

Lt. Frank W. Loops, 0-667527
432nd Bomb. Sqdn.
17th Bomb. Gp.
A.P.O. 520, 4th Postmaster N.Y.C.



Mr. + Mrs. Charles E. Loops
5418-13th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Censored by:
Lt. FW Loops, A.C.

U.S.A.

432 Bomb. Sqdn.

17th Bomb. Gp.

A.P.O. 520, % Postmaster, N.Y.C.

June 27, 1943 (Sunday)

Hello, Folks!.

Here's that man again! And the best I can figure it, another Sunday - so by all laws of man + the calendar of which I don't have - it must mean that another week has gone by - tho at this point I wouldn't swear to anything. This Sunday will be a bit different, tho. - I'll be able to go to church like a normal being, instead of first going out on a mission and bombing the hell out of somebody! ~~first~~ Oh, it's a great life.

See, you should have seen us go the other day. - We had the American Airlines beat. - It seems somebody wanted to move - so instead of "vans" like you folks use - they called in the bombers and made transports out of them. - I had a queer assortment of junk we carried! But we got 'em moved in a surprisingly short time. It was fun - you should have seen all the planes! - a regular shuttle service. - I flew on almost all the trips - and what trips. - Both ends of the journey - it was clear weather - while only 5 minutes away from the fields - each one - we would run into cloudy weather + thunderstorms! - And to add to it - the terrain we had to go over was very mountainous - with peaks up around 4000' or 4500'. - We would just take off - climb to about 5000' take up our compass course + go on instruments! - Just about time to be over our destination - we'd break out into clear weather - look down - see the field, - and come on in to land! - It was like that on each trip. Golly, - when we think of flying back in the states - with all the radio beams + facilities at your disposal - and none at all over here - and on top of that, of our maps which aren't even accurate - you just think - what a cinch

2/ those fellows have! Don't think we're complaining - it's lots of fun - cause besides learning on every trip, - there's a certain feeling of elation at your own ability to cope with things. - It all just adds up to "ye olde experience" and the more you know & have the greater your chances are. -

Put on some low shoes and went to town yesterday. - It's the first time in about three weeks I've worn anything but G.I. ones! - Even put on some clean clothes for the occasion, too! There's just no holding me down once I get started! - We had a funny thing happen to us there too. - (I don't make all these queer stories up - they actually happen) After roaming around town awhile - we heard someone behind us speak, a couple of girls we had somehow missed. - They spoke just a little English & asked us if we would like to go to a dance? - Well, - anything is worth a try - you can always leave, - so we said, "yes". - They give us an address and tell us to be there at 5 o'clock - we said "O.K." - Well, - about 4:30 - we start wondering how to get ~~th~~ to the house of the party, - After all - it's the first time we'd ever been to the place - and those French names for streets never register on our feeble minds. Well, - we started out and after asking our way from police every block or so - we eventually get there. - Of course we can't understand the policemen either - but if we ask often enough - we can go by their gestures! -

When we got to the house - we were met by an entire French family - Father, mother, big brother, ^{Big} Sister (the one who had invited us), little brother & little sister! - Big Brother knew about 5 more words of English than big sister, which made a total of 15 or 20! - Well, - we sat around and grinned at each other awhile - when finally Big brother sat down to play the piano! - After 5 minutes - we finally recognized the tune as the French version of "Dina" (you know - from Carolina). - He also knew several other American tunes such as "The Beer Barrel Polka" - the only

3/
trouble was - they weren't played too well. - sorta like he had taken one of these 1/2 courses you hear offered over the radio - and he only took 50 cents worth! - after awhile, he settled down and played a bit of classical music which wasn't bad.

Well, - about this time other guests & relatives started arriving. It ended up with about 25 or 30 people in a room, about 15' x 15', including a table & piano! - Then - as the victrola seemed temperamental - someone started playing the piano again, someone else started beating a tambourine, and another "stroking" a banjo! - Then, - they actually started dancing in that little room with all those people - and he's not leave out the table & piano! - It was almost as crowded as some of the G. W. dances I've been to! - Along about this time some more guests started arriving - and things really got crowded. - He found out the occasion for all this was the birthday of the Big Sister who had invited us in the first place. The poor people were certainly having a swell time staying to make us feel a part of them, and I think they were just a mite proud for their neighbors to see that ~~the~~ among their guests were American "air plane drivers"! - They started serving some wine - but soon ran out with such a mob. - for cake they had bread with some sort of preserves or something spread all over it. - About the time I left we had seen their predicament - so we all (the American officers, 5 of us) chipped in and one of us went to the store and bought about 5 or 6 qts. of wine so they could really have their festivities! - He can't spend our money for anything, so it gave us a chance to help them and to show our appreciation too. You should go to one of these affairs where you can't speak to anyone. He of course have a little book - of English - French words - but not knowing the pronunciation, we never recognize the words - so we don't even carry the damn things around with us.

4/ By not being able to spend our money - I don't mean the populace won't let us spend it - it's just that there's nothing worth buying. And should there be some little something that interests us - well - the prices go sky high as soon as an American shows any interest in it. - We never buy anything without bargaining. - You can get most anything for half the marked price, cause they just mark 'em double to start with. Even then we get giffed! - I've been looking for some little souvenirs to send home to you but can't really find a thing worth the trouble of sending to you, even for the sentimental value if any.

I almost shot me an Arab the other day. - They are most obnoxious and repulsive too - and steal anything lying around loose. - We really have orders to shoot them if they won't go away! - The other day - our tent was on the very edge of the camp - one of 'em stole almost everything our navigator, Jim Carey, had. - He took it during the night so when we woke up - it was all gone. The next night we had everything inside the tent (sorta like locking the stable, etc.) and towards dawn I happened to wake up. - Well - I heard this noise - and for a second - after just waking up - I thought it a rat - not unusual. Well. The noise was right behind the head of my cot - and I thought of my things that were left just inside the tent there - and the stealing of the night before. - I reached down for my automatic, but a piece of my bed-roll had fallen over it and it ^{didn't} come to hand readily. - so instead of making a noise looking for it, I grabbed my flash-light, turned over on my stomach and flashed the light at the noise. - I saw an Arab's hand sticking under the tent flap - giving my baggage a going over. - What I said to myself is ~~un~~ - censorable - but having just wakened I hadn't all my facilities - so instead of waking up someone

Else goes to catch him - I just swung at the hand with my flashlight - wham! - I hope I broke a bone in it - anyway, he withdrew his hand and all you could hear were the rocks tumbling after him as he ran down the hill - faster than he ever moved before, I imagine. On going outside I saw that he had left but he had gathered from another tent! - That's what he got ~~for~~ being hogish! - But no fooling - had I found my gun when I reached for it, - I know I would have shot him without a second's thought. Nothing makes me so mad as a thief, and an Arab one at that - and believe it or not - I'm not a bad shot with my old 45! Did you think your son & brother could get to that point? Well, I couldn't have kept Arabs as Arabs and the night before they were taking shots at us - and have you ever been shot at? He broke that up fast too, - but that's another tale.

It seems that that day was some sort of a religious holiday for the Arabs - and rumor had it that if an Arab could kill a non-believer on that day - it would insure their going to their equivalent of heaven. - Don't know about that, just know that just before dark - ~~at~~ about 5 horsemen galloped up on a hill across the valley & started shooting! - Right over the officers area! - He of course - didn't stand there for targets - and soon had 'em running. - You've never seen a bunch of gunmen on the ground go into action have you? - Oh, well - anything to keep life from becoming monotonous (monotonous).

You should see the country around here. - Real "edgy-ashuring"! - There are lots of things I cannot say - but there are also some I can - and amongst them are old Roman cities left in ruins thru the years - and some of their aqueducts still standing, running along the landscape. Now I can study my Roman Architecture first hand! - It really is remarkable the way these things still stand. - They certainly were no slouches from the engineers standpoint. The

6/ aqueducts running along the ground look just like the pictures you see of 'em in history books. - But then again, why shouldn't they? - It's just seeing them in person, I guess. -

- Just had to take time out for dinner. - Quite the best meal in days - but that's not saying an awful lot. - : Corned beef, beans, cabbage + some canned cherries. I've been eating the regular Army "C" rations (Beans + stew) for all meals the past few days. Most of us have gotten to get food on our own and even cook it. - Some of the fellows have these stoves that burn gasoline + works like a blow torch. As you've guessed our Air Corps "K" rations I was raving about have become exhausted!

Am kinda glad we got in this Bomb. Sq. - They all are, besides being swell fellows, experienced and know the score. At first we were dubious cause we were separated from most of those ~~we~~ ^{we} came over with, but don't think we will regret it. Am ~~at~~ ^{finally} separated from John Freeman - so that is the last link of our "clique" that left Lubbock for Avon Park. - But will be seeing each other at times, surely.

See! - I just took stock of the number of pages I've written - think I'll get it copywrited if it keeps on. - Oh, well. I knew I had the urge to write, but didn't think it was quite as big an urge to fill all these pages! -

Be glad when mail finally gets to coming in for me. I was satisfied for awhile - but after awhile - it gets ~~to~~ to gnawing like when you're hungry! -

Haven't weighed for awhile - but with the work + sweat I've been doing - am down just a nite, I think. Had it to lose, however as I had put on some at Avon. -

Well - bye for now - I'll stop and give you + me a rest! - Now next time if I can think of something else ~~more~~ ^{to write}

Lots + Lots of Love,

P.S. - Don't mind my changing the tenses of my verbs around. I must have absorbed some of those Damon Runyon Frank stories I've been reading!