



Al on his way back.

AL TO JILL AUGUST 16, 1945

Dearest,

Here are several pictures I came across in clearing out my field desk today. I hope that by the time you see my visage in the picture, I'll be there in the flesh. Nothing has happened yet to interfere with my leaving on the 23rd and I hope and believe nothing will.

We saw Meet Me in St. Louis last evening at our theater here on the castle grounds. I enjoyed it very much, despite its great length. In some ways the delightful tranquillity and restraint of the stories were exaggerated in the film. I'm sure, on the other hand, though, that the photography was the best technicolor has seen. The cameraman & director weren't so awed by the colors that they simply let the cameras grind away, as happens in most technicolor pictures. Nor was there that hatred of black and whites and of shadows that generally is displayed by the owner of the glittering color machine.

The German summer is an evil thing. It has been cold most of the time and it rains practically every day. I spent the morning burning old papers, discussing the company's affairs with Lt. Col. Harden & cleaning three guns - large, medium & small - which I have. I put a lot of oil on them. I don't think I'll use them in a long time. Tomorrow will be a holiday in the ETO I

understand but it won't be much different from any other day around here. They don't overwork. It's a dead life, though. I don't like it at all, comfortable as it is.

Well it looks as if we'll spend the whole autumn and thenceforth together, sweetheart. If you don't already know, I have three months of leave with full pay coming. It will be "terminal leave", i.e., I will collect my pay once a month for three months & that's about all I'll have to do with the army. To what lonely, beautiful spot shall we retire?

Many kisses

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 17, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

It's been so long since I wrote you last (Tuesday and this is Friday) that I feel positively embarrassed and hesitant about taking up lines of communication again, with the vague thought that you may have dropped me by now. The delirium of V-J day finally caught up with me -- when I last wrote Tuesday night I was surly, nervous, tired and rundown, and feeling very sorry for myself that I had nobody to celebrate with, namely you. But Wednesday I took Kathy up to Mom's, and while passing through the holiday Loop crowds I got the infection of the glad tidings. Then I went back to the Loop and met Nancy and we went sailing. Curiously enough I got a little sea-sick, which probably had nothing to do with victory but with the queasy state by stomach has been in all week. After sailing she met her date for the evening and he took us both up to the Knickerbocker for a couple of drinks and then we drove up to get Kathy and they drove me home again -- the first sign of victory -- unlimited gas. Then yesterday was rainy so I furiously cleaned the house and did the laundry all day, again goaded by an irrational euphoria, and last night she (Nancy) came over and we rode bikes out to

Joan's, where we had a short bull session, and then proceeded back, on a perilous trip home. Neither of us had lights and we came close to getting socked twice. Today was the first decent summer's day we've had in about three weeks so I spent it down at the rocks with Kathy. The water was beautiful and calm and we both went in a lot. I'm sure Kathy will be swimming next summer, if you're here to teach her.

I haven't gotten any mail from you since Tuesday either, the result, no doubt, of all services being halted because of the two-day holiday, but now [*paper is damaged*] you'll be home very soon that I'm in a current mood of indifference [] as a form of communication. Pretty soon we'll be talking our [] one another. It took me a while to realize that complete victory [] would make a difference in getting you home -- I guess that's why I wasn't so elated at first. But everything in the newspapers points to the fact that the Army is going to try to demobilize as rapidly as possible. My head is swimming with visions of the post-war world -- a dizzy mixture of sex unlimited, sleeping late in the morning (twice a week, at which time you'll be delegated to give Miss K. her breakfast), rubber scrapers for the dishes, a light-weight bike or two, small-sized life preservers for Kathy, maybe a sailboat, and lots of fresh air. Of course, we all had lots of fresh air in wartime -- I don't know why I set that up to be a post-war good. But I keep meditating on fantastic hikes and jaunts into the country with you -- probably in complete conflict with your post-war plans. Still I don't ask for the impossible -- cars, fur coats or a maid.

Oh, in that big wooden box of books you sent I found the second can of pâté and they are both on ice, awaiting your arrival. I finally got around to reading the directions of the can, which said very clearly in Turkish to keep them cold. We need another bookcase very badly, also a chest of drawers and a bigger ice box. However, I don't think I'll get the two former items until you come back and we know what we'll do, or at least, until you are here in person to tell me how to arrange the books. You can use my drawers and I'll give my clothes to Russian War Relief.

Wasn't Churchill's speech re the Red peril stinky? Also I don't like MacArthur and have heard foul tales about his politics, also I am out of sympathy with Chiang Kai Shek. However, it will be another few days before I can get seriously worried about post-war politics. Now I'm too busy thinking about how soon you'll be coming home. It's so imminent that I'm rather worried. Will I have my hair washed by then, will the house be clean enough, will he criticize the dirty windows, will he insist on wearing that pin-stripe dull right away. As far as shirts go, Mom says she must have a lot up north that fit you, and I found a very nice white one in the closet here that I just sent to the laundry, having worn it until it started to mold. I think what I'll do soon is dig up all the stuff you've sent home that you might wear and also the civilian things around here and arrange them neatly in a drawer. As it is, your olive drab undershirts and my virginal white pants are all mixed surrealistically.

Kathy is fine, though full of grievance against me. I've been very short-tempered all day because, Damn it, I'm tired of getting up at seven in the morning. Every time I fall asleep, which I always do with great difficulty, it seems as if she deliberately tries to wake me up again. I started to nap again this afternoon and she woke up with a bellow, just about the time somebody started to shovel coal in what sounded like our front window. I'd certainly like to go someplace where it's a little quieter. The dread Viennese came back from their vacation the night of victory day and have been stomping around with renewed vigor, now that the world is free from fascism. All of which conspires to make me very irritable indeed. The only palliative I know is to go down to the lake and swim, but then, as soon as I get home to the dirty dishes and the stomping I get mad all over again. Kathy becomes the target of my ill-humor when she starts following me around, especially into the bathroom. As soon as I start to wash my teeth or my face, up she hops on the john seat and starts turning on the cold water full blast, so that it washes all over the floor, and then she insists on brushing her teeth too, or putting on lipstick, or having her nails manicured, which is darling if you're not in a hurry and a pain when one is.

Well, darling, enough of my trivial troubles. I just want you to know what to expect in a very short time -- what bedlam and trials. I love you terribly and hope ditto vice versa.

OOOXXX

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 17, 1945 V-MAIL

My Dearest Jill,

Today is a holiday which gives me slightly more time to think about me leaving for home next week. It is therefore also a longer than usual twenty-four hours. We are having a ping-pong tournament this afternoon which helps to pass time. I know you don't realize while I'm writing you that I'll be home in a couple of weeks, but you must have gotten a surge of optimism from the end of the Japanese war and the news that the high-pointers were getting first priority. The quota I'm on was made up before the end of the war and I'll still get home sooner than the bulk of the 85ers. Still the next four days will be long. Once on the way I'll be more exuberant and the time will pass faster.

This morning I didn't do very much. We had breakfast at nine because of the holiday and afterwards I sorted letters to mail home and worked a little cleaning up the unit records. I read the newspaper if you can call it such and it still has the Japs fiddling around and the Russians fighting. I think the Russki want to get located strategically before they stop moving. You can't very well halt in the middle of a pincers movement. It is very embarrassing. And of course the Chinese communists and the Chiang government are having their little spat in the middle of it. There is no guarantee, I suppose, that the war in China is really over. The army will be under great pressure now on all sides. Already they are getting the suppliant attitude in their call for enlistments for three years. That was, of course, the signal for a great raspberry by most of the men concerned. I doubt very

much whether there will be any form of conscription during peacetime. The atomic bomb helped the opposing side a great deal. If there is to be another war it will be a highly technical affair, and whatever discipline exists will be foreign to the old type which is based on the problems of the infantry. I don't believe militarism will ever be a threat to civilization or peace. It is too old-fashioned.

I'm looking around now for a good thick book to carry on my journey. I have a collection of Eugene O'Neill's plays, most of which I've read at one time or another, but that will hardly suffice. Perhaps I'll take along one of Dickens' long novels, if you can picture me reading that in the midst of achieving the happy state of arriving home.

Tomorrow I'm going either to Offenbach or Heidelberg. I would rather go to Offenbach where I've never been before but I may have to go to Heidelberg to pick up some orders. They are each about an hour and three quarters' ride from here.

What a dull letter. But I can't think of anything more interesting than going home, hard as I try. The idea of seeing you and Kathy is stupendous. It blocks out everything else. Will a thousand kisses do you until then? And all my love? Well here it is, anyway.

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 18, 1945 V-MAIL

Al darling --

Still no mail from you today, Saturday. But then, my New Yorker didn't come either so I guess it must be the postal service. At any rate, I didn't sit home and brood about it. Far from it, I took Kathy over to the lake this morning for a picnic lunch and it was so muggy and deserted and the water was covered with an oily film. Then this middle-aged man I have a chatting acquaintance

with rode along -- he has a Hercules even more beautiful than my stolen but not forgotten darling, which is why I ever talked to him in the first place. He suggested I try the bathing down at Calumet beach, which is, as you know, pretty far down, so I plopped Kathy on the bar and away we went. At about 93rd we bought some fruit at a roadside stand and we finally got there, and sure enough the water was clean, and we had a nice lunch of fruit, very continental, since Kathy ate everything else up, and then started back. I got to Joan's about three, thinking I might as well stop off there on the way back, and said goodbye to my silent-except-on-the-subject-of-bicycles friend, and stayed there the rest of the afternoon, and rode back around six. It was really a swell day. Kathy loves travel as much as I do, at least on bikes, and behaved admirably, and it was more fun exploring a little and going someplace new. I'm not the least bit tired either. I think bike-riding in the Middle West is by far the most superior form of travel and will simply die if you don't accept a new bike from me on Valentine's day, or whenever the English bikes start being produced in large quantities. I don't envy people with cars in the least, because after all, in the summer time you can get anywhere you like with a bike and in the winter, who wants to travel anyway. Just think of the fun we can have with bikes. If we have another little baby, we could put it in the basket on one bike, and Kathy on the buddy seat on the other, and the lunch in the basket on that bike. A truly idyllic picture. You know, when I look back on it, I thought I would simply die this summer without you, the loneliness and all, but just because I've been able to be quite mobile and stay out late with Kathy, because she is such a good companion, I haven't minded it as much as I thought. However, let none of the above be construed as a suggestion that you are not the most essential part of my life.

I feel just wonderful tonight, despite the fact that I have a stomach ache from eating so much fruit and also that the kitchen is littered with the dishes from all day. Last night after I got in bed I started to read, but you kept intruding into my thoughts, so I spent several happy minutes with what corresponds to my bible, the album of your pictures. Then I

went to bed, contented with the thought that you were by far the most glamorous, the kindest, the most sinister, the ugliest, the shortest and the tallest man alive, depending on the view I got of you. I don't think expressionistic painting has anything on the assortment of Kodakerie I have of you. I guess my pictures must have the same effect on you, except for the fact that you generally come out very well in pictures. Only a great love could survive most of the ones I've sent you, of me.

I love you sweetie and will write more tomorrow.

Jill

JILL TO AL AUGUST 20, 1945 V-MAIL

You fiend you --

You've just ruined my afternoon's nap and I don't suppose it will be the last time you do it, either. I got your letters of Aug. 8, 9, and 12th today, and the last one, telling of the possibility of how soon you would be home, has sent me into a sleep-destroying euphoria. God, darling, the thought that you might be home in a couple of weeks more or less has made me absolutely dizzy with joy and plans. And the latter mainly center about all the ways I will kiss you and love you, and all the wonderful ways Kathy will perform for you. But promise me one thing, darling, that if you come unexpectedly, you won't notice if I haven't dusted or something that day. I am so afraid that you might come and something awful will happen that day, like my not having a clean thing to wear, or my hair needs washing, or some terrible crisis like that. I'm going out this afternoon to get it cut, but there's no guarantee that it won't have grown in raggedly again by the time you come, since it grows very fast.

I don't know how I'm going to survive the time between getting that cable and your actual arrival. Well, one thing I won't do is try to get the house in immaculate fall-housecleaning condition before you come, because then I would be so tired I might not

be able to cope with you. I wish I knew which was your favorite dress so I could wash it and set it aside, but unfortunately, so much time has elapsed since we last saw each other that I've had a pretty complete turnover in wardrobe. I couldn't think of anything more tragic than my putting on a dress that you wouldn't like. Maybe I just ought to appear stark naked and let you select the homecoming wardrobe, out of my closet-full of choice moth-eaten items. I don't feel the least bit apologetic for cluttering up my mind and this page with such trivia, because apparently it's not an uncommon concern, viz your announcement that you got a new pair of dark green pants, presumably to wear in my presence. I want you to arrive with the works on, too, all insignia (Coast Artillery, Signal Corps and Black Horses) and medals and bars. I think it's swell that the Bronze Star came through and I'm very proud, though no prouder than I could possibly be, just having you for my husband.

I think what I will do for the next few weeks, besides just the ordinary low level of housekeeping to which I'm addicted, is to concentrate on keeping up my tan and getting a lot of sleep. And also eschewing tainted foods and liquor in all forms. Not that so much as a beer has passed my lips for these many months, excepting the scotch I had on VJ day. I had thought I was going to wash the windows but now I might as well wait until you come home, and some afternoon you can take Kathy out alone and I'll do all the unfinished chores. I hope these plans are agreeable to you. I do want everything to be just perfect for you when you come home, but my limited imagination and energies (except for 18-mile bike rides) sort of set the limits on perfection pretty close.

I didn't write you yesterday because I spent one of those tiring, completely extroverted, days at the beach. I kept Kathy out until four, then brought her home in a completely exhausted condition and she napped until six. Laura and Priscilla came over for dinner and we got her up and fed her and then everybody went either back to bed or home. Oh, I did stay up long enough to go out with Lettie around nine for a sundae.

These active days leave me with an insatiable hunger for sweets, so powerful is it that I can't go to sleep unless I have my ration of fudge first. I'm still reading Kafka but interspersed it with The Sad Sack last night. I didn't mention before this that I'd received it in that big package of books, because no sooner had I opened the box than some kid borrowed the book, so I didn't know till yesterday that it was dedicated and a very special gift for me. Thanks a lot sweetie, I still think he is very funny, though I'd seen many of the sequences in the Sun before. By the way, have you seen Mauldin's Willie and Joe since they became civilians. The strip is fully as good as before, still full of the Army irony and snafu. One of the ones I liked best recently was of Willie's wife holding his shirt at arm's length, with him saying, "But honey, I've only worn it a week."

I had a lot more to tell you but I keep getting interrupted. Priscilla is over for dinner and is going to stay tonight as well as tomorrow night -- tomorrow aft. is my sailing day again, so she'll be here to take care of the baby when Mrs. Oppenheimer leaves off. This morning I took Kathy to the lake again and we had a divine swim. It's really hot again and the lake was very calm. I guess we'll go swimming again tonight when the baby falls asleep. I had a queer experience with a little boy down there. He is always there with his sister -- they are about ten years each -- and today he was there alone. They are rather typical war children, from what they've told me, and God knows they've told me enough, since they've fastened on me as if I were their second mother. Their real mother works in a restaurant and they have, confusingly enough, a soldier daddy and a sailor daddy. Anyway, he insisted on riding me home, along on his bike, so I asked him in for lunch, which he accepted very willingly. He ate scantily (very neurotic I thought, since he certainly isn't shy) and then insisted on helping me with all sorts of household chores, like dumping the garbage and doing the dishes. He would still be here, helping me with the shopping, if I hadn't shunted him out so I could read your letters in peace. I feel very sorry for kids like that but they compensate for their deprivations with a notable smartness and boldness

and appearance of being at home in the world. I guess there are a lot of kids in Europe that way, only more so.

Kathy got a new pair of shoes this afternoon and I got one of those invisible haircuts, so you see, we are busy smartening ourselves up for your return. Now if I could only find a good cleaning woman I would be perfectly at ease. You see, I don't say perfectly happy because that won't be until I see you face to face.

I love you a million times over.

P.S. Am sending your Finchley and gabardine suit to cleaners. Also found two decent looking shirts to be laundered.

AL TO JILL AUGUST 20, 1945

Dearest Jill, Dearest Jill,

Day after tomorrow I leave and that's all I feel like writing. However, a few trivia may make you and me both less impatient. My current problem, a very minor one, is to wrap up and send my surplus belongings, i.e., all short of what I'm carrying. I'll mail my Class A uniform home tomorrow. It's too much to carry. And there are other odds and ends which would probably interest you more if you weren't waiting the chief odd and end to appear. I was down to Seventh Army HQ yesterday to pick up copies of various orders affecting me and the company for my and the company's file. Seventh Army has really fixed itself up there. They've taken over the city completely. Men and officers work at the HQ buildings on the outskirts of town, but most live in the hotels in town. The messes are in town. The lieutenants have one mess, and the other grades likewise have separate messes. All the colonels have houses they've taken over from the Germans. The signposts in Heidelberg are more American than German, advertising Special Service features, movies, schools, etc., and directing traffic to American companies.

The weather was as ugly as ever. I drove my jeep back in two hours of driving rain. There are three routes one can take from here. Usually I drive across the Rhine at Mainz where the army has built a great fine bridge, thence down through Oppenheim Worms, across the Rhine again at Ludwigshaven and through Mannheim to Heidelberg. Yesterday, however, I came back by way of the Autobahn from Mannheim to Darmstadt, which is safer on a rainy day and faster, drove from Darmstadt to the upper corner where the Rhine & Mainz meet and there took a slow civilian river ferry across the Main, then drove West to Wiesbaden. The third route is like the second except that from Darmstadt, one crosses the Rhine at Oppenheim & then up the first way. Oppenheim is a picturesque untouched town. It must be one of the oldest in this sector. It has narrow streets and cobblestones, the small Christmas village houses. The country around it has lots of vineyards, despite the cool and rainy seasons. All of this is French territory now and all through the villages one sees Moroccans and Algerians. U.S. [?] and red fezzes and blue turbans make a very nice combination. The French colonial officers wear a red overseas cap like ours that goes very well against khaki and OD too.

A couple of evenings ago, they showed God is my Co-Pilot at our place and I didn't go: I guess I was right. Among the other blasphemies of the movie, I understand that everyone is to "Synchronize your watches", they all look at their watches and then walk out. I suppose the Co-Pilot of Them All took care of that also. There is another show tonight which is called Brighton String or something. I'll take a look at it anyhow.

10.30 P.M.

I just returned from seeing the show which was entitled Brighton Strangler, to set the record straight. There were a lot of good vicious murders but the whole thing was pretty hammy. The classic line was "Don't shoot! Applaud!" which I can't explain in detail here. You see, the actor had a bump on the head & was murdering people. As he was about to murder the heroine, the inspector of police drew a bead on him. The resulting bright

idea from an actress caused him to drop his dirty work to bow to the audience. After that, everything was simple. And so am I.

It's been a week since I've had any mail from you. I hope I don't have to leave without getting at least one letter from August. I hope also that the weather is more tolerable at home than it is here just now, though I can't say that I would notice anything between 100 below and above. For your sake and your temper, shall we say. The Chicago climate does things for your disposition, or at least that was one excuse during one period for your disposition. There have been others at various other times. More about that when I see you, two Martinis at two paces.

Always my deepest love,

Al

JILL TO AL AUGUST 21, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling --

I'm still in the dizzy whirl your letter of Aug. 12 sent me into yesterday, and I probably won't come out of it for the next 40 years. While I didn't put too much hopes on your guess that you might be leaving in a week from that date (the week has already lapsed and there hasn't been any cable) I think it will be so soon as to justify the mad and impotent whirl I'm now in. Oh, I did do something tonight -- I spoke soothingly over the phone to some cleaning woman somebody recommended to me, so maybe she will come in next week and right the wrongs of my housekeeping. I will also try to get a chest of drawers by the end of this week. The reason I haven't made any such provision before for your needs is because I never knew, until the total peace was made, where we would land up together. But now it looks as if you will be heading straight back for 5436.

I didn't cut up your shorts and never will, because as I told you, I

found a very nice pair at the bookstore which are the right color to go with the jacket, if you let me wear it. I also found packed away two fairly decent shirts you used to wear, and I'm sure there will be many more in the stores by the time you're ready to go shopping. That will certainly be a lark, shopping for civilian clothes for you. Your Finchley suit still looks swell and so does that gabardine, when the spots are removed. I still don't like the pin striped brown one at all. Surely you deserve at least one more civilian suit, if not more, when you get back. I don't seem to remember your leaving any ties in my care. Well, those must be easy items to procure. I don't see any civilian underwear either, but you probably wouldn't mind wearing your Army stuff if those are hard to get. Anyway, who knows what you have on underneath. Presumably it will only be me.

Kathy probably won't be toilet-trained by the time you get back and I hope it won't annoy you. Apparently, it has nothing to do with how early you start, because Joan started about nine months with Mike and he is no further along than Kathy in that respect. I've heard other mothers say the same thing. As for starting them at a few weeks, it's not only ridiculous but might be dangerous to the personality development of the child. The general conclusion by modern child psychologists is that when the child is ready for toilet-training, he'll do it himself, and that generally, training works best as the verbal facility of the child increases. As Kathy still is no great linguist, we can conclude that when she gets that way, she'll be trained or train-able. You can attribute her relative (according to Mom) slowness in speaking compared to DeGrazia norms to the Oppenheim bad blood. But her muscles -- you can't take that away from me.

We were supposed to go sailing today but when we got downtown, Nancy couldn't make it so Joan and I went to the Oriental, where we were treated to the incredible and revolting sight of Dick Haymes and his juvenile fans, screams and all. Also a curious but not bad Republic film.

Darling, I love you and will write more tomorrow. Jill

JILL TO AL AUGUST 22, 1945 V-MAIL

[handwritten]

Darling --

I don't know if there's any sense in writing you. I got your letter this morning that you were leaving the 23rd and I don't know what to do. I am so dizzy. With difficulty I gave Kathy lunch but am unable to eat myself - much less sleep, read or do anything but (at first) cry with joy & call Mom & talk, rather babble endlessly.

I don't know whether to write any more. I might better devote the time to cleaning the house & fixing my clothes.

Darling, I don't know what else to say except that I'm the happiest woman alive.

OOOXXX

Jill

AL TO JILL AUGUST 22, 1945 V-MAIL

Jill, Dearest,

We left Wiesbaden this morning, on our way home. Tonight we are staying in Luxembourg, where I'm writing this and tomorrow morning we report to the 14th Reinforcement Dept at Thionville which is a little ways South of here. I don't know where we'll go from there except that it will be homewards. We are thru with Germany for now and I am happy for that. Lux. is like a breath of fresh air, a beautiful city. I'm staying in a bright room in the Continental Hotel. I have army friends here and they've fixed me up well. Lt. Little, for one, is here, and the EM managing the place used to be under my command with the Seventh Army. This morning Col. Stanley called the officers together and presented me with a little farewell speech and a bottle of cognac. They are nice people at the 6871st DISCC. I hope they

get home soon too. I said goodbye last night to the men staying behind. I hope I beat this letter home to you. A big kiss for you & Kathy until then.

Always your

Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 23, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

God, when will this mess end up and when will I be with you again? I'm in this Reinforcement Depot now and it is the very asshole of creation, dismal, desolate, wet, dirty and slow. We are crowded together and fed shit on a shingle. No one knows any one else and everyone has left his good friends and unit behind and therefore feels like hell. Here we must sit for several days at least and from here we go to a port where we take a boat. No more planes for going home, they say. Well, we don't mind so much as long as they take us out of here and put us on our way. To make matters worse, I've had no mail from you in a week and won't now until I see you. I think it's a damned shame that the army can't treat the men who won this damned war better. Two officers rode three days in a 40 and 8 from Austria to here. One hot meal was all they had. If it all were fast we wouldn't mind any discomfort. But we will sit here for days.

This will get to you after I'm out of this place and I can't even count on your sympathy. It's just as well and nice to think of. Once I have my arms around you, it will all be worthwhile and more. I will kiss you a thousand times over again. So don't worry if I don't arrive as early as I had expected. I'll arrive and in force.

With all my love,

Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 25, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

I've escaped from Hell's Kitchen into Luxembourg where I am in comfort for a couple of days while waiting for my shipment to be called up to leave the camp. I came in last night with a lieutenant who is one of the three officers who share my room at the Reinfor. Depot, and we had a good sleep on a bed after making the rounds of a couple of cafes: his name is Cowan and in many ways he is another Hank Danenberg though less intelligent. This morning I finished breakfast and walked around the interesting city before coming into this Red Cross Club to have a cup of coffee and write you. Cowan is over having a massage. Last night he was completely obsessed with sexual desire - so busy looking around that he was like an absent-minded professor. Finally while we were walking home, he spotted a lone woman and abandoned me to trail her. He succeeded and came home like a puppy after a bath while I was in bed reading Thomas Wolfe's last book -- if you can call it a book.

I spotted a child's dress in a shop window this morning that I thought would be very pretty on Kathy but I couldn't buy it or anything else in the way of clothes without coupons. The souvenirs I've seen around are not nice. Some of the buildings in Lux are very beautiful, one I saw I thought almost perfectly aesthetic. But I don't think the Luxers are as good in the handicrafts and painting. I noticed two extremely childish paintings displayed in an art store - and when I say "childish" I mean stuff I could paint technically and wouldn't dream of painting creatively.

Now you must be curious to know when I'll be home if you are not already exhausted by your curiosity and impatience as I am. My present opinion inclines around September 15. I am very much afraid that we won't ship out of our present concentration

camp until the end of the month, afterwards spending two days on a slow train to a camp near the sea, two days at that camp and eight days on the ocean, arriving finally at Fort Sheridan in the physical and mental state of a canned sardine. It'll be worth it in the end but it's a painful way of getting out of the army in Europe.

All my love and a thousand kisses.

Your Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 28, 1945 V-MAIL

Darling,

Still in Buchenwald, my love, while you probably think of me this moment as flying over the bounding wave. But only two more days to do and we will once again be on our way. Since an earlier batch moved out yesterday & there are less here, the food is no longer undescrivable. It is simply horrible. The Luxembourg interlude of two days has fortunately shortened our time here. I may drive in again tomorrow morning with Col. Perry to spend another day there, I met him today here, just another inmate glad to see a friendly face. I think it disgraceful that the army assistant chief of staff for G-2 should be treated like this. He was one of those most responsible for stopping cold the German offensive at Bitche last December and January.

However, we saw a good show here last night, "Junior Miss" good and yet strange in that very little was done to turn the play into a screen play. And so many of the lines were said hurriedly. Tonight there is another movie and I'm going again. Edw. Robinson in The Face at the Window. I managed to get through to my outfit near Wiesbaden on the phone today and asked them to send whatever mail they have for us down here today or tomorrow. I would enjoy so much getting a letter from you, it has been so long. And the same & more goes for seeing you.

All my love to you & Kathy. Your Al

AL TO JILL AUGUST 30, 1945 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

We were supposed to leave tomorrow by train for Le Havre thence to take a boat, but all plans have been changed, so that we must stay here another two days to leave Sunday for Marseilles by train and thence by plane the rest of the way. I think the news is more good than bad. I hate to stay here another two days but I believe we may get home a couple of days earlier than if we had gone by boat. From Marseilles the planes go to Casablanca, Dakar, Brazil, Trinidad and Miami, I understand. I know all these changes must be stretching your patience and imagination, as they are mine. I am seething with repressed anticipation and famished for news of you. My last word of you is still July 28, since the messages from Wiesbaden has not turned up here with any mail yet.

The food continues bad and the general atmosphere around here a great deal like the State pen. Supper was tasteless noodles and tasteless peas. There were also tasteless carrots, but I exercised my right as a free man to not eat them and starve. Fortunately, I bought a sort of apple pie in Luxembourg last evening and had some of that and I've several chocolate bars. I finished Walles' book and a book of bad "Best Plays of 1943-44". Perhaps I can beat this letter home and give you a lot of kisses instead of sending them.

Al

End of August 1945 letters

