

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 16, 1944

Darling - Wednesday

Here I am on the train to N. Y., the Commodore Vanderbilt to be exact since we DeG's travel in STYLE, & feeling very queer indeed. In the first place, after leaving Kathy yesterday with Mom, the projected trip began to look less like the projected picnic. In short, I miss her dreadfully. My qualms were not lessened this morning after I called up the minute I woke up (& it was strange waking & seeing the crib empty). Kathy made funny noises over the phone & Mom gave me the disturbing piece of intelligence that she had forgotten to give Kathy her morning egg.

How do babies ever survive without me as a mother, anyway?

But I know I shall have a good time & more important, sleep. I coughed all night again last night & it is a damn nuisance. I find train riding a melancholy event too, because it is inextricably woven in my mind with you. I was always going someplace to you or from you or you were doing vice versa. Our life together was a constant succession of met & unmet trains.

I guess this is a good time to tell you how I feel about you. I say so often that I love you that it starts to become meaningless, and the salutation "dear" when you are writing to the Montgomery Ward order department, which is anything but dear.

Well, in the first place, you are so damned much part of what I do & think all the time, I think I am a little afraid of you too -- of your judgements, which are frequently as stern & as apparently right as the lady with the scales herself, & of your anger or irritation, which is to me formidable. Since I'm not afraid of anybody else, I guess that is one reason you've been singled out from all others for the frequently tiresome task of being my husband.

Indiana farm country only looks good when it has sheep on it.

Otherwise it is terribly dreary.

You can't expect much continuity from a letter written on a train. This is the damndest hot train too. I have an upper berth which will be even hotter, since heat rises.

me

tonite

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Oh yes, I was talking about how I loved you. Well, for another thing, you are Kathy's father, a rather oblique tribute to be sure but a very real assurance that I shall continue to hold you in esteem the rest of my days. Then, as evidenced by the raft of pictures I've been getting of you lately, standing around looking alluring in a borrowed field jacket, you are sexy. Or rather, sexy looking, which all adds up to the same thing. Joan, who came for lunch yesterday, remarked that you looked sexy too. Now that too might not make you swell up with pride but it still is a fine recommendation, the best, in my eyes.

This is the damndest silly letter, starting no place, going same way.

Mom & I left Kathy with Dad & Vic last night & went to the Esquire where we saw Danny Kaye in Up in Arms, a very funny picture, mainly because of Mr. Kaye. Hope you get to see it. I also think Dinah Shore has a damned good voice, tho I'm not ordinarily a canary fancier. I was listening to Lena Horne one

night on the radio & decided that a good part of the listening public must share my blind chauvinism for the Negro, since she certainly can't sing very well, in fact, occasionally approaches the same uncertain feeling about high & very low notes that characterizes my brilliant vocalizations to Kathy.

I have since left my seat & entered the club car where I cornered the little desk, after a long boring conversation with a man from Brooklyn who talked about his baby while I grew strangely & diffidently silent about ours. Train riding sure is anathema. It befogs one's senses & sensibilities, circumscribes one's horizons & paralyzes one's ass.

Did I tell you (I did but you mentioned it in your last letter so I thought I'd mention it again) I got the Schiaparelli. The only thing is that the glass stopper broke off and there is no way of opening it unless I saw off the top & pour it into another bottle. I've had more damned hard luck with perfume. Can you get any more Messenger (Renoir). Dystal said that the rate of exchange when he was there was 2 packs of butts per bottle. Cigarettes are impossible to get here now -- I buy them 5 at a time from the druggist -- however, if I find any in packs I'll send them to you. This is positively not to be construed as a hint.

Darling - I love you.

Always - your -

Jill

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 17, 1944

Darling Al -

Thursday morning & I'm still on this f-king train, which appears to have detoured by way of Niagara Falls to satisfy the romantic whim of the engineer. I slept apparently better than most of my grey-faced co-travellers, since I leaped into my berth the minute

it was made up, circa 8 pm & stayed in it determinedly until 9 this morning. No fraternizing in the coarse smoke-ridden environs of a smoking car for me! Of course I didn't exactly sleep all that time. A good part of it was spent administering cough medicine (which tastes exactly like the tar roads on which I used to pratfall while cycling in my younger days at Rockaway Beach), aspirin, pheno-barbital &, uh, cough medicine. I also got about halfway through a rather charming novel of manners, The Life (sic) of Innocence by Edith Wharton. She wrote Ethan Frome which you may recall from Lakeview, Class of '35. Anyway, it's better train reading than, say, Turgenev, the other Modern Library alternative which confronted me at Woodworth's yesterday. (I seem to have read every other pocket-size book from Austin, Jane to Zeno, Joe. God, how I wish this were THE TRIP - the one which I'll make some day, God willing, when you step off a troopship looking sexy & needing a bath. But you need never fear. No matter how many baths you miss these years I'll nevertheless leap on you as if you had just emerged from Elizabeth Arden.

The train is getting more & more erratic in its movements. I think I'd better shut up shop for the nonce.

I love you.

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 17, 1944 (A) V-MAIL

Dearest Love,

I am covered with shame for not having written you in the last several days, an incredible long period for me. But I had no V-mail with me and I was running hither & yon. I thought of you always and under new circumstances too - you might say I put you in new frames of reference, pictured in new scenery and under new lights - and always loving you and wanting you beyond reason.

My biggest result in this period of epistolary quiescence was the purchase of a bottle of Renoir "Messenger" for you which I will send you today, hoping that I can kiss you through its romantic haze very soon. Today, too, I'm going to mail you a photograph of myself some guy took a week ago and I'm going to write you a much longer letter. In fact, every day for the next two weeks will see you bored to tears by an overflowing mail box. You'll have so many, you can give Kathy some to eat.

All of love and always your Al

AL TO KATHY NOVEMBER 17, 1944 (B)

[Postcard: old fashioned postcard of a lady in a crinoline and bonnet, followed by a kid with suitcases, with a sailing vessel in the background, greeted by a man, a woman and a child.

Caption: "Les joies du retour"]

Dear Kathy,

Here is a nice pretty card for you to look at and chew up. It comes from Paris which you will see one day if you behave well towards your mother.

Dad

P. S. Jill, it's me!!! Love

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 17, 1944 (C) V-MAIL

Dearest Love,

It is night and I can write a letter to you that I had to put off during the day in conscience to my other duties. Characteristically, my ideas on what to write haven't improved with age. My best ones always occur when I am in the midst of doing something else, but it would be a bad show if I were

suddenly to drop whatever I was doing to pick up pen and ink to write my true love. The most I can do is to pause and follow the tantalizing thought trail that leads to you, garnished with flowery images and soft bowers, as I used to stop kissing you for an instant sometimes - not often - to analyze or rather appreciate the act more fully. But I am wandering from my original intention to reply to two of your letters that I got last night, of Nov. 1 and some other date unknown. Incidentally, please date your V-mails. You are increasingly leaving it to my imagination whether you are sulking on Tuesday or two weeks from Tuesday or whether you burst Kathy's bottle on Friday or a week before. Especially now that the election is over, because before that I could tell by the increasing hysteria of each letter approximately how near to election day we were. When I think that I haven't received the final chapters of your epic struggle against vice and Republicanism yet, I gasp at the possibilities that lay before me. Will or will she not sacrifice our child on the altar of party politics in a last epic orgy?

I am happy to hear about the bonds. It cleans up that little mess. I stopped taking bonds at the end of June, as I believe I told you in a letter of some time ago, and therefore, we won't be getting any more. I've been spending a little more than I ought perhaps, and therefore not saving the \$18.75 which has hitherto gone into bonds but maybe I can start the New Year off right in that direction. I have been buying a few winter articles and I've bought a few presents for people, mostly candy which I've sent to Mir, MOM, and Ann. I must send something to Daisy. I have a pipe for Buzz and will send a book or two to Ed and Vic. There is nothing to buy in this cold clammy region. We get snow now frequently. This morning there was snow and a thick frost. When the old lady from next door knocked to enter with the basin of hot water, it required a supreme effort to get up. That little frame shack won't hold out a determined breeze. Still once dressed, the morning air was bracing.

I am glad that you could hear about me through Dystal and that you feel better as a result. I wish I could see someone that had seen you recently. Aren't any of your girl friends going into the

WACS? There are some in Paris, poor girls under hopeless competitive conditions with the consolation of being able to go back home and speaking authoritatively of having their hair done by Lucien Le Long. I also got a very long affectionate letter from Hank and a long one from Ed. I got hold of some Christmas cards, which are rare over here, at high cost and am sending them out.

So much for now. Give my Kathy a hug. As always, I am yours,

Al

HE had gone to Paris with Tom Crowell and Earl Pittman, staying at Madame Heller's hotel again, where they put on a big drunk with three prostitutes, waving goodbye to them from across the subway platforms as dawn strikes La Madeleine. A couple of days later Tom is downcast; he has caught the clap. They exchange a few sour jokes. Fortunately modern medicine, penicillin and all of that, rids him of the gonorrhea promptly; in respect to Madame Heller, it must be said that Tom had refused the escort of a plain-looking woman, insisting upon the better-looking one, who was reluctant to go along; as he recovers he lectures about beauty being only skin-deep.

The people of Alsace and Lorraine regard the Americans as liberators, and, on the whole prefer the French to the Germans, especially so long as the French are democratic and on the winning side; they have had enough of the Nazi Party, disastrous War, and appeals to their Germanic origins. Heeding their town crier, the villagers turn out in goodly numbers for a dance with the Americans; the mothers watch with keen interest; the men appear indifferent but steadily drink down the three barrels of beer the Yanks have bought (\$10 for one barrel came indirectly from De Grazia's Chicago Addison Street neighborhood association); the boards resound with cheerful, heavy-footed jumping. At first it's *jazz Americain*, but then an authentic accordionist appears and the polkas and waltzes blare out through the Company loudspeakers. Hardly a sexual orgy. But the cowsheds shiver their timbers.

Private Cook -- the same of the fatal shooting -- has his own private stock. She is a pretty girl whom the Exec had glimpsed a couple of times; he heard that she had followed one of the soldiers up from Lyon. Private Cook disappears with a two-ton truck one afternoon and a blizzard comes raging in. They worry. No truck, no Cook. A vehicle and two men are sent to the rescue in another truck. All return well. Cook was stuck in the drifts.

The Exec is angry: the killing was in his mind, and the truck could have been cannibalized, and the rescue truck was endangered. He determines that there will be a Court Martial: Cook has gone too far. He is given a fair trial, and the maximum punishment of thirty days confinement in a Company cell by a unanimous panel of two officers and an enlisted man. This means finding a private unpleasant space for him now, and for when they move. He is kept in a stairwell most of the time. He is brought his meals. The men can visit him. He has no duties. He emerges from confinement smiling and good-natured, as ever, always ready to help when called upon. "Sir," says one of his most affectionate soldiers, a private from Boston, "I thought you were a great guy, but I have to tell you that I am very disappointed in you and have changed my mind about you." "Sorry to hear that," says the Exec.

The complications of the romance have not finished. Second Lieutenant Hardbill approaches the Exec. "Sir, I would like the permission of the Commanding Officer in order to get married." So the Army rules state. But who would be prepared for the stunning news? "Married?" exclaims the Exec, "but how? Where would you find a girl?" He looks incredulously at the small erect North Carolinian, handsome, always serious, his chin and cheek traversed by a slash scar. "I have known her for a while." Her name? "Lucille." The same Lucille who -- the same Lucille? "Yes Sir." "But you know, Hardbill, that she has been around the company, has had relations with Private Cook and, well, you know." "Yes, sir, I know." "Well..., if you love her, I shouldn't want to stand in your way. Good luck." "Thank you." "Don't mention it... Why don't you take three days leave and maybe George can go along as a driver to watch the car." The Exec tells Major Roos about it. "Disgusting, don't you think?" Roos says, curling his lip, but signs the permission.

How soldiers manage to fall in love and keep up the affair -- when the front is stable -- well, yes --but when the front is fluid -- will always be a ticklish mystery. It can happen anywhere. Wasn't it thus that Moses wandering in exile beat up a ruffian, helped a girl to draw water from a well, and married her in short order? Even in a small Company, secrets are born, and they are kept by their little networks. What seems to be important often is not whether others know the secret, but whether a certain person or group -- the Commander, the officers, the First Sergeant, the Orderly, the Technician Second Class named Joe, does not learn it.

Generally the American soldiers speak and probably think the less of sexuality the longer they are in action. The response of the soldiers to the seductive flirtations and dancing in the occasional movies that come in and are shown are more subdued than they are in the Stateside camps. There occurs a letdown in sexuality. A small group are pledged to women back home and keep the faith, others don't feel the urge, some are afraid of the troubles and disease and ugliness of the situations in prospect. The Exec takes it for granted that a normal proportion of the soldiers and officers masturbate but is incurious about it, and never comes upon instances; the Company usually occupies a large space and the men are spread out and have their own recesses of privacy. There is an actual diminution of testicular activity, also.

He has not come upon overt homosexuality, but a warmth bordering upon it, as the strong devoted affection Sergeant Villeneuve, the Chief Clerk, displays quietly toward Private Connie Wilson, his assistant. Not even an emulation of the traits usually assigned to gay types, such as Major Greenlees would put on, but what the British condone, would make Americans angry. A libidinal, unexpressed, and unexercised homosexuality emerges from the shared dangerous and deprived associations among the men; this would vary with the expectation of immediate danger and is therefore found much more among the risking-killing units than the safer ones. Direct combat brings the soldiers to embrace one another psychologically, profoundly, to become attached by the fear-fight, masochistic-sadistic aggression against the enemy. Combat makes blood-brothers of them, in more ways than one.

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 18?, 1944

Darling -

Egad, here is New York and once more, for the nine thousandth time, I'd give it to the Indians. It seems that I am doomed to these periodic salmon-like urges to run back to my native haunts. And each time I run back, slightly dispirited & invariably bored with that noble clan from which I am descended.

First, everybody is fine. Unk is feeling better from his operation and I'm going out to the Island to see him tomorrow. I had a large elaborate lunch with Renee today at some place at 49th & Park. Afterwards I felt heavy & even more dispirited. She is fine. She thinks you are fine, as per Jerry's testimony.

Daisy is fine and Walt, still slinging it around.

Remind me to keep out of NY until you get back. Jesus, how I miss you - not because I'm here because I admit my associations between you & NY are dim - mostly leaping in & out of the Biltmore as I recall. I just damn well miss you because I'm in love with you & need somebody to love & have a lot of excess energy which will never be worked off until you get home & kick me around some.

And I miss Kathy, tho, by dint of talking about her constantly, I manage to take the edge off that.

After lunch today we went shopping & Day bought me my Xmas present, a lovely black purse. I am smelling very alluring these days too, opening up your bottle of Luzy for the occasion. The stores are awfully crowded these days, however, & shopping ain't any fun at all. I shall probably learn to spin & weave at home before the war's over, to spare me the anguish of going downtown.

Walter & Day are ensconced in a new apt. (see envelop) where Walter has more room to sling it around in. I suppose it's a nice

apt., tho hardly to my tailored tastes -- you know, they go in for Chinese Art & English chandeliers. Such shit, as Evelyn Dear used to say.

But I love you & that ain't no ---.

Always with

000 & XXX

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 18, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

A half a letter from you came today along with a New Yorker. You finished giving Mrs. Cate hell in it, described Kathy's spilling of soap flakes and sent your love, which is enough to hold me for the day certainly. I got a new jacket today and together with the wool knit gloves I bought in Paris I feel well-dressed, at least until I fall in the mud. It is a dark green color and is the general outer wear for the troops here. It has an elastic waist without a belt and four large pockets which make it much more useful than the old field jacket which is hereby discarded. I haven't told you about my trip to Paris, all that it was. I was only able to spend a couple of days there but enjoyed them thoroughly. It was a long drive but the roads are excellent, and the curtains kept out the cold which was extreme at times. I stayed in Paris at a hotel recommended me by Beaudry who knew the woman who ran it. As a result, I was well-treated, although there was hardly a bit of heat in any part of the city, and received hot water for washing and heating coffee and chocolate I had brought along with me. It was a great thrill for me to get up in the morning and throw open the window onto the early morning scene of Montparnasse, to see the people on the streets, the fine old buildings, the cafés opening up and the newspapers being laid on the stands. There

aren't a lot of troops in Paris, since the front is so far away, and I succeeded very well in feeling very much out of the war for a few hours. I only wish you were there to enjoy it too. I walked many a mile through the streets and along the river, alone and very happy, and used up several books of subway tickets. I went cabareting with a French lieutenant, his sister and brother-in-law one night, after a good dinner at his home which included fine roast lamb and two or three excellent old wines, a Moselle and a champagne sticking very well in my mind. The Tabarin in Montmartre is what it always was, a tourist hangout, showy and vulgar. It was filled with soldiers. The orchestra was very good, the best in Europe, I would judge. The only other good thing was a very fine version of the famous French can-can, than which there is no dance more strenuous. The cost of the Tabarin for me was a cool ten bucks for a bottle of champagne, the sine qua non of sitting down to a table. I've been glancing nervously at my wallet ever since. On my income, one loses the dash and financial aplomb rapidly. We ended there after two, and I walked the good stretch from Montmartre to Montparnasse alone, past the Opera, through the government buildings, across the river and down Boulevard Raspail. The next evening I had an even better time at a place called Poisson d'Or near my hotel with a very gay party of two men and two women from the north of France who were down on a vacation. They had a mediocre floor show and a dull orchestra of the stringy type and we had a lot of fun annoying the performers, my friends being too dewy-eyed with champagne to do much about the politeness the French are supposed to have. -cont.

But then Gregory, the mad Russian, and his guitar came on the floor and he was terrific, singing those lightening-fast gallops that the Russians are famed for, howling himself mad, stomping his foot and beating his guitar, his face and body contorted into wild spasms, his long hair flying in all directions. After the place closed up we went to our rooms and had a bottle of champagne in the room of one of the men who was at the same hotel and I and adjourned to my room for coffee. The two women were sisters and blondes of different color. They were both very gay

and loved to dance, not being handicapped at all by the characteristic hopping Europeans indulge in while dancing to "swing". After everyone had left, leaving only myself and my friend of the hotel, we sat and smoked for a while in quiet conversation until he left.

Best of all came the next morning when I went to visit the Louvre museum. There was hardly anyone there and very few things were left on exhibit. Only an ancient tapestry was on exhibit upstairs, depicting a long series of French-English history tales. It was interesting but not too good. There were several British officers, some French civilians and soldiers, and a few Americans in the room. I walked the length of the tapestry, reading the Latin inscription as I went along and arrived at the end just in time to hear the concluding remark of one British major to another Britisher which I thought were very amusing. He said, "It has a definite French bias, doesn't it?" and they left. I abandoned that room and went down to the underground rooms where there was no one and wandered through the ancient Egyptian and Assyrian rooms, and those of the Roman and Greek that were left. Here I was enthralled. It was so quiet and remote. I don't think I've ever felt so completely released from the war, so much on wings above my society. There were the quiet tombs of infinite time, the great statues, the marble without passion, the burial without regret, the artifacts of a civilization too remote from me to admire or condemn, and thereby near to my heart and soothing to my spirit, like the dream of the lost Atlantis. I have never been so charmed by art.

Now I am back, better for it, I feel, and only regretting that I could not have you with me. We must do these things together before long. We won't rush it either. We'll have breakfast in bed, see what we want when we want to and spend many pleasant hours in the cafés talking over everything. Here at the moment, the big offensive is in the air and we are hoping just like you that it may be big enough to settle the issue of how long we shall be apart. You can be sure that I can't make any more of life without you than you can without me; it just doesn't make sense.

Many kisses to you, darling, and to Kathy too. I hope you get the best part of the turkey for Thanksgiving, and wish I were there to assure it for you.

Always

Al

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 19, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

Two letters of yours came today, & if you are like me, as you are you are as happy to know that I've received your letters as I am to have gotten them. The news of Kathy getting teeth is very important though I'm very sorry to know that the first one is so unprepossessing. What can be the reason for it, or is the straightness of teeth a hereditary affair. Perhaps the delay is the cause. I'll start putting nickels away too so that she can have an extra good job done as early as possible. Now that I think of it, our war bonds, which are enough to do the job, mature just at the right time. In a way, it's nice that she has a problem, so that she won't be gripped by an overweening self-idolatry. I wish I could see Ed in his uniform. He must cut quite a figure and I suppose Vic is torn with envy. Ed says Vic is much better-behaved since he is alone. I guess he is pausing more for reflection. All the news you give me of Howard is most surprising. I knew none of it and thought there was nothing unusual about his married life. I never heard before about any child and the Texas business is new too. I've never been illusioned about him, and as with most people, I discovered his virtues after I had learned all of his faults. Did he quit the airplane factory?

Your dear sister sent me a fine assortment of foodstuffs in a Christmas package I got this evening. There was a jar of Welsh rarebit, one of pâté, one of liverwurst and one of jellied tongue - all of them very good. If I get any more food packages I hope

they are as good. The cute card inside says "Xmas in Chicago next year or bust". That ain't exaggerating.

Tonight, Tom, Fred Faas, and I will have a late snack of the Pâté de Foie. Adams is away and won't be able to participate. My perfume to you is on its way and Godspeed it. Tomorrow I will send the picture I promised for yesterday.

As you know, that front is very active. The news is more interesting to hear now than for the past month and a half. The Germans are burning towns on the front and the French lieutenant with us is getting unmanageable. He is saving his ration of matches for our entry into Germany. There is a good chance still that the knockout will come before Christmas. If it does, I agree with the various letters from servicemen to the American newspapers that a celebration on that day should be a more solemn thing and that any plans for a "bust" are calloused vulgarity. Our civilian population has not suffered enough to celebrate a victory riotously. I wonder, do I sound too grim? I don't feel particularly indulgent towards the world, I admit.

The day has been an easy one. It is warmer and the mud has dried somewhat. We had two good meals, one of veal roast, one of chicken. Two more New Yorkers came and I have plenty to read for a couple of days. Tell me, if you can, darling, when my subscription expires. I've noticed, incidentally, that, excepting the New Yorkers, all the big magazines got stinkier towards the end of the campaign. But now it only affords the pleasure of amusement to read them. I must find silly amusements when you aren't around.

A thousand tender kisses.

Always,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 20, 1944 V-MAIL

Sweetheart -

The mad whirl of NY life continues - movies (awful) with Day & Walter Sat. nite, dinner with Renée & Ben last night, a walk in the park with Cousin Frances (pregnant) yesterday afternoon, a train ride out to L.I. Sat. aft. to see poor Unk, still in the hospital but recovering surely. All of these people, suffice to say, ask for you & send their love. I dare not describe them further, remembering your expressions of enraged ennui the last time I tried giving you The Word on my relatives. And for which I could hardly blame you.

I can't say that I'm having a terrific time because I'm not, except for getting a good edge on last night & pouring the old charm all over Uncle Ben, to the chagrin of Renée who still maintains an air of frigid ambivalence to me. You see how desperate I am for amusement & for sops to my enlarged vanity. But this trip has provided the change I needed to make me as hundred-fold grateful for my life with Kathy in Chicago. I called her yesterday at Kate's & everybody is fine. Later today -- I went to see this friend of mine from h.s. who has a baby Kathy's age & an older one, & who is bending down under the load. At the moment I am writing this in the bathroom. Jack Squire - the doctor who first discovered Kathy - like a casting agent - & his wife are here for dinner. His wife is having another baby - her second in 14 months & I am very envious, needless to say.

I'll be so damned glad to go home. I don't see how anybody can bear NY for any length of time. You just don't get any exercise, for one thing. For another, I don't like riding up & down apt. house elevators. They might burst. Another reason, the taxi drivers here are all paranoid. I had one today who passed a bus through the 86th St. transverse with another yellow jockey coming our way, missing both vehicles by about an inch on each side. We had hardly finished dipping our toes in the River Styx when he turned around, proceeding at 60 mph and said, "that damned bus tried to edge me out because he's jealous I

can go faster than he can."

Chicago Chicago I'll always go back, etc. etc. Darling, do take care of yourself and remember you have all my love. Always your

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 21, 1944 (A) V-MAIL

Jill, my darling,

Nothing much to do tonight save to read Time, the New Yorker and one or two other things. I sent poor Corporal Scott out on a dirty assignment, a couple of others out for the night and therefore I am a little more thankful for being in. There is nothing worse than finding one's way in the blackout. I suppose we'll all have a lot of it now that things are beginning to move. Tonight the French army was announced to be at the Rhine, a very dashing piece of work and somewhat incomprehensible to those who don't understand the French at work. The French play at war with careless audacity. While the Americans strip themselves for action, gather themselves up and model their lives on a plan, the French pick themselves up nonchalantly from a café and before anyone knows it they have taken a good healthy whack at the Germans. They are masters at the infantry attack, which of all tactics has changed least in modern warfare. While we adapt our men to machine warfare, they adapt their machines to the warfare of men. I've had an unusual chance to observe them, yet I'm not entirely sure that I know all the quirks that motivate them. I feel the same way about the British and Italians, and even somewhat about our own army, - judgements are hard to make properly on the way different men make war. I think I understand the German method more clearly than any, even though my first-hand experience with them is least, for they wage war most like machines and least like men.

I am luxuriously contemplating at the moment whether to eat

the pâté de foie or the rest of the liverwurst tonight. I'm in no hurry and will later consult the scroungers who will eat it with me. Christmas packages are beginning to arrive now and there are snacks being had all over the place, shiny paper and various candies in evidence in all the various crevices around here where the men are stored away. I and other adamant officers are currently involved in a struggle with a nearby Special Services officer for the possession of a ration of American whiskey which he has drawn for us but for which he wants us to pay an extra fee. We want the whiskey badly, as this Mirabelle is enough to make strong men blanch and shudder, but a principle is involved. We seem to be winning and in a day or so, if he doesn't disappear somewhere, we should have our Thanksgiving bottle. Incidentally, the picture I said I would send you turned out very badly and you must wait for another one.

Like you, I noticed the remarkable coincidence of our feelings about having another child. It proves a great deal, emotionally, if not logically. The world has billions of accidents, but strangely and startlingly, we were meant for each other. In biology, you might call it evolution or a sport, and for us it certainly is a sport.

Many kisses to you, dearest, and to Kathy too. Some day soon she will be faced with a father and a lot of pleasant trauma. She may well wonder whatever became of her mother. I'll know better.

Al

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 21, 1944 (B) V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

I shall write you before going over to where Wallenberg sleeps to divide part of the salami that arrived for me today. He furnishes the hot coffee in return. The salami and the chocolate candy with it have been in the mail for three months and have

finally come through. The package was badly battered but not leaking. Never fail to wrap up things extra well, even though it is most exasperating and you are convinced that only a bulldozer could break into it or crush it. I don't know what is done to the poor things but they all show up over here as if the Gestapo had gone to work on them. Anyhow, you can tell Mom and Jennie thanks for me. The sausage has a thick mold all over it but I'm sure that will only improve the taste of the inside. The candy isn't very good. It has alternately melted and hardened and is now even more tasteless than the tropical chocolates we get here. A letter of yours arrived, dated Nov. 6-7, in which you claimed to be very depressed, probably the very normal siege of doubts before the trial by election. You also remarked at length about your failure to comprehend Buzz' magazine article as well as much of what I say. I don't take that seriously. I'm sure any failings your comprehension may have are caused by sheer unwillingness to read anything more than once over lightly, even my letters, which, I can say, I must seriously consider making less frequent in order to elicit the proper digestion on your part. This, you see, is the punishment you get for not stating boldly unsympathetically, and perhaps truly, that what I wrote was all balderdash, didn't make sense, and was no damned consolation for my lack of tender syllables. It may well be true, that if you caress a woman, she will be happy but not constant, and if you charm her intellectually she will be constant but not happy. The true lover then is the harpist who touches the proper chords in the proper tempo. I, unfortunately, am in the position of a mere telegraph operator, tapping out mechanical notes over a cold wire. Tough luck, darling, having to pull yourself up from one state into another by your own bootstraps.

The idea of getting Jane Hess in to the apartment for the time being sounds all right to me. I'm sure that if I did get to come home, I could let you know in time to send her packing, bag and baggage. My Kathy does seem to be getting red hot. I must tell you that while I was at the Louvre in Paris I got the finest idea for a family hobby. I was examining ancient Roman and Greek mosaics and I would like very much to do some at home

sometime. We could do them just like a jigsaw puzzle and Kathy could pitch in. They can be beautifully decorative, are indestructible and offer great scope for imagination. You are a natural-born mosaic designer anyway. I wish I might say more but so this ends.

All my love, always.

Al

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 21, 1944 (C) V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

Things are picking up, aren't they? Events seem to have broken into a lumbering trot in the right direction. One of these days, I should be able to stomp my feet firmly on German soil. Today, I managed to find two small containers suitable for sending things to America, and I sent Walter a nice pipe I bought at Cogolin in Southern France. Afterwards, I realized that I was disposing of all my French acquisitions & one day would be confronted by a circle of my friends and relatives all smoking imported French briars whilst I puffed away on a 49¢ Walgreen special. Therefore, I wrapped up another package containing the remaining pipe and sent it addressed to you. Please cache it for me and some night I will be back to blow smoke in your face. I've also been thinking of a Christmas present for Ed and Vic. The best thought I have is to ask you to buy them each a copy of the new Beard, Basic History of the U.S. which is in a low-priced edition, and to send Ed a subscription to the New Yorker. Perhaps Vic would like Esquire mag. At any rate, please include my name on the gift, because I'm sending them nothing from here save a Christmas card.

I just got your long election night and the day after letter. You seem to be in the throes of hyperactivity, as bad as Kathy, and yet you compare her to me. Me, I would just like to ignore the world and have the world ignore me. More of these significant

coincidences -- your questions about political parties. I was going to write you about them -- and will, but not now. Just a million tender kisses now.

Always,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 23-24, 1944

New York Central System

En Route

Darling -

Your 2nd train letter in a week complete with wobbly hand and the noble crest of the N.Y. Central. I'll get in some time tomorrow morning, in time for Thanksgiving Dinner please God. I'm awfully glad to get back, needless to say, having done enough sitting, riding around in taxis & generally being petted & pampered to last me a lifetime, or at least another year. I shall scrub floors & Kathy with renewed vigor.

Friday, Nov. 25?

Dear Love --

I started writing the crap on the reverse side two days ago but abandoned the job as a bad one, because of the swinging and swaying of the Water Level Limited and also because it apparently was impossible for me to write you a single coherent letter while I was under the influence of the Muse of Travel, if there was one.

Needless to say I'm terribly glad to be back, even though it is nightfall Thursday and the house still has a weekend's cleaning ahead of it. I've been alternately working and sleeping all day but haven't got very far. You can well imagine that a good part

of the time I've been back has been spent making love to our dear Kathy, and to you, via the medium of reading the four letters that came while I was away (the fifth, the sixth and the tenth -- I guess that makes three).

The train got in on time yesterday morning, an uneventful journey except for a rather pleasant and unusual train association I struck up with a Lt. Com. in the air Arm of the British Fleet. I've never known any English before except the Pears and naturally I get all excited when I meet one. This guy was very young - 27 - a regular in the Navy and from Harrow and spoke nicely in public school accents which are really the only kind we're used to anyway, through Mr. Churchill, and was pleasant and not brilliant. I rather suspect he was tight all the time he was talking to me but managed to hold it well. He also was rather shot up from one encounter or another and had a deep though not unhappily held conviction that he would be killed. A whole group of them were going to Australia to pilot planes or something.

Anyway, I got home and went right up north. I invited this guy to Thanksgiving dinner but he didn't have time in between trains to the coast. Mom was more disappointed than I was even -- we are both khaki-happy I'm afraid. I got up about noon and found that Vic had disappeared with Kathy some place. Immediately search parties were sent off in all directions to satisfy the impatient mother -- Dad set off to Norm's house, though God knows why Kathy would be taken there, Cooney and I went off another way, where Cooney immediately got involved in a fight with the biggest brown dog in captivity. I somehow managed to pick him up and the big brown dog kept leaping on my back to get at Cooney while the owner, a nasty little man, waved his arms ineffectually from the other side of the street. Finally Dad came back and cursed everybody out including me and that broke it up.

Anyway, Vic also finally showed up from the alley he had been hiding in with my sweet pure child whom I hadn't seen for a whole week. She gave me a cool look and immediately fell to

kissing Cooney. I guess I haven't made much of an impression these many months. However, I was impressed by the fact that she really did and could change in a week. She stands alone better and longer than she did before and another tooth came in -- making two lowers. She is if possible even more social than before -- the very good effects of living in a large admiring family. And she's developed a new and charming habit of demonstrating affection, by resting her head on the beloved object. We were over at Diane's for lunch today and Kathy stood next to Liza, who is also standing, holding on, miraculously at the age of five months, and Kathy put her arm around Liza's shoulder and rubbed heads as described. Unfortunately Liza is scared stiff of this monster and didn't reciprocate.

Apparently Kathy was relatively little trouble for the family and everybody was sorry to see her go, including Vic who was before a partisan of Joe's. She and Cooney got along nicely, considering how she mauls him. Occasionally they would play tug of war with one another.

I wonder if you had turkey for Thanksgiving. I hope so, for your letters indicate that food is one of the few pleasures you can get. Good lord, how can you feel regretful over an occasional drunk? I think if I were in your boots I would be tight all the time. I know I did manage to put away quite a lot in New York, out of sheer ennui, like the night I had to spend with Renée and Ben. And I did on the train too. I never seem to get very high any more but am as jumpy as a cat the next morning. The only time I've had a really pleasant drunk in ages was election night, when I was skipping with joy down the middle of the street.

Darling, the middle (I mean minute, is that Freudian) I wash my hair, which is now coated with the soots of two metropolises, I'll send you a lock. However, it varies in color, so I'd better send you two.

I'm ashamed that I've written you so very little this week. It seemed that I was absolutely stultified in New York, it was really

a sort of neurotic retrogression. I called only a very few people, attempted to see even less and, except for arguing with Renée, was barely able to carry on a coherent conversation. One night I went out with a friend of Klaus's, whom I called because I knew he'd take me to a night club. That's another thing -- I have such associations with New York from my youth and from the times we've been together (to be distinguished, you may be annoyed to note) that I don't think I'm having a good time unless I'm out every second of the time in some fashionable bistro or theatre. Anyway, this guy, who is one of these smooth-mannered refugees in the manner of Fritz Neugarten (who was just here a moment ago to sell me some war bonds), took me to Café Society Uptown, which had an absolutely superb floor show and one which you will see the second you get home -- a fine colored band, Hazel Scott and Jimmy Savo, who is one of the funniest men in existence. I think that between him and Durante is the world's greatest humor, which may, if you're in the mood, produce a lot of probably silly generalizations about the Italian mood. But both men have evolved their own humor which depends very little on verbal gags, yet makes fun of the language. And both, of course, are eminently suited for bringing the children.

I think that was Monday night I went there, I got back early and woke up jumpy which is why I didn't write you Tuesday. However, I did have the good grace to call Martin's mother and had tea with her that afternoon. She was pleased to hear from me and told me what Martin was doing and I told her what you were doing and we covertly vied thusly. Then Tuesday night Walter took us to theatre - Elizabeth Bergner who is very good in a very bad murder play that I might have written at Smith. Going out with Walter is, of course, rather a trial. He is hearty with cabdrivers and has a habit of steering me through crowds which makes my flesh crawl, since I am not exactly fond of him. It's funny, because he tries hard to be nice and maybe if he weren't my brother-in-law I could put up with his faults. But this way, having to be nice and listen to his shit all the time is very hard on me. And Daisy thinks he is the only man alive, he and

Paul. All the rest are ugly, gauche, dumb, ill-mannered, etc. etc. It's amazing.

Oh, about Thanksgiving dinner. We had a capon, not turkey for a change. It was very good, though.

I took Kathy home late in the afternoon and then Bill and a friend with a car stopped by at Mom's and brought Kathy's bags and new automobile down south -- they came too late for me to wait for them. Kathy has a new machine called a tailor-tot. It is like a kiddy-car with a big stick at the back which I push. She likes it very much and it is superior to the buggy for fast runs to the Midway, since it is light and can be pushed with one hand. Mom also got her a most beautiful snow suit at Wards -- blue gabardine lined in red. I'll send you a picture of her in it when I get some film. Mom really can get good things cheaper -- some of the time anyway.

I think that when I was in New York I was almost anxious even to get back doing house work, although now that I've spent a day at it and gotten very little done I regard that attitude as rather too naive. I let Mac stay here while I was away and she didn't keep it very clean, which was poor policy on her part as now I'll never do it again. I can't understand why people are so dumb, politically speaking. Ten minutes with a dust rag and carpet sweeper would have made me practically sob for the joy of knowing such a noble girl but this way, I'm just rather mad at her. Actually the work I had to do I would have had whether she had stayed here or not -- unpacking, washing floors, etc., so it would have been just a matter of politics on her part.

I always get so embarrassed when people start talking to me about money, as Fritz did. You see, I want to buy a good hunk of bonds so that all our money isn't in at one percent in savings, so we started to talk about how I'd get the money, etc. etc., and I found I couldn't remember the names of the banks I'd put it in, and it took me an hour to find the bank books, and then an uncashed check from September from the estate turned up, and all in all I looked the great fool. I thought I'd buy \$3,750

worth (\$5,000 at maturity) if it's all right with you. That will still leave us a large margin of cash to fool around with when you get back.

Oh dear, the dishes in the kitchen are still dirty. I suddenly realize that not only have I been writing this letter since Wednesday but also all evening since about six o'clock, because I'm so frequently interrupted by garrulous friends.

The big drive in the West makes me feel a lot happier. Somehow it's much easier for me to let myself go and be in love with you when the news is good. Otherwise it's so damned frustrating, this being in love with a man you have practically no hope of seeing for months and years. But now again maybe the war will be over sooner, ergo, I love you a million times all over again. So now you know the solution -- if you want to keep me a happy loving frau you'd better either get the war won yourself or else control the press so that it looks as if the war is being won.

Anyway, darling, I'm yours, one way or another.

Kathy kisses you too.

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 23, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

I don't know whether I'll be able to get down to a real Thanksgiving valentine to my love. I have been stuffing myself assiduously for the past couple of hours and am belabored on the one hand by pie-eyed Mr. Crowell who is spreading good cheer loudly and my own drowsiness which would find its heaven on a couch with you, with nothing to do but watch the long, peaceful hours of late afternoon and evening while away, holding you closer as the sky darkens.

Damn! My thoughts of you are rudely interrupted. Crowell wants attention. There isn't much use in writing more this minute. I'll get back to it when things quiet down. There was too much to drink today - gin, champagne, wine and now beer. The turkey was magnificent and the whole meal my best army meal of all time. The meat came from America, whole turkeys weighing an average of 21 pounds. We had cranberries, mashed potatoes, peas - well I'll send you the whole menu.

The next morning - I never got around to finishing this properly. We drank lots of beer and talked far into the night. Then we ate the rest of the tongue I had and a large amount of the sausage Mom sent me. Altogether, it was as nice a Thanksgiving day as one could expect here. I'll write a much better letter tonight when I return.

But always, I love you.

Al

MMARTIN Herz, oldest friend of the global horror show, returns to visit once, twice, thrice, lean, black-haired, hawk-nosed, soft brown eyes turned fierce, speaking crisply but dispassionately like a Prussian staff officer. He comes to sniff the Front and refresh himself from his labors at SHEAF where he is now chief leaflet writer and soon becomes a Major. His operation there has become gigantic. A full bomber squadron operating out of England has been assigned to leaflet operations. More of the same: one does not know why they do not go in for noisemakers, shriekers, boomers, and more exotic forms of printed material. Might as well scare the next generation of Germans to death; but, by now, most have been evacuated to the countryside, this is known from prisoner interrogations. Most of the casualties of the bombers are friendly impressed foreign workers, afterwards to be counted not at all or as German-inflicted (which, indirectly, they are).

Martin is more technocratic about the whole business than Alfred. He is doing a job for which he is well-suited and is

well-recognized, promoted and decorated; he lives in a fine hotel in Paris with private bath, with complete laundry and other services furnished, excellent board and a bar at prices far less than he can afford. He is unmarried. Indeed the only reason you can see for his not wanting the war to go on and on is his basically responsible and generous spirit; he hates war in principle, and detests human stupidity, which manifests itself so openly and completely in war; he hates the Nazis but feels an almost maternal affection for the ordinary German soldier, of whom he has seen many, not trying to kill him, but worn-out and docile as newly taken prisoners of war usually are. He wants Alfred to get back home along with all the other soldiers, too. So he works very hard, at least four times as hard as he might get away with.

He is happier than the Exec when the Exec is at last promoted to Captain. "Congratulations on th'promotion," he writes, apologetically, "somewhat belated, to be sure, but nonetheless sincere," and blames the Algiers mafiosi for delaying the orders. But now de Grazia is twice promoted to Captain. What happens is that Colonel Quinn, Seventh Army G-2, decides that the promotion process has dragged on too long, and short-cuts the Algiers Headquarters that was formally the parent organization of the Exec. He puts him up through Seventh Army HQ and the matter is promptly attended to. But meanwhile Algiers has gotten around to promoting him too, and these orders work their way up through Sixth Army Group. So he has two sets of promotion orders, and should there and then have coined another identity and sent himself home on leave while remaining ostensibly in the theater of operations. He is advised by G-2 that unfortunately two Captaincies do not add up to one Majority and to adopt as his date of promotion the earlier of the two, November 17.

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 24, 1944

Dearest Jill,

It has been a filthy day today but the very good news makes this evening a lot more than a somber resume of the past hours.

The brilliant dash into Strasbourg was enough to create jubilation without the Tokyo raid, but I can take that too. One is almost inclined to be jingoistic when he thinks of the way we are hitting the enemy everywhere. And we are taking too little in return, just because we've done such a gigantic job of preparing the way. Weeks ago, I hadn't expected that our humble portion of the front would ever take the headlines again. The other armies were so well placed to do things. But now, we've got that old Italian feeling again of being the big news. Now it's the French, and I hope it will be the German before long.

You should know what weather we are undergoing here. Today wasn't very cold. I left my mackinaw behind and only wore long underwear, wool shirt, sweater, field jacket and raincoat. But the rain was dirty. It blew in the jeep, making a mess of everything. I returned covered with mud, splattered on me by all manner of passing vehicles. The roads were bad, ruts, shell-holes, and every other conceivable kind of bump. Inured though I am, after a couple of hours I begin to lose sensation over much of my lower extremities and discover a pain at the base of the spine which persists no matter how straight I sit. And it is difficult to sit straight, because the rain dashes against the windshield, leaving only a small space for vision, and the roof slumps downward, banging one's head if he is too high up. The windshield wiper works by hand after a fashion, but for really good vision in the rain one needs to peer out the side of the jeep.

How complete a picture of depression the fought-over towns are, desolate-looking houses, not so completely destroyed that they have lost their character and therefore so pathetic, like the body of a soldier before he becomes a shapeless rag, buried in dust or mud, a few people rustling amid the ruins, the rain pouring down on everything, dripping from gaping holes, running down the jagged lines of broken bricks and tile, falling thickly into the agitated, grey pools which lie everywhere. The sky is hopeless. It is a swirling fog of gloom, pressing low over everything, allowing no distant light to pierce through with any shaft of hope. The trucks come out of the gloom and return into

it. A huddled, shawled old woman stumbles along the gutter avoiding the ponderous trucks and the bigger puddles and disappears into a doorway that is a frame of no geometric ratio, but a ratio of insanity, of the world taking the design corresponding to its activities, the physical depicting the spiritual, beams outstretched in an agony of ruptures, the rain coming down in a flood of tears, an ugly rushing torrent cutting through the town like a slashed artery. And the soldiers behave like the tormented souls who are forced to be the devil's helpers. They stand around in their long cloaks, deep in their helmets, somber and saturnine, tending the scene in silence with drooping eyelids and mirthless eyes, or call fiercely at each other over the noise of the machines and the rain, hastening along the toil and trouble.

I don't think you would like me if I were to kiss you now. I just felt of my chin and it's pretty bristly. I shave daily generally, but once in the while I miss. This morning it was because I got up late. Tom wants me to grow my Dewey mustache again. He's an old buck-and-wing man, I guess, and he thinks I look better out of a tin-type. I have strong natural feelings against mustaches, but perhaps I will grow one out of sheer boredom. Now that the elections are over, it will have no propaganda value one way or the other.

And where are you intellectually, darling, now that the elections are over? Or may I answer this for you. Your letter on the day of election and the day after brought out very clearly the fine elements of sophistication, the perfume from the election tar brush. I'm afraid, in reply to one of your queries, that the Democratic Party per se would be in semi-permanent oblivion without the solid South. The Democratic Party is a hodge-podge of large minority groups -- rabid southerners, Catholics and Jews, plus the labor unions. Each of these is compromised with the others by the exigencies of the two-party system. There has been some changes during the Roosevelt administrations. Four straight victories have created an additional traditional Democratic vote from among former Republicans and independents. I confess, as a Democrat, that the Republicans

form the solid bulk of the nation. I wish the South were not so solid. I think that Republican gains there would be balanced by Democratic gains in the North - the ensuing balance would not change the national picture so much but it would be a more "rational" picture, that is, drawn on liberal vs. conservative lines. And probably the Democrats would gain in internal strength what they lost in external strength - i. e. votes - and therefore actually be more effective in the offices they hold. For, as you know, the solid Democratic South has frequently been harmful to Democratic unity in national politics and government. They may have helped elect the president, but they did not help his program. Therefore, the loss to liberal politics by their defection would not be great. If they moved into the Republican Party, their conservativeness would drive many Northern Republicans into the Democratic Party. But all of these considerations are highly theoretical. Meanwhile, until they are realized, there is no more reason for feeling uncomfortable at the association than there is for accepting any one of the millions of other coincidences that make up the world we didn't make.

I must finish abruptly. I hope you are teaching Kathy to say "Daddy" well so that I won't be greeted by "Hey, You!" when I return. We veterans are very sensitive, you know. Do you still fix such delicious scrambled eggs and bacon - I want that too when I get back. (sounds of great sighing from the chorus.)

A long kiss to you, my love.

Al

AS the Front stabilizes and the propaganda shells fire unceasingly, he borrows from the main Army ammunition dump a crew of three men and brings them to live with his own men under Sergeant Becker, in a kind of cave. For them it is a holiday from the wretched discipline of the battalion; their rations improve; they set their own routines.

When Thanksgiving Day arrived, he consulted with his soldiers and they invited the group to join the whole Company for the day of feasting. For the moment it may have constituted the only racially integrated unit in the Seventh Army.

At a point in the festivities, the Exec had a word aside with his racist barometer, unreconstructed Southerner Pfc Connie Wilson, who in a surprising moment of enlightenment says, "I think it's a good idea, Sir, to have niggerahs over to eat with us." Than as an afterthought, "You know, Sir, I have come around to thinking that the niggerahs are all right. I have changed my mind." The Exec was pleased; he had made a convert. But Connie is hesitating and then explains his further brainstorm, "It's the Jews, Sir, I know now, they are the problem." Here! In such a company as ours, how can it be? The Exec was mentally flattened one more time by the intricate, patterned messiness of the human mind and soul. Sweet, neat, dutiful Connie the Clerk: he was prejudiced against every possible subject, French, Italians -- especially Sicilians, the worst of them, he could be overheard to argue when drunk, that would include his own beloved Captain, stretching the point a little. He dared not spill out his hatred for all Yankees as such.

Enlisted men are allowed to choose, if they wish, which of their officers will censor their mail. Most did not bother to do so and the Exec ended up censoring some of their mail and dumping the rest upon Lt. Anspacher. It was a dull job. The lives of the soldiers are richer than is apparent in their letters, which are almost always brief, unadorned, laconic messages. In 820 days he does not read a beautiful full letter. He can only commend an occasional phrase; a rare outcropping of lines of profound love or yearning or suffering or despair. Some express themselves well orally. They can sing a popular tune with clever or moving lines. Scribbling original messages conveying true feelings and their environment is beyond them, even on politics. Elections, Dewey or Roosevelt -- hardly a word in the letters, little enough arguing otherwise.

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 25, 1944 V-MAIL

My dear Love,

Nothing but an already-read Time mag in the mail today. I haven't heard from you in three days. The last one is still the one in which you were recovering from an election night hangover. Nothing much happened today. I am unchanged from last evening. I have written you a letter a day for the last week at least and will run my string to two weeks at least before ceasing to worry you. Momentous event: I am no longer a member of PWB, AFHQ, but am assigned to Seventh Army, which is a more or less definite break with my past like when I found you at International House one June Day and have never been the same since. And I feel much the better for it, I may add. We certainly struck it off well together from the very beginning, doing nothing much, if living happily in each other's company can be called doing nothing. What a wealth of memories I can call on regarding you. Besides Buzz, I don't think anyone ever got so familiar with Miriam as I did that night at their house when I pinned here, giggling, to the floor and whispered to her that I needed clean sheets desperately for the night. Then I had to shake her violently when she repeated my request in a loud voice. I would like to have such nice parties again.

I'm so sorry that I must finish this in a hurry. I would like to recall many incidents, in my own mind, if not to write this down. One thinks of many more things than he is able to put on paper. But Harold Adams is waiting to go out with me. We pass over one stretch of road that is badly flooded. I barely made it once before and I understood it must be detoured now. The water came up to the floor boards of the jeep. One poor company was completely washed out, water half the height of their tents. You wonder how in the world wars can be carried on in such weather. Total war doesn't recognize seasons any more than civilians. I suppose one might just as well keep going in such foul weather as stay still.

Good bye now, darling. Always in love with you.

Later, same night. I've breasted the flood to return and fill up this empty space. With what, I don't know. I took a bath today - that's news and we had a good time poking fun at these S.I. showers. There are big signs in the little showroom saying - "Wet yourself thoroughly one minute." "soap yourself: 2 minutes", "release chain while doing so." "Pull chain and rinse yourself, 2 minutes." "Release chain". Total, 5 minutes, all by the numbers. Oh for a real bath and you, Allah be praised. And may the same shower wet us soon.

Many kisses,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 25-26, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

I don't know why I don't write you when I feel like it. This afternoon after lunch I was lying down and daydreaming about you, and full of warm tender sentiments, emanating from the primary stimulus of having dreamt about you last night and the secondary ones of having a full stomach and pleasantly relaxed muscles after a morning of housework and marketing. But instead I fell asleep. Now that I have time -- the supper dishes and the baby both being out of the way -- I also have one helluva stomach ache, which kind of takes the starch out of my passion. Oh, my dream about you last night concerned your coming home. You arrived suddenly and the house was just full of people, many of them living here permanently it seemed, and there didn't seem to be any way of my getting rid of them so we could be alone. I was astonished by your appearance -- you were incredibly dirty and had an enormous head of black hair -- but was terribly glad to see you anyway and distressed by all the crowds. It's funny that that seems to be the recurrent theme of my dreams about you, and also at least once, if I recall, of your dream about me -- that we want to be alone but there are

always so many people.

The little boy from upstairs, scion of the despised Viennese, brought down a package for me that he had been apparently hoarding for the week I'd been away. Guess what -- two wonderful books from you, the Maurois and Halifax ones. I can hardly wait until I start going to bed tonight when I can read them. The one about love also has a most decorative cover, suitable for framing practically. Thanks ever so much darling. As ever, your taste is impeccable. And the mailman also brought today two boxes of candy from Barracini. There wasn't any card but I can only guess that it was from you. I'll give one to Mom since I couldn't possibly eat all that candy myself and maybe that was what you intended anyway. Again thanks. I'll probably feel differently next week although I don't see how I could have a worse stomach ache than I do now.

I broke my glasses on the train and am having a new pair made up -- the frames were cracked already so I don't feel too badly about them -- in horn rims this time, just to be different. I shall probably look as savage as those women who wear black fingernails.

My sense of justice is sorely tried. Mac just left here after dinner. On the face of it, that sounds like an innocent event but, as I pointed out in a previous letter, she had stayed here for the week I was away and left the place relatively littered for one who had been given specific directions to do otherwise. Then yesterday she called and evinced some surprise that I was home and informed me that she had a date at seven, which date was going to pick her up at my place, and could she spend the night here. I said no as politely as I could but said she could eat dinner here as long as her date was coming so early. So she came and we started to eat and then he came as ravenous as a bull so he was invited to eat too. Then they both departed, still leaving traces of her belongings in great evidence. Now here is where justice enters (to be continued) ... Mac is not exactly liberal, with which fact I've mysteriously put up with these many years and I know damned well if I acted that way

she'd go around mumbling about those damned nervy Jews. There are times like these when you can hardly blame a person for exhibiting traces of a national paranoia. I was so mad this morning (this letter has been continued unto Sunday) I was all ready to ship Kathy out to be circumcised.

Today is Sunday as I said and even though my routine still continues it always manages to be a more pleasant restful day than the others. I went back to bed with the funnies this morning and fell into a profound sleep, and somehow Kathy always manages to shut up when I do so. I just had breakfast (it now being three PM) and read more of the papers and talked endlessly to Mom on the phone. She too got some candy from you so now I know my unidentified box didn't come from an unidentified mysterious admirer but from you, and so I thank you again, this time with more conviction. I still haven't tasted of it, being singularly queasy in the stomach this week, but Mac did (naturally) and pronounced it fine. Last night I went out for a little while to some weird people named Murray, man and wife, who were giving a small party for George Hussar, who continues also to be the weirdest character around here but very amusing.

Still later -- Kathy woke up after I finished the above paragraph so, as it was nasty outside, I thought it might amuse her if she sat in the playpen and watched me wash and wax the dining room floor, which, when you get down on your knees, turns into a vast though not trackless stretch of linoleum. I arose at five, sweaty and with housemaid's knee and released her from the playpen and FLASH, SHE GOT UP AND WALKED FOUR FEET ALL BY HERSELF. If I hadn't had this letter in the typewriter I would have rushed out and sent you a cable. Just think of it. This morning she surprised me by holding on to the bed and walking around it and she has been standing up alone for a few seconds at a time for over a month now, but who would have thought that the transition would have come so quickly. I might add that she fell down on her face after this promenade and scratched her forehead and howled mightily, but after I'd soothed her by letting her put on my pearls, she got

up and walked a few steps more. This is verily the most exciting day I've had in months, practically since she was born. And although she didn't make your record of walking at eight months, I still think she's doing it damned early. The significance of this also is that I'll have to keep the floors fairly clean because naturally now I'm going to give her much more freedom about the house. They really don't learn to do anything so fast when you keep them confined to bed and playpen. Also, it will be a lot easier for me when she can walk easily by herself. I won't have to hold her constantly when we go out and also, she won't get her knees so dirty crawling. And when it snows we can go out and have fun and I won't have to worry about her getting sopping wet by crawling. All in all, it's a happy advance. It's funny too, the past few days she has been eating very little, practically nothing in fact except her bottles and her -- I love you -- I love you -- orange juice. I really do think there is something to Gesell's theory that during periods of radical behavior change in infants, other aspects of their behavior get thrown off. I can recall that when she first started to sit and crawl she was very fussy. Certainly Diane's baby has been. So of course I'm not the least bit worried about her picayune appetite. Another thing in her development -- she's learning about imitating my behavior, like trying to put my pearls around her neck and always putting things on her head as if she were trying on an endless succession of dashing headgear. She's just a terribly smart kid, there's no doubt about it.

I feel so virtuous tonight after the housework. I think from now on I'm going to dispense with the services of my destructive cleaning woman, who hasn't been in for a month anyway. Her man is coming home from Iran, she thinks, and she's always in a tizzy. Now that we're home so much because of the weather I almost welcome housework if I'm not too tired to do it. And I certainly can save some money that way and also household objects that would otherwise be destroyed.

Until I get my glasses my intellectual life will be quite barren, I fear. I use my dark ones for necessary reading but it's a rather foggy view of life I get.

After all these years I still can't tell the difference between babies and cats. I just leaped up to look in Kathy's room, fearing the worst, and it turned out to be a couple of rutting cats outside the window. What an unattractive sound they do make.

God how I wish you were home to hear and see all these things, good and bad. But we really will have fun when you do get home. There are so damned many things we can do together and even if we do nothing but sit home and ogle one another and give each other baths, life will be heaven. After seeing that even in a Park Avenue apartment people have roaches and stomping Viennese upstairs, I'm not so dissatisfied with this place. Furthermore, I'm getting over my neurosis about sleeping in the in-a-door bed, in fact, I do so every night now, so we won't even have to worry about getting a new bed or a bigger place until it is easy and convenient to do so. When I see other apartments of people in Chicago I realize that by comparison this place is really rather comfortable and attractive. It must be from the number of people who, to my sorrow, elect to sit around here. The only big disadvantage is the fact that you really have to keep the shades down (which I never remember to do, as always) if you want any privacy. But in the daytime the garden and the bushes pretty much obscure the view from the outside, although they make breeding grounds for various species of visitors, like mammoth spiders, itinerant cats and other night-crawlers. A big improvement would be Venetian blinds and rugs from wall to wall, but then you can't buy the former and if you have the latter you have to have a vacuum cleaner, which you can't buy either. So it ends up with my loving you and being relatively at peace, at least today.

Al -----> Jill Your Jill 000XXX

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 26, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

Everyone has ducked out of the orderly room leaving an

unearthly stillness behind them. The place is usually a bedlam, filled with people doing all sorts of things, just passing through, trying to build a fire but only succeeding in making the air foul with smoke, setting plates on the table to eat from or clearing them away afterwards, running in with a hot rumor or running out with one, holding heated arguments on everything from the guard roster to international politics, sweeping out the mud which is brought in every five minutes in large quantities, carrying in mail, bringing out mail, bumming cigarettes or shouting at the top of their lungs to some party at the other end of the field phone. This morning I was in a bad mood and at the top of the confusion, with a fine disregard for individual differences and ranks, I told everyone that they were a darned bunch of anarchists and that I would fire everyone if I had half a chance. But since men are less frightened by threats of discipline in the army than in civilian life, the effect was quickly lost. And it's just as well, because a couple of the more offensive long-distance calls were made by me.

The moon is out in the clear tonight and that means much more to us than it can mean to you city slickers. It is like the long summer twilight. I never appreciated how much light the moon gave until recently in the land of blackouts. It's all the difference between stepping continually into deep mire and avoiding them nicely. It's all the difference between getting your throat cut on a tree limb and ducking in time, etc. etc.

Two letters came from you today, one of them a relic of September 23, the other from Nov. 6, describing an anthropology party and a baby parade, the latter an event that would have covered me with horror and shame. But then, I suppose that wheeling a buggy in a parade is just one step from merely wheeling a buggy. You probably looked very well as a bobby soxer at the party - probably the people just didn't catch the subtle difference. I have so insulted the local photographers because of the bad pictures they have taken of me, by the way, that I doubt whether any of them will take another one. I agree with you perfectly regarding that one, grinning with the cap, and I told the photographer, Fred Faas, that he would be

responsible for any alienation of affections. I have never received the colored pictures of Kathy and I would love to have them. Mike is teaching a little police dog pup we have some tricks at the moment, rewarding her with pieces of salami from America. I feel like doing a few tricks myself, save that I have still some salami of my own left. He got her in Paris and she is petted from morning to night by the whole company. Like the GIs she always has a sore shoulder from some shot or another.

There is a little excitement occurring so I'll sign off with fortunately just enough space to say I love you very much.

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 27, 1944

Angel -

I am in the midst of furiously cleaning out the kitchen, muttering anti-gentilic sentiments (see my letter of yesterday) as I go. However, in the midst of purging the icebox I managed to stack away a good lunch so now I take the most propitious moment in the day -- while I bask in the contentment of a well-functioning digestion and while our angel naps soundly -- to write you. I really seem to be in a much better mood right after lunch, that is, if I've had a good night's sleep so I'm not too sleepy, for writing than any other time during the day. Anyway, this evening our neighborhood political group is having its first post-election meeting, to pat ourselves on our collective back and to organize for 1946.

You may laugh and I suppose it is laughable that we turn our great noses so far ahead, but aside from the true humor of it, it's also a rather exciting thing, this whole new popular political movement. When you get right down to it, the phenomenon of the PAC and all the independent political pressure groups like ours that have sprung up in 1944 is really one of the biggest things in political history. There have been farmer groups and

labor groups before, and also consumer groups, but they have always tried to strike out as independent parties (in the first case) and have met therewith with failure, or as isolated and therefore impotent pressure groups, in the second case. Furthermore, in no period in history has there been so much accumulated emotion, because of the war and because so many people are participating in it one way or another. And it is this emotion of course that gives drive to so many people like me, such a feeling of being socialized. (I always feel it necessary to italicize words that sounds strictly from Park and Burgess, whether they are or not.) I am also grateful that I live in Chicago and associate with a class where such things are possible. In New York, in the location and class whence I sprung, there is too much anomie (you can italicize or not as you see fit), too much of a peculiar kind of disorganization, to ever allow me to participate in these movements.

With my renewed zest of living, born of a week of ennui in New York, I have been reading and tearing up papers furiously, despite the fact that all is murky gloom because of the necessity of my wearing dark glasses till I get the new pair. I enclose the results -- a lot of crap that may alternately amuse or bemuse you. I would like to know what you think of veteran's movements in general. The clipping I'm enclosing doesn't represent my thoughts in particular because, until I read it, I really didn't have any thoughts on the subject at all.

I get my first fairly recent letter from you today, a teeny V-mail from Nov. 17 which confirms my suspicions that you are getting around some more, to be distinguished from me, who don't get around any more. (You really should see Jimmy Savo render his version of that song.) And which letter adds another reason why I am in such a frenzy of good spirits -- the fact that you're sending me another bottle of Renoir. God, what did I ever do to deserve such a tolerant, generous, generally square man! I've been using the Luzy on occasion and it is simply marvelous. People drop like flies out of sheer ecstasy when I walk by with it on. I also succumbed and ate some of the candy and it is divine and irresistible, and I shall curse you henceforth for all the

blotches and cramps it will doubtless cause me. But it really is good candy, very continental although I know it comes from New York. I noticed they have lots of stores in New York and people stand in lines for blocks trying to get in.

Kathy and I worked this morning and went shopping -- not much to talk about. I gave her a little broiled beef patty for lunch and she liked it pretty well, considering her general aversion to food these days, but insisted on eating it herself. I notice that a lot of times when she won't eat stuff off a spoon, if you give it to her in a form where she can pick it up, she'll eat it then. Just another manifestation of her typical DeGrazia desire to live in a world she made herself.

I started to read Seven Faces of Love and haven't found it yet much more than a tantalizing smattering of French history, albeit interesting. That's the trouble with books that evolve out of historical research. You find yourself much more eager to read the original source than the book itself, which sounds like the snips and scraps that used to comprise the typical collegiate term paper. Maybe when he gets off Madame de Sévigné and on to Love, I'll find it more digestible.

I got a card from Rosabel saying she and Buster would be in around Christmas. I guess you know that they are married and at Connecticut College for Women. I'm awfully anxious to see her. The last time she saw me I was about six days removed from Kathy and in a very black mood indeed.

Al darling, how the hell are we going to make up for all the time we've lost? We'll have so many things to say, so many adventures to relate (at least you will), so damn many kisses to get kissed. I think we'd better declare a moratorium on talking for a year and get ourselves caught up on the latter, since I hear tell that a person only has a few years for that sort of thing -- about forty for a man, considerably less for a woman. Conversation will be limited by law to the following sentences: Come here; I'm hungry; No, you go out and get the milk.

I'll love you always, darling --

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 27, 1944 V-MAIL

O wandering minstrel,

I feel as if I shouldn't really bother writing you since you have just announced your departure for New York and there won't be anyone at home to receive my complaints, save Kathy who is too busy drooling to pay attention to inconsequentials. But I hope that when you return, bedraggled and exhausted, you will be assailed by the thrilling odor of Renoir all over Kathy. And if she finds retribution in never becoming toilet-broken for your unfaithfulness, that too will be no more than you deserve.

Frankly, I envy you the chance to do New York. The city must be at a screaming pitch of excitement with all the confusion of the war and the optimism of the early peace and all the lights will be on. I would write you care of Daisy if I thought there was time but I'm sure you will have returned by the time any letter would reach you. How many times must I beseech you to put the damned date on your letters. You are forgetting all the time now and it is very annoying, worse than keeping the window open at night.

These nights here are very frosty and light. The last two days have been comparatively bright and the war has been moving apace. Something should break soon in the German defenses, even excluding the fine breakthrough to Strasbourg. You needn't accuse me of not thinking of getting home. I assure you that I only don't think of that when something every immediate and exciting is happening. These days are at least as great a drag on me as they are on you. They aren't so hard as they are dull. I don't know whether I'll be fit for any sort of academic work when I return, that is, fit for it in the sense I think worthwhile. I wouldn't want to become just another untutored professor of

political science. I've got to produce some brain children to make up for your enviable capacity to generate the real thing. Still there must be some unconscious jealousy, and if I bite you when kissing you it is undoubtedly because of that and not out of passion.

Harold Adams gave a fine midnight supper the other night in the portion of a café that he inhabits with Crowell. He had good steak, fried potatoes, French bread and butter, wine, and afterwards coffee. There were a couple of officers from an adjoining ordnance outfit in attendance and they became very gay and funny. You people must be desperately short of animal spirits back home with all these fine young specimens here by the hundreds of thousands. That guy, Polachek, e.g., I've avoided very well during my college career. What a goon! There are plenty in the army too; it'll be nice to get back where one can avoid them. Adams is an old friend from Italy, quite a character. He was sales mgr. for Eastman Kodak for NYC. He'll get you lots of film after the war to take bad pictures. I'm always razzing his salesmanship for he's the best scrounger in the army, but he can take it.

Always my love,

Al

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 28, 1944

Jill dearest,

Because I returned and found my room so warm tonight through the kindness of the old woman, I can sit down and write you before plunging into bed. Knowing that you have gone to New York to find more interesting material for your historic correspondence, I am waiting eagerly for the first results. Perhaps being away from Kathy, you can think more of me as a

lover than as a father, and a father of a very bothersome child at that. I can't appreciate what must sometimes run through your mind since I have never felt properly like a father and by the same token have found it pretty nearly impossible to regard you as a mother, try as I might. You are still, unfortunately for your esprit as a mère, just Jill to me, of the long legs and the nice mouth for kissing, of savoir-faire for love and good companionship.

It just occurred to me that if I were a confirmed bachelor I wouldn't be saying these things at all because I'm having what I'd call a very good bachelor's evening. After chow, which was good, I did a little work, drove to a place nearby and returned. Then I talked to Lt. Anspacher who is the intelligent but overly anxious officer who assists me, picked up a batch of Swiss newspapers and magazines that just came in and headed for my billet. I stopped by Wallenberg's place and had another one of our very interesting conversations, most of which concern Germany together with British Lt. Crossman, and came home. Now I am home, there is a fire and I have a cigar which Hans gave me. I have a bottle of good captured German cognac and pleasant thoughts of the woman in my past - so you see that you are so nice that you even contribute to making my bachelorhood a more pleasant thing.

We talked tonight about what to do with the German professors, all of whom we shall face shortly, having necessarily been compromised with Nazism. And yet their skills will be useful in constructing the New Europe, even from a merely technical standpoint. I think that so far we show much more evidence that we have a plan with regards to Germany than we evidenced towards Italy, but still the problems will be terrible and innumerable, unless one wishes to write off the whole German population. Even if it were not necessary to adjust my ideas to those of any other person, I would be very much at a loss for all the solutions. And therefore, by the very logic of that fact, one cannot hope that the ultimate solution will be the proper one, or even that there will be an identifiable solution. I don't feel so badly about it because I believe that in politics

every success is only a half-success. And [Note: the next page is numbered -3- but it is obviously the second and last page] the greater part of the difficulties in social life come from those people who won't take anything except whole success (and therefore, one might add, end up by getting a complete failure). The very nature of a political problem is its insolubility. The result of this trend of thought is not necessarily pessimistic. I don't think I'm a political pessimist. Rather, it might be compared to the optimism of the Catholic Church which takes a fairly conservative view of man's capabilities, and yet maintains a considerable momentum forward. (I hope you don't read an excessive amount into this analogy.) So as not to hold you in suspense (a euphemism for your complete boredom at this point, I'll say that we finally decided, to put it roughly, that these professors that used the teaching of National Socialist doctrine as the springboard for academic success or who wielded political power as a result of their accession to Nazi ideals should be eliminated and that the others should remain, under a heavy stream of democratic influence, as indirectly applied as possible.

When I complain that I am being deprived intellectually by this existence, as I did in yesterday's letter, I am not really being just to my situation. Discussions of the type I just described inadequately are common and they are as fruitful as any seminar I ever attended at a university. True there are many formal things that I cannot remember, law cases that have slipped my memory, writings I have half-forgotten, books I haven't gotten to read and so forth, but I have met up with a great many new things and people, all of whom have something to contribute to a better understanding, many of them more than some of the three-hundred-page books I would have read in their place before. Though my reading has been extracurricular and sometimes comically so, in places that would make Harper library seem like a sanctuary of peaceful isolation, I have read all sorts of things, good, mediocre and rubbish. I suppose that my dissatisfaction lies in the fact that I, in my boots and long woolen underwear, am like a flower, filled with perfume and

hidden beauties that must be closed tight for the night and can only open to expose itself in all its glory when dawn comes and the sun strikes its petals. And you and peace are the dawn in the sun, and I am in the darkness.

And shivering and alone, I will retire into my darkness with a final kiss and thought for you. Al

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 29, 1944*

*Note carefully the exact date - recommended form for all letters as any fool can see!

Dearest,

I won't be writing a full letter now. Your latest was pretty brief too, written, I gather, the day before you went to New York. If you haven't broken your neck on the subway stairs, you are probably back by now, full of regrets and penitence and undoubtedly kissing Kathy twice as much as is good for her.

I'm enclosing some ads from a couple of Swiss mags which you can compare with Broadway. Some of them are very nice. I marked one or two of my favorites. I think you'll agree that they do very well by their house interiors. The big kitchen strikes me most favorably.

Life is still dull. Won't it ever change? I never see even a movie star. Rain, rain, go away. I wish my feet weren't so cold or something.

I think I'll cut me a slice of salami & go to bed.

With a fiendish chuckle, I remain,

tua enamorata,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 30, 1944

Al my love -- Thursday

It's a cold snowy morning, far too cold to take Kathy out in, and it seems like a good time to review the events of the past couple of days. For alas, I've skipped another two days again without writing you, and things always seem to pile up so. I think of things to write you, and get all enthusiastic about setting them down on paper, and then when I don't, they just hang around annoyingly, like leftover food.

For instance, I went to this little neighborhood meeting of IVI Monday night, where we were called upon to resolve upon the future purposes and functions of IVI. Everybody said a lot of shit and I alternately dozed and lost my temper. I have to attend another meeting tonight, of leaders in this Congressional district, and it will undoubtedly come off with the same effects on this tender psyche.

The thing is, there seems to be some difference of opinion between me and everybody else on what IVI should do. They think it should be an educational organization, on the order, I suppose, of the League of Women Voters (except that there are some men in our group), to instruct the public on candidates, issues, etc., being non-partisan. But on the other hand, they endorse (at least, they did at our neighborhood meeting) a lot of progressive ideas, so-called. Well hell, I say, we should be something that distinguishes us from other educational associations, we should, in short, be a pressure group from the left or left-center, preferably identified with the National Citizens Political Action Committee, which is the catchall for all non-proletarian political citizens group, to be distinguished from PAC. Well, as I repeat, I am a minority.

I think that I am that in this instance because, as I was amazed to note in a rehash with Klaus, whose girl is very active in her neighborhood, I am basically and subtly rather anti-intellectual, and, as you put it yourself, don't have much faith in the limits of persuasion and argument. I think that a group (like PAC) which

represents and exerts pressure for a bunch of people who have a specific desire or group of desires is more effective than a group which sets itself up to laboriously explore all the issues and educate a dull-witted citizenry. (What an awful sentence.) Well, that isn't a very good example of how I feel. Perhaps this is better. I somehow have more faith in an ordinary joe like ex-Congressman McKeough or our present Rep. Rowan, who know damn well they have to answer to a lot of working joes in their district, than I do in an expert, like Paul Douglas, or Mrs. Douglas or even the defeated and otherwise quite capable Prof. MacDougall. Put one of those, or even a much better example, T.V. in Congress, and he will arrive at conclusions on the basis of his particular skills and logic. But we know from the example of Hutchins, Adler and Mayer that one man and one logic do not bring one conclusion, and that the glories of expertness may bring a man to arrive at a conclusion absolutely antithetical to the interest of the people he represents. Rather, I say, put in a man who is a tool of the interests, and then see that the prevailing interests are also yours. And of course, I think that the interests of labor, the small consumer and the small farmer can be bound up very nicely into one powerful pressure group.

MacDougall is an example of how a man can be led on the basis of logic to support a point that is harmful to the group he would most like to help. He is against the no-strike pledge in wartime. He thinks it is one of the goods that should be kept, war or no war. But the big guns of organized labor itself have sworn to keep the pledge, realizing that it is more expedient to waive the right to strike now than to keep it. So really, a man like MacDougall would do more to antagonize the foes of labor than to win them over, even if he is a college professor and not a union organizer.

Well, this is getting dull and I write awfully badly and think even worse, but you see what I mean, or do you?

And yesterday, I took Kathy up north and then went downtown to do a little shopping and see the United Nations show at the Art Institute, which is self-evidently, an exhibition of art from the

United Nations. Intermingled with Peruvian jugs and Bolivian mugs were some very good contemporary paintings and the whole thing was tastefully and cleverly arranged and a darned good show for the non-cognoscenti public, like me. The Art Institute also has as good a collection of 20th-century European painters as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, so I guess it isn't necessary that I fly to New York every time my soul gets the yen to see a good painting. I'm still a Matisse and Duffy fan - every time I see one of their pictures I get excited, whether I know they painted them or not.

I got back to Mom's fairly early and we had a good dinner and I put Kathy to bed there while I helped Mom clean up and we talked a while. Then I routed the indignant child out of bed and took her home about nine. But Jesus, it's no fun coming home these winter nights on that chilly EI platform. I wish to hell we didn't live so far away from each other.

I think that Britain is acting absolutely bastardly about the Italian government crisis, don't you? Why shouldn't the Italians have Sforza if they want him? And the Belgium mess is something awful too. It's all very discouraging to such lovers of normal home life as me.

Darling, I'm getting colder by the minute, sitting here at the typewriter. I wish we were in bed together, warming each other's feet. I hope this letter doesn't make you mad or set you to thinking I'm awfully dumb. (There I go, acceding to the expert while I damn him.)

Anyway - I love you, forever claiming the edge on you in the great battle of who loves who more.

A million kisses -

Jill

End of November 1944 letters

