

NAME: Ross

RANK: Second Lieutenant

ORGANIZATION: 12th Air Force

OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE: Mediterranean Theater of Operations

- The following text is directly from two original wartime period letters about Ross. These are two of many letters related to Ross in the site curator's possession and more will be transcribed in the future.
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- No controversial material has been omitted from the following text aside from edited profanity for the protection of younger readers. No grammatical or spelling errors have been corrected.

Ross writes his girlfriend in the United States:

“XXX XX, 1944.

Received two of your sweet cards and also the four belated ‘snaps.’ I must thank you for the lot. I can see that you’re still as beautiful as ever and intend to keep that way. I never thought that you’d ever go for any ‘zoot suit’ patterns since I always thought that you were against that sort of garb. Will admit, though, that they’re very becoming to you.

Haven’t received a letter from you for quite a little while, but I guess you’re also very busy, so I won’t squabble. I really don’t receive very much mail from anyone back there, but I guess if you don’t write very often you shouldn’t expect too much.

Didn’t fly today so I thought that this was an opportune time to consume some alcoholics – and which I did! It makes one kinda’ forget what he’s doing, what he’s here for – and just forget everything. I guess you won’t understand my emotions & feelings, since it’s more or less an unhuman outlook on things in general. But I guess one gets that way when he’s over here for awhile.

In your latest ‘snaps’ you look like you’ve put on a little weight since I’ve seen you last, and for which I am thankful for. I do hope that you’re fine and that you’re not working too hard. As an old employee of the firm I imagine that you should be right up in there by now. Keep up the splendid work but also don’t overdo it!

Well, by now you should be enjoying some splendid weather. You must write and let me know how the swimming and sun-tanning is back there. The weather here is somewhat beautiful also, so I guess I’m getting my share as equally. I do some swimming when time permits, and which I enjoy immensely.

Seems funny, but when I have a few drinks, I feel under the urge to write you a letter, strange isn’t it? I’m glad that I have the will-power to restrain myself from disclosing my immediate emotions and opinions, for such, I know, would cause much controversy on probably both our parts. But haven’t I always been that way? I guess I’ll never change, though.

Do you remember the last evening that I enjoyed your company during my short stay at home? Remember, we parked down at the gorge? And do you remember the statement or query that you asked? I

hope you know what I'm referring to. I've often thought of that and always wanted to ask, in my letters, as to how really serious you were that unforgettable night. Please don't mis-understand me, I'm only curious, as one gets off times.

I often wonder, sometimes, whether people back there surmise our thoughts and feelings while were here in combat. I also wonder whether the people realize, back there, the reason for our infrequent correspondence, our definite change in outlook, our don't give a-d _ _ n attitude towards anything & everything concerned. I often wondered too, but now I know. Funny and strange things run through one's mind here at times, and oft he dares not think too much of the past.

I guess I kinda' got off the subject in the last paragraph, although I didn't mean to do so. I suppose I'm just in one of my usual moods where I get sore at anyone and everybody. Please excuse any and all profanity in this little note.

True to my promise, I'll have to love you for sending me those 'pics' of yourself, only I know that there would be many more elaborate reasons why I could love you than the mere one mentioned above. You know, it's a good thing that I've made up my mind to be a 'social bum' instead of a Ladies Man (not that I could be such a terrific success at either one of them).

Well, I really didn't mean to start a book when I commenced this letter, so I'll try to refrain from such by saying a little of my activities and then closing.

We're still flying fairly regularly and we're still seeing a little bit of action. Our work still consists chiefly of dive-bombing and strafing missions. To date I have 80 combat missions to my credit...

...Enough propoganda for one evening, I guess, so perhaps I'll take a hint and close this little note.

Love,

Ross.

P.S. Excuse my varied types of stationery.”

Ross' girlfriend writes to one of his squadron mates overseas:

“Today I have received the sorrowful news that my boyfriend Ross whom I loved so very much was killed XXX XX.

After reading the article in our Sunday newspaper of your saving Ross' life for which I was very grateful to you, I thought also that maybe you could help me now. In that article it mentioned you had lost one plane on that mission and the pilot was seen to bail out. I thought maybe there was a possible chance that my Ross could have bailed out and may be safe.

Would appreciate your answering as soon as possible as his family and I will be patiently waiting to hear from you. Thanking you in advance and wishing you the best of luck in the world, I'll remain,

Ross' Girlfriend...”

- Ross died in the Second World War and his girlfriend's letter above was returned, marked "missing."
- **For visual context, this link connects to an original wartime period film in the public domain that covers the above time period and Ross' organization (viewer discretion advised):**
<https://archive.org/details/gov.archives.arc.63897>
- **For additional detail, this link connects to the Wikipedia article that covers Ross' wartime organization, the 12th Air Force (reader discretion advised):**
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelfth_Air_Force