[Transcription begins]

#55 Sept. [indecipherable], 1944 (I think I sent you two unnumbered letters from Coles & think that makes this #55)

Dear Douglas - Of course the big news around here is the hurricane. Dad had no damage at his shop this time altho plenty of cellars down town were flooded but the tide had been receding for over two hours before the storm struck. It was very exciting--all day the radio told of the storm's progress & warned us over & over again to take all precautions. I did not feel uneasy to be at Coles with Daryl, for our cottage was not touched last time but I did begin to feel rather lonely as the police came in warning all the front row families to vacate & as man after man arrived from the city to get his family to safety. About five o'clock Dad appeared, quite excited & worn out from putting his office equipment & tools as high in the shop as possible. We worked like mad, piling everything necessary into the car & reached Grand Avenue all right & Daryl went right to bed & slept thru it all. About nine the electricity went & we decided to go to bed & get some sleep before the peak which was expected about eleven but we found we were much to [sic] excited. The winds became terrific with a strange moaning sound & the rain was torrential. But finally the storm passed & in the morning the only damage in our immediate neighborhood was a pile of branches but several beautiful old trees in Edgewood are down & we had no electricity until last night so had to depend on candles, ice & no radio. At Coles, the wharf was destroyed & a large cabin boat thrown upon the beach. There was no loss of life around here & we feel that the radio did a fine job of warning & keeping the public informed. Wendell Brown with Marjorie sailed his boat in back of Gaspee Point, there is a very secure cove between that & the High Banks & about twenty other boats found refuge there. The Cape was very hard hit--one cottage was moved almost intact more than a mile over the swamps--communications are down & there has been some looting. But by the time you get this, it is surprising how normal things will be again. The ceilings in our house had just been re-done & we have bad water streaks in Marilyn's room & the bathroom.

Our new paper looks very fine & we feel so clean & fresh. The piano is still with us, I keep thinking you might get home & [indecipherable line] Marilyn is still in Rockland but hopes to come home by automobile Wednesday this week. Daryl is a good little thing but lively as a cricket. We spent Sunday at Coles--Dad painting the front of the house so that she couldn't be on the porch & did I have my hands full!

Some family down there had rescued a baby blue jay last May & had to leave it when they returned to the city. Almost as soon as we arrived Sunday, "Blue Boy" appeared. When Dad started scraping the pain he jumped on Dad's shoulder & there on to his head & stayed there no matter how hard Dad worked! He wouldn't get out of Chip's way (luckily we had left Bing at home) & landed on Daryl's head & on mine or sat on the backs of the chairs & would take anything out of our hand. He finally flew down to stay with the Sargents in front of us, but we hated to see him go!

Mrs. Buffum has just called up to give me Tommie's new address:

Lt. (jg) Thomas B. Buffum, Jr. USNTB
Hotel Villa D'Este, Miami, Florida

Timmie is assigned to a dry dock on the West Coast & is Asst. Superintendent of some ship they are repairing. Edmund Brown told him about some plane connected with Pratt & Whitney & he got on it at Hartford & went as far as Kansas City without its [sic] costing him anything! You might inquire "just in case."

I hope Betty Shaw really tries to do something with writing--I hear young John Leonard is now one of the editors of *Time*. I don't know how up to date your reading matter is as far as *Life* is concerned but eventually you may come across the copy with quite a write-up about Thornton Burgess[1] & his picture.

I wish you had a little more time for reading for I know how you enjoy it & how it relaxes you. Yes I enjoyed Wolcott[2] [sic] & you can imagine what a treat it was to see him take the lead in person in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* which of course was written about [indecipherable lines]

[Indecipherable] different friends for you will not feel so out of touch with everyone when you return. I am enclosing the death notice of Charlotte Hewitson's mother & I am sure a short note from you would be much appreciated by Charlotte for Mrs. Hewitson was always so nice to you. Even if you haven't her address you can send it home to Hudson Place & it will be forwarded. I think she is a Lieut.

Yes, Dad is still struggling with the cutting grass problem! He said only tonight that he would have to cut it once more but first it must all be raked clear of hurricane debris.

Tomorrow night I am having scallops for supper, the first of the season--does that make your mouth water?

We will do what we can to have your pen fixed & will try to send you another to replace it.

I can well remember that remark, "A year in the Army would do you good!" but it seems to me it was more often applied to Marilyn than [sic] to you! But her stay at the Vineyard did a lot for her & her care & responsibility for Daryl & concern over Bill is making a woman of her. You remember how indifferent she was with Tommie & Charlie Leach, you should see her now when we have company. She stays around & holds her own in the conversation!

Your last letter #127 telling of dress regulations, provisioning of your ship, was all very

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[1] Thornton Burgess of Sandwich, Massachusetts, was a conservationist and the popular author of many children's stories and books.

[2] Alexander Woollcott was an American critic and commentator for the New Yorker magazine as well as an actor in several plays. Not only did he play the part of protagonist in *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, he served as the inspiration for the character.

interesting to us. So much of that has become routine to you that perhaps you don't realize how every little detail is enjoyed.

I still do not consider myself on speaking terms with either Hitler or the Mikado when I think that they have kept you out of my sight for one whole year! But I figure that the time is just ½ over & the second half will go much faster than the first!

Everett Jones is graduated but still unassigned so they are staying at the beach until October first.

When I type my letters to you they are much more readable but Dad was using it [the typewriter] tonight for some CYMBC work.

In about fifteen minutes we are going to try to tune in on Admiral Nimitz[3] who is scheduled for an important broadcast but the station was not mentioned so we will have to twirl the dial.

We know that we can send you only trifles for a Christmas remembrance. How would you like to have us buy you either *Pinafore* or *The Mikado* or *Gondoliers* (record sets) & keep it for your return?

We're thinking of you constantly & as we know you are of us.

Ever so much love
Mother [Transcription ended]

[3] Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was a five-star admiral in the US Navy, holding the dual command of Commander in Chief, US Pacific Fleet as well as Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas during the War. After the War, he served as Chief of Naval Operations until 1947.