

JILL TO AL MAY ?, 1945

[Letter undated. Envelope has May 18 postmark]

Darling,

Some sweet photographs came from you today - very shiny and decorative and instructive. PWB releases, I take it, except for the intimate and rather good shot of you. I was sitting in the front steps with little Paul & Kathy when the mailman brought them and opened the package before their eyes. I pointed out your picture and Paul and Kathy -- see, Kathy's Daddy -- and they fell to [?] over possession of it. As a result it is slightly bent. But never fear, darling, I don't give any of the pictures you send away whether they are of scenery or atrocity pictures of you. I have put all the ones I got pre-Cal in the album and plan to do the same with these. You'd be surprised what a source of pleasure a coherent album like that is, to the person who makes it anyway. You would probably be rather distressed at so many gruesome views of you.

Tomorrow we go back to Chicago. I was busy yesterday washing, today packing & ironing. I still have a couple more suitcases to fill. Unlike the trip out, I am taking a fantastic assortment & quantity of toys back - all new and more or less of a surprise to Kathy. I learned my lesson on the way out - better surplus baggage than a bored child. I am also going to give the porter 5 bucks the minute I get on the train. Paul suggested it and then added "And he will probably spend the rest of the trip studying your profile to see what state you're wanted in". We are even talking the little Mexican chair which Paul is going to put a few last minute decorative touches on tonight. I painted it yellow a couple of days ago. Mom sent me a wire tonight saying she would meet us Monday, which makes me very happy. I bet she's anxious to see us. Kathy has changed so much since we left - she's grown so tall - she really is monstrous - and can talk (I-dropped-it, NAH!, MOMMIE, CWACKER - just like the Salernon butter cookie brat - and some version of "thank you". Also "there".) And she understands so many things, particularly

"Now stop it".

There was company for dinner last night - Bernice & Pete, Norman & Kay, which is why I didn't write you - to bid me farewell. Pete is really very bright - the compleat dilettante - and had some perceptive things to say about the so-called peace. What he said appeared to be true but I think he errs on the side of pessimism. My arm is tired, else I would tell all. Since my strapping was removed, my shoulder tends to get rather tired & sore. However, I view the trip with stoicism and a minimum of emotion. Fortunately I always carried Kathy with my left arm and it is very strong, so I'll get along fine. Norman took the Western Pacific back from Chicago and said it is a crummy old train but nothing could be worse than the Challenger and we'll be well equipped this time, right down to a music box that doesn't work. Maybe I should send it to you - it was made in Switzerland and you can dig up the dolt that made it.

I'm terribly anxious to hear from you past V-E day and how you stand in the homecoming deal. I hear the 15th Army will be the Army of Occupation, which reduces the chances that you will be stuck there. How I pray that you'll be home this summer.

Well, darling, my next letter to you will be on the train - if I get time to write.

All my love,

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 18, 1945 (A)

Dearest Jill,

Strassberg, Germany

I arrived back yesterday noon and donned the rural cloak with great ease. There was none of the mail from you which I had expected to be waiting for me and that made me angry. It's been well over a week since I heard from you. It had better not

be your fault. This is no time to stop regaling me, for I have little else to do to keep up my interest. Two copies of the New Yorker had arrived meanwhile, however. And I was given André Gide's The Counterfeiters by Martin, which is proving to be very stimulating and unusual. I find myself agreeing very strongly in his methods and in the aesthetic comment he makes throughout. I'll send it to you as soon as I finish it.

The other piece of mail yesterday was a letter from Elizabeth acknowledging my note written to her upon hearing of Bill's death. I feel I understand her more since reading it. She seems to have arisen from her bitter ashes into a martial martyrdom. I confess it frankly, it makes me slightly uneasy. I saw signs of that in her long ago. She's a stern little avenging angel, whatever her apparent softness. She'll drive her man out to fight like a Homeric mother, and when he is done go rushing to the fray herself. This may only be a temporary stage in her. I don't know whether it will change somewhat as soon as the wounds are healed. If so, it is a fine thing, most beneficial in its effects on herself and society. If not, its effects will be better on society than upon her, and we may be forever sorry, even if she is not. I myself am more chastened than I am inspired by losses. And I am too skeptical of the duration of false emotional states to move starry-eyed into them.

Same evening. Thanks to you, my dear love, for two letters which finally arrived tonight. They were of May 2 and 3. I am very happy to know that you are well on your way to your pristine agility. Now you must take care of yourself for a while, so that the break will heal properly, as any fool will tell you. Today, according to my delayed timetable, you are heading back to the Windy City. Bon voyage and I hope it won't be long before I join you there. The night is beautifully cool here after a hot day. What a delightful time we could have together on a night like this. It would stretch ever so far and long and be swept with kisses and breezes.

There has been no real news on readjustment in the last few days. Incidentally, readjustment applies to individuals and refers

to their return home. Redeployment applies to units. An individual is selected for readjustment to the states and then is put in one category of redeployed unit that proceeds to the states. You can rest certain that my only desire now is to see you and Kathy as soon as possible. I feel sure that whatever contribution I might make here can be matched by others and the army itself, in its point system agrees that I am perfectly eligible for a return home . The delay is now a matter of transport and administration, neither of them negligible factors. Of course, you and I are too old hands at this army game to be surprised or crushed by anything, but still I think there is grounds for as much optimism as you expressed in your letter. In fact, you think army pretty nearly all the way through, which is not a negligible virtue. Your skepticism towards the first accounts of the end of the war were appreciated by me. It was a typical soldier's reaction.

Sometimes I feel that the bonds that hold us together are positively weird. You will notice in the first paragraph of this letter the book I am reading, and then this evening's mail brought the news that you were reading the same book. I think it is one well worth exchanging opinions on, all disagreement to be settled by embracing.

Don't feel too badly about my changed appearance on the basis of the pictures you see of me. I am still kindly disposed toward you, and besides I think I can still get a gleam in my eye that you will find young enough to be hair-raising. Here are a couple of more pictures. Any better? But I know the one you want. I'll send it tomorrow. I am wearing a wool knit cap.

I don't receive enough pictures from you to even make a judgment about your changing. I don't need to, in reality. All I need is a sedative to keep my heart from leaping out at you. Down, damned organ, down!

All my love,

Al

AL TO JILL MAY 18, 1945 (B)

Here you are, dearest. Next time I'll powder my nose. I'm not going to write you tonight, since I must write a couple of other letters. Nothing much new anyhow. We had fresh oranges and fresh tomatoes in the rations today. It was a great treat, the first fresh fruit and vegetables in many months. I took a long nap this afternoon to make up for last night which I spent until one o'clock talking to a group of French officers who stayed overnight. They all left this morning.

All my love and many kisses,

Your

Al

P.S. Don't show around to anyone any picture that contained some German officials which I may have sent you. An order was just issued covering the matter.

THE moral questions of the German nation were immense and complicated. Instances come up before us. There is fat Hermann, Marshal of the German Nazi Reich Goering. He is caught up with finally by the American Seventh Army, a refugee in Austria, after giving up on Hitler in Berlin and ordering the last of the Luftwaffe to fight on the ground against the Russians who were attacking the Capital in a final assault. The Captain is informed: Goering has been taken. Do you want to see him? No. (He would admit to no morbid curiosity about the disgusting slob.) Go ahead without me. He gets two pictures, so fitting to the case: Goering is trying to squeeze his large ass into the small rear door of a sub-compact car; the second picture: Goering is standing amidst his interrogators, who are as "Jewish-looking" as the worst anti-semite would deserve; Hans Wallenberg is standing alongside Goering, scowling as only he could scowl.

What did he have to say, asked the Captain of Hans. He said that

the big mistake of the Nazis was the persecution of the Jews. They laughed sardonically. Was Goering trying to please his interrogators? Or was he really expressing an opinion about anti-semitism as a tactic, never mind its morality? The Captain had given thought to this point, years before; his conclusion: if the Nazis had embraced the Jews, they never would have achieved the totalitarian state, for most Jews would have held them back; besides, the idea was an impossible contradiction: anti-semitism was of the essence of Nazism, inseparable nourishment of its cancer.

Then came a message from Dr. Robert Ley. A more villainous character would be hard to find. It was unclear for whom he meant it: to whoever was commanding his interrogators, it would appear. The Captain was the C.O. of the combat propaganda team, but the better line of command would be via Colonel Quinn. General Patch!

No. The men knew it. It was a joke for everyone. In translation it reads::

MESSAGE

To the Commander:

Sir:

I beg you to supply me with socks, underwear, shirt, handkerchief, trousers and a jacket. I have been arrested out of bed. I have not run away. I have arrived here almost naked.

With highest considerations of you,

Dr. R. Ley

Ley was a Jew-hater whose job included facilitating the holocaust. He was also a Russian-hater, believed they should be exterminated, brutalized, was overheard to order, "Get rid of those Russian prisoners." He identified himself with the program of the mass murderer, Gauleiter Koch. He was a General of the SS, SA, and top leader of other Nazi organizations, though often implicated in the infighting for Hitler's favor among the top Nazis. Hitler was fond of his first wife, always carrying flowers into their cozy family circle. His mistress, a ballet dancer thirty-seven years his junior, stuck by him

until the end, but also gave copious information to her interrogators about him. (All American interrogators agreed: Germans, male or female, sang like canaries under questioning.)

She, Madeleine Wanderer, and his Private Secretary, Paula Mueller, described a scheme of Dr. Ley that could have helped inspire rumors of the Redoubt. His last assignment by *Der Führer* was to carry on with his own scheme, the *Freicorps*, which he would organize and command. The *Freicorps* was to fight ahead of and behind the Front; it was to be composed of *Schwaerme* or "swarms" of nine men and one woman (a cook, a medic, and a fighter), armed with pistols and *Panzerfaust*, and riding bicycles. They did not get under way before the big show collapsed. The bizarre scheme tickled Captain de Grazia; it must have aroused in him memories of childhood games of war. It was a neat German version of partisans, guerrillas, "terrorists," as the Wehrmacht called them.

Another project of Ley had to do with a secret weapon that a professor was developing and that no one knew much about, save that it would work by remote control. When asked about experiments involving the weapon at Waldenburg, an adjutant of Ley said it failed: that "it would not even hurt a rabbit."

A more attractive prisoner was the movie-maker, Leni Riefenstahl, whose film of the 1936 Olympic games was regarded, because it was truly great, as a triumph of Nazi propaganda. Wallenberg and Langendorf interrogated her, and, it must be said, she won them over. All the bad that happened to her later, because her career had survived the war, was in spite of their report:

Her statements give one the impression of honesty, and the dread which she expresses about the Regime and its leaders seems sincere. It is possible that she actually was not aware of what went on. That was her sin of omission, which appears all the more serious due to the fact that she, more than any other person, had the opportunity to get to the truth. She is a product of the moral corruption which characterizes the regime. But it would be false to picture her as an ambitious female who wanted to attain fame and wealth on the NSDAP bandwagon.

What really happened, thought her interrogators, is that her

admiration for Hitler closed her eyes, while his authoritative hand let her pass unscathed through the nasty struggles and back-stabbing politics inside the Regime. She could dream and live in her art. She could help Jews from time to time. She could deny, because she was en route to America, the November 1938 Crystal Night pogroms about which she was asked when she arrived by boat; when she returned to Germany, she was told that they were true, that the American newspapers had not lied, but that the perpetrators of the pogroms were being punished. She believed that the concentration camps, of which she had heard, were places of detention and punishment of criminals. And so on.

It is not at all astonishing, thinks the Captain, given what the science of public opinion has discovered time after time, that the most "obvious" of occurrences is sincerely denied by people both because they do not want to believe them and because the controls over free flow of information are always serious and in a totalitarian state practically total in effectiveness. Did not the American public, even the Roman Catholics, believe that the Germans had illegally and fully occupied the Abbey of Montecassino? Did not the powerful on-the-spot correspondent of the *New York Times*, later its chief, give it the headline that hundreds of German soldiers went scurrying from its premises following the Allied bombardment?

The big Nazi fish came flopping over the gunwales fleeing the Russians or were hooked aboard. Only when all was ended did the German generals surrender their troops. One exception had occurred long before, the surrender of Von Paulus of the forces in Stalingrad; they would have been shortly annihilated; still Hitler wanted to be able to say that they fought to the last man. Von Paulus denied him this political and erotic pleasure. Another case occurred in Tunis, May 12, 1943, when Jurgen von Arnim surrendered a second large army, this time to the Western Allies. A partial exception came at the end of the War in Italy where contacts had been made with Allen Dulles, an American representative in Switzerland; it appeared that the German Army there would give up days before Hitler committed suicide but when the Russians were already in the outskirts of Berlin; that is, it was practically not a separate surrender. Why did the Generals order their troops to fight to the end? They could have saved the lives of a

quarter of a million men and an equal number of civilians and foreigners; they might have mollified even if slightly their conquerors. Their country, and other lands, would be less destroyed. I am speaking only of the period from January 1, 1945, even though to any rational man, half-informed, the game was up upon the loss of Stalingrad and North Africa.

1. They were not dying personally and would increase their chances of dying upon surrender ("unconditional surrender" sounded ominous in this regard). They were also "freaks," to be blunt. They saw the world as made for war Prussian-style.

2. They would be killed by the SS immediately upon giving any intimation of dealing in surrender, under orders from Hitler, and their own troops and staffs would not fight to protect them.

3. If they fought on the Eastern Front, then they hoped to resist until the Western Allies broke through and conquered the remaining portions of the Reich.

4. They were tightly controlled by Hitler's Headquarters, by the Führer himself, who "called all the shots."

5. The doctrine of unconditional surrender was taken to mean the giving over of Germany to total rapine and likely total destruction.

6. They were not contacted or subjected to psychological and propaganda pressures by their Allied counterparts in the West. American and British generals behaved like automatons; they supported psychological warfare of the Captain's kind in combat operations, but no general acquired a reputation for being cognizant of and sympathetic to the aspirations of any irresolute or resolute German general. It was against the rules for the American generals to do so; they must "stay out of politics," and fishing for a surrender would have been impossible. Just as Hitler wiped out any countervailing attitude in his generals, the Western Allies discouraged any personalism in their generals (except on silly levels of public images -- pistol-toting, Bible-spouting, etc.). Eisenhower, at SHAEF, might have effected negotiations, reporting to Churchill and Roosevelt carefully, but he was bureaucratized, a reliable foe of any extraordinary maneuvers. Alexander was a dilettante, who might have been prepared to do more

except for his famed hesitancy.

7. The July 1944 attempt at Hitler's assassination by a group of highly placed and respected German officers brought the massacre of all who were suspected to have been even remotely involved. The lack of appreciation of this heroism, on the part of Allied leaders and Allied propaganda, whether East or West, discouraged all further attempts at violating the will of the Führer, even unto his last crazed hours in his Berlin bunker.

8. Death diminishes to a small matter relative to the ignominy of surrender when one has been in charge of a great army in a great cause and has ordered the death of hundreds of thousands of men; what else is left to be achieved in life?

AL TO JILL MAY 19, 1945

Jill, Dear Love,

While waiting for the mess sergeant to come back (he has gone to look for a movie to show us tonight), I can start a letter to you. The latest from you is a letter from April 30, which, when added to those of May 2 and 3, give me almost the basis for charting your fever curve. I'm very glad to know that you're coming out of it all in fine style. I've often felt about you like we say about some men in the army, "He can fall into a sewer and come up smelling like a rose." But don't you go falling into any more of them. I don't want to feel that I'm taking advantage of any weakness of yours when I return. I want to win the right to the bathroom first fair and square, maybe only a little tripping or so, and a slap from a wet towel.

Midnight.- Our hero turned up with a movie and it was a very good one in many respects. Cary Grant and a fine supporting cast in a movie called something like None but a lonely heart, the story of a gloater who initially couldn't stand the bitter existence of the poor, or the inhumanity of the successful, and who, in the movie, tried both ways, failed in both, and ended up with a mess of trouble, but a grand motive and a girl who, if he

weren't generally so unfortunate, one might well begrudge him. The plot had a real philosophy of virtue which I mostly agree with, and you must admit that it is a rare movie that contains that. This one almost broke down under the strain. There were a great number of scenes, almost a bewildering number.

Now I went around on bed-check with the first sergeant and this is the end of the day. It has been fairly busy. There are a number of things to do of an administrative nature and we are still doing useful things for the army too. Roos has gone and I'm the CO, and besides him we've lost another officer.

Tomorrow morning, I'm going on a short trip with Tom and Sgt. Taubert and expect to return in the afternoon. I hope it is nearly as cool as it is tonight, which is really delightful. Every breath I take recalls the evenings we spent walking together in the warm months of the years. I am so starved for you that a flicker of memory is like the odor of stew wafted to a famished man. It is at the same time exquisite pleasure and agony beyond telling. I should be next to you now, warming myself with you, kissing you so softly as not to be heard amid the faint rustle of the leaves, and tilting your head to let the moonlight play on your face and hair. But I am not and what more reason could I have for being a dismal sort of being. I must wait, you must wait. The war cannot wait, nor can all the rest of the misery. That has a priority. Only the best things are to be discriminated against.

I shouldn't communicate these ill feelings to you, though. They are quite useless. I had better go back to counting my points and sending thousands of kisses to you and Kathy.

Always

Al

P.S. More love.

AL TO JILL MAY 20, 1945

My dearest Jill,

I don't know which is more painful, not to receive any pictures of your dearly beloved person or to receive them, as I did today, and to be consumed by your unravishable beauty. You look really very pretty and most desirable, I'm practically gnawing my heart away for not being able to do anything about it. I can scarcely take my eyes from them, and have them lined up neatly on the table here. Your new Field's dress is very nice. You can wear it when you meet my train, if you like. I blush to say it, but your legs are nice too.

I was startled to see how big a girl Kathy is. My last pictures were fairly old, you know. Here it is evident that she must be a furious little beast. Her smile is most engaging and I think her haircut is very funny. For enlargements, I'd like the one of you, Kathy smiling, chair in background, and/or you smiling and Kathy smiling, on the floor, and/or the profile one of yourself against the dune, and/or you and Kathy, Kathy sitting on her little chair this time and looking grave.

Thanks very much and a big kiss. You make me feel ashamed of the grimy, mustachioed specimens I've been sending. Did I tell you, incidentally, that the mustache is no more. I was shaving in a hurried stupor one morning and cut right through it. Small loss. I can always grow another one if I want to avoid your tender lips.

I've been to Munich on some preparatory work, had a good lunch there with a colonel from our parent organization, and enjoyed the drive in the cool weather that has struck us lately. Munich is a tremendous city and I can't presume to describe the extent of the damage there. It was hit. There is no doubt of that, but there are still a huge number of people there. Wallenberg just got back from a trip to Austria and is full of talk about the beautiful country, part of which I saw when I went down to Italy. Martin Herz is in these parts too and should be dropping in tomorrow on his way back. Otherwise, life at the Schloss is

pretty quiet. The evenings are long and tranquil. The light from the setting sun gives the fields and hills a softness and glow that make one feel most acutely the absence of those things that would make it heaven. I hope you take it as a compliment because I mean it for you.



Munich

I'm going to bed now with that absolute genius Thurber and the rest of Gide's Counterfeiters, two of the best bedfellows a bachelor can have. All my love to you and Kathy.

Your

Al

AL TO JILL MAY 21, 1945

Darling Jill,

It started out to be a dull evening. Extrinsicly, it perhaps still has been, but sensually I think it has been quite something. I must confess ab initio that I am full of Vodka like a Cossack in midwinter, and am just about ready to pour myself a cup of coffee that the unique Lena has just carried into my room.

And that is a good beginning to a story which certainly begins with Lena. It began on a bright day when we discovered here - tonight it is raining steadily and outside my room the trees bend and the mists push steadily over the valley.-- I had a scouting

party out to find a billet for the troops who were moving into newly liberated territory. We moved into a German house late at night, told the occupants to get out in the morning, ate a good supper with some mediocre but welcome wine, and went to bed, after letting some wandering Russians in out of the cold. In the morning, I was in a hurry to leave, placing two men to guard the place. Just before I left, I noticed one of the Russians talking to a woman in Russian who was in the top floor of a house nearby. But I hadn't time to liberate every individual we met, and departed. The sergeant I left behind, it seems, then urged the Russians to kill a chicken in the yard of the nearby house, since they were famished. It took him some while to stir up some of their revolutionary spirit but they finally mustered up the courage and energy -- they were ridiculously weak -- to attack the coop. A square meal followed and the wine flowed freely. Suffused with the new blood, the Russians proposed more food and said that the Russian maid had indicated the cellar as an egg repository. This time the man appeared and protested, in a manner which so enraged the sergeant that he gave chase, ending up unfortunately in the arms of the MPs. But when he got back he was determined to liberate the maid, and out she came, happy and smiling. When we arrived back, she fell right in with the company and since has been most useful. She would be making a fortune in America today but here she doesn't take a cent. She isn't interested in money, she says. She comes from Odessa, is 42 years old, strong as an ox and very intelligent, although she has a block as far as learning German goes. She went to a mining school for three years and was some sort of a technical foreman until the Germans moved into Stalino one day and moved everything and everybody to Germany the next. She is a great favorite with all the men and officers and rolls right along with us wherever we go. And whenever there is civilian labor to handle, she looks as if she were addressing Cell no. 974 of the Krasnograd Soviet on a topic dear to the Party. Vigorous and emphatic are the best words for it.

Last day or so she has been unusually colorful and active, because it has been the Russian Christmas holiday. This

evening, she came in and asked me to go to a nearby DP camp for an hour or so -- she had told them she would bring me. So I donned my raincoat and we went. We had a reasonably communicable political discussion, considering the fluency of our respective German and the vodka, and then came back to where I am writing this. The Russian method of drinking vodka is completely mad. Tumblers full, and then bottoms down in one flash. The consequences can be horrible in a short time. Luckily, there was only one two-thirds litre bottle amongst the three of us drinking, and as a result I can be here to tell the tale. And more so, since I had eaten an hour before and had no appetite for the food placed before me which is counted on to absorb some of the shock. I have found, incidentally, that mirabelle, schnapps, and vodka are alike in that respect, that they go well with hearty eating, whereas whiskey stands alone for me.

Next day: I must send this letter off. I still think your latest pictures are beautiful and look at them often. You have a fine knack of looking like you love your baby and at the same time unlike a mother. Don't tell her, but Ann doesn't quite make the grade there, nor do many others. Wasn't I clever that day when I decided it was high time I kissed you?

Always,

Al

THE country is jumping with DP's, and just about every American unit is dealing with some of them. They are on the verge of starvation, and the Army is pouring out rations among them as fast as they can be brought in. There is the official and the informal effort, both of them large. It is no wonder, and indeed justifiable, that the million and more German prisoners coming into Allied hands from one month to the next, are not eating regularly. There is not enough to go around, unless one were to cut back on American rations, which would be ironic, considering the ancient adage that "to the victor belong the spoils;" the troops would feel badly. What commonly happened is that the

individual units dished out a portion of their rations to those in want and near at hand, beginning with the half-starved Russians, Poles, French and other large groups -- we speak of hundreds of thousands of these others. The propaganda company did more than its share, if only because they were better at it.

This particular group was squatting and standing all the while near the entrance of a huge cavernous barn so crowded that it looked like the stage of the Metropolitan Opera in the triumphal scene from *Aida*. They were vastly curious about the American, but did not dare to press in close, so well-disciplined were they or habitually intimidated. The discipline would have come from the young man whom Lena introduced. He was thin, below medium height, but self-possessed and prompt to deal with the Captain in businesslike terms. He had around him several men and women who appeared to be a sort of staff. The Captain figured that communist party rule had been reestablished in the barnyard.

When, several days later, his men came upon a warehouse filled with shoes, the Captain remembered the mass of refugees, who would have to return to Russia and Poland unshod or in worn footgear and sent for the commissar. These are yours to distribute among your people, he said, and sent truckload upon truckload to the barn. There must have been a thousand well-shod ex-slaves the next day. A nice aspect of the project was its unsentimentality. The Captain and his men conducted themselves unaffectedly. So did the tough kids in charge of the mob. There is nothing like a war to make acts of charity global and infinite. As if to match its brutality and destruction.

One day, a protest delegation from several Polish slave workers provoked something close to brutality, or lynch justice. They had just been liberated, but the German owner of their small factory would not feed them unless they continued to work. Indignant soldiers brought them before the Captain, who called First Sergeant Jack Taubert and a couple of other men to accompany him there. They came upon the owner, a tall man in his fifties, sitting in his office. When the Polish delegates accused him of starving them, he answered them back angrily. At this Sergeant Taubert seized him and dragged him out of his chair. The man's wife came running in, having heard the

commotion, exclaiming in distress, "What is the matter?! What are they doing to you?!" And the man said, "Nothing, nothing, don't worry, leave us alone, go away." So she left. And there was the Captain, with a fine excuse to proceed with the manslaughter. Yet when Taubert, death in his scowling black face, raised his fist again, the Captain said -- and he had to repeat himself, for passions were high -- "Lay off, Sergeant. Lay off!" It was the woman who did it to him. Her concern, which made her burst in upon them. And then the man's courage in ordering her to get out of the room -- knowing he would be in for worse, now, but wanting to spare her the sight. (He couldn't be so stupid as to ignore this.) "Look," said the Captain to the man, "*gibt dem zu essen*, or else," or words to that effect. And they left. And the Poles ate *besser, viel besser*.

JILL TO AL MAY 22, 1945

Darling Al,

I feel like a dog and also like a perfect stranger to you. I haven't written you since Thursday night, before I left for Chicago, and today is Tuesday. I haven't, either, received a letter from you for more than a week (for that I curse the Army post office), that one being dated the 29th of April. So you see we are separated by a great deal of time and distance, and much has happened in between. I wonder of course, and most times very vocally, how you stand on the home coming deal. Your points have been figured up by everybody from an Army major I met on the train to little Joey. The major incidentally has a son named Perkins, a sergeant, in your Army A.G. headquarters or whatever it is. That all transpired during one short sloppy breakfast we sat together over.

Well, you gather we've arrived, all in one piece. The trip wasn't at all bad, though it bores me to write of it. I gave the porter a hearty tip when we got on and everything went smoothly. He let me keep the berth made up during the entire trip, which made a big difference, since Kathy and I could huddle in it during the

day and take naps and we could play together in quiet when she got too upset by the motion of the train and all the admiring passengers. I took lots of toys along and also her beloved blanket, and she really was very good and delightfully (to everybody else, not me) exhibitionistic.

There is something wrong with the typewriter, as you can see. And how I yearned for it on the coast!

We got in at four PM, yesterday, exactly four hours late. The train was awfully old and the food wasn't very good, but we didn't have to wait in line for the diner except toward the last, at which time I'd cadged enough food from fellow passengers with babies to give Kathy a satisfactory meal before putting her to bed. She slept well and so did I, aside from falling out of the berth the first night out.* *She fell out, not me. I even got a chance to read a little out of McSorley's Wonderful Saloon, a wonderful book. But at no time did I have the time for reflective silence conducive to letter writing, and not till this minute have I had it. Mom and Ed met us at the train and stayed overnight, and Dad was here for dinner tonight and they just all went to Buss's which is, you know, just a half a block from here, in the newly remodeled Kenwood Gardens apt. I didn't go because I wanted this moment with you. As you can see I'm not yet sufficiently oriented to the quiet life to write a coherent letter. That very sentence, even, was interrupted by a phone call from June King, who also lives in Buss's building -- the word gets around quickly that we're back. She talked endlessly needless to say. She works over at school and the kids are at nursery school.

The family was of course overjoyed to see Kathy. My one regret is that we couldn't keep her awake past six o'clock tonight for Dad to see her awake. She's changed so much, as everybody noticed. She's gotten so tremendously fresh, darling. It really gives me a pain sometimes. She says "Nah" to everything. She discovered how effective the negative was at some point or other and has been exercising it ever since. Well, more of Kathy's cute tricks later.

Mostly, I wanted to tell you about Eddy. He's still in the enlisted reserve and just waiting around for something to happen. As you know, the Air Corps stopped its flight training programs. He's been sitting in on classes over at school and working in the Bookstore a few hours a day and eating with Mir and Buss and sleeping here. I want him to stay on and he'll do it - it's really very nice to have him. I haven't had time to formulate my thoughts about him, but I feel he's in a very critical phase of his career and I don't know much what to do. Buss had advised him to stay in the Air Corps and get some kind of technical training. The alternative had been to be discharged and go up to the draft board immediately thereafter and be drafted into the regular Army. Ed was sure that meant the infantry and he had very strong feelings against that. He thinks they are inadequately trained before being sent into combat and the casualties are high. But meanwhile he is here on the south side, very much under the influence of and at the beck and call of us all, and not leading any independent life of his own. He doesn't seem to want to go home. Vic is leading his own life pretty much, completely absorbed in his music and from the little I gathered, there are few threads Ed can pick up, up there. I told him I thought you might advise him to get into the regular Army, to get into the war as long as one was being fought, and then to get out and pick up some kind of normal life in peace time. I said there wasn't much point in learning radio or radar or whatever the Air Corps had to offer. That wasn't what he was going to do after the war anyway. Buss seems to think he should get what training of that sort he can. But it's a hard thing to talk about, though we've both tried very hard in the short time he's been here. I know what's eating him, and what ate Buss when you went overseas. It's the possibility of being knocked off. Well, you just can't talk about that very much. It's something you either think about or don't think about -- rather, you can think about it but you may, as I've done and as you may (though it's presumptuous for me to speak for you, ever) put it aside as a possibility in your own personal destiny. At least, you either let it, or don't let it, influence your decisions. Well, it's influencing his. Well, the only thing I said concretely, and it was really very

much of an abstraction, was that in wartime, the one sacrifice the individual can make is to give up his right of choice. That was the great equalizer, rather than what job you had in the Army or as a civilian. Buss has done a great deal more in his work for the war effort than many servicemen, but he has refused to give up his right to choose, and in that sense, he has failed. At least, he has not come up to you in my estimation.

Darling, I never needed you more than I do now, because I'm being put in a position where I should speak and I may be saying all the wrong things from your point of view. He's your brother and I'm not sure what you would say to him just because of that -- whether you would talk to him as you would to any guy of 18, or whether special considerations would enter into it.

Well, darling, I'll write a long letter tomorrow. I'm trying to crowd too much into this one -- at least the gamut between a train ride, bright sayings of children and I love you is too much.

I do love you, too.

Jill

JILL TO AL MAY 23, 1945

Sweetheart --

Oh, this is the paper Unk sent me for my birthday. I don't think I've used it before. Explicit, isn't it?

Before I start on whatever pleasant things I might have to say to you, my lawfully wedded and remote husband, I have something very horrid to relate. I got a letter from the Office of Dependency Benefits (this is where you came in, and so did I) today, saying that they had made a total overpayment to me of 500, that I'd repaid 200 and therefore owed them 300. I like that. The horrible part is that I have no record of the checks issued to me,

so although I don't think that they sent that much, I have no way of proving it. However it sounds as if the 500 covers all payments made to me while you were both an enlisted man and an officer, and I don't know why they would have disqualified me from receiving benefits while you were an enlisted man. I can't send you the letter, which is typically Army presumption and snafu, because I have to return it to them when I send them a burning "Nah" just like Kathy. But I wonder what you have to say, besides criticizing my inefficiency. I mean, will they ever see the light?

I've been staggering around all day, doing a bit of shopping, cleaning and soothing Kathy, who has been rather fussy. She woke up at five this morning and I had to get up and give her an orange. Boy, was I mad. But she went back to sleep, though I didn't. Then I got Ed up at eight and we had breakfast together. Having him around is good practice for me, learning not to gripe over cooking for another person. He came home for dinner tonight and I managed to get dinner and put Kathy away without having a nervous breakdown, which I always thought I would have, with a demanding child and household responsibilities augmented by having a man around. Ed is a big help or would be if the sink drain hadn't clogged up, thereby stalling all operations until the morrow.

I haven't had time to figure yet whether I'm glad to be back. I find myself not very anxious to renew auld acquaintances, but that may be because what with Mir, Joey and Ed around during the day, I'm pretty self-sufficient. Mir was over for a while this morning and we sat on the gras and watched the kids play. Joey is very sweet to Kathy and plays flattering attentions to me, like bringing me half a tree every time he comes by. They had a little fight over tennis balls, this morning but I took his part, making Kathy give up one of the balls. She sure is possessive. They all are, of course, but she is just prematurely so. Well, she is just going through a stage, I comfort myself. Everybody is amazed (or did I say this before) at the amount she's grown and matured.

She really is the size and has the psychological development of a smart two-year-old. Joey, on the other hand, looks like a four-year-old. Where do we get such smart kids. He speaks beautifully, distinctly and with care and deliberation. And right through his nose, just like Buss. It's the funniest thing to hear this beer-barrel tenor from a baby.

People say I'm fat and healthy looking too, and God I am. I need a good twenty-mile bike ride to thin down my plumping legs. I really didn't get enough exercise out there.

While I was away that wonderful Nazi dagger came, and also the letters. I have the knife lying on the desk now. It's really very decorative. Ed and I were trying to figure out whether you'd had the blades filed down or whether it was always that way, with only a sharp point.

I'm in a state of suspended emotion now, until I hear from you. I don't know whether you have a chance of coming home, and therefore I should exult, or whether you'll be kept over there for the occupation. Joan said she'd read that Gen. McClurg's outfit, and I presume that is you, was going to handle all communications in Germany, and I myself read that PWB was now functioning in the enforcement of the non-fraternization rule. Incidentally, this week's New Yorker has a very surprising and enlightening article by A. J. Liebling on Army public relations and the press, all leading up to the AP break of the story at Reims. Liebling was on the side of Kennedy, the first defense I'd heard. If you are kept over there, I hope (which is a mild word for what I really feel) that I'll be one of the officer's families to be allowed to go over. I guess my willingness in this respect doesn't come as exactly a surprise to you, does it?

Well, darling, it's time for bed. All my love to you, as ever, and a billion big kisses.

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 23, 1945

Dearest Jill,

Isn't my new typewriter ribbon a boon? How the well-dressed letter will look. I got very industrious today and cleaned the machine too. By now you must be back in Chicago, lucky girl, and looking about at the chaos Ed has left in our little potential love nest. He wrote me that he was spending a week there and attending some classes at the U in hope of learning something. Apparently he wasn't much impressed. I think he would have enjoyed more the classes in the natural sciences. There is no compulsion, after all, on him to study the social sciences save incidentally.

Simply on the basis of letters, I could see strong differences between Ed and Vic. Vic writes much better. He has an easy, stimulating style, whereas Ed's is likely to be repressed and formal, even more conventional, as if reading a letter posed as a classic in the textbook at the same time as writing one. The things Vic says about people and affairs are just as adult and they come forth in a breezy fashion, without effort, "as if no one were watching him". I don't know what that means about their futures. character changes in the next few years may be very notable. And then again, placing a man in any field on the basis of slim character analysis is pretty foolish. Though you might say that because Ed has so many inhibitions and a feeling of the world crowding about him he couldn't be a social scientist which demands a wide free approach, on the other hand you might say that because of those very inhibitions and suspicions he is likely to tread very carefully on that one field which must be trodden so very carefully. Don't think that I am thinking only in academic terms when I say social and natural sciences. Practically all the occupations in life fall into one of the two categories, dealing in men or instruments.

We are losing some men here. Fred Faas left yesterday to start working his way to the states. Tom is still here. As long as he is I'll know there's still a war on. Wallenberg is doing some most

interesting interrogations. Sgt. Scott was shot in the leg by a French Arab I think I told you but he has been moved to a different hospital and I am trying to locate him to get him back. I am recommending the promotion of Lankford to first lieutenant - he works the radio station with Hogie. I hope to do it in time for his wedding to a French girl which will take place soon. He met her way back at Thaon, near Epinal. Although he is the quietest person imaginable, he apparently has expressive eyes because the romance blossomed out beautifully.

Yesterday, I sent you a big package addressed to myself. It contains a lot of leaflets and things concerning leaflets and I sent them home for safekeeping. There is no place to store them over here and I know of no place back home either, so I sent them to myself in the event that some one in the future wants to work on the materials. I'd rather you left the package just as it arrives, if it arrives. I am trying to unlimber myself in case I receive the call. So far things on the readjustment front have been fairly quiet. We have just completed the preliminary reporting stage and are waiting impatiently for the next step.

I intend to send home another box today consisting of excess clothing. I don't think any of it will fit you, however, unless it be the wool sweater which in any event you won't want to wear before winter and then I'll be there to fight you for it.

We had a good ball game last night in the Sportsplatz of this little village. There is a squad of infantrymen guarding a warehouse and they played also. A number of Germans gathered to watch the mysterious proceedings. One of the most curious things to them must have been how the only normally vocal American becomes a talking machine playing ball, and the gestures of Crowell as umpire bowled them over.

Your telegram came last evening after eleven days in transit. Not excruciatingly fast. But the sentiment was noble and I love you very much for sending it, once I got over my original feeling that you had fallen off another horse.

Lee Hebling, the assistant cook, got a little fat mongrel puppy three weeks old and he is a very funny little animal. He can walk in a sense now that he is a couple of weeks older but it is nothing to brag about. This morning he put on his first rage and it was très drôle. Lena was pushing him around in the kitchen and he got very angry. He would chase towards her but fall on his face every time he had to swerve, and made up for it with most savage barks and growls. If you haven't received my previous letter, Lena is the Russian woman from Odessa that works for us on her way back to her job as straw boss in a steel factory.

So much for now. All my love as always and a kiss to Kathy. I saw pictures of Michigan Ave. and the Lake Front in a film recently. I hope we'll be walking down along there soon together.

Give my love to the folks at home.

Your

Al

P.S. How do you like the enclosed specimen of black propaganda. "Futsches" means "finished", like "Caput".

JILL TO AL MAY 24?, 1945

[Note: Letter to Army referred to is dated May 25]

Sweetheart -

As you can see, I did my duty promptly and answered the maddening communication of the ODB with the enclosed. I hope that holds them for another year, until they get around to answering me. I hope I'm not lousing things up with my snotty attitude, but one really can't resist it with such a bunch of lunk-heads as they must be.

I got an equally maddening, though certainly infinitely more welcome, communication from you today dated May 15. It described your trip to Paris, seeing Martin, etc. The maddening aspect was unintentional on your part. You see, it's the first letter I've gotten from you since the one dated April 29 -- a lot more must have been written but I haven't gotten them yet -- and it said nothing of course about peace or your coming home or anything, which must have been said before. So there I was, with my curiosity vastly unsatisfied, until Mom called up and said Vic had gotten a letter written around V-E day, at which time you discussed things like points and your hope of being home this summer. For God's sake, darling, do, as you suggested, take anything to get home, even if you have to go out again. I've heard of them giving the alternative of a leave now or a discharge a year later, and that sounds like a fast one -- since the war will probably be over in a year anyway. If I could only see you for a weekend it would keep me going and happy for another year at least. Even if they kept us from talking to each other, like in a badly run prison, just the sight of you and the touch of your hand would be the most wonderful thing in the world.

Today the Chicago weather was accommodatingly San Francisco style, rainy all afternoon but sunny in the morning (only it's usually the other way around out there). Joan came over this morning, which was otherwise miserable because the kitchen drain was still stopped up and the place was starting to look like a cesspool. However, Ed came home for lunch and fixed it. He didn't feel so good, having a sore throat, so he stayed home this afternoon while I danced up and down 55th Street alone, doing errands, which are always a nuisance to do when I have Kathy along. Then when I got back he helped me do a lot of useful things like shoving furniture around, which I'm forever doing, as you will find out yourself someday. Ed is over at Mir's now for dinner, and I find myself missing him. As I said before, I'm surprised at how much I like having somebody else around. I was afraid I'd gotten very old-maidish in my habits, seeking solitude in which to write you, etc., but I can do both

anyway with him around and having somebody around for meals take the awful curse off the early part of the evening, just about the time when Kathy is being put to bed, when the whole night looms ahead of one. During winter it wasn't so bad because it got dark early, thereby misleading one into going to bed early and thereby shortening the night. But now the nights are light and tempting -- perfect for us to walk in the park and along the rocks, in solitude in the midst of the city. So please darling, come home this summer, else I shall surely take to nameless vices, like snuff.

All my love, as always,

Jill

JILL TO US ARMY MAY 25, 1945

5436 Ridgewood court

Chicago 15, Illinois

May 25, 1945

Army Service Forces

Office of Dependency Benefits

Newark, N.J.

Dear Sirs:

Relative to your communication of May 18, which I am enclosing as you requested, I find I disagree with you on all points:

1. I don't think you paid me as much as \$500. I think the figure was closer to \$400. However, the burden of proof rests on you as you have the canceled checks.

2. I believe I was eligible to receive family allowances up to the time my husband was commissioned a second lieutenant, the date of which I believe was September 4, 1942. He entered the Army circa February 17. We were married on May 11, 1942. Since he was an enlisted man for approximately four months of our married life, I was, and still am, under the impression I was entitled to \$200 of family allowances.

3. I returned \$200 of the amount to you (we agree on that). The first 50 I returned unasked, and then, when I received no further communication from you, I banked the succeeding \$150 of checks I was not eligible to receive, at the same time sending you at least one more communication to the effect that you were overpaying me. I received no further communication from you until around April of 1943, at which time you requested \$150 and I sent it.

4. Wherefore do I owe you \$300?

Yours truly,

\signed: Jill de Grazia\

AL TO JILL MAY 25, 1945 V-MAIL

Dear Love,

One trouble in getting a large number of letters from you at one time is that days can easily slip away before one thinks to reply, days filled with ecstatic reading and pleasant thoughts. Night before last I received five letters of yours which covered the V-E period in toto, false alarms, celebrations, depression, hope and Kathy's growing vocabulary. You are quite right when you say that they learn more from children of their own age than from the elders. I think there again it is because they must communicate with other children in order to arouse their interest, put forward a case for what they want, and defend what they've got. It would be interesting to know if there is any

difference in the talking age between orphan asylum children and children brought up by parents, or between first children and the children that follow. I know that I talked earlier than Buzz.

I laughed when I saw what you so generously afforded me in the matter of points. After all, I do have six campaign stars, you know. I haven't spend all of the last two years in fishing. I appreciated the anniversary round-robin letter, even though obviously a pretty drunken attempt. Ann's note especially was really most amusing. I hope you are well settled in Chicago again. I got a letter from Buzz and a five-page V-mail from Ed saying that they were looking forward to seeing you again soon. Buzz said he thought I was sitting on my fat rear end and he is not far off. Part of the day is spent in honest toil, but otherwise this is a plush life. We are eating well, getting some exercise, cleaning up things in general, e.g. all my shoes are shined now -- doing some reading, taking baths, and battling out the point system. We received two new jeeps yesterday for two that we salvaged: one I named "Kathy" and the other "84 points" to commemorate those sweating souls who so far just haven't made the grade, "CBI bait" they are also called. Progre brought three French officers back with him last evening to stay the night with us who had just come up from Italy where they had been working with the partisans. We exchanged some pleasant talk over a whiskey and sandwich. I returned to my room where I read a little more of Gide, and then I fell asleep.

I've got a dental appointment this morning to have my teeth examined and perhaps to have them cleaned although overseas it is next to impossible to get a dentist to clean one's teeth, they are so overworked. Two of our men have suffered serious injury to their teeth because of the impossibility of getting attention consistently. You wouldn't want me to have a ragged-tooth, tobacco-stained smile, would you? So I won't. All the better to kiss you.

All my love to you and Kathy,

Al

JILL TO AL MAY 27, 1945 (A)

Sat. nite

Darling -

All the mail that I complained about not getting for two weeks came today, five letters -- May 2, 3, 9, 13 and 15, the last from paris. It was swell to get a fairly integrated picture of what you've been doing and where you've been living. It was quite a crash, getting that picture of Wallenberg and Goering. It didn't look as if Wallenberg was one of the lunkhead Allied officers who kissed the fat man's ass and invited him to tea. Do you really think they'll execute him? I'm not so sure. Maybe Himmler shouldn't have been so impetuous about that poison. He may have ended up his days as a house guest in a British castle. I don't know why they don't have summary trials of all the higher-ups they catch. I think Mussolini's was most adequate.

As usual there is so much in your letters that I don't know where to start answering them. You ask when I think Kathy is going to be trained. The answer is never. Well, the thing is that her resistance to toilet-training is pretty much part of her general personality and an extension of her previous behavior. I don't know if I ever mentioned this but many babies start taking fluids (like juice) out of a cup when they are just a few months old -- sometimes one or two. Well, Kathy wouldn't drink out of a cup until she was fourteen months old, at which time she promptly walked over to it, picked it up and drank. She has been feeding herself for several months now, a relatively early age for self-feeding, but until she did start, her appetite for solid foods was very poor and she only enjoyed her bottle and/or orange juice (also in a bottle). I've talked the matter over with many mothers and some of the more intelligent of them seem to have this problem -- partly because intelligent people don't start toilet-training to relatively late -- toward one year, and that's the time a baby can resist if it has the mind to do it. One of them, whose husband is a psychiatrist, incidentally, said her child wouldn't go to the toilet until she was twenty-two months old, at which time

she just climbed up on the seat one day by herself and went. The thing is, even the well -- or early -- trained ones have accidents. Lateness of training usually makes for more complete training. It's just a damned embarrassing nuisance. Today when she woke up from her nap I knew she hadn't wet yet, so I said, "Shall we go to the bathroom, Kathy" and she fell into the most terrible crying fit until she finally went on me -- I'd picked her up to soothe her, much against her will -- and wouldn't stop until I started barking like a dog. So you see, her verbal comprehension is OK, she just doesn't want to be put on the can. I'll just have to let it go at that for another month or two, and try again. She has enough sense to go get a diaper out of the drawer and mop it up when she goes and she knows what I'm talking about too, I'm sure of that. Well, she's your child with your disposition, damn it. Don't blame me.

She climbs into her high chair now by herself when she's hungry. This new ability has pushed her mealtime up about an hour, since she can express her wishes so unmistakably now. She can also climb in and out of her tailor tot when she wants to. That relieves me of quite a burden of lifting. It's funny to hear her grunting when she does it. It's quite a job, if you know how they're built -- it's like a chair completely surrounded by a metal bar about chest high, and she starts grunting when she's about five feet away from it. If her bed had movable sides she'd probably be climbing out of that, too. Unfortunately it hasn't so I have to wrench my poor old arm around picking her up. Incidentally it's all right now. The muscles just get tired.

I would have loved to have been with you at the Rodin gallery, although now that I think of it, I don't know why, except to be with you. I find most sculpture pretty dull -- there are many painting shows in New York that I read about lustfully in The New Yorker that I'd much rather attend. I think that is because so little of the sculpture one sees is modern, that is, unrealistic, an attempt to portray the essence of form and movement rather than the coarse outlines of reality. Industrial design is often a great deal more interesting than sculpture. It would be interesting to see Rodin just because he was considered good

in his time, just as it's interesting to read Thomas Hardy, but neither of them are of our aesthetic standards. Whereas I think Pieter Breughel and El Greco and Dürer are-- none of them smudge up things with a lot of non-essentials. The whole idea, I guess, is to get away from photographic representations. Our age has photography so we can do it, so there's not much reason for pictures depicting harvesting the cows at sunset, or whatever were the themes that so entranced the earlier masters.

Ed called me up a little while ago. She says he heard from a friend up north that he may still have a chance to get into Navy V-5 -- air cadet training, for flight crews or something. He's going down Monday to find out more and wanted to know what I thought. It sounds better than the Army air corps, I think. I don't know why I'm so prejudiced against the AAF ground forces. Maybe because I've heard of so many guys getting dull jobs on the ground. I think I was a little overwrought the other night about him - he has a lot of sense and just because he's not exuberant is no reason for me to think he's in the depths of sorrow. At any rate, he'll solve his problems, or they'll be solved for him, by the time you get his or my letters, and you can write back. One thing is certain -- Ed is neither a dope nor a low life. He wants an education and some day -- it may have to be after the war -- he'll get it.

I did nothing today but clean, negotiate to have a radio fixed that Kathy once dragged down violently, and try to get meat. Finally I had to resort to a friend going into a butcher where she was known and getting me some hamburger. I don't mind the meat shortage but I don't think it's right for butchers to discriminate against people they don't know, although that's a general practice, with cigarettes and all scarce commodities. I guess I'll eat fish from now on. I think from now on I'll patronize the chain stores exclusively. At least when they have stuff anybody can get it.

Kathy climbed on another child's bike today and fell off and got back on right away. I'll have to start looking for one of those for

her too. She seems to be fascinated with all machines of locomotion. She is always running up to other people's buggies and pushing them away at high speed, to the horror of all concerned, except me. I try to pretend she's not my child. I used to do that with Cooney and it never worked then either. Why do I always have such problematical appendages? they always stem from your family too, I might point out before you say something.

Darling, I still have that dirty old kitchen to do. Oh, a man called me up last night and wanted me to do some typing for him - he's the research director of IVI - and I said, you must have the wrong De Grazia. I can't type. I don't know why I thought of it, except that I am beating sixty on this right now. But that will be my answer to you too, if you should ever ask.

All my love to you, sweetheart.

Jill

JILL TO AL MAY 27, 1945 (B)

Al darling --

Sunday

I just spent an exceptionally lazy Sunday, alternating between strolling through the damp green spring with Kathy and lying flat on my back asleep. Now I probably won't be able to sleep tonight, damn it. Now that I'm back in Chicago I'm having my old troubles sleeping. Part of it is the noise that goes on over my head -- the hideous refugee family have gotten one more person in, the father of the clan, making, all told, three horrible refugee adults and one obnoxious child. And part, I guess, is the excitement of being back and part the peculiar Chicago climate which is moist beyond one's wildest dreams. Kathy and I both have hair like an Australian bushman's, the air is so damp and curl-making. And part of not sleeping is, I suppose, my deeply buried and protesting libido. God knows I try not to think of it and, in the excitement of these past few months, have well

succeeded. But it would sure be nice to sleep with something else besides McSorley's Wonderful Tavern, or is it Saloon.

This morning I went over to Mir and Buss's and Mir and Joey and we took a walk over to the Midway. Kathy is very selfish about letting anybody else touch her Tailor Tot and she howled mightily at Joe and he hit her on the heat with a small steam engine he was carrying. But it's all in a day's work. I don't care since I'm not particularly protective of Kathy. Her ego is strong enough to withstand such blows. I think I cared more when Paul did it because I knew how protective Ann was of Paul and perversely then I would get that way about Kathy.

We slept very late this afternoon and then went over to Bernice and Fritz, who have a very cute new baby. Kathy was so good that we stayed very late, and only got home a little while ago, circa nine o'clock. I don't see much point in putting her to bed early every night, particularly on Sundays when I would like to be out a little later, to stave off the peculiar restlessness that characterizes Sunday nights. She eats any place, and usually eats even more than when at home. The only thing is that it makes such a frightful mess without her high chair to ward off some of the worser spills. Someday somebody should invent portable nursery furniture, that will collapse to purse-size. Not that I bother to carry a purse.

Everybody thinks Kathy has gotten so much prettier since her hair got curly. It's exactly the color of mine except a much softer and nicer texture, and I've finally worked out an easy way of brushing it - curls on top and then the side hair brushed back, Grecian fashion, with a vertical roll of curls in back. I assure you it's a lot more Voguey than the way I wear my own. I'm going down this week and getting her a lot of new clothes -- she really has a very scanty and battered wardrobe. Even if she isn't housebroken, I think the time has come for her to be conscious of her appearance. She likes dressing now and knows when things are pretty, anyway she knows what the word means. And finally people on the street refer to her as a little girl so it's about time she assumes the attributes of girlhood, namely, vanity.

I'd like a raft of pretty clothes myself but it's so damned hard to know what to get. My clothes simply have to be washable, she gets me so dirty, but washable things usually tend to look dank after a few washings. Vogue was certainly never meant for mothers, at least, for mothers like me, who let their kids climb all over them without restraint. And shoes are a problem. The only kind I can get are the kind that wear, since I do a lot of walking, but the kind that wears usually looks like hell, viz. my old girl scout shoes, which fortunately haven't been seen since I landed in the emergency ward of San Francisco County Hospital. My brother said they probably threw them away on the assumption there weren't mine, since no girl who could afford to go riding would wear shoes like that. Him and his silly cracks. Well, it's some consolation to see that nobody looks any or much better than I do -- i.e., we are all slobs -- except for an occasional silly ass stomping up 53rd Street in high heels and a beaver jacket.

Well, it's time for me to take a bath and read today's paper, just to keep the record straight. For gosh sakes, make them send you home.

All my love - Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 27, 1945 V-MAIL

Mia Carissima,

Yesterday's mail brought me up to the very threshold of your departure es Chicago. I almost felt the haste of those last lines, the breath of father time down your neck, and the pre-actual jostlings and discomforts. I am in no haste here and can thus spend much more sympathy on your situation. Another lazy day has passed. Nothing new has been announced on readjustment in the last couple of days. The Stars & Stripes carried one of those non-meaningful articles on the discharge of officers, "yes, and then again, no". I pity the first person who dares to say that I am essential. I shall pour on him all the turgid flood of gripes

dammed up these years in the army.

I finished reading Gide's book today and am struck about the mass of intellectual agreement I have with one who is emotionally on a completely different plane. All through the book runs that strange type of male relationship which I cannot comprehend at all. True that Gide calls one of his characters a homosexual but to me it is almost like a pot calling the kettle black. The whole book is one about men seeking response in a feminine form from other men. I have tried to plumb those sentiments in myself to see whether they are repressed, or undeveloped or simply non-existent in order to judge him better but had very little success. Part of the heavy accent though comes from the preponderance of old and young characters in the book, including the aged author, two ages where sentiments towards other males are most expressed. I shouldn't commit myself to understanding Gide without the assistance of Klaus Mann who is qualified both in background and temperament better than I, but I would say that he is a refreshing kind of realist that treats his subject matter classically, in selection, form and style. His style tends to dissect the reality, which I like, rather than, as in the case of Dos Passos, for example, to increase the substance, like Giotto and Mozart against Manet and Debussy. I wish I had more of him around to read. How nice it will be to live in a world of bookstores again: Come on, Jill, let's go down to the corner for a book and an ice cream cone!

I have all sorts of letters to write, Dad, Buzz, Vic and Ed are all on my debit side not to mention people like Kathie Stiens, Aaron Zealet, Jerry Kerwin, Liz Evers, etc. For one thing, we are getting cinemas every other night here and we are playing baseball often. The other night it was Gaslight which was much ado about nothing since only a crazy person would go crazy from the petty tribulations Charles Boyer could visit on her, and if Joseph Cotton thought he was getting a bargain when the villainish Boyer was carted away. he was loony too. Also saw the Canterville Ghost, a modernized and worsened version of the Wilde tale.

Love

Al

A big kiss for Kathy.

JILL TO AL MAY 28, 1945

Darling,

This evening I feel unaccountably sad. I shouldn't -- I got three letters from you this morning, the 9th, 11th and 19th. The number of points you've accrued quite staggered me -- I had figured a minimum of 76 for months in service, months overseas and the child, though I guessed you had more than that because of campaign stars. I'm curious to know what all the points are for. But it pains me to think that we must still wait an indeterminate length of time for you to come home. Have you no idea where or when? Where did the two officers you "lost" go? Will your being a C.O. add at all to the length of time you may have to stay over? Is there any way I can get to you if you can't get to me? When I had my nap this afternoon I dreamt that you were coming home. Rather, I dreamt that they had canceled your subscription to the Sun, and then I thought, "Well, he must be coming home if they do that." A silly dream. But it apparently left me with the grave depression of disappointed dreams.

God, darling, it seems that these moments of despair about seeing you will never end. I felt them when you were over six months, when you were over a year, and here you are over two years, the war is over and still one can hope for nothing tangible. Undoubtedly, being alone in this apartment contributes to these feelings, but there is not much I can do about it and no place else I can go. San Francisco was but temporary therapy. And now Ed, who has been up north all weekend and who has been downtown being examined by the Navy all day, will probably be leaping off to the wars any minute, so my brief fling

at being a big sister will terminate any minute now. Well, when I gripe like this, I have only to think of Liz Evers to feel thoroughly ashamed of my weakness. But please, please, write me any news you pick up, even if it borders on the side of optimism. Tell me this much, do you think you'll be home within the next six months? Is there anything I can pull to get you home faster, such as breaking a leg? I'd be glad to do so. Apparently breaking bones isn't a very serious matter for me (except when I get the bill -- 50 rocks, ouch).

I have to dash out to a meeting now, something to do with setting up a research staff of IVI. Virginia is coming in an hour to look at Kathy. My sitter Ed failed me tonight. So far I haven't exploited his services in that respect.

I love you forever darling.

Jill

AL TO JILL MAY 29, 1945

Darling Jill,

This morning brought the very welcome news that you are back in Chicago with Kathy, all in one piece. You need fear no annoyance on my part for your inability to write for a week. I know how difficult it is to write on a train and how it is to be smothered by my family when they are out in force. I am thankful that I have mainly the long hop home ahead of me and most of my uncomfortable travel behind me. In the past couple of weeks, travel has been actually a novelty for me. I spend practically all of the time right here with an occasional drive to army headquarters. I'll have to visit Munich again soon, but that isn't very far, only about two hours driving and through very pretty country. The weather has been temperamental lately, alternating showers and hot sun, or both as tonight.

Last evening we drove a baseball team down to play an

ordnance outfit near Bobingen. We lost a hard-fought game, 6-3, but feel pretty good about it, since we had little previous practice and anyway lost the game on a couple of breaks. Our pitcher's arm went bad midway, and an error combined with it to let them have two runs. Later a homer cinched the game for them. They were a pretty slick team, signals, sweatshirts, and everything. They are a much larger company too. Enough of excuses. Next time we will beat them, I'm sure.

This morning, following a report from Crowell that in a nearby small lake the fish were leaping all over the place, I got up with Larry Bloon at six-thirty and went down to try our luck. Our contrivances were very primitive and the fish were like the well-known type of girl, teasers only. They jumped all around us but none bit. One only came up to my bait, looked disdainfully at it, and went on his way. That was too much and we went home to a breakfast of fried eggs and jeering friends. Perhaps we'll try again soon with more sophisticated tackle and local advice. I'll get one of our intelligence section to interrogate an old fisherman.

I only wrote one letter yesterday, and that was to Bill Steinbrecher whom I haven't written in several months. Tonight we have a movie called Brazil which will start showing in an hour. After I finish this letter to you, I'll read some more of Richard Wright's autobiography. So far it is very interesting and different from the usual personal memoirs, although I don't believe as different as he believes.

Anspacher's detached duty will probably be permanent, so that there are only myself, Wallenberg and Lt. Constantine, who is a very good officer, left. I will recall a lieutenant from another group, though, tomorrow. Tom Crowell is still with us and happy. He doesn't care very much about going back to his printing establishment and newspaper in Great Neck, LI, as long as the help situation back home is so difficult. And I certainly don't want to see him go because he is a dependable and fine fellow.



Anspacher and others bathing near Darmstadt



Tom Crowell in Goering's car.

I had a pleasant time earlier this evening looking through the theatre ads in an old copy of the Tribune that one of the men got. I ran through the names like the Ken, and the Piccadilly, and the Tower, and remembered the evenings we spent pondering their respective merits and the long walks we took to and from them. I don't think I could stand sitting next to you for very long without looking at you and therefore ruled out the double features entirely. The rest didn't have very good programs and besides you would probably have forgotten your glasses, so I settled for a good hamburger, a cup of coffee, and an argument on realism in literature. Needless to say, we got to bed early.

I would hate to try to measure how much I desire you now. It is completely beyond the imagery power of words. Nor do static pictures go much farther in something that is so dynamic from its most common to its most exotic detail. For now, a kiss and my love,

Al

JILL TO AL MAY 30, 1945

Darling,

More of the mail I didn't get from you last month is seeping in, proving that you were a very faithful, as always, correspondent, a lot better than I was, no doubt. But now that I'm home I'm trying to be more regular about writing you. I should have never told you about falling off the horse when I did, if ever, because that was a time when the mails were loused up anyway and it must have caused you some suspense. But really, I didn't intend you to worry and you may be sure that if anything bad ever does happen to me, I won't write about it until it's all over. Anyway, that was the way I felt about the horse - that by the time I wrote you about it I was in good condition. Naturally at the moment I am fine, although a conveniently small malaise persists, so that whenever I don't feel like doing the dishes I can complain about debilitating muscular aches and pains. And you know, that sort of thing can last a lifetime.

Today was Decoration Day and we spent it at the beach this morning. June King came by with her two kids and we went down together. She bores me to death. This afternoon, by the time we got up Ed had come back from the north side so we all went down to the lake again, having a gooey fudge sundae on the way. Don't begrudge the fudge. I would have much rather had spare ribs. Now that we can't get meat, all I do is think about it. That's human nature for you, to coin a phrase. Ed and I got some tongue and a quart of beer and I guess we'll tackle that with relish in a little while. Don't you love that kind of meal -- hamburgers and beer, sandwiches and beer, onions and beer, anything and beer? When you come back, let's get it by the quarter barrel -- I think bottled beer is too fizzy. I wonder if I'll ever be able to enjoy all the fine wines and liquors that you do. right now I simply can't get excited about anything but beer and perhaps occasionally, to combat late afternoon fatigue, one of Paul's superb old-fashioned. But martinis make me ill and wine just bores me.

I didn't write you yesterday because I went downtown shopping all afternoon and in the evening was too tired to do anything but go to bed. I met Mom for lunch -- Mir took Kathy -- and afterwards got a virtual trousseau for Kathy and nothing for myself, clothes being that dreary. Clothes are on the dreary side for kids too -- you can get plenty of expensive pretty dresses but no underwear, because there's a price ceiling on the latter and it doesn't pay the manufacturer to make them. Ditto pajamas for kids. Isn't that a gyp. I don't know how they're ever going to clothe and feed European kids with such goings on. Oh, a note of humor was injected into shopping by Mom losing me, and vice versa, in Field's. We never did get to find one another, and for all I know she may still be combing the wilds of Fifth Floor, Shoes, for me. Oh, I remember, Ed said she got home all right.

I have to go look for my eyeglasses now. I think Kathy threw them away.

All my love, dearest,

Jill

JILL TO AL MAY?, 1945

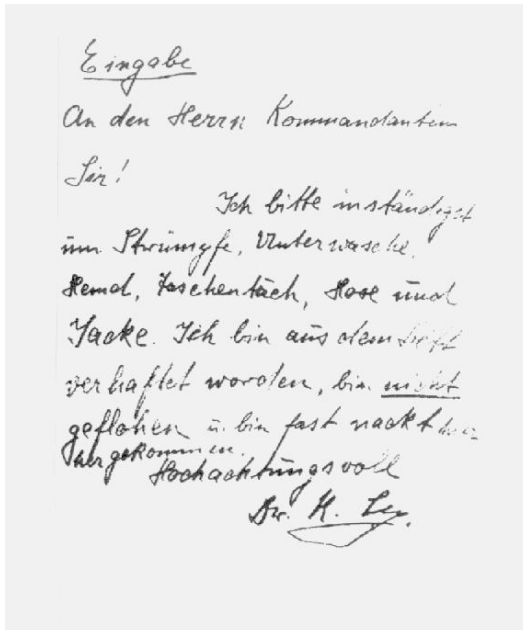
[Note: - the following sheet was in the May month - can't find the beginning or end of it]

authoress, by the name of The Ballad and the Source. It is mindful of Henry James but not nearly so good and not worth your bother, in my opinion. Now I am reading The Trial by Franz Kafka. You ought to read some Kafka if you get the chance. He is very weird and entertaining, even if one is not philosophically bent, as I am not, and apparently, great meat for those so bent. The idea is to read it as if you were reading the account of someone's dream, although it is a great deal more meaningful and interesting than the single dream of an individual ever is. I've heard that a lot of people try to read Freudian implications into his stuff, but that actually he is dealing with a straight

religious or moral problem -- that of the individual's atonement for guilt of which he is not even aware. I have to say "I've heard" because obviously I could have never figured that out myself, and I didn't enjoy Amerika nearly so much because I was not aware of the level upon which he was operating. He is also rather funny, because the theme of the individual being senselessly fucked up is always rather funny, if presented without the brass and fanfare of say, a Hardy.

We had the ghastliest day yesterday. I went out to Michigan shores with Klaus and Lucille and his mother, and of course Kathy. It is a two-hour drive, and they had a flat on the way out. Then when we got there, it transpired that

[...? incomplete]



Eingabe
An den Herrn Kommandanten
Ley!
Ich bitte inständigst
um Strümpfe, Unterwäsche,
Kemol, Taschentuch, Hose und
Jacke. Ich bin aus dem Hof
verhaftet worden, bin nicht
geflohen. Ich bin fast nackt hier
Jah gekommen.
Hochachtungsvoll
Hr. H. Ley.

Handwritten note from Ley.

End of May 1945 letters

