herself now. And she is really not fat -- just very solid and well-formed. She isn't at all hoggish about food any more although she eats very well, albeit with some reluctance when it comes to cereal and vegetable soup. But then you yourself found cereal distasteful and she can't even get coffee or a cigarette to wash it down.

Oh damn, I have to tend to those damned chickens. I'm sure this will traumatize me out of ever having chicken again, so you'd better cultivate an exclusive post-war taste for steaks and chops.

I'll write more tomorrow, darling. As ever, I love you terribly and wish we could spend this spring and every spring together. Well we'll have the next one, I'm sure.

As ever your --

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 3, 1944

Dearest Jill,

Until the first page of your V-mail arrives describing the extent of your illness, I can't know how to address you properly, whether in a bantering vein or in a resonant deep sympathy. Put it this way - if you still aren't your chipper gay dog self, you are probably hating me anyway and there is nothing I can do to change things either way.

Not that I expect to be exceptionally witty. But I do want to

describe what happened to Charlton's manuscript and I can't do that without admitting how tight I was. And I know you detest me when I'm tacking to the wind. Because you like to toss off a few and have me carry you home carefully. Anyhow, Charlton and I had a few bad stregas and got to talking over his book. Then we gadded about some more and he showed me it; then we went out to the Royal Navy Club and leaned on the bar until all the world seemed bright and dreamy; and finally we ate a big meal with a couple of bottles of vino thrown in. Charl was to leave for England the next day and we were very happy and exuberant, though a bit vague. It was getting along towards supper and we were looking for fresh lands to conquer with all the cockiness that comes before the fall. So Charl said he had a bottle of real whiskey and I said "fine, I'll have a set-up prepared over at my place. See you in half an hour." Well, that's the last I've seen of him. They either carried him down to the boat or the MPs got him or he was attracted to some nether regions. I think I'll bump into him again some day. He's [*a/ways?*] batting around.

At this very moment I feel like the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dam. First there is this overwhelming report which threatens imminent collapse. Then there is that big batch of letters of the night before last from you which I feel ought to elicit a flood of response from me. And two minutes ago a great wave of chocolate bars and cigars staggered me. And now also another letter of April 12. What can I ever do to compensate for all this attention without being court-martialed for neglect of duty. I swear that I can't rest my head if I think I owe you a letter and the condition is much more serious now. Wherever did you get all that chocolate? I've never seen so much at one time. I feel as bloated as the QM general. Perhaps it will keep me awake tonight so that I can write you another letter.

Don't say another word about the insurance. It was done almost a month ago and I maintain firmly that my admittedly mild argument had nothing whatsoever to do with that old plaint of "everything of yours isn't mine." Of course everything I have is yours. Christ, all I have at this minute that isn't in fact in your possession is four dollars and thirty-nine cents, some chocolate

& cigars, and a couple of bags of army junk which I wish were yours too. I might mention my body which I would also offer up most eagerly, with the greatest alacrity.

I am sending my signature on that card in this letter. Send anything you like signed to me. It may be a barren pleasure, but I'm happy to oblige. I think, regarding the filing cabinet, that in addition to its other uses it will be handy for an index of all the banks we have money in.

I met Martin today for the first time since leaving the team. He was slightly wounded in the side but is as well as ever now. Ferla was wounded at the same time and badly. He is recovering though. Martin is coming over to our mess tonight for dinner. I'm sorry I don't have any Sardinian cheese left to offer at the table. The great cheese connoisseurs at our table like Robbie, Greenlees, Vernon, Spalding, and the Howards tore into it with great gusto. I'm so sorry you couldn't join me in eating cheese, bread and red wine. You'd love it. And I love you, and wish I could write you ten volumes with an appendix for Kathy.

Always your love,

JILL TO AL MAY 5, 1944

Darling --

This cold unseasonable May day was made quite bearable by getting your nice long letter of the 26th and also a short V-mail. As you warned me, I didn't hear so much from you while you were on your island mission. Naturally I'm curious as a cockroach to know where you were and what you were doing but I suppose I'll have to wait for the news, as for all other good things.

The cigarette boxes sound lovely and Kathy and I await them and the doll with great glee. I suppose the doll is to be seen and

not chewed. She is now quite capable of playing with things and can hold her enormous mama giraffe (this mama lost the baby giraffe on 57th St., I regretfully announce) and her panda in both hands. Then she drops them on her face and I pick them up and it starts all over again.

Oh damn, Diana just dropped in and now I'll never finish this letter tonight. I wish people wouldn't drop in like that but she saw me writing this in the window so I had to answer the doorbell then. I've been in a bitch of a mood all day anyway, except for the few minutes I was reading your letters. I woke up with the curse and while I don't have pain, I feel so weak and tired the first day. Actually, it would be a rather pleasant feeling - - you get a kind of airy detachment, probably resembling a mild case of schizophrenia -- if I didn't have such an awful *[lot of]* things to do, like making the baby eat cereal and then, as tonight, watching her spit it up because in my zeal I put too much in at one time. It was the first time she had spit up all over the floor in about three weeks and it would have been tonight. And I am boiling her clothes now because she doesn't have anything clean to wear, so I'll have to stop writing soon anyway to rinse them out. And Christ, I had a dentist's appointment today and took the baby with me, to leave her outside the bank building for what I thought would only be a few minutes. I thought he would be busy and would tell me to wait, at which I would rejoin blithely that I couldn't, and thus put off the horrid ordeal until another time. But no, the fiend was unencumbered, and leaped upon me as if I were a long-lost mistress, and promptly drugged and hypnotized me in one fell swoop, all the while chuckling hideously and murmuring sweet nothings like "This will only cost you about 50 dollars). He drilled for what seemed to be hours, painlessly as he gloatingly reminded me every three seconds. When I got downstairs again Kathy was screaming and a large crowd had collected. She stopped as soon as she saw me and I slunk off with her, with my ears buzzing with threats of lynching and consignment of Kathy to the ASPCA from the enraged and indignant crowd.

For your edification, I will have to have three more gold inlays

(they last, said the dentist, to which I replied, "Yes, I know. And they'll last a helluva longer than I will, no doubt").

I think you're just being nice when you say my letters are so detailed, or rather, when you say they are detailed as if you enjoy it. Actually, I'd like to write just one letter that wasn't so damn full of the mountainous mundaneness of my life. I'm trying to practice a sort of mental yoga that will free my mind from all this awful practical life I lead -- with little success so far, I might add. In the morning when I wake up I usually have good thoughts but by the time I get to write you I'm all bitched up with the details of living and caring for the baby. The thing is -- I have a very embryonic yearning to Write again, because it seems to me that there is still something to write about, and because, possibly, Virginia and I have talked about writing so much that her needling is finally taking some effect. For one thing, not much has ever been said about the flowering of new human life in this world. I can very well understand why, too. The person who can best make some definitive statement on the matter, i.e., the mother who is constantly with her child, is ipso facto so taken up with caring for the little bud there isn't any time left to put down what she thinks on paper, granted that she thinks about it at all. The thing that has impressed and amused me the most this past month of Kathy's inception into the world is her regard for me as a vehicle. When I am holding her, she completely ignores me as a source of stimulus but prefers to regard other people or objects and to smile and respond to them. If by chance her glance falls to me, she quickly averts it, as if to say, "Oh, it's you again." Such a crust of romanticism has grown about the relationship of mother and child, such a vast ring of deception and self-deception. It becomes increasingly apparent to me that the child, while totally dependent on the mother, prefers to direct its interest outwards. I think the word outwards is apt because the child may very well consider the mother no more than a part, a necessary appendage of itself, and that therefore the world is divided into two parts -- the child (together with the mother) and then all the other wonderful people and objects, i.e., the outside world. For

all I know, I may be on the same realm of Kathy's consciousness as her toes or her alimentation -- all very nice things, but definitely part of her, and nothing much to get excited about. She probably looks at me and thinks, "Here comes that other part of me, the part that turns me over in the morning and that I ride on when I see all those interesting things." The infant has no affection to give. Acceptance is the best it can offer. Possibly parental demands for other than acceptance or interest is the root of much conflict between parent and child later on.

Turning over a child who has just awakened from a long night's sleep on her stomach is also a wonderful and enlightening experience. It's like uncovering a new flower from its leaves, except that, unlike the flower, Kathy immediately curls up when she is rolled on her back. The strain of sleeping stretched out all night is too great for one so recently emerged from the foetal state, and she immediately clutches her knees, a kind of reverse stretch. Frequently I have found her asleep on her stomach with her knees well pulled up and her fanny waving freely in the air, so it is no surprise to see her revert to the knee-chest position when she is freed from the chains of sleep. Her face is all rosy and translucent from sleep when she wakes, and her soul is momentarily free from its usual burdens of hunger and defecation, so that she greets me with an enormously benign smile. But it doesn't last long. By the time I have the early morning bottled heated, she is ready to whimper and cry for food.

So you see, there is much to think about. But now I have to unboil the wash. All my love to you darling and I positively will write more tomorrow, and not about doing dishes or laundry.

All my love to my darling --

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 5, 1944(A)

Dearest,

A thousand vile curses on my black head for not planning sufficient time in which to write letters. But I always find that upon a change in schedule, it takes a couple of days to find the best hours for writing. Last night, when I should have written, we had a bang-up dinner, with several officer guests. We had spaghetti, meat, Italian salad, wine, cheese, and coffee. And afterwards, I gave out four of your cigars in a burst of generosity that staggered everyone. I smoked one myself of course, and found them the best I've smoked in as long a time as I can remember. I think the one we bought in that Hollywood tobacco shop after a lengthy lecture on the blends of the movie stars was better. Anyhow, please don't worry any more about my not having all sorts of good things, because I really lack nothing now.

Spalding told a good story last night at the table while we were discussing German barbarities, and someone mentioned Gov. Frank of Poland. Spalding, after a concert in 1936 in Berlin, went to a small reception at which Frank was, and also the Dodds. That same day they had torn down the statue of Mendelssohn. Frank asked S. what he thought of Mendelssohn's concerto and S. answered he thought it was one of the best German masterworks. The silence was like a fog. Then added S.: in Paris, London, and New York, when M. is played, everyone thinks nice things of Germany. More silence. Finally Frank proposed a toast to some non-sequitur. Frank is a very evil character, acc. to S.; even though he likes music. Do you remember him from Sicily? Robbie told some of his outlandish war stories. The other guests were Manley's from the eighth army, youngish staff officers, who got along very well with us because they disliked the same people.

Just this minute Thompson brought in something from the Industrial National Bank of Chicago for me to sign. I keep signing these things, but I'm damned if I know what they amount

to. We must have a dollar in every bank. We still have the Rigg's account, don't we? If we don't, I had better destroy the checks I still have before I succumb to the soldier's temptation five thousand miles from home. I must dash to the office, but I swear by all that is holy, that I shall write you again today, because I love you very much. I have your sailboat picture up in my room, and you look very lovely.

Kisses to Kathy.

Always your Al

AL TO JILL MAY 5, 1944(B)

Dearest Jill,

I'm not taking any chances on failing to write you a second letter today, after having promised it in my first one this morning. So, having just finished lunch, I'll do this before returning to work.

Certainly, I have the most wonderful incentives for writing, since I received a short hour ago the pictures of you and Kathy with your letter of April 24. I've never had pictures I've liked nearly as much. You are both of you very beautiful and I love you very much. As for your figure, I can scarcely go into that without benefit of fire-proofed paper. It shows how completely wrong you have always been when you insisted that you couldn't take a good photograph. Aren't those the same trousers that I know so well, the brown ones that have adorned God knows how many rocks and woodland retreats with me? Your hair looks very long and beautiful, and so is your face. Has sorrow for my absence drawn you out? Kathy's pictures are really the first clear ones I've seen and authenticate all rumors of her beef and brawn. I think the hat she is wearing is the funniest thing I've ever seen.

I laughed out loud every time I look at the picture in Irmie's arms. I do have a sneaking suspicion that she does look like

me, though, and will defend her right to be called beautiful to the death. She might have smiled Ipana fashion, though, perhaps, she didn't realize that she might be someone's pin-up girl already. I share your non-Catholic humility completely. Already a practicing catholic, and at her age! Your description of the baptismal day was very enjoyable. I'm sorry that you didn't know I was in Sardinia. And if I could express myself sarcastically enough, I would say that you should have told me sooner about the pictures, because I've thrown them all away. What kind of low, un sentimental beast do you take me for. In fact, I carry most of them in my pockets and I never throw my pockets away, or empty them, for that matter, as you probably remember.

I remember, speaking of Kathy's panda, reading a story in Time about the terrible effects eating paint from toys has on children. Be forewarned and feed her only unpainted art objects.

You needn't expatiate any longer on the place of the mother in motherhood. I agree with you perfectly. Nor on the architectural needs of life. Let me rescue you from your sordid basement and carry you to a big room with plenty of rassling room in the middle of the floor. We'll find ourselves a real place to live with plenty of storage space, on my honor.

2. "at work"

It certainly is nice receiving your letters one at a time so that they can be answered one at a time and read the proper number of times too. They deserve all the attention I can give them. I feel it's a shameful waste of great talent to receive several together. It's like the feeling I get in a famous art gallery, too many masterpieces to appreciate properly.

I'm planning on seeing a movie Sunday, perhaps the only movie I've ever planned seeing in advance overseas. Chances are that something will intervene. Anyway, it's Watch on the Rhine which ought to be good. At least, I think you once gave it your approval.

I got hold of a cardboard carton yesterday in which I plan to send you the cigarette boxes and the doll, plus any other incidentals I come across to fill them. (I ought to tell you that I am presently smoking one of your seegars and it makes the afternoon seem very mellow. I won't give the brand name for fear that this will be used for advertising purposes.

I showed the pictures to three neurotic and unattractive English girls at lunch today and they said you are both beautiful. The poor things are in Italy for a rest cure, I guess. I guess I must accept them as part of the punishment for living at a base. Granted, they do succeed in doing very necessary typing and one of them, Rowina Vining, a little, dumpy Irish girl, is very intelligent. Unfortunately, every woman I see actually makes me more angry that she isn't you.

You ought not to think that all the expectation of the second front has imparted a tremendous stir to these parts. Life is more dull, if anything. As far as I am concerned, I am a convinced fatalist by now; sweating out three landings was enough. This one will come when it will come. It only annoys me in that, when and if it comes, it will give me a better basis for charting when I can see you again.

I think that the Italians are feeling a lot better since they got their new government. So are we. Certainly the old one didn't accomplish very much. Though I wish this one the best of luck, sometimes I think the problems they have to deal with are unsurmountable by any government. Well, they have the optimism of a beautiful Italian Spring to help them along, if nothing else.

I'm enclosing a clipping from the News Digest, the marked section of which I think is something for the New Yorker. Honestly, the Germans have the world's worst sense of humor. You ought to hear some of the dull jokes the prisoners tell. They love to tell stories like "What's the difference between a glass of milk and Herman Goering"

Answering with a guffaw, "They both are fattening." Any resemblance to a joke, dead or alive, is absolute coincidence.

All my love to you and Kathy. If my telegram on our anniversary doesn't get through, it's not because I didn't remember it. And then, too, I don't have to whip myself up into an enthusiasm on our anniversary for you. I always feel that way.

Kisses to Kathy.

Your

JILL TO AL MAY 6, 1944

Sweetheart --

Saturday

Gosh I haven't even mailed yesterday's letter to you yet so consider this appendage. I was all balled up this morning -- Rose Ivey was over helping me do some cleaning and Mac dropped in and then I dropped out to see the proofs of my pictures. I have no comment to make on the latter. When they are finished I'll just send them along to you.

Anyway I didn't finish commenting on your letter. Your essential great optimism is again verified by your plot to send your winter clothing home to me. My emotions are mingled, to say the least. I would like to consider the receipt of them as a portent, but on the other hand (and knowing your gift for prophecy) I should be very unhappy to spend next winter with your winter clothing, but not with you. I know how enraged you get when I doubt your word, or when my love seems to be inappropriately tinged with common sense, but at least let me get this word in edgewise. Keep at least one change of a warm shirt, pants and socks. It will at least give you time to borrow the rest off someone your size if the weather should turn unseasonably chilly during the next few months. And admit it darling -- this is a long slow war and you do occasionally call your shots wild. I was depressed enough to discover a few months ago that you weren't coming

home on the heels of Kathy's arrival, so now I just prefer to sit and wait, closing off that corner of my mind ordinarily given over to peering into the entrails of chickens.

You ask what my friends think about the war. Not much I guess. Oliver if anything is a greater asshole than before he left. The girls I know don't like the war because it deprives them of men, specific ones or men in general. They agree it's being fought for a good cause and let it go at that. Occasionally one like Mac will get excited enough to quit her good non-war job at the Daily News to enter a war job. She's now studying meteorology so she can take the exams. But none of them know what it's like to die or see death, and never will, reasonably enough, until they get into it themselves. I do know that Oliver was terribly afraid when he got to England and this anxiety was what ultimately got him the Section-8. And then there's always the neurotic like Stud who absolves himself of all responsibility in or for the war and then gets himself psychoanalyzed. But I guess everybody gets pretty sick when they read about atrocities.

Your shitty little daughter is crying again. You might as well know that very infrequently, but almost unavoidably, I get a little resentful that you, the protagonist of this all, are so comfortably far away from it all. I know Joan feels the same way about Tom. Yes I know, God knows it's no will of yours and it's not the least bit rational of me, particularly in respect to you, who would be such a perfect protector of wife and child if given a chance. Joan has a little more legitimate beef. For one thing, Tom enlisted, probably with getting away to a nice quiet bar in mind when he did. And now Joan is not only doing a man's job in the mill as well as running a house and two kids with incompetent help, but Tom is doing the work of about one half of a Waac and beering it up on the side. Of course, there is some unkind providence involved probably. No woman has a right to be as self-contained, as bitchy and as masculine protesting as Joan and I are, or used to be, so we are probably paying off a little.

Speaking of bitchiness, you can guess over whose head the aura of it hangs when I tell you that I saw the Maguire girls

yesterday. The blonde one looks ripe for a disorderly conduct charge, and upon Mickey the weight of her years and intellectual achievements hang heavy. Surely she can't be younger than I am! They were flashing about in a rather lush Buick convertible, however, so at least one of them must have a good man or find her job paying off. Mac and I pleasantly speculated over the activities of the blonde today. She is known as Fire Maguire among the more discerning, and you couldn't be much less discerning to see that.

I really do think you are wonderful and have been speculating about the ways in which you are wonderful this very day. In the first place you really are very kind -- I've always thought that and again when you remarked on not being able to see the point of Dos Passos's despair about people. The amazing thing about your kindness is that you still get quite a few of the things you want in the world. Perhaps heaven still takes care of its own, although that makes you sound like the Christ-fool, Dostoyevsky's Idiot, which you're definitely not. Of course, one disadvantage of this pure unadulterated and exclusively masculine kindness of yours is that it makes you somewhat less appreciative of one aspect of my humor. I really can say very funny things occasionally about people but when I say them to you all I get is a black look and a reprimand. But then I can't stand bitchy men -- they are almost always homosexuals anyway.

I don't think I'll go on any further with this dissertation on why you are wonderful. I think I'll just feed it out to you in little dribbles. My feet are too cold for one thing to really think.

Kathy, now asleep on the couch, sends her love to you and says if you are going to send your clothes home, make sure and send your helmet too so she has something to crap in when she can sit up.

I love you very much darling and really do pray we can be together soon. -- Jill

P.S. Thought you'd be interested in the clippings. I sat next to Mrs. Coen when I worked registering people for ration books. She is lovely.

JILL TO AL MAY 7, 1944

Darling --

Sunday

Really, this letter will turn into a book, probably called *War Wife* and published in installments in House and Garden, before I get around to mailing it. Don't ask me the cause of the delay.

Possibly because I have come to the end of my tether, referring to Air Mail envelopes of course, and possibly because the walk to the corner mailbox has been, to date, long dull and cold. It is now noon and I am about to embark on two unpleasant tasks, washing my hair and making formula. I had a good night's sleep, arising at the usual time, quarter of seven, and then going back to bed for an hour. Kathy is taking a little nap now but if she were awake she would ask to be remembered to you.

Diana lent me a wonderful book on infant behavior by Gesell and Ilg and I think I shall buy it because it gives sample behavior days of children all the way up to five years old, and it is a great joy to find out that Kathy to date has been doing just the right things. Apparently it is quite normal for her now to cry in the afternoon, whereas if a very young infant cried, it would indicate hunger or malaise. She cries now for sociability, and the book indicates that the right-thinking parent will satisfy that desire, which I have been doing of course, but with qualms, thinking I might "spoil" her. One sentence in the profile of the 16-week infant was particularly interesting. "There is, at 12 to 16 weeks, a marked interest in the father and also in young children. Social play with the father may go more smoothly than with the mother since the baby does not associate food with the father. He likes to have people pay attention to him, talk to him, sing to him. He is apt to cry in supine and seems to prefer

sitting. By 20 weeks he so much enjoys being talked to that he may cry when people leave."

I have the past week been propping her up on the couch and she according to form enjoys this position, and I was gratified to note that it was the right thing to do, since somewhere I had heard, inaccurately, that it wasn't good to prop them up before they could sit up under their own power. Apparently the sitting up position doesn't hurt their muscles as I had thought, or anyway it was worth taking the chance to avoid fits of anguished boredom. And the little sessions she has in the afternoon with Virginia's kids when they get out of school are also a good idea, I gather.

Bill is coming down this afternoon. It's now three -- had to stop writing for a while and now I have to start dinner. I'm making pot roast and it will probably be burned.

Everybody thinks the invasion is coming soon and so do I, so I'm really not as pessimistic as I sound over the prospects of seeing you soon. And what fun we'll have then. By then I hope I'll have burned all the pot roast I'm ever going to burn, dried out all the chickens, opened up all the unsavory cans of canned food and boiled all the milk for hot chocolates. Then we can settle down to good food, good company and much beer. Oh dear, Kathy weeps.

All my love to you dearest,

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 7, 1944

Dearest Jill,

A fine hob you play with my life -- at night I think of what I should write you and in the morning I have to write you. Meantime I must win the war and take care of my various needs, not to

mention shopping for you too. The onions I ate for supper last night may have had something to do with my sleeplessness, too, or it might have been out of sheer sympathy for your insomnia which doesn't seem much improved from days of yore. Maybe I can tire you out when I get home sufficiently to sleep.

At the moment in re you, I'm planning that wherever we shall live that we ought to have some garden space, filled with roses, lilies of the valley and things. I probably don't realize the effort that entails, but we must have some sort of ground to run around, even if it does mean a certain amount of isolation. And who doesn't want isolation?

Now to answer the sixty-four dollar question. Do I find it difficult to get along without a woman, specifically you? Well, taking the query component by component, every letter I sent you is an affirmative answer to the "specifically you" part. As for getting along without woman simply, there is a natural safety valve the male fortunately possesses when the biological accretion gets pressing. It's annoying but effective, even though it disturbs one's sleep. So that's the answer to your inquisition, there are day-dreams, some glimpses of women (there's a universal appeal about a flash of legs and swirling skirt), letter from the Woman, pictures of Her and pictures of others, night dreams and nocturnal emissions that I mentioned above. You can well say that these are all frustrating nasty bits of life. But I am not defending them. They are typical of most men in the army, and some think of them less, some more. And so strange a thing is the human mind, its habits, fancies, failures to distinguish between reality and fiction, undistinguishability between actual experience and sensual experience, its unconscious adaptations to sensual famine by creating the food for its own appetite, and especially in the sexual, so indisputably mental is the sexual experience, that actually life is tolerable and doesn't become divided into black and whites on the basis of when one was getting it and when one was not. And then, of course, the more active one is, the more work he does, the less he is physically uncomfortable.

It was sad to hear all about Kathy's illness in your letter of the 21st. But nice to know that by the 26th she was tooting away, and having her musical sense destroyed perhaps forever by her mother. In compensation, I suggest you get a pitch pipe and blow it every now and then on A, so that she will get a sense of pitch. I'll be delighted to get a picture of you in your new raincoat. I have one that needs to be developed in my raincoat too; it was taken on my last voyage.

I wanted to write you a dissertation on the coming presidential but it must wait for the next mail. I got to brooding the sexual question too much. Looking at it now, I think I gave a pretty general picture of what we're all up against. And yet the men keep plugging along. So it's not really all-consuming in its importance, for limited periods of time, anyway. As our separation lacks the character of a great tragedy because it too isn't permanent.

All my love, darling. Your

Al

P.S. Major Manley just gave me the enclosed picture. I couldn't even place it at first.

P.P.S. I keep looking at your pictures. They are fine indeed.

AL TO JILL MAY 8, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling,

It's about time that I wrote a V-mail; the last three letters were airmail and one never knows what will happen to them. Nothing much has been happening in the last day or so. I feel well, though as usual I am oppressed by the difficulties of mailing a package. There is no rest for the devoted husband, even thousands of miles away. I shall be blissful when I can treat directly with you instead of through the various inadequate

media our civilization has provided. My anniversary telegram wasn't very specific, for example, The only phrase I could find that was permissible was Many Happy Returns, which isn't bad, I suppose, considering that the best thing I could get out of life would be happy returns in great numbers of our wedding day. I saw Buck Weaver yesterday. His baby girl is eleven months old now and he hasn't seen her yet. It will undoubtedly improve her attitudes towards life. Nevertheless, I sympathize with him. His wife has all sorts of odd men in to talk to the baby so that it will become accustomed to a male voice. I don't agree that the idea is a good one because the baby will only become confused and won't like him any the more for it. He thought he would send a recording of his own voice to be played at home and I think that's a better idea. But I won't worry about that particular problem for a few months. Anyway, she'll be sick of male voices in our family naturally. Time mag of April 3 came through two days ago and was read with the usual interest. The SatEvePost and Colliers and Red Book can be purchased over here too now and are because everyone has lots of money. They'd buy the New Republic if they had the chance too, though it would do them more harm than good. I suppose things like Harper's Monthly and the Atlantic Monthly would be the best compromise. Two things made me angry in Time this week though Time itself came out pretty well in them. One was the story of the oilmen's opposition to the trans-Asia-Mediterranean pipeline. It is so obviously a case of a few men racketeering against our interest and the people. If we get out, the Russians and the British will do exactly what we would have done. The other was the bumbling about over Palestinian independence. I am more than ever convinced that an independent Palestinian state would be a completely good thing: for the United States in that area a friendly, advanced state would be helpful (since we aren't especially interested in empire there, but others are), for a most sweeping settlement of the Jewish problem which is so simple as it is misunderstood (I am not ideologically a Zionist), for the development of that area which would help the benighted and misguided Arabs. While I'm warmed up on the subject you might send a check for ten dollars or so to that

committee for a Free Palestine.

What a horrible fate it is to watch the full moon these days without you.

All love,

Al

JILL TO AL MAY 11, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

A big big kiss to you on our wedding anniversary, which I'm sure you forgot. I don't say that with malice because I confess I would have overlooked it too this morning, in my zeal to plow up our victory garden, if it hadn't been that Day sent us a congratulatory card. You see, the only way I know what day it is by reading the paper, well, there it is. Aren't we wonderful to have a large ripe baby by our second anniversary. I'll send you the pictures Saturday when they get finished and that will be your present until I can see you again and ply you with handkerchiefs, shorts and shirts, the traditional gifts of the second, or cotton, year.

I got your letter of May 1st yesterday, in which you expressed, without particular wonder suspicion that everything was snafu here. Never fear, every thing is under control. My finger has long since healed, in fact, I've had time to burn and cut up the other nine. Kathy no longer has diarrhea because the doctor substituted ascorbic acid pills instead of orange juice, which apparently had been her *bête noire*. She just ate a half a can of goeey vegetable soup and is now swinging from her little crib trapeze. I am dressed in dirty shorts with dirtier legs hanging out, having just done the week's wash and also groveled about in Virginia's garden (which is also mine, except that I don't do enough work in it to really justify the claim. I just stand around and make funny remarks and keep leading her children in to my

conveniently located bathroom). Now I have to clean the house, which will really never be clean again now that spring is here, and then I'll go out and loaf around the dealings and fertilizer again. Yesterday, I took Gweenie, Virginia's five-year-old, for a long and instructive bike ride, she sitting on the bars. We went past our old house on University. The people who have the apartment now have very declass  looking curtains. Then we biked around 57th St. and then up to Int. House. It was lots of fun. I can't wait until Kathy is old enough to ride around on the bars. I think I'll look around for a large and firm basket to put on the front this summer, to make trips to the beach easy for us both. Yesterday I also went to the dentist, who didn't annoy me much for a change. Virginia takes care of Kathy when I take these jaunts. Maxine came over for dinner and all in all, I didn't have time to write. I owe so many people letters again and I'll never get around to writing until next winter, I'm sure. I got a letter from Liz, who says Bill is good and mad -- he's stuck in some sort of QM job. She and the baby are fine but she had an awful time -- 24 hours of labor. So you see, I came off rather easily, I guess, so far as the actual labor went. I've suggested she try to come out this summer, August perhaps, since she still has no permanent place to live yet. Poor gal. Again I've been really lucky, as lucky as one can be with their own true love away, getting this place, being independent financially and every other way. And I discover, now that the weather is getting really warm, that this apartment is divinely cool, a full twenty degrees cooler inside, like the Tivoli. Which reminds me, I want to go to a movie. Come home and sit with the baby. I love you darling and am in a very good mood. Come home so I can spray some of it on you. Another big BIG kiss.

I'm reading a good book "The Lost Weekend". Always your loving Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 11, 1944 (A) V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

Much to my shame I went to a movie last night instead of writing you and am living to regret it. Therefore two letters today, not an unhappy penance. Your letters are arriving very well. I got one yesterday and a couple the day before. Yesterday I got a cigar box of chocolates and fudge and several books, thank you and a fervid kiss on your brow. You mustn't go through so much trouble for me though. The books look swell. I know the Liebling one is and though I was initially a little against the idea of the Grafton book because I thought I couldn't read too much protest in one fell swoop, I thumbed through it and soon hated to put it down. So I am glad you sent that too. I had a most strenuous twelve hours in a jeep the day before yesterday. I drove for about nine hours to see people for three. I saw Beauclerk, Cox, Herz, Clark and a number of other people, and stopped by an evacuation hospital to see a woman Red Cross worker Ann had written me about. She has been overseas a long time and is a very pleasant person. We talked for a while and had two "Vesuvius" cocktails which she made from vermouth, cognac and oranges in her tent. She is from San Francisco and is a good friend of Ann, Bernice, Pete, etc. Now I will have hot news to write Ann, all about seeing her friend right in the middle of the war. (Jim Clark just this minute called and said Joe Fella is in a nearby hospital, so I must go down to see him this afternoon. He is probably lonely.) Now the only loose end to tie up for the folks back home is the matter of that young man missing in action. I'll bump into his outfit one of these days. As a result of all the driving, I was devilishly tired yesterday and in a very violent mood. To make matters worse I had to climb stairs just as you described yourself doing in search of your dentist, and I had to drive the jeep along congested roads and streets, and to get an annoying repair made to the machine, and, in short, was ready to call the whole war off. However, after having slept better last night, I feel more anti-German and in favor of winning the war right away and starting to work on a country garden for you. Where would you like it? East, West, North or South?

Perhaps I had better stick to teaching as the best way to be near the country and not be a full-time farmer. I'm not worried in the slightest about the future, but I haven't decided specifically what I want to do. It depends a great deal on what you want to do. And what is best for Kathy. At any rate, I think we should provide that you don't have to "continually make short dashes into the countryside" but can take your own dam time about the whole thing. I laughed for a long time over your description of Eddie and the exams, pencils and all. Do you know that puzzle over the pencil and eraser was a sign of exceptional intelligence? No time to explain why. But enough to say I love you very ardently.

AL TO JILL MAY 11, 1944 (B) V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

It was clever of you to try and put me out of the way by accidentally including the shells with the walnuts in the fudge. But I fooled you and ate them too, because I like fudge and even you. I started to read the Telephone Booth Indian and find, though there are faint overtones of having read part of it before, that it is thoroughly enjoyable, nay, hilarious, and I will pass it on to various British who have both a sense of humor and an interest in American folklore. Someday I think I would like to make a small book collection of American folk stories including things like the Indian and the Paul Bunyan stories. It would be fun.

I am so sorry for you and your dreams and your weeping spell over the telephone. I think I know how you feel, because, from time to time, I get the same feeling regarding you. I worry about what unfortunate incident may be bothering you or about what sort of an accident could possibly befall you in your various wanderings about rocks and alleys, knowing from experience how, rarely, it is true, you get very frightened over incidents, and I feel sad that I can't be around to be of any help. Certainly you

deserve less worry than most other girls because you are more self-reliant, but it's just all a part of that "life ain't the same without you" complex. One's response to anything is never complete because a good part of him is too far away to respond simultaneously.

The Montgomery Ward affair is making the Stars and Stripes. I can't agree with you that it is none of Congress' business, but I do agree that Congress is probably wrong and the courts will probably bear us out. The election results at the plant haven't come in yet.

I never have said anything about the great silver theft. I learned about it in disconnected letters starting three days ago, and the story got less terrible as it unfolded. The best thing to do is to forget it, and if you honestly wouldn't have had the lie detector test and didn't authorize it implicitly or explicitly, I wouldn't pay a third of it. The question to be asked in a lie detector test is, "Whatever be the results, what then?" No use taking it, if one doesn't have a plan of action to apply when the results are known. Even if it is fun to watch it work. I am glad that we lost so little. I don't care if I have anything left of the Sturm und Drang of peacetime/wartime America besides you and Kathy.

I think of you more and more these days, darling. It is partly the spring and partly the great crouching for the spring against Europe, and underneath it all, always the fact that I love you more than ever. I know both you and Kathy are beautiful from the pictorial evidence I have on hand to refresh a memory that was always accurate anyhow. It will be a great joy to refresh it from the fount soon.

Always your

Al

JILL TO AL MAY 12, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

I've just put Kathy in the buggy outside, hoping against hope that the sound of the warm breeze will keep her interested and lull her to sleep. Life and she have been fantastically wonderful today. I arose with a bounce at quarter of seven this morning and busily cleaned us all up so that we could go out after her ten AM feeding, which she took manfully. then we walked and walked and walked in the hot sun, first with little Gweenie, the five-year-old Virginia child, and then, dropping Gweenie off for her afternoon classes at the local kindergarten, we went over to the Midway. I dodged into Int. House, leaving Kathy with an interested (in her) GI, got an invisible haircut and then we lay naked on the Midway, getting five minutes on each side. We she was naked. I was decorously dressed in my new blue dress spun by bleeding peons, and at any rate, I would not be so temperate about lying in the sun if it were only I that was getting burned. Then we walked some more, our little doll cooing and shouting away at a great rate, and then home to be fed and to make formula. I guess that will be the pattern of our days from now on, if I can only resist the temptation to go back to sleep in the mornings. If I stay up after she's had her early morning bottle, I can get the house and everything fixed up so that we have most of the day to loll about in. Kathy is, I say again, fantastically perfect. She is all of a sudden a great big competent girl, reaching out for everything and pulling things over if I give her a chance. She takes her solid foods with surprisingly little protest and reaches for the spoon to help things along. If she manages to get the spoon away from me she makes a general pass in the direction of her mouth, usually ending up by rubbing the cement-like cereal all over her face. And really darling, she is just the most beautiful baby that ever lived. Such is the testimony, approximately, of all who see her, and I am quite convinced of it myself, especially now that the weather is nice and there is a great spate of babies on the streets. In the first place, all the other babies are so pale and overdressed. They all wear these ridiculous furry-looking

bonnets, although it is a good eighty in the shade. And their limbs are pale and wizened and they stare vacantly, as if in madness or utter boredom, which probably is the same thing. But our Kathy is brown and pink and boisterous and large-limbed, and usually completely naked. She is such wonderful company for me now. I really don't know what I would have done without her.

I stayed up late last night finishing the most wonderful book, The Lost Weekend, by Charles Jackson. You may have heard of it -- it's the story of a drunk's drunken weekend. However, it is no more the story of drunkenness per se than War and Peace is a "war novel." It is rather the tale of a species of human weakness that achieves its prototype in the drunk, and if you are interested in weakness, related clinically (though subjectively) and not with the drooling self-congratulatory manner of Hemingway, it's the book. I don't know if you'll like it as well as I did because I don't think you admit the potentialities for weakness and self-abasement in the people you like as readily as I do. Or rather, if you like them, you ipso facto deny that possibility and if you think they are weak you don't like them.* [*footnote*: *Over-simplification - I know] There are things in this drunk's reflections that are horrifyingly reminiscent to anybody, drunk or sober, who ever wanted to write or who ever abhorred the day he suddenly became an adult. I hope you can get to read it and don't be scared off by the people who say shudderingly that it's just another book about drinking. Well, come to think of it, you would hardly come in contact with that class of readers, unless you hang out with the GI femmes, since it's probably a more female point of view, the only point of view I unfortunately come in contact with these days.

Mac is here now and we are plotting how to spend the night. Syb is coming over to study and thereby to sit with Kathy so the evening suddenly looms large and free ahead of us.

And I am getting sleepy, oh horrors. Darling, I'll end this now, prematurely, but with many kisses to you, for being so wonderful and for finding me such a nice little girl to play with until you

come home.

All my love,

Jill

JILL TO AL MAY 13? [14 ON THE ENVELOPE], 1944

Sweetheart --

I got your letter of May 5 this morning and like you, I agree that it's much nicer to get one letter at a time. In fact, it's almost a dirty trick on both reader and writer for the PO to let them bunch up. This way I can both read and answer your letter carefully. They always come in bunches on mornings when the house is in chaos, Kathy is blubbering to go out, and then I must read them on the street, filing them away in a pocket already stuffed with ration books, cigarette packs and loose dollar bills. Naturally I wouldn't think of carrying a purse. I do carry a wallet, the same red one with your pictures, but somehow the lettuce always seems to spring loose, ending up in the lining of my coat no doubt.

I'm glad you got those pictures. The only trouble is that part of Kathy's good looks is her marvelous, really notable coloring, and that doesn't show up in any picture. I got my pictures today and will send them in the folder to you Monday. If you think this Barker gal does good work, shall I plunk out another nine bucks (her minimum) when Kathy is about six months old? I think she could probably show her up in her best light if you think these are good. I do think they are good photographs, but it is always a shock to me to see my face in any other angle than the one I present myself when I lipstick. To be terribly candid, I think I am better looking in that fixed pose than I really must be when people look at me in just any angle.

Oh no, I wouldn't think of giving Kathy painted toys now either, too. However, she did manage to chew a corner out of this

week's New Yorker, which you will eventually get and I hope treasure for that reason. We had a long exciting and tiring day. Mac came last night and then Sybil too, and they spent the night here. Then this morning, which dawned bright and sunny, we set out for the promontory. Of course, no sooner had we loaded up with baby, bottles, diapers and suitable summery coverings than it turned grey and dismal. Undaunted and pathetically optimistic, we got down to the lake and I uncovered down to my snazzy bathing suit, although by that time the temperature had dropped about twenty degrees. We covered Kathy with all our clothes and shivered a while on the rocks. Then we went back to 57th and had hamburgers at the Tropical Hut. It got to be about two and we were still there, so I gave Kathy her bottle and dashed across the street for a can of food at the A and P, which the waitress considerately opened and heated in the kitchen. So Kathy had her first meal out in a restaurant, and what a crummy one it was too. Then the sun came out again, so exhausted but still persistent we went over to the Midway, where I again disrobed in the sun. We spread Kathy out on a blanket and covered her up, again with my clothes. I finally got my dress back on but it was too cold for me to snatch my coat away from her, so we had to stumble home in our cotton dresses, figuring that it would be far worse for Kathy to take cold than for us. All this time she was alternating between tears and laughter. Whenever my friends visit me for a protracted time she gets so damned much attention that she keeps yelling for more. Finally Mac left about five and Kathy finally got to bed, leaving me to blessed silence and a six-bit club steak, which I thought I should have after all the cold and privation of the day.

That damned chest of drawers came yesterday and now I have to paint it some time. And Day sent us a red-checked cotton summer quilt, very rural and comfy-looking, for our cotton anniversary. We shall bundle underneath some day.

Answering your letter in order, no, I didn't like Watch on the Rhine at all. It must have been somebody else. I saw the play and couldn't hear enough of it to pass judgement, and then when I saw the picture, I realized that I hadn't missed much. I

thought it was forced, talky, an impossible situation and rather dull.

I didn't know you'd gotten the cigars. Was the candy stale?

The evening looms ahead enchantingly vacant, even though it is a Saturday night, one that most right-minded people are out in, getting stiff. There is a hot bath awaiting me to warm my chilled bones, and then a book, Dangling Man by Saul Bellows [sic], one of the boys from the Great Books bucket shop. It's the story of a Chicagoan awaiting induction -- the period between giving up his job and getting into the Army, during which period he weaves in and out of 1-A and slowly goes to pot. I just started it last night and it seems pretty good, although the hero seems to be a bit of an ass. Oh yes, he can't enlist because he's an alien I guess. Anyway it will be good reading on a familiar (in life if not in literature) subject. Yes, Bellows works for the U. of C., on the encyclopedia or maybe the Great Books program, I don't remember which.

Speaking of your dear Alma Mater, I saw a sight yesterday which should give you pause. A 13-year-old boy walking down 57th St. carrying a briefcase, followed 6 paces behind by a man in uniform carrying more artillery than the 531st. It seems that the lad is a messenger for the secret Project going on in the metallurgic department. So Miggie explained this phenomenon to me. Maybe by next year Kathy can get a job on one of the Brink's armored wagons. It seems to me this is carrying the manpower shortage a little too far.

The gals were very amusing. Syb always is. She told of this girl she knows who is being analyzed. This girl is a chronic bike rider and also a bike-faller-off-of, but that is not precisely the symptom of her illness. It seems, as she explained to Syb, she always thinks there is a third person looking at her. "A third persons?" asked Syb. "Oh yes," said the gal, "A third person. There are two me's, it goes without saying." The day this encounter took place she was hotfooting it over to the analyst to tell of a dream she had had the night before -- all three of them

had been bike-riding and all three had fallen off.

So you see, 57th Street does not change, even if the world does.

Maybe that sounds like a German joke, on paper. Those dear funny courageous people, the Germans. It's so nice that we're giving them hell again on the Italian front, not to mention the Russians.

I'm sending you another column by Grafton. Did you ever get my hand-wrought fudge, along with his book and a couple of others? I think I'll send you some more magazines Monday too.

Needless to say, I wish to hell you were spending this quiet Saturday night with me. Perhaps we could do a puzzle before we got into bed.

Kathy sends you a big kiss and a scratchy pat on your cheek, and as ever, I send you all my love and lots of kisses.

Jill

Mauldin's cartoons.

AL TO JILL MAY 13, 1944 (A)

Hi Ya, my sweet,

Here is another one of those joint deposit slips. For all practical purposes they are single deposits, because I'll never remember the names of all the banks. You're as bad as Mom, running to all lengths to save a minute possible profit; and otherwise not caring a damn about buying things and giving money away, etc. I never before realized I loved you because you reminded me of my mother. But I find new reasons every day.

Whatever did happen to your finger. As you described it, it seemed like an advanced case of gangrene, everything falling

apart, great pain, confusion, chaos. I suppose the story will out in the letters of the coming week.

Last night two American naval officers from England had dinner with us. They were very nice and intelligent. I wish we had more of our people like them here. It was interesting to know that they were struck by the gloom of the Fifth and Eighth Armies which has been a sort of hangover from the bad winter. Apparently in England, everybody is peppy and optimistic.

Are you in favor of siestas, if you don't mind my asking a personal question (not as personal as some of those you ask). I had a nap after lunch yesterday and got through the day and evening in much better shape than usual. I think it's a good way of getting by with less sleep and wasting the worse hour of the day. I remember that many a time we spent the hour together in bed, but it is questionable as to whether we played or slept more. I must say my siesta yesterday was incomparably dull in comparison. And so is all of life.

Love to you and Kathy from your

Al

AL TO JILL MAY 13, 1944 (B) V-MAIL

Jill, my darling,

While I'm waiting for a prospective hireling to show up, I guess I can at least begin a letter. I did sign another bank deposit card and send it off to you this morning. Since it is late in the afternoon, I am munching on the remaining fudge and chocolate that I got from you a couple of days ago. It is better than English tea or rather, it should be followed by tea. Chocolate is rather sticky now that the warm weather has arrived. This morning at seven, four of us descended from our palazzo into a jeep and thence drove to a spot on the sea where we could bathe. The water wasn't too cold but it had an

oil slick on it and some undistinguishable vegetable matter. The drive was nice, accomplished in the cool early morning mist. Afterwards, at the breakfast table, where we sat streaked with oil and tar from the briny deep, we discussed the new offensive cheerfully. It gives me a great exhilaration to know that we have started again. The best part of the whole thing was the message of Alexander which was almost unbelievably bold and optimistic. Perhaps this thing happening under our noses will actually go down in history as the beginning of the end. Just a little offensive, any ol' offensive, makes me feel closer to you. That's the best tonic I can have over here. Robbie gave me a little book called the Intimate Papers of Colonel Bogus which I am reading and find very funny, though somewhat heavier than the New Yorker type of humorous writing I like so much. I have plenty to read at the moment. My riches of cigars continue to astound people.

(a couple of hours later). I got your letter of May 1 at the billet this evening and your letter, a very charming one with the pictures of Kathy which show her to be every inch as pretty as everyone says. I never saw such a terrific smile in one so young. Her eyes are practically closed with sheer glee, though in the other picture her eyes are great shining pools. They really are fine pictures and I found her much more human looking than I would have thought possible in a three-month-old baby. I know what you mean now when you say she is precocious. You must be tired of all the compliments people give her and yourself. Incidentally, I now remember wanting to tell you that the reason thumb-sucking is bad is because it tends to malform the teeth which are developing. Or at least so I heard. I am very startled at your claim that she drinks soup out of a cup already. At this rate, she'll be married off before I get home. You will spoil me, I might add, with all these beautiful babies, fine letters, cigars, chocolates, and books. What more can a man ask, save the goddess bountiful who is the source of all this good.

Still, I do ask that.

Your AI

JILL TO AL MAY 14, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Sweetheart --

Sunday

Kathy and I just had the most wonderful day (it's too bad it has to be capped by my making formula). We started out for the beach today after her ten o'clock feeding. Virginia saw us leaving and between the two of us, we needled Hin out of the house (it's Mother's Day, we argued) and they and their kids came with Kathy and me. Virginia made a magnificent sandwich lunch and biked down after us on our old faithful Hercules. We basked in the sun all day until five, Kathy naked a good part of the time, cooing under a little bush. There were enough of us so that everybody could wander off at times and engage in self-expressive activities, like picking violets, cycling around the promontory (until the coppers came) and of course your brave show-offy wife took a dive into the abysmally cold depths of the lake. Needless to say I got out fast. But I do think (though, as I say, my motives were purely exhibitionistic) that if you start early, you never really mind the cold water so much again. I am burned to a crisp but it feels wonderful. Kathy got the best tan of all, partly because she's been exposed gradually the past few weeks, partly because she has by far the darkest skin of any of us. Virginia and I wheeled her around the park for a while, making all the people dressed up in their hot Sunday best uncomfortable because we were in our swim suits and horrifying all the silly mothers who still dress up their babies as if it were the middle of winter. Kathy has the cutest little sunsuit which I put on her later in the day. It's yellow and white silk and makes her look like a little crocus, especially if she has that little yellow fun hat on that made you laugh so much. We took a roll of pictures which I'll send you as soon as they're developed. Don't you think it's wonderful that we're getting started on the good life so early? Kathy is adjusting marvelously to the outdoor life. If I heat her bottle and soup at ten and wrap them up in diapers they are just the right temperature at two and she loves to eat a leisurely meal in the outdoors. I really think that a spot on a soft blanket under a wavy bush is a baby's natural element, the next best thing to her mother's insides. I feel so sorry for little babies

who must spend their lives in a hot buggy or a starkly furnished lonely baby's room. Kathy is particularly fond of a breeze. As soon as a gentle one hits her she starts to laugh and coo.

I was supposed to go to Laura's house for dinner tonight with Maxine and finally decided that I couldn't stand those girls. Of course, I did the thing gracelessly -- called up at five minutes past the hour I was supposed to be there and said I couldn't come. I seem to be constitutionally unable to say no the first time. I always was that way with dates I didn't like. I'd consent to go out with some grub three weeks hence, thinking that the time would never come, and then it did come and I'd welch out uncharmingly. But anyway I am coming around to the state of deciding finally that there are some people I don't like and to hell with them. I just don't have enough time to keep up with people I have no real affection for. And that particular group of girls -- Maxine, Laura, Adele, Ruth Brody -- are a little beyond, or rather, behind me. Essentially they are overage for the things they are trying to do -- the brisk competitive careerism, or something. It's funny but I much prefer to be with younger gals like Mac and Syb if I am going to be with footloose females. They have so much spirit that I don't notice that the pattern of our lives is so very different, or rather, it's fun just because they still are rather collegiate and fresh in their approach. But Maxine and Laura particularly seem so overage now -- they don't have the insouciance or daring of youth any more and yet they don't have the maturity and insight and almost humility that comes from giving up one's life, in part, to another person or persons. Not that I'm very mature or humble, but anyway, I'm learning how to take care of myself by learning how to take care of Kathy. I think that more and more my taste in people is getting like yours -- I hope. I like sweet and intelligent girls like Liz Evers, for instance. I do hope you'll like Virginia. She's very different from anybody I've ever known, but although she's a lot older and seems to have less of a grip on some things than I -- anyway, I'm more efficient -- which isn't saying much I know -- we get along wonderfully well. She's absolutely without pretense or arrogance and has a lot of delicate insights into things and

also an unconscious knowledge of what is good, which doesn't include Saks Fifth Avenue clothes (which on second thought aren't very good even in their class) or French Provincial furniture.

I got your wire this morning darling and it was so nice of you to send it. I knew what it was right away, as soon as the sixty-year-old telegraph boy stumbled down the stairs into the apartment (the hall light had blown out) so I wasn't worried when I opened it.

This was Mother's Day, as I think I mentioned before. Now that I am a Mother, I am more than ever convinced that it is the silliest damned excuse for a celebration and gift-giving that has ever been devised by man and the national Association of American Florist. Reminds me to remind you to forget it. However, I don't feel the same way about fathers, mostly because the poor blokes are hardly given the credit they deserve in the propagation of the species. Remind me to remind you to remind me to give you a tie next father's day.

I am making formula at the present moment. Everything is boiling and hissing frighteningly and I guess I had better go tend my pots and pans.

What are you doing now or can't you say? I never really do know anyway. I was surprised to hear you were in Sardinia. I never think of there being any other islands besides Sicily.

Lots and lots of love to you dearest. Please come home and save me from myself. No, I'm not referring to my libido (though that's a thought too). I mean getting sunburned.

Always -- your -- Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 15, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

Today is noteworthy as the first day of khaki and I feel Spring-fresh in them. They last for several hours and then you feel frazzled and unkempt. But in the morning they're all right. I've decided recently that I haven't an article of clothing that fits me properly, winter or summer, and am resolved to get a decently fitting suit first thing when I become a civilian, whenever that blessed day may be. The attack, as you know is going well, and I have great though restrained hopes of it developing into something really significant all over Europe. I don't know whether it is that which makes my disposition a little more sunny than it has been for the past several months or whether it is that picture of Kathy who is already at the tender age of three months gladdening a man's heart, namely mine. I can't look at that laughing boy picture of hers without grinning in return. She certainly is a pretty little devil for her age.

I spent some time yesterday with Capt. De Vinney, prof. at the U of C in Sociology whom I knew first as a teacher ten years ago or so and then as a friend. He knows Earl of course very well and the others around the place. He is working on very interesting morale studies out of Stouffer's office, more statistical than anything else at present. He has a group of about eight including a captain named Strang and a civilian named Sheffield. We are seeing each other again shortly, probably at my place for dinner tomorrow night. De Vinney is a very nice, quiet sort of guy who really knows his sociology though, like Blumer, he doesn't show it. I understand from them that Spencer is now a major because of the daring trip he took to Algiers and back. All things come to them who sit and wait. That leads me to my own little promotion which continues to run hither and yon to find a place in someone's table of organization. The names of all the people I have on recommendations for it look like a new edition of the Doomsday Book. However, a second front will make me happier than a captaincy any time.

I have never gotten around to sending you those souvenirs of Sardinia but will heave ho one day and get them off. As yet I haven't heard of the Easter presents I sent you and Kathy and Mom, the gloves or the letters. What's up?

I'll finish for now and go to eat my lunch. It's supposed to be my day off but it hasn't burdened with leisure so far. However, I always have time to kiss you and Kathy.

Your loving Al

NEXT day in Cagliari he buys the two hand-carved cigar boxes he had wanted for his wife, and locates a plane headed for Palermo. The night is celebrated with his friends there, the next day he is back in Naples, exactly three weeks from his date of departure.

First person he bumps into is Charlton of the Eighth Army, so they cheer their comings and goings, this time Charlton is off to London, for good. They toss off a few bad Stregas, and begin to talk about Charl's book in its new version. Charl goes to fetch his manuscript. They take it to the Royal Navy Club bar where they drink merrily to the brave new world. They eat a meal then and there with two bottles of vino. They separate for him to find ice and for Charl to get the whiskey he drew from the Naafi stores for the trip to London. That is the last of Charlton's Anglo-pink face, alcoholically refulgent, bobbing among the sallow-complected crowd. He never resurfaces.

So the American goes to visit Joe Ferla in the hospital. He's flat on his back still. He's had the War. He's going back home to Massachusetts. "See you back home, Joe." What else?

He unwraps a large Sardinian cheese and they gather for a homecoming at the Palazzo: Robbie, Greenlees, Vernon, the Howards, and Albert Spalding, who has given up his violin concerts to become a propagandist, just as he had been under La Guardia in World War I. He is heading something called "Italia Combatte," a radio station and leaflet disseminating organization for Italian partisans of the North. He tells a story of performing in Berlin in 1936 and attending a party with Ambassador Dodd following the concert, where Frank the Nazi

Governor of Poland was present. Frank is a lover of the arts, like Goering. Felix Mendelssohn is the latest target of anti-Semitic epuration in Germany: his statue has been torn down that very day. Frank asked Spalding's opinion of Mendelssohn's Concerto and Spalding acclaimed it as one of Germany's mightiest musical works, to the embarrassment of Frank and his guests. He is a bad type, says Spalding, meaning sewer scum.

The front is boiling up continuously around Cassino with terrible losses and small gain. It is the last month of the struggle. The 15th army group is throwing against the Germans' mortars and machine guns French troops, Australians, Indians, Poles, Italians, New Zealanders, anybody who comes to hand, as well as the depleted American and British Forces, which have been losing numbers to casualties, to deployment at Anzio, or by removal and shipment to England for transhipment to the invasion forces readying for assault upon the West Wall.

While he is visiting Fifth Army Headquarters, the Polish Corps liaison officer introduces himself and congratulates him on the Folgore Report from Sardinia; it had evidently reached its target, the Army Command; you are right, he says, especially in your analysis of the distinction between fascist and nationalist attitudes, and how the nationalism factor would make the Italians reliable in the line. At this point the Lieutenant should have pushed in to see the Chief of Staff or an Assistant, but he does not think to do so; the Army does not encourage an Officer or Enlisted Man to go over anyone's head to make suggestions; Alfred is unusually bold for a twenty-three-year-old Lieutenant, witness the Report itself, but here he lets the intelligence work weakly its own way up. He is surprised at how far the idea has gone.

Finally, with pressures from four directions and the Vatican pleading against turning Rome into a Montecassino, the German positions begin to crack -- around Cassino, in the mountains, along the Sea and at the Anzio beachhead.

End of May (first of two parts) 1944 letters

