

London, The Norfolk House  
Saturday, Jan. 29, 1944

Operations again resumed on what appears at this time to be a much more promising basis than the past efforts. A not too busy day by most standards. Went to Hqrs 21st Army Group (BR) and talked air support to Col. Cole, A-3 IX AF. The time is opportune for us to get in our plan before the current thinking on overlord air support matters becomes crystallized. Several conferences during the morning with SAC staff members on airborne and troop carrier problems. With one week to go on this particular assignment my feelings upon imminent relief are mixed. Definitely mixed. This is a most difficult place unless one is committed to a staff career. A troop officer feels frustrated with the evident dearth of accomplishment despite the lengthy and profound conferences that take place. I like some aspect of it however. It has been particularly gratifying to get along so well with the British officers and at the same time accomplish so much. They have many fine professionally well qualified officers in their high commands. Had a long talk with Oldfield yesterday. Let us want to build up some publicity for the TCC pilots, we have got to convince them that they are tough people then maybe they will be. He told me of a movement afoot to write up a story for Colliers on me. Wm Courtney is to do the job, he is excellent. I am rather skeptical however of the merit of being written up as a jumping general, a glamor boy. In the long run it may do harm. Looking however to the days of peace to follow it may do little harm and much good to be well known. Return to a captaincy is not very promising for the next ten years. First news releases this morning on the Japanese treatment of the survivors of Bataan. It is interesting to conjecture why the War Dept. saw fit to release this information at this time. It is certain to stir up a wave of anti-jap feeling that might well upset the War Dept. plans to finish off Hitler first. For that reason, particularly since Mr. Eden released the news to the British simultaneously, it may be part of a well laid plan to solidly line up the British behind us in the Asiatic theatre after the end of this European mess. Seems a bit premature for that, yet why would it be released now? I do believe that the British will be behind us in Asia, perhaps not as intensely as for this local affair but that is entirely understandable. I wish to hell that tomorrow were D day. It is the waiting that is bothersome, not the fight itself.



London,  
Monday Jan. 31, 1944

Gen. Lee came up for lunch, this was followed by a conference with Col. Edwards at ETOUSA re the reorganization of the A/B units. The 507 is to be broken up, the 501st to the 101st and the 508 to the 82nd. Had a long talk with Gen. Lee re his plan for the Carentan operation. Sounded to me as though he was dissipating his division before ever getting it organized after landing. He has a difficult job ahead, really one that takes more experienced troops and troop leaders than he will have in the 101st. He is to come up today and we are to confer with G-3, First US Army at 1000. His mission at present does appear rather extensive. Talked to Gen Ridgway and Col. Eaton several times during the day. Hagan and Roy to come to London on Gen. R's staff. Appears as though Norton may go to Div. as G-3, about time. This is more and more becoming a parachute show despite our most intense efforts to get the gliders in. Called Gen Giles re packing buildings in the Grantham area, having difficulties. Went to Ciro's Saturday evening with Val. Yesterday noon took her and her mother to lunch at Barclay's,

London,  
Tuesday, ~~Jan~~ Feb. 1, 1944

Conference with Gen. Bradley and Gen. Lee in Gen Bradley's office at 1000. Gen. Lee concerned with the difficulties of his mission. Talked to him quite a bit about it. Didn't realize before how ideas from the last war carried into this one can be confusing. He is thinking in terms of a coordinated broad scale attack against an extremely vague German coastal position whereas nowadays the system in such a case is patrolling in force and then going thru the holes and mopping up. His mission is not an easy one, perhaps too difficult for his division as green as it is. Gen. Bradley is a good soldier, he knows the details of organization and equipment that only can be acquired through long familiarity with ~~it~~ them. I know of no enemies that he may have in the service, a most interesting case study. Conference in afternoon with Bagby on air support, troop carrier training standards etc. Conference with Schellhammer late in afternoon on reorganization. It appears to be more difficult of accomplishment on further study. Dinner at the Empire.



London  
Wednesday, Feb. 2, 1944

Several interesting but unimportant conferences in the AM on Overlord. Matter of terrain models was inquired about by SHAEF staff, called 101st and they said that they were going to send their own man to school and after training him make their own. Lunch at Chas. Lytle's, 24 Park Lane. Stag, some very nice civilians there including the chief of Scotland Yard, now WC Horwell, RAF. Conference on training at 1430. Arrived at a rather general but I believe satisfactory solution. Understand that the memorandum on "The Employment of Airborne Forces" is not being too well received, same rehash of Cir 113 etc etc. Dinner at Ciro's. Didn't sleep well, worried about lack of tangible accomplishment in office. I waste too much time. For many reasons it will be the thing for me to get back to the Div Prime Minister had a conference yesterday at which the matter of more air lift for Overlord was discussed. It shows the fine hand of Browning. Montgomery is back of him, or he had better be. It appears possible that more ships may be obtained and that the size of the American lift may be lessened to increase in the British lift. I do hope that the 82nd gets in, or that I get

London  
Thursday, Feb. 3, 1944

Conference with Bagby, McIntyre and MacPherson on the training program and SOP. Cleaned up a number of personal chores about the city in view of my coming relief. Called ETOUSA, order should be in today. Business here is slowing down, when enough officers are present to permit travelling to units to check training it should pick up. Maj. Roy reported in. He is to be the glider expert in the new section.



London  
Friday, Feb. 4, 1944

Maj. Roy to duty in AM. I left for CP 101st at 1000, arrived at 1200 in time for lunch. After lunch had a long conference with Gen. Lee and Higgins. He is concerned about his mission and well he might be, it is difficult to see how it can be worked out to the satisfaction of everyone with the means he will have. The probability of an increase in the British lift at the expense of the American lift becomes increasingly greater. Returned to Norfolk House in PM, Maj. Hagan for duty. Dinner at 82. Called Jack Thompson who has just returned from Algiers, lunch date for tomorrow.

London  
Sunday, Feb. 6, 1944

A very busy day what with getting Hagan and Roy started and getting cleared myself. Conference with Gen Bull and said good-byes. SOP and Training conferences to complete final drafts. This all finished. Called Gen Ridgway, he OKed my Sunday departure this may be impossible however. Dinner at Ciro's with Jack Thompson, Eil and Val. I am anxious to get back to the division although this has been an education.

Leicester, England  
Friday, Feb. 11, 1944

Sunday evening, referred to above, I received a call from Division directing me to go over as soon as possible. Difficulties of some sort in the 505. Left Heston field 0900 and arrived Langford Lodge 1300. Met Gen Taylor at the Ballyscullion house, he had just returned from Italy. The 505th troubles were AWOL, 60 in the regt of which 32 were in Vandervort's battalion, the 2nd. Gen Ridgway was particularly concerned because an inspection by the Div IG showed that there was apparently unfair treatment and that the situation could easily get entirely out of hand if it was not already so. Allegedly Vandervort was a martinet, the officers aloof and unapproachable, the men overworked, and punished for the offenses of others. Van was using his favorite mass punishment technique. I spent a day and a half around the regt, had several meals. Quite clearly it rests on Batcheller, inadequate and unforceful supervision of the



regiment. Gen Ridgway holds me closely responsible for the behavior of the regt since he feels that I brought it up and know it well. Batcheller is a headache, he can do the job, but it will take effort. Commanding a parachute regiment is quite a job, it never just happens, it must be commanded. Wednesday morning left for England, stopped by Half Penny Field at Kidderminster and called on CG of the VIII Corps Gen Reinhart. We are attached to that corps upon arrival in England. Had lunch with him and his staff. Arrived London at 1500. Sent letter to AEAF on packing shed requirements of us airborne troops and took Gen Ridgway to call on Gen. Browning at British AB Hqrs. Signed out and cleared flat at 2000. Had dinner at Val's flat and departed London at 0030 Thursday. Arrived Leicester at 0430 and after considerable searching found the 82nd CP area at Braunston Park at 0500. Slept until 0700 and then to work, there was much to do. Turner, G-3, left permanently for the hospital with ulcers. After a lot of preliminary conferring started around on a reconnaissance at 1100 visiting Stoughton, Scampton, Quarndon, Nottingham, and returning to the Div at 1600. There more conferring until 2000 at which time I was ready for some sleep. There is a great deal to be done if the division is to get in here with a minimum of confusion and get started on its training program. Training is the most serious problem, both the extent of it and the magnitude of the problems, and it is the one least well solved particularly because of Turner's denouement. The future shows promise of being very very busy, many headaches and much worry, lots of dissatisfaction. I hope our difficulties are appreciated by the higher ups, there will be many and we are starting late.

Leicester  
Feb. 12, 1943

Accompanied by Col. Pettit went over the 32 325 area to determine whether or not alternate billeting would be necessary in the case of that regiment. Decided not. Actually all of these units will be very well off compared to many of the camps that I have wintered in. Went to Cottesmore to check the interior construction in the division packing shed, an excellent hangar for that purpose. They are assembling, the RAF, Hamilcars in adjoining hangars now or we could easily get another hangar for brigade. Went to Grantham to Hqrs IX TCC.



Feb. 14, 1944

Had lunch with Gen Brereton and Giles. Brereton had just dropped in to apparently look things over. Talked to me and Col. Crouch a short while on pathfinder training. He is an unusual chap. Evidently quite smart but with it rather pompous and ~~opinionated~~ opinionated. It is difficult to obtain anything definite in the way of training plans from them at this time in view of Gen Giles impending relief. It is clear however that training even on the regimental scale must be coordinated with the Navy, RAF fighters, and Land Procurement people. Returned to the Div CP about 1700. Col. Weinick came in from Ireland, he is to be the Div G-3, a good choice although I would prefer to have someone with some practical parachute experience.

Leicester  
Sunday, Feb 13, 1944

Spent the morning visiting the billets and camps of the artillery and engineers. Some of the homes that the British have turned over to us for occupancy are lovely and have seen days of prosperity and gaiety. I wonder if they were not actually bankrupt or approaching that state when they turned them over to the government, actually they are castles of a size and inefficient arrangement that would preclude their economic maintenance. Back to camp by noon. Met Gen Ridgway who had just come in from London. It was good to see him and talk to him of our problems, I need an expression of confidence from him occasionally. It is after all his Div, he has positive and definite ways of running it, it is his staff, so despite my best of intentions and industry I feel at times that a word from him helps. He told me that Gen. Taylor would probably replace Gen. Lee who has been taken seriously ill. Since his replacement would very likely be junior to me I would at last feel like and actually be the Assistant CG. Sorry to lose Taylor. His presence in the Division was some guaranty of Gen Ridgway's availability for promotion to a Corps, I may be considered a bit young to take the Division by some people although I would give anything to get it. Spent the afternoon taking Gen Ridgway around to the different billets, he seems pleased with them. At the suggestion of the G-1 spent the night at the Grand Hotel in town. Called Val, makes one feel good. Aren't we fighting for blueberry pie?



Leicester  
Feb. 14, 1944

A late start, breakfast at the Grand, out to camp by 9:00. Visited the 325 camp to check its readiness it being the camp of most concern. All set. Talked training with G-3 in the afternoon. Drafted a swell schedule. All Bns to get a parachute actual lift proficiency test. I hope it works out. Each Prcht regt to get a CT lift in early April. G-3 agreed that the ideal A/B division, at present, would consist of three parachute regiments, with four glider arty bns, an AT and an AA Bn plus services. No glider infantry. Until we devise a better way to carry glider infantry they are not worth much to us airborne. It appears as though I am in for a very busy three months with little time to visit London.

Leicester  
Feb. 15, 1944

Checked the 505 and 325 camp, both are coming along in excellent shape especially the 505th. G-3 returned in the evening from IX TCC. Richards, the TCC A-3, is at times most difficult to work with. I presume that in any test of knowledge he would rate very high, he appears to be smart and quite competent as/ as boss but as a staff officer he is headstrong, opinionated and disloyal. Gen Williams who is to take over the IX TCC is due in any day now, he may change things around a bit. Anyway it appears as though we should be able to accomplish some excellent training. Dately I have felt a bit lost, what it is I want or whether I am just simply tired of all of this I don't know. It has been the attitude of the British to say, when we say anything about being tired of being away from our normal way of life so long, well, we have been at war four years. Being here with them now I realize that to them being at war is like being on WPA in uniform, except for the overseas armies. Even those they grant leaves and furlors to whenever possible. The people of ours, that must get fed up at times are the 45th and 3rd Divisions. They are in the Nettuno beachhead now. A young man doesn't give a damn, he has his whole life ahead of him and maybe opportunity lies right where he is, who knows? A middle aged man must have a home, family, and something to fight for besides himself, he realizes that there is little opportunity except for death or injury in his present vocation. An old man is out of place and if he is there at all it is because he knows nothing else and has no other choice and probably has followed the profession of arms all his life.



Leicester  
Feb. 15, 1944

This is no time to write this- but it is as good a time as any. It is now 7:45. I have just come from the mess having eaten in splendid solitude. Not an officer present. Not an office open. The Division closed in its billets and by now not a call has come in notifying Hqrs of their arrival. Yesterday had a conference with McRoberts and Wilkins to the TCC (Lno). They are ready to go ahead on our training, however the TCC A-3 declines to permit his unit to start planning until formal orders are received. Later in the day made a reconnaissance of the probable Bn test areas with G-3. It took all afternoon. Returned at the CP at 5:30 and there found Gen. R waiting to find out why A-3 of the TCC is putting us out of the necessary office and billet space at Cottesmore. After some sparks and phone calls we got nowhere and repaired to the Glebe house for dinner. I hate, actually hate, being treated as an incompetent. Despite the time and effort put into this job there is an unmistakable lack of trust, especially at times when it is most needed. This fast growing habit of officers putting their troops in tents and then getting themselves a fine house in a nearby village burns me up. At present every Regimental CO has himself a house while his troops are under canvas, then we wonder about accusations of officers being aloof, unapproachable and unsympathetic. I don't like the mud and rain anymore than anyone else but neither do the troops. Someone is losing their sense of values, maybe its perspective.

Leicester  
Feb. 16, 1944

Visited the 505th, 325th and Engrs in their new billets. Everyone doing very well, actually the billets are excellent. Pryamidal tents with stoves and board floors. Missen huts for offices and the dispensary. Kitchens and messes in large nissen hut type buildings. Lights in the offices and messes. Six men to a pryamidal tent. Walked home from the office for dinner, accompanied by Gen Ridgway. About 5½ miles, walked it in exactly one hour. Gen. R in a good humor. Had a feeling that at he would not have been displeased to find me faltering at his pace, he takes considerable pride in having walked many people off their feet. It is unfortunate in some respects and well in others that we are so god damn so much alike. Dissussed training after dinner, much to be done. He definitely arranged packing sheds at Cottesmore.



Leicester  
Saturday, Feb. 19, 1944 - 9:30PM

Thursday the 17th visited the area in the vicinity of Nottingham and picked what I am sure will be an excellent area for an A/B exercise. Called on Col. Chappel at Bottesford. He is CG of the 50th TC Wing and at the moment somewhat lost. Gen. Williams is needed very badly to get the IX TCC in hand. Returned to Div Hqrs at noon to lunch with Gen Ridgway and Maj. Gen. Harter local district commander, British. Being an old soldier he had some interesting tales to tell. After lunch accompanied him around on an inspection of some of his British units. Stopped by the CP of the British 4th A/B Brigade. Brigadier Harper commands it. Gen. Ridgway told me that I had to get to London without delay to attend a meeting at Bentley Priory early Friday morning. Left at 5:15 and arrived at Vals at 8:00. She had a date with Carl Hausauer. Called on her later, 2:00 to be exact. Attended the meeting at Hqrs AEAF conducted by AVM Leigh Mallory at 11:00. He wanted to discuss airborne operations with people who have had practical combat experience. He is to have a conference with Gen. Montgomery Monday and he wanted to be well fortified. It appears as though the entire A/B picture is to be revamped. There is some talk of an exclusive A/B show on the Brest peninsula. I am for that. Generally speaking there is a feeling that the proposed plans for employment of the A/B troops in the coming operations lack vision and boldness. As Gen. Butler put it, it is like having Michel Angelo paint a barn. AVM made no decisions nor commitments, merely discussed all aspects and encouraged arguments. The meeting ended at 1:00 at which time he took everyone to an excellent lunch in the same area. Upon returning to the CP Gen Ridgway told me that I would have to stay for another meeting ~~Friday~~ Saturday morning. Went to Ciro's with Val. Attended a meeting again at Bentley Priory on the subject of establishing a combined TCC - A/B operations room in the vicinity of Uxbridge. During the night had a good air raid, the best for me in London to date. Sixty planes came over, dropped mostly incendiaries. Discussed the appointment of an A/B officer to the SHAEF staff with Gen Ridgway. He is having a difficult time filling all of the requirements for high ranking A/B officers. I was glad that SHAEF wanted me and more glad that Gen. R refused. My future is with the division. Higgins may get the job. I feel much better about the whole picture. For a change I feel like working hard and bucking, it has been a long lay off. Gen Taylor's status still in doubt.



Leicester  
Sunday Feb. 20th

To work early this morning. A conference with G-3 on the training program followed by a conference with Gen R. Gen. R now has authority to qualify parachutists for the division staff which will help both personally and help the division. The situation is a most interesting one, many of them would like to get the pay and many of them have talked each other into how good the idea of being a parachutist is. The consensus of feeling is that we should have two categories, 1st regular qualified active parachutists and 2nd qualified parachutists except for pay. The latter would only take such instruction that would be necessary to permit them to enter combat with some chance of making it. This afternoon made a reconnaissance with G-3 of the training areas. Snowing and snow and ice on the ground, The first drops are going to be frightfully uncomfortable but I must participate in the first ones of the Bns and Regts.

Leicester  
Monday, Feb. 21st

Out on a training reconnaissance after a good nights sleep. Colder than hell, food for thought about the coming training, a hell of a time to spend nights in a fox hole. Awakened by the returning bombers. Quite a few over last night. Quite a few were over London also. Was calling Val when the alarm sounded. Picked an excellent area for the Bn tests and the division CPX and FX. The DZs are not too large and have a canal nearby but I hope all works out well. We have a terrific training program outlined. Visited the 505th in the afternoon, always enjoy seeing those kids again. They are beginning to look rather good. A few months of good training and they should be ready, or as ready as they can get. Dinner at the house with Col. Grubbs this evening. He is in charge of all colored AC troops in UK. Some Job. We had trouble with them down town last night. Everyone is scared to death of the riot potentialities of the situation. Our troops are touchy about the problem after Naples and tough enough to do something about it if anything starts, a bad combination.



Leicester  
Tuesday, Feb. 22nd

Several near riots in town last night. English people, especially the lower classes, do not discriminate in any way. In fact they prefer the company of colored troops. The colored troops have been in this community for almost a year and they are well entrenched. Many are living with local English women. With the advent of the white troops frays and minor unpleasant encounters have occurred in the local pubs and dance halls. American whites resent very much seeing a white woman in the company of a colored soldier. Here they almost see them in bed with them. Last night the 505th had its officer patrols armed. The negroes resented this alleging that the white officers intended to get them. A group of negroes broke into an arms storeroom secured arms stole a truck and headed for town. They were intercepted on the way by one of their own officers and taken back to camp thus avoiding what might have been a disastrous situation. Today I had conferences with the EBS PM, local SOS PM, SAF PM, plus anyone else interested. Placed Leicester off limits until further orders, had all unit COs make a shakedown for weapons and talk to their men personally. Now is no time to settle our racial problem. The attitude of the British is in many respects difficult to understand. Their treatment of colonials is deplorable yet they entirely mishandle the colored problem. They inflame it and run, yelling all the while, this is no way to do things in a democracy. Visited our packing sheds in Cottesmore. They will have chutes ready for the Bn tests and the jump school. The colored problem took most of the damn day. Received several Xmas packages.

Leicester  
Feb. 23, 1944

Presented the local colored situation to General Ridgway. He went to work on it this morning. Little can be done at the moment but talk and let the situation simmer down. Took Norton and Batcheller to the problem area and showed them the DZs. They were rather enthusiastic in their approval. Looks like an excellent exercise, and damn good test problems for the Bns. This afternoon visited the 325 training. Coming along OK. A steady appearing regiment, probably never will fight with the élan and dash of the parachute regiments but can be counted upon for a steady fight. Conferred with Gen R for a few minutes.



on the present state of the operational planning. He attended a conference yesterday at which Gen. Bradley and the British army commander outlined their requirements for the use of airborne troops to Gen. Montgomery. Air Marshall Leigh Mallor dissented recommending another use. Montgomery backed the army commanders and firmly set the mission for the 101st. The British are to get 200 C-47s which they estimate will be enough to lift one of their brigades. Next the 82nd was told that its mission on the western side of the peninsula was being firmly set and that very likely that would be it. We are to plan accordingly. Gen R hopes to get in all four regts. I am afraid that further study will indicate the impossibility of getting in that many gliders. It will be an interesting mission and a hell of a tough one. Any kraut no matter how dumb he is surely realizes the importance of that bottleneck. The present count of divisions in Western France is 53. Last month it was 24. That shows better than anything else what is happening on the Russian front. To an unbiased observer it must appear at this moment as though the Germans are preparing to invade UK rather than the reverse. They even have an A/B division at Rheims. Some day we are going to get kicked off a beachhead, lets hope that it is not this time. That would be disastrous for the A/B troops. Val is a problem but grand.

Leicester  
Feb. 24, 1944

Up at 4:30 and out to see the 3rd Bn 505th perform. Wrong coordinates so much time was lost. Returned at 10:00. Several conferences on training with G-3, Gen R, Gen Howell. Gen R said this evening that he was going to keep the Brigade intact and employ it as a brigade in combat, this certainly was a surprise. He still hopes to get four regiments in. He said that if there were a mission for 2 para regts he would send the brigade. A bit of a change and a screwy set up. Contacted IX TCC and 50th Wing and 438th Group re training. Things are shaping up. The Brigade is finding reasons already why they cannot take the training tests. Ran home in 49 min. tonight, ran and walked. Getting back on the beam, its about time. Lewis suspects that I will inherit the division and he is becoming quite ornery, it will work out.



Leicester  
Feb. 25, 1944

A conference at Langar Field with Col. Chappel, CG 50th Wing, and Lt. Col. Donaldson, CO 438th Grp. They will not be able to meet our training schedule starting Mar 1st. Instead they hope to be ready to drop at night by Mar 5th, even this is optimistic I believe. Gen. Hal Clark of the 52nd Wing here for lunch. Had a nice talk with him. Our units have a great deal of confidence in each other, personal friendship of officers goes a long way to establishing confidence among units. A staff meeting at which the initial directive for "Curveball" was put out. I suspect that I have never properly appreciated the donor of the books and sweater that came today. It is so good that I am busy, the minute that things slow down I become introspective, restless and unhappy as hell.

Leicester  
Feb. 26, 1944

Called Val, a bit like old times in London, worried some and awakened at 5:30, couldn't sleep. Up to Langar Field to the 438th Grp for a reconnaissance of the DZs. Looked satisfactory. Millet and Lindquist in for an inspection of their Nottingham areas, good to see them again. Sounds as though Lindquist has a good regiment. There will be lots of bad feeling if Millett must be relieved, I wish that someone had had the moral courage to relieve him before he had come this far. They came by the house for dinner. Snowing tonight. I have felt very much alone the past few days, a general officer in one of our divisions is a lonely person. The juniors can all frequent the local pubs, meet people, have some fun, but not the generals. It gets to be a tough proposition, at times Val is a life saver. Taylor went to London today to take over the AB section in SHAEF. It is expected that he will shortly get the 101st, Gen. Lee's division. A long time ago I had figured out that the place for me at this stage of the game was on higher staff. That may have appeared correct at that time but it seems as clear as can be that the place for me now is with this division. I am certain that Bradley will give Ridgway a corps soon. I may be fortunate enough to get the Division although I will certainly be rather young and there will be lots of clamoring for it. I do not ever want to jump and fight the division for anyone else. I am getting tired of the prospects of an A/B general, certainly for someone more.



Leicester  
Feb. 27, 1944

Called at 1:30 and all was superwell, so pleased could hardly go back to sleep. A conference with Gen Ridgway in the war room, the first. Our mission is becoming increasingly firm. For the first time today he said that I would go in with the parachute mission. So here we go again. I feel really like I would like to raise hell for the next couple of months until target date. This A/B general is like nothing else in the service. You have all of the hell and dangers of any paratrooper, yet you cannot raise hell and get the worry out of your system. The mission does not look too bad. The German continues to build up, taking from the Russian front. Since we are depending on the 101st for relief I am not expecting too much. I wish that it were an older outfit. We may be cut off for four or five days. That will be a long, nasty hard fight. That is my present job, to get ready for it. Training is coming along but not well enough. The next week or so will show a lot.

Leicester  
Feb. 28, 1944

Accompanied Gen R to Hqrs IX TCC at Grantham. About an inch of snow here, at least a foot at Grantham, countryside beautiful. Now I know where they get those superbeautiful pictures for calendars etc., quaint buildings, church spires, snow laden evergreens, clusters of brick houses. From Grantham went to Cottesmore to call on Gen. Clark, CG 52nd Wing. A very nice visit. As a result to both calls we reached a good understanding of our mutual problems. Gen. Williams will of course do everything in his power to help us. We need A/B training badly. His groups are not ready to fly nine ship group formations yet. Studied the operational area some more. I like the looks of our mission in many respects. We should not, with a bit of luck, meet too much resistance upon landing. We can accomplish our mission for a day or two, that is a certainty. My only worry is when we will be relieved. With only two divisions hitting the beaches, one to be exact and one A/B, I hardly see where they can come to our rescue soon. Fortunately we have Gen Bradley in command, I am sure that he would not sacrifice us. Anyway someone has got to do the job. I hope in some respects that this is the last of this type for some time. We should pick better spots, resistance upon landing and intensely thereafter is curtains for many.



Leicester  
March 1, 1944

Trip to the 505th to check training, 8in of snow has hindered them considerably. Several conferences on training. Draw up an outline defense for the combat area. With a bit of luck that should be a good mission. I am sweating out a bit going into it. The likelihood of encountering hostile resistance during the landing and reorganization phase is greater there than it should be. Still if we get away with we know that it will probably be our worst. Had an idea so went into London for dinner. Forgot that it was Feb. 29th. Dinner at Josefs. Left here 5:15pm, returned 4:00am.

Leicester  
March 1, 1944

Went up to Langar to confer with Lt. Col. Doneldson, CO 438th Group. He will be able to fly us Sunday night, evening rather, he does not feel equal to a night drop yet. Back to division, accomplished little actually. I will be happy as hell when this show finally comes off, the waiting is worse than the fighting. The cold weather does not help things much. Batcheller and Alexander received word today that they were to receive the British DSO for their work from Naples to the Volturno with the 505th. I am very glad to see them get it.

Leicester  
March 2, 1944

An extra full nights sleep and off to a busy day. A trip to East Leicester airfield to call on Group Capt. Venter, CO, then out on the field to observe the Horsa glider activities. Went aloft for a ride, my first glider ride, and enjoyed it very much. Callen on Co. Kingston local British district CO, not in his office. Had a meeting of all Infantry unit COs at 1400 hour. Outlined the training program for the coming two months and discussed some of the training points to be emphasized in order to point our training towards our combat mission. This is the most interesting phase of training, we are beginning to see what the future holds for us, the men take their training more seriously. We are endeavoring to lay particular stress on defense against German armor. We lost Gorham that way, and we will lose more. Now is the time to drive home the proper techniques. Also AA and A/B defense. The decisive A/B battle is fought on the ground of the A.B commanders selection, there are no retrograde movements.



Leicester  
March 4, 1944

Out to observe a battalion problem staged by the 2nd Bn 505. Back at 9:00. Gen. Ridgways birthday. Sherry and coffee with cake in the office, quite nice. He was leaving for London so things had to be done that way. Inspected 3rd Bn 505 in the afternoon in connection with its proficiency test many shortages. Strange thing and one that most of us have long since learned and that is that a unit commander will repeatedly profess complete equipment and weapons status for his unit yet a showdown will show up many many deficiencies. There is no substitute for a combat load showdown and proficiency test. The competition and pressure always brings out the real stuff. The British have an Ordnance Corps school in Leicester. Last evening they had Gen. Taylor, Col. Weinicke, and myself to dinner

Leicester  
March 5, 1944

Val called at 1:30, that helps. Up at 1:45, left at 2:30 for Langar with Gen Ridgway. Arrangements at the take-off field ran smoothly. Stations at 5:10, take-off 5:45, drop 7:00. One of the best drops that I have seen. An interesting experience to drop in snow. I still wonder what in the hell I am doing in this business. Krause is handling his battalion much better, could be gotten feady in very short order. He is still a most interesting case. I do not believe that he would stand up long in sustained combat, he still appears to be very emotionally unstable at times. Returned at 11:30, chow and off to Cottesmore to a meeting with Gen. Clark and staff re the 507-508 drops. Appears to be shaping up satisfactorily. These weekends are hard on me. Little work is done, but I am invariably tied up, I would really like to get away for a day or two.

Leicester  
March 7, 1944

Most of the day spent close to the office. Visited the 325 on the range. Continued to investigate the malfunction in Sunday's drop. Static line broke, at this point it appears as though the government has been sold inferior materials for static lines. Pushing the investigation this morning. Last evening had the first staff conference on Overlord. G-2 and



G-3 presented their estimates. We are all in agreement on what ground we will attempt to hold. It will include St. Sauver Vicomte extending to the west to include all of the woods five miles west of the town. Efforts will be made to block the neck of the corridor by advancing from our base. Provided, the german is not occupying the area in force it will be a grand mission. If he is there waiting it will be a hell of a fight from the time the first feet hit the ground. If we can only have an hour or so to get organized everything will be OK. Val called at 9:00, been trying since 7:00, to tell me that I am to be promoted to Maj. Gen. Said that she had heard it and that Johnny Richards had seen a cablegram. Her dope allegedly came directly from Gen. Bradley. Wouldn't convince her that she was in error. She was going to Ciro's was to call when she returned but didn't. That would really be an impossible situation, I should realize it even though bias

Leicester 2100  
March 7, 1944 2221

A lazy day about the office. Checked the annexes for the Div. Field Exercise. Inspected the 1st Bn 505th. Maj. Kellam although definitely under a cloud is doing a fine job. It is of course impossible to tell just how well he will do in combat but he is trying like hell and getting results now. Under the circumstances it is impossible to reclassify him, that is what Gen R wants. Ran home in 43½ minutes, not good enough. Olson ran along. Gen R was very badly stove up after our last jaunt. Sometimes it is difficult for a formerly active man to realize that he is aging, I expect to have the same difficulty myself.

Leicester  
March 9, 1944 0800

Over to the 325 for a talk with Lewis in the AM, the way he bounces about since Gen. Ridgway talked to him is embarrassing, well almost. He dislikes the Horsa glider, still expects to have his Regt go into combat, I don't know who will tell him that it can't. Attended a P/JM conference in the afternoon. Then over to Nottingham to the 507 camp at Tollerton, and the 508 camp at Wolloston. They are lovely sites, formerly



castle grounds of some of the local rather small bore royalty. In the evening went to a Division Officers dance, had a very nice time although made no connections. This general's rank is awkward a an affair like that, you can never tell when people are being nice because of your grade or really because they like you and have some interest in you. The division is now directly under VII Corps for supply, all planning etc. Looks like the final o, the A/B section in London, just as well.

Leicester

March 10, 1944 0745

Went to Bradgate Park to a British battlecourse, 325 firing. Too much exposure over open ground to be reasonable. Problem jump last night had to be called off, fog and limited visibility. We will stage it tonight. Gen Taylor back from London, his assignment to command the 101st is evidently set. It will be interesting to see how it works out. He is smart and capable but better suited to one of the many war commissions being formed. Looks like I will not see V Saturday afternoon. There is no one who can cause me such damn concern and discomfort at the moment, this must be corrected.

Leicester

March 11, 1944 0815

A rough twenty-four hours, a dilemma, what in the hell is the answer. Checked in at Langar and had lunch with the 1st Bn 505th. Kellam looks not too good yet it is difficult to put your finger on what his trouble is, he just does not appear sure of himself. The battalion looks good. The morale and attitude of the 505th is at its best. Had to call off the drop of Kellam's battalion on account of weather, most unfortunate. Just arranged with Gen R to go to London today.

Leicester

March 13, 1944

Left at 1:30, arrived 82 Portland Place 4:00. Visited US A/B Hqrs and talked to Ireland and Michealis. Procured my liquor ration. Met Val at Park West at 6:00. Went to Ciro's for dinner. Brunch at 11:00 Sunday and off for Leicester at 1:30. A perfect weenend. I sincerely hope and pray that we can work this out and what is most important that after working it out we get along well and Val is not unhappy away from her home, friends, way of life and standard of living. This latter is the most serious problem.



Leicester

March 14, 1944 0815

A 325 exercise, Bn proficiency test in the amand pm. A 40 mph wind in the evening so the 505 test had to be called off. A very busy day, Gen Taylor's orders to the 101st came in in the evening morning. Sorry to lose him in many ways although it gives me an opportunity that I hope to be able to make the most of. A cocktail party for him at the Glebe Mt house at 5:30. ~~Everything looks so good now, this training and waiting period that I so disliked doesn't look so bad. I feel now that I will get through the next fight, I certainly want to.~~

Leicester

March 16, 1944 0745

Val called, out on a trip for four or five days. Called last night from Bristol. The test of the 2nd Bn 505th was held on the 14th. Drop and A/B planning OK, execution of the ground phase unsatisfactory. I am ready to recommend the relief of Col. Batcheller. We cannot take him into combat in command of a regiment. I still remember his action at Biazza ridge and the day prior thereto. Now the regiment is going definitely sour, morale is slipping and the attitude of the officers, especially the higher ranking ones is not what it should be. Inspected the 507 and 508 Bns taking the test yesterday. Their new equipment looks wonderful, I forgot that there was such nice new stuff. If they fight as well as they are equipped we have nothing to worry about. There are times when I have enough this eager newness on newly arrived noncombatants. They all want to get shot at and many of them will be much the worse for having been shot at I am afraid.

Leicester

March 16, 1944

Visited the Bns at Cottesmore and Barkeston Heath, they are taking the tests. Both looked good. The 507 and 508 look better to all appearances right now than the 505th. I spoke to General Ridgway this evening about relæving Batcheller ~~this evening~~, recommended Ekman to take his place. That is a tough spot to step into for Ekman but I am sure that he can handle it. It would be disastrous to continue counting on Batcheller, I have never told anyone of his behavior in Sicily, neither on D day nor at Biazza. I had hoped that he could do the job when put on his own. ~~Everything looks so good now, this training and waiting period that I so disliked doesn't look so bad. I feel now that I will get through the next fight, I certainly want to.~~



Leicester

March 18, 1944 0800

It hardly seemed like St. Patrick's Day, nary a drunk nor a speck of green. The Irish are rather unpopular at the moment. Went up to Grantham where we laid on the 8 group lift. It should be a big show. Checked the CPX in the afternoon, not working too well. Weinicke's greatest trouble has always been that he is inclined to do all of his G-3ing in the office. Went to Cottesmore at 11:00 pm, jump called off on account of weather, ground fog. Too bad. Will make it today, in daylight if necessary. Called Val at 10:00, not in, supposedly out to Widewing.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I do feel that it has its compensations. Spent some time in the war room. That coupled with a talk that I had with A-3 of the 9th TCC just about convinces me that we are making our main effort in the wrong place. Surely the high command will shift. Here he is making his main effort where the kraut is strongest, it is so basic and obvious. The Balkans is the place, I would not be a bit surprised if we went there. If we do this big build up for a second front into France is being done very well, for my money it is being over done that is why I am becoming suspicious of it. The German now has 56 divisions in there, one the 243rd, in our landing areas. It should be a rat race to end all rat races.

Leicester

March 19, 1944 0900

Bns of the 507th and 508th jumped operation curveball at 1600 yesterday. Called the thing off at 2130 and 2200. An well carried out exercise. It is refreshing to work with troops fresh from America, enthusiastic, and anxious. They listen and hang on to every word and as far as I could observe try to do exactly as they are told. The Battle hardened veteran of the 505th are by now a bit calloused. The 507 and 508 appear to lack the technical proficiency of the 505th but what they lack they more than make up for in their zeal and interest in doing the correct thing. They will do all right. Called Val at 1030 pm, she was just calling me. Will try to get down for her mother's birthday.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Critiques at 1000 and 1100 this am. Looks like a busy Sunday, we need more busy days.



Leicester

March 20, 1944 1100

Critiques at the 507 and 508 in am, conference with Gen R on Overlord at 1300. He is getting firm ideas on how he wants to carry out our mission. Still looks like a hell of a mess, but if it must be done it will be done. The current favorite idea is to drop the parachutists of both divisions ~~xx~~ during the night of D-1 and reinforce them with glider essentials at dawn. Neither division would get

Leicester

March 21, 1944 1000

A much brighter day today. Went to London Sunday evening. On the return somewhere an hour and a half out of London the car chugged and came to a dead stop - out of gas. What a mess finally begged, for a pound, two gallons from a civilian truck driver that got as far as Lutterworth here we found two US sailors asleep in a GI truck and they gave us enough to get us to Leicester by 0500. To work at 0700 and so it was a full day. Conference on the subject of refusals at Brig Hqr at nine. Gen R stated that each refusal would be handled on its own merits, that old recurrent injuries that subjected an oldtimer to jumping jitters would be grounds for transfer to a quieter unit, non-jumping, that obvious refusals to avoid hazardous combat duty would be tried by general CM and the maximum punishment meted out of them. Cases from Africa were cited wherein the sentences ranged from 6 to 20 years. Returned to Brig to inspect their test Bns at 1:30pm. Met Gen R in the war room at 5:00 for further conferences on the coming operation, at this second it does not look too bad. He drew up a plan that was again read at Glebe House at 2100. So all in all it was a full day. Conferred with Col. Hunt of a Lt Tnk Bn at 1100. He is going to bring us some Lt Tanks for training in April. Endeavored to arrange accommodations for at one of the nicer local hotels for the 505th Prop Blast. Impossible to find any. A very nice birthday party for Mrs. Came. Gen. Lewis and Lovett were there. A nice family although at times the old lady is painful. She likes to pick up the girl and draw them out in front of company, a natural state of affairs of a proud mother I suppose. This is the first day of Spring. One would never know it from observing the local conditions of weather. It is improving a bit, still damp and at times colder than hell. Wish that we were either fighting or going. Complicates matters to stick around one place or community for too long. Either home or at war, the combination is pleasant but hardly satisfactory.



Leicester

March 22, 1944 0745

Stayed close to the office all day and cleaned up some problems and letters. Drew up the FO for operation Sidecar. It looks like a good show, scheduled for the 1st-2nd and will involve 3 Prcht Regts not to mention Gen Bradley, Air Marshall Leigh-Mallory etc. It follows very closely the A/B plan for Overlord. As a result of a conference that Gen R had in London yesterday it appears as though we might go in the night of D-1. I like that, I am getting anxious as we get closer. Things are shaping up in definite form, I fully expected a big change or two in our planning by now, I'll find myself going out of the door over Cherbourg muttering "I'm sure we are going to the Balkans" Called Val and definitely arranged for a billet at The Flying Horse in Nottingham for the Prop Blast.

Leicester

March 23, 1944

A phone call from Val at 0830, cocktails by the Division staff at the Glebe Mt. house at 645 and a nice dinner at 700pm. Went out to the 507 and 508 night drop at 9:30 pm. They hit on schedule and hit their DZs, despite this unusual good fortune by daylight they had not yet organized their defense nor dug their men and weapons in. Neither Regt CO appeared all day. Called the exercise at 2:00 this afternoon. It worries me, they are not ready to take on the combat mission that Gen R is lining up for them. He believes that they are. There is so much to be done. The officers are dogging. Col. Timmes Bn in the 507 has the worse attitude that I have encountered in many a day, what to do? More and tougher training, chop off the worse heads, put the heat on where it will do the most good. Our combat commitment with these people is a woofy.

Leicester

March 24, 1145

A long talk with Gen re the state of training of the two regiments. He will quite probably reclassify Millett before we are through. Lazy, soft, indolent, lacking leadership necessary for combat. McKellam is to go now. All good changes if we are to be combat effective. Talked to Capa of Life this morning, he is to take a jump course and go in with us. I am very glad, excellent for the morale for the troops to know that they are to get press coverage, especially parachute troops. They are glory hunters. Looking forward to the visit of Val.



Leicester

Friday

March 26, 1944 0900

Val arrived 1500 ~~Saturday~~ afternoon. Went to the 505th Prop Blast ~~Saturday~~ evening. It was frightful, I was a bit ashamed of the entire performance. Nothing was organized. The prop blast ceremony was slighted if not overlooked, they forgot the toast to the former members whom we have left buried in foreign soil, there was no food worthy of the name, the girls were terrible with few exceptions and the drunken condition of some of the officers and their dates was deplorable. I was very sorry that Val was present, it was certainly not a part worthy of being a regimental affair. Val was wonderful about it all. Planned a drop last night had to call it off on account of the weather and bombing missions to Berlin.

Leicester

March 27, 1944 0800

A conference with Gen. R re the probability of our mission being called off because of German occupation in strength of the area we plan to land in. This, if it happens, may make it necessary for us to drop nearer the 101st or not drop at all. Lunch with Val and in the afternoon walked in Abbey Park. A very lovely afternoon. Left for the DZs at 2000 and returned at ~~22~~ 2300. Exercise called off on account of ground fog. This is it, the first reason I have had to return from the war.

Leicester

March 28, 1944 0800

A conference at Cottesmore with Gen Clark re the conditions of weather necessary for flying. We are getting farther and farther behind in our training. Jumped the Bns of the 507 and 508 at 1500. Not what we wanted but the best that we could get. Killed one lad in the 507. Appeared as though he may have made a faulty exit, in addition, unfortunately, he had placed a wooden paddle in his chute, evidently home made for tucking in the flaps and it got caught in the chute, after falling with the main about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the way out for a hundred feet he pulled his reserve. It went right up into the main and didn't open out so he came in. Regrettable. The Bns taking the test looked much better yesterday. It is suprising what a little help applied in the right places will do. Human beings never change we all need a little checking up on every now and then. I wish sometimes that there was someone checking up on me a bit more closely.



Leicester  
March 29, 1944 0800

Attended the 507 and 508 critiques yesterday. Millett bitching as usual about anything he can find to bitch about.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Yesterday I had some heated words with the IX TCC staff re the coming operation Sidecar. They say that they occasionally put out orders arbitrarily stating what we will do or where we will land, and their too frequent condescending attitude makes me wonder of the future. It is definite in their minds that there will be a separate air force after the war, I am in agreement with them that there should be. They also are of the opinion that the airborne troops should be part of the air force and not the ground forces, and in this I am in agreement with them. Right now it is clear that our place may be in the ground forces but with the development that is certain to come in both the airborne forces and the air force it is clearly the proper thing to do, i.e. look ahead and put the airborne troops and the Troop Carrier in the same organization and command. Considering all of this I wonder then of our future role, certainly in peacetime it should not be doing guard duty, KP, boards, courtmartials, PX Off., and all the nasty administrative jobs for the air corps. If the airborne troops are to be the step children of the air forces I ~~xt~~ want no part of it, nor does any other parachutist, we are not built that way. But the question ~~xt~~ arises, is the best and most promising future in the airborne troops even if they are in the air force, or in the ground forces? Everyone knows the answer but I can foresee a life of struggle and dissatisfaction. I'll never be a hind tit for anyone nor will any parachutist.

Leicester  
March 30, 1944

Day spent around Hqrs getting the details of sidecar arranged. Gen. Williams and Col. Crouch came over in the afternoon to talk TCC organization to fit our organization for both Sidecar and Overlord. Gen. Ridgway has an axe over them. I am uncertain of what it is but they have a great deal of respect for his wants. I believe that his action in the Gen. Dunn case in Africa put the fear of God into them. Gen R told me that I would command the Precht Task Force of the 82nd in Overlord.



Leicester

March 31, 1944 1000

A day of final reconnaissance of the Sidecar DZs. Looks rather good from the DZs. Just found out that I am to jump in it so I hope that they are OK, I would certainly hate to crack an ankle at this stage of the game. Weinicke doing a very poor job at G-3 at the moment. He has an odd and most unusual faculty for shirking work and at the same time polishing the CGs apple enough to lead him to believe that he is doing everything. I am ashamed of the tactics of this coming affair. I hope that the administrative aspects of it work out. We could have serious trouble.

Leicester

April 1, 1944 0745

April Fool's Day. Twenty years in the army today. It seems like a long time. As soon as the war is ended I should take a four months vacation, wear civies, get a civilian job, and get away from it all. Would like to go to West Africa. -The show for tonight is all set. I am not to jump now unless Gen. Ridgway decides not to jump, in which case I will. The keeping of diaries has been forbidden by SHAEF. Also all overnight passes and leaves will be stopped as of April 5th. Seems a bit early. I would not be a bit surprised to see a change in target date for overlord. The situation over there remains essentially unchanged the past few weeks, still 54 divisions. The Russian pressure in the Balkans is helping. If we could get the Southern France front opened a week or two before our effort that would help too. It is certain to be a hot place. I have been busy selecting the DZs. That does bring it close. They look good except for the prospects of immediate hostile interference. It is going to be a rough fight.

Leicester

April 3, 1944 0800

Saturday devoted almost entirely to a tour of all of the Sidecar takeoff airdromes. Took from 1000 until 1900. Everyone in satisfactory bivouacs. The new regiments feel a bit imposed upon so it will prove a good experience for them. Weather bad so the exercise had to be called off, Sunday also. Received a call from Val Sunday morning informing me that I had won a case of whiskey at a charity affair at Claridge's Saturday evening. Not being there I went down yesterday to pick it up. It had been moved from the hotel so Val will pick it up for me.



This weather at this time is most unfortunate. The entire parachute force of the division is at takeoff airdromes sweating out what now amounts to threedays of rain, so far. Yesterday the division's tentative outline plan for overlord was drafted. I am to be given the parachute taskforce going in the night of D-D plus 1. Gen Ridgway follows with the glider force at daylight. It shows great promise for interest. It will be very exciting and a wonderful opportunity. With a break we will go to town although I wish that the new regts had a bit of experience. We will be hit shortly after landing and during landing, of that I am quite certain. I am worried about Val, she is a wonderful person.

Leicester

April 4, 1944

Visited each regimental headquarters. They are all taking much better care of themselves now, it has been a good thing for them. The problem had to be postponed another 24 hours. Worked some on operational planning. It is shaping up well. Gen. R visited Col. Mendez Bn at Barkston Heath. Mendez evidently had something nice to say about my critique of several days ago, since Gen R was pleased I was doubly pleased. It is not very often these days that he shows many evidences of pleasure with what I am trying to get done. This is an odd job, Asst CG, there are none of the accomplishments nor the satisfaction that comes with a well handled troop command. One is somewhat of a whipping boy and axe man as well as general supervisor. If the Asst CG does not get along well with the C/S and the staff things would be in a hell of a mess. Anyway I have never had the feeling of solid accomplishment that I occasionally experienced in the 505th. Only in combat will that come I suppose. Although even that is problematical. I may if I am fortunate get the division.

Leicester April 5th

An all night problem, Sidecar, involving the flight and a drop of three regiments (Prcht). 136 of the C-47s not accounted for at daylight. They scattered to all points of the compass, landed all over UK. Those that jumped did not do too badly. The present pathfinder equipment helps. The 508<sup>th</sup> looks fine, the 507 not too well. Millett may yet have to go. That will be hard on me but it may have to be done. Very tired, no sleep last night.



Leicester April 7th 1700

Left yesterday afternoon at 1600 for London arriving 82 Portland Place at 1830. Went to Ciro's for dinner at 2100, returned 2400. Left for Newbury at 0715. Gliders loaded and marshalled for takeoff but weather kept them grounded. Despite this the troops got a great deal of good out of the exercise. Combat will tell us a lot about our glider capabilities. Talked to Jack Thompson for a bit at Ciro's, he was escorting some girl whom he kept referring to as "Lady" with some emphasis on the lady. Americans put such great stock on a title, and some of the dogs that pass off for royalty make for quite a mess. Very disappointed to find Val such a scold as she was last night. I am so anxious that this be entirely OK and workable, it is so disheartening and discouraging, and most disappointing, what to do? I don't know the answer. I want -

Leicester April 10th 1600

The evening of the 7th I was called to London by Gen Ridgway at 1900, arrived down there at 2200 for a conference on personnel matters. Gen R of the opinion that Billingslea could be gotten up to take over the 507th which I heartily endorsed. What to do with Raff still a question, I neither want him now or if I had the division. I went down to Newbury Saturday after spending the night at the Dorchester in London. Glider training organized and I returned to London at 1800. Dinner and billets and breakfast at 82 Portland Place. Talked over Thursday night with Val. Perhaps that sort of attitude can be avoided in the future. Returned to Newbury early Sunday morning the 9th, glider took off at 1600 and landed at 1900. I called on Gen WC Lee in the hospital at Hermitage. He left in the afternoon for America. A most difficult farewell, he has done a great deal for A/B troops. His heart was set on taking his division into combat. I called Gen Ridgway by phone and he told me that Gen Hodges was to be present today, 10th, and for me to be at the Glebe Mount house at 0700 this morning. Came directly back and arrived at Leicester at 2200. Thus missing an opportunity to spend a few hours with Val. Later I will regret it but at the moment this war is getting quite serious. After about one more fight I can see where I will not be worth a damn between fights, even now I am not worth much, the old soldiers are all the same, it is very difficult to keep up the pressure when you know what is in store. This afternoon Gen Ridgway gave me for comment a letter that Gen Howell sent him recommending the retention of Millett as regimental commander of the 507th. Too bad that we are at



odds. I no doubt am making many enemies in this army by refusing to retain or condoning the retention of inefficient unit commanders. I cannot see any other course. Many lives are at stake, If a unit commander does not have it I do see how in the world I can keep him. I have been a bit ruthless and have hurt many people but I have had many people killed too. Biazza Ridge should not have been fought as it was. Hagan was responsible for the plan of attack there. There will be many snafu affairs in the 507 as long as Millett is in command of it. This is a vicious system. It will turn against the hatchet man if he is not careful. If you do nothing many lives will be lost needlessly and your unit will not function satisfactorily, you may or may not be relieved of your own command. If you kick a man out you make many enemies lose lots of friends and certainly make no new ones. I wish the god damn war was over and I were back to blueberry pie.

Leicester April 11th

Time flies. An interesting talk with Gen. Hodges. He is to command the American First Army. Bradley is to move up to the FUSAG. Hodges commanded a battalion in the last war. His tactical ideas are quite good, some of them I wish I had heard ten years ago. He appears to be quite old to be an active field commander. I believe that Ridgway gets impatient with his slowness in getting about. A conference with Ridgway last night re Millett's relief. It looks as though he may take him into this first fight. Poor Zier is in a hell of a sweat and I am sorry as hell for him, an officer should stay away from a high troop command unless he is especially fitted for it and supremely confident. The SOS also needs thousands of good officers.

Leicester April 12th 1200

Spent the morning in the office catching up on papers. Went to a pay drop for the 456 FA in the afternoon then to brigade bazooka firing west of Nottingham. Returned by 5:30, some time in the war room and then to the Glebe Mt house. I still am unable to adapt myself to this Division staff setup. Nothing is ever done at night, or rarely. Everyone quits and goes home about 5:00.

Leicester April 13, 1944 1200

Visited the tank training at Strawberry Hills. Most beneficial, just what these lads need. Had lunch with Vandervort, he is a good soldier. I hope that I can someday repay him for his fine Sicilian job. His battalion will do well in its next fight.



On the return trip Weber hit another car. Most unfortunate. Not exactly his fault but I believe that he could have avoided it. He has been throwing his weight around a bit behind the star. This car just didn't move over and the right fronts tangled. It annoys the hell out of me. A bad thing to have happen. I am sure that Gen Ridgway does not like it and it will certainly cause a lot of tongue wagging. This being a general is most painful at times. The brigade had two Bn jumps last night. Both did a nice job of reorganization despite the poor performance of the air corps. This matter of the air corps just simply not delivering is much more serious than most of us will admit. If we have another Sicily in France I am going on record as strong as I am able to. We have got to have better pilots, if necessary bomb trained pilots. Hit a low I guess. Val called. Bagby came in and wanted to change the operational plan so as to use the entire TC lift the night of D day preferably by lifting the entire 82nd and part of the 101st. Gen Ridgway asked the purpose of his visit and when I told him he was very sharp and critical about the thing. I felt that he was showing some resentment because of the car crackup. Perhaps not. This Asst Div Comdr is a hell of a job. Actually one can do nothing except in this division there is a training responsibility that at times becomes very confused between Brigade, G-3, and myself

Leicester April 14, 1944

A conference with Maj. Forward of IX TCC at which the DZs tentative were selected. Looks rather good. Returned to Glebe Mount earlier than usual and got an hours sleep before dinner. Talked to Gen. Ridgway for a few minutes. If I were on my toes I would stop in and talk to him regularly and have a drink with him before dinner. I have a hell of a time making myself do this but I know he likes it. He called Andy March and myself in for a drink. Talked Overlord. We are to have lots of artillery and TD. Bradley is giving us everything. I am positive that this generosity is based upon our work for him in Sicily. He certainly came to my rescue there and we did a job for him. I know he went over our position later at Biazza Ridge and I suppose saw the graves. These lads will fight and more than that clean up if given half a chance and the means. We get a TD BN, and SP Arty Bn; an Armd Recon Trp, a Recon Plat, and 155 support. The softening up is well underway. The kraut still moves about at night quite freely however, I have no illusions about that.



Leicester April 15, 1944

The 15th of April, time is flying. Visited the 0505th for the first time since Eckman took over. Shaping up very nicely. The area and regiment is showing improvement. Heard that Bkllingslea cannot fly, must be wounded. He is to come in with me. Raff returned by the 1st Division. He is to be my assistant since there is no other job for him. That sort of thing is rather unbelievable and most unfortunate. Mark Clark made him a Colonel and now no one wants him. Went by brigade. They were crying about the jump the other night. About 10% casualties. The TCC did a very poor job, new groups 439th and 440th. Talked to Joe Crouch about pathfinder work, seems to be coming along OK, it is difficult to get everyone both TC and A/B to accept it yet if we had in Sicily what we have today it would be an entirely different story. Val came up from London.

Leicester Sunday April 16, 1944

A conference or two on operational planning. Went to town to lunch with Val. Worked over the regimental missions with G-3. Got them in tentative shape. Down town at 1700, took Val to dinner at 2030.

I have always figured that the woman that I married next would be very active in athletics, music, theatre and have many and diverse interests it is odd that Val so completely meets every standard that I have had in mind yet she is not especially interested in any of the above. Because of the war and its social deprivations I have come to feel that a woman's honest complete and full love is more important than anything else. Why marry an athlete or a public character. Nothing should be permitted to take the place of one's homelife. The home must come first. Recognizing the fact the biological sex is a very transitory attraction and that a permanent union must be based upon something more permanent than sexual attraction.

Leicester Monday April 17, 1944

Completed regimental missions and tentative division order, issued order to regimental commanders. It certainly helps at this stage to have had some combat background. They have many simple questions that would be hard to answer otherwise. Ekman and Lindquist will be OK, I am sweating out Millett. It will be a hell of a day at best for all of us. The mission looks OK.



Leicester Wednesday April 19, 1944 0800

Left for Horsham Monday afternoon arriving in the problem area at 2100. There met Gen Taylor, Pratt, McAuliff at al. Glider landings scheduled for daylight Tuesday finally came in at 11:40. Marshalled 50 gliders on takeoff airfield in 50 minutes. Time from take-off of first glider until entire column was on its course to its objective: 24 mins. Time from release of first glider until last glider landed: 5½ mins. A good show, most of the horsas were damaged beyond recovery, of the Wacos probably about ¼-½ of them can be snatched out. The entire show was impressive, if we could only do it at night so as to eliminate the necessity for such great air coverage. Returned at 1800 landing at East Leicester. An RAF field that was supposed to be closed landed anyway despite the red flags. Will probably get a letter. Called Val at 2030, no reply. Went to a 325 dance. It is most regrettable to attend these regimental affairs and see the type of girls that are invited. Few if any of the officers would either wish or dare to escort them to a regimental affair back in the states. Yet they do here where they and their army is judged by the type of company they keep. The english have not nepped in that they have not asked any of our people to meet the nicer sort of girls. On the other hand one can hardly blame them.

Leicester Wednesday April 19th 2100

Went over to North Witham field this morning and talked to all of the pathfinder personnel of the division. It was something that had to be done very soon. They have a tough assignment and probably the most important one in the entire airborne effort. Their attitude appeared to be very good. Recd a call from Col. Twitchell of Gen. Bull's Ops section in SHAEF re a British order to america for 96,000 equipment canopies. We have asked for 51,000 for Overlord and Bull thought that someone was wrong. We advised him that the British requirement was excessive based upon 8 canopies per ton of supplies and approximately 300 tons of supplies per division per day being needed. Went to a cocktail party given by the local British uppercrust at 1830. Quite nice. Called Val at 0730 after a bad night. Enjoyed talking to her. Called Edith Steiger and made a date for a division hop tomorrow night. I have got to do something. I have never let myself get so onetracked before. It gets painful at times. Called again this evening at 2030, no reply. Some state of affairs. I've got to decentraliz e, and right now. Nice letter from N/B. There is someone who is loyal and OK.



Leicester, Saturday April 22nd 1230

Thursday spent in checking training. Thursday evening went to the Division Officers dance. Dragged Ethel Steiger, ARC, and a hell of a nice person. Took her to dinner at the Grand first. A good hop, stopped by her home afterwards. An air alert. The following morning up at 5:45 and out to a 507 FX. Friday afternoon a cocktail party given by the local police chief. Mostly titles present, had a very nice time. (This was Thursday afternoon) Friday evening went to a dance given for the division by the Lord mayor and lord mayoress of Leicester at DeMontfort hall. They gave for Britishers. Danced, by request, the first dance with the Duchess of Rutland. Nice enough, trouble was she had three grown children and was high ranking in her own opinion. The British certainly fell all over her, an <sup>one</sup> american resents that attitude. Left the dance at 2130. Val evidently doing well. The training is coming along as well as ~~can~~ be expected at this stage. Up at 5:45 this morning and off to a CPX. Capt Downs who will handle my communications appears to be OK, a solid citizen as the boys say. Gen Ridgway has been sick in bed for three days. It has been a grand opportunity for me and I have made the most of it. I love command. My entire outlook has changed in these few days. The responsibility is good to get. I would like to get around now and see the men more often. I should get daily recreation schedules as well as drill schedules and they should be checked as well as training. From recent indications it appears as though Gen Ridgway is not as popular with the men of the division as he should be. Popularity of course must of necessity come to second to command ability and tactical skill but it certainly helps to have it. It should not be courted but no opportunities to gain it should be overlooked.

Leicester Sunday April 23, 1944 0700

Stayed close to the CP most of the day except for an inspection of the 504 area, a visit to the 80th, a conference <sup>er</sup> with Gen R. Most everyone in the usual Saturday afternoon spirit by mid-afternoon. Felt rather low as usual at these times. Called Val twice then she called me. Went to bed at 2100 and read. Gen R up for dinner so he may now take over. I wish he would or wouldn't. I can see lots of things that I would like to go to work on but I can't since it is not included in my functions in this division. The train schedule cancelled, rather postponed until 1000 today. At 0400 received a call to the effect that the train would arrive at 0500. I have just returned from meeting it. The 504 boys look fine. Talked to the S-3. Depressing and sobering to hear of the combat losses and commanding officer replacements as a result of combat.



Leicester Monday April 24th 1700

Rube Tucker came in at 10:30, looked fine and all ready to go on the 2nd Front. Very disappointed that he is not to get into the assault wave. Left at 1400 for London arriving at 82 Portland Place at 1630. Val grand to see again. Left at 2030 to return and arrived here at 0115. Took a jeep and went out to a 505 night problem arriving at 0200. Returned to Camp at 0400 and to bed after a full 24 hrs. Up at 0700 and off to another day. Conference with officers of the 504th on policies etc. Conference with Gen Eddy, CG 9th Div., in PM. Edith Steiger's father died and she called. All of this is getting too complicated.

Leicester Tuesday April 25th 1330

A very busy day with several conferences. Working with Gen R still leaves me frequently with a feeling of not doing well enough or not doing the right thing. One rarely experiences a feeling of complete satisfaction. I remember his attitude towards Keerans and Taylor. His present attitude towards March is at times embarrassing. I wonder if I am much the same with my subordinates. I believe that he likes more personal attention than I give him, I perhaps should stay at the Glebe Mt house.

Leicester Wednesday April 26th 1330

A conference with all regimental commanders at 0900 that lasted until 1200. Their plans were aired for discussion by the CG and staff. They appeared to be in rather good shape. Gen R flew up to IX TCC and upon his return went to bed again sick. This morning the doctor diagnosed it as malaria. If this is correct it will be most unfortunate for him. He got wind of a possible change in our operational plan from Gen Williams yesterday, probably requiring a jump of all parachute regiments of both US Divisions the night of D-1. I like that idea very much. Our area is going to be an inferno the night of D day.

Leicester Thursday April 27th

A Div CPX, the first, went along rather well. The staff was almost enthusiastic about it. Called Gen Bradley re a conference then changed plans and I am to meet him in London Friday AM. The current matter of discussion is the plan to drop all Para units the night of D-1 rather than spread them over two nights. Received a good letter from Val. She is starting proceedings to divorce her present husband. Since it possibly means a loss of alimony it is a big step for her to undertake. She is banking on our own affairs straightening themselves out. I have explained to her how long this is likely to take. I will be shot at



an awful lot in the next few months and after this we have the Asiatic front to clean up. If I live through it all I will be lucky. But it certain to take time, perhaps years. I love Valerie very much, I believe that we could be very happy. I am afraid sometimes of her adaptability to a service life, and I am not yet sure of how well she will get along with people. I also wish that her education were more along American lines. She has a typical English-Continental background that ill lends itself to American society, particularly of the kind that I enjoy. I have always felt that a wife should have many and diverse interests, be capable and energetic, and be somewhat of a community leader. Val will bring to our union few of these things but she will, I believe, make a happy home and a family. Perhaps I am at the stage where a home and a family is what I will want above all else. In my career my wife will certainly play a large part. If I live through the coming battles of this war I will do everything to make myself heard from in the councils of our government and national defense. Val at least will have her own independent means to enjoy many of the material pleasures that I will very likely not be able to afford. She is attractive, poised, and of impeccable behavior. Maybe she is it. Anyway I love her very very much.

Leicester Saturday April 29, 1944 0730

Malaria again hit Gen Ridgway Thursday afternoon, fever up to 102°. I stayed at the Glebe Mount House Thursday night leaving at 0500 for London where I had a scheduled conference with Gen Bradley. Met Gen Bradley at 0800 at Bryanston Square. The story was that our mission for Overlord remains unchanged but that AM Leigh-Mallory had submitted a paper to Gen Eisenhower stating that he could not deliver the present planned large glider lift at dawn D day without heavy losses and that therefore he was recommending a complete parachute lift the first night, six regiments, with each division getting 50 gliders apiece. The 82nd, due to its remoteness, is to get about 200 gliders at dusk D day and 200 more the following 24 hours. He justified this delivery of 200 on the supposition that they would practically neutralize or ground the GAF by dusk D day. Gen Bradley discussed the probable enemy actions for some time. He is very optimistic about the whole affair, feeling that the Peninsula will fall with much more ease than I at present expect. He does not think that the German will commit any armored units up the peninsula especially if we cut it off even partially the night of D-1 D day. His attitude is a good one when talking with subordinates, and besides I am inclined to agree with him. Attended a conference later in the day, 1500, at Bentley Priory in Stanmore with



AM Leigh Mallory, AM Tedder, Gen Bradley, Gen Browning, Gen Williams, and AVM Hollingsworth. AM Leigh-Mallory is afraid of getting too many gliders into the air until he has the GAF beaten down which he thinks he can accomplish in twentyfour hours if they will come up and fight. At present they are staying down. They will have to come up at H hour or be considered definitely beaten and out of the war. The British plan over East of Caen was discussed at some length and does not look too good. They are having trouble coordinating with the Navy. Our mission will require a very high degree of coordination with the Navy and with our own air support. The operation is to be rehearsed in Eagle. The preparation of that exercise is the next immediate task of the staff. Gen Ridgway is expecting a classmate by the name of Matthewson in to take over the Div artillery. It will be very hard on March. I caught a glint in Doc Eatons eye when he was watching me discuss Matthewson's capabilities with Gen Ridgway that may have indicated that Ridgway's plans go beyond having him take over the Arty. He may have him in mind as the ultimate Division commander. I certainly have not boned it, which I may well have at least worked at.

Leicester Sunday April 30, 1944 0815

Another of those Sundays when everyone starts when he damn pleases. It never fails to burn me up. If a subordinate gets off to a late start on a particular day when someone in Div Hqs wants to contact him or visit the outfit one would think that the Army was falling apart from lack of a sense of duty of its officers. Yet on occasions and whenever the whim strikes them Gen R or the staff merely get in about an hour late. Lunch with Val yesterday, also dinner and to a dance at Market Harborough later. She was very attractive and rather popular. Gave me an odd and entirely unreasonable feeling for a moment. Back to Leicester at one and I was in at two am. Had a cocktail party for the local British uppercrust at the Glebe Mount house. Went off very well. Received a cablegram from the War Dept. authorizing parachute qualification for all glider personnel of the Div. Something that we have been waiting for for a long time, we are on the beam.

Leicester Tuesday May 2, 1944 0720

A busy day Sunday. Worked over the Air Support Plan to fit the changed operation. Received the Regtl orders. Made final resupply plan. We are to ask for an automatic resupply daily for four days amounting to 250 tons. ~~xxxxxx~~ Our mission will be difficult of accomplishment. Although the resupply will come in



recovering it will be a task if for no other reason because of the tonnage. Took Tucker and Billingslea over to 52nd Wing and the Pathfinder school yesterday. For the first time Crouch expressed rather definite doubts on the efficacy of the Eureka. He now has four 717 sets or Bups Beacon. They are the only four in the world. It appears to be the answer right now and most probably will not be jammed. Efforts are being made to get additional sets before the operation. I talked to Gen R about it as soon as I came back in an effort to elicit his interest in cabling or calling Gen Marshall or Gen Arnold. I do not know of any single peice of equipment that could have such great effect on the success or failure of the 2nd Front. Called on Miss Steiger of the ARC last night, I don't believe that I have ever been so well behaved. Valerie occupys a permanent place in my scheme of things that I intend to honor and respect. Wish that this was one month from now.

Leicester May 2, 1944 2000

Waited around the office most of the morning for Gen Clark, Cols. Petty and Brown from the 52nd Wing. When they arrived we laid on a definite air movement table for Eagle and Neptune. It certainly helps to have had combat experience with that wing. I am quite satisfied with the plan, we would preferred to have had nine serials but the six decided upon should do the job. At 1230 attended a lunch given by the English speaking union. Harvey Gibson, Lord Trent, Sir Arthur Hazelwig et al. A very nice affair of high purpose and probable accomplishment. In the evening played deck tennis with Gen R, Doc, Lt. Kraus. Not particularly enjoyed. Received a letter from Peggy. She followed the line expected calling attention to the unfortunate plight of Barbara in the event of a divorce. I still feel however that for any child a home with love is far better than a home of distress and hate or better to have one parent always present who loves her and keeps her happy than to have two parents who are always at odds. She said that she would divorce me as soon as possible after the war. Now all that I have to do is survive. This all must be affecting my work, I really don't concentrate on things the way that I used to. Most of the time I figure that this is because I am stale and rather fed up with the war, but again I suspect that it may in part be due to my preoccupation with my messed up marital affairs.



Leicester Thursday Apr May 4th

Some time with training, visited brigade twice during the past twenty-four hours. The 508 is shaping up very nicely, they are destined to do a top notch job, the 507 is still questionable. Gen Williams came in yesterday. The 82nd is to lead in. The P/F drop at 2350 and the first troops at 0022. I will be with that serial. It is fine for the morale of the 505th that they are again to lead the invasion. The entire affair looks much better now than it did some time ago. I hope that I live through it, if I do and the division does at all well I have an excellent chance to inherit it. As a parachute division it would be wonderful and that is what it would be.

Leicester Sunday, May 7, 1944 0830

(be) Went to London Friday morning for a conference on air support. Held at Stanmore, Smith FH presiding. Concerned itself mostly with air support for the flight. Night and day fighters, intruders. 20 intruders to work over searchlights will be available. At time of take-off fighters will be over German bases to intercept German fighters if they dare come up. Bad crossings of the coast is to be smoked. Left Stanmore at 1800 and due to car trouble did not arrive at Leicester until 2300. Had dinner and left at once for the division filed exercise arriving at 0200. It was to be a ground rehearsal of Neptune. Came in from it last night at 1700 and so a full two days were passed. Saw Valerie on Friday, she has never looked better, hope to see her today.

Leicester Tuesday May 9, 1944 0930

Critiqued Field Exercise Sunday AM and left for London at 11:30. Conferred with Cols Bagby and Jones at Eastcote from 1430 to 1530. TCC promised to include all of our air support requests in their plan. It is interesting to have such frank admissions made of the fact that the TCC can get AS directly from the Air Corps when we would be denied under the same circumstances. It is quite evident that the AB troops and the AC should be together in the same "branch". Joined Valerie at 1700 supper at a pub, the coach and horses, early to bed and away to Stanmore for a conference on AS with the AEAF. Started at 11:00 and ended at 1700. A very enlightening session on air support and the capabilities of the air corps in bombing support. Hour has not been set so that it was difficult to make a firm plan. The entire picture looks like an expensive one. This invasion is going to cost many lives. Although it is imperative that I present an optimistic front at all times nevertheless I am not very happy about our prospects. It is going to be a bitch of a fight with many losses. I believe that we will be dropped on our DZs OK but I also believe that the kraut will



be either on or near the DZs also. Shortly after our landing elements of the 21st Panzer should hit the area. That is the present picture and unless the Russian front moves damn soon or the French crack the southern area the prospects will get worse rather than better. Before combat for the first time a man has boundless faith in the High command ~~xx~~ and the staff planning. He feels that if worse comes to worse they will pull him out of every difficulty that they put him into. Avellino was the first rude awakening, Sicily was no better. You must look out for yourself if you expect to live and fight. Especially in AB operations is this true. It is entirely within the realm of possibility for a staff to sacrifice an AB unit without realizing it or even giving a damn. Well, I want to come back from this one. In Sicily I didn't give much of a damn except to want to ~~to~~ do a good job. Now I know that these lads will do a good job anywhere and I am supremely confident of my own tactical ability. The difference is that I have a complete and full reason for coming back. Valerie and I should have a full and interesting life ahead of us. Smith told me that Tokyo is to be bombed May 15th with B-29s. Just a token drop. The gas must be ferried across the MTs to the takeoff bases and is entirely impractical for regular use. As he put it: it will get a few more thousand votes for Roosevelt. D day and H hour is still not set. Since Y day is now June 1st I expect D day to be within a day or two of that. H hour will be about 0700.

Leicester Wednesday May 10th

A very full day. Conferences with the G-3 and Gen R in the morning. Luncheon with Mr. Gibson and representatives of the Red Cross upon the arrival of 13 donut trucks. The Red Cross is doing a splendid job for us in this war. Conference on EAGLE at 1500. Conferred with Regt COs of Task Force A on NEPTUNE later, winding up at 1700. They are in good shape and will give an excellent account of themselves. Played deck tennis until 1900 dinner and then to the office and to bed at 2230. Called Val.

Leicester Thursday May 11th

Studying the 52nd Wing order for Eagle roused my suspicions that all was not as it should be. Went over to the Wing and to the P/F school and talked to Clark and Col. Crouch. I have never seen such a mess. Our DZs are different. The TCC is going to drop our people on different DZs than the Div FO gives them missions on or thinks that they are to be dropped on. Most unfortunate and little that can be done about it now. Our G-3 Weinicke is miscast if I ever saw an officer miscast. He has plenty of ability, very smart, a smooth talker, but lazy as hell.



Photographs taken Apr 28th came in yesterday. Hill 110 continues to be most intriguing. The spots are continuing to expand, we cannot tell what they are. We are still going to jump on them. S. Sauver has been bombed, five bombs, probably some kid on the way home jettisoned his load. Didn't hit anything. The Germans are flooding the river down near Lessay, an excellent sign. They may be organizing a defensive line along the river near Lessay, that is the best sign that we have seen yet. They are continuing to build up their divisions now being up to 56. The Russians have done nothing for a few weeks. As soon as they attack again and especially if the southern France attack comes in it should help us. It is going to be some affair.

Leicester Saturday May 13th 0800

Left for takeoff airfields at 0730 Thursday. Checked all fields during the day. Takeoff at about 11:00, drop at 1:30-2:30 landed back at Saltby at 4:15. Back at Braunstone at 5:30. Left by air for 1st Army CP at 9:30. Lunch with Gen Hodges, Ridgway, Kean and staff. Conference later on air support. The AS plan getting rather well set. Despite the elaborate plan however we are learning more and more that the air support arm has very definite limitations. The amount of accurate bombing that can be done on any one target at one time is very limited due to dust etc. On a clear target the accuracy of the AC is not very good.

Leicester Sunday May 14th 0800

Arrived at CP 21st Army Group at 11:45, a bit late, remained in conference until 1300. It was agreed that the 82nd would get its bombing requests on D-1 provided that the German was unaware of the locale of our effort on the continent. If he were not, we would not get our targets bombed until D day. Since he is now flooding the Ay valley near Lessay it appears as though he has defensive intentions for the Cherbourg peninsula. This is the best indication that I have seen so far. Hill 110 continues to be built up with anti-airborne obstacles. The attitude of the AC in our recent exercise EAGLE was most disheartening. My own pilot refused to use his Rebecca relying solely on DR. This operation will, I hope, settle a few things. If it is as snafu as Sicily I hope some one gets tried. I am afraid that if it is as bad as Sicily I may not get a chance to settle with the TCC, I was inordinately lucky down there. Yet this Airborne effort cannot limp along with the TCC screwing things up at every opportunity more thru indifference than lack of equipment or means. Its future is limitless, restricted only by the imagination of its proponents.



Leicester Wednesday May 16, 1944

This has been a busy period. Couldn't resist the temptation to run into London and see Val Sunday afternoon. After all there is no telling when I may never see her again. Returned Sunday evening at one am, out to a drop at three and back to camp in bed at six. To work at eight and a very busy day. Flew down to Eastcote to a critique on EAGLE returning at 1800. I am afraid that again I was too critical of the TCC. That is the damndest touchy problem, how to get them to fly better and show more concern for our aspects of the operation without becoming too critical of their technique. They are quick to resent it if we do. It is so evident that we would both be much better off in one unit with one branch, boss, promotion list, supply source, planning hrs, but it will be very difficult to ever get them together.

Sunday evening Gen Joe Collins the VII Corps commander arrived for an inspection of the division and so we took him around from early Tuesday until noon today. An interesting type. Runty, cocky, confident, almost to the point of being a bore. Not quite appreciative of our problems in assigning us tactical missions but nevertheless very much interested in our welfare. At least he expressed himself as so being. I am certain that Ridgway would make a much better Corps commander than Collins, they are classmates, and it is difficult to understand. Ridgway appears to be sick. His malaria and what now appears to be Jaundice are getting him down a bit.

Leicester Friday May 18, 1944 0830

A most profitable day spent cleaning up details about the office. Caught up with all or most of my letter writing and studies of the Overlord situation. Went to a 325 dance in the evening, dragged their red cross girl, Edith Steiger. Plans that were made to go to London Friday for a Saturday conference at St Pauls had to be dropped because of a cancellation. I feel particularly badly about it because of the disappointment in not seeing Valerie. Sometimes I think that I would be better off if I had never met her. I am so damn much in love with her. Sometimes I can't quite figure out why, and how long it will last concerns me too. At the moment I feel miserable as hell. What's the answer?

Leicester Saturday May 19th 2130

Just returned from Torquay having been down there for the past 24 hours. It was an interesting war game, all of the Div Comdrs and staffs in the VII Corps were present. The 82, 101, 9, and 90th. Like Old Home Week, there were many old faces that I haven't seen for years. It was nice to see them all again. The conference was as interesting from a view of the characters



present as from a study of the tactical solutions offered, Ridgway was outstanding as a divisional commander. Collins, the Corps Commander, was outstanding. Eddy of the 9th didn't look too good nor did McKelvey of the 90th although he didn't have much to say. As a general comment they all looked too well fed and behaved rather pompously to be very effective field soldiers. A few shots and they will change some, either that or lose their commands. A letter from Val awaiting me upon my return which was very nice to get. I am still entirely unsatisfied about her continuing to go about so and about to give up on it. She has been the recipient of such attention for years and she is so good looking and attractive that she almost has to have constant attention, I am afraid that it has come to be part, an essential part, of her existence. I am convinced of her faithfulness to me but despite that I find her gadding about extremely difficult to feel satisfied about. Having a continuous miserable feeling knowing that she is spending the evening with another man becomes after awhile intolerable. She will not understand this despite any explanations I may make so an attempt at a clear break may be best. It is an odd experience for me. Except for the remote possibility of a happy future for us I would say that it was unfortunate that I ever met her. I am still not convinced that she will not expect to gad about after we are married, that would be the finish

Leicester Sunday May 21, 1944

A call from Val at 0100 which was damn nice to get. Changed my serial and DZ

Monday May 22nd

Not a very busy day Sunday. Picked Val and Eileen up at Liverpool Station and went to 82 Portland Place. Stayed there until 11:30 pm when it was time to pick up Jack Thompson who I brought back with me getting back at 0245. Wonderful to see Val again, she does love me of that I am convinced. Saw Al Ireland, he had the dope that our movement to the takeoff fields would be deferred until the 1st of June. This helps considerably although the high command does not look well upon it.

Tuesday May 23rd, 0800 Leicester

Gen Ridgway talked to the 325<sup>th</sup> and 507<sup>th</sup>. Excellent talk to the 507<sup>th</sup>, this is a good thing. He is to talk to the others in the next day or two. I plan on doing my talking at the take-off air fields. He does not look well, I am afraid that he is not well and is covering it up. A conference at 1700 at which time all Bn COs outlined their plans. Worked well. Our Infantry is closer together than it has ever been before.



Leicester Wednesday May 24th

Visited the 504th and 505th with Jack Thompson. Spent several hours with the 505th talking over their mission. Kellam still looks weak. Gen. Ridgway talked to the regt at 1800 at which time the Legion of Merit was awarded to Lt. Masters. The talk was well delivered and equally as well received. Later a demonstration of the gammon grenade was staged at the Gypsy Lane quarry in Leicester. Most impressive. Lt. Reiss of the 505th also demonstrated the throwing of 60mm and 81mm mortar HE shells as hand grenades. Posder increments are removed, the pin removed, the base of the shell struck on the ground until the set back pellet drops back and the fork flies out then the shell is armed and will detonate on impact. Worked about the office in the evening, called Val or rather she called me. I am becoming worried about her condition. I don't really know whether or not she is as sick as the doctor leads her to believe. She looks the picture of health but may be run down. At all events if she is as sick as he says she is it is a matter of much concern. Due to the cancellation of many trains she may be unable to come up this week. I had rather hoped she would.

Leicester Thursday May 25, 1944 1600

The seaborne lift this morning. Present plans contemplate the departure of the Glider and Parachute lift on the 29th. Yesterday I took the Tipoints to the Pathfinder School at North Witham. Talked over the 101st mission with Col. Crouch, it looks rather tough. Spent quite a bit of time last evening with our PIs. There are now cows grazing on the Prarie de M. This is beginning to look bad. If that is passable for armor we will be in a tough spot. Visited the 505, 507, 508 this morning. They are in as good a shape as we can get them under present circumstances. I wish now that we could have given them tougher training such as we got in Africa. They are confident and certain of their ability to do the job. It is inspiring to contact new parachute troops about to go into combat. They are so sure of themselves. They will do a good job and it is just as well. Either this 82nd Div job will be the most glorious and spectacular episode in our history or it will be another Little Big Horn. There is no way to tell now but we are going in and they will, I am certain, do a hell of a good job. It is regrettable that so many of them have to get lost but it is a tough business and they all figure that parachutists have nine lives. Apparently we are to get all of the air bombardment missions that we have requested.



Leicester Saturday May 26th 1300

As is always the case when there is a big change there is too much to do in connection with it to take time to write about it. Neptune has been changed and we are now to jump astride the Maderet River with the mission of seizing the crossings, protecting the flank of the Corps, securing a bridgehead over the Maderet and being prepared to advance to the West to the Douvye. Gen. Ridgway was called down to Bristol yesterday and given the new plan, it was necessitated by a change in the German dispositions. They are continuing to build up in France despite the pressure that is being put on them in Italy, it looks as though they may lose Rome, presumably they would sooner lose it than weaken their reserves in France, a sound decision. Since we are now dropping much closer to the amphibious troops our chances of survival are greatly improved, the entire picture looks much better. I will jump with the 508th and 507th, Gen Ridgway is going to jump with the 505th. It looks like a real ratrace and a grand show, there will be lots of fighting for everyone from the moment their feet hit the ground.

Leicester Sunday May 27th 1420

Meeting of the regt COs at which time the new situation was outlined to them. Lots of work. These damn changes. Complete sets of plans, terrain memory classes, plastic models, all wasted. Valerie arrived at 1800. Took her to dinner and then to the 505th Officers club. Grand to have her here. The 505th looks fine. At this stage of the planning the new drop looks like a real snafu, confusion, and indiscriminate fighting galore. It will be several days until any semblance of organization or tactical integrity comes out of the mess.

Leicester Tuesday May 30, 1944

The 30th of May, I just realized it, we are living in a different world these days. Drove down to London Sunday evening returned in haste arriving at midnight. Planning still in a rather confused state. Yesterday, Monday, visited the P/F school and 314th Grp which will fly me in. Col. Meyers is to command my serial. Probably will work OK. Gen. Bradley arrived in the evening, all of the unit commanders were in for dinner. He is still as confident as ever that we will swamp the German. It is difficult to fully share his optimism although one really wants to. The situation is shaping up a bit better daily. If I live through this one I may be fortunate to get command of the division. Three excess field officers from the states arrived yesterday, a terrible system, they sent their cast offs to combat units on the verge of going in, inexcusable.



Cottesmore Wednesday May 31st

Moved over here yesterday afternoon. Visited all of the fields in the past 24hrs and everything is in excellent shape. The SOS is doing a splendid job of taking care of us before take-off. Just about our every wish is granted, cots, blankets, mess kits, cooks, and the chow is well/ above average. These troops will enter combat with a much higher morale than we have ever had before, regrettably they will lack some of the condition and toughness of our African trained troops. D day remains Monday, June 5th. Everything is in readiness, even with the new mission I want to come back from this one, much more than I have ever wanted to come back before. I am not as uneasy about going in as I have been before although it is certain to be a hell of a rough fight, those of us who have been there before are all a bit more certain of ourselves and of our ability to handle anything that develops, there are not so many unknowns this time, it is the unknowns that bother the newsoldier.

Cottesmore Friday June 2, 1944

Started the rounds talking to the 505th Hq and 1st Bn at Spanhoe at 1030 ended with the 2nd and 3rd Bns at Cottesmore at 1800. During the interim spoke to all Bns at all fields. Most interesting, not sure who enjoyed it most, I certainly had a lot of fun, at this stage of the game they are tops to talk to. Finally evoked some spontaneous cheers after twenty years of waiting. Their morale could hardly be improved upon. With Gods help they will do their job well and return. Last night had a conference with all Bns COs and Regt COs. Final conference. Gave the Regt COs the date of D day, still June 5th. Afterwards attended a training exercise in reorganization and assembly. Back to Cottesmore by 0115. Mr Walton of Time and Life and Sgt. Bucknell of Stars and Stripes joined yesterday. Lt. Col. Bolland recently assigned to the Division joined the Task Force staff yesterday in order to get shot at. He does not look very good. It is a shame the number of graduates who are definitely inferior officers. This should never be.

Cottesmore, Saturday June 3, 1944 D-2

Over to Saltby at 1000 and talked to entire serial on the reorganization and assembly plan. Difficult to say whether or not it will work, the degree to which it will work is the degree of enemy resistance. Short conference with Gen R at noon. Over to Div Hqrs at Braunstone at 1500. Read the mail, called Val, studied the situation. Anti-airborne obstacles are appearing all over the operation area, some in the fields in which we are going to jump. I figure that they are a desperate last minute