

Folder 18: Ralph L. Minker, Sr., January – December 1944

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Saturday evening January 22, [1944]	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. updates Lee on the Bombers' progress in the season. He had the key men from the Civilian Defense to dinner. Went to a meeting on new pre-induction training for the Selective Service, concerned because of the number of married men being called up. Reports on their active social life, asks that he call next week.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 2, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. advises Lee on what to buy for his new uniform after talking with an officer at the Air Base. Tells him to buy regulation items rather than tailor-made that Lee was requesting.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 14, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. updates Lee on the Bombers' season thus far and the recent winter weather. Begins a conversation about ways to get home on leave.			

Lee Minker graduated from Flight School on March 12, 1944. He arrived home on leave on approximately March 14, leaving again a week later for Transitional Flight Training in the B-17 in Roswell, New Mexico.

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
March 22, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. inquires on Lee's stay in Chicago and if it was eventful. He loved having Lee at home, enjoyed all the things they did together. He congratulates his son on his commission, had expressed his pride from the pulpit while preaching the Sunday Lee graduated [March 12].			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Tuesday evening March 28, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. shares a poignant moment while watching an intense basketball game with Governor Bacon. He inquires about Lee's new location and the experience he will have putting together a crew. Wants to put together a code so they will know of special developments. Gives news of Raymond Eckard and James Gilbert.			
Names: Raymond Eckard, James Gilbert, Governor Walter W. Bacon			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
May 2, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The family scanned every bomber that passed over trying to get a sense of what it was like for him. Talked some more about his clothing requirements. Lets Lee know he is doing a great job and that he has proven much to himself, there will be even greater jobs when this [war] is over.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday evening [mid-May, 1944]	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. reports on a panel discussion on social work and the meetings and speeches he is doing. They are enjoying his letters from Roswell.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
May 21, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. talks about the winning game he saw with the Blue Rocks. He visited with Irving Carpenter, a minister he knew as a young person who is now the chief of chaplains in the Air Forces. They bred Ginger to a police dog and are looking forward to puppies. Thinks he should ask for a furlough.			
Names: Colonel Irving Carpenter			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 2, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. commends Lee's work thus far in his career. He is working on a bond drive and still remembering how wonderful it was to have Lee at home [mid-March]. The Blue Rocks are now having some success.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 16, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. talks about the Sunday Church service. Margaret Jones, a nurse is joining the army. Baseball player Dutch Dorman was given a severe sentence without a hearing. He appreciates hearing that Lee likes his bomber crew.			
Names: Margaret Jones [cousin on mother's side]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday morning, [late July 1944]	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. comments on the impact of the traveling Lee has done. He tells his son that he is very proud of him for all of his hard work and his steadfast attitude. Assures him that they are well and pulling for him every minute.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Saturday morning August 5, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. give advice to Lee on how to handle the new responsibilities he has been given as the commander of a B-17. He reports that the 5 th War Loan Drive was successful although there are some slackers.			

2nd Lieutenant Ralph Lee Minker departed Hunter Field, Georgia, on Wednesday, October 4, 1944. With his crew they flew a B-17 to Wales, flying up the east coast of the U.S. and over Wilmington on their way to England. They arrived at Rattlesden Army Air Force Base on October 13, 1944.

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
October 8, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The cramped space of using V-Mail is a new experience. The entire family enjoyed themselves as Lee flew low over the house on Wed. on his way to Bangor, Maine, and then England. They were happy to see the plane after Lee's descriptions of the B-17. Comments on the presidential election, the president seems old and in a tough spot for a campaign. Gives Lee support as he heads off for combat.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
October 13, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	New York City, NY
Attending a convention in NYC. Ralph Sr. took a walk, writes his observations of the crowds and the hundreds of boys on leave. Reports on the World Series. Minker's strong connection with his son shows in how he closes the letter.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
October 14, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	New York City, NY
Ralph Sr. just finished a training course on problems of 16-21 year-olds and how to be helpful. He is grateful that Lee at least had a few years to get started in college in a time of normalcy. Talks about the future when Lee's job is over. He is thinking of his son this minute wondering where he is and what he is doing.			

Date V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
November 3, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
He opens describing the quiet life of the family at home. Wonders if he will hear the Navy-Notre Dame game. Comments on the pending election. Everyone asks for him [Lee] and wants to be remembered. Ben Johns has registered for the army.			
Names: Ben Johns [son of friends]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
December 1, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. talks about seeing a Chicago Bears and Philadelphia Eagles game and describes other sporting events. He is going to a meeting at Boston University about Americanism. The Sixth War Drive is about to begin.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
December 23, 1944	Ralph Minker Sr.	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Minker Sr. talks about the family's Christmas trip to New York City. He describes getting ready for Christmas, and sending Lee some gifts and cookies. His fatherly anxiety is not expressed directly, rather he reassures Lee that they are all thinking of him a great deal as they read the articles in the paper about the European Theatre.			