

MEMO

309

when a "bandit" he was pitifully
 shooting at inadvertently staying
 out in violent evasive action and
 spun in. At 24 yrs he became a
 Major and the CO but only because
 he had hung around until he was
 the oldest timer in the outfit. As
 an officer he would have made
 a good F/O, as a CO he would have
 made a fair mail clerk. He be-
 ed about 20 with a tight frown on his
 chin and perpetually in need of
 a good face scrubbing. He was
 the type of a leader who when
 asked a civil and serious question
 would if he did design to answer
 at all would retort with some-
 thing as childish as, "I am not talking
 to you." Never once did he utter
 a word unless it were a criticism.

OCTOBER 1

310

Many days ago the Squadron
 voted to go set a bar in Kassel
 that the "carousers" in the outfit
 have been frequenting. All it
 actually is is a place where they
 can bring any frankins they
 pick up and it takes on the
 distinct odor of a "house of ill
 repute" to me. Bob was chosen
 as administrative officer of
 the location which means he
 has to hang around and see
 that the beer is procured.
 I have no intention of hang-
 ing out down there. I'm not
 the place absolutely leaves
 me cold. Tom & I find plenty
 to do here on the base and
 have no companions and an
 atmosphere more to our liking.

OCTOBER 2

Assuming the job of O'well, Capt. Leake has given out a whole lot of jobs to officers to fill any vacancies that exist and creating a lot of jobs such as postal officers and assigning men with typing experience to help out in the ordinary room. The cause for all this is not only the fact that officers leaving has created vacancies but more the fact that we are so short of enlisted men that it is necessary for officers to perform many of their duties. Gronberg & Duber are clerks. Tom Harris is assistant intelligence officer. Dan is full Bar officer. Dan Gronberg and Randa went to the lumber but they've had it on their hands assigned for my points tonight:

OCTOBER 3

The lights went out tonight about the same time a report came up from Hansel that two more G.I.'s had been killed. Immediately as the lights went out all over the field, there so inclined volunteered their guns and started talking furiously about sabotage and the "Heavenly Hosts." About this time we were sitting around in our room with candle light when Sid Rook walked in. In his usual way in "snuck in" stared around in his perpetual look of utter disbelief and said "what's the matter with the lights!" The next morning we discovered that he had been in Dan's room removing some picture that was wired in. So out the wires he took cutting

OCTOBER 4

and cut both wires at once. There was a binding flask and blackness settled over the whole base. Not having the slightest comprehension of what he had done he wondered and was mad that the lights went out just as he was working on that picture of Doc. Edwards head. These murders are getting serious in Kassel. The two last night made 10 men killed and there have been about the same number of men shot dead and castrated. It appears to be the work of violent bands or gangs. Apparently these men are executed when caught with a German wife or girl. The thing is damn blame them if that is their reason. I hate to think what it is in a reversed situation.

OCTOBER 5

This morning Robert and I took all the negatives that I didn't have prints of and all morning long we ran off prints. Bob is quite sharp at this phase of the photography game now, of course he's been printing like mad for the past week. I say by the way, to everyone's surprise and delight, is making a damn good C.O. He sent two men to 64th today to find out all they can about getting Air Medals for us and they are going to pursue this further tomorrow. It also was discovered that "Junior" H. Gray was told by higher authority to turn in six men for the Bronze Star but he fixed it so he alone got it at his own recommendation.

OCTOBER 6

It seems as though the bar in town is living up to my expectations. It has turned into a den of iniquity of no mean repute. Last night the usual crowd went in and brought their usual families. It seems as though one German lass, a horrible looking creature, had been hiding talent. Last night she claimed to be a strip tease artist so taking an audience, all the fellows and a lot of girls there, into a back room and went into her act. The unusual routine however was that she started, went through, and completed her strip without a stitch of clothes on, which was a miracle. Larry in a burst of aggression for her act brought her home to sleep in a warm bed. His!

OCTOBER 7

Bob and I have been assembling all the negatives of the fellow and printing copies of those of any nostalgic merit. We must have developed over 100 individual shots by now which meant we also printed about six duplicates of each and made about 20 enlargements. Today we borrowed a camera, and film and took some pictures of our own. We took them in the afternoon, developed and dried the film and within the same evening had prints made. We're getting quite adept at this dark room technique and at the same time getting a lot of pictures that make up for not having a camera. I'd like to see a band new shot of Erin & I together!

OCTOBER 8

317

going to breakfast this morning before mass I found an official looking envelope in my mail box. It seems as though our room wasn't satisfactory for the 9th morning inspection. This letter informed us of such and stated that on Monday our room must be "emaculate repeat emaculate" (which must mean immaculate) and that we are to reply to this by endorsement. Tonight as all the "cooks men" went to town for and I following a usual pattern sat for hours over a bottle of Guinness, "Worms" and talk for hours, mainly about wires. Later "Dix" came in and we had a snack of tuna fish sandwiches, crackers and dates till 0300.

OCTOBER 9

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This morning "Dirty" Dalton and I had our "stand by inspection" so we got up for breakfast having only five hours sleep. By 9 o'clock we were ready and were lounging in Bob's room when Capt. Salome stuck his head in through the adjoining door and said "O.K." and that was our inspection. This afternoon Bob and I had to fly two officers down to Stuttgart and I got ridiculously drunk. Harkness. Finding myself we landed at our destination, saw a couple of our old enlisted men and Doc Weinberg. Coming back I stayed on the ball and knew where we were every second which was good as the weather was busy here.

OCTOBER 10

It was announced that all of the officers from the 155th will be sent to 64th Wing to fill vacancies there. I knew this was going to happen but I was surprised to learn that Tom Hunt and George Aubill were also on the orders. To my notion Tom is the best gee in the squadron and I sure hate to see him go. The army seems to make a habit of splitting you from fellows you really like. This may be temporary however. Tonight using the cases we got today as mice, with a grace we had one last session of talking for hours over a couple drinks. Good this life over here is getting discouraging. Miss

OCTOBER 11

Early this morning Tom and George along with the 155th boys left in a truck for 64th Wing and started. Certainly hated to see them go, especially Tom, he's a really swell fellow. We learned that 22 more enlisted men are going to leave Saturday. This will leave us about twenty enlisted men. More and more the running of the squadron is being taken over by the officers and increasing numbers of DP's and German civilians and to get fresh meat we have to hunt for it. Occasionally we have deer or wild boar. Tommy Anderson got a large one point deer today. I sure could go for one of those delicious meals. Erin gets up.

OCTOBER 12

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On the 19th of September I painted my model of a 61 with enamel and put it in a box to dry dust-free. Seeing how it is a few hours and I figured it should be hard as a rock now. It was almost as wet as the day I painted it. I disgust cleaned all the paint off and then on an inspiration I stained it with black India ink and waxed it thoroughly with a clear wax. The wax did results than a good enamel and it was done and dry in a couple hours of polishing. Then I painted the cutting red and made the spinners for it. It's really turning out sharp and it's fun working on it now. Every bit of detail makes it look better.

OCTOBER 13

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Here it is a year and four months that that first Rebel became all mine. Here it is 10 out of 16 of our married months that this damnable war has separated us. I miss that wife of mine so very much and now it looks as though the waterfront strikes are going to make our time away from each other a little longer. I must stand to get home, I hope that lady of mine. That "Widow" I'm making for Erin is almost done, today I put on the spinners and painted the numbers on the tail and the red lines on the wings. Now all it needs is the insignia, and I may put invasion stripes on it. I think Erin will like it.

OCTOBER 14

323

Bob had to go into Kassel to get some beer for the bar in town so I went along with him to check on the new hospital to see if I can get an appointment to have my teeth fixed. The dentist lab isn't complete yet however so I have to wait until a few more weeks. Gronberg gave me some insignia decals so I can put invasion stripes on the 61 model it is all done. Of course I still have to make a stand for it. It really looks sharp. Jim Conlon had a bad accident coming back drunk from the bar in town last night. He hit a stone house, washing out the jeep and cutting his face pretty bad. He was lucky to get out alive. I sure miss that wife of his.

OCTOBER 15

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Noticed "Dirty" working on some telephone lines so having nothing to do I decided to help him. Doing this may cause me to end up being persistent communication of. While we were working on the line a weapon's carrier drove up and it was Tom Hart & George Aubill. Apparently they've got a good deal. They with the 10 other, old 155th men that left here are running a regular mess depot in Mannheim with a major as a CO. Their living conditions are much better than here and they seem very content with the setup. It sure was good to see them again. Man, I would sure like to see that train wife of mine. Good, Miss Ter!

OCTOBER 16

OCTOBER 17

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OCTOBER 22

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The man picked up in the black market robbery last night was one of the switch board operators so now we have only one and Ditty and I are helping him out by taking turns on the switch board. This afternoon I took all of my oil paintings to date and scrubbed them thoroughly removing any spots or effects children like. Also while on the switch board I made a drawing for a painting of a girl sitting with a glass of wine. Am using a new idea now, tired of the results of painting without models so in using photographs to act as models still ending up with an original painting in subject.

OCTOBER 23

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John Doud is going on leave to England and Ditty is going to fly home going in the 8-25. He in "communications" received another set back when our only remaining switchboard operator was implicated in the robbery Saturday night along with an added charge of having two women in his room. Ditty and I now run the switch board in its entirety. Tonight I started painting the wine girl and I had at least an audience of seven fellows. Its really turning out well and should be the best work I've ever done. So far it is way beyond anything I've ever done. Even like this.

OCTOBER 24

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Dirty and John left this morning so now the switchboard is my baby. I got three fellows to help me this afternoon. Jim Conlon, and Woody Grange also Bob. The only trouble is that with these high winds our lines break and wear out faster than we can repair them. Transportation, Supply and two orderly rooms times went out today. I haven't climbed so many trees since I was twelve. Only had a little spare time to paint on the air girl but it is still exceeding all expectations. Cheever got many compliments on my work in my life. This thing has appeal. Even sure appeal.

OCTOBER 25

334

Tommy Anderson came back from the hospital so he can help me out on the switchboard. He and Bob and Woody helped out again today so the time went pretty fast. It's funny to think of Bar Officer, Communications officer, Operations officer, plus Engineering officer helping out on the switchboard. Supply and a phone in the orderly room went out again so I still didn't have time to do much painting but I did paint the glass of wine and the background and it's still the best. Golly I miss that mighty lovable little Fedan of mine. Man, I love that Gal. Let's!

OCTOBER 26

I got so busy today and the DP switchboard operator I ordered yesterday hasn't arrived yet that I looked thoroughly into the situation and asked Captain Oakyne if I could have any enlisted men that I could find who had non-functioning jobs and he gave me his O.K. Within a half hour I found two men working in armament which is non-functional now. They are now switchboard operators. I climbed more trees this afternoon and put a telephone in burthouse. I couldn't finish the painting of the "Dine Girl" but it is all done with the exception of her dress. This is by far the best work I've ever done.

OCTOBER 27

It was such a relief to know that the switchboard is manned and I won't have to break up my day with that monotonous task. I finished the painting of the Gal with the wine today and I certainly am encouraged with the results. I think Erin will be also. I now am certain that I can paint and paint well as long as I have models. Actually I was not only doing myself no good but was doing harm to my impressions. With the right breaks I honestly believe I can become a strictly top notch commercial artist and really make a good life for Erin and Mike and the rest of our future gang.

OCTOBER 29

clumsy wandering around checking upon communications this morning when it was only told that we had to fly to Munich to get some much needed parts. It was a beautiful day so we took the train to the trip. Munich is set right at the foot of the mountains and it was a beautiful sight to see the snow topped Alps rising abruptly from the flat valley floor. We didn't get the parts but I met an officer named Brown I had met in Luxembourg. He showed me around a bit, the likes of which is only at night field, that he is in charge of. Erin is beginning to have a recurrence of malaria and doesn't like it at all. Gerd, which should be with

OCTOBER 28

For some delightful reason it was a beautiful day today. The first in weeks. Immediately after mass Ted and I went up in the car to get the remainder of our flying time for this month. The whole country side is covered in the equivalent of our Indian summer back home and it's truly a beautiful sight. This afternoon I started on a portrait of Ted (in oils) and it's really turning out well. I certainly have improved in the past few months and I'm getting more and more encouraged about the chances of my finding employment. Gerd, which was a civilian. Mr. & Mrs. ...

OCTOBER 30

I worked most of the day on this portrait of Jim making of Bob today and it still isn't done. I'm taking my time so I can do a really good job and it is turning out same. It's a very good resemblance and good composition. This also shows me that I have improved and I know that now I am capable of doing much better portraits of Erin than the ones I did before. Gosh it's going to be wonderful to get that lovely creature to pose for me again, of course I think I'll enjoy having her secure in my arms more than capturing her on canvas. I miss that wife of mine so terribly much and I love her so desperately. It's going to be sheer Heaven to get back to that beautiful Fern of mine!

OCTOBER 31

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MEMO

NOVEMBER 1

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