I've come to the conclusion that
of the ladies I see going. Those
are damn few fellows that can
be a credit of their wives faith-
fulness as I and there isn't a
fellow that comes near having
a wife as completely adorable,
as perfectly wonderful or as
wonderfully perfect as mine.
Erin is undoubtedly the best
wife, mate or lover that God
created for any man. Why such
a creature should give herself
so completely and explusively
to me is beyond my mortal fa-
thound comprehension. I can't
understand it but I certainly
can appreciate this wonderful
fact and love her with every
iota of my heart, body, & soul!

I worked some more on the paint-
ing and now all it lacks is the trim
of planes in the fore ground along
the parking ramps. It is practic-
ally finished and I've received
many compliments already.
Today word came to send "Andy"
Anderson, Tom Kelley, Sam Clark,
Jack Allen, George Allen and Thom
Cambell. They're going to leave
tomorrow and they'll fly which
means they'll be home in a day
or so. It looks as though the
are starting to ship the men home
now. With a little luck we can
be home pretty quick. There's
been no further news on Red
Grisel and it certainly looks
hopeless for him now. It's been
a week that he's been missing.

Today, unheralded, unannounced unexpected and almost unbelievably Red Geisel walked in on us in perfect health. Going down to Nice he had had one anxious moments when both his engines had quit when they were over the Alps but they came back in and he made it O.K. On the way back he had no navigator and he got lost so he landed at Sicily to determine his whereabouts (he was near Tyon) and had a thorough while taping. He sent two telegrams requesting a line but neither ever reached the squadron. After sitting there for eights days with no answer he summoned back, but the same of Red Geisel.

The Inspector General was supposed to come today but didn't as it is Labor Day. He is coming tomorrow instead, we think. George Allen, Frank Lambell, Jack Colbert, Sam Rial, Tom Wolfley, and "Andy" Anderson left today and word came in that Gil Johnson and Hob Rudolph should also leave in a day or two. All the groundcrew officer jobs are slowly being absorbed by flying officers as the air corps is slowly getting back to its peace time basis. Soon we will have only flying officers with the exception of 1 or 2 and I hope our replacements come soon. Home to Texas.

SEPTEMBER 4

The Inspector General came today and at last we F/O's had our chance to see why we have had to wear this "blue pickle" so long. As usual we were allowed a personal interview to air our own gripes and four of the six F/O's went chasing as spokesman. We were interviewed by a Major and he promised us some results on this. Also I asked him about the rumored Air Medal for any operational time. This is not a rumor but an order from General Barcus and he is going to see why we haven't been turned in for same. Later Major M "Crag got a chewing on both these scores and now maybe will have some action

SEPTEMBER 5

Dave became supply officer today as Gil Johnson and Red Rubin requested to leave late tonight. That leaves Brown, "Crag" Campbell, Simpson, Nelson, DeWeinberg, and Smeltzer as ground officers. Oh, I forgot Raven, the indomitable Sid Raven "personal equip. officer" It won't be too long and they will all be gone. Twenty more enlisted men left today and that only leaves about fifteen of the old men and they'll go any day now. I certainly will be glad when I see those replacements come in for the flying crews. Erin will be glad to get back to a normal life with Erin!

We finally got our rations today after three weeks without same and going through several days of starving & cigarettes. Looks as if Uncle Sam now that Johnson has retired his trusty colt and his being same has paid dividends already. Some poor "Yonson" Lieutenants came in today and told tales as about them before the stand so Bob, Graberg and I were able to go down & see Spiece. Capts Brown, Lambell, and Smeltzer will probably be leaving soon as all the ground officer jobs are being taken over by flying officers. Guess we'll go home soon as we're more than ready to get home to the Session Peck of Mine!

A strange thing happened today. Just as I was walking out of the house I almost ran in to Major Mac Gray and he asked me if I wanted to go home or stay over here awhile. It seems an order came directing the major to send a list of all air crew stating whether they wished to go home immediately or were willing to stay over here awhile. He said that he has been informed that no replacements will be sent for us until this list is sent to Italy. This is encouraging as it has been this is the very first mention we've had of replacements. Man, I hope it means that I soon find myself in Texas with a mighty sweet Texan in my arms.

SEPTEMBER 8

285

We had a big accident this morning as the field was open for the first day. An A-20 was taking off when he had his right tire blow out. He swerved right over into our area and they ground looped around the "Siebel." The German transport that is the Major's pet and everyone else's pet hate. That pilot shouldn't have picked a better place to crash into as no one was hurt and both planes are ruined. If he had just swerved a couple more feet he could have wiped out the two Bubars" plus the "Siebel" and left us entirely devoid of German aircraft. What a wonderful show that would have been. Man, am I miss that Siebel of mine!

SEPTEMBER 9

286

Today in a letter from Mom was a note from a friend of hers to her relatives over here. I looked up the town Elsen and found it to be 45 miles from here near Paderborn. Having nothing else to do I talked Bob in to taking me up there in the Cub. We found the town and picked out a field suitable just on the edge of this little hamlet. We no sooner landed than a mob of big, little, young and old Krauts started swarming us. We soon adjusted to the people and Bob played Dr. Anthony "to all those who have relatives PW's in the States. We delivered the message and took off as they all waved. Bob sure is a damn good pilot!

Hourly more of our old enlisted men left today and now those that are left are few indeed. We are below strength now and they keep sending men out. If this keeps up we won't have any enlisted men left. We don't have any radar mechanics now and all of our crew chiefs are P-47 or 38 men. We learned today that when the 415th moves to Bremen their job will be to run weather patrols over the North Sea all winter and that is a rough job especially in the winter. Helped Col John run an inventory on Supply today and what a mess that is. Grimley I sure wish they would send me home. Erin and I have been gone so damnably long. Gawd it's hot

Early this morning long before I could bear to get up Bob and Tom Hark took off for Cannes. Strange how them down as that trip is to sought after to get let us fly our own boys down there. There certainly is a ridiculously selfish attitude in this squadron. It crops up from the biggest issues on down to the most insignificant. It dominates every policy and issue in the squadron and I believe is the base of all the troubles and faults in the outfit. Naturally Major McCray is the greatest exponent of this. He without a doubt is the poorest CO possible. Man, will I ever be glad when I get out of this poor outfit and out of the army.

I borrowed some enamel from Earl Gronberg and painted my model P-61. It has grains in it yet so I may have to take it off & again by & bye & sand them out. It also is too thick but is definitely in the finish charts. This afternoon George Aubrill and I went up in the hills. I always knew he was hot and a nut but I never knew any body who was more at home in an airplane than he. When he's at the controls that plane fairly breathes. He's just one of those guys that's out of place on the ground but in the air. That's where he's at home and I mean definitely. As for me I'm not at home under 5 in with that lush woman of mine.

The coat of enamel on my little model of the P-61 didn't come out too well so tonight I sanded it off in preparation to putting a thinner and better coat on it. I want to do a good job on this as it's the only model I intend to build & especially because I'm building it for that mighty sweet little Pilot wife of mine. Yawn. I'm lucky to have a wife like Erin. I couldn't ask for a more perfect lovable creature for a mate. Here it is our anniversary of a year and three months and I've been away more than half our married life. Man those six months when we were together were the happiest months of my life. I hope they send me back to the coast.

Rather unexpectedly John Lowe announced today that he is going to the hospital. It seems that he is one of the thousands that have this illusive ailment of a trick knee. He hasn't complained any and he isn't the type to holler any pain in silence. I think his big ailment is his job as supply officer, so he has decided to have this knee looked into to relieve his other greater ailment. His trip to the hospital can have three ades make results. He can get out of supply, he can get his leg fixed in the army and there's a chance that they might send him home. I wish they'd ship me to my lovely Betty!

It was really pleasant to have to roam all to my self today and the prospect of days of same is a nice thought. The house is actually empty now as George Dubell, Smelser, and Price the only one's left. It will get lonely after a week but now it is very refreshing. I picked up the book "Arundel" today (Kenneth Roberts) and read it in two five hour sittings. Tomorrow I'd better pick up my brush and start painting as now is an ideal time to put in some good constructive and undisturbed work. We got to be on the ball when I get home to that luscious wife of mine. Man, I love her!

This morning immediately after mass I got out a chunk of ply-wood and using a plaster head of Gods that I discouraged from "E" I started to paint. I was not particularly interested in subject desiring only to do something in the commercial vein that would emphasize color, tone and shading on. Naturally it was a face and a girls. I worked all day pausing only to eat and at 11:30 pm I still had work done. But it's the best oil painting I've ever done and rather encouraging. Enough work like this and I should not have much trouble getting a job when I get out of this dragnet bed army. Gotby, Miss Erin!

I worked almost all day today finishing this girls head & painting. As far as skin tone and color is concerned it is good and well worth while and the best piece done but as far as subject is concerned it is worthless. It's a girls head and not an especially beautiful one or even an especially interesting face. I'm satisfied with it as a successful completion of its primary purpose but it isn't a picture you frame and hang in your living room. I'm quite sure I will be glad when Erin and I have our own living room and nice to see young Mike crawling over the floor. Miss that girl!

The other day I was surprised to see a girl sitting behind the desk in the Major's office and more surprised to find one up in operations. They are both good looking and I guess to be above the average. It seems as though "Jody" Simpson met the one in town and becoming physically interested offered her a job as secretary to make her more accessible. It seems she has a sister as "Boogy" Bamblett took care of this by offering her a job in operations. Well "Jody" was successful in his ulterior motives but another fellow in the outfit beat "Boogy's" time. Not to be daunted however "Boogy" filed another application for engineering. To type of course

I needed twenty minutes to make my four hours for this month so George Aubell took me up in the blue. First we shot a couple landings and then we went out into the area getting some altitude. We did a couple lazy eights and I could see that George was itching for excitement. He'd be flying along and all of a sudden he'd slam the controls all over the place making the plane shake like a wet dog. I've never seen anyone so complete master of his steed as George is of an airplane. He finally settled for a couple loops and a spin. This evening I drew a long promised pencil sketch of Gronberg. I sure miss that Gal of mine!

Frayblud got back from the army college at Barrit today without Russell. Russell it seems drank so much during their two month course that he became an acute alcoholic and is now in the hospital. Word came through about a course in Commercial Art in London and I was all ready to sign up when an order came through that all men with 60 or more points cannot leave the squadron except to go to Cannes. All 72's and 73's are cancelled. This sounds very encouraging, may be all be getting home to my Jacqueline of Arbel. Golly what a happy thought. I love her.

Today, I pulled out another hunk of jolly wood and started to paint. This time I decided to do an illustration of the two main characters from Kenneth Roberts book "Oliver Wiswell" Steve Mason and Hocke. As so far is turning out very well and if it continues the way it has I should have a good "argument" towards getting that old job when I get home. Golly it's going to be so wonderful to get back to a normal life with that lovable wife of mine. This existence over here is so disgusting and so senseless. I miss and need that wife of mine!

299 SEPT. 23

Painted the majority of the day on that painting which is should be done tomorrow sure should have been able to finish it tonight but all of a sudden out of a clear sky I got a toothache and was not as pleased doing any work was concerned. This afternoon Smeltzer, Brown and Capt. Nelson left for home. That leaves three grouchy officers "Jody" Simpson, Woody Campbell and Rowen. Oh yes I forgot Lucy Parada went down to T.H.C. to see if he can still get his application in. It looks as though Lowland Gronberg have had it however I wish they'd send me home.

SEPT. 22 300

Mr. Cook
Lieut. Smeltzer
Capt. Nelson
Lieut. Simpson
Lieut. Campbell
Lieut. Rowen
Italia

work on my painting.

Mr. Roberto Schiess
Guardia Svizzera
Città del Vaticano
Italia

SEPTEMBER 23

SEPT. 22 300

Right after breakfast we got dressed and gathering our gear and George Aubrey, Red Graham and I took off for Memmingen and 12th TAC with only one false start. Arriving there we met an F/O, there for the same purpose, that had been an F/O for three years, plus bags of fruit salad. The 12th TAC we learned that we were to meet the board as ours the only one out of 20 without a waiver. The colonel on the board was a good joe and I think we may get our "seconds" this time. Bob and Tom Hood got back from Cannes today and walked in and was hard at work on my painting.

Finished my painting of Grandad this morning and it's good enough to be encouragingly good. More work of this kind won't have much difficulty getting a job when they finally decide to let me out. Tonight on the radio they announced that any man with 44 points can expect to be repatriated. All men down to those with 45 points will be sent from the ETO by June. They also gave the approximate date of shipping according to points and men with 60 points will be on their way by Christmas. We managed to pick up a whole case of Vermouth tonight. Vermouth stamped "Wehrmacht Only" !!

Awoke up this morning to find that my tooth ache is still with me. It's amazing how much a thing like a toothache can make any concentration practically impossible. All day long I've sat with a damn thing in my mouth trying to do what I have many things to do but can't seem to get started because that seemingly emphasizes the throbbing. The first thing tomorrow I'm going to have to track down a dentist. I hope it won't be necessary to pull this tooth as it will mean I'll have two, my false tooth being hinged to it. A toothache just sours the outlook on life the whole day. This evening Tom Hazlewood relieved the pain by reverting to a little "Scotch"!

When I awoke up this morning I found an indication of swelling with still the monotony of that damnable toothache. Right after chow I went over across the field and found a dentist. There was no indication of the day and since the tooth is such an important one all he could do was take an X-Ray and told me to come back tomorrow. The tooth must be abscessed as I am getting the chills and fever. We have lights and the water is turned off so I think I'll hit the sack early. I guess tomorrow this time I'll be minus two teeth. I hope they send me home soon toothless or not. I sure miss that Gal of mine

was surprised to find I had no toothache when I awoke this morning but my eye felt funny and as I looked in the mirror convinced me that I should'nt waste any time getting over to the dentist. The whole left side of my face was swollen and my left eye was almost shut. After breakfast I hustled over there. One look at it and the dentist said well it's sure you have an abcess but am still not positive that it's that front one. I convinced him however so he pulled it and of course my false tooth came with it. I am now toothless but I find I still adore that luscious wife of mine even with two teeth out.

The squadron hoisted its true colors today when a phone call from Jody called all the inhabitants of #34 over to his and the Major's office. This issue was that they had decided to make our house into a lounge and to move us out immediately. This naturally insulted us as we knew that our house was desirable as such because we had made it so and that any such place would soon take on the character of a whore house, a spot for drunks and the carousing of the more carousers in this outfit. We couldn't reason with them and the Major abused the boys by pulling his rank.

Our moving to #30 was completed this morning and immediately began scrounging to make the place livable. The windows are for the most part broken or missing so Tom Herb and I spent the majority of the day scrounging good for windows from the 155th area to replace ours. We also picked up some decent furniture to supplement that we already had. Bob and John Dwyer are sharing one room while I moved into an adjoining room with "Dirty" Dalton. The fellow got pissed little Sid Rosen drunk tonight at our bar in Kassel and he spun a staying spree until he spun in.

307

A wonderful thing happened today when an order came in to ship seven officers with over 175 points. Griffy, "Boogy" Lambert, "Joe" Weiberg, Sawyer, ~~and~~ MacCrea Lombard and one of the men from the old 155th were the men that left and Griffy and Lom. will be the only two that will be missed. It was surprising to learn how unanimous was the delight at Major McBoyle's departure. Everyone was in a noticeable good mood at his leaving and he left without saying goodby to any one. He was probably afraid of unpleasantries. The whole squadron breathed a sigh of relief when he left and now we have a baby made

308

What a strange character this Mc Cray was. Apparently he led a sheltered pampered boyhood as its quite evident he wasn't used to dealing with men. He came into the squadron as a 2nd Lt. at its inception and among those of the original outfit he was the type of individual that is merely tolerated. He had a damn good RO and thus had more "visuals" than any man in the history of the Sqn. Fifteen times his RO brought him up to "visuals" and fifteen times he shot at the enemy. Never once did he shoot down and it is doubtful if he ever had a bullet of his strike all that this seems impossible. He did, however, get credit for a victory