

Folder 16: Edna Minker, May-October 1945

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Tuesday] May 1, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Hopeful over the coming end of the war in Europe while worried over his fatigue from flying. Recognizes some men will be shipped directly to the Pacific. Praises him, hoping it will be over soon. Report on the family.</p>			
<p>Names: William Ulrich [Lee saw him in London]</p>			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Friday] May 4, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Quite excited to get a call from Olaf Larsen [Lee's radio operator] who was in NY Sports news about the Blue Rocks. A postscript to the letter with war news.</p>			
<p>Names: Olaf Larsen [radio operator of the <i>Blue Hen Chick</i>.]</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] May 7, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Victory in Europe at last! Encloses a hymn by Dr. Stidger on the work ahead. The most reflective letter in the collection as Edna struggles with what her son has had to do at such a young age and how the years are racing by, she is nearly 50. She is deeply moved by the Mother's Day card he sent.</p>			
<p>Names: Leland Inscho [POW], Bob Durnham [killed in action]</p>			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Thursday] May 10, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Visit from a buddy who thought Lee would be home by now. Going out to dinner for her 50th birthday.</p>			
<p>Names: Bob Casel</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] May 14, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Looking for college for Bernice, surprised that so many girls are applying to junior college. Adding up his score [number of points to be eligible to come home]. Lee, Shirley, and Bernice are all away from home, her first Mother's Day alone. Should they send a box for his birthday? [June 16]</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Wednesday] May 16, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>His sisters are trying out for solos with Brandywiners. Hoping Bernice is accepted at Centenary [junior college]. Planes are flying low overhead, her eagerness at his return is seen as she jumps up to see each of them.</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Saturday] May 19, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Full day of meetings [a women's Christian society] for Edna. Various graduation activities. Chaplain Carpenter was in Paris for VE Day. Haven't heard from Lee in 2 weeks.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday morning, May 20 [1945]	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Graduation at Ferris school, wedding of a several friends. Hoping to hear from Olaf [Larsen], still no letter from Lee.			
Names: Bill Johns, Ben Johns Dr. Long [President of Dickinson College]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Thursday] May 24, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Relief at hearing from him. Wishing he was among the first returning from the 8 th Air Force. Shirley busy with graduation activities. Going to dinner at the Young Men's Hebrew Association. Embarrassed by his questions about the garden as she hasn't had the time; with him on hand to supervise they will do a new layout. Wonders the lull in activity is hard for him.			
Names: Walter From, Howell Wilkins			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Saturday nite May 26, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Williamsport, PA
The family is in Williamsport for Shirley's graduation; she graduated magna cum laude and received several prizes. Speaker is the minister from Methodist Church in Carlisle when Edna and Ralph Sr. were at Dickinson. Thankful for her children and praying they will all be together soon.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] May 28, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Detailed description of the people and events at graduation. Was not complete because Lee was not there. Mrs. Inscho reports that Leland has been liberated from a German prison. Olaf Larsen [Lee's radioman] wrote that he cannot get away. Report that 8 th Air Force is going to Japan, many rumors about peace. Bernice is accepted into Centenary Jr. College. Want to send him something special for his 21 st birthday, but unsure of what he wants. Can he tell them his plans?			
Names: Leland Inscho [Wilmington], Olaf Larsen [crew of the <i>Blue Hen Chick</i>]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Wednesday] May 30, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Another Memorial Day and still at war, waiting for the defeat of Japan. Sending him cookies for his birthday, would be happy if he dropped in on them as he did last year. Sugar rationing has been cut again. Ralph Sr. going to Carlisle for his 25 th class reunion.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Thursday] May 31, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Received letter that he is now a captain and expects to be home for a 30 day leave next month. Hopeful he could be stationed at New Castle Air Base [Delaware].			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Tuesday] June 5, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Shirley is home, learning to drive. Bernice is graduating next week, several local boys are home on leave.			
Names: Bobby Booker, Bernie Grier			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Friday] June 8, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Saw teachers from Lee's high school who were asking about him, warns he will be mobbed when he gets home. His girlfriend Julia [Taylor] and his sisters have parts in Brandywiner's <i>Iolanthe</i> , so he simply must be home by July.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] June 11, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Edna is happy to receive his cable that he will be home by July 4. [He was not.] News of others arriving home. She is speaking at the W.S.C. S. tonight. Has bought [concert] series tickets expecting him to be home.			
Names: Howard Rhoades , Wally Wroten [Killed in Action, Oct. 24, 1944]			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Thursday, June 14, 1945]	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice graduated from high school, had a ticket for him but he did not arrive. She is saddened that Carol Cohen cannot get into any college because she is Jewish. The eagerness for Lee to be home is in every letter.			
Names: Carol Cohen			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Saturday] June 16, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Lee's 21 st birthday elicits happy memories, great pride, sadness that he is in the Army. They are grateful that he has been spared. [She recognizes that other families are not as fortunate.] Ordering tickets for the Brandywiners in July expecting him to be home.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
Undated [Tuesday, June 19, 1945]	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Lee sent negatives in his letter to Grandmother Jones, they are eager to see the plane and the crew. Staff [Ferris School] took the boys in town to see the circus. Listened to Eisenhower on the radio.			
Names: General Eisenhower			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Friday] June 22, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Going away for a week, but will be called immediately if he comes home. Likes the pictures of the <i>Blue Hen</i> that he sent. Edna's anticipation at Lee's homecoming is growing, counting the days.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] July 2, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Deeply disappointed that he was not home when she returned from trip to Ocean Grove, letter lets them know he will be delayed another month. On the trip back all the trains are crowded with servicemen; feels civilians should not be using the trains. Edna has kept up with the Blue Rocks, knowing her son cared about sports. His sisters are practicing for the Brandywiners performance. Sorry she did not write last week, thought he was on his way home.			
Names: Bill Ulrich, Julia [Taylor] , Phil Karl, John Pollard, Walter [From]			

Date [One of the few handwritten letters from Edna.]	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Wednesday] July 4, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
With planes overhead, thought he might be home, disappointed once again. Another runaway from the [Ferris] school. Her frustration with waiting comes out in a tease that he will be the last man to leave England. Went to a fine concert by an infantry band as part of the 7 th War Loan drive. They missed him especially today, know it is hard on him as well.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Friday, July 6, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Discussion of George[Wolf], boyfriend of Shirley's. Edna's concern about the future is contained in her comments about Churchill; he has done a grand job, but doubts he has the outlook for postwar problems.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday, July 8, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Problems with the boys at the [Ferris] school keep Ralph Sr. home from church, have hired some new staff. Holding a ticket for Lee for his sisters' performance in <i>Iolanthe</i> . Shirley is applying for jobs in the medical field. Expects to be home every day to greet him.			
Names: 2 nd Lt. Jimmy Goldey, Clyde England			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Tuesday] July 10, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
People are admiring the pictures he sent. His sisters selected Julia's [Taylor] birthday present. Jobs for girls are harder to get than before, Shirley is going to work at the Delaware Hospital.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Friday] July 13, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Edna sets aside the time for a "talk" with Lee as she has done before. Heard an outdoor concert of Verdi's <i>Requiem</i> , a plane flew overhead and she thought of him and that he was not by her side. A boy at the [Ferris] school was critically hurt in a fight, they could not get a night watchman; concerned because Ralph Sr. is getting the criticism for it. Bernice has not found a job.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Saturday] July 14, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Friend heard that the last plane of the 8 th AF left England, called to see if Lee was home. Windstorm did severe damage to the campus at the [Ferris] school. Shirley uses the Packard for work which eats up gas.			
Names: Charles Gibson, Howell Wilkins			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] July 16, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Edna is teaching summer school in Dover for the WSCS so not writing as often. Shirley and Bernice were featured in the newspaper as a sister act in <i>Iolanthe</i> .			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Friday night, July 20 [1945]	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
One of the crew called while she was in Dover, invited him for dinner. A tease that grandmother Minker is practicing making Lee's favorite dinner rolls to be ready for him. The paper listed officers of the 8 th air force who arrived on the <i>Queen Mary</i> .			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Monday] July 23, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Williamsport, PA
Disappointed that Gullio from Lee's crew was not able to make it down for dinner. [Note: this man was probably a member of the ground crew.] Civil defense commanders are coming to the school for dinner. Life has been abnormal for so long, she is not sure she will know how to act.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday, August 16, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Lee had told them not to write, so there are no letters in early August. A troopship arrived in Boston with members of the 709 th Bomber Group, they though he would be among them. The news has finally come that the war is over, there is wild jubilation downtown. Edna only wants to have her son by her side in church. While celebrating peace, Edna is quite aware of the work that lies ahead. Acknowledges how terrible the atomic bomb is, but accepts the necessity. As the final days drag on, she is encouraging to Lee as he is frustrated with the waiting. Thankful he will soon be back in college.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Saturday, August 18, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The girls and friends went to Rehoboth, people are driving more now but cannot get tires. Blue Rocks are winning again. Bernice leaves in four weeks for junior college, afraid she will miss seeing her brother as he may not be home before then.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday, August 20, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Scanning the paper for news of soldiers' return. Every Sunday, he will be home next week. Discusses staff issues at the various cottages. Ralph Sr. preached a good sermon [end of the war].			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[Tuesday] August 21, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
News that Shirley is going to marry George Wolf. [She did not marry Wolf, rather J. Newton Hunsburger.] They were a bit surprised as she had not been dating George for very long. They will not marry until George finishes school. Mentions Ben and Fred [other boyfriends] who may be disappointed. Edna is unsettled by the unexpected news.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
Friday, August 24, 1945	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Getting Bernice ready for school. Expecting Lee's arrival to be her third surprise of the week; the war came to an end, Shirley is engaged, surely her son will be home!			

Captain Ralph L. "Lee" Minker, Jr. returned to the U.S. on the *Queen Elizabeth*, arriving in New York Harbor on Friday, August 31, 1945. It took him several days to get to Wilmington. On October 8, 1945 the Minkers drove their son to Dickinson College to return to his studies. Lee had spent two years and seven months in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday afternoon [October 9 1945]	Edna Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Arrived home after taking Lee to Dickinson [College] to resume his education. Talks about decorating his room, Ralph Sr. thinks veterans should have rooms separate from the rest of the students. Expresses her utter relief that Lee is in college, not in combat. Always – how proud they are of him.			