

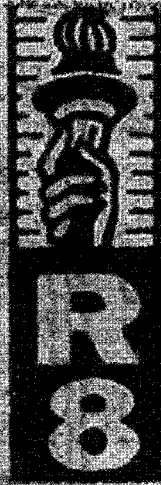
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Rhode Island History

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Rhode Island History



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Edited by JANE LANCASTER;

annotated by JANE LANCASTER *and* ELIZABETH C. STEVENS

3



Dec. 7 - This is a sleepy Sunday afternoon at home. We are in the little
Sunday upstairs sitting room. Mother sewing, I writing and Doraace listen -
sing to the portable radio.

I haven't anything to write about, really, and the Philharmonic is fast
putting me to sleep although the broadcast is interrupted now and then
with news bulletins on the tense "Far Eastern Situation". After all we
have been more or less tense for months.

Late - I guess this is it! Japanese dive bombers have attacked Honolulu!

4:30 news bulletin. Take down as given. Parachute troops sighted -
Pearl Harbor attacked by dive bombers - Manila bombed - smoke of anti-
aircraft guns over Pearl Harbor - from 50 to 100 planes from Japanese air-
craft carrier - attacks of Japanese government at Washington burning secret
papers.

We are shocked silent. Doraace who is coming down with a cold is too
carried away by the intermittent bulletins to realize how rotten she feels.

The Albert Spalding program, Victor Herbert selections, Cox Michael's Stardust,
Castelano's orchestra.

5 P.M. At last more news - fragmentary, probably inaccurate.

Washington: President Roosevelt dictating message to Congress. Probable
declaration of war tomorrow. Heavy damage and loss of life in Hawaii.
It was a dawn attack. All aerial observation posts in two Angles island
manned, Naval engagement reported. Pearl Harbor under bombardment.
Well, here it is: we're at war.

We hang close to the radio listening to program after program afraid
we may miss a news bulletin no matter how vague or uncom-
firmed the reports may be. The Prudential (Insured) Hour with
Gene Taylor, Gladys Swarthout singing Paradise in Valley Time from
the motion picture Champagne Valley.

At last, another bulletin. Japan announces she has entered a state
of war with Britain and the United States from dawn to day Dec. 7, 1941.
Government order just issued comes over W.P.R.O.: The Secretary of War
orders that all plants working on defense orders institute a guard
against sabotage.

Jimmy Cat pounces in my lap. The news has come to an end. The
program returns to Gladys Swarthout.

5:45 - William F. Shuber, news commentator. Speaks of "flagrant
aggression . . . a war after 23 years of and one month of uneasy peace
". The battleship Oklahoma set on fire by Japanese bombs.
I should be reacting to this in some ~~way~~ but I remain incred-
ulous and interested, nothing more as yet.

An attempt has been made to contact overseas - no result.

Honolulu - C.B.S. calling Honolulu - no answer. Calling Manila - C.B.S.
calling Manila, go ahead Manila - no answer.

We take time out for supper, our ears on the radio.

“I Go into Detail Mostly on Account of Posterity”: Extracts from the World War II Diary of Helen Clarke Grimes

Edited by JANE LANCASTER;
annotated by JANE LANCASTER
and ELIZABETH C. STEVENS

On New Year’s Day, 1920, fifteen-year-old Helen Clarke sat in her bedroom in Mystic, Connecticut, and wrote in her diary, “I know I write more than I should in a very rambling way, but I go into detail mostly on account of posterity.” She was conscious that her diary would be a historical record; as she wrote in 1919, “What is the use of a diary unless it is passed on?” It is fortunate for us and for posterity that she felt this way and that her husband honored her wishes, for Helen Clarke Grimes had a unique voice.

Helen Grimes described the everyday happenings of her family and her world, the books she read (which were many), the meals she ate (although she was always tiny and slender, she loved to eat), the places she visited, the men she flirted with, and the people she met. She also described the Great Depression and World War II, including the effects of unemployment, poverty, and war on her husband and herself. She wrote in a tiny, neat hand in exercise books with mottled black covers, the sort that can still be bought at any corner drugstore, and pasted in newspaper clippings, photographs, and souvenirs of her travels.



Helen May Clarke was born in Mystic, Connecticut, on 17 September 1905. Her family was proud of its English heritage: on her father’s side she was descended from Joseph Clarke, brother of Dr. John Clarke, the founder of Newport, and on her mother’s side from Robert Burrows, who settled in the Mystic area in 1651.

Helen’s father, Asa Hoxie Clarke (1870-1928), was a choleric, often cynical man; he was away from home for much of her early childhood, and Helen consequently became closer to her grandfather Lyman E. Hill (1837-1918). Helen’s mother, Alice Bowen Hill Clarke (1878-1943), was a conventional woman, given to worrying about respectability. Helen had a sister, Constance, six years younger than herself, who would have a somewhat tempestuous marriage with a cousin, Oliver Clarke.

Helen grew up in comfortable circumstances; her family was not rich, but certainly not poor. Small and slim, with dark hair and big eyes, she was a very pretty child, though she sometimes doubted it. She would always look much younger than her age. An avid reader, she spent some of her happiest hours in the local library. But she was less happy at school, and she failed to graduate from Stonington High School, mainly because she had missed classes in her freshman year when she was recovering from an attack of influenza (it was 1919, the year of the great flu epidemic, which killed millions of people). Helen’s teachers were not always sympathetic to a precocious reader, and she had to suffer a whole semester of *Treasure Island* while reading her way through Washington Irving, Jane Austen, and Darwin’s *Origin of Species*. At sixteen she alternated swooning over Rudolph Valentino with reading Nietzsche, and she pondered which boy was going to kiss her while she made her way through Carlyle’s *French Revolution*.

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The beginning of the 7 December 1941 entry in the Helen Clarke Grimes diary, September 1940-January 1942. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7766).

and her friends celebrated V-E Day. Her 1941 diary entries from 6 through 11 December, and the beginning of the 12 December entry, are transcribed in full; the excerpts that follow are taken from entries ranging from January 1942 to July 1945. Entry dates are

printed in boldface, but spelling, capitalization, and punctuation follow the diary. All interpolations—including editorial ellipsis points—are enclosed in brackets; Helen sometimes used ellipsis-like dots in her diary, and these are transcribed unbracketed.

People mentioned in these extracts include the Grimeses' neighbors Charlie and Harriett, who lived in the other duplex apartment of the rented two-family house that they and the Grimeses shared on Swan Street in Spragueville; Edgar Payette, a friend, who ran a store in Spragueville village and had something of a crush on

Helen; Maxine, Myra, Ann, Barbara, and Evelyn, women Helen knew when she worked at Brown & Sharpe; and Hugh, Evelyn's husband. Most of these people are not identified by surname in the diary.



The Grimeses' house in Spragueville, Smithfield. Grimes diary, 1942, first page. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7773).

Helen Clarke Grimes, thirty-four years old and a childless housewife, was at home in Spragueville with her husband and her mother on Sunday, 7 December 1941. The three of them sat listening to the radio as a momentous drama unfolded six thousand miles away. The Japanese attack began in Hawaii at dawn, or about 1:20 P.M. eastern standard time.

The networks' reactions to the news of Pearl Harbor may seem strange to those accustomed to twenty-four-hour news coverage. Normal, live Sunday night programming continued, although programs were interrupted from time to time for news flashes. Helen's account is thus a striking mélange of news, entertainment, and private life, all suffused with a certain ironic awareness of the contrast between the incoming war news and the stuff of everyday life—the actions of her cat, a chip on her nail polish, the clanking of the radiator.

Helen had been writing and worrying about the looming war for months. The information she heard that day was fragmentary, with the losses inflicted in the attack greatly understated. In the surprise attack, waves of Japanese torpedo planes and dive bombers showered destruction and death on some ninety American battleships and other military craft that were moored in the harbor, located near Honolulu. An official report stated that the military of the United States suffered a total of 3,435 casualties, of which 2,280 officers and men were killed or fatally wounded. (U.S. Congress, Report of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack [Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1946], 64-65).

Helen's wrote her first entry for December on Saturday, the sixth.

Dec. 6—These last few days have been remarkably warm for December, with a pea soup fog mornings and nights, but of slightly lesser density thru out the day. Harriett and Charlie have a new G.R. Combination phonograph and radio, and we have listened to Ravel, Cesar Franck, Gershwin, Kreisler, Brahms and Liszt. Someone gave her a recording of Lynn Fontaine's reading of *The White Cliffs of Dover*. Everything reeks of propaganda these days, but I must admit Lynn Fontaine made a moving thing of it.¹

It is so unseasonably warm the doors are open and the men have driven over to Greenville for ginger ale and ice cream.

We spent the afternoon in Providence bucking the holiday crowd, but at least we accomplished the greater part of our shopping. The stores are jammed this Christmas with people who due to the threat of war, are enjoying fat pay envelopes for the first time in years.

We had dinner at Anderson's, and spent a pleasant evening with Constance and Oliver at their apartment. Came home with a splitting headache.

Forgot to say that the traffic was doubly bad because of the Army returning from the South Carolina maneuvers.

Dec. 7—This is a sleepy Sunday afternoon at home. We are in the little upstairs sitting room, Mother sewing, I writing, and Dorrance listening to the portable radio.

I haven't anything to write about, really, and the Philharmonic is fast putting me to sleep although the broadcast is interrupted now and then with news bulletins on the tense "Far Eastern Situation." After all we have been more or less tense for months.

.....
 Later—I guess this is it! Japanese dive bombers have attacked Honolulu!²

.....
 4:30—News bulletin. Taken down as given. Parachute troupes sighted—Pearl Harbor attacked by dive bombers—Manila bombed—smoke of anti-aircraft guns over Pearl Harbor—from 50 to 100 planes from Japanese aircraft carrier—attachés of Japanese government at Washington burning secret papers.

We are shocked silent. Dorrance who is coming down with a cold is too carried away by the intermittent bulletins to realize how rotten he feels.

The Albert Spalding program, Victor Herbert selections, Carmichael's Stardust, Castelanetz orchestra.³

.....
 5 P.M.—At last more news—fragmentary, probably inaccurate.

Washington: President Roosevelt is dictating message to Congress. Probable declaration of war tomorrow. Heavy damage and loss of life in Hawaii. It was a dawn attack. All aerial observation posts in Los Angeles ordered manned. Naval engagement reported. Pearl Harbor under bombardment.

Well, here it is: we're at war.

We hang close to the radio listening to program after program afraid we may miss a news bulletin no matter how vague or unconfirmed the reports may be. The Prudential (Insurance) Hour with Deems Taylor and Gladys Swarthout singing Paradise in Waltz Time from the motion picture Champagne Waltz.⁴

At last, another bulletin. Japan announces she has entered a state of war with Britain and the United States from dawn to-day Dec. 7th, 1941. Government order just issued comes over WPRO: The Secretary of War orders that all plants working on defense orders institute a guard against sabotage.⁵

Jimmie Cat jumps in my lap. The news has come to an end, the program returns to Gladys Swarthout.



A cat, possibly Mrs. Grimes's Jimmie Cat. Loose photographs from Grimes diaries. RIHS Collection (RH1 X3 7765).

5:45—William L. Shirer, news commentator. Speaks of “flagrant aggression . . . a war after 23 years and one month of uneasy peace” . . . the battleship Oklahoma set on fire by Japanese bombs.⁶

I should be reacting to this in some way, but I remain incredulous and interested, nothing more as yet.

An attempt has been made to contact overseas—no result. Honolulu—CBS calling Honolulu—no answer. Calling Manila—CBS calling Manila, go ahead Manila—no answer.

We take time out for supper, our ears on the radio.

6:30—All marines notified to return to their stations . . . order from Quonset.⁷

Guam has been attacked by a squadron of planes . . . Elmer Davis, commentator. *He* must have seen this happening months ago. Senator Wheeler, isolationist says sensibly enough that “there is nothing to do now but lick the hell out of them.” The Japanese have struck at Singapore, sinking two British ships.⁸

We now hear Albert Warner, Washington news commentator—and next, Maj. Elliot who says the Japanese plan plainly underway for two weeks during treacherous negotiations at Washington. I have a conviction we have been sold down the river again. A year ago Oliver said every navy man on Jamestown said we’d be at war with Japan shortly. I suppose *Major* Elliot didn’t know, or our beloved President! Well, this is no time to think of that. We *are* at war.⁹

Notice: all recruiting offices open to-morrow.

7:00—censorship on all out going cablegrams and radio messages. The Jack Benny Program . . . Don Wilson, the announcer . . . “J-E-L-L-O with that locked in flavor.” An interruption; news from the office of the Providence Journal—Providence police are requested to round-up all enlisted men. War Extra editions are on the streets.¹⁰

I am surprised at Mother. I expected her to be shocked, horrified, but she seems excited, stepped up, her asthma forgotten.

The programs continue . . . a Dennis Day song. How are the performers reacting?—they must be getting this awful news.¹¹

More bulletins; Shanghai: the Japanese have taken over the American Light Company.

7:30—Providence Cake commercial . . . the Fitch (Shampoo) Band Wagon program with—Oh, another news bulletin, from the Prov. Journal: Gov. McGrath has called a meeting . . . Newport takes immediate precautions . . . six Japanese planes said to have been shot down. Unconfirmed report that Wake Island is occupied by Japanese. A black-out of Panama Canal ordered for to-night.¹²

Back to the scheduled program again: Horace Heit and the “Sphepherd’s Serenade,” with Frankie Carl at the piano . . . “I’ll Never Forget,” this weeks Band Wagons top tune.¹³

Just happened to remember that Elizabeth Colby and her husband are stationed at Honolulu.¹⁴

News bulletin: 104 dead and 300 wounded, not including civilian population as a result of Japanese raid on Hawaii.¹⁵

8:00—A Pinkerton Fur commercial . . . the Chase and Sanborn Coffee Hour with Charlie McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd on Edgar Bergen’s knee. Just ordinary Sunday night listening mixed in with a world shaking event.¹⁶

Ray Noble’s Orchestra . . . Abbot and Costello . . . Judy Garland, the guest star.¹⁷

News: The Governor of the Dutch East Indies has declared war on Japan . . . likewise Costa Rica. Well, that will be a help!

In Shanghai bombs fall on the International Settlement . . . and Judy Garland sings, Zing Went the Strings of My Heart. Commercial: Shop at Newberry's *first*. News flash: All women and children in Manila ordered evacuated. Mayor La Guardia has issued an order that all Japanese nationals remain in their homes until their status is settled.¹⁸



An interior view of the Grimeses' house in Spragueville, 1943. Loose photographs from Grimes diaries. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7770).

Back to the regular programs—this one Carter's Little Liver Pills and it is terrible. A long wait this time lasting through an Inner Sanctum mystery story and into the Ford Musical Hour which comes on at 9 o'clock. Jimmie Cat is in my lap again, mother is embroidering a bureau scarf for Constance. Somehow small things seem important—things I can understand like the radiator clanking as the steam comes up, or the small spot of nail varnish flaked from my thumb nail.¹⁹

9:30—At last more news. Washington officially announces 100 dead and 300 wounded. Wake Island is said to have surrendered to a superior Japanese force. There has been one—perhaps two—ship casualties. Japanese of San Francisco under careful watch.²⁰

Back to the Ford Hour, the second half of the program taking place at the U.S. Naval Training Station at Great Lakes, Illinois. There is a band, and a commanding officer, Rear Admiral John Downes thanks Edsel Ford for the new auditorium and recreational building presented by him to the Naval Training Station. We listen to the Training Station Chorus, the Training Station Band, and a Lieut. Edward Peabody who plays a medley of Southern airs on his banjo.²¹

10:00—Commercial: This Christmas shoppers are using Gerber's lay away plan. News Flash: Canada has declared war upon Japan.

Grand Central Station is jammed with men in uniform rounded up by Shore Patrol and Military Police from theatres, restaurants and bars. All officers on leave called back to their posts. State of emergency declared in San Francisco. Mother says thank God Constance isn't there.²²

At last they have established direct radio contact with the Phillipines. The commentator tells of one news reporter who broadcast over wrong chain in his haste.

The Telephone Company makes an announcement. Long distance so over taxed it is asked that no calls be made unless strictly necessary.

Clare Booth and Vincent Shean speak. Shean describes Wake Island and the base made there, and the 1100 American soldiers now probably the prisoners of the Japanese.²³

The Army and Navy Departments are flooded with pleas from families for knowledge of men in Hawaii and the Phillipines.

10:30—Following a Nylon hosiery commercial comes a CBS special broadcast. There is an unconfirmed report of a big naval engagement at sea. Eric Severied reports from

Washington: the city is swarming with reporters, the portico is lighted; there are lines of shiny cars and a mass of faces standing in the cold waiting news.²⁴

There has been heavy destruction at Hawaii. Unconfirmed reports state that we have lost two capital ships and the airfield has been leveled. President Roosevelt will address joint session of Congress at 12:30 to-morrow.

It is 4:30 in London. Parliament meets today to declare war on Japan directly after America.²⁵

A Columbia broadcast: Guam is in trouble . . . Shanghai bombed. I have smoked until my mouth is dry: I am too tired to write more. It is now eleven o'clock, we have been glued to the radio for hours.

Dec. 8—This Monday morning we face a turquoise and coral sunrise with the sick realization that we are at war, and that the radio bulletins are not something by Orson Welles.²⁶

We had turned the radio off at eleven o'clock last night, worn dull by hours of incessant listening, and were about to go to bed when Charlie and Harriett who had spent the day at his mother's, came home with two copies of the War Extra.

We talked until twelve, soberly with no fine frenzy to fire us.

Constance and Oliver phoned, but there was nothing to say.

It is 8 AM and the news is pouring in over the radio.

Hongkong has been bombed, and there is a report of 200 casualties suffered at Singapore. Ford Wilkins in Manila says there has been no violence in that city as yet. He tells of Japanese landing on some parts of the Phillipines, of the round-up and internment of Japanese in Manila; of the evacuation of Manila, and of a naval battle reported in the Pacific.²⁷

A Washington commentator says our losses are far more serious (in Hawaii) than given out. Hangars have been flattened, planes destroyed, there has been torpedo damage—altogether a heavy naval defeat.

At night the lights burned in embassy windows along Massachusetts Avenue [in Washington, D.C.].

In Providence, the State Guard has been mobilized, and roving guards placed at industrial plants, at the airport, and along the waterfront.²⁸

On the West Coast few went to bed last night, excitement running high the thoroughfares crowded.

Charles Collingwood in a report from London, speaks of grey parliament buildings, and of Churchill in his black Homburg hat.²⁹

Arthur Krock, in writing of the American reaction in the "N.Y. Times," says one can almost hear national unity click into place.³⁰

This is a grim day. Here, in one of the smallest communities in the smallest state in the union, the stark branches of the apple trees are bleak and cold against a lowering sky.

Mother is having an asthma attack.

Twelve o'clock noon—The sun is out, the sky a thin wash of blue.

Japanese planes are only forty miles from Manila.

12:30—President Roosevelt spoke to the joint session of House and Senate, a short address of five hundred words, at the end of which he asked "that Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday Dec. 7th, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."³¹

The "President Pierce" reported to have been torpedoed, was the first dollar liner on which Oliver sailed to the Orient.³²

A news flash breaks into a concert of chamber music to tell of an air raid now in progress over Manila.

12:30—The Phillipines direct. At 1:30 a terrific air attack had begun over Manila. It is thought that twenty-five American bombers have been destroyed. As the announcer broadcasts there is the sound of Japanese planes overhead.

An N.B.C. announcer on the roof of an eight story building reports a great fire which is destroying the gasoline supply dump on Nichols Field, a base airfield in the heart of Manila. He is panting from his run up eight flights of stairs, the elevator boy having deserted his post.

The stars were shining over the city and a bright moon rides directly over head. Galvanized iron rooftops stand out like mirrors, the black-out rendered futile by the moon.

3:30 PM—Prime Minister Churchill has delivered a solemn speech in a tired, husky voice.³³

4:30 PM—The tires of the news boy's bicycle grit on the gravel as he wheels up to the door. There is a thud as the "Providence Bulletin" hits the door. Its headlines have no power to shock those already benumbed by the radio.

9:35 PM—There is a report from the "San Francisco News Chronicle" that fifty unidentified planes have been sighted flying from the south west toward San Francisco. The city is blacked-out to a depth of ten miles.

10:00 PM—An air raid siren is blowing in San Francisco. All radio stations but one are off the air. Planes are said to have been seen off the Golden Gate. The man in the street is wondering if this is an air raid test or the real thing.³⁴

A copy of the November "Atlantic Monthly" lies on the table, the back page given over to a vacation ad: "Hawaii. Standing two thousand miles out in the gentle latitudes of the South Pacific . . ."

San Francisco motorists are driving without headlights.

The all-clear signal has been given. False alarm or practice work-out?

11:00 PM—A summary of to-day's events—and so ends the first day of this war. We go to bed wondering why, when for months there has been a strong possibility of war with Japan, our forces were caught napping.³⁵

Will close this with two lines from Shakespeare. King John, I think.

"For when you should be told they do prepare
The tidings come that they are all arrived."

It goes on: "O where hath our intelligence been drunk? Where hath it slept?" Oh, where indeed!³⁶

Dec. 9, Tuesday—Overslept this morning, but managed to get Dorrance off with his usual substantial breakfast comfortably warming his stomach.

Mother seems a little better—I have just taken her breakfast tray.

9 o'clock—The round-up of Italian, German and Japanese aliens in Providence has started.³⁷

Congress figures on a war of at least six years duration, and at least a billion lives. God!

No matter how long one has expected it, war, like Death is always a surprise.

9:05—A persistent rumor that American planes have bombed Formosa and Tokyo has no confirmation. I should think it extremely unlikely.³⁸

The Navy announces the minesweeper, Penguin has been sunk.³⁹

Outside, a chick-a-dee, light as a thistle, is hanging upside down from a twig, and the sun gives false warmth to the dry, brown oak leaves.

The first word we have of any air-craft in action over the Phillipines has just come in; a Japanese attack over Manila is reported to have been repulsed by American planes.

12:30—There has been a report that Japanese planes have been spotted approaching Long Island. Sirens have sounded at Mitchell Field and planes have gone into the air. All airfields in the vicinity are alerted.

1 PM—The War Office declares there is no foundation for the report of planes over New England.

A U.P. bulletin says a well qualified military source claims that a strange plane, thought to be a scouting plane has been seen off the New England coast. While the War Department insists there is no truth in the report, radio warnings are being broadcast to New York that if there is a necessity for an alarm, fire and police sirens will sound for five full minutes.

AP bulletin: hostile planes again reported.

1:30 PM—Special bulletin. Two hundred and eighty planes have taken off; fire fighting trucks and ambulances are in position. An air raid warning is expected at any moment. All public schools have been evacuated. An order has just come from Commissioner Valentine that New York residents remain indoors. All navy airfields and stations have been placed on the alert: all air raid wardens ordered to their respective stations.

Boston motorists have been asked to get their cars off the streets.

In Providence, Quonset has had an air alarm.

The scheduled radio programs are riddled with news bulletins.

1:55—New York has had its first alarm, and the all clear has sounded.

Went to the store. Edgar and the Bond Bread delivery man were talking excitedly.

2:30—Came back to the radio and the news of a second air raid alarm in New York. Commentator speaking from the top of a building over-looking Times Square, says crowds remain in the street oblivious to warnings.

2:40—The all clear has sounded.

A later bulletin: it has developed that the second alert was given because of a small fire on Mitchell Field, and was probably the result of confusion.

Washington still insists that it has no evidence of enemy planes off the East Coast. The commentator sounds exhausted.

3:20—Public safety officials now announce that the air-raid warnings in New England and New York were simply a part of the precautionary measures and that there were no enemy planes.

Still another bulletin says the air-raid warnings were the result of a "phony tip." Does anyone anywhere know anything?⁴⁰

9:30 PM—Listening-in to Fibber McGee and Molly, a little comedy for a change.⁴¹

10 PM—Have listened to President Roosevelt and believe very little of what he says.

Dec. 10—From London comes news that the ill-fated and short-lived Prince of Wales has been sunk by Japanese aircraft. In the year of its service it saw action with the Bismarck from which it emerged badly crippled, and later served as the meeting place of Churchill and Roosevelt in the mid-Atlantic.

The Repulse has been lost, too.⁴²

Keeping the radio tuned-in all day means listening to an endless series of "soap operas," the daytime serials for moronic women. The sensible thing is to listen to regular news broadcasts at stated intervals, but I find myself compelled to listen almost continuously for every stray bulletin, which is downright idiotic of me.

There is a report that American bombers have sunk one Japanese transport and hit five others, three by direct hits.

Noon 12:00—The Japanese attempt to land troops on Luzon has been beaten back by our forces.⁴³

The British report a heavy battle going on in Hong Kong.

No news from Germany.

The last of the trans-Atlantic steamship service has been discontinued. Only planes now link us to Europe.

Some idiot in Washington has chopped down four of the Japanese cherry trees along the Potomac, and pinned messages to the hacked trunks.

Dec. 11—Now that President Roosevelt has all the power he has demanded in his insatiable desire to rule absolute, it remains to be seen if he is capable of applying it wisely—or if he will continue his Grand Court of Lagado.⁴⁴

It is no time for national disunity, the people must stand or fall with the man thrice acclaimed by the majority.

An early report gives news of a Japanese battleship sunk by American bombers off the Phillipines.⁴⁵

This morning, Hitler in one of his high flown speeches declared Germany at war with the United States. Italy obediently tailed along.

By 10 o'clock we had received word that the United States had declared war against Germany.

A late bulletin reveals that there were four attacks on our fleet in Pearl Harbor: three on Sunday and a fourth on Monday, which may have been the basis of a preposterous rumor emanating from Washington itself the early part of this week that ninety percent of the fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor had been destroyed.⁴⁶

Dec. 12—Tin Pan Alley is said to be swatting out patriotic songs at a great rate of speed, although with the war only five days old none has as yet hit the air waves. Of course we have had Irving Berlin's "Any Bonds Today" for some time, but that might be classed as a pre-war song, as E. B. White remarked, "innocently combining patriotic fervor with a definite rate of interest." It is a tuneful affair and as such has become very popular. However, it is my belief that music will appeal to the heart, the soul, or the feet, but seldom touches the pocket book. [. . .]⁴⁷



After listening to the radio all week, Helen and Dorrance went about their Saturday pre-Christmas shopping as normal, and they celebrated Christmas 1941 with their family and friends.

In spite of drawing a low draft number, Dorrance was initially deferred because he worked at Brown & Sharpe, which had expanded into wartime production and employed some 11,119 people, a "Rhode Island employment record" (George H. Kellner and J. Stanley Lemons, Rhode Island: The Independent State [Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1982], 179). In 1944 he failed his draft physical for being underweight, and he was never called to serve. Until 1941 he had never had to pay income tax, but with taxation increased during the war and his wages steadily rising, by 1943 he was facing an annual tax bill of two hundred dollars, making Helen fearful that they would suffer financially.

Helen had a lot to say about the wartime scene in Providence. For instance, after seeing soldiers at Union Station on 31 January 1942, she noted that "The American soldier is trim looking cannon fodder. I thought, how burnished, new and young they look." There was never any likelihood that she would be in the military; she was thirty-seven years old, and relatively few women served—approximately one-third of a million out of 18 million women working during World War II.

In the early years of the war the Grimeses suffered minor irritations due to shortages and rationing, but like many others they used their connections to get what they needed. Helen's brother-in-law Joe was manager of Providence's Public Market, a circumstance that allowed Helen and Dorrance access to "under-the-counter" goods. Starting in May 1942, sugar and gas were rationed; as a clerk at Brown & Sharpe, Dorrance was allowed eight gallons of gas a week. After some initial skepticism about war bonds, Helen and Dorrance contributed to the war effort in a variety of ways: they bought war bonds, shared rides, collected scrap metal, and followed (albeit unwillingly) air raid precautions. With some luxuries still available, they ate out frequently, went to the movies, and sometimes took in a show in Providence.

In 1943, after her mother died, Helen joined the ranks of the employed, taking a clerical job in Brown & Sharpe's office. She was part of a trend: 26 percent of American women were in the labor force in 1940; by 1944 the proportion had risen to 36 percent, with the greatest increase among married women over thirty-five. Helen worked with eight other women, sorting and filing, and earned twenty dollars a week. After six months her pay was raised to twenty-three dollars a week. She enjoyed her work, though she had some harsh words to say about the new wartime women workers—and, as well, about the changes in sexual behavior that the war seemed to have brought about.

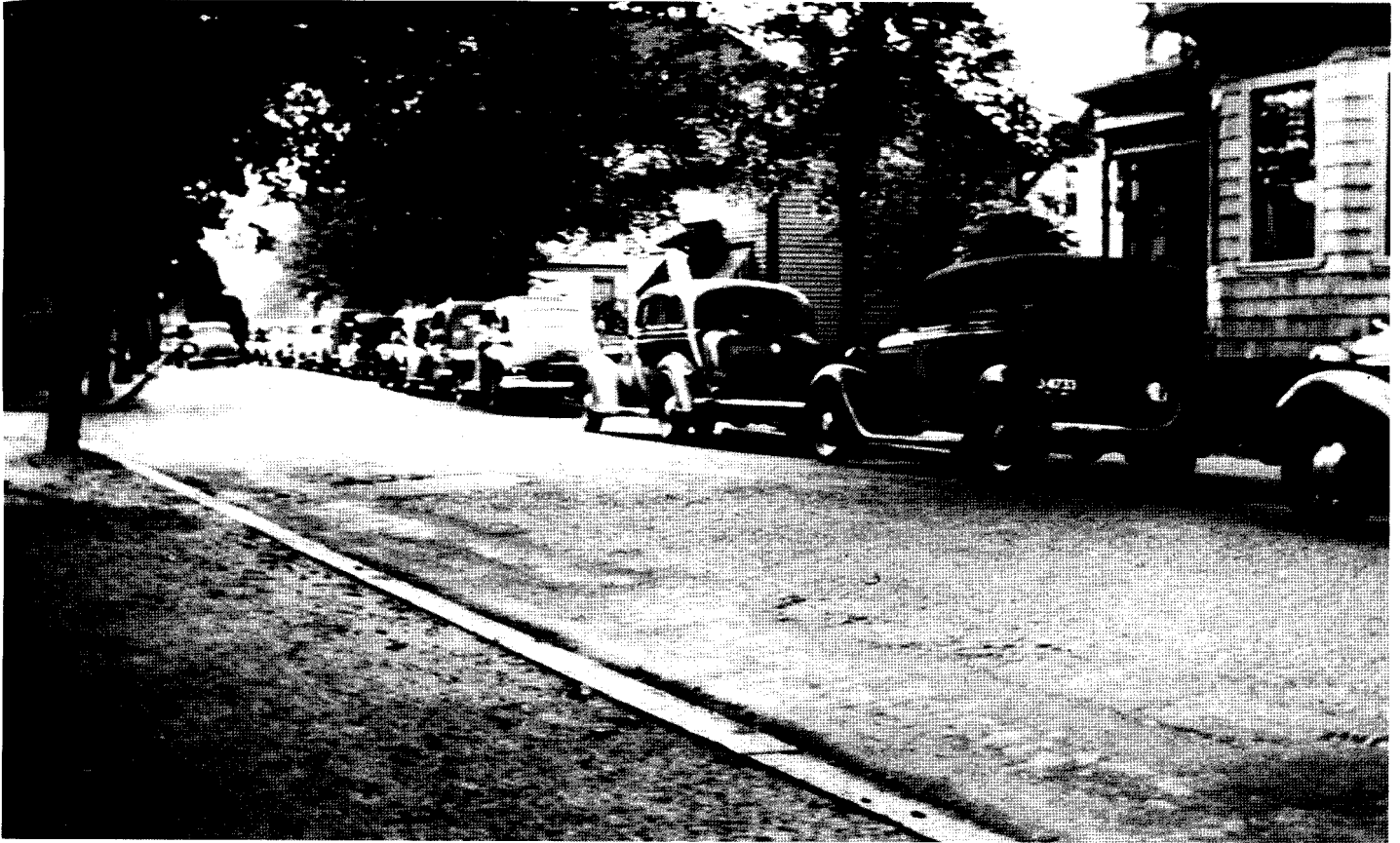
Helen Grimes had no great love for the Democrats, and in 1945 she recorded the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt without much regret. On the other hand, her excitement is evident in her account of V-E Day less than a month later.

The extracts from 1945—6 March, 10 July, 12 and 13 April, and 8 May—are transcribed from Helen Grimes's 1945 diary, in the collection of the Mystic River Historical Society, and are included here by permission..

RATIONING

[1942] Jan. 16—I could join the sugar hoarders if I chose—E[dgar] lets me have all I want, but save for an emergency ten pound bag I never buy more than the weekly supply. Constance says she can't get a two pound bag without first purchasing a dollar's worth of groceries.

[1942] Saturday Feb. 14—[...] In a First National Store in Centredale [I] read a printed request that customers return their paper bags. A clerk asked in a whisper if we could use a pound of sugar. Nodded our heads and walked out with an extra pound we hadn't expected to get.



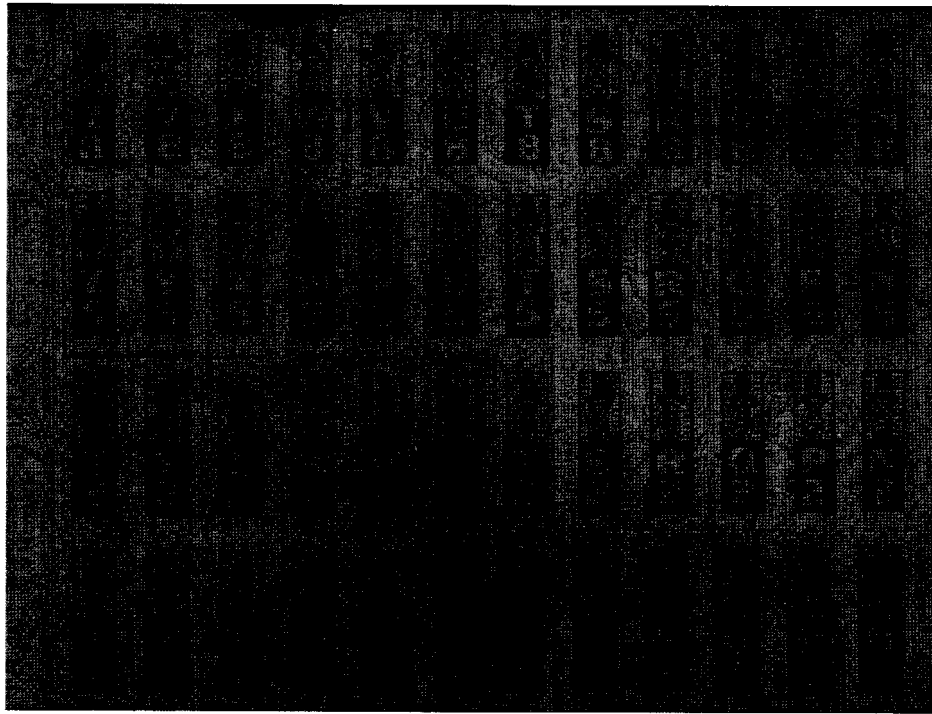
Cars waiting for gasoline on 21 July 1942, the day before wartime gas rationing went into effect. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7764).

[1942] March 2—So far, the toilet tissue shortage is funny. [...] I accepted Edgar's extra sugar easily enough and am learning to receive all extra toilet paper without embarrassment. After all, it is not the gift, but the spirit in which it is given!

[1942] August 1—The cats have gone on strike against the stuff sold as catfood and are turning into hunters to my distress.

[1943] Jan. 31—[...] I went to the markets for meat. At the Elm Farm women stood four deep before the meat counters and something easily mistaken for a football scrimmage was taking place in front of the last few straggling bits of hamburger. [...] The time may come when I shall stand in line and fight at meat counters, but not as yet.

[1943] Feb. 20—We had not availed ourselves of any privileges we might expect from Joe until today when we quite suddenly didn't give a damn. He let us have a nine pound ham which had been put away for someone else and also a pound of butter though none was on sale, both of which we accepted without a twinge of conscience.



World War II ration stamps from Ration Book Four, 1943. Ephemera Collection, World War II, RIHS Collection (RH1 X3 7775).

[1945] Mar. 6—Tuesday. Some people have always eaten kidneys, brains and sweetbreads—though it has never been a practice of ours, but so far as I know testicles are new to market showcases in this part of the country. Disgusting. Maxine says they are common in Arkansas where they are called “Mountain Oysters,” Lord knows why. I can cook Christian meat, but I don’t know how to cook gunk nor do I intend to learn.

[1945] July 10—OPA released a large number of shoes today. The crowds were terrific, some women buying ten pair apiece. The smell of hundreds of stocking feet was unbelievable.⁴⁸

AVOIDING WASTE

[1942] Oct. 12—Yesterday, trucks and men covered every street, road and laneway in Rhode Island collecting scrap from count-

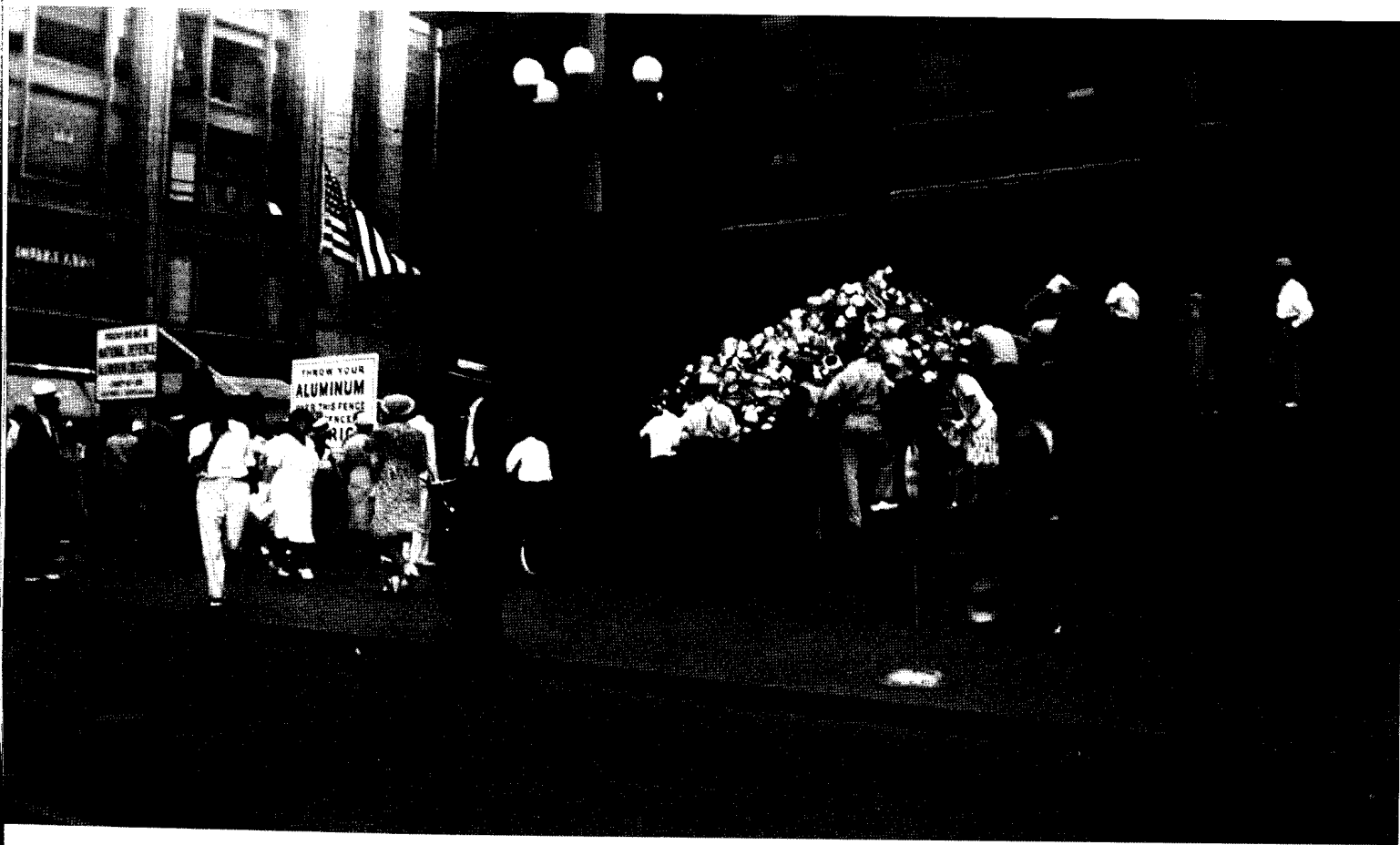
less attics and cellars. [. . .] Dorrance put on old clothes and dug thru the cellar and Charlie did likewise. The aluminum handle of an old vacuum cleaner came to light, several lengths of pipe, an old grate, an oil burner, a coil of good steel wire, rubber tubing, several metal objects as to what purpose we could only guess and a trash can. From our own possessions I threw a heavy metal wastebasket and a trash can. Harriett becoming obsessed with the desire to make the pile grow contributed a small nickel crumber, a garbage can and a wire coat hanger. After surveying the heap thoughtfully she demanded that Dorrance and Charlie take down and add an iron bed that someone had given her for emergencies and which needed a new mattress.

Charlie balked, but she kept at it so persistently he gave in although he lost his temper most completely. Harriett insisted that “ordinarily you’d have to pay a junk man to take it away.” Charlie’s repeated assertion was to the effect that she’d be damn sorry if her family got evacuated from Providence sometime and she didn’t have that bed to put them in because if a bomb ever fell her whole damn family would be living in our place. Harriett remarked that his family would land on them first. Hurt feelings resulted. However, two cans of junk were rolled to the end of the driveway flanked by the head board, foot board, side pieces and springs of the iron bed.

LUXURIES

[1943] January 31— [. . .] [We] hurried to the Metropolitan Theatre. [. . .] We were sorry [Duke Ellington] did not play more of his old familiar numbers—his new things can’t be grasped instantly, and were grateful for the medley in which “Sophisticated Lady,” “Deep Purple” and “Mood Indigo” brought a touch of familiarity. We pulsed with sound, we darn near burst with sound, it was completely marvelous.⁴⁹

[After the show] we entered the Biltmore. The Bacchante Room has been turned over to officers and their guests for the duration, and as a consequence the Town Room is terribly overcrowded. Fortunately we dropped upon a portion of a recently vacated leather lounge almost at once and within a few minutes we were drinking Manhattans



Aluminum is piled next to the steps of Providence City Hall during a World War II scrap-metal collection drive. Photograph by Clarence I. Brown. RIHS Collection (RH1 X3 7772).

in perfect comfort. The place was filled with uniforms of course—soldiers, sailors, W.A.C.'s, W.A.V.'s, cadets and S.P.A.R.'s all of the better class, with just enough civilians to keep one from feeling conspicuous. Dirty faced little newsboys darted in furtively with tabloids and sometimes managed to sell a few before a red coated waiter or bus boy with an air of pleased authority could send them scampering. There were very few in evening dress for it is smart not to dress in wartime. Trim girls in the tricky uniform of a stage maid wove in and out with their trays of glasses, tips jingling against tips in their black side pockets.⁵⁰

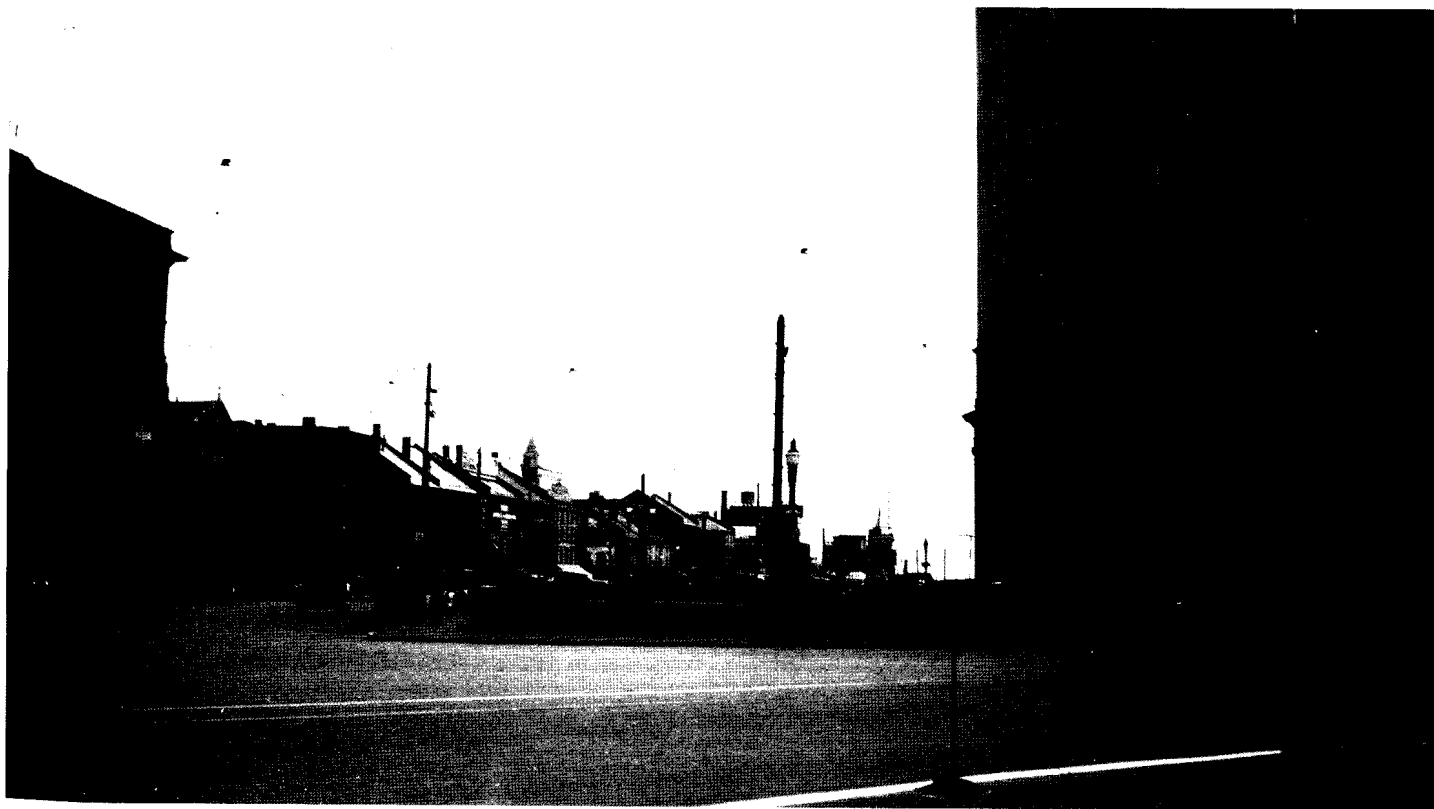
WOMEN AND WORK

[1942] Sept. 17—Dorrance says they are taking on women to run the screw machines at Brown & Sharpe's. There is nothing new in that of course, women have been taken on everywhere for jobs no one thought they could fill. And they are very cocky about it which seems silly to me. Led on by flattering editorials and magazine articles they believe they are competing with men when actually they are only competing with the ever increasing absence of men. A certain proportion of these women are working because their husbands are in some branch of the armed forces, and they must support themselves. And of course as more and more men are drained away women must fill the empty jobs. However there seems to be a vast crowd of sloppy, rough talking women who swagger about the streets, dirty, coarse, swinging dinner pails as if they had waited for this all their lives and at last have found their place in the scheme of things.

[1942] Nov 6—[. . .] [W]omen by the thousands have become greedy for money. One hears of women who boast that they never made so much money in their lives and who "hope the war goes on for years." Dorrance says "God help the men who come

back! These females will fight tooth and nail for what they've gained. You read about women from all walks of life taking jobs in machine shops, but all I know is, the ones I see in the plant are riff-raff."⁵¹

[1943] **October 24**—I went to work on Columbus Day at the Brown & Sharpe offices in the Hospital Trust Building, and have lived these last two weeks in a new world. I have been interested, entertained and sometimes disgusted, but every bit alive.⁵²



On the right in this photo is the Hospital Trust Building, where Helen Clarke Grimes worked in the offices of Brown & Sharpe. Photograph, circa 1940-1950, by John Hutchins Cady. RIHS Collection (RH1 C120 439).

CHANGES IN PRIVATE BEHAVIOR

[1942] **April 13**—Westminster Street used to be empty on a Sunday night; now men in uniform and in civilian clothes stroll up and down with girls in Easter finery, a vicious element hangs in doorways and alleys, and plain clothes men haunt the dine and dance places. A woman cannot walk unattended without inviting unwelcome attentions: there are stories of assaults, robberies and brawls. One seldom saw complete drunkenness on the main city streets, but now one is forced to side step many a reeling figure.

[1943] **December 12**—The girls [at Brown & Sharpe] are apparently a very moral bunch—as such things go now-a-days, but some of the others make you afraid to share the same rest room, no matter how gingerly. Myra sins so steadily it is no longer news. She tells of all her exploits, but as in *Nana* or *Moll Flanders*, so much getting in and out of bed with alacrity numbs ones interest.⁵³

[1944] **Sept. 22**—The world seems given over to fornication to an unprecedented degree. One gets more or less used to cast aside contraceptives and to doorway get-togethers, but when it is indulged at the movies—The only two seats available at a recent movie were in the back row of the balcony near the projector. No one in their right senses would choose to stay under such circumstances, but Ann and another moviemad kid kept on climbing until they found seats. Next to them were a couple,

the man a soldier, who were enjoying themselves to the utmost. Ann was honestly shocked, nevertheless her description was vivid and detailed.

[1944] October 7—I don't know whether it is the manpower shortage or because some change has taken place in Dorrance, but the girls in his office are after him. One in particular, whose husband has been in service for two months, tells him that of course she loves her husband, but she is starved sexually, apparently expecting him to do something about it. It amuses him and pleases him, though he denies it.⁵⁴

DEATH OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

[1945] Apr. 12—Thur. With our American victories on every German front we have been expecting news of VE Day momentarily, but world-shaking news of another kind broke to-day coming as a distinct surprize. President Roosevelt died from a cerebral hemorrhage at Warm Springs. The bulletin was not released until after five o'clock and our first intimation of it came from Charlie who, driving in later than we, had heard a broadcast in a little store on Federal Hill.⁵⁵

I never admired the President when he was alive and will not mourn hypocritically at his passing. Frankly, the eulogies make me sick. However, it would have been well if he had lasted out this term for which he strove so hard, as I have no faith in Vice Pres. Truman.

[1945] Apr. 13—Fri. The flag is at half mast, beautiful against the greening trees. Everywhere there is talk of the President's death, some who admired him speak in sorrow, others who did not, voice fear and uncertainty; while some are openly glad. You'd never guess the last from newspapers and radio—even the Providence Journal bent backwards in an attempt to be fair, but I heard instances of it; a shoe clerk who called it "the best thing that could have happened," a waiter in the Centredale Diner where we had supper (being unable to find meat), who was gleeful of the news. On the other hand there are those who wept and prayed, needing little to throw them into hysterics.

V-E DAY

[1945] May 8, VE DAY—Tuesday

I didn't think I should be so excited when it came, there have been so many statements and retractions, so much censorship, so much bickering between press and officials. Thanks to an AS correspondent who managed to get the news we've known about it though forced to wait for the announcement before celebrating.⁵⁶

Of course few of us are simple enough to believe we have any cause for a real celebration; we regard it as an emotional spree, a chance to let go as a soldier on a furlough; a safety valve.

All war plants were supposed to work, which was well and good. In many, radio loud-speakers brought Pres. Truman's address; but not at B & S. When the whistles blew people hung from windows throwing confetti, cheering and waving flags, but not at B & S. We were warned not to throw paper from the windows.

And so we walked out, a few at a time, until the place emptied of all but the old retainers. Barbara and I and several others went to Grace Church for a few minutes of quiet, and when we came out the city had begun to rock under the impact of its own exuberant joy. We walked down Westminster St., kicking paper streamers from our heels joyously, laughing and excited. For a wonder the sun was shining and a skittish breeze danced along the streets.⁵⁷



We were out less than half an hour when we returned to learn the place was closing. The workmen had been walking out at the plant since 8:30—partly to celebrate, but mostly I think in defiance of Henry D. Sharpe and his dictator complex. Workers have never dared defy him too much, even with the help of the Union, since the time twenty or more years ago when he closed the plant down and as he dourly threatened starved the workers into submission. The government won't let him, and the workers don't give a damn.⁵⁸

Of course he'll see to it that those of us on hourly pay don't get it, but the act of defiance is worth it. So stupid of the management to suppose the men had remained: their lockers were stocked with liquor, and liquor and machines don't mix. However, we weren't at all averse to having the day if that was the way they wanted it.

Dorrance had told me long ago that when the day came he would meet me at the Biltmore and so Barbara and I walked over. It wasn't an exactly quiet place but it was a let up from the aimless surging crowd, allowing one to hear one's own voice without shouting. Dorrance wasn't long in getting there[. . .]

Barbara wanted us all to come up to her apartment to which there seemed no alternative.

[. . .] Barbara is a sweet and lovely fool. We had fun of course; we were excited, there were plenty of drinks to further excite us. They [Barbara and her boyfriend] wanted us to make a day and night of it with them, but we had promised to meet Evelyn under Shepard's clock at 12:30[. . .].⁵⁹

We left the apartment feeling high and found Evelyn standing there patiently, cold sober. To make amends we had lunch in the Centredale Diner, then brought her home for a drink. It was then we decided to hunt up Hugh and do things. He'd be in his old clothes she presumed, so she went to her house and gathered up a change of clothes and started out in search of him. His battered green car was parked behind Tom's Lodge and we went in the back way. The Lodge isn't open for business but Tom was entertaining in his kitchen where Hugh and he were playing cribbage. He immediately fixed us up with drinks, Dorrance sat in the game; the rain which had arrived without my notice slapped against the clean kitchen windows. Tom's sister and her husband dropped in, she fift[y]ish with a gin husky voice, her husband a meek little man with a mouth like a trap, who said he knew nothing about cards yet watched every move with alert eyes.⁶⁰

Jubilant crowds celebrated V-E Day in the streets of downtown Providence. A Providence Journal photo.



Shepard's clock, the downtown Providence landmark where Helen Grimes met her friend Evelyn on V-E Day, stood outside the Shepard Company Building on Westminster Street. Photograph, 1951, by Allan B. McCoy. RIHS Collection (RH1 X3 5452).

Gertrude who waits on tables and sleeps with Tom sat on the red velvet lounge seat with me thumbing through Esquire and Coronets. Time passed quickly as if on muffled wheels.

Tom wanted us to stay for supper, but Evelyn and I craved action. After we had left we were tempted to go back again, for we drove everywhere trying to find a place to dine. Everything was closed, but we finally got in a place on Federal Hill which was open after a fashion. As the weary waiter said as he placed us at a paper covered table and removed the menu, "All we got is veal and spaghetti, take your pick we aint got nuthin else." We were so hungry we counted ourselves fortunate to get anything. People crowded in the door until the manager locked it, and then some shook it imploringly.

"I gotta next to no food, I gotta no waiters! Godam waiters walk out. Watta hell!" he howled despairingly. When we had paid our bill and he opened the door a few inches to let us out, someone in the long queue of people stretching down the street cried in a pathetically hungry voice, "Smell the food!"

We stopped at Tom's for a night cap.



Helen Clarke Grimes at age thirty-five. Grimes diary, 1942, back of first page. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7769).



Helen Grimes returned to her native Connecticut with her husband after the war. She wrote in her diary almost every day for more than seventy years, a practice she started at the age of ten and continued until shortly before her death in 1989, a month before her eighty-fourth birthday. She always hoped that her diaries would be published.

After her death Dorrance Grimes donated the notebook diaries that deal with her Connecticut years to the Mystic River Historical Society, which published part of them in 1997 under the title *An Account of My Life: The Childhood Journals of Helen May Clarke, 1915-1926*. The four notebooks dealing with her life in Providence and Smithfield he gave to the Rhode Island Historical Society, where they are a valued part of the Society's manuscript collection.

Notes

1. Earlier in 1941 British-born actress Lynn Fontanne recorded American poet Alice Duer Miller's sentimental 1940 poem "The White Cliffs." It was about an American woman married to a British man serving in the military. "Records: Three Americans, *New York Times*, 20 Apr. 1941, X6; Margot Peters, *Design for Living: Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).
2. Listeners "whose radios were already tuned to CBS for the 3:00 New York Philharmonic concert" heard announcer Jack Daly break in at 2:31 P.M. with a bulletin of the surprise attack on the military installation in Hawaii. Stanley Weintraub, *Long Day's Journey into War: December 7, 1941* (New York: Dutton, 1991), 277. The broadcast may be heard on a compact disc included with Joe Garner, *We Interrupt This Broadcast* (Naperville, Ill.: Sourcebooks, 1998).
3. Andre Kostelanetz conducted the CBS studio orchestra. John Dunning, *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 174-75.
4. Deems Taylor was a composer and consultant to CBS who provided commentary for the New York Philharmonic broadcasts on the network; *Champagne Waltz* was a 1937 cinematic musical starring contralto Gladys Swarthout. Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 18:604, 398; Ephraim Katz, *The Film Encyclopedia* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), 1321.
5. On 8 December the *Providence Journal* reported that the secretary of war's call for "increased precautions against sabotage in defense plants met [with] almost instantaneous compliance" in the state. "Rhode Island intensified its precautions against sabotage with swift actions last night to protect its sprawling defense workshops, key utility and transportation facilities serving them, and the waterfront where the materials of war are setting out on world-wide journeys." P. 12.
6. William L. Shirer had been a CBS correspondent in Europe and was now reporting from the United States. Dunning, *On the Air*, 505-6; John Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondence: The Great Reporters and Their Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 327-28, 332, 334, 336, 365. Helen read Shirer's best-selling account of Nazi Germany, *Berlin Diary*, published in June 1941. The American battleship *Oklahoma* was heavily damaged by torpedoes and sunk; 415 officers and men were killed or missing in the

Notes continued

- attack. H. P. Willmot, Tohmatsu Haruo, and W. Spencer Johnson, *Pearl Harbor* (London: Cassell & Co., 2001), 105-7, 109, 134.
7. Because Rhode Island had a number naval and air bases, including the Naval Training Station at Newport (where, during the summer preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor, "a large portion of the Atlantic Fleet" was berthed), many thousands of service personnel were stationed in the state. During World War II the naval air station at Quonset, in North Kingstown, was "the largest in the East. Authorized in May 1939, . . . the base eventually covered 1,200 acres and housed 15,000 servicemen. Soon after Pearl Harbor, a training center for naval construction battalions opened at [nearby] Davisville, and by war's end a total of 100,000 'Seabees' had been trained there." The naval air bases at Westerly and Charlestown, the Melville Fuel Depot in Portsmouth, and the Anti-Aircraft Training Center and the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadrons Training Center in Newport were temporarily home to many thousands of service personnel before and during the war. George H. Kellner and J. Stanley Lemons, *Rhode Island: The Independent State* (Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1982), 135.
 8. Poorly defended by about five hundred American troops, Guam surrendered to the Japanese on 10 December 1941. Norman Polmar and Thomas Allen, *World War II: America at War, 1941-1945* (New York: Random House, 1991), 358. Elmer Davis, a former journalist with the *New York Times*, was a correspondent with CBS; he later became head of the Office of War Information in Washington, D.C. Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondence*, 327, 352. Burton K. Wheeler, a U.S. senator from Montana, was an outspoken isolationist until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Weintraub, *Long Day's Journey*, 478.
 9. Albert Warner was the CBS correspondent in Washington, D.C. Dunning, *On the Air*, 487. Maj. George Fielding Eliot was a "CBS military analyst. A veteran of World War I," Eliot "used his old rank, major, on the air." *Ibid.*, 498. Jamestown (Conanicut Island, in Narragansett Bay) was the site of forts used by the U.S. Navy.
 10. United States censorship of incoming and outgoing overseas mail was formally instituted with the passage of the first War Powers Act on 18 December 1941. Polmar and Allen, *World War II*, 196. *The Jack Benny Show*, known then as "The Jell-O Program," was one of the most successful comedies in the history of radio. Dunning, *On the Air*, 355-63. The four-page "War Extra" edition of the *Providence Journal*, with news of the attack on Pearl Harbor, was out by nightfall on Sunday, 7 December. The next day the *Journal* reported that following the first news of the Japanese attack, most "Providence persons who were at home remained there to hear musical and other programs interrupted by war flashes." Once it was "announced [that] a war extra would be published," people began to gather downtown outside the Journal Company offices. As soon as the extra edition appeared, newsboys darted in and out among the halted cars on Fountain Street," outside the *Journal* offices, to distribute it to the gathered throng. *Providence Journal*, 8 Dec. 1941, p. 4.
 11. Tenor Dennis Day was also the "resident scatter-brain" of *The Jack Benny Show*. Dunning, *On the Air*, 356, 360.
 12. NBC's *The Fitch Bandwagon*, sponsored by the F. W. Fitch Shampoo Company, featured popular music on Sunday evenings. *Ibid.*, 254. J. Howard McGrath, a Democrat from Woonsocket, was governor of Rhode Island from 1941 to 1945. At a five-hour meeting that began in the evening of 7 December and ended at one o'clock the following morning, McGrath and "the executive committee of the [R.I.] State Council of Defense" took steps to mobilize "the State Guard to protect public property" and mandated the "immediate registration of all alien Japanese in Rhode Island." *Providence Journal*, 8 Dec. 1941, p. 12.
 13. Frankie Carle, the Providence-born "wizard of the keyboard," became nationally known after he was hired by bandleader Horace Heidt. <http://nfo.net/usa/c1.html> "Shepherd Serenade" was a song that Horace Heidt and His Musical Knights made popular. Nat Shapiro, ed., *Popular Music: An Annotated Index of American Popular Songs* (New York: Adrian Press, 1965), 69.
 14. Elizabeth Colby and her husband have not been identified.
 15. The casualty figures for the attack on Pearl Harbor were much larger than this bulletin reported. See U.S. Congress, *Report of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), 64-65; Dan Van Der Vat, *Pearl Harbor: The Day of Infamy—An Illustrated History* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); and Willmot, Haruo, and Johnson, *Pearl Harbor*.
 16. With his "partners," the wisecracking Charlie McCarthy and the lovable moron Mortimer Snerd, ventriloquist Edgar Bergen had one of the most popular acts on radio. Dunning, *On the Air*, 226-30.
 17. English-born Ray Noble was a composer who directed the orchestra for Edgar Bergen's show and sometimes acted as a stooge to Charlie McCarthy. *Ibid.*, 226, 229.
 18. Japanese forces seized the International Settlement in Shanghai a day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and citizens of Allied countries living there were "essentially interned for the duration of the war." Polmar and Allen, *World War II*, 728. Fiorello H. LaGuardia was mayor of New York from 1934 to 1945; he also served as director of the Office of Civilian Defense under President Roosevelt from May 1941 until February 1942. *Ibid.*, 485.
 19. Carter's Little Liver Pills were a much-advertised laxative. The Inner *Sanctum Mysteries*, which began and ended with the sound of a creaking door, were a "strange combination of horror and humor." Dunning, *On the Air*, 346.
 20. Wake Island was not in fact surrendered to the Japanese until 23 December 1941. Polmar and Allen, *World War II*, 871-72.
 21. The Great Lakes Naval Training Station, in North Chicago, became "the largest of its kind in the country" and was training some "70,000 candidate navy men at a time" by mid-1942. Edsel Ford was the son of Henry Ford, the pioneer automobile manufacturer. Conrad Black, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Public Affairs, 2003), 769-70.
 22. The *Providence Journal* reported that on the evening of 7 December "several extra buses rolled up to the [bus] station in Fountain Street, to carry sailors and marines back to Newport naval establishments and soldiers to Fort Adams. These extra buses to Newport were kept in service until after midnight, and other special buses were placed in service here to take men to Quonset and the Jamestown forts." The New Haven Railroad, which ran trains out of New York's Grand Central Station, also added "special trains bringing hundreds of sailors on leave from Newport back from New York to Providence." *Providence Journal*, 8 Dec. 1941, p. 4.
 23. Clare Boothe Luce, a journalist and playwright and the wife of Henry Luce, the publisher of *Time* magazine, had covered China for *Time* during 1941. Sylvia Jukes Morris, *Rage for Fame: The Ascent of Clare Boothe Luce* (New York: Random House, 1997), 413-40. Boothe Luce "was a guest on Vincent 'Jimmy' Sheean's radio program on the evening of December 7th." *Ibid.*, 439. Sheean was an experienced newspaperman who reported for a number of news organizations. Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondence*, 275-76, 319.
 24. Eric Sevareid was a CBS radio news correspondent who had been based in Europe before the fall of France; he was now in London. Hohenberg, *Foreign Correspondence*, 327, 334, 362; Dunning, *On the Air*, 495. In his biography of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Conrad Black describes the scene outside the White House on the evening of 7 December: "As the news came in, large crowds gathered outside the White House fence, illuminated by floodlights on the façade of the mansion. From time to time they would burst into 'God Bless America,' 'My Country 'Tis of Thee,' 'America the Beautiful,' or other patriotic songs." Black, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, 691.

Notes continued

- the author observed in the final paragraph, "was Irving Berlin's song 'Any Bonds Today?' . . . No one was thinking about the mechanics of liberty; people were just enjoying the fact of it. I think there has never been a song quite like 'Any Bonds Today?' so innocently combining patriotic fervor with a definite rate of interest." Reprinted in E. B. White, *One Man's Meat* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 257; Scott Elledge, *E. B. White: A Biography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1985), chap. 11.
48. According to historian Emily Yellin, the OPA (Office of Price Administration) "oversaw rationing through a network of ration boards in every county in the nation. There were three types of rationing. First there was a complex system of ration books with stamps for a weekly or monthly allotment of some items, such as sugar or coffee. Then, as items with varying grades of quality were rationed, a system of assigning points based on value was also implemented. So, better cuts of meat required more ration points from a weekly allotment of points. And a third factor was used in some rationing too—need. For gasoline, those who did the least driving were given an A stamp, allowing them four gallons of gas per week. Those who needed more, such as workers at war plants driving carpools to factories each day, were given B and C stamps, allowing them more gasoline." Emily Yellin, *Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front during World War II* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 22.
 49. The Metropolitan Theatre was located at Broad and Chestnut Streets in downtown Providence. *Polk's Providence City Directory, 1944* (Boston: R. L. Polk Co., 1944), 943.
 50. The Biltmore Hotel is on Dorrance Street in downtown Providence. The Wacs were women in uniform who served in the army ("Women's Army Corps"); the Waves ("Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service") served in the navy; the Spars ("Semper Paratus" [Always Ready]) were women in the Coast Guard. Yellin, *Our Mothers' War*, 115-61. By "cadets," Helen may have meant members of the Cadet Nurse Corps. *Ibid.*, 182.
 51. As more American men joined the armed forces, women entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers. The female labor force expanded from 12 million in 1940 to 18 million in 1945. D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 104. Although many new female workers took white-collar jobs, a substantial number were hired to work in factories in blue-collar employment to aid the war effort. *Ibid.*, 112-137. D'Ann Campbell has observed that "[m]arried men and women both expressed concern over mixing the sexes. Jealous husbands did not want their wives to work alongside other men; housewives wondered if their husbands might be flirting in the plant." *Ibid.*, 126.
 52. Helen's move from full-time housewife to office worker was not unusual. Employment of women in clerical jobs nearly doubled during the war years as "[t]he paperwork of war accelerated the creation of new clerical and secretarial positions throughout the country." *Ibid.*, 106, 107. The Hospital Trust Building is on Westminster Street in downtown Providence.
 53. Emile Zola's *Nana* (1880) and Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) are novels whose heroines are disreputable women.
 54. In her work on women's lives during World War II, Emily Yellin has observed that during the war "the undercurrent accompanying the new opportunities women were gaining in the workplace and the military seemed to include a more open attitude toward sexuality among women." Yellin, *Our Mothers' War*, 307.
 55. Roosevelt was stricken in the early afternoon that day and died at 3:35 P.M. He was at Warm Springs (Bullochville), Georgia, where he often retreated for therapy for his polio-ravaged limbs. Black, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*, 1110.
 56. Although V-E Day was celebrated on 8 May, when the surrender of Germany was officially announced, the Germans had actually surrendered to the Allied command on the preceding day. According to Polmar and Allen, "On May 7, 1945, the Associated Press flashed word of the German surrender at Reims a day ahead of the official announcement. War correspondent Edward Kennedy, the AP reporter responsible for the premature announcement, was suspended by Allied supreme headquarters." Polmar and Allen, *World War II*, 865.
 57. Although Governor McGrath issued a proclamation asking that Rhode Islanders "conduct themselves with reverent decorum, befitting the magnitude and solemnity of the events [of V-E Day]," the *Providence Journal* noted that "boisterousness and noisiness there was aplenty in downtown" Providence to mark the occasion. There was a "Sabbath-like calm" after sirens and factory whistles had "wailed the glad news at 9 a.m." Then war plants, including Brown & Sharpe, "were forced to close their doors when so many workers left their work." Downtown was cordoned off and "the streets began to fill." The newspaper reported that "streams of confetti began showering on the Mall from the Industrial Trust and the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Building," and by 9:30 "downtown sidewalks were jammed solidly with noisy celebrators and passive spectators as hundreds of persons overflowed into the streets [,] slowing what trolley and automobile traffic there was." Businesses, schools, banks, and public buildings closed, and by 11:00 A.M. "the bars that remained open were jammed three and four deep." Although "the celebration simmered down after dinner . . . promenaders of all ages continued to throng the city and lines half a block long began to queue up outside theaters." The newspaper report observed that "Drunks were few and friendly." Observers agreed that because of the continuing war in the Far East, the V-E celebrations lacked the intensity of the celebrations following the end of World War I. "To one old codger standing on the sidewalk on Weybosset Street yesterday afternoon," the *Journal* reported, "the scene was lamentably tame. . . . 'Remember the other war?' he reminisced. 'They took this city apart that day.'" *Providence Journal*, 9 May 1945, pp. 1, 11. Grace Episcopal Church is on Westminster Street in the heart of downtown Providence.
 58. Henry D. Sharpe (1872-1954) became president of Brown & Sharpe after the death of his father, Lucian, in 1898. One of Rhode Island's most conservative industrialists, a proponent of efficiency in all spheres of life, he was involved in Rhode Island political reform in the 1890s and early 1900s. Kellner and Lemons, *Rhode Island*, 121-22; John S. Gilkeson Jr., *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 206-7, 274-75.
 59. "The late 19th-century cast-iron clock in front of the [Shepard Company Building on Westminster Street was] a familiar downtown landmark." William McKenzie Woodward and Edward F. Sanderson, *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986), 240.
 60. Tom's Wionkheige Lodge was a restaurant on Pleasant View Avenue in Spragueville. *Armstrong's North Providence, Johnston, and Smithfield, Rhode Island, Directory, 1941-42* (Cranston: J. H. Armstrong Co., 1941), 366.