



Mom and Kathy.

JILL TO AL AUGUST 2, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling -- Two more letters from you today, the 25th and 27, and yesterday I got one dated around the 20th, in which you assured me of your affection much better, I'm sure, than any mistress has ever been assured before. And although I need it, it looks as if you need it even more, since you said you hadn't heard from me for two weeks. That makes me mad, darling, because I have been writing you, and it seems to me that the least the goddam Army could do is see that you got your mail, and all the ersatz loving it contains. I am getting madder by the day that you are not getting back to me, and am really ready to write my Congressman about it. It seems so abysmally stupid that so little effort is being made to re-unite the old timers with their families, either by sending them home or by permitting the families to get over there. I'm glad you've heard that some stink about it is being made at home. I certainly have seen no indication of anybody, the press or the satisfied civilians, giving a damn about what happens to the guys still left overseas. To read the papers, you'd think that every deserving veteran was already home, kissing his baby! They much prefer to dwell on the wickedness of wives who are taking up with other men while their husbands are away. Granted it as wrong, I still don't think it is right for the papers to make such a fuss over it, when they refuse to recognize the community's responsibility for all these poor EM's wives who have three kids by the time they are 19 years old and who must sweat it out without their men. Well,

fortunately, I'm not in that category, but what irks me is the people who say, "Well, aren't you lucky he's still there and is not coming back to fight the Japanese". It shows much an ignorance of Army ways. A lot of the guys who are coming back to be redeployed to the Pacific will never get there, because they'll be trained here for a while, and Army requirements for the number of men to be used in the Pacific will change, and it seems to me that any dope would prefer to have their guy back in the States, even at the relatively slight risk that he'll be redeployed to the Pacific. All in all, I'm damn sore at everything and everybody, except you.

I was interested in your comments on the article on anti-Semitism in PM. I haven't heard anything about it either before I read what you read or rather, said. I doubt whether you'd find any more in the Army than you would in a comparable civilian organization, and in many of the latter, you'd find a great deal more, as when it is definite company policy, as in the case of the big utility and chemical companies. Don't ask me why they should take that line but they do. The one case of discrimination I have heard the Army accused of (other than the Negro one) is against leftists, and leftist unionists. Tom is an example of that and I've heard of quite a few others. I of course can't see any reasonable excuse for it. However, why should one seek Utopia in the Army when it is organized for such uncivilized reasons and when the whole world is in such a goddamn mess. Well, anyway, we have the labor victory in England to cheer us a bit. We still haven't heard much of the results of the Potsdam conference and I don't think anything breath-taking will come of it, so far as the future of egalit e etc. are concerned, but I guess it was only supposed to take care of the technical aspects of ruling Germany and winning the rest of the war. I don't know if I told you before, but I got a real strange letter from Adele Rose Saxe last week, in which she said that she was sure that the Japanese war could be halted by smart moves on the part of our State Dept. I don't know what to make of that.

Those were nice pictures you sent, of scenic views of Wiesbaden etc. I find German architecture even more appalling

than the summer palazzos of the Washington bourgeoisie at Blue Ridge Summit, if possible. The place at Strassberg wasn't so ungraceful looking, however. Well again, how can one expect the state of architecture to be any better than the level of men's souls and civilization? Oh boy, I'm hotter than a pistol tonight.

I didn't write you last night because I went to dinner at the Neugarten's and then to a very good flicker, Lifeboat, with Tallulah Bankhead and sundry other competent performers. It got all balled up at the end on the question of "What to do with the German" (Hereafter to be coded as WTDWTG in future accounts of our life and times by the DeGrazia family) but since that has stumped more flossy thinkers than Alf Hitchcock, I don't think it should be too much held against the production. It was well done (all in a lifeboat as you know) though underdone, come to think of it, and had such intelligent touches as a leftist oiler in the Merchant Marine given plenty of footage. I guess Hitchcock is one of the men Rankin should investigate, since it came out, though not overtly stated, that this guy was the only one who wanted correctly to deal with the German on board, i.e., kill him. In the end, they did.

Priscilla cared for the baby but she has since left my bed and board, because Laura got back from the country and P. had to go home and keep house for her. Yesterday I also wore my legs down to the knees biking back and forth from the lake, it being a very hot day. Today we went down once and then took a trip to the PX this afternoon, to get cigarettes.

Of course, this is only the 2nd day of what will turn out to be an interminable month, but I am starting to keep track of all expenditures, not only food. Then I will send it to you at the end of the month, liberally blotting it with ink and bacon grease, and give you a merry month or so to decipher it. This is where you came in. It seems I tried this once before, in Hollywood as I recall. Ah well, the times were too unstable then and I was always losing my fountain pen.

Darling, I have to go do the greasy old dishes now.

I love you now, too - & always.

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 2, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

I mailed your bond form to you yesterday. You will notice one correction where you avoided the question. It's a lucky thing you aren't in as much of a hurry to make love as you are to fill out a questionnaire, but perhaps an increase in specialization in the first has been accompanied by a loss of the secondary function. I'm all for you, mind you -- long nights and short forms. As long as you can kiss me as lingeringly and well as you do, I will even make out the forms myself, or throw them away, or something in my small amount of spare time.

I had a good night's sleep last night and at the same time or perhaps therefore the most clear and beautiful image of you. No action was involved. It was simply a picture but it was much better than I could ever conjure up in my waking moments. I think now that my departure seems possible. I am letting myself dream much more freely than in those last two years. And those two years seem even more inconceivable, impossible. I still can't imagine now I can love you so much and let all that time by without catastrophic nameless consequences.

There isn't much to do here right now except to make some changes in the company. Promotions are still frozen for the men. I hope they will be unfrozen soon so as to allow me to promote a few to the vacancies left by men leaving. We are quite a bit under strength, too, but I got permission to recruit more men and will do that soon. I stopped by Bad Homburg on the way back from discussing these things with Headquarters Command, USFET, and had lunch with Anspacher. Hans Habe

was there too and I had the first talk with him since Italy, although I met him in passing a couple of months ago. He is a captain and handling a very big job on the German press, stirring up great flurries of trouble but running along through it all in his imperturbable fashion. Wallenberg is editing the U. S. Berlin paper, I may have told you. Habe had just come back from there and said that the Germans were reduced to a very low level. Cigarettes are worth their weight in gold, womanflesh is worth far less, the civilians are getting thinner and their clothing is beginning to look ragged. The Americans, he says, are stealing the show. Berlin looks like an American city, and the British and Russians look like poor cousins. I said I thought that even where the Americans are in a minority, they give the impression of a crowd by their natural mobility. The same private is seen in sixteen places in the same day because of nothing except his inclination to be on the go. He is in and out of everything.

I had better get some work done. This afternoon I'm going either to Bad H. or Heidelberg. But my heart goes to you all day with a kiss to Kathy. Always,

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 3, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling -- Today I am a Three-Letter girl, having gotten, belatedly, yours of July 12, July 16 and then my most recent one of July 29. It's funny how they are arriving in such a hodgepodge of order, and all in this one week, it seems. I've gotten about seven so far, after the relative famine all during July of only three or so a week. It would be nicer if letters came in the order they were sent, and not all at once, as you'll probably be getting mine now. The earliest one told of getting Kathy's pictures -- I'm very relieved because they would have been quite a handful to lose. Someone told me later that the leather frames wives are so addicted to sending pictures to their

husbands are very de trop -- that men would rather have wallet size pictures and put them in their wallet, that these things make a bulge if carried in the pants, and that the frames themselves are an expensive gyp. I listened to this intelligence depressedly, and wonder if you agree. I did notice a larger leather packet of some sort in one of the boxes you sent back, and can't figure out what it is for. Tell me, so I can use it.

Oh, I stopped doing those exercises ages ago. I figured the bike has taken off most of what will come off, and the rest you will just attribute to the growing voluptuousness of middle young womanhood. I don't mind your liking my carcass at all. After all, what else or who else is it there for. And since I'm reasonably narcissistic, it would be hard lines indeed to stack up (is that the word - it isn't latch up, is it?) with somebody who yearned only for my intelligence, which is at the moment non-existent. I was fascinated by your account of meeting Marion Harper. I don't remember much about her except that she was on the mousy side and all the time I knew her she was going with Bob Burns, a poor recommendation for anyone. I am so divided on the question of what I would have done if I hadn't gotten with child, that I'm completely neutralized. On the one hand, I could have gotten overseas and had a lot of interesting experiences and eventually been able to see you, probably quicker than the snailspace way we're doing it now, but on the other hand, what I have done has undoubtedly been awfully good for my character and lent a fillip to our matrimonial ties and, most of all in importance, has given the breath of life to an individual who undoubtedly deserves it, when stacked up with all the other new individuals in the world, though sometimes I doubt that too, as when she gets me up at six in the morning, as this morning, to give her breakfast. Well, I made up for it this afternoon by sleeping three hours when she did. We had a rugged morning -- laundry, shopping, and then a trip to the beach. It was too wavy to go swimming off the rocks so I thought I'd give Kathy a break by letting her play in the sand for a while. It's awfully dirty and not much fun for me, unless, as today, the weather is cool and there are waves to look at.

I don't think it's much of an advantage for me to be in a spot where the people and places remind me of you. I could remember you just as well any place else and this way, I am constantly getting resentful of the people who are left behind, i.e., why can't they be you, and also of their dopey civilian questions re you, like "Well, Al must be getting back any day now." That sounds too damn glib when you are sweating it out as impatiently as I am now. And as for the place, well, at best Chicago is no rose, and being here for so long just gives me a feeling of growing old in the harness. It will probably prejudice me against the place so much that the only way you'll be able to get me to stay here when you come back is to dig a good deep hole and put me in it and over it up promptly. Like the other day I ran into Janice when I was on the bike. In the first place, she always makes such a fuss over the baby and the fact that the baby rides on the bike that it annoys me, and then she started giving out with dopey questions about you, and the brilliant remark that I was lucky you weren't back yet because then you would be going to the Pacific. Her husband was with her too, and added to the general conviviality. He certainly is a jerk, as you remarked the first second you met him.

I read that they were going to discharge 1,500,000 men by next June and I got into a discussion with a girl who said that it didn't mean officers. So I called up the Yanks Service Bureau of the Sun and he, whoever he was with the nice voice, said it did, and also, in reply to my next question, that absolutely no wives were being allowed to go over. So I shall abandon the notion of doing so forthwith. But I really must organize myself for the winter campaign, since there is always the gruesome possibility that you won't be home, and I couldn't live through another winter like last -- dullness from morning to night in conformance with the baby's routine, colds and depressions. But Kathy will be too young to send to school still, and if she isn't toilet-trained they won't take her anyway. I don't know what I'll do. I just hope it won't happen, that you won't be away again.

Tomorrow night Gert Goldsmith is coming over for dinner again and we are going to some new exhibit at the local art gallery I

told you about, after dinner. Gert is a very nice girl as you know, though no great wit. However, she is pleasant to have around, which is all that one can say for anybody.

Your banquet sounded wonderful, but menus in French always do. There's no doubt about it, men can have a passably good time in one another's company (as Joan and I were saying to one another over the phone last night) whereas it is an unlikely phenomenon among women. I guess it's because most of us are brought up to get men and to live with men and to build up vanity as a sizable part of one's personality, and that can only, normally, be catered to by men. I can count the times I've had fun with women on one finger, practically. One of them was when we went sailing about a month ago, and even then, half the time we were skirting around the aircraft carriers and listening to the sailors whistle. Well, I must stop sometime.

I love you, darling, and will expand on the above at some later date.

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 3, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

I've just come back from walking an hour and a half along various by-paths and through some of the woods that abound here as in all of Germany. It has been a nice cool evening and is only now turning dark and it is almost ten o'clock. I've been fiddling around with the radio here to get some decent program. Ordinarily that is extremely easy to do this time of the evening. There is a *[two words unreadable]* on the nearest American Forces Network Station. The French and German radios seem to be giving news at the moment, and a Spanish station which I find I can understand slightly is doing the same. On an Italian station there was a soap opera in which two gents were contesting in a comical and pathetic fashion for an elusive girl

named Penelope. Finally I found a string ensemble which is playing some nice Haydn dance. It will probably cease any moment and I will be belabored by the latest MG proclamation in German.

I am terribly lazy these days. I don't have much work to do and I can't find much ambition even though I may dream ambitious thoughts. I simply wait out quotas in the knowledge that one day, my quota will come along. There are plenty of others like myself. I am consoled in fact by seeing that I accomplish more than they do. I would like to ask you for certain books but I am afraid it is too late for that. Tonight after I finish this letter I will begin to read Dickens' Martin Chuzzlewit. I will read one more book of Bret Harte too and then put him aside. After all, he isn't that good. And he was most prolific. There must be thirty volumes of his stuff down in the library which isn't very good although the books are beautifully bound. Like most Germans the owner here has an abundance of travel books. You can understand why Sven Hedin was a Nazi. His dough all came from Deutschland.

Tomorrow morning, I'm going to Bad Homburg and Frankfurt with Col. Harden. Incidentally he explained to me he was kidding when he told me he was a Charlestown alderman. He is from Anderson, S. C. and says there never is a contest there at election time. He is on the committee of the party which makes up the slates, however, and is by profession an auditor for the Southern Railway. I haven't yet gotten on to him about the southern railroads, but I shall. He is a good-natured, kindly sort of man, confessedly perplexed by the "characters" with whom he comes into contact in the control of information services in Germany. He drinks a lot as does everyone here but doesn't get drunk. Others do, however. For lack of better occupation. Today the people just below 85 were feeling low. They had expected the critical score to be lowered several points. I think the army is wise not to do so when it can't even act right away on the ones with high scores now. Like me, of course.

But soon, with all my love,

Your becharmed

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 4, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

There are a sheaf of V-mails outside on the window sill to you, that the mailman didn't pick up this morning for some reason or another, so that when [] added to the one I'm writing now, you will probably go blind or drunk with so much concentrated prose from me. I'll make sure to mail the whole batch this afternoon, after Kathy wakes up. That good servant of the public did, however, bring me another letter from you this morning, July 27, which contained your short story, a new and pleasant dish in the way of things I've gotten from you. I liked it because you wrote it, that is, the subject matter itself I always find a strain to read, but I'm always interested in your interpretations of it. In style, it is very much like your letters -- a mixture of the objective and subjective, which is good for letters but doesn't add up to Art, which could hardly have been your intention, anyway, within the limits of time and space. I think that if you have the time, you should go ahead and write everything that comes into your head about the war, casting aside every consideration except to get it down on paper. You might either come out with a damned good story or a damned good analysis, or both, and in either case, the way you write can always be fixed up later, viz. Thomas Wolfe. Of course, I'm not very fond of him but everybody else says he writes beautifully.

Well, I am not in much condition to judge anything this morning since I have had a fearful stomach ache since arising. (It reminds me of the "Cup-of-coffee theory of jurisprudence" you used to tell me about.) I ate a lobster tail last night, out of sheer curiosity, since it was an abominable thing aesthetically and no rose to my palate either. But I did want to see how one would go

about cooking it. Oh, it was very expensive too, 55 cents for one meager tail. Well, my conclusions are that you broil them and that they give you stomach ache afterwards. It's funny that you haven't had liver for all these years. We don't get it much either. I wonder where all the insides go to. One butcher told me that the PW's get them here, but I can hardly believe that all the millions of organs of all the millions of sheep, cows and pigs go to maintain a relative handful of men. I still like that stuff very much and will cook it all the time for you when you get home, thereby decreasing our mysteriously high food bills so that we will have money left over to buy cigarettes. Oh, in answer to your question, this apartment is much nicer than the one on University. Of course, it is even further down to the ground, but the layout is much more conventional and has more rooms and less waste space. If you recall, the kitchen equipment in that old apartment was so dotted about all over the room that you couldn't get any other furniture in, to speak of. The rooms are bigger here, too. It's all right, but a dump next to the kind of houses that will flourish in the postwar world, as they say. I hope you agree with me that the thing to do is build our own place, instead of paying a lot of money for someone else's antiquated and often tasteless ideas. I have cruised around this city a lot, especially on the south side, and so far I have only seen one house I would care to live in, and it isn't modern. The modern houses here are small, the few I've seen in the Kenwood are. This house is on Kenwood and 50th, and is a two-story grey frame job, very simple, with large windows a bit on the quaint side, but in good taste. But there's no point in buying a traditional house, even if it is one of the rare ones in good taste, because you spend so much money fixing it up, modernizing the kitchen, etc. You might as well fork out your 5,000 for something new. I'd like a long low job with some rough exterior, perhaps California redwood, with most of the windows opening out into gardens or little plazas. And no basement because I am afraid of cellar stairs. I would also like solar heating and no woodwork, and rubber composition floors that would be warm and resilient enough so that you wouldn't need carpeting, which I consider unsanitary and too plushy looking. Then you would

only need little rugs if you felt arty on some days. I also would like the flooring material to be of one piece with the walls in the kitchen, with a slight grade and drain in the floor, so that all you'd have to do to clean the floor would be to hose it down. Don't you think that's a hot idea? It's mine, all mine. And I'd like the kitchen to look like a functional farmhouse one, roomy and warm and an invitation to work and have company while you're doing it, and the rest of the house, excluding the nurseries, to be sophisticated enough to blend in with the Matisse print we have and the Picasso originals you're going to get me the next time you go to Paris, with lots of light and color and furniture that you don't notice unless you feel like using it. All except the ten-foot-wide bed, with four posts, so you can hang your shorts on it. Of course my tastes might change. Last year I thought colonial furniture was pretty cute. But how do the main outlines sound to you? Oh, we'd have lots of big trees around the house too, to furnish shady rooms and pretty vistas. I hope you like my ideas in decorating, I mean eventually, not the way the place we have here looks. I think it's great sport to fix up a place, that is, if you don't have to do it with your bare hands. *[handwritten from now on:]* And I have such a conceited notion of my own taste that I don't even like the stuff they show in the "Home" magazines, much less the crap at Field's, which is strictly from Oak Park. I got bored with typing, inexplicably.

I'll light a candle to that Lt in USFET - maybe then you'll be in the quota. At least it's something to hope for these dreary days.

I love you, darling.

Jill

JILL TO AL AUGUST 5, 1945 V-MAIL

Al Darling --

I've just finished a day spent almost entirely in the horizontal, and I must confess it grows on one, so that I had difficulty

straightening myself up to write this letter. Kathy woke up last night with a temperature of 101, which isn't very much but she felt plenty hot, and she kept waking up at intervals the rest of the night, saying "Mommee" in an aggrieved tone. So I kept her in bed today -- her bed and then my bed when she got bored, although by this morning her fever had gone back to normal. It was a rainy grey day and very auspicious for bed-riding, and we really had a pretty good time. She wasn't at all fussy, which she had been all week, and we made towers out of her blocks and fixed up the doll buggy, and later this afternoon I took a nap while she roamed around, in bed and out. I think what she needed was just the peace and quiet of a day at home, because now, at seven, she has retired into a deep slumber and looks very healthy indeed.

I also got the opportunity to read the profile in this week's New Yorker, one of those thoroughly delightful sketches by Joseph Mitchell about his friend, Hugh Flood, the ancient lover of sea food and scotch who lives in the Fulton Fish Market area in New York. Did you ever read McSorley's Wonderful Saloon by him? I have a battered copy here which I'll send you. I don't know what mysterious nostalgia makes me love so much these accounts of ancient New York life, when the food and liquor were marvelous and cheap and the protagonists were exclusively male. I'd send you the New Yorker story too, except that you'll see it in yours, when you get it. One of the parts I liked best in today's story was the description of the biggest lobster one of the men had ever seen. "It weighed 34 pounds. Took two men to hold it. It was a hen lobster. It wasn't much good - too coarse and stringy - but it was full of coral and tomalley and it scared the women and it was educational." Now that's my idea of the prose beautiful.

What do you think of the Potsdam Conference? I guess I forgot to mention it in my previous letters. I think it came out all right, tough enough, but not going to the impracticable lengths of dismembering Germany altogether. Well, it all depends on how the thing is enforced. I just wish they had a paragraph in it dealing with A. J. DeGrazia, Capt. CAC(AA): when he will come home. I hear that Katherine, daughter of Fini's husband is back

in the States after only a few months overseas. That's the sort of thing that makes me grit my teeth, although I'm glad for her sake (*she added in a more Christian vein*).

Oh, last night Gert Goldsmith came for dinner and then later we lit out for a quarter of hour to see that new exhibition on 57th St. It was a lot of primitive wood carvings by a young Panamanian, who was there and was the weirdest-looking small item of humanity I've ever seen. However I asked the guy who runs the gallery to get me a nice reproduction of horses by Franz Marc for Kathy, who might as well be exposed to good art in her current absorbing study of animal life. Every other morning when the milkman comes I have to take her out to say hello to the "Hor". Well darling I don't have enuf to say to take up a whole new page so I'll say I love you now. A million big kisses and come home soon to collect.

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 6, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling,

I got up bright and early this morning to get rid of a pile of work that had piled up over the week-end in order to get started on a letter to you. I can now report with pride that the task has been accomplished in one hour and I can enter the second phase. You ought to see me apply myself to work. I can't stand it and therefore get rid of it as soon as possible in what is sometimes an almost revulsive frenzy. I would be more concerned over my attitude if it weren't so constructive in its effects. When it's over and I'm left with so much free time, I wonder why I was so energetic about it. I must go over to Frankfurt sometime today to see if they've received a quota for home yet. It's quite a job to keep one's burning interest in the issue concealed. I know that if a clerk should turn his back while cutting the orders I've cut my own name into them before you could wink an eyelash. I heard

a concert Thursday night by the newly revived Wiesbaden Symphony Orchestra that I don't think I mentioned to you yet. It was a program of Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Tchaikowski mostly, standard stuff and played without much inspiration. The hall was too small for the sixty-piece orchestra and the acoustics were very bad but the audience of some five hundred Germans ate it up. There were a few Americans in uniform present. I thought that this being the first concert since the occupation that the Germans couldn't help but be impressed by the new color of the uniforms and the absence of all their old traditional insignia, songs, flags, etc. but I don't think they are very imaginative except on the subject of Cossack cavalry, and flying fortresses. After the concert I was standing outside the building, preparatory to driving off and talking with Curtis, the Red Cross representative in this zone, and noticed out of the corner of my eye a tall officer who had come up to us. I thought it was our Lt. Keller and paid no attention to him until I finished with Curtis. Then I was amazed to see Tom Stauffer there. We exchanged greetings. Naturally Tom would seek out a cultural event if it were in Darkest Africa. He said he was going to work with the Group Control Council in Berlin and seemed for some reason to be embarrassed by the fact. He's a first Lt. and I don't believe he's been over for long. As weird as ever, though. I wonder what havoc he'll wreak in Berlin. Wally's newspaper goes off the presses in a day or so there incidentally. It's the most important press job in Germany now certainly, it will be in direct competition with the Russian papers on the newsstands. Saturday night Simone Thomas drove up with Col. Landstrom who is our representative at Seventh Army Headquarters for dinner and the Sat. Night concert we have here. She is a fine party girl, buzzes all over the place, is very lively and always smiling, she is uninhibited and without illusions of any sort which does credit to her family. Her attitudes in politics are in correspondence. She is not sensitive or jealous towards Americans as so many French are, especially from the middle classes. We had a lot of champagne and things for dinner and afterward while the musicians rested, Bass on the piano and I on the violin accompanied bad singers in drinking songs. Then I

played Love in Bloom by popular request just as well as Jack Benny. Sunday morning I went with Kvam who controls theatres to Wiesbaden to look in on a revue which was cheap and bad, a violin player that made me feel cocky even. Last evening was very quiet. I read Bret Harte's Story of a Mine and took a long walk with Col. Harden at Lt. Horsey.

[missing section ?]

of all the Bret Harte I read (excuse please, the machine slipped). As I was saying, the

Story of a Mine is to me among his best, perhaps the best. It shows that Harte had in him the makings of a really great novelist. His descriptions of the working of congressional lobbyists, the congressional types he portrays, the knowledge he possesses of the innumerable occasions, incidents, crimes, passions, accidents and designs that go into the growth of a mine working reveal a depth of insight you might not suspect in some of his other novels, together with a feeling for the social forces existing and operating at the time. The tendency of a western or to a lesser extent of all American authors is to make the personal character the all important story element, to the detriment of the historical and sociological influences. Did I tell you that I finished that book of Woodward called The way our people lived. I remember now that I did and suggested you read it if you can get hold of it. It's worthwhile buying for our library in my opinion.

This morning, you will be gratified to know, I filled out the form in triplicate for sending money to America and attached to it \$75.00 which are going to you today, not tomorrow but today. I am as gratified as you are. I would prefer to send you some of the steaks and chickens we've been eating here too often but of course I can't. The next package I send home will have a couple of packages of luckies in one of its crevices though.

I was glad to notice the new name in some places over the smug attempts to put officers in higher qualified brackets for

jobs in civilian life. I certainly would never hire on that basis, nor would anyone else who has seen all that passes for an officer.

I got a long letter from Ed two days ago, mostly on the heat, so you said about yours. Strange what an all-compelling subject weather can be. Me, now, I like cold so that I can keep you warm, and heat because you have less on. Keep your fingers crossed, gal, for a beautiful late summer .

Give my Kathy a big kiss, please.

With love,

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 7, 1945

Darling --

Monday

I just finished the most prodigious domestic feat -- I dry-cleaned a dress all by myself. Actually it's a lot easier than it sounds -- you just buy a big can of cleaning fluid, pour it into a bowl and swish the stuff up and down. But the fire hazards are tremendous, and I was all ready to take out an insurance policy. However, now the deed is done. Cleaning takes so long to get back now and I'm going to a supper party at Bea's Thursday night and needed something to wear. Well, as it transpired later, I took Kathy down the street for a pair of shoes and the place was closed and I went a little further to a dress shop and ended with a pink dress. So now I have two dresses. The pink dress makes me look about 6 months old but I guess it's all right. Joan is coming over tonight to go for a bike ride so I'll reserve judgement on it until she sees it.

Tomorrow I'm going sailing in the afternoon with her and Nancy, who owns the boat, and Gert Goldsmith is taking care of Kathy in the afternoon and then Vic will come over and give her supper. I had hitherto hesitated to ask him to sit but he offered

to last week and God knows I'm hard up for sitting material. The only person I know who does it for hire, Mrs. Oppenheimer, has to be dated up ten years in advance. I am seriously thinking of making a deal with her this fall, that she could take Kathy several afternoons a week and I will try to find some part-time work, either at the IVI, the PAC or some union, or the University, with just enough pay to cover the cost of the sitter. As I said before, I don't think I could stand another winter like last, and if I kept busy enough, I wouldn't be too unhappy. Of course I have every intention of letting you into the house if you come home, but for the nonce, I might as well face the worst, that you might not be back when the cold weather sets in, and I will be left with an infinity of dismal, solitary winter afternoons and evenings.

I had the queerest dream about you last night, that you came home, saw me for a little while and then lit out to Mom's or someplace like that. I couldn't reach you by phone because you didn't leave your number, and you wouldn't call me. I was mad as hell, and went around telling my troubles to June King. This morning when I woke up I was still mad.

I had to get up about five times last night too to service Kathy. She woke up hungry in the middle of the night because she hadn't eaten much yesterday, and I made her juice, staggering around in the dark completely naked, and cereal. It is a very trying experience. Then, just as I got back to sleep she called me again, to change her. This morning she was quite fussy though without a fever, and hasn't eaten much today. I can't imagine that it's the hot weather, because other days have been hotter, yet she shows no signs of a definite complaint, like dysentery or a cold. Tonight Joan is coming over and we are going bike riding. Priscilla very thoughtfully left her bike here.

I got the returned bond forms from you this morning, but no letter, so I can't figure out if the red tape drove you into such a fury that you couldn't write a word. You dope, you weren't supposed to have that notarized or affirmed -- it wasn't notarized anyway because there was no stamp. I am supposed to do that because I'm the person sending in the form. It said

so, right there at the bottom. Well, I'll take it over to the bank tomorrow and ask them if it needs another stamp.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if this very minute your name came up in the quota. Let me know how those things come out, I mean, even if you are not called, such as how many were called, the number of officers, etc. Did you ever hear about the Bronze Star. Oh darling, I forgot to ask at the PX last week if I could get those insignia for you but will ask tomorrow when I go, or Wednesday. Somebody said that they didn't think I could get them for you anyway. I know I've been a dog about sending you things lately. Part of it was the feeling a month ago that you would be home any minute -- a feeling since dissipated -- and part is the hot weather, and my inefficiency during same. I did get the binoculars from you this morning but am so far unable to make them work, and the little French magazine, from which I have been diligently translating a story about Duke Ellington all morning. I'd read it in English already and figured, incorrectly, that it would make it easier to read the French. Actually magazine French is very easy to read but there are still a lot of words I don't know so I use a dictionary, not that I couldn't make good guesses, to learn the new words.

The binoculars will come in handy if you ever live in S. F. Right now it is merely quixotic for me to get close-ups of the petunias outside the windows here.

Darling, I think I will lie down or drink a chocolate milk, or both.

I love you very much,

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 7, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

It's been quite an eventful morning what with the news of the

atomic bomb and the arrival of two photos and five letters from you, at least two of the latter having their own atomic bomb qualities. I find myself assuming this character in your mind: a pleasant but weak fellow who doesn't really give a damn about coming home, terribly wasteful of our hard-earned money, so secretive about his life that he can't even predict his future activities to the point of telling where he will be tomorrow or on what day he will come home, conspiratorial with the mailman to prevent letters from arriving regularly so that his poor wife is thereby tortured into thinking he is momentarily arriving. Well, I am fatalistic. Nothing I can say or do will cause you to believe otherwise. If you didn't wear yourself out running back and forth between the rocks and Ridgewood under the noonday sun, your disposition might improve to the point where you might even be slightly thankful for some of the things you have. So went the letters from July 14, 15, 16, 20 and 28. I should add that the last was more normal and leaves me a little more at ease. I spent most of the morning reading your letters and looking at your pictures. As I said before, I don't admire the enlargements you sent me as much as several others of the same group of pictures, and speaking about waiting until I hear from you about taking decisions on sending money home what about your sending photos before you hear which ones I want? And you, my dear girl, did not work desperately to feed me and clothe me during some pretty tough years and if I want to send Mom something I will do so. I only remember you paying one request of mine, that for Dannenberg, and welshing on two other requests, all of which could be trebled on the money I've sent home out of my share of my salary in cash or bonds. So you bother me much more than my conscience.

After that is no time to be talking of Christmas presents, but we have been told to stop all sending of such overseas if we are coming home before Christmas and that I am doing. Save all you shopping energy and bake me a custard pie instead which you can alternately throw at me or let me eat.

Speaking of eating, there goes the dinner bell. You may go to bed now with the Thin Man but by the time I get home you will

have to change your habits.

It's a good thing I wasn't around to attack personally on that recriminative July 16. I would have massacred you. In fact I may still. Two months isn't too long to wait for a good fight.

Good-bye darling and a nice sweet kiss for you if you don't wrinkle your forehead.

Love to Kathy.

Always your Al

Any intimation that I don't love you completely and absolutely is coincidental, absurd and false.

THE soldiers talk a lot about the Bomb. They are awed, perhaps all the more because they see all about them the effects of thousands of bombs and high explosive projectiles. At the same time, they are not inclined to see in it anything especially immoral, because they measure its murderousness against the otherwise loss of a million American lives to take Japan. Since they believe that this anyhow is the last war that they will see, they are not preoccupied with the handling of the Bomb in the future or whether more will be made. They assume there would be a halt to their manufacture; there would be no more bombs made after the annihilation of Nagasaki. After all, against whom would the nuclear bomb be employed? No aggressive power remains to threaten a peaceful world. The idea of a Cold War hardly occurs to anyone.

He walks about the castle gardens, pondering a formula for Europe. No one speaks of the United Nations as the organization that is to settle a New Europe into a New One World. This is the way he would like it and he perks up when he reads that the United Nations might even set up its headquarters in San Francisco, where it starts up life, for he would see combined there two dear wishes, to live in San Francisco and to work for world federalism.

He had given up the idea of becoming a Professor. He thought of going into publishing on the West Coast or in Chicago, rather than New York where, though he did not know, "everybody who was anybody" in the industry worked. He thought that the center of world politics would now shift to the United Nations and to Washington, and to the free media of communications, in publishing, in the press, where he pictured himself, rather prematurely, as qualified.

The Colonel asked him in an informal way if he would like to go with his party to Berlin, to join the Allied Control Mission there, promoted to Major to begin with. The Colonel liked to live well. It would be a ball. He was gratified. He could be integral to whatever the Allies would be doing with the prostrate monster Reich. He could justify staying or returning so far as his little household was concerned: Jill and Baby Cathy could be brought over soon enough. At this point especially, but, in general, too, as ought to be quite clear by now, he did like Army life and felt more at home in the Army than anywhere else in the world except -- and this was in his imagination -- the University of Chicago neighborhood -- an increasingly vague dreamland.

Still, it would commit him to more years in the Army, perhaps forever, even though just now it was the kind of Army that every gold brick dreamt about. There might not be anything afterwards, and soon his role would shrink, and become less and less political, indeed therefore dangerous, for he was a political animal. He would be voicing opinions in ever higher councils and, while flexible on most matters, would be obdurate in giving credit to the Soviets for the major role they had played in breaking the back of the Third Reich. (He counted every other American soldier as a saved casualty by virtue of the Soviet Army.)

This was soon to become an uncomfortable reminder for the Western Allies. More and more of the occupying force would not have felt poignantly the effects of the War in the East. The ever-increasing influence of the Germans would be felt against the Russians, even though the Germans would know the true history. The Germans then were still good mythographers; they could tell historical lies with a straight face or placidly permit others to do so. They were not yet so

sincerely democratic as they would later become (most of them is meant, of course, not all).

Bitter talk against the Soviets was beginning. The savagery and rapine by the victorious Soviet troops in conquered territories was widely publicized, though mostly by eye-witnesses and word of mouth. The Captain's personal informant had been Larry Walker, who had driven straight through the lines into Prague and there encountered the Russian troops, and who had returned shocked with tales of rape, looting, and murder. The Captain told him to make allowances -- what allowances, how many? Well, Walker, whatever allowances you might grant yourself if you had your country torn apart by these arrogant murderous aggressors, had been forced to live like a pig, eat like a convict, submit to merciless discipline and fight fearfully for years and seen half your comrades killed, had your home blown apart and your family scattered into misery or captivity. With all this and the promise of extermination, it is a wonder that the Soviets were not even more harsh.

The word out of Berlin was not so good. The Western and Eastern Allies were infrequently talking to each other, hardly even at the top level. They were drawing lines, on the ground and in their minds. The Russians were too suspicious. Still, while berating the Russians, the men around him were not yet dealing in the unspeakable, the need to make numbers of A-Bombs in order to keep the Communists at bay.

He brooded about the fate of the good people, the democrats of Europe, and the death and destruction everywhere. He saw few signs of the great roundup of the confirmed Nazis who had survived, the SS, the murderers, the slave-drivers. Under certain circumstances -- if the Allied Command were fierce down to the junior officer level, for instance -- he would have taken up the hue and cry; he believed still in summary execution of the worst enemy types (he figured that there were a quarter of a million of them), and a scolding and exhortation for the general population; he wanted, too, to go after all of the non-German Nazis and collaborators around Europe: Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Finnish, Polish, Ukrainian, Byelorussians, Bessarabians, Cossacks, Tatars, Arabs, Hindustani, Baluchistani, Spanish,

Argentinans, French, Irish, Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, Flemings and Walloons, Swiss, Hungarians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Greeks, Croats, Slovaks, Bohemians, and, of course, Italians and Austrians.

Most of the experienced officers and men would go home as soon as possible. Men who had never felt an enemy presence nor the deprivations of campaign life were to be in charge of reconstructing Germany and assisting the victims of other countries. Would not they be too lenient, because the enemy had not hurt them? Some would. Would they be too harsh out of guilt? Some would. Would the conquered enemy respond better to rule by men who had not destroyed them? Yes. If the conquering troops were forced to stay as rulers, would they not be falsely persuaded that they knew "how to handle the Germans"? Many of them would be so deluded.

Actually only a tiny proportion of the conquering soldiery knew anything useful about Germany or civil affairs; for that matter only a small proportion of them had ever seen a German soldier under hostile circumstances, mostly a half-million surviving riflemen, not the artillery, not even the airmen, who had had occasion to kill enemy troops, and also had been ordered to kill enemy civilians en masse (whereas the ground forces had been forbidden to commit crimes against the same civilians).

The old officers and soldiers had dealt with themselves; no more than one-twentieth of the time during the most violent campaign was spent even by a front-line combat officer dealing with the enemy; the rest goes to his own troop and his auxiliary services and higher command. Hardly anyone sees the enemy face to face and a third of those who do don't live to tell the tale. So what could they know about rebuilding and controlling the German nation?

Considering everything, it was better to get rid of the old soldiers and let in the new bunch to do the job. The new ones were much more reasonable and constructive. No one planned it that way: as I said, the Captain and practically every other old soldier (he was 25 years old) would have been welcome to stay on for the occupation and given preference over the newcomers.

He would have liked, then and there -- so he imagined as he walked the twilight gardens in July whipping at limp stalks with his

riding crop -- to take part in a general round of proclamations, punishment, restitution, recovery, and utopian social reconstruction, binding upon all of Europe, not Germany alone.

JILL TO AL AUGUST 8, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

It's late, ten, and I've had a busy evening -- softball, movies (one half of a Paulette Goddard epic which is all I can stand, or more) and a fudge sundae, but I got two letters from you today, the 30 and 31st, and I at least want to start answering them before I go to bed.

I guess I'd better answer the stuff in the order it came up. In the first place my heart was brightened considerably by the thought that a quota was coming up and that you might be called. But when is the next one that the man said you'd probably be in, if not this one? It sounds good but don't add that they only come up once in six months. And look, you know I feel awful about Kathy's names too. I don't know what lapse of good taste led me to choose the middle one, undoubtedly the morphine since I'd never thought of it before, I would like to forget she had it altogether, else change it if it wouldn't be too silly or too expensive a process, when you come home. I should have thought of it before, but what would be wrong with Esther, my mother's birth name, though she was never known by anything but Essie. However that's too silly. I also like Elizabeth, because it's Liz's name, though think it should be reserved for a second girl's first name. I like Katherine spelled that way too. I think the reason I spelled it as I did is because I like the two-syllable pronunciation better. How about Jessie for a middle name. It's awful too, but at least it was my father's. And God knows it's antiquated.

Well is Crowel or isn't he the same one who publishes. Your sarcasm is sometimes too obscure for me. I won't send you De Tocqueville, in fact, I'm relieved that you don't want him. But don't be so uppity about everything. I meant well, didn't I. Like

Vic says, you are always criticizing him for everything. He is getting a strong case against you (and so will I if you don't watch out) because Mom is always comparing Ed to you, to Vic's detriment. That added to several apparently harsh letters you've sent him is making him psycho-neurotic, says he. He came bike riding with Joan and me last night and it all transpired. Tonight he came for supper and stayed with Kathy while I did the above. Another woman and I went to the playground at seven, when girl's games from 12 up are scheduled, and there were about eight little girls there and we played slapdash games, with many arguments among the little girls, while I stood by with Junoesque calm. I made a couple of hits and got home once. Our team won. It was a lousy game, however. The ball was too soft and the pitching rotated and nobody was very good. Maybe next Tuesday Mir will come out and maybe if we got a few more fair players, we could have enough people to keep the players fixed in their firmaments.

Speaking of firmaments, I can view only with distaste the invention of the atomic bomb. Well, it will probably keep all of us from living to an unattractive barren unloved old age, say 35. I guess that's what the big metallurgy project over at school, which had been kept in such high secrecy, was all about.

I had God's own time to get the sour old notary at the bank to re-notarize that bond form. I was right, the person making out and sending the application (that's me) had to have the notarization done. Well, you can't be right all the time. Listen, you great booby, who do you think your pals from the 42nd war really are? That's just my idea of humor. After all, I couldn't very well put just plain Jill as the donor of such a great gift, it would sound too cold, and your loving wife Jill too treacly.

Oh don't give the 50 bucks a second thought. I don't really want it. It was just the idea I had when you asked what to do with the first 50, that you eventually sent Mom. But damn it, if my strict accounting of this month's finances, down to the last 4 cents plunked out for a news, doesn't prove to you that I spend more than 160 a month, I'm going to sue for non-support. That dress

yesterday cost 15 bucks. It is just a rag, becoming but tailored like the 9.95 jobs my mother used to get me. You must never have gotten to Chapter three of Economics by Fairchild Furness and Fuck, entitled inflation. Well, there damn well better be deflation soon, or we won't be able to live on the 2,400 a year that this blessed university so generously allots to instructors. That's another reason I'd like to light out of this place. At least, living elsewhere, preferably the coast, we could get a little light and beauty out of a middle income.

If you get home while the weather is still decent, I really would like to go to the country for a while, someplace like Saugatuck where there is water and bikes for hire and a nice un-suburban environment. I don't see why it should be trouble if we can leave Kathy with Mom for a week. We never had had a vacation together or a honeymoon. The incandescence of the last word was apparently too much for the feeble lighting system around here because once more the lights blew out. I've been padding around with candles for the last ten minutes but they just went on again, mysteriously, since I know the janitor wouldn't be up at this hour to fix them.

Darling, I really ought to go to bed now. I love you very much, and my hair is turning a bright red to prove the depth of my passion. Every summer it turns another color, it seems. But this time it really means it.

000XXX

[Handwriting] I love you. Do you? Jill

P. S. Aug. 9. Nothing to write about today anyway. Weather fair and windy. One trip to lake, no swimming. Slept this aft. till just now.

[Typewritten] Aug. 9, the next day -- I didn't get around to mailing these yet and now have another letter from you, Aug. 2. Your current work sounds clad in a last-minute flurry that excites me very much. *[Handwritten]* Maybe this very minute you're packing up the last bushel barrels of books and smelly

underwear to send me. I saw a nice story on Hans Wallenberg in yesterday's Sun. His job now, so I knew before you told me. More tomorrow. Kathy is flooding the joint, dragging around a wet washrag.

AL TO JILL AUGUST 8, 1945 V-MAIL

Jill Darling,

As our very clever little Morning Bulletin put it this morning today is AB + 3. So far most of the news programs have given us superlatives in fact and expression more than anything else about the bomb. It is very difficult to conceive but everyone is awed and although hopeful of its bringing to an early end the Japanese war a little dismayed by the future prospects of life on this earth. It certainly should make any future war impossible. Perhaps it can accomplish what peace conferences cannot accomplish, and once more, remind man that he is incapable of willing and planning any of the big things of his life, but must wait for a catastrophe to direct him. I understand that the New York Times was ready with forty pages on the bomb, not only a good piece of journalism but giving the devil his due. The consequences are being analyzed by people with more time and research materials than I and I suppose I will get to read about some of them in due time. Meanwhile this morning it occurred to me that just as the British Labor Party gets into power to take over the coal industries, the coal industries may be soon replaced by this new source of power. Another first consequence of the application of the new power will be the hastening of socialism, because the power is so enormous and important as to tie people together almost inextricably. A local by-product of the news was that Lt. Rosette of the 6871 was more depressed than ever last night. He is a medievalist of the Hutchins, T. S. Eliot ilk, convinced of the malignity of material progress and of the greater happiness of other peoples in other times. He says he can't find life in America compatible with his way of living and plans to live in London, Paris or somewhere on the continent after the war. He was with Newsweek before going into the army and was with OSS just before going into Inf

Control. I can't find much sympathy for him. It is such an absurd escapism and of course it is completely selfish. I would feel for him more if he didn't think he was basing it on a true philosophy.

I meant to go to Seventh Army HQ at Heidelberg and to Baden-Baden where the First French Army is and finally to Strasbourg yesterday afternoon and today but was too overwhelmed by the thought of all that travel to move. I am getting to be more of a personal isolationist every day. You say you dislike meeting people and going places, but infinitely less than I. Can you imagine what a beautiful trip that is? Well, perhaps some morning I will have a spark of adventure which will send me off. My desire to take only one trip and that to America is so great that everything else is dulled to nothing by comparison.

I read some in Martin Chuzzlewit last evening before going to bed. What marvelous detailed descriptions those writers had and what infinite patience with what we would call irrelevancies!

No news on homecoming.

Many kisses to you and Kathy.

P.S. I showed your profile picture to a couple of the OSF yesterday and they thought you were pretty. But I won't show anybody that other picture although it is fine as a picture because the representation of your legs is dastardly.

AL TO JILL AUGUST 9, 1945 V-MAIL

Dear Love,

It is so cold and wet here now that I can hardly realize that I am missing part of the summer with you. I do know though that wet and cold afternoons were our meat too and that therefore makes little difference to my constant hunger. I am still a little taken aback by the events of these last several days. The atomic bomb of course can be discussed and thought about in

all its implications until doomsday, which incidentally is more than a manner of expression now that I look at it. And the Russian entry into the war is almost as hard to adjust to immediately. In the short run, all of the war news is good then and I suppose too there will be changes affecting a great number of men in this theatre as well. Certainly the plan for an army of seven million men in the Pacific is ridiculous. Even three million may be excessive if the war lasts. And no one seems to think it will, a couple of weeks being the ordinary guess.

The August quota hasn't come out yet, but is expected momentarily. I understand there may be two this month, this means that if I miss the first I can be involved in the second. I'm sure that you'll have me around when the leaves begin to fall and the cold winds begin to blow. And believe me, it is nice to have you then. I've slept in some cold places without you and I don't like it at all.

We've just had lunch and I told the other officers at the table how Kathy was beginning to swear and they were much impressed. I also said that you swore you had never said it to her to clear you, but myself I'm not so sure. Last night I talked about children with Lt. Horsey who married in England and has a baby boy in consequence and he said that they tried to toilet train him after he was only a few weeks old, with no success. I told him I thought that an extremely early time to start training, even if nothing but suggestion were used, but he says that is the English custom, or at least the custom in his wife's circle. I'm really very vague on the subject of infant behavior. I must read up on it when I get back after I refresh my reading on feminine behavior for your sake.

Col. Harden, Capt. Boyle, and myself drove down to Heidelberg yesterday. Both 6871 and 6822 are now attached to Seventh Army, so the old address is cooking with gas. "PWB" is passé, however. I looked into the matter of the medal, both for myself and a couple of other men who were recommended and I understand that it is coming out on orders any day now. The five

points might help a lot at this particular moment for the men involved, myself included. It takes a lot of points to get a look at your gams, doesn't it? But you're worth a lot of them; I can tell from your picture. By the way, why isn't your tongue hanging out? Didn't you know it was for me? You needn't commit any excesses to get me home sooner. In the time it takes to write and get cables and action on the subject, I'll be home anyway. Love and a thousand kisses.

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 11, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

Since I last wrote you, Thursday aft. (this is Saturday ditto), a lot has happened. The whole business of the Jap surrender offer came out early yesterday morning -- I was blasted out of bed with the news by my thoughtful friend Joan, and this noon comes the news that we have in part accepted the offer, at any rate, have decided to leave the Emperor his throne with conditions. From what I have heard and seen in newspaper interviews, public opinion is much against the original content of the Jap offer, to leave Hirohito. I am too. It is again an example of our desire for order rather than for new political forms. However most people have other reasons - that surrender should be unconditional -- leave us take no crap from the Japanese. No one is celebrating or particularly exuberant yet in this city. However, it may be because I am not in contact with the points of hysteria, likes Times Square or Randolph St. here and it is, more likely, that Chicago, not being a port of embarkation, is relatively isolated from the currents and emotions of military achievement. Chicago in fact is the prototype of America's position in this war -- prosperous, relatively undrained by manpower demands, and cocky. And underneath the surface of affluence is the twin nemesis of unemployment and race tensions. Yet the feeling is -- and

Truman's speech gave currency to it -- that this must have to be the end of all wars, because of the discovery of the atomic bomb. I don't think that fact that the British and Americans know the "secret" and the Russians don't will make much difference one way or the other, since the Russians will as surely work out the discovery independently as we have, and the need for cooperation between us all is just as great as before. I do think Truman was a little silly in saying that God was on our side because we discovered it -- certainly not a novel idea in the history of all warfare but uncalled for just the same. I read his speech in the papers yesterday rather than to listen to it Thursday night at Bea's party, which everyone else was doing. His voice sends me into a sound slumber. All in all, you can guess that I am not one of his greatest admirers.

Bea's party was very pleasant. The food was good and I played ping-pong in their basement all night, winning one game and losing about fifty to Klaus and to George Huszar. Then George took me home and we stopped off for a drink on the way home at a new saloon on 55th, which we probably put the kiss of death on by being probably the first and last patrons to discuss André Gide in it. George is quite a treat for me occasionally because as you can guess, I don't have much contact with intellectuals although most of the girls I know are bright enough. But nobody knows anything more than I do about anything, and it's fun to talk to somebody who does, at least in the field of literary criticism.

Yesterday was very grim. I was naturally tired all day and then Mom and Dad and your Uncle Joe and his wife Ivy came for dinner and to see the baby. I made a big pot roast and generally sweated myself cooking. I'm certainly getting a lot of practice being a mother to a big family, with all the big cooking jobs I've been doing. They didn't leave until ten and Kathy got me up a couple of times in the night and again around six, so I am still in not too ripe shape today, although I did manage to get in a swim this morning, which made me feel better. I also got your letters of July 20 and Aug. 3 today. The former letter discussed at length the topic currently nearest and dearest to my heart --

points. All in all, I can conclude that somebody is interested in your welfare and that of the high point men --not a strong interest to be sure, but enough to re-assure me that at least you guys won't rot over there. That's the thing that's been bothering me so -- that perhaps nobody gave a damn about seeing that individuals deserving it got home.

[Handwriting]. I hear great shouts of "Hi" & "Momee" from the bedroom, so must be off. I love you passionately, darling, & not even ping-pong helps - & God, I do play a sweaty game. You'd better come home soon. Speaking of the progressive demoralization of 85 pointers, I guess it is worse for them than their wives - the progressive feeling of out-of-touchness & anomony which people away from home get. As for the 85-pt. wives, they undoubtedly have their symptoms too. Mine is bad temper; Joan drinks, or did before she started having hangovers. And I can hardly bear to pedal past the playground, where the Y guy with your build flashes around.

Well, enough.

Love, Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 12, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

Go ahead and cut up my shorts and see if I care. I'd rather see your bare legs than mine any day. I hope posterity will forgive me for not recording any impressions of these great days of atomic bombs, Russian entry into the war, and Jap surrender offers. But everyone in the world is discussing the same things and you probably have the various shades of opining you need. There has been no immediate reaction here apart from a great surge of optimism. There have been no riotous celebrations. The drinks at the bar have been free for the last two nights and that's about all. Last night, for our dinner and concert, several people from the 317 Station Hospital came over, but they

weren't very interesting. Arnold Kvam, of the Entertainment and Control Section, brought in Maggie Hammerstein whom he is rushing as furiously as he can, considering that he can hardly ever get her away from the company of "Baldy" Curtis. She is a beautiful girl (her legs are just a little too short) but I'm afraid most of her opinions were begged type, - all of them like Hess' Phyllis - but I am always hypercritical. They all have a sort of pathos about them, which I don't suppose most people ever perceive, that comes from being over their heads in a world that contains much more than a chorus line. And they so much want to be more than a chorus line. Has anyone ever written an interesting character analysis of the type? It could be most interesting. They love to discuss deep problems and come staggering out of the discussions like a devout pilgrim from the holy shrine. But their contributions are singularly small, and the inner mental machinations are as primitive as the stone axe. I am not accusing Maggie of these things but she gives me that impression. I got to bed after midnight without hearing any news of the surrender and so far today there hasn't been any either. I worked this morning albeit Sunday and still have some things to do this afternoon. Things look pretty good as far as readjustment. I almost feel it safe to say that I will leave this month, perhaps in a week. I will let you know by cable if I do. I hope to get all the remaining high pointers home too from the company. By the way I just received the General Orders from Seventh Army awarding me the Bronze Star Medal. There's the 110. I may get another mostly undeserved campaign star for The North Apennines Campaign. I've just had a long and involved conversation with La Branche in this room over a bottle of white wine! He is in a depressed mood today but figuring on going home soon too. He is the prototype of a playboy. He recited me his whole family history this afternoon from the man that helped Andrew Jackson enlist Lafitte to his seat on the stock exchange.

Damn these short forms.

Give my best to the family. I bought a new pair of dark greens 2 days ago \$12.00 for you. All my love to you and Kathy. -- Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 13, 1945

Dear Love,

Here are several photos for you. We are waiting for the announcement of the Japanese surrender which somehow doesn't seem so sure now as it did yesterday or the day before. Perhaps they're grooming the crown prince for the job of signing all future orders in our name. I hope the decision is reached today. It's the one sure way of getting home right away. My stock reply to anyone who talks about the war being over is that it isn't over for me until I'm home. I was over to Frankfurt this morning. What a bureaucracy that is. Let no one ever try to convince me of the joys of private enterprise and the vices of the bureaus. I know it and can say a hearty "Amen". Damn the army's spirit when it gets enclosed in four walls and a typewriter.

I got a fairly long letter from Kathy Steinz day before yesterday. She is no longer with the Univ. but is looking about for a more interesting job with responsibility. She seems to have little trouble finding work.

Taubert came up from Stuttgart today & I'm waiting to see him. Practically all the 6822 men are scattered around Germany but they keep coming in every day and there is a nucleus of some twenty right here all of the time. Saw a fairly good gangster film other evening. John Garfield & Faye Emerson in No one Lives Forever (?) A kind of classic, like Tall in the Saddle. Give my Kathy a big [kiss], dearest. And all my love to you.

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 14, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

The war's been over for about five hours now and I am just beginning to feel the emotion that's expected of us. The thing is, the whole war has stopped in such fits and starts that it's hard to maintain a given level of emotion. I haven't felt at all like celebrating. I was even supposed to go to the movies tonight because Vic was here to stay with Kathy, but instead I batted a ball around at the playground for a while, then came home and sent him home. Then I went up to Lettie's and we just finished talking, around eleven now. She is a kindred soul as far as the war's end goes -- her husband is still in service and she doesn't know when he's coming home, and we both feel that the only people who could go out and howl tonight are those totally disinterested in the war. At least, that goes for the civilians. You can hardly blame a GI for using this as an excuse to hang one on. You only really begin to feel the difference between war and peace in semantic situations, like saying "When the war is over I'll get the typewriter fixed, Vic." Then I realize that the war is over (and that the typewriter never will be fixed). And I also realized it when I went in just now to change the sleeping Kathy's wet diaper - I figured I was gazing on the face of one individual who probably won't see another war and be bothered by it -- that is, another shooting war. If somebody decides to give this atomic thing a really good try, Kathy won't have to worry about the deformities of old age either.

I got your letter of Aug. 7 today and I can't find it just now to answer it, very significant, because you devoted a good part of it to giving me hell for one thing or another. However I don't mind because of the one good part, your instructions not to send Xmas presents because you would be home before Xmas. At least, I hope I interpreted correctly. It was open to another (due to your obscurantist style of writing) -- that you weren't going to send me any. But in either case the reasons are the same, and you can't imagine how happy it makes me. You also can't imagine how pessimistic I've been about the time of your

homecoming. I'm still not very sure of how sure you are of the outside limit of coming home, but at least, before Christmas gives one something to go by. Now anyway they can't use the excuse that they are deploying men to the Pacific.

I saw Bill Kent in the store today. He is a captain and just got back from Spain (why Spain). I don't know how interesting that is to you because you probably don't know him, or am laboring under the same delusion I was, that he and Bill Earle are the same people. Anyway, they're both Beta's.

Vic is worrying about what the end of the war will do to the supply of girls. He is a terrible wolf, I think. It seems to me that all you DeGrazia's must be unusually libidinous folk (at least, I hope so).

Well, darling, it is way past bedtime. One of these days you will be home, to keep me from getting my proper sleep in person, and I'll love it.

And you too.

Jill

P.S. Got big box of books today. Assume Verdi score is for Dad. Is it? Lousy books, except ones I sent you. No room in bookcases either.

JILL TO AL AUGUST 15?, 1945

Darling --

I feel like a cur for not writing all weekend and what is worse, not yet mailing the letters I did write you on Saturday. I just don't have any stamps and haven't been able to get out to buy some yet. And today I got your long V-mail from Aug. 6, written in caps which give every word and phrase an augustness destined to make them almost immortal. Which is very well, but rather

hard on these eyes, which are used to frailer representations of the workings of your great mind.

Damn those quotas. Why doesn't something happen soon. Here the world is going up in a blast of atomic bombs, history is being made and probably culminated, and you are still stuck in Come-to-scenic-Wiesbaden, with apparently no better excuse than the Army doesn't have space to transport you. What makes me even madder is that I read in the paper this morning that they are taking three big transports, like the Queen Mary, out of service, to re-fit them for peacetime travel. Should I write my Congressman?

I never read any of Bret Harte but maybe I should now. I looked through that book of James Thurslow Adams you sent and it looked remarkably conventional and uninspiring. Last week I read a strange novel by Rosamund Lehmann, an English

[page missing] * * *

their friends who have the cottage there weren't really very glad to see us, because they'd been expecting other people or something. Then finally around three I got Kathy to take a nap and went to the beach. Fifteen minutes later she woke up and somebody brought her down to the beach where she had a good time wading and "Sweeming" which consists of forcing me to hold her under her arms and she levels out on her stomach on the water and kicks. I think this is very wonderful and am sure that next summer she'll be ready for you to teach the rudiments of a dog paddle too. She was the only one who had any fun. It was hot and I had the curse and couldn't go in. Then we had another flat tire so we left around six and went to Michigan City, surely the most dismal place in the world if I didn't know it was just like every other small town in the middle west, and while the tire was being fixed we had dinner in the most horrible short-order place imaginable. The meat was terrible, which I didn't realize until I'd given Kathy a little and eaten some myself. Then we left and got home at ten, very dispirited except for my apparent knowledge that Kathy had a

happy day and really acted like an angel. But then I woke up in the middle of the night feeling like I was about to give birth to a baby, and had a fine case of GI's which are not yet gone, and this morning Kathy woke up with ditto. I feel terrible about her getting it too but am relieved that she doesn't seem to have the really crashing cramps I've got. She is asleep now and has been for three hours and maybe when she wakes up, she'll be rested and well again. She is such a nice little girl too. I have figured out that a lot of her whining and bitching is due to my bad temper and also to the fact that she gets so terribly overtired all the time, because she is incapable of resting and taking it easy when she is awake, unlike other babies who seem to live at a slower pace. However yesterday I made her rest in the morning before we left and was very sweet to her all day long, and she reacted fine, despite the heat and interminable waits. She does tend to cry to get me to do something, like "Out go" but I'm learning to get around that too. I give her a reason for my not wishing to go, and then if she continues to cry, I say, "Well, if you're going to cry, please go away and do so, don't cry in the kitchen, the bathroom, etc." Then she tears into her room wailing and in a few minutes will emerge smiling, or at least, with some other interest. She just woke up now, apparently feeling very well and smiling, although she still looks a bit peaked. I better go now and supervise her building a dam in the bathtub.

Darling, I love you very much. Here are some pictures taken when Day was here, not very good. [*Handwritten:*] The ones the man next door took didn't come out.

000XXX Jill

handwritten - part of a letter, undated.

even if you don't like the city you're in, you can look to the hills beyond & the endless stretches of mountains, water & lovely farm lands. But Chicago's South Side - brrr. You're locked in by US Steel, the Stockyards & the Stinks.

Vic is over and using the typewriter which hampers me a bit. I feel terrible - it's worse than having a baby. That at least was over in 6 hours.

I got some cute boys GI shorts at the bookstore, in between spasms, also a book for Kathy.

I love you Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 15, 1945 (A) V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

Much as it hurts me to so inform you, I'm being evicted from the ETO and will take my departure next week, August 23, 1945, to be exact. The news came yesterday while I was down at Seventh Army Headquarters in Heidelberg. Six of us are going, five EMs and myself. I like that. We will have a little group going home together. In addition La Branche may go at the same time and he is fine company. But I would love it even if it were throughout a matter of solitary confinement on bread and water. I am almost sure it will be by air that we'll go. I'll send you a telegram as soon as the written orders come in but you know how it gets to be. I won't feel completely sure until I hit the old sod. It is too incredible.

Here goes the mail out. I didn't have a chance to write last night. But I want to make this mail for you, and will write more later today.

In deepest anticipation,

I am always your

Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 15, 1945 (B) V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

I wrote you earlier in the day that I was scheduled for shipment home on August 23, that is, next Wednesday. I didn't write much more because I wanted to make the outgoing mail. I'm leaving with five of the oldest members of the company, so old in fact that like myself they will feel the whole thing more credible when we are aboard the plane for the States. It seems likely that we will fly to Marseilles, thence to Casablanca, thence to Miami and thence to our individual separation centers. I don't know then when I will arrive at Fort Sheridan and I won't know until I actually arrive there but you can be sure that I will call you by phone immediately upon getting near home. Don't worry about me and don't worry about not being home. Perhaps only days are involved, perhaps weeks. It is impossible to say, weather, passenger loads, etc. are all factors. I wouldn't go to the country for a week if I were you but don't feel that you must stay at home. If you are going for more than several hours, leave word of your whereabouts with Mom or Mir. I know you would rather meet me at the station and therefore if I am coming in on any station I will do my best to let you know, meanwhile leaving it to your judgement whether you want to ask any other members of the family to accompany you. For my part I will have eyes only for you.

Today I packed a barracks bag full of belongings and will ship it on ahead tomorrow. I don't know when it will arrive. I will send out a couple of others within the next couple of days. Perhaps they'll beat me home though I hope not. I won't have much with me in the way of baggage and will probably throw you out of the bathroom [*bath tub ?*], or try to, the first thing, so you might remove all of Kathryn's animals and boats from said object.

I don't know how the next several days will drag out but I suppose they will go the way of all the others we've gone through apart. I have some packing and paperwork to do and a lot of good-byes and a farewell party with the company. But I will

be dreaming all the time of home, I don't doubt, and my anticipation will get sharper as the day grows nearer.

I owe several people letters and will write them too. I won't stop writing you until actually on the last leg of the journey, even though I won't be getting any letters from you. We have been mildly celebrating here ever since the first report of the Jap surrender. Nothing big - a minor levity, a few drinks. Work has been at a minimum for most people. I think I'll turn what's left of the company over to Hagie who will be recalled from Stuttgart. I can't say how much I look forward to seeing you & Kathy.

All my passionate love.

Al

End of August (first of two parts) 1945 letters

