

AFTER FIVE DAYS RETURN TO

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*Prague trip*



**VIA AIR MAIL**

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(1)

## Second Trip to Czechoslovakia

On the morning of 17 June ~~1944~~, after very many delays (our original intention was to return to Karlsbad on the 29 May for a party), Berg and I entered into those last minute preparations for leaving. Spare tires, ~~on the case~~, jacks and pumps and tools were loaded onto my jeep and Sol's Tatra; <sup>tire</sup> air pressures were checked and corrected; gasoline and oil packed in needed quantities (We carried, ~~besides~~ full tanks, 65 gallons, most of it in the jeep trailer); and various other mechanical and auto maintenance items taken care of. My packing of the grips was completed, having spasmodically ~~been~~ <sup>an</sup> covered 8 days period.

We left our headquarters at about 11 a.m., and after a trip to finance for money conversions, and a mediocre <sup>sardine</sup> meal snack ~~at~~ the autobahn Munich City Limits, ~~left~~ ~~at~~ headed up the autobahn toward Ingolstadt.

Our plan (or rather Berg's plan, since he drove the ~~Tatra~~ <sup>luxury car</sup>) was that ~~the~~ Berg should drive ahead with the Tatra on each stretch of the road, and wait for

me at the termin<sup>us</sup> of that particular length of the journey. With this in mind, Berg tore off ahead of me in the RINGHOFFER, disappearing too quickly in the rolling distance of the autobahn. Following after him, I rolled into Ingolstadt in good time, bounced and slid over the speckle road <sup>with the cumbersome jeep & trailer arrangement</sup> and <sup>Ing-R.</sup> ~~got down~~ <sup>finally</sup> into Regensburg up to the C.D. office in Regensburg. After a short treatise, which included lunch, we left, under the same driving plan, towards Waldsassen. After arriving in Waldsassen, the last American occupied town in Germany in the direction of the Czech border near ~~Chab.~~, we parked the trailer and the Tatra in Company Hd. of A. Co, 778<sup>th</sup> Tank Bn, and retired to the C.O.'s billets for the evening and night.

The evening Berg and I passed in company with ~~1~~ <sup>2</sup> Lt. Cook, the C.O. of A. company, and a 1st Lt. White, who was staying at W. during the time <sup>period</sup> of his working on a <sup>pedestal</sup> monument in Chab. Berg and Lt. White spun stories to each (B. having introduced himself as "Asajun...." Berg, with a slurring intonation highly favoring the vowel of the word "Agent," which introduction in eager young <sup>junior</sup> officers & invariably take for "Major.") After the other three retired, I listened to the radio and read Poe's "Mystery of Marie Roget." It was my first reading of Poe in several years, and

I was impressed <sup>with</sup> the highly clear and rational <sup>deductive</sup> writing. Poe was not only <sup>the</sup> first inventor of the story, he remains one of the few realists in that genre.

18 JUNE 1946

After changing a <sup>flat</sup> ~~tire~~ on my jeep, we left Walsassen at about 9 a.m. Crossed the border not long thereafter and left Blub for Karlebad. Bob proved the point of his insistence <sup>upon me</sup> at following him in one of trouble. He proved it by having trouble. About 20 Km. outside of K. I saw ~~the~~ familiar big colored, squat shape of an automobile at the side of the road. A flat. Naturally, he had no tools, and as my jeep tools didn't fit, I drove into the <sup>nearest</sup> ~~next~~ village <sup>with a garage,</sup> which proved to be three down the road, and loaded a grimy load with a jack onto the jeep. With that repaired, we raced into Karlebad.

We found Frank Story in ~~his~~ "Law Mill." the office of his ~~lumber~~ <sup>lumber</sup> business, our best Czech acquaintance in Karlovy Vary, was not in his office as we stopped ~~at~~ by. We left a note that we intended to return after lunch, and drove down town for a lunch. The lunch we had at the hotel Lois, in the traditional hotel Lois manner; endless procrastination, flutterings, attentions, all combined with a

forgetting of essentials such as bread and salt. Altho' they had no bread, they served us two pats of butter. The very unsatisfactory report cost us 200 Kronun (\$4.00).

Because of the possibility that Frank <sup>might</sup> ~~would~~ invite us to his woodland sawmill for a "wonderful partee," we deferred actually engaging hotel rooms at the moment. After lunch we drove back out to Frank's. <sup>In my</sup> ~~the~~ first fifteen minutes in Karlovy Vary, <sup>was alarmed to see</sup> ~~two~~ two Russians who were actually armed. One had a ~~pistol~~ a side holster, the other strode the balustraded bath halls with a Tommy gun. ~~There were~~ This had the effect of irritating me, rather unreasonably perhaps, since both Berg and I went ~~armed~~ carried concealed pistols. ~~But~~ All Americans are enjoined not to carry weapons; and Lt White, for example, had to surrender his .45 each day at the border as he crossed. A few days later, as I write this, I do not see the picture ~~as~~ <sup>so</sup> sinister as then. If the Russians have 2000 or 2500 troops in Karlovy Vary, it is obviously necessary to take certain armed precautions. Besides these two instances, and the sentries before the Russian billets, I ~~do~~ never see any

of them with arms.

Frank Story is ~~the~~ personified optimism and good fellowship. Thirty-one years of age, he has a well tanned face, a large enough share of blond hair, brown eyes, and an almost permanent grin. He served <sup>as a Lt.</sup> in the South <sup>questionable</sup> Brigade in England, from which experience he gained a ~~certain~~ mastery of the English language, and <sup>out</sup> of consideration of which experience he received a confiscated German lumber firm. Frank is clearly convinced that his six years of hardships were ~~definitely~~ and ~~exclusively~~ <sup>the</sup> prelude to theilded age of his life. Now, as <sup>an</sup> ~~the~~ eligible young bachelor, with a business of his own, he is set for life and the enjoyment thereof.

We found him in his office, eating ~~the~~ Moravian cherries and admiring his new set of office furniture. Naturally, ~~the~~ welcome was effusive. Frank's <sup>which is</sup> English, <sup>it's</sup> clearly deterior in grammar and vocabulary, is as fresh and entertaining as his grin. His first words after the greeting, were a reproach that we ~~of~~ missed his May 29<sup>th</sup> party <sup>at</sup> ~~in~~ his ~~his~~ woods forest saw-mill. "Why you no ~~come~~ kamon to my partee? It was wonderful! We had every thing, every thing; wine, food, music,