Thursday noon
May 18, 1944

Dear Dad,

It cheered me up immensely to talk with you and the rest of the family Monday evening. At times the military life gets extremely boring. For instance, this week Class 44-4-C carries a full schedule even though regular transition training has been completed. It is a filler schedule consisting of my fifth first aid course as a member of the Air Forces (again all lecture and no practical application such as in Boy Scout or Red Cross training), dull lectures on various phases of administration (finance, mess, supply, command, operations, operational training, travel, sanitation, V.D., conduct in foreign countries, assignment, etc.), physical training and formal retreat. The schedule will be kept full of fillers until we are shipped to another base but it will all be ground
material which will be comparatively useless in aerial combat. There are ninety odd B-17's stationed at Roswell but only forty are allowed in the air at one time, regardless of the type of missions to be flown. If one has completed his required 105 hours of transition flying he is not eligible to fly more hours. One fifth of our class has been lucky enough to ship for operational training as first pilots on B-29's. But they are old instructors and B-25 shore patrol pilots with totals of at least one thousand hours of flying time. The rest of us have met the same requirements that they have but we idle away twiddling our thumbs.

However, we were scheduled to complete transition training on June 6, 1944, before the schedule was accelerated. Thus we are not behind the original schedule. Maybe the shift of production from the Boeing B-17 to the Boeing B-29 has caused a temporary lag in B-17-B-29 training. Maybe we are feeling the results of
overestimating the manpower needs for the Air Forces. But then, maybe we are feeling the results of unrestricted and thoughtless strikes against war production, such as the recent foremen strike which caused the loss of 250 P-51 fighter planes which are necessary for long range bomber protection, which have needlessly and dangerously prolonged the length of the war and increased immeasurably the problems of postwar resettlement.

Major Haan, commandant of pilot students, said that he did not expect that class 44-4-T would ship to new jobs before July and that he had been ordered to outline a schedule for us to fill in for two months.

So ——

A see by the Journal that you now have another job — war bond salesman. Congratulations. But after the campaign is over why don’t you get away from
all the rush for a couple of weeks. You and mother visit New England. Why not spend a weekend in Carlisle or Trisfield? Why don't you reserve an afternoon a week for a round of golf? Is Mother going to Ocean Grove this year?

How did the Spring Festival go this year. The outline of events that Mother sent me seemed fine.

Both the Phils and Blue Rocks seem to be slipping badly of late. The Phils have had some mighty close ones against the better teams in the league. I think they need hitting. Maybe the Rocks will bolster with the experienced men in the lineup after they get done. How are Utica and Bradford doing? The old A's are having a good streak now. I see. How are prospects for Delaware Park this year? Can Ferris field a negro or white ball team in league competition this summer?

How is our garden doing now? Has Grandmother Minker started digging yet? How is the farm doing? Don't forget to keep the ground cultivated and moist. Keep all dead blooms cut, bulb
the ticks out of thing.

Ben has written that he has been accepted at Princeton. Leland Anacleto is with a mortar squad at Camp Carson, Colorado; Howell Finn is with a Heavy Auto Maintenance unit in Ordinance at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. Billy Jim says to say hello for him from Camp Pickett, Virginia. Bob Neuber writes that he is well and out in the Marshalls. Ed wrote recently and mentioned that he was planning to visit Wilmington in June. He also wrote that Stan Wilson's brother and Mr. Smalls's son were ready to enter Dickinson. I wish you would send me J. Bright's, Ed Lakes and Tom Twiley's address if you can.

The alarm just sounded for a practice gas alert so I will close this letter and put on my gas mask.

Lee