

[Transcription begins]

#71 Tuesday morning 12-19-44

Dear Douglas - Eight o'clock in the morning is not too good a time to try to write a letter, but I am going down town to finish my Christmas shopping and want to mail this. I had hoped to write a long Christmas letter before this but every day has been full because either I would be down town shopping or Marilyn would and that meant I had Daryl and try and write a letter with that cricket around! This morning we awoke to find the world a beautiful white piece of scenery with snow still falling. Dad has finished shoveling and plowed down the middle of the street hoping to find the bus running. The weather man has promised it would stop by tonight. When I saw him struggling with his overshoes it brought to mind the agony you used to endure! I bought a nice book of records for Mr. & Mrs. Buffum--did them up in white paper with dark blue ribbon and a bunch of artificial holly in the center. I'm sure they are going to be surprised when it is opened. Tommie has been home for three nights from Boston, just as you were, for his ship was there for a short stay but now he is definitely on his way. Dad & I stopped at his home for a few minutes Saturday evening. Bob Green with Isabel Keene were there & later we went on to the Browns' & they followed, having picked up Trudie in the meantime & over there we saw Roger Brown & his wife & Charles. Roger thinks he is heading heading [sic] for the coast--Charles is home for 30 days. Roger H's ship has been damaged & he expects a 30 day leave sometime after the new year. I will take care of a present for Grandma for you, your little box for "the girls" has come & if you haven't picked up anything [indecipherable] for Dad & I can wait a day or two to see if the mail brings anything, I will get something for him. He is still enjoying the ties you sent him last year (I think).

No, I am not envious of your eating steak, for we want you men to have the best. We are not suffering by any means & in fact it is quite interesting to see how we can get along. Last week I bought a piece of beef called Utility Grade which is so far below Grade A that no points were required & by adding catsup to the kettle which helped to tenderize it, we had one of the nicest stews I ever made but often we will get a pot roast that no amount of cooking can make tender. This morning I shall stop at the First National to see what the chances are for turkey, and I think they are good. Bill may be home as he is back at Rockland again & if he is they will go to Schmid's to dinner, if not Marilyn will be with us. In any event I shall have a real Christmas dinner ready & the Millards will be with us. When I comment on your not saying anything in your letters, don't think I am tempting you to tell anything--I wouldn't have you do that for the world--in fact--I say with pride that you have never disclosed a thing to us and you have never even hinted where you have been or are going. So many people boast "my son & I have fixed up a code" as tho any fool couldn't think of that & I know many an officer who has done that very thing and then never used it, showing how serious they realize it is when they actually are out there. I know you enjoy seeing Alan Grimes & Jim Peery--do hope I can meet them sometime. If any of your friends are [is] ever sent this way, do have them at least telephone us. Only this week some friend of Roger H's telephoned his people from Maine. Your #141 arrived in six days. We shudder at the name of Dabney! I might explain that I do not paragraph so as to save space. I'm wondering what I wrote about Thanksgiving at Carver to give you the impression of many there. Blanche's family

drifted in to say "Hello" but were all with their in-laws for dinner & just Dad & I, Blanche & Jesse sat down to the table. We wonder & wonder what your type of work can be to keep you so busy! But we sympathize with your having to wait so long for service for that is a common occurrence here.

Yes, there are many pathetic cases of broken families in this war and we can't understand some people but I always feel if the background has been stable & fine, character will endure. Both you & I number among our acquaintances shallow natures and I am thankful, as you are, that Dad & I had such fine families in back of us--it tells every time --there is more to picking a wife than face & figure. And even at that, some fine people crack up under too heavy a strain. I pity the poor boy of whom you write & do hope that a way will be found to salvage his baby from the debris of his family life. If he comes from a place of any size he could get in touch with the Family Welfare Society, Soc. for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC) or Legal Aid Society and of course the Red Cross--any of these agencies is splendid to deal with.

This will probably not reach you before Christmas & we hope you had a pleasant day.

Lovingly
Mother

I'll write again in a day or two but Daryl is on the rampage at my elbow, Chip is tearing thru the house barking like mad because the milkman is delivering--M is trying to get the stamps on the Christmas cards, the radio is blaring forth "Tel-a-test"--how peaceful it must be over on Leyte with just the mere crash of shells! [Transcription ends]