(Transcription begins)

British War Relief Society, Inc.

Rhode Island Committee

38 Exchange Place – PROVIDENCE

Tel. GA. 2176

Monday, May 10, 1943

Dear Douglas:

Yesterday, Sunday, was one of our few gorgeous Spring days. Dad has been working on the yard and it begins to look very fine. There are quantities of yellow daffodils in bloom with one or two red tulips, the grass and trees are getting very green, as is also the forsythia bushes, for this year they were blighted and instead of the yellow blossoms coming first as is their custom, just the green leaves have appeared. Along the back fence Dad has been putting in small evergreen trees and has also placed one at the corner of the garage (SE corner) and a group of three small opposite them on Gray's border line. Chip and Bing have a grand time while he is working out there and I don't think Bing has had a bird this year since we put his belled collar on him.

We had and exhibition of pictures of every man in service at the church yesterday. They were arranged alaphabetically (*sic*) at eye level all around the chapel and of course we thought yours was the handsomest one there! At the close of the church services every one went into the chapel and theoretically started along the wall at A and proceeded around to Z but you know women! But nevertheless every one managed finally to get around and we had a very pleasant time greeting all the parents. During the church service the large service flag which was hung at the centre of the platform had each star designated for a particular service man and eventually you will receive a picture of it showing which star is yours. Nancy Potter pointed to each star as the names were read slowly by—guess who—none other than Lieut-Commander Roger E. Hard!

Yes, he is home on a three months leave after strenuous duty in the South Pacific. He is ruddy but much thinner and grayer and looks tired and nervous. He and Mrs. Hard arrived home Friday night and came over to see us Saturday afternoon and of course Alice and George came in too, so we had such a pleasant reunion. He talked very interestingly of his experiences and they were terrific and then all of a sudden he broke down but we were able to quickly get on to other topics and he was all right again in a minute or two. He has asked for active duty again but as he is 48 years old I am hoping that he can be just as useful in a less active position. Bob Hard also was home that weekend but expects to leave this week for the South to start the next part of his course.

Friday night Bill appeared unexpectedly. The school is not to start for another two weeks and as he had a chance to come by machine to Providence he was given permission. Marilyn happened to be at the Palace with Marilyn Eaton so he went down there to wait for her and you can imagine her surprise when she came out of the theatre. She spent the day at his home, then they went to the Lobster Pot in Bristol for dinner at night but as usually happens at all the popular eating places these days, the sign was on the door saying that they had fed all the people that they could accommodate for that day so they had to go back to Warren to a small restaurant for a sandwich. Afterwards they went to Rhodes, then he had to go back at nine o'clock in the morning on Sunday.

Timmie was also home and sang in the choir. It is remarkable how that choir loft keeps full and the (w)onderful work that they do. Sunday they sang a very fine arrangement (By Mr. Balzar) of "This is My Country." Tommie arrived home about dinner time! Just in from patrol and had to go back at quarter of six this morning. He is expecting his permanent assignment any day now but was not at liberty to say what. In the afternoon, he and Timmie, Ethel and Clara and some nurse friend of Ethel's came to the house and believe it or not, I returned Clara's cameo to her at that time! Marilyn was at the Schmid's but I telephoned her and she soon was home where everyone could admire the baby. They all thought she is a darling as she is. Her eyes are large and very dark blue and the whites of them are still very bluish. Ethel and Clara brought her a dainty pink sweater.

Just before they arrived Mary Noyes appeared looking very snappy in her WAVES uniform and happy as a lark. She is stationed in Washington in the de-coding department and of course could say nothing about her work except that it is most interesting and that she is very happy to be stationed in Washington. Next week they move into their new barracks, sleeping a hundred girls in a room. She has blossomed out under all this experience and is a gal to keep your eye one (*sic*) and not spoken for yet (Dean Phinney is out of the picture, I think). Bob Noyes has just received his JG and is Mary proud of her brother!

Last night Alice Jones and I went to the Auditorium to hear Alec Templeton and just below us sat, Tommie, Timmie, Dick Johnson, Roger Brown, Ethel, Clara, Trudy and Connie Brown and of all things, a long black cigar in Tommie's fingers! He certainly hasn't been smoking them very long for he was most awkward with it and it took him the entire evening to consume it. That is the only thing I dislike about the Pop concerts, is the clouds of smoke. Templeton was marvellous (*sic*) and so very clever at musical composition. Of course you know that he had been blind from birth and once he hit the microphone knocking it to the floor, as it was being re-instated he played and sang the cleverest little ditty about how this had never happened to him before and it "certainly was immense to think it should happen to him in Providence." His classical music was beautifully played, every bit of it having been memorized by ear.

After the performace (*sic*) Mrs. Buffum met us and drove us home, first stopping with Hope and Connie Allen, or I should say Mrs. Mohr. Both inquired about you and Hope even took your address with the express purpose of writing you but we know how busy she is just now. Besides her regular school work she uses all her spare time to interview

candidates for camp which seems to be filling up satisfactorily. Mrs. Mohr's oldest son, a marine, has just been home after a year away.

Tonight was to be the annual Ladies' Night for the CYMBC. The Plantations Club had been hired as had the orchestra and speaker, one of the columnist(s) from the Journal, but the re-sponse was so small that the affair has been called off for the first time in thirty-five years and just a small affair will be held at the church tonight.

It must have been an interesting ride to Key West if it wasn't too hot. I shall get out the old Geographics and see what kind of a place you are in. Don't worry about not having anything to write about. We are always interested to small details, such as the food you have, how your uniforms are holding out, what moving pictures you see and comments on them, whether any of your former associated (*sic*) are with you, what you hear from any of your friends in the service, all perhaps trivial to you but most interesting to us at home.

Have I asked you for suggestions for your birthday? I know there is not much you can use but perhaps there are accessories for your uniforms that you might enjoy having duplicated or some certain kind of candy or something similar that would appeal to you.

Your birthday card to Marilyn was very clever and you were a bright boy to keep the date in your mind. We gave her a chest for her silver and a lovely pocket-book. She manages so beautifully about the baby, handles her cleverly and keeps her immaculate and this last week she gained nine ounces and five is considered enough. We have some snapshots taken Easter Sunday that we are having printed—not too good as it was windy and she kept her eyes closed but just to give you an idea.

It must have been a strain for you to keep at studying ever since last August but I know you can take it and hope you are finding it interesting. I notice you say nothing about getting home but of course, we are hoping that after these eight weeks are over, you will ask for and be granted leave for it seems as though you should have it after all this time. Do you find it terrifically hot or are you so far out in the water that the sea breezes are a relief?

We had a short note from Jesse this week. He is down stairs again and getting along all right. Said he had had a cheer up card from you which I know was appreciated.

We still are having fun getting our food. Meat seems almost non-existant (*sic*) although last Friday Mrs. Buffum and I happened to be in the Piggily-Wiggily just as five hams arrived so we pooled our ration points and bought one together having it split down lengthwise so as to have it evenly divided. Potat(o)es have entirely disappeared and we are substituting macaroni, rice and very often R.I. Johnny cakes but nobody seems to mind and Marilyn is so different, eats whatever we have with no comments whatsoever. Can you imagine that a year ago?

We often wonder what you are doing at a particular time. Is the time zone the same as ours? Keep plugging and write us when you can.

Ever so much love,

Mother (Transcription ends)