

Folder 24: Bernice Minker, January – December 1944

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Tuesday January 4, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Shirley going back to school [at Williamsport] and Bernice is starting back to school in the new year. She writes about the sports season, they are not quite as good as last year. Jimmy Cooper is home on leave and went to her game.			
Names: Jimmy Cooper			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
5:00 Saturday [January 14, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Writes her brother that everyone is asking about him. Her friend Walt [From] took wonderful pictures of their dog, Ginger. The first week back at school was full of tests, she is captain-elect of the tenth-grade intramural basketball team.			
Names: John Clark [On leave/ at home], Harry Brown			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday [January 20, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is concerned with the basketball team playing against Vocational [high school], as they have lost nearly every game. Their high school senior play will be <i>Quality Street</i> . Saw the play, <i>Decision</i> . Admiral Halsey makes an appearance in Wilmington, gives a speech, Walter [From] gets his autograph.			
Names: Taylor Edler, Bill Baird (On leave/ at home) [J.M.] Barrie (Playwright), Admiral Halsey			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
January 31, 1943 [1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice complains about falling ill, and not being prepared for tryouts for a local musical. She is pleased with the success of their football team. She received her report card, reports her grades to Lee.			
Names: Zach Elliot, Bill Brooks, Ralph Jones (All soldiers on leave/ at home)			
Note: The original date on this letter is an error by the writer; Lee was not in the army in January, 1943.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 2, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is in bed, sick again. The war comes to high schools with a talk by two veterans of the famous Ploesti Raid [August 1, 1943]. Shirley called home, is tired from exams and dating her numerous boyfriends. A sisterly tease to not land upside down.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
11:00 Saturday Morning, [February 26, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Mother was mad because she had been sick and then stayed out quite late. Bernice is taking voice lessons with a Mr. Stanley in New York, who created a method of teaching vocals that she uses. She describes him in remarkable detail, calling him a typical "New York Jew". Tried to see the movie <i>Jane Eyre</i>. She attended a conference at Temple [University], a "darn Republican senator" spoke about how much he hated the New Deal, she found him one-sided and was not impressed with the speaker. Several boys they know are home on leave, Johnny Curlett and Dick Gathwell.</p>			
<p>Names: Johnny Curlett [killed in action Nov. 21, 1944], Dick Gathwell</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Tuesday night [March 7, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Bernice is excited that Lee will be home in a week. Teases her brother about being a second Louie [Lieutenant]. "Charlie Chaplin Night" night at school where they played three of his silent movies. She is under the weather due to a huge amount of snow and rain they got recently.</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[March 31, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Bernice describes attending a mock Republican Convention at Temple [University]. She did the speech nominating Wilkie; writes about the conga lines and groups outshouting each other, an unforgettable experience. Several soldiers home on leave. The schools are doing x-rays to test for TB. Enclosing the pictures they took when he was home [March 14 – 21].</p>			
<p>Names: Daley Damash, Gordon Lang</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Saturday [April 8, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Bernice talks about Easter, expecting nice weather. Shirley is home for the holiday, her clothes don't fit because she has grown an inch. Writes a paragraph for Lee on their dog, Ginger. Bill Skimner was discharged.</p>			
<p>Names: Charley Bossart, Bill Sharpley, Donald Shane, Navy, Bill Skimner</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
May 4, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
<p>Bernice is getting ready to go to Williamsport to visit Shirley. She is singing at the Sunday school dinner, as well as the Wilmington Chorus making a debut at the high school, thought it was a great evening .</p>			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
[2 nd week in May, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice talk about a long and, in her opinion, unnecessary project she had to do for school concerning the school dances. She describes sneaking into the hospital to see their friend Jimmy Maxwell. Bernice commends the student council for "actually doing something" and holding a sporting event for other students.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday [May 17, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice keeps her brother up-to-date by telling him about the upcoming prom and how busy she is with so many different committees. Additionally, the Spring Festival is coming up, and one of the teachers is directing a musical called <i>I am an American</i> . Shirley is coming home for good on the twenty-eighth.			
Names: Glade Brendle (On leave/ at home)			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
June 6, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The final days of school are fast approaching for Bernice, school was getting boring. She thought D-Day was anti-climactic after all the build-up, but recognizes this the beginning of the end. She has a terrible case of poison ivy and is worried as she is going to the Tower Hill prom Friday night. Shirley has applied for jobs.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
June 16, 1944 letter and 2 poems	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice wishes her brother a happy 20th birthday. She is going to a dance with Walt which she notes had a very nice theme. Youth Sunday at church. She has been offered a scholarship to Tower Hill, which she attributes to one of her high school teachers. There is also a poem attached to her letter.			
Bernice wrote a poem for Lee titled "The Soldier's Mom." It describes their mother dusting in Lee's room and her silent longing for him. She also wrote a poem for him in honor of his 20 th birthday.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday [June 25, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
She and Shirley enjoyed the beautiful weather by sunbathing. <i>Saw Going my Way</i> , which she recommend to her brother. She has been trying to keep the garden weeded. Hopes the puppies will be born on the 4 th .			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 13, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Ginger had 14 puppies, hopes that at least 3 survive. Carolyn announced her engagement. Granny [Jones] thinks it is a sin because the boy is Catholic and that Carolyn ought to wait until she is 30 to marry! She is quite emphatic about hoping to be engaged by age 20. She is working fulltime at Crosby's [Department Store]. Brandywiners rehearsal 3 nights a week.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday [July 20, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is taking care of the switchboard for the AWVS. The pups are fine, eyes not open yet. A friend of the family from Chrisfield days has died.			
Names: Gordon Betherds			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday [July] 26, [1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Working at the AWVS switchboard. Have been busy with Brandywiner rehearsals. Moved the box with the puppies, didn't realize there was a hornets nest in the garage roof. She and Walt saw the film <i>The Hairy Ape</i> .			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
August 23, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice has won a scholarship to Tower Hill [High School]. Shirley is undecided about going back to school or studying music. The pups are growing and chewing on everyone's shoes. Bernice, Shirley, and mother are all going to Ocean City soon. Mom has been working quite hard and needs a vacation.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
August 28, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Lee evidently asked her to date the letters as she teases him. Plans for going to Ocean City with friends for the weekend. Then she, Shirley and mom will go to Rehoboth. Report on movies and a tease about Nancy Tatnall who was asking for Lee.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday September 4, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice, Shirley, and mom went shopping in Philadelphia. Went to Atlantic City, then to Ocean City, had a super time. The pup they are keeping ate the cactus he sent.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Tuesday [September 19, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is exhausted from taking so many tests the past two days. She is getting ready for school, is worried the teachers will not be as good as previous years. They have named the puppy they kept Pilot, he has been growing rapidly. Taylor Hollingsworth, Hys Simmons and Babe Rydings are friends recently home on leave.			
Names: Taylor Hollingsworth, Hys Simmons, Babe Rydings			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday [October 2, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
There's a stomach bug going around, which Bernice has caught. She consoles Lee about the loss of his co-pilot. [Lee reported the loss of his co-pilot to illness in a letter dated September 29]. She went to see <i>Hail the Conquering Hero</i> . Mother is helping with the local war fund.			

Date	V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
October 7, 1944		Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice begins by stating this will probably be his first letter on V-Mail [He is now in combat in England]. She describes how happy they were to see Lee [when he flew over the house on his way to England], was so glad she happened to be at home. Professor Thompson was down for dinner.				
Names: Professor [Russell I.] Thompson, [Professor of Education and Psychology, Dickinson College]				

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday [October 11, 1944]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice complains about V-Mail and says she is switching back to air mail. There is a class dance at Tower Hill sponsored by the Athletic Association, and a football game. Raymond Harding is back from a German prison camp, he has lost 40 pounds.			
Names: Raymond Harding			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
October 19, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice complains about being exhausted and achy in bed due to playing in the girl's hockey game at Tower Hill, which they did win. She also talks about seeing South Street while visiting Philadelphia. She mentions her mother being very busy with Girl Scout Council, DE war fund and the Methodist Women's Society.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
November 1, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice talks about the academics in the family, with Shirley getting three As and a B, while Bernice has two Bs, a C, and a D. The Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsoring a number of lectures on current events, which she must attend for history class. The first presenter was Richard Harkness on the election in 1945.			
Names: Richard Harkness			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday November 12, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is thrilled that the family received their first letter from Lee since he left for England. She was injured playing hockey the previous week. She attended a Victory Dance at school; reading <i>Hamlet</i> for English but is not fond of it.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday November 19, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is eager for Thanksgiving, they are having quite a crowd of family and Shirley's friends from college. She talks about Christmas shopping. Shirley is on the Dean's List. The family wants to Lee to have a semblance of Christmas, warns him not to peek into his Christmas packages.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday December 7, 1944	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice went to Philadelphia to watch the commissioning of a boat they (the AWVS) sponsored. She tells her brother that the puppy, Pilot, is getting older and more adventurous. She is putting in a call to Shirley as it is her birthday. She has come up in all her grades, except for chemistry.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
December 25, 1944 2 AM	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice describes the preparations for Christmas and that their friend Fred from Plainfield visited. She and Shirley received their Christmas gift early, which was going to New York to see <i>Rigoletto</i> at the Metropolitan Opera House which she found to be phenomenal.			