

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 16, 1944

Darling -

I'm cleaning out the desk drawer and frantically making mental notes of things to tell you which will never stick - soo-oo - if you'll forgive the brevity

1. Did you ever get shoes for lady in Rome mailed Aug. 22 according to my record.

2. I haven't gotten bottle of Schiaparelli you talked about.

(I did get that darling little fish brooch today. It is very cute and thank you very much. You are so darned nice to me.)

3. You wrote a lot of letters in Aug. & Sept. I'm sure I didn't write that many or ever do anything to deserve that much.

4. The drawers are very dusty.

5. Have 2 more copies of affidavit of length of service in State Guard in case you need more.

6. How long must I keep bank statements before they are ripe enough to throw away.

[drawing of female bust surrounded with papers, labeled "Pretty Hair" and with "Mrs. A. J. De Gra.." on the bottom. Underneath, a worm, called "book worm" saying: When is she going to put that stuff away so I can start eating it?]

Ah, now I can relax, if you call sitting quietly in a house where the temperature does not exceed 45 degrees Fahrenheit relaxing (except in the morning when it maintains an unyielding ninety.

Yes, night has fallen, the baby is asleep, I have just sorted out some ninety letters it would seem and written some ninety checks to ninety creditors. There are an awful lot of people and institutions who keep sending me bills for things, like kilowatts I

don't remember using or dresses I don't remember wearing. However, I suppose I should count myself lucky that we have a checking account with presumably money in it.

I got your letter today revealing that which is your sacred right to conceal, namely your ballot. Of course I always recommend to my clients that they vote a straight Democratic ticket, mostly because I am too dumb to do otherwise, but since you voted for the right key people in the state like Mrs. D., Rowan (who is a very good progressive legislator) and Lucas, I shan't turn you out of my figurative bed. Perish the thought. I wouldn't have voted for any Republican state candidates, least of all Barrett, and don't know anything about the city ones like sanitary district trustees. Our organization, lacking time to do research on the minor people, is just putting out literature on the Sun and News recommendations, to the effect that the reader can take his pick. It doesn't make much difference anyway. The long ballot is the evil to be eliminated, not the people who currently get into office on the strength of it. I'll take your word that Noble Lee is a jerk, anybody with first name of Noble must be, and give my three votes to Berman, whatever he is running for. Szumaarski should have changed his name to Sumner years ago, keeping a nationally significant first one (like Stanislaus if he hasn't got it already). For that sin of omission alone I'll vote against him. No, I won't either. I have to vote straight Democratic. I promised the precinct captain I would.

I think I ought to warn you ahead of time so you won't jump on me for sending it. You are about to become the lucky recipient of a package from this block, through the efforts and good will of our janitor, who is a potent figure in the block organization. He described the contents of it to me and I would like to see your face when you open it. Anyway, they MEAN WELL.

I got the last of your packages off today, a pile of back New Yorkers pre your subscription which I never managed to get off before. I can't remember how many Xmas packages I sent you because I kept taking them over to the post office and they kept giving them back to me because they were too heavy, then I'd

take them home and re-arrange the contents and they would end up by being too heavy again. Finally I gave a particularly annoying (six ounces net and I could never figure out the gross) tin of chicken and another of cocoa to Mom and let her figure out the various permutations and combinations involved in keeping a package under five pounds. I also had Finchley send you a small luxury item which will probably get lost in the mail.

I don't want to learn how to play the drums. I want to play the trumpet. Another potential source of conflict (the first one is that razor you took from me in 1942, the second are your pajamas which I want to wear).

Summer Storm is playing in Chicago right now and I'll make sure to see it when it comes to the neighborhood. Psychological crime films are just my dish, my only one since my taste in movies is getting increasingly parochial. I saw this whimsy job about a dancing caterpillar the other night with Cary Grant and nearly shot my cookies out of boredom and embarrassment for the glossy Mr. G.

I have been spending a great deal of time in the open air the past couple of days with Kathy. I find it improves both our tempers. I want you to know, incidentally, that I have taken a vow not to get mad at Kathy ever. For a while there I was tired and vitamin deficient and when she cried I would get very mad and stand in another room and swear at her through the door but I decided it was silly and didn't do her any good, and maybe harm. So now I sing all the time, whether she likes it or not. Most of the time she will stop crying and harmonize. It is hideous.

The kodachromes came out very well that that man upstairs took but I cannot send them to you that way. They will get all scratched up. So I will kiss a couple of more bucks goodbye and have the two most interesting ones printed up in many beautiful colors. So when you get them don't think they are just tinted blacks and whites. Kodachromes are very lovely to look at. They lose some of the sharpness through printing as I used to

observe with the Coronet nudes, if you'll pardon the salacious reference.

I went over to school today with Diane and Liza. Some anthropologist they know said he would take Liza's measurements so they took her over to the SS building and while Kathy and I gaped in amazement, they stripped the poor waif and applied these barbaric measuring devices to her. Since the man who was taking the measurements, which were, incidentally, copious and which were all written down on a chart, didn't know what they meant, as did neither the interested parents, I thought the whole scene was the reductio ad absurdum of quantitative social science. Measuring babies, indeed.

Kathy crawled through the leaf-littered lawns and in other ways had fun. She likes bouncing up and down now, on her tail or on her feet if she has something to hang onto, usually and preferably me. She is very fresh and forward about grabbing onto me and sticking there, little leech that she is. And it's fatal to walk near her when you're naked. She grabs onto my chest and the only thing that will make her let go is a sharp slap between the eyes.

Somebody just called up at this unseemly hour of nine PM and wanted me to take out hospital insurance. I don't know if it's a threat but I told them my husband was in the Army and we get our medical treatment that way, a bright and kindly brush off, I thought.

And now I must do the dishes. Darling, come home to me soon. I love you so damn much.

Always your

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 16, 1944

Darling Jill,

Eight-thirty of a rainy night that I might as well spend on a couch with you as in this cheerless place, as thankful as I am for the little stove which warms up the room very well. The fire was just relit after going out while I was engrossed in a copy of an English weekly called the Tribune. It's a magazine very much on the order of the New Republic and the Nation, in fact even printed on the same type of paper. Its personal ads, if anything, are a little less silly and probably on the whole it is duller. But it does show exactly how the New Republic mind would operate if it were in England, and I can honestly say that there is a lot of good in it. It criticizes the very things about the British Empire that the foreigners criticize, as is true of the New Republic as it is read by an Englishman, say, instead of an American like yourself or myself. It is just now dawning on me that this last is an interesting discovery. Does it then mean that foreigners judge a country truthfully, that the magazines are against a country's best interests or what?

I am enclosing a letter I wrote to Hank Dannenberg today before finding out that I hadn't his address. Would you please mail it for me after, and please don't forget it, putting in a check for fifty dollars, which you can say is compensation for the black dress you bought (no, I wasn't waiting for the opportunity). I promise that I won't make any more rash bets.

Since our food hasn't been so good, I've been thinking of the salami that should have reached me some time ago. It will probably find me back home savoring one of your delicious lamb roasts. As for the shoes, they probably found their way to some lady of the Casbah by this time.

Speaking of Tribunes, I saw none other than the Chicago model today. What a stinkaroo and yet how interesting. You have no idea how amusing I find all the domestic articles in the newspapers from home. I chortle through every page. It's all unbelievable and irrelevant, and good silly fun.

I'm going over to Tom's tent for a cup of coffee now, darling. I try to time my visits there to profit from their efforts. You're the only one I like to make coffee for. You can't imagine how horrible breakfast is in the army over here. Life couldn't be more perfect than when waking up to one of your well-turned out productions. You were a great hand with the coffee and bacon. It is a shame to waste you on old toothless Kathy. But she is all mine and I love her, a condescending expression which no doubt will infuriate you. I do believe that she is the most perfect and beautiful infant in the world.

But so are you and there can't be two.

Many kisses to you both. Your Al

LT. Oseieki is supposed to be a liaison officer for leaflet operations, and therefore the Exec hands him over to Johnny Anspacher, not without misgivings. Like Roos himself, the officer is supernumerary, so far as the Exec is concerned. He'd rather return him to base for credit, for he engages in conduct distrusted by Alfred: he starts cultivating buddies among the enlisted men. What is he going to do for these guys? -- feed their egos and that's it, but they have just about the best egos around unless, like Connie Wilson and Lennie Cook, something happened to them in infancy and they are psychically crippled. His conduct seems good, democratic, egalitarian, friendly, considerate -- but the Exec recognize in it dangers of incompetency, inferiority complex, inability to command, and a few other salient defects of an officer. Living close, talking much, a group becomes a democracy and overrules command; decisions require some isolation for planning, sanctions, self-defense, and evaluation.

But how can you resist such a sweet guy? However, he takes a driver, gets in a jeep to call on a French division, the roads are slippery, he drives too fast (this after the Exec told him, just a few days before, Steve, you drive recklessly, watch out!), and he skids off the mountain road breaking his arms and legs and throwing his driver for a loop (he had insisted upon driving). The Exec was so angry he would

not visit him in the hospital, leaving the decent gesture to Lt. Anspacher. He never sees him again; that was the end of his war.

Alfred does not see much of the French Army, not even their propaganda detachment, but deals with them through Lieutenants Jacques Pregre and Jacques Villanave (later to be Captained for nothing whatsoever), and their mixed aggregation, French *pieds noirs*, Algerian, Tunisian, Spanish, Moroccan, Corsican and Continental French, all under his command. Back of these stands a mistily forming political and propaganda intelligence section of the First French Army, minus the American know-how, technical apparatus and organization for direct delivery of messages to the Germans. They are in the midst of the struggle to determine what role the communist, military, and liberal Resistance shall play in the new order of affairs. They are bent upon the uncovering and punishment of collaborators among the French; the political mess of the next generation is beginning. They relieve the Americans of the task of sorting out the pro-Nazi French.

An Algiers acquaintance, the nearest to a professional soldier-propagandist among them, has been sent in from Algiers, Captain Fernand Auberjonois. However, the leader of the group is Quick-Colonel André Malraux. Alfred does not get to meet him, but has read parts of his book, *Man's Hope*, and knows him to be an outstanding novelist. Malraux is obviously up to something more than defeating the Germans. He would be welcome to come visit the Americans; he might learn a few tricks; but he doesn't come. The Exec would like to talk about literature and philosophy with him: Malraux and Arthur Koestler and Ignazio Silone have much to tell him; he feels the romance of their struggles -- personal, party, national, worldwide in scope -- carried on in the bowels of revolutions. But a combination of pride and principles keep the Lieutenant from approaching Malraux. And as for the rest of the tribe they have little to say. Except -- but it is too early to hear the beginnings of a love story -- except for Simone Thomas.

But, wait, stay, I must pause! For here comes an unnecessary whole level of command! It is called the Sixth Army Group. General Devers bosses it. It sets up by the beautiful spas of Vittel, and receives copies of the Seventh Army Team reports and sends visitors to the

Team. It speaks to them formally from on high through "Psychological Warfare Section, " G-2, Sixth Army Group. Nice guys: a Major Shields shows up, cheerful, happy to be where he is and to know of the fine combat aggregation which the theory of military hierarchy lets him believe to be his command responsibility. Jim Clark, tiring now after being around so long and of a certain age, ineffable still, goes to join him there, so they work up a cozy group, and they stare right through Roos, who stares through everybody anyhow, which is important, for the Exec gets no backlash at speaking on behalf of the Seventh Army Team; they tolerate Roos as the Army suffers its myriad incompetents until they have done most of their damage, and then are gotten rid of too late, like Colonel Hazeltine of the U.S. Cavalry, who, it will be recalled, was summarily removed from his post as Chief of Psychological Warfare in the Mediterranean Theater as a Christmas present to Alfred the year before.

Roos was to stay some months longer but his *modus vivendi* with De Grazia developed nicely and before the winter set in he is drinking quietly in his successive rooms (the Exec always gives him the best spot to lay his head), while the Exec and Wallenberg and Crowell and Headquarters Sergeant Roger Villaneuve and the First Sergeant and the others carry on effectively. When First Sergeant Mike Annunziata's wounds and memories got to his head and he became too surly despite his beautiful Michelangelo face, and was wafted homewards, First Sergeant Taubert comes in out of nowhere. He is good, he handles Roos well, respectfully. He is Danish-American, too, like Roos, a big swarthy version as Roos is a middle-sized platinum blonde.

The feeling against the Commander is general. The Exec and the other officers do not go about singing his praises, nor are some of the other ranks reticent in criticizing. It may originate with Clark or Shields at the Sixth Army Group, or perhaps in anonymous letters from the Team, that a Colonel from the Inspector General's Office of the Army should show up one day in the Village of Herimenil. He circulates, interviewing soldiers and officers about their Company and especially their Commander. The Exec realizes that the critical interview is to be with himself. What is he to do? Worse than anything the Army hates disloyalty. Moreover, it smacks of insubordination.

Criticism is *prima facie* proof of insubordination and disloyalty. Criticism from the second in command is almost always fatal -- to the Second in Command.

The Exec says that there are no serious problems with the Company, that the Major is a heavy drinker but generally keeps to himself and is certainly no mad bull. There is nothing good to say about him, however. The Exec would like to recommend getting rid of him, but the least that would happen is that the Army would get rid of both of them. Anyhow, that's the way Alfred figures it. Perhaps he is mistaken. The Inspector General departs. There is no further word about the matter.

And here come even more visitors. As in Africa, in Sicily, in Italy, so in France and then in Germany. The Team is an attractive outfit. They are in close touch with the Front and at the same time not as misanthropic and exposed to mishaps as the infantry. They eat well, mostly with the same rations as the infantry, but better prepared and with more skillful scrounging in outside markets. They have mobility and know everything that is going on, from the German side, the Americans side, locally, along the Front and from the enemy and Soviet radio and press. Earl Pittman and his assistant are manning the radio monitoring truck continuously. Tom Crowell's printing trucks are converting electric power into word-power with interminable click-clacking. Harold Adams has no business as a civilian taking on the over-the-lines amplifiers and the half-track armored reconnaissance vehicle that is used to get the equipment forward and to protect the orators, and to get them in and out expeditiously. He is a sweet guy. The Exec feels sorry when he learns that Harold's wife has decided to divorce him. The guy is seriously downcast; he drinks and talks incessantly.

Their frontline one kilowatt radio broadcasting station is not functioning here. It is working far back near the Riviera, with Captain Hoagie and his crew. It never has fulfilled its promise of a station that can be heard by the nearby enemy across the lines. It is best used for newly occupied areas where the radio broadcasting facility has been damaged or is non-existent, or is dependent upon a station still in enemy hands. It depends, too, upon a stable front situation; it's not as

simple to move around as a tow truck. But it's a cute technology. Like the other equipment, the fast little printing presses. Too, the mobile hear-all monitor van.

Also the half-track amplifiers, for it must be said that this armored vehicle is useful for approaching the point of broadcast to the enemy, but then it has to be hidden and the amplifiers toted up to the auditory location, and there abandoned until the operation is over, because it is usually subjected to small-arms and cannon fire. A cheap small amplifier would be just as effective; no matter if it had to be abandoned. It would cost only as much as a few cannon shells. But it should be stocked in some quantity, like the shells, say at least a score per army. And divisions should be encouraged to employ them on their own initiative, by means of recordings and even broadcasts live by German-speaking Americans, who are always to be found.

In addition, there is Fred Faas, the photographer, who shows up on November 5 and is harbored. Then a Britisher is assigned for a while, Lt. Crossman, whose big brother is an acquaintance from Africa now with SHAEF, Dick Crossman. (We know even then that he is destined for high office in some future Labour Party Government and has picked up the name "Doublecrossman" already, thanks to his many enemies in politics and military affairs -- the English public school boys like to coin these naughty nicknames for each other.) Sociability, news, nothing much else. They carry away ideas, stories, scuttlebutt from the scene of action.

Lt. Col. Culligan comes in, he who had been top military administrator in Rome after the Liberation and is now with the Sixth Army Group HQ. Culligan had been an entrepreneur; he had, still owns, a company that he describes to the curious Exec. The company matches quickly people from all around the country and of every skill with emergency jobs -- a guy who can work a telegraph while holding his breath under water is needed for testing an underseas installation, that sort of thing -- a glorified operation later represented more mundanely by the Kelly Girl or by what are called "head-hunters."

Captain Galitzine, handsome and humane, somehow detaches himself and even gets back to England to get married, but then returns like an eel to the Sargasso Sea, very much alive and smiling. He has

smashing pictures of the High Society wedding and articles from the Press.

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 18, 1944

Darling Al --

I started a letter to you yesterday while I was spending the afternoon down at IVI headquarters and had an idle non-partisan moment, and then left it there, to my embarrassment and their edification, re Kathy. Fortunately I had gotten no farther than a detailed description of the weather (which has been beautiful) and Kathy's tortuous and successful climb yesterday morning up the slope at the Midway. But still it's a shame to waste such loving prose, which cannot be duplicated because of my memory.

I have an apology massa. Having perused the specimen ballot which our organization gets out I see that I got the two Barretts (R and D) confused and that you voted for the right one. You can see that even at the great distance between us, you still maintain your superiority to me in all ways, including knowledge of the candidates. But that of course is how it should be. Kitchen and kinder for me and all the rest of the world is your domain, including ping pong, trumpet playing and politics.

I got some pictures of you today, one which I liked particularly of you looking very tough next to a phantom horse. Any man who can keep his aplomb in the face of such psychic phenomenon deserves my vote, not to mention my love, which he has already. You look sort of thin but not very, sturdy enough still to withstand my flying leaps onto your lap. I feel pretty terrible too about the slow progress of the war and daily send up a prayer that you'll be rotated. Come the middle of November and you'll have been over 18 months, if they include time of the transport. I hear that rotation depends on the divisional commanders in whatever theater the men are in. My despair is that you probably don't even have one because of the peculiar set-up of

PWB. Every time I see an Army man ranking a major or more I feel like running up to him with Kathy in my arms and pleading tearfully for you. My only hope and consolation is that time will not change us very much -- you, me, Kathy (except to make her bigger and better) or our love. We're getting older but it won't be enough to make any difference in our capacities for doing anything. But damn it, it is hard waiting, remembering the fun we had together and could have now. As far as Kathy goes, she's cute now but will be even cuter later on, when she can talk and go out and do things with you. I think that so far as the interesting stages of babyhood go, the first few months are terribly interesting because of the novelty and the need for both parents to share the work, and then things level off until the infant becomes the young child and can verbalize its demands, and can be trained by counter-verbalizations, so to speak. Right now our little elf is singularly untrained. I honestly don't know what else to do but let nature takes its course. You can't make a docile child out of a peppy one, nor can you make a baby go to the bathroom after breakfast if she happens to want to go before breakfast (while you're still too sleepy to put her on the john). You can't keep her from trying to climb out of her feeding table except by getting another feeding table that she can't climb out of. You can't make her stop crying when she sees you fix her meals and you're doing it too slowly, because after all she is hungry. And you can't expect her to shut up and stay in bed or her playpen all day when she knows and you know it's a lot more fun to be outside. So I'm giving up and am taking her out and letting her have fun. Today we went all the way down to the Chicago Beach Hotel and sat on the grass around there, this morning I mean. A little two-year old boy came along and they played very nicely together, he being the first child I've seen who didn't try to knock her down.

Kathy has a box top she likes to hold over her face so I crayoned an ugly face on it and now she has a little Halloween mask. It makes quite a striking effect. Do you remember the skull we got one Halloween which we put a candle in and hung in the window, thinking to frighten passersby, only it rained and

there weren't any? I love Halloween. When you come home we'll have to have really exciting ones. I think next to Xmas it's a holiday with more potentialities for fun than any.

My foot is going to sleep and I think I will too. Darling, please take care of yourself and don't despair. I love you and everything else will be the same too no matter when you come, and we'll have quite a lot of money to have fun with for a while -- and Kathy too.

Always your

Jill

P. S. Encl. is picture of Bill Evers' baby Liz sent me today. She looks cute doesn't she?

P.P.S. Got a letter from Hank Dannenberg yesterday wanting your address. He said he'd written you but didn't think you got it.

Love Love Love

J

I

LOVE

YOU

They got me doing lettering for them at IVI for their multigraphed bulletin yesterday.

I STINK

I STINK

I STINK

I STINK I really did!

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 18, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

Another chill damp day has arrived and I have a cold or the beginning of one. But I also have a bottle of prune brandy, any resemblance to prunes being wholly coincidental, and it should nip the incipient viruses in the bud. That isn't so far-fetched a figure, since I vaguely recall viruses as being neither plants nor animals. I am beginning also to wonder the same thing about myself. What I need is a month in bed with a 125-pound reddish blonde with a daughter named Kathryn to prove otherwise. And after that continuous experiments, as Voltaire called them, to reassure me.

You needn't worry about my exposing myself too much to the elements just now. For the past few days I've watched the dismal clime mostly from indoors. The day before yesterday was fairly clear and coincided with my only long trip lately. There is a lot of industrial country in Northern France which is remarkably similar to the same country back home. There is a lot of the same pinched appearance, the poverty and the very drab dwellings. Factory workers have never recovered half of what they lost a couple of hundred years ago at the hands of the first industrialists. They still live nasty lives. Man has not lived long enough industrially to realize that there is an urban life which is not merely a degradation of rural standards. It is a different thing and should be approached differently than rural life. The differences must be recognized and the advantages realized upon.

Speaking of cities reminds me of a conversation with a Frenchman the other day on American jazz. I said that jazz was the folk music of a true urban civilization, not merely a rural thing introduced into the city. Is it possible that its rhythms are primitive only by coincidence, or that the contact of the primitive and ultra-modern occur by a cultural miracle under American conditions and therefore the primitive is eagerly and intuitively matched to the machine and motions of the city? I think both

conditions are possible. The American city-dweller is more completely urban than any other city-dweller in the world. If the new culture is to produce new forms of expression, a likely thing, then we must expect it from America. Not only that, but the rural tradition has been somewhat broken up in America. People don't hold land for generations, and unlike many European cities which have fairly constant immobile populations, ours shifts rapidly, thus making the cities conform more to the "ideal" of the city as defined sociologically.

And so on. I wish I had someone as intelligent as you to talk to here, reversing the prediction in the first paragraph as to what I'd do with you when I first would see you. We'll manage everything, I believe. One more bath of German blood inside Germany and this will be over.

All my love to you and K.

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 19 ?, 1944 V-MAIL

Sweetheart --

Two fine long letters from you today, the 29th and Oct 2nd, and also one from Pvt. E. R. DeGrazia. I got rather a jolt seeing his name thus, as if it were the first time I'd realized that Ed were part of the show too. I think it was damned nice of him to write me, since the poor kid obviously doesn't have any time. He gave me a detailed description of his schedule and it *[is]* just like OCS -- busy from 6 to 11 at night. I don't think it's right to allow adolescent boys to get so little sleep, do you? I never could understand the Army in that respect anyway. It's all right to get people up early in the morning but they should make them go to bed early too.

But then I always did worry about sleep, mine and everybody else's. I crawled into bed before ten last night, without even

reading because I am back to sleeping with Kathy again. I moved my bed into her room for the duration of the rug cleaning of the people upstairs, it being the quietest room in the house under those circumstances. And since the light bothers her I must forego the joy of reading in bed for that time. Anyway I slept all last night and then took a nap this afternoon. I really must be tired, that or the fact that my sinus bothers me makes me sleepy. The weather is damp now, sunny in spells but noticeably damp.

I feel that way about Woolcott too. So does another critic, Sterling North, I think. The guy was such a pansy I guess, combining the worst traits of both sexes. I used to think he was funny in high school but that's as far as I went. I've started to read The Warden by Anthony Trollope but my glasses are still broken so I can't read anything now. I spent the evening with Diane and Helen Baker -- all our husbands being out of town, some further than others. We sewed and ate and talked about our obstetricians. You wouldn't have liked it at all. Today I did a big wash and have been fighting with that goddam curtain stretcher all the rest of the time. Remind me to get venetian blinds after the war.

I gave copies of those pictures I sent you around the family so don't think of giving any up that you have. Kathy still looks like that. She probably is bigger but her proportions are pretty much the same. She stands alone for seconds at a time now quite frequently but still doesn't walk, naturally. She can climb stairs but it's hard and makes her cry. Best of all she likes to stand at the little table where I have the radio and pat it and wiggle the station changer, the result being that I never can hear the same program for more than a second at a time. And when you go over to get it back on WMAQ, she pushes your hand away as bold as brass. She got into a big fight with the dressmaker's little boy today, he being two. She started to play with his toys and he started to grab them away and she gave that little pushing motion and he got panic stricken, ascribing more meaning to the gesture than it actually had, and bopped her in the eye. Then she cried but was quickly soothed with a new toy.

Everything looks simply beautiful to her, no matter what, just so long as it is something different. My finger's still sore -- that is why I type funny.

I love you, my darling Al.

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 19, 1944 V-MAIL

Dear One,

With all your trials and troubles, indomitable willpower, etc., as revealed by your letters that came today, your life reads like the premier chapters of Bound to Win by Horatio Alger. I intend to see that the same analogy can be drawn with the last chapters, but meanwhile it is a thrilling uphill fight to bring up baby, keep house, re-elect Roosevelt and stay beautiful. And you wonder why you feel tired. It's responsibilities, that's what it is. Your letters were of Sept. 18, Oct. 3 and 6, the last quite late. The pictures we send each other are certainly horrible things. The best picture of you that I have is still the one on the sail boat the summer before I met you. It's no younger or anything, but it's the only damned picture I have that shows you in a typical state. The late arrivals had a couple of good snaps of Kathy but yours were badly over-exposed, and badly posed. I can't truthfully say I admire your expensive bathing suit as revealed in the picture, though I must admit, on second glance, that you reveal certain things that it takes to -- well, let's talk about the weather.

The weather is simply beastly, my dear, simply beastly. Now bringing up the beast reminds me again of the picture, so let's talk about the news. That is very good. Hitler's speech or rather proclamation certainly revealed modest war aims, namely peace. I'd as soon give him peace as spit in his eye. The Russians are going great guns and I don't think we've shot our wad for the year either, by a long shot. So one of these days, you'll be able to forget all about your little worries and we'll have a carnival that will involve all the Greek gods and a few more of

our own. We'll set up a table for Bacchus, Venus, Ceres and Hermes, plus Pan and the demons of the wood. Then we'll forget to invite them and eat all their delights.

How lucky we are that we have Kathy. She has cut down in her completely innocent way a good deal of the sense of waste time that is the curse of this isolation from each other. In fact, if I did ever have to go to the Far East and passed through America on leave on the way over, I like to contemplate the possibility that we might have another child in the same way. I would like to add, too, that I realize that all the trouble is yours and all the pain too, but if you would be willing, so would I. I sent out a jeep today, getting back to my momentary preoccupations, and it is six hours late in returning. Something must have happened to him. He's a Frenchman named Blackie and is more daring than he is skillful as a driver. The French are poor drivers. The Italians are better. No one touches the Americans, of course. My cold is better today. I think the prune brandy licked it. Nothing else new.

I love you always.

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 20, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest one,

This is your manic-depressive momma, yowling out of the depths. Yesterday I was all sweetness and light and Pollyanna, writing you comforting optimistic notes and now I think I can out-gloom you at your gloomiest. Damn it, when I think of how we've been screwed up, loused up and generally snafued by this war I could go out and bit the jugular of the first civilian I see. It just doesn't seem right that we have to wait for what seems like all eternity to see one another. I suppose worse things could happen to us than that we be separated and lonely for a year and a half, but right now I can't think what. I'd get drunk if I liked

to drink alone but unfortunately I don't, so the next best thing I can think of is to take a long street car ride and see a movie at the Tower tonight, The Mask of Dimitrios, which should be reasonably satisfactory to me in my mood of mayhem.

I seem to have written out my woes -- at any rate, you can't take up a whole letter penning the obvious -- that I love you and miss you desperately and am awfully lonely. But not much else happened to me today to make noteworthy writing. We walked and played and napped and ate, and God knows that isn't news.

From the tone of the above, I did well to wait until today (the next) to continue. I was somewhat appeased by a rather good mystery picture and also a Disney short, very rare these days. And this morning came two letters from you, the 9th and the 12th. I'm glad you got the butts etc. (I should have known better than to leave the coffee in jars though) and have hopes, therefore, that you'll also get the shoes for the Roman lady, which represent a fair investment and therefore would be a shame to lose. It seems that a fair proportion of the thing we send one another suffer casualties, if not in transit, then at the destination. Like yesterday Kathy pitched one of those beautiful two-tone gloves you sent me out of the buggy, and tho I retraced our path faithfully today, I couldn't find it. I think that more than anything was responsible for my black mood last night. It seems that every material remembrance I have of you, everything of this world that I prize, somehow gets lost or broken. If it were my fault directly every time I might feel better, or worse (depending on whether I chose to give a Freudian interpretation_ -- but it isn't -- it's usually the maid or Kathy. But it's awful and ironic that the two nicest things you sent me, the Renoir perfume (the other never came) and the best of the gloves should so vanish, in one week too. It's enough to make one suspicious, or else, optimistically receptive of these trials as an indication that God is planning something very nice for one as compensation. Please don't be mad at me, though, that these things happen. I feel bad enough as it is, though I admit it makes me feel somewhat better to tell you.

Kathy hasn't done much other damage besides tearing the map of England out of your Baedeker. But she doesn't go for books much, mostly magazines, specifically New Yorkers that I haven't quite finished or New Republics that I never intended to anyway. I think the fact that the two radios are on a good part of the time that she is crawling around and that they are accessible for patting and other tinkering with keeps her occupied and away from other stuff, more perishable. I have to be careful mostly about cigarettes and ash trays -- apparently they have an irrevocable fascination for most infants and it's not very pleasant to come upon your child choking and spitting on a mouthful of Chesterfields.

It's a lovely day today -- October seems to be a month full of them. I'll probably go walking again with Kathy this afternoon and tonight I'm invited out to dinner with the Kerners. It's nice to go out for a while in the evening. Unless I have a lot of work to do like ironing and can listen to the radio while being useful I don't much enjoy evenings at home alone. I like to read in bed but I'm not enough of a scholar to take up a book directly after supper and read right through. I could do it, I think, if I had company. I remember at school studying was always more tolerable if we sat in one another's rooms. I like to read after lunch, however, mostly because I invariably end up snoring.

Every once in a while I walk wistfully through the five and dime and 53rd which has the most beautiful big jigsaw puzzles. I look longingly at them but never buy one, because I know it wouldn't be any fun to do without you and would only serve as a sad reminder of the bonecrushing competitive evenings we used to spend doing them together.

Kathy and I are just now quite breathless from dancing to the overture to Beautiful Galatea. She hurled herself up and down on her seat, a new trick and she does it very effectively, getting about three inches clearance from the floor, and also crawled around very rapidly, making quick turns in the manner of a pirouette. I went through the whole routine taught me in those dear old days at the Ballet Russe, and she thought it pretty

funny, as would have any detached observer. We have a lot of fun playing together. In the evening before supper I pretend I am her father and play with her very rough, standing her on her head, swinging her around and beating her against the wall, all of which she enjoys very much. In the morning I take her into bed with me until her bottle warms up and play hide and seek with her, covering myself up with the sheet and letting her find me.

I borrowed this pamphlet, The Psychological Aspects of Pediatrics, from Oliver. It's a pretty good straight Freudian (says Oliver, I don't know much about it) interpretation for physicians. They said several interesting things, for us, anyway, one, that toilet training can very well be delayed until fifteen months with then greater success than if it were started early. I think I'll try doing that, waiting I mean. I've had very little success with Kathy so far. For a few days it looked as if she were catching on but actually it's a matter of the mother catching the baby in time, and since Kathy has irregular times, I couldn't always get her in time. Secondly, they said about thumb sucking (Kathy is very fond of sucking her thumb and feeling the edge of her wool blanket before she retires) "emotional factors have an influence on thumb-sucking but one suspects that there is a constitutional element too. Infants are seen who have apparently had an ideal feeding history and yet have sucked their thumbs since birth (Kathy started considerably later but does it like an old hand now)... There is some evidence that infants each have certain quantity of sucking instinct which they must expend independently of how much food they get. This argues for not cutting down the number of bottle or breast feedings too soon in the case of the infant who likes to suck." I think Kathy is the kind of child they refer to. Maybe her strong oral disposition really is the cause of her good nature, supporting the straight Freudian theory. Anyway, I sort of hate to deprive her of all that fun by changing her over to cup feeding now although she is well able to drink out of a cup. Anyway, she doesn't object although she spills a lot.

Well, I guess I've exhausted that subject, as well as myself.

Your idea for treating with the Germans sounds very good to me, combining enough bloodshed with a sense of democratic procedure.

Well, one thing and another and now it is time to take Kathy out again. I myself have eaten and napped since I started this last page, the latter most unsatisfactory because the people upstairs came home in the middle and their footfalls are something fearful and wonderful.

Oh, I forgot to tell you, Bill Steinbrecher was over the other night rather late. He had gone to hear Mark Van Doren lecture on Poetry and Education at school. He wanted me to go too but I am death itself at lectures; my skin assumes an ashen tinge, my pulse drops to 10 beats per cycle and I give off that musty sweetish odor that every trained nostril can detect as death through cyanosis. However, my symptoms are somewhat less severe when somebody only tells me what a lecture was about. Then the mortuary cold usually stops just short of my kneecaps. Anyway, we had sort of an interesting talk on why no great novels have been written since the 19th century. If you can agree with our definition of a great novel, when we get around to making one. Oh you tack-sharp, pin-neat, picture-pretty Jill.

I've simply got to stop this letter somewhere, since now it is nigh nightfall. Take care of yourself, darling, and remember, I love you.

Always your

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 20, 1944 V-MAIL

My darling,

It is indeed a rare night. It cleared up a little before chow time and the sun shone beautifully. One could even feel its lovely

rays. And now, even after it has set, the sky is a most glorious combination of fall colors, all the beautiful greys in the world, with hints of blue and white here and there. They are clean greys and they are far away, not close enough to choke one. It is most remarkable how bigger and grander the world looks when the sky is the sky and not a low pall. I myself am in the throes of a head cold which has slipped up from my chest where I last reported it to you. I feel uncomfortable and restless but not really bad. Most of the day I spent in a rather forlorn, mongrel dog fashion, searching for a fire where I could warm myself. For some reason, most of the men, including myself, were too lazy today to light a fire.

Today also brought the fine news of the invasion of the Philippines and reports of light losses on landing there. The place selected has a fine strategic position, not only commanding the Philippines by air and sea and allowing the rest of the islands to be taken, but also governing practically all the traffic in the various straits, archipelagoes and the South China Sea. It is a sad day for the Japs and I'm sorry that I wasn't in on it. Though not a tenth as sorry that I am not in on you. Considering that I insulted your latest pictures in yesterday's letter, I certainly spent enough time looking at them today.

Now some god is pulling a blackout shade over the clear sky. What a dirty war. I wish I was home. Specifically, I wish I were helping you out of your tweed jacket at home, with a fire lit, darkness just falling, a well-spent day together just completed, and a long evening at home to look forward to, Kathy and all. I would be doing society a good turn, too, keeping you out of the saloons. It may be hard at first, I know, breaking you of the habits and I may have to send Kathy crawling over to the tune of "Mother, Mother, come home with me now, or Daddy will beat you again." But I am determined that you shall not escape beyond the reach of a roving hand.

There is rien de plus à dire and so I kiss you good night and send you all my love, hoping as always that you love me too.

Your

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 23, 1944

My darling,

Two fine letters from you today -- the 5th and the 13th. The latter was the one in which you described the execution I'd previously discussed and it really was a masterpiece of description. I'd like to show it to Klaus if and when I see him, although he has since reneged on his original stand. You are right in assuming that Bill is a more competent intellectual mentor although he is usually too abstruse for me. Bill is an intellectual's intellectual, whereas I am more the poor man's intellectual -- I hold up better when discussing and abstracting on everyday affairs. But give me the 100 great books and I whither and pale like a morning glory in the evening.

Here are a couple of pictures of Kathy, taken by some neighbors who own the little boy Kathy is making passes at. He is three months younger than she and not very responsive, as you can see. I think there is time yet for her to select a suitable mate. For all practical purposes her engagement to Mike Kelly is snafu. I took her out to Joan's yesterday afternoon and we put them in the playpen together. She was kind of cranky anyway -- that invisible tooth seems to be bothering her a little -- and when Mike fumbled around trying to get his rattle away from her she burst into screams. Then he absent-mindedly proceeded to pull her hair and from then on, every time she saw him she wept with renewed indignation. But Mike is really a beautiful baby and without malice too. He is bigger than Kathy and has curly blond hair and an Irish face. He wasn't such a good looking young infant but now he could win prizes hands down in a baby contest. He isn't nearly as active or well-coordinated as Kathy and when he fusses, does so in a subdued well-modulated

tone, whereas she breaks right into a yell. Neither of them has changed much in basic personality since infancy. It's funny about Kathy's hair -- it's still quite straight and droops around her ears in brown wisps, like a coquette's of the 1920's. My father has straight hair -- that can be the only explanation. But then, I think long straight hair is very pretty and am constantly brushing mine to achieve that wilted, Veronica Lake look.

Between feeding the babies, keeping them apart and feeding ourselves, Joan and I didn't have much time to talk. Poor Tom has been kicked out of the airborne infantry on account of having a collapsed lung and is just hanging around some southern camp, waiting reclassification. If ever a man tried hard to be a soldier he did, and it's a shame he couldn't get to be one. Joan has given up her job at the mill and is just doing part time work, editing the local's paper, a large and rather good one.

I felt mad and frustrated, coming home to an empty house with Kathy last night and so, instead of writing you, I stewed in silence. I suppose I should be used to it by now but I'm not. Almost every evening for a little while at least I feel the same pang of loneliness and missing you. Maybe if I were a great intellectual I wouldn't mind it so much but I guess I'm sort of gregarious, at least with one person, and I'd much rather play Russian bank with you than read any time.

I had a brief and pleasant interview tonight with a gentleman named Chris Dunne, the precinct captain of a precinct nearby that I'm supposed to work in the next couple of weeks. He gave me a list of people to see that he considers doubtful and coyly showed me the little ribbon in his lapel. I dumbly guess it was AEF from the last war but no, it was the Distinguished Service Cross which he got from being a doughboy in 1918. I was properly impressed. These precinct guys are good joes, it's their business and they do it well. At least, the ones around here do. I think the Democrat at Addition St. is pretty much of a jerk. Dunne gave me a pair of tickets for reserved seats to hear the president speak Saturday night at Soldier's Field. It's a big

secret apparently that he's coming and Hodes is running it, with his customary smooth guile. I'm going to try to go because I've never seen the president.

Do you get rashes or anything from being so dirty? That would be the one thing that I'd be afraid of, from prolonged abstinence from bathing. But then, your duckskin should be resistant to anything. God, won't it be fun when we can wash each other's backs again. Every time I get a letter from you I first read it very quickly, thinking "Maybe this one will be the one he'll tell about coming home" -- like the guy bucking for a section 8 who kept picking up pieces of paper all over the place.

There was a good story in the New Yorker a couple of weeks ago on that subjects -- by John Cheever. Did you read it? About bucking for section 8, I mean.

Since I am always in a somewhat better mood when I finish writing you than when I start, there must be some therapy in writing. But I still hesitate to write when I am at my blackest, and fortunately then I usually don't have the time. I think the worst part of the day is around five o'clock, before I start getting Kathy ready for bed. I'm usually out walking then and the thought of coming home and not doing anything just withers me away. Couldn't you tell that to your CO? "My wife is withering away."

I had a long argument with my laundryman (sheets, not diapers) this morning. He is a Dewey man and an isolationist and I learned with horror that his was the only non-union laundry in the city. He is an Italian, of origin anyway and quite a card, at least I thought so until today. Now I don't know but what I should change laundries, or do the sheets myself. Or would that be taking my creed too seriously? Those damned laundry men, though. They make more money than a full professor, and usually only work a half day at that. Social justice, bah. (That word was bah).

I have to take a bath now. As a civilian, you would have laughed me down. Actually I don't take as many baths now as I used to

because the dampness makes the plaster in the bathroom crack and I am trying to keep it in as good shape for you as possible.

I love you a million times over, possibly more than you love me. So there.

Always your

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 23, 1944 (A) V-MAIL

Dearest,

I am writing this by the dawn's early light. I don't know whether I'll finish it before breakfast, but anyway I'll get it off in the morning mail. Though it is dark now in the morning, it isn't so very cold yet. I mean that I keep my window slightly open. I have lit a fire already and it feels very good.

I got your letter of Oct. 2 yesterday. I had better put all your letters of the last couple weeks together and read them properly. I'm beginning to get flash-back dizzy. There also came the shoes and that cute little make-up kit, all of them held together so fragiley by a broken shoe box and a loose piece of wrapping paper that it is a wonder they ever arrived. I hope you've put the fudge in a good strong container. It's a shame to waste such great talents on a mail clerk. At the moment I am at a loss as to how to forward the shoes to my ill-shod friend. She'll have to wait, I'm afraid, until I find someone going her way.

Excuse me while I wash and shave. The landlady just knocked on the door and gave me my morning basin of hot water, accompanied as always by her two little girls who find me and my habitat interesting. By the way, I am still using Gillette blades someone sent me last Christmas. It makes last year seem like yesterday.

Now five minutes more before I go to chow. All of yesterday afternoon I wished you were with me to see the beautiful display of fall colors in the countryside. I have never seen the principle of fall so nobly demonstrated as here in France. The whole thing is like a painted background for the fall clothing display of Bergdorf-Goodman. More seriously, the country is rolling and each moment in a car has its new sight, a new kind of russet, brown or brown-green like your old suit I used to like so much. And of course the tang in the air adds to the thrill of it. I was driving Jim Clark back to his headquarters and he said it reminded him of the passages describing autumn in Thomas Wolfe's Web and the Rock. I like Wolfe very much. Will you have a complete collection of his writings for me when I come home as a homecoming present?

Now I'm eating & I can see Sgt. Villaneuve heading for the door so I'll send you all my love and 10^â kisses. To Kathy too.

Yours,

Al

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 23, 1944 (B) V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

I wrote you a disjointed V-mail this morning, and this promises to be little better. It was, in fact, a very dull day, and I had a nap this afternoon which helped shorten it. I fell asleep reading a stupid, though probably justifiable, excoriation of Laski's Faith, Reason and Civilization by Wm Chamberlain in the American Mercury for September which fell into my hands today. After I finish writing you, which is certainly a bright spot in the day, I'll read the rest of the mag and a couple of articles in the August Esquire which I also inherited from someone. It is certainly going to be a dull winter, and if I don't watch out, you will be getting a very dull man back who will probably only be good for those responses known as carnal, as contrasted to intellectual

and will otherwise respond only with a stupid "huh" to everything you say or do. Sometimes I am prone to say I couldn't stand another winter like this, but that is of course ridiculous and I'll stand it perfectly well. The remarkable thing is that a human being can stand practically anything if he has to, and I'm nowhere near practically anything yet. Sometimes, as I think I wrote you long ago, I tell myself that by virtue of my education and sensitive nature, I should feel all this bad living more. But alas and alack I am apparently a case of developed sensitivity and it is too well-contained to interfere with eating any old thing, sleeping anywhere and passing the time of day pointlessly. You must be now feeling the same way, though I think that you have had the greater pleasure of developing something you weren't entirely convinced that you had in you. I believe there were times when you were a little frightened that you could ever be anything but sensitive and skittish and certainly would lift your eyebrow at the thought that you could execute a care-full and long-term stretch by the numbers. However, I do not think this sort of life will last much longer for both of us. When I said winter, I really believe the first part of winter only. We have two more months before Christmas. Certainly, we should swing another haymaker at Germany before then. If it succeeds, the war is over here. If it fails, the war goes into the Spring. Let us pray, children.

Meanwhile I shall miss holding you close to me and kissing you actually and not on paper. Though time does have the effect of spreading the pain of a lover throughout his system, it has the advantage, most fortunately for him, of deadening the sharpness of the pain, the memory of the touch and the proximity of the detail. I am so much in love with you that if in addition to this general melancholy were added the specific torments of a day-old memory, I would be *[three words cut off. Last one "lost" ?]*.

Your

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 25, 1944

Darling --

Guess what! More perfume came today, to console me for that awful mis-step of the cleaning women. Both scents are lovely, although I don't know how they compared to the Renoir. I sniffed about the floor where she had dropped it, and where the varnish has peeled off like a banana skin, but my befuddled nostrils could detect no difference although ordinarily Kathy's room seems to be absolutely laden with the odor of spilled Renoir. But when you get a lot of perfume up close you can't tell the difference, at least I can't. But thanks loads, darling. I have secreted the bottles away in a drawer where neither child nor Flossie can get at them. A bitter lesson it was, however.

I couldn't get to write you yesterday because my day was just full up with politics. In the afternoon and the evening I made calls with this other girl, using a list of names the Democratic precinct captain had given me as being doubtful. Some were Democratic, some Republican, and I doubt whether we changed anybody's minds, since I am loath to mumble more than a few words to anybody. We just leave the literature, praise our friends and sneer at our enemies (behind their backs of course) and scuttle off. That's independent political activity for you. Now if we could fix a parking ticket for them or leave them a Thanksgiving turkey, maybe we would be more effectual. Some of the people in this precinct we're working in are colored -- you know that little row of houses on Kenwood between 53rd and 54th. They were very nice and mostly Democratic, we found. But even though you know you're not changing anybody's minds, somehow I'm loath to abandon or condemn this form of activity wholly, on the bare chance that we may do some good somewhere. After we finished making calls last night we went to this meeting of neighborhood workers and I got home rather late. This afternoon I went out again with Helen Baker, who also has a baby, so the two infants consoled each other while we went racing up and down stairs.

I am enclosing a wisp of Kathy's hair which I had to cut off because it was full of pink paint from the bathroom. So it serves a double purpose -- to show you what color her hair is and what color the bathroom is too.

But I am getting increasingly less faith in anything -- political activity, movies, alcohol or friends -- as a panacea for my longing for you. That isn't a very good psychological state to be in, for sure, and you'd think that by now I would have gotten used to my single state. But it just proves my contention that absence gets worse as it is prolonged, and that if anything, one's philosophy for tolerating it is reduced by time, not increased. I keep dreaming about you too. I've had two dreams this week that were practically identical -- you came in for a short time and I knew you were going away again, yet we couldn't manage to spend any time together at all. I knew you were here yet I couldn't find you and would keep taking long bus rides in search. I kept feeling that if I found you I could have a second baby, so that even if you went away again I would have two babies, and that would be something. I don't know if that's such a hot indication -- my willingness to assume the responsibility of practically an unlimited amount of children single-handed, so to speak. The truth is, of course, that Kathy is no longer a full-time job for me, and that I feel that she isn't sufficient reason for my being, yet of course I can't have a career and her both. Oh well, I'll live, my current and favorite rationalization for all my woes. And it's silly for me to let them out on you -- silly and cruel -- because there's nothing you can do about all this and it only adds to the burden of your frustration. Anyway, it proves I'm damnably, desperately, in love with you.

Kathy is fine. She plays a very rough game of hide and seek now, both of us crawling around the floor like demons, with her screeching with delight every time she finds me. It's funny the way babies and dogs like to play this game and the way they work themselves up finding somebody they knew they were going to find anyway.

Well, I have to take a bath now and warm up my cold feet. I must have poor circulation or something, since the rest of me is broiling.

All my love, as ever --

Jill

P.S. I sent you a very dumb postcard the other day, put out by the CIO Pol. Act. Com. I hope it won't annoy you too much. At the time I thought the drawing and colors were pretty but now I don't even think that.

The house is lousy with Roosevelt buttons. I keep stepping on them every time I maneuver about barefoot.

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 25, 1944

Dearest Jill,

Call me silly, but I've been just amusing myself by reading the personal ads in the Sat. Review of Literature which happened my way today. I may be wrong, but a personal ad, "Want friends," "intellectual companions," "someone who likes E. A. Poe and cats," is so absurd an attempt to draw response from the mysterious environment. Not that I consider myself wholly immune to the cheery thoughts they bring up. One find himself answering the ad automatically - thus, would I qualify for this young intellectual to wants to talk ART with companionable liberal man? or as a member of a "leftist book circle"? or to discuss fish with a fish-bowl fancier? (Could that be you?)

Anyhow I got started on this letter and it should be a long one. For yesterday I had no time to write and amidst a world of work came a wealth of letters from you, two magazines & a very long letter from Bill who had much to say on everything. I repeat, I've been very busy for the last day and a half - time out for meals only and will be for another day or so after I finish this letter, and

had little sleep because I read all the mail again before finally going to sleep last night. Everyone here got mail, too, for some reason, the biggest we've had in France. There were four from you, ranging from October 7th to an undated one probably around the fourteenth, which mentioned my letter of Oct. 2. That is fast! With such close communion directly of mind and by innuendo & imagination of body, I feel very high-spirited. In fact, noticing a slight tendency on the part of your letters of late to be grumpy, and knowing that mine have been the same, I'd like to suggest, in a spirit of mutual elevation not to be confused with Boosterism, that we write each other amusing and frivolous letters for a couple of weeks. So instead of reading into my lines when I describe the gallon of cold water that fell down my neck last night from a sagging piece of canvas that I am bitter about the experience, you should sit back on your haunches and laugh like hell. Just to show you how unpredictable I am, I did laugh.

But let me proceed in this new joyous mood. The weather is exhilarating. To the low grey sky and the drip, dripping rain is added the new mud of our present encampment. I always prefer to refer to it as "merde" and mutter it so often that one of my French friends told me gently that the proper word was "boue", thinking I didn't know the real word and fearing that someday social complications might ensue. So my feet are cold as only yours are and therefore, you need never fear that particular obstacle to our rapprochement.

Dammit all! I can barely answer the letters I have and another of yours comes in just now, destroying the string of superlatives I had lined up like soldiers for the first ones and leaving me without verbal reserves of any sort. Kathy may be just getting out of the "mmmm" stage but I'm in it right now for fair. That goes for your latest picture as well as the Sept. 22nd letter which accompanied it. You are too cruel with me -- you should write dull letters which won't stir up my imagination and make me practically in need of a strait-jacket, then you outflanked me too, because before my letter arrives, making critical remarks about certain photographs, a photograph of you circles around

it and rises now before me to plague me with remorse. This photo, by your vague friend, is the best of you and Kathy together of all I've received, and is also the best one of you I've had in many a moon. Dammit - why can't all your photographs be at least as good. You're a very pretty girl, with a body better than ninety percent of the pin-up bodies. I've always loved your neck & shoulders, your hair and your straight bearing and yet this was one of the very few times they've ever appeared in a photo. And you've yet to give me a picture of your legs that are as they are, namely (... whistle follows). Instead, the moment you see a camera, you crouch like an ape and grimace at the poor thing -, you muss your hair, put on an old, old garment of sorts and, if you have a chance, look down or backwards when the button is pressed as if you were Lucky Luciano being thrust into a showdown or snarl as if you were throwing a brick through a Republican office's window. We were always smiling together, whether it was warranted or not, but yet hardly a picture of you is smiling and I have only my memory, which, I must admit, is excellent regarding you to sketch in the giggles. Perhaps this excitement surprises you, but you are lovely in the picture, and I have always thought you the most attractive girl physically I've ever seen. But sometimes I think you're too damned self-deprecating to appreciate that sentiment. Furthermore, when I say physically, I don't exclude any other aspects. You are as always my all-around girl, darling ol' pal of mine.

And finally, everyone who writes me tells me that you are prettier and more charming than ever, until I'm beginning to feel like a worthless mediocrity. I know that even the best pictures can't re-create you for me, because you are for me a moving experience, not a still thing, an inert model (Hollywood or inanimate) or a cut-out, like the lifting of the blinds to let in the beautiful morning - an act, that is, - something that is meaningless if statically viewed. I'll explain myself more fully some day when we're lying in some sunny field.

It will be this coming spring, I believe. I think the last offensive has started now in East Prussia and that it will catch the burnt autumn grass along the whole perimeter of the Reich. Each day

is still a trial, it is true, but the days of trial are numbered. Afterwards, we can reconstruct the peace together. I'll see that your maimed finger gets the proper attention and that the offending stonework be banished from the streets of Chicago, that you get a new bicycle, that Kathy gets the toys she wants from little boys who are older than her, and that I myself get properly bathed.

Always your

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 26, 1944 V-MAIL

Dear Pen Pal,

Honestly, darling, I'm beginning to feel like one of those lonely adolescents who correspond with a buddy, preferably from someplace exotic like the Argentine, he's never seen, and pours out all his woes and hopes to this invisible mentor. I suppose I should do it in bad French to you, to complete the analogy. Of course our relationship was raised, or if you want to look at it another way, reduced today to something other than pen pals. I refer to your request, which I instanter complied with, to pay Hank Dannenberg 50 bananas. Since I have lost a bike, bought several dresses I don't like, lost two pairs of gloves and broken one bottle of perfume this fall, as well as losing a mailbox key and ruining two sweaters in the washing machine, as of today, I have no comment to make. I sent your letter too to Hank and cross-wise sent you the package he sent me for you (also today) by the clever ruse of bringing one of your more illegible V-mails to the post office and telling the girl it was a letter of request for said box. I didn't open the box to see what was in it - - just too lazy, it had nothing to do with honor -- so you must tell me when you get it. Here is a lot of wasted space to tell you I love you in.

I also got your letter of Oct. 15 today, which was notable

because you said that part of your driving habiliments was a scarf and I sent you another one for Christmas, a very lush imported one, so now you have two scarves and will probably be annoyed. Jippers, now I am annoyed. There's not a cigarette in the house and I like nothing better than to smoke and write you after dinner.

I just spoke to Mom and she sends her love, as always. She is electioneering in her own way among her friends, whom she reports are distressingly Republican. Vic also is giving out the Word, probably more convincingly than most adult election workers, your own sweet shy wife included. Mom said he got in such an argument with Mamie she chased him out the back door (Mamie did, not Mom). That was always the way with Vic -- when adults couldn't get around his incontrovertible logic and rhetoric, they pulled their rank on him. I remember Dad doing that several times, memorably when Vic was refuting Dad's anti-English (or maybe it was Negro or Jewish) utterances. I know that song you told Hank about. Even the bad words.

I can't decide what to buy Mom for her anniversary. I'm tempted to get them a bottle of whiskey and some flowers and let it go at that.

This letter has been interrupted twice, first for a long harangue from Duffy, the precinct captain, second for a long phone call from J. Kelley. Now I am a little hoarse from talking. Joan's and mine phone calls are phenomenal in length and content. We spare each other nothing in the way of tedious detail of our daily lives. I think I'll look around for a cigarette again. Hell, maybe a butt will do. I am now smoking a three-quarter inch butt and it is damned uncomfortable, as well as not very tasty. To what lengths will a passion take one. Actually I don't smoke very much -- about four or five a day -- but I just don't like to be thwarted. Some more of my exquisite printing: I love, nay, adore you.

Well, I just be off to my cold bed. I'm sleeping in Kathy's room again because it is quieter and the bed is right under the wide-

open window, a thought that must horrify you. But I love it. And you, too - a lot more than anything.

(heart with arrow diagram)

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 26, 1943 V-MAIL

Darling,

I found this crumpled V-letter already addressed, so I'll scribble a few lines on it. Mainly I want to tell you that I received a most charming photograph of you and Kathy, you looking absolutely lovely and desirable. But more details are in a long letter I just sent you.

As always, your

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 27, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Papa -- for so I refer to you in conversations with our child. I just pulled off a neat coup by giving her my bunch of keys just as she was about to pull the pages out of your Gibbon Decline and Fall. Not that it would have been such a great loss. I also, I hope, completed my cycle of poor autumnal luck by leaving the iron on my new corduroy suit as I went to answer the phone this morning. Well, it wasn't such a nice suit anyway. But Jeepers, don't the worst things happen to me? I thought I'd learned everything the hard way already.

We just came back from walking around, ringing doorbells with Helen Baker, only nobody was home and Helen's baby kept crying, distracting us from our mission. Kathy enjoys these trips very much, however, to the extent of crying when we come

home, until I put the radio on loud and provided her with another distraction.

h d n g y

Your own sweet Kathy inscribed the above letters while getting on my lap. I am at a loss to determine their significance. At best it looks like an infantile curse, such as "hell, --- this damn no good jerky typewriter anyway. I got a letter from Daisy today, saying that Jerry was in Rome, cursing that he has missed you. Well, so do I. I wish Dytel would show up so that I could get a little first-hand information from somebody.

I read that David Xardner, the son of Ring & the New Yorker movie critic, was killed at Aachen, while covering the 1st Army for the New Yorker. This rather depressed me for some reason or other. Also, I spoke to Julie Hess the other day. She is pregnant again, the lucky dog, & John has finally succeeded in getting overseas & she thinks he is with the 1st Army in Holland. He was sent as a replacement after numerous pleas to that effect.

I heard Roosevelt speak tonight over the radio & a very good speech it was. I think he'll win, don't you. God, I hope so. Dewey is a double-dealing dog.

God, darling, I miss & love you. Kathy does too, even if she doesn't know it. A million kisses to you. OOOXXX Jill



Postcard: John Dewey in the lap of Herbert Hoover.

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 27, 1943 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

The war continues as the world's greatest nuisance today and there is nothing else worthy of note, no letters from you, no sunshine of any sort save the memory of a pork chop at dinner last night. The world of people remain the same; my old friends are still my friends, the people I dislike I still dislike, though not so as would hurt, and those I can't make up my mind about still tread the fine wire. But as we say, c'est la f-----g guerre. There is absolutely no progress in this life. It is really the world I didn't make. Any sort of civilian life would seem a thrilling denial of that statement. (Late flash from chow house: roast pork tonight.) I'm glad I sent out a message to my crew at the dump to get back for supper. They'll be able to get some of it. This job of mine is a funny damn thing. In order not to make mistakes in it, one must know the army from top to bottom in a general sort of way. And we get results too, of course, mostly on the direct cause and effect level as far as can be noticed, but indirectly too.

In fact, man for man, I think we account for more than our share of Germans.

The reason that typewriter jumps is that it isn't the same machine. Supper came and with it two letters from you, one from Sept. 28, the other from Oct. 15, together with a reprint from Buzz of that article he wrote on Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony. Between all of that and general sleepiness, I didn't get to finish this last night and am doing so this morning. Your latest letter was certainly a long one, five or six pages, all about abandoning our only child and skipping off to the big city. Ah well, I suppose it is one of the effects of the war, the individual restlessness, the distaste for petty routine, the desire to be part of the great mass orgy of the war, the urge to move, to have flings, to desire to make time run faster by rushing into it, instead of letting it pass by.

I'm not really serious, I hope you understand. But what a letter

that was, full of all sorts of things, including your own particular kind of beefing which is at least as full-throated and depictive as mine, even if more libidinal and less analytic. The next thing I'll probably hear is that you intend to divorce me because Kathy is so much like me and she makes a great nuisance of herself trying to dominate you.

All I want to do to you, meanwhile, is to kiss you and a few other things, which, if they be domination, I'm sure you wouldn't mind anyway.

I'll write more tonight. All my love for now.

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 28?, 1944 V-MAIL

My darling -

Tonight I sit down to write you after one of these days of toil which would seem to be beastly but which really are very funny & heartening, especially after a nap in the middle of the day. I guess it was sunny & not burdensome because, after I had done a huge wash in the middle of which I broke the washing machine wringer and also discovered the cleaning woman had broken my perfume bottle (Goddam her hide except that the house will smell perpetually lovely), the laundry man passed by my sweating form hanging up clothes that kept dropping in the alley and I said, in reply to his quizzical & sympathetic glance "You know I'm just too goddamed cultured to do housework." He thought it uproariously funny and on the strength of that, I've been carried through the day. Anyway, fall housecleaning is finally over and that's something to be grateful for.

And your letter today (Oct. 10) made me believe that everything is pretty good & worth while. Even tho it was sad in tone, the thought that you worry about me and that we share equally in a loneliness which has a cure -- the presence of each other

ultimately -- gives me a poignant sort of happiness, I guess that's an awfully dumb way of putting it. I want to tell you that I love you and need you terribly, but the very fact of that -- of feeling deprived -- makes the thought of the future so much better. It would be terrible if one had nothing to look forward to or no one to really care what became of one. This way I always have you loving me and judging me and worrying

whether I'll ultimately break my legs crossing 55th St.

If I'm not scared or lonely more often, it is, of course, because of Kathy. She's so solid & real that I can't very well fear the unknown when I'm with her. But when I'm downtown alone I get that feeling of rattling around in a large world filled with unfriendly presences. I look at other people & marvel at their self-assurance & wonder whether I look that way too, & whether they also are not afraid and anxious to get home to a child or lover. It must be so much harder for you, who have nobody's physical presence to turn to.

I don't think the mere fact of permanent quarters makes much difference one way or the other. I could always feel assured and at home no matter where we were -- in all the furnished rooms - - much more so than I do now, returning to an apartment empty for all practical purposes.

But I keep hoping that something will happen to bring you home soon -- a new assignment maybe. And then there is the thought that neither we nor the Russians have thrown everything at them yet. So maybe the war will be over soon anyway.

I love you, darling, now and always.

Your

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 28, 1943

Darling Jill,

I might as well write you before going over to chow to relieve the monotony of the wait and obviate the possibility of not getting around to a letter tonight. Thus you will know precisely what your precious one did or did not do today straight from his ruby red lips, tinged at the moment with the remnants of a small bottle of Mirabelle, a local rot-gut product of the cognac family. It is highly unfortunate that the American army does not see fit to supply its wandering boys with a grog ration. I find that heat applied internally is as good as heat applied externally and a lot less trouble. So here's mud in your eye, charmaine, as the last gulp goes down and the initial stages of the muscle paralysis set in.

The day is clear but cold. The colors of the autumn persist everywhere, becoming exceedingly brilliant on a day like this. We should be riding horses, old pal, on a day like this, scattering the beautiful dead leaves before us and winding up in some desolate spot where we can cook a steak, drink some hot coffee and bed down in the same sleeping bag. Or we should be sailing, you sailing and I watching, beating the rushing clouds to wherever they're going, and following it with a French dinner at an American French restaurant where the French have had half a chance to cook up something. Or we should be spending the afternoon together in a warm house, before a fire, teaching Kathy the fallacies of the categorical imperative when confronted with the hedonistic potentiality, reading of the trials of other people instead of suffering them, and slowly beginning the long, excruciating process of preparing supper which will finally end in a bestial orgasm. But fate barring these things to us for the moment, though not entirely defeating the eternal human protests against its will, we can be happy in knowing that these things are in us, neither the dust of a frustrated past, nor the air-built imaginings of the future, but the experience of the past, tested by time, and tempered by reflection and resolve.

I told you yesterday that I received Buzz's article on Shostakovich. I read it through twice. It is difficult reading. Finally I have concluded that it is highly original and significant, and though some things might have been expressed more simply, I would say outright that it stands as one of the best pieces of musical criticism ever written. One must know the state of music as well as psychology to realize what a syncretistic marvel and unfettered conception it reveals. I appreciate it more just now too because I encounter so few examples of really complex intellectual modern work. I have indeed become an expert on mediocrity, which, though as difficult perhaps, is quite a different feeling from being an expert on experts. Though difficult to express, I mean to say that I have lost the thrill of treating only with experts and competing only on that complex level, and miss it sadly. And I wonder whether I'll ever go home again, figuratively speaking.

But I must go to dinner now, leaving the complimentary close for afterwards, complimentary as far as you're concerned signifying superlative.

Dinner was very good tonight, the death of a good steer being involved somewhere along the line. Afterwards we had a celebration of the return of Harold Adams from Paris. Tom Crowell got drunk and was the only casualty. I don't feel sleepy because of the drinking and some sausage that I ate and will read a little of Beard's book before sleeping. The night is clear and beautiful, and so are you.

Always your

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 29, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

I just got back from a perfect day at the family's. Everything

came off just nicely -- the weather, Mom's roast lamb dinner, Kathy's behavior, the boys who for a change didn't attack one another, and the long sleep I had in the front bedroom this afternoon. I brought up a bottle of rye and one of decent wine and the fudge I made, and we all got pretty tight on rye highballs circa one PM. Then I took a little ride on Vic's bike, which I financed the fixing of, since I might want to borrow it. I went over to Billis but he wasn't there and I had to talk to Mrs. S. quite a while in the vestibule, because I didn't dare go upstairs leaving the bike unlocked, meanwhile breathing the penetrating fumes of rye all over her and the vestibule. I wonder what she must think of me now. I do agree with you that she is very nice although you could see how one might mistake her for the Carlson type of middle-aged mamma. Or maybe you think Mrs. Carlson is nice too. I can't stand that querulous, demanding sweetness. And those Swedes are so goddam clean. A fat chance you would have around a wife or mother like that.

Ed and Vic met me at the Southport station. It was the first time I'd seen Ed in his uniform and he really looked just like you when you were an enlisted man. I said as much immediately and gave him a big kiss on the strength of it. Ed took it in good grace. He really is very manly about being kissed by older women.

Mom told me Howard and his wife and his wife's son (whom everybody thinks is Howard's too) are back in town after their unsuccessful Texas venture with Uncle Joe. It seems Joe sold the place from under Howard's very feet, after Howard had gone all the way down there for the 100 a week Joe would pay him. Now Howard is living in Evanston and working in a bar there and also has a job at night. Mom described in detail the beastly way he treats the little boy, who, having been shunted around in boarding schools until his mother achieved the doubtful honor of marrying Howard and who, having been subjected to the parental attentions of Howard and Mary since, is growing up to be a first-class neurotic. Howard is really one of the more ghastly personalities I've met -- stingy, avaricious, a bully with his wife, obsequious with his betters, utterly lacking in

social conscience. Jeepers, and he's your cousin. Oh well, we'd better not get started on that, except that I doubt whether my family could produce exactly that type of defective personality, although it has produced many others. But really, after what Mom told me about the way he treats the kid, I doubt whether I could ever treat with him socially again, and it always was an effort, needless to say.

As I re-read this letter, I find it has more waspish elements than you'd expect after a satisfactory day with really a nice family. But I have a stiff neck from a cold which is in my neck, I suppose, and anyway, I never did feel too good after stuffing myself at the noon hour. Anyway, I am a bitch, so there.

Mom got Kathy a high chair at Wards for me because she keeps jumping out of the low one you see in those pictures I sent you. She also is getting her a kind of scooter to scoot in.

I love you. Goodbye for now.

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 30, 1944

Hello Jill-Pill, my dearest,

It's a dull day but I don't feel so dull. Perhaps it's the red meat we've had for the last couple of meals. I feel like chasing you through the woods, for one thing, which shows that meat is really an aphrodisiac. For one thing again, I've decided that should we take the extremely pessimistic view that the war will end in the spring, I still find it a laughable obstacle. Just think, only a few paltry months. Hell, I could wait for you for years. This ain't nothing. I could chase an infinitely longer rainbow if it had you at the end of it.

It is late afternoon. I am starting this before dinner, lacking anything pressing to do. I was over to see Hans a little earlier. That's Hans Wallenberg. He lives two dingy houses down from me in a cold room, and has the flu of some sort today. But we

had a good talk and he felt well when I left him. He was reading some letters of Frederick the Great which were very interesting, showing among other things the deep roots of the Germanic conception of the duty of men and remarkable parallels in Frederick's thinking at a particularly tough point in his career to Hitler's thinking at the moment. Then we discussed Buzz's article which Hans read and liked, diverging from the article to all sorts of things that suggested themselves, such as the need of great artists for mass response when important events are on hand, the inability of the analyst to be an artist, i.e. the critic to be creative, and the failure of painting in our age to strike the people. The analysis of music shows, because of its clear symbols and devices, how the divergence of the artist from his environment is quantitative. Sometimes common symbols are used, sometimes original ones. The ratio between the two decides the immediacy of the response and the greatness of the work at least in some part. These are not new ideas and they are still not complete ideas but they should be worked over a lot. My great objection to Joyce, for example, always was that he fails to convey meaning to an audience and therefore fails in the social function of art -which, by the way, I don't confuse for a second with the old leftist clamor for what they call "socially-conscious" art.

Yesterday I spent an interesting, otherwise unoccupied hour at our ammo dump conversing with a Sgt. Galloway, one of the widely divergent souls I have assigned to me. He is, as Jim suggested when he saw him while accompanying me on an inspection, a "colored gentleman". That is, he is smooth and has "been around". He lived strangely enough only about a mile from us in Chicago, just the other side of Washington Park. We had an interesting talk about the neighborhood, mostly just repeating the names of streets and other mundane items which become important to the exile. He used to be a cook on a Pullman, which fixes very well his wide experience and savoir-faire. Among other things, we got around to talking politics. He is a Roosevelt man and said that most of the Pullman workers were also. The most intriguing idea for me came when in a

discussion of how the colored people, according to a story he told, voted Republican whenever anyone mentioned Lincoln. He then went on to say that he heard someone say sometimes that Lincoln only freed the slaves in order to win the war. Now, the significance in my mind is that he, and men like him, independent, proud and competent workers, unconsciously and consciously dislike the idea of crediting Lincoln with freeing the slaves, because it presumes that they were an inert mass and that some omnipotent white man waved his wand and they were free. Galloway thought that, though he was cautious in expressing the idea, the negroes would have freed by the forces of history apart from the desires of any white benevolent societies or philanthropists. The principle behind his attitude I find very striking, and I am now almost convinced that the whole propaganda of the Lincoln myth is a bad thing for the negro and among the more intelligent of them is actually a subtle insult.

9 P.M.

I've just returned from a movie at a nearby headquarters. The room was crowded but towards the end I got far enough away from the screen to make out various characters dancing & singing. It was Stars of 1945 or something with Eleanor Powell and a good little skit by our hero, W. C. Fields. It was gay, light entertainment that was fun despite its vacuity. They had a good short on the big pipeline from Texas to N.J. too.

I'm enclosing what I consider a bad picture of myself, but perhaps you love me enough to read desirable features into it. I'm going to send you nicer pictures, maybe, in a few days when I get a roll I have on hand developed and printed. But ugly or not though I be, I still love you and I don't love anyone else.

Kisses to Kathy, the little dear.

Al

JILL TO AL OCTOBER 31, 1944

Darling --

Guess who came to see me today -- none other than Dystal! Having heard from Laura that he was in town, I called him yesterday and this noon he paid a call on us, hurriedly to be sure, because he was leaving for New York this afternoon. He was awfully willing and nice about doing it, and it was a great thrill for me to get such first-hand news of you. He told me you looked fine -- that you were heavier than the picture I have of you on prominent display from Rome. He told me what you were doing and also, about that one-in-a-thousand chance that he might be able to get you here for the Far Eastern stuff, if he decides to head it up, or whatever his role will be. He said things in OWI were so snafu that you never could tell what would happen next. But the interview lightened my heart considerably, particularly the news that you were well and doing your job with your customary verve.

He came at noon, the hour that Kathy, right before her meal, is at her liveliest and most cantankerous too. She crawled around our feet and I tried hard to keep her running smoothly, such as by suavely removing rare books and cigarettes from her path. However, she managed to go to the bathroom in her pants at this extraordinary and unseemly time. I didn't want to use up his precious time changing and cleaning her, so she proceeded to crawl around unchanged, emanating the odor of a sewer as she went. I don't know what he thought. Then, at the last minute, just as he was leaving, she fell on her face and we said our goodbyes amidst her piercing screams. It was quite a strain, needless to say. I had washed my hair and dressed myself up reasonably neatly, even with stockings, so as to make a good impression, lest no one think that DeGrazia's wife is an old bag, but Kathy had to go and destroy the sublimity of the scene. He claimed that he didn't remember me, from Esky, which may be true but was also tactful, since it completed the dissociation of roles between Jill, the dopey employee and Jill the slick wife of Al.

I have been working like a dog the past couple of days and will continue to do so until elections. Yesterday I went out canvassing and then to a neighborhood meeting last night and this afternoon, right after Dystal left, I left Kathy with Priscilla and worked all afternoon downtown, stuffing envelopes. Tomorrow I have to distribute leaflets for Rep. Rowan (from our Cong. district) in front of the Hyde Park Bank Building and then I have to organize mothers with babies for a grand baby parade Saturday, carrying those silly signs for Roosevelt I told you about, down 55th St. I feel very virtuous, all in all.

I got a letter from Walter yesterday, saying among other things that they were for Roosevelt, which cheered me considerably. Now I'm sure Dewey doesn't have a chance. Walter said that his firm had tabled their expansion project for the nonce so he didn't need to borrow money from us. That was good news too.

Johnny Hess's wife Jane is in town and is coming out to lunch tomorrow, which will be fun. She is a very nice girl although her theatrical air would be disturbing to sold solid citizens, like Buss.

Dystal thought Kathy was the spit and image of you, as indeed she is. She resembles you too in the reception she gives me when I come home from an afternoon downtown -- in effect if not exactly in the manner in which it's carried out. Priscilla was holding her when I came in this evening and Kathy let out a yell and practically jumped out of Priscilla's arms if she hadn't had a good grip on her. Then I took her on my lap and she kept saying *momma*, jumping up and down and giving me that peculiar version she has of a kiss -- half bite and half slobber. It's amazing how early that gesture is implanted in their behavior, that biting of the faces of loved ones. It's easy to see how at the age of a year and a half, as Joe was last summer, a baby comes to be a very accomplished kisser. Kathy is standing up more frequently now -- alone, I mean, for as much as a minute at a time it seems. She occasionally tries to put one foot in front of the other as she stands, but she almost immediately collapses. I took her to the doctor yesterday and he pronounced her fine. She only gained a quarter of a pound so he asked me

if she was an active child, to which I could only reply, "Jesus!". She is now taking fresh homogenized milk instead of formula -- i.e., canned milk and water -- but I have to boil the milk and the bottles too so I don't see where it's any easier. He is stricter about this than other pediatricians or friends of mine, who allow the mother to give the babies fresh unboiled milk in just plain washed bottles. I wonder how long I shall keep to the letter of his instructions, knowing this. He also told me that she'd damned well better get used to drinking out of a cup, because when she is one year old he will order the bottle taken away from her, whether she drinks milk or not out of a cup. This I consider an unnecessarily harsh and arbitrary point of view, not to mention un-Freudian, and will disregard it in the light of my own readings in the field. So from here on in Dr. Wile and I part company, ideologically anyway. He is a good doctor but very old-fashioned in his point of view, although actually he's relatively young in years. I know that his nurses handle Kathy too peremptorily, so that when she is dumped in the scale she is scared stiff and starts to yell, and doesn't stop until the examination is over. And since Kathy has a very loud voice, his office sounds like a torture chamber. I don't see why they couldn't handle the whole matter of weighing and giving shots more tactfully. It must be a very hard experience on a young thing to be mauled and stuck in the arm like that.

I was reading the Daily News carefully tonight and noticed to my horror that the paper is changing radically and for the worse. They have a new publisher, a guy named John Knight in place of the late Frank Knox, and he writes some of the editorials and must put his stamp on others. Anyway, they are extremely conservative except for the support they are giving Northwestern's Curtiss MacDougall who is running for Congress from the Tenth District, and written in a style strictly from Brisbane, you know, short paragraphs with a sentence calculated to hit a poorly educated moron at every turn. They've gotten four new comic strips from the Scripps Howard syndicate which has notably lousy comics and a couple of new anti-administration and unnotable columnists, although they still

retain Lahey to give the paper a semblance of "independence" it lays such voracious claim to. The make-up is getting closer and tighter and concomitantly lousier and all in all, I think I shall convert myself to reading the Times, which itself is a bitter dose to swallow from the point of view of make-up & funnies. The Sun may be a thin little rag but it certainly has got beautiful typography and of course, its politics are fine. So are the funnies.

And with these great thoughts I leave you. I guess it's a good thing sometimes that our only mode of communication is by letter since you would never let me get these profundities off if you were here to seal my lips with a scornful remark, a cynical laugh, a black look or a kiss. But no matter how you choose to rebut my arguments, I'll always love you.

Your

Jill

AL TO JILL OCTOBER 31, 1944

Dearest Jill,

I am spending a fine evening. I have battened down the hatches of my two-by-four room, built a roaring fire and am avidly perusing a late copy of Time, The Saturday Review for August 26th, recently arrived, and the Atlantic Monthly for September. The War, in short, is some thousands of miles away, despite occasional noises and though I left it only two hours ago. It is unfortunate that I can't have someone here like yourself to make comments to for I have become like a baby towards all phenomena of the outside world, full of wonder and questions. You will have a time between Kathy and me. However, you have the consolation that I am physically more able than she is and you will be able to spend a couple of weeks in New York satisfied that we two will be able to take care of each other the while we crawl on all fours satisfying our childish curiosity.

I have just made some Nescafé in a small pop bottle which I believe contained Mirabelle in my account to you of several days ago. The coffee isn't so good since I couldn't get the water to boil and had only one lump of sugar in all of my possessions, but it will do.

I had a good hot shower today and soaped myself all over several times, thus making up for the length of time between baths. I wouldn't even hesitate to approach spotless you now, clean that I am. I arrived at the shower early and the GI who stoked the furnace that heats the water joined me singing plaintive hillbilly songs under the pelting droplets. The resonance of a stone-walled room would draw songs from a stick.

Tom Crowell went to Paris with Pittman this morning for a couple of days and I am momentarily deprived of my pleasantest companion. He hung a good one on the other evening and as usual was covered with shame the next morning. He is, even drunk, a boon companion and is, more than that, an utterly reliable working partner. He is one of the best printers in America. If I knew what he does about the business, my fortune would be made, as his has been already, and I could sit back and write you poetry for the rest of my life. I think my main postwar problem will be to keep from doing just that without accomplishing the other first.

I wonder sometimes whether I shouldn't give you more assurance that our financial future is something to be viewed without shuddering. If you are like me, then you don't feel the slightest doubt, but then I have no assurance that you are like me. Maybe I shouldn't expose you to shock as I did when I asked you to send Hank fifty dollars for a remote bet payment, but honestly I don't believe that was a typical financial transaction on my part. Lately, too, I've been bothered to realize that I haven't saved anything of my pay as an officer. I don't even think of saving the part of my salary I draw here whereas perhaps I should. Somehow the paltry sum that would entail doesn't seem worthwhile from the soldier's viewpoint. Tell me

what you think, because you register the financial pulse of the family. Incidentally, regarding your mention of my post-war study, I have no intention of doing odd jobs at the same time unless they are very interesting and fruitful. I know about our Bill of Rights too; I have a copy of the whole law with me. But I am doubtful still whether or not to choose again the academics now that I am out of it and free to choose again. I should certainly gain a clearer perspective, no matter what I do.

I've stacked and sorted your letters I've received since being in France and they make quite a book. Do my letters amount to so much too? They must, I guess. I must have said I love you a thousand times, still it's no more than the number of kisses you used to get in a single day or will get. And the thousandth one didn't seem repetitive at all.

Always your love,

Al

AS the Seventh and Third Armies joined in a solid front moving North across France, and only a pocket of resistance remained in Southern Alsace after the liberation of Strasbourg (the Lieutenant had already entered Alsace in September), Nazi killings were at peak and a million people were being driven into Germany. At least 150,000 lives a month would be saved for every month by which the War might be shortened. Were the War to end before the end of the year 1944, as many as a million souls would be saved. Not included would be the saved lives, otherwise to be lost, from among the friendly and hostile armies engaged, including the American armies in Europe and the Pacific, the hundreds of thousands of civilian lives saved (from aerial bombing, as well as on the ground, as in the bombings, largely useless, that devastated Berlin and Dresden -- said to be the most beautiful city of Central Europe). The atomic bomb might not have been rushed to completion or might not have been dropped.

Could so much of the disaster that actually occurred really be

traced back and laid to the frequently uninspired and incompetent political and military leadership of the Allies? There was some indication that such was the case in this soldier's taste of war that trailed back to the initial landings in Africa and included delays all along the line in the timing of invasions and the giving of battle. And perhaps even back to the delay in inducting him into the Armed Forces, the transfers about, the largely useless training that he shared with twelve million other soldiers.

There were numerous psychological facets to this hippopotamatic military behavior. To complicate problems at the top, to give excuses, too, for all manner of timidity and delay and logistical excess were a cavernous and maddening echo of the egalitarian slogan: "Not one of our boys shall be sacrificed unnecessarily." The British recalled the Somme and Verdun, the Americans: Mom. An obsessive inflation of the word "unnecessary" led often to inactivity and indecisiveness.

The thoughts, no less than the feet, of a soldier often stink, so one could imagine two additional reasons for the generals and politicians of the West not to exert themselves over reports of the destruction of Jewry in the East. Jews had disappeared from the West of Europe, hence no vivid emergency was close at hand; the Nazis had thoughtfully murdered their Western victims in walking columns, trains, and gas ovens elsewhere. Moreover, importantly, Western high conservatives, industrialists, and military officers consciously and unconsciously identified Jews with Bolshevism just as did the Nazis, and were therefore bewildered and turned off by the news and mental pictures that arose from it.

Can even also this be possible: that they had to have reasons to be conducting this World War that were quite sufficient in themselves? That is, they would prefer not to introduce the problem of a lot of strange Jews being driven into camps and killed. The more the Jews who were murdered, one ought to reason, the more the Allied elite could and should in all conscience justify the War. But, not wishing to justify a War to save the Jews, they would suppress considerations and evidence of a veritable holocaust.

Moreover, psychologically, they would avoid taking any steps to

establish its occurrence, extent, and significance. Thereupon they could rest upon their strongly preferred rationale for the War: Nazi aims to conquer the World, attacks on kindred democracies, and aggressive attacks by the Axis powers against the United States of America. All of these things the Lieutenant remarked upon from the beginning of the War to the End. His data bank was enriched, also, when he came to be invited by a grateful Army Orientation Officer to stop off whenever he could and talk to combat troops in reserve or in rest camp, crouched on their cannon and carriers or sprawled on the floors in a half-ruined factory, where he could sense how tenuous was the men's commitment to the Great War as the focus of life's ideals. To venture that they were at war to protect anyone from extermination but Themselves, construed personally, and suspiciously, would be foolhardy. It would also be deluding oneself to think that their experience of war had enhanced their taste for it.

To all of this, as I confessed, the Lieutenant had his back half-turned. He knew more than he needed to know and infinitely more than he had the power to act upon. He could even sympathize with a helpless *Landser* prisoner, who claimed to know nothing of large affairs, who was loyal to Der Führer, and who interpreted the crashing down of his moral and physical world as no more than the maddening din of American artillery bursts.

It is highly doubtful that the Lieutenant had made a proper correlation of events, or knew of the half of them; the same might be said of his comrades, several of them Jews with access to all that he might know. With respect to the genocide of the Jews, the twisted Nazi logic and the events that were determined by it went generally as follows:

1. The job of extirpation of the German and Austrian Jews was nearly completed and remnants had been moved East as the attack on the Soviet Union was launched in June of 1941. Many thousands had saved themselves by flight abroad. The euthanasia campaign against the mentally ill and the old and disabled was carried out on Germans in Germany actively in 1941. Many Jews were being rounded up in France and elsewhere. The Big Rationalization that married Genocide to Total War was not quite born. Total War, including the

redeployment, resettling, and moving of hordes of people was in itself a favorite and early Nazi concept. Not yet Total Murder.

Our Lieutenant knew this and had assimilated its meaning. That is why he was so anti-Nazi and pro-War. He had been well-grounded in the origins of Nazism and chauvinistic fascism in its several forms; his professors and fellow-students at the University of Chicago had seen to this. He had spoken at length to German and Austrian refugees. He knew nearly as much as any well-informed and anxious Jew, and much more than the average politician and citizen or general officer.

2. By the Fall of the first year of the German offensive against the Soviet Union all of the genocidal elements of the Nazi vision and apparatus were coming together and becoming dominant politically and militarily. In the Fall of 1941 and the year 1942, immense massacres were conducted by the SS forces; they had the extensive help of native anti-semites in Poland, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, Latvia, the Ukraine and other conquered Soviet regions, anti-"Jew-Bolsheviks", impressed laborers and prisoners, and often even the German Army. Soviet prisoners were frequently butchered or put into camps and starved. Over half a million of the more than one million Soviet prisoners of the first campaigns died within a year. That the Nazis, with popular German support, waged Total War in fact, and against whole peoples physically, was known to him and his circle of friends and in the civilian and Army milieus where he found himself during this year, the year which saw terrible warfare in Eastern Europe and the beginning of the equally Total War of the Pacific with Japan. At the end of 1942, the British Government, speaking through Anthony Eden, began finally to describe and denounce publicly the accelerating destruction visited by the Nazis upon the Jewish people. It was tardy. Worse, almost no change in policies, nor speed-up in the War, occurred.

3. From 1942 through 1944, massacres by the hundreds occurred throughout Eastern Europe except Hungary and Rumania. In Yugoslavia, fanatic Croatian Catholics, the Ustachis, given an independent State, brutally disposed of over half a million Serbians, including all Jews who could be found. Camps were constructed to hold Jews and others. Great numbers of deaths by starvation and

disease occurred. The brutality, rape, torture and hardships affecting 50,000,000 of those alive and those to die go beyond the record for any other historical epoch. The black-uniformed Nazis and those they set loose had the equivalent effect of the Black Death of the plagues that killed a third of Europe in the Fourteenth Century; they were worse by being flesh and blood, wolves of fellow humans.

Did Our Hero learn of all this? No, only part of it. The media were full of "real war" between uniformed combatants, and had no major interest in following the "human rights violations" intensely and continually. East European ethnic exterminations were remote from everyday life in the army camps throughout the States, and displaced by the widespread attention lent to the Pacific War against Japan.

4. The middle of 1944 witnessed landings in Normandy, Russian victories, the German officers' July 20 attempt to kill Hitler, the defection of Rumania, and abundant absolute evidence of the approaching extermination of Jews when the SS heavily pressured the Hungarians to round up half a million Jews. Then on July 24, 1944 the Majdanek Concentration Camp was liberated before the SS could remove all prisoners and raze it as they had intended to do. (They exhibited a consistent pattern of attempts to hide genocidal operations up to the very end.)

Between August 1944 and January 1945, the population of German work camps and extermination camps rose by 200,000 to over 700,000, despite high death rates. Millions of foreign workers were in Germany, living miserably and under threat of extermination.

The Seventh Army Combat Propaganda Team knew little of the vast cauldron of torture and death that Germany, and Central and Eastern Europe had become. They only knew that it was very bad.

By a strange contradiction and irony, this unit that could have been used to advise the Seventh Army on morale was used strictly against the enemy. Its officers, unlike the Army command, did not believe that American soldiers got their morale from Red Cross doughnut stands by the roadside and Betty Grable movies. Nor, and here is a misfortune, it did not believe that morale came from ideal convictions concerning the War and the Nazi horrors far away. It is hard to believe that this very team, or, better yet, something that should

have been coming out of the Army Morale Division, that was mainly justifying soldiers' fears by careful research and putting on vaudeville to divert them, could not have mounted a propaganda campaign among the troops with just enough effect to have cut off the Germans at Montelimar and gotten the Army to all points of the Upper Rhine by October.

The idea that American troops would have been insulted by, degraded by, dictated to by propaganda ("information"), or that the job was well left to a jolly troop newspaper like the *Stars and Stripes*, may be emphatically denied. American troops, more than the German troops, needed continuous "education" and encouragement to do their job. The achievement of high morale was not a function of newspaper reporters asking soldiers questions designed to expose how tough their personal conditions were and how pitiable.

The Lieutenant could be scored high in knowledge and indignation, high in wish to "do something about it all," but was as powerless as any general officer or U.S. Senator to push against the inertia of the system that had grown up for winning the War. So he lived an ordinary soldier's life for the most part, as I tell it here, with much more personal freedom and awareness of what was happening; there was no stimulation of the morale factor among the American troops, and only had such been called for would the Lieutenant have been spurred into greater action. He was always wary of being characterized as a trouble-maker, although that is what he wanted to be and sometimes was.

5. Between January of 1945 and the capture of Berlin four months later, 200,000 camp inmates were brought within the borders of the Reich. Most of these were killed or died. They were brought in a) to hide them, b) to keep them hostage and ransom them, c) to kill them, and d) to use them as workers. The Nazi mind was seeking desperately a way to escape or, barring that, a way to bring down the world with their own destruction. The Nazis' early terrorist slogan turned upon the Nazi mind: "Better a terrible end than an endless terror!"

