

a strong fear of the Bears and a great confidence in his "chute". A few nights later Woody again had engine trouble but he could make the field so he told Sugar "We're going in!". When he landed he found no Sugar. A search was made and they found a badly battered Sugar he thought Woody meant they were going to crash. Thus he now not only had a fear of airplanes but one of Chutes also. He hasn't been inside a plane since. His only occupation now is "bird dogging" and he works harder at it. He now is having an intrigue with the two very untowardly fractions of the Fran's house he is killed. The Fran hopes he'll marry one and take her to the

Pete, Ray Q., Ray and the others got official word today that they are transferred to the 425 and they will leave tomorrow. I'll be sorry to see them go, with the possible exception of a certain insidious little beast named Kimmel. Howard talked me into helping with the bar and it should do me a lot of good to work under him as he is really an accomp. liked artist and one should learn a lot from in the art line. We got word today that Hadra has been missing since May. Apparently he was crossing the hump in a transport and they made a forced landing. We certainly have lost a lot of our best lies in the last few months.

Pete Lambert, Ken Jones, Ray O'Brien, Christianson, Ray Peré and Jack Kimmel left today in Peré's car. They are now officially in the 425 which is a camp & troop awaiting shipment. There are some that will be missed but some that won't. The squadron is getting smaller all the time, and the smaller the more pleasant and friendly. It's actually getting to be a pleasure to be in it now but it would be so much more of a pleasure to go home. We are still working on the bar and it should be done in time for the fourth of July. Meanwhile we are getting settled in this dull little village of Klein Gersau. Am glad this isn't our destination.

Only worked on the bar part of the day today. They've instigated a new policy here whereby a truck goes to Frankfurt every night for those who want to go. Rand and I took advantage of it. We went to SHAEF (what was the C. G. Harbor Co.) to eat at the officers club amidst swank surroundings, dinner, music and surrounded by rank of all nationalities. After dinner we went to the adjoining "snack bar" and ate some more then we went to a show. Again we ate at the "Snack Bar" and finally came home. They were still working in the bar so I stayed there playing records till 5:30 AM. Now I'm tired and go home with that Rebel O'mine!

We finished the bar this morning and it is a beautiful job. I know dozens of bars in the states that haven't the class our "Front Room" has. Tonight we had the grand opening and what an affair it was. The very air was saturated with alcohol it was so drunk. Bob Bates came over with what seemed all of the 415th and all throughout the event we sat oblivious to it all as we sat sipping champagne engrossed in talking about our wives. To celebrate the 4th quite a barrage of flares were let go by a very drunk bunch. They were shooting at houses, people, and at anything that took their fancy. It was beautiful but noisy. Gosh, how I wish Erin and I were together now. Gosh, I miss her!

Out of an apparently clear sky Madsen and 5 tanks were transferred to the 425th, voluntarily of course. That makes four crews that have transferred so far and McCullen is going to trade with a fellow named Mercer of the 422nd. This will be in every one's estimation be a very satisfactory deal regardless of what Mercer is like. However Mercer seems to be a good Joe. His reason for desiring occupation in preference to going home with the 422nd is that he has a girl in England he intends to marry. I sure wish I could be as close to the gal that I married. Gosh I miss the sweet of Double Rebel. What a perfect wife she is!

The locals here in Rhein Geran seem to not only be very eager to please but they also seem phobic as hell. There are more little kids around this town and they all seem to hang out here in front of our houses and clubs. This morning I counted 53 kids piled on a jeep. Strangely enough these kids leave me cold. Usually I like kids but I almost share Tom Hart's feelings about them and would just as soon drop kick them as look at them. They have a strange meanness that is unnatural for kids. There is one little girl I like and she is a tot named Thula only 4. Regardless of what you say to her she always solemnly says "Ya."

Another one of the rainy German days had us in its melancholy grip again today and the confinement of the drab houses of Rhein Geran proved rather depressing. Accordingly we signed up to go to Frankfurt again in hopes of finding a little diversion. We being John & Dad, Bob & Al. Again the meal wasn't up to usual SHAF standards but it was very enjoyable. After dinner we went to see "Ries & Fell" put on by the U.S. O. It was a riot and well done, check see why it lasted so long on Broadway. The snack bar and then home. I had a good time but I sure miss my wife.

With the new setup of flights, we being in A flight it was our day to fly. They have instigated a garrison schedule now and as a result the men on the line were all off except for a skeleton crew. These fellows had a devil of a time resulting in not enough airplanes. Accordingly Bob and I flew the cub for a while in the afternoon and made our mission and NF 1 in the same flight. It was black as pitch up there and we weren't much in the mood for running PT's. Gosh I miss that sweet H. red wife of mine. I hope that this occupation doesn't last more than six months. Being away from her is sheer hell. I love her!

Our orders came through for our leave this morning, three days in Paris and three days in Brussels. After considerable disorganization the B-25 took off and in an hour and 20 minutes we landed at A-46. A taxi took us to Versailles and from here we rode a local train to the outskirts of Paris, the Metro the remainder of the way. We reported in and were given a room in the Lafayette Club. Being dead tired we laid around for a while, ate and then strolled the town for a few hours becoming very disgusted with the prices. Finally we came back to our rooms and rested for a time before hitting our sacks. It is very hot here and I miss Erin!

JULY 10

223

Bob and I slept late this morning and just layed away the time until noon. Then we ate and headed for the P.X. The Gift Dept. was a disappointment as we could only buy one gift and I had already bought a fairly cheap bracelet before finding this out. The remainder of the day we spent hunting in all the stores for gifts for our wives and we had a wonderful time but didn't buy anything else. Even-
ually we ended up on the Champs Elysees near the Arc de Triomphe and went to a show. Then we wandered back and stayed in our room the rest of the evening. Gave I miss that Fascious of Bellet wife of mine? (Beaucap)

JULY 11

224

A busy and utterly unconstructive morning was again passed and once more we began our ceaseless search for gifts for our wives. Many a mile of the ancient ways of Paris we tread and were more successful today. I bought three bottles of perfume and another bracelet for that Fascious of Bellet of mine. I sure love that Gal. In our wanderings we saw the spot where Marie Antoinette bought it, "the obelisk, Napoleon's tomb, and the Tour de Eiffel". Napoleon's tomb is a beautiful place done in marble and you have to look at it from above so all heads are bowed when viewing it. Tomorrow we catch a train for Brussels at 0800.

BRUSSELS JULY 12

225

Reluctantly at 0630 we rolled out of our very comfortable beds and made a dash for the metro. Surviving the dash with early Parisians we arrived at the Gare du Nord and acquired an RTO order for the trip to Brussels. Our train was one of these streamlined DeSels of two cars that they use so extensively here on the continent. At 1130 we changed at Feignes and a short while later we had to wait while the civilians went through customs. Soon we passed Waterloo and then arrived in Brussels. Brussels is not as grandiose as Paris but it is homier and much friendlier. We have a room in the Hotel Centrale in the town center.

JULY 13

226

Every morning of our leave seems destined to be sleepaway. Rising late we again after eating scoured the town for gifts. All of our site-seeing seems to be done in dept stores. The first thing I bought was a rather tinny made out of Belgian coins. Then I found some perfume some for my mother in law and some more for Erin. By this time we were exhausted so after drinking so beer we returned to the Hotel where we bought our rations accompanied by Ashtray. There we had every thing packed in one box and mailed it. Golly, here it is a year and a month that I look ownership rights on that box of mine & I sure love her.

227

JULY 14

At about the door awoke as this morning and by nine o'clock we had dressed, eaten breakfast, checked with the RAF on the possibility of going to Copenhagen. By nine forty-five we had received a one day extension and were checked back in at the Centrale with even the same room. Our orders to Copenhagen were filed and this evening we got a booking on the 0900 tomorrow morning RAF plane. At a C47 with British crew. Tonight out of sheer boredom we went to the Alhambra Theater and what we supposed was the Burlesque. It was the Burlesque all right but the burlesque in Belgium is so tame you could take your grandma to it.

Dinner

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COPENHAGEN,
DENMARK
15 JULY 1945

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DENMARK JULY 15

228

We were off and at the RAF field and on our way to Copenhagen at 0900. One stop was made at Detmold, Germany. Then we were over the North Sea and at 1200 in Copenhagen. We were "advised" to stay only one day. It being Sunday the only way we could get dinner was to sell some cigars. Copenhagen is beautiful and the Danes are wonderful. We ate in a restaurant and it was the best meal we've had since the states. The Danes have everything in abundance except tobacco, coffee and fuel, and they really know how to handle food. They do not force themselves on us and showed us the city. The city is beautiful and a maze of picturesque squares. Wish we could spend months here. Even would love it.

417 TH NIGHT FIGHTER SQUADRON

A P O 374

U. S. ARMY

14 July 1945

SUBJECT : Orders

TO : All concerned

1. The following named officers will proceed by mil acft or GMT on dated indicated from present station to Copenhagen, Danemark, for a period of temp dy not to exceed 3 days. Upon completion of temp dy to return by mil acft or GMT to proper orgn and station .TDN.

NAME

TO PROCEED

2d. Lt. Robert L. King Jr. ASR 53 QVT O-770308
F/O David F. Diehl, ASR 46 QVT T-180287 o/a 14 July 1945

By order of Major MC CRAY

James J. Simpson
JAMES J. SIMPSON

1st. Lt. Air Corps
Adjutant

Date 16 July 45
Persons 2 OFF
Nights 1
6.17 CENTS
U S Billiting Officer

JULY 16

229-

We got up early to get in as much shopping as possible and were amazed at the beauty of all the things and the wonderful selection they have. They are masters at China, glass & brass ware, and wood work. There are only about 50 Americans in Copenhagen and all the Danes took us as long lost brothers. Everywhere we go we are stared at, it seems they all have relatives in the States. We met an awfully nice fellow - Erik Engelsen, Nimmersgade 111 II, KØBENHAVN - and what he regrets is that we didn't meet him sooner. He showed us around till we left. We're going to contact his sister in Ohio & go for him. He was a "prince"!

LUXEMBURG JULY 17

230

We left Copenhagen at 3:00 yesterday flying with the ATC. We stopped for 45 minutes in Bremen and at 6 we arrived at Brussels where we stayed all night.

0700 This morning found us on the train and pulling out for Luxembourg. It was a long ride and a dull one but we were so tired that we slept most of the way. We arrived in Luxembourg around 2:30 and what a beautiful it is. The city is very dull and unimpressive in appearance and in actuality. It is a country where many old people come to retire. We are stuck here for tonight and maybe longer if we can't get a ride out all travel towards Germany seems to end here. Miss Erik!

JULY 18

231

Last night I was so tired that I laid down at 1900 and slept right on through until 1000 today. We got up and went up to Ninth Air Force headquarters to check on the possibility of flying to Germany. Much to our surprise we got docking on a plane to Mannheim at 1245. We went out to the field to see about the plane and another one came in that was leaving soon so we took it. Oh no time at all we were in Mannheim and on the road to Darmstadt and home. I hoped in vain that I'd get back to find I was a second Lt., but the presidential citation came through. Beaucoup letters were waiting for me when I got back from the sweet ol' Tolan of mine!

JULY 19

232

It finally came out that our applications for 2nd Lt. haven't been at the Ninth Air Force at all but that they've been lost. It seems Maj MacBray gave them to Simpson and Simpson gave them to Capt. Brown and Brown proceeded to lose them. He accused the enlisted men of losing them and forgot all about it. That was better than a month ago. Three days ago he was going through a foot locker he has on the line and there were our papers making a mess. Now they are making them out again and may be with a lot of luck they'll go through. Somebody ought to kick that lost ball out of the squadron.

JULY 20

233.

As soon as we got up we took off for the Officers Sales Store at Frankfurt to buy some clothes. I only got a pair of pants. Finishing here we went to the leather goods store at Duffenbach. The selection wasn't so good when we got there but I did manage to get a pair of shoes of very good quality leather but only fair in size. They only allow two articles per person and you have to hit it lucky to get a good selection. We were scheduled to fly today so we ran P's with Dad. It was a nice night and I really enjoyed getting back in the groove. I certainly miss that. I'm curious of Dad of mine. Good she's a wonderful wife.

JULY 21

234

Hankus unexpectedly left the squadron and what a deal he walked in to. It seems as though this wing staff sent a request for a pilot a captain, with the night fight or 1058 rating. Our only captain logically didn't want it and Hankus who just made 1st Lt. a few days ago jumped at it merely because it was a way of getting out of the squadron. It turns out that this wing staff needs a night fighter advisor and the position calls for Major. Thus Hankus will be a major in six months which will be in all six months and three days from 2nd Lt. to Major. Hankus doesn't know it as yet but I doubt seriously if he will mind.

JULY 22

235

Today, I had the odious task of being O.D. Being O.D. actually requires little or no work but it takes hours of time. You always have to be seen wandering around with a gun on your hip and look official as a peacock. Also as the enlisted men are so far from ours the O.D. is required to sleep behind the orderly room. Chat up until 300 talking to enlisted men and I know I'll be dead tired tomorrow. Max. also came to the conclusion that I have the most wonderful wife in the whole world. I had a lovely creature. Of course I first came to this conclusion a long time ago, but I always re-conclude this everyday.

JULY 23.

236

This morning I was awfully tired but before surrendering to that so welcome sack I had to undergo a "Strike down" inspection on the enlisted men. All the officers took part in this to speed it up. We were looking for flying equipment, foreign weapons that should have been turned into supply for safe keeping, and excessive money or unusual boarding that might indicate Black-Market activity. They must have had a warning as the results were rather frugal. We picked up a little flying equipment and several guns but that was all. It was John & mine's Birthday today as he chalked of seven plus twenty years. I was my wife?

JULY 24

237

Today was a day of shows! This morning when we got up we had to attend our bi-weekly class which consisted of films on German and Japanese aircraft which took until noon. Then immediately after lunch we went out to the line to see Bob Hope's show. Naturally it was the best show I've seen in a long while because it is the best show out there was Bob Hope, Jerry Colonna and three girls. They certainly were good and it was a real morale builder. I wish Erin could have been with me. Tonight we went over to the show but we had all seen it so we came home and played bridge. I'm sure got a luscious wife!

JULY 25

238

As usual we went swimming today and it really felt good. It was not as hot today as it was yesterday but it certainly was refreshing. Tom, Jack, John and I went with the usual bunch. I can't seem to get Bob to come along. This evening Tom and I had our usual dig in the bar. Lately we've been going to the bar for a drink or two, never getting drunk! As we sit there and nod over our beers or turbon and coke Tom plays the piano. He plays quite well and all by ear. So I sit and make songs as he plays away and we both love ourselves in dreams of our wives. Gave I miss Erin!

I had to miss my usual daily swim today as the art class was in session. There were only two students present besides Bob and that was "Skip" Condon and an enlisted man and I don't think such attendance is worth missing swimming on such a perfect day for same. I'll have to get these classes changed to the morning, as the saying goes "This operation has to cease!" We were to fly tonight but at 9³⁰ a big line of clouds loomed up on the horizon and the report came through that a hellish thunderstorm was on the way, a cold front no less. It flashed and crashed all around us but never let loose.

Today Bob had to fly the B-25 down to Paris along with Jim Condon so I went along to navigate. With that cold front that had moved in yesterday it was busy work all the way with an included front hanging over Paris. We got safely in and in an hour took off again. The weather was O.K. back at Base, and we slipped back into the dull routine of existence here at Klein Jean. Even to the routine of an accident at "popping" of a chute in the B-25, which makes eight in eight days, which is a boring repetition. Life here is so uninteresting that it leaves one in a lethargy. Guess that's why that Lucille's wife of mine!

JULY 28

We had our usual hour force of weekly drill this morning and when we came back from some chores very pleasantly surprised to see Pete Lambert. It seems that they won't leave for Marseille until the 10th of August and in the meantime they are making a gay time of it touring around the country. Bob and John have both started some super detail models of P-51's and if they finish them they should really be beauties especially Bob's. In the spirit of things I did a slight on my tiny model but only slightly. I hope some day I'll finish it. Meanwhile I sure miss that vicious gal of mine. Where are they now?

JULY 29

Today was one of those days when all you can say about it is that it was a day. It was one of those days when nothing at all happens. Day when you get up get to bed fast five minutes late, and then stumble through the morning doing little more than existing. At 1145 you get to show early to beat the deer, after lunch you check the mail and on a day like this there never is and so you pick up a Star and Stripes. Reading this assumes a half hour and settles in, and dull session till the afternoon. After evening chow letter writing goes off an empty day. Gave, I want to go home to Erin!

JULY 30

It's a strange thing but the building we eat in, the school, is underneath the quarters of an apparently confirmed Nazi. The townspeople tell us that the old schoolmaster and especially his daughter are of the died in the wool variety. Apparently the Nazis can't get anything on them here ever. At the same time over in Groo Gerau just a short while before we took it a P-47 made a forced landing on the edge of town. Led by the Mayor the town people stoned the pilot to death. Today only the wrecked P-47 remains as mute evidence of their crime. They who persecuted this dead man all been picked up. They've had it!

JULY 31

DeGott said this morning and instead of sending a hundred home I only sent \$75 because of spending more this month during all the traveling Bob and Shelia. Connor who was pay officer this month also brought back the sad news that we had it on the Danish Danvers I still have as they have changed the currency in the fifteen days since we've been there. Rumors now have it that we are to move to Rand to replace the 422nd when they move out. The living conditions would probably be good up there but there would be any place to go. Wish they'd just send us home. This is a farce!