

Folder 25: Bernice Minker, January – August 1945

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday January 1, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice describes a New Year's party full of soldiers and sailors from the previous year's class at A. I du Pont. She describes all of her Christmas presents, including the hat she bought with the money Lee sent. Asks that he request stuff in his letters so they could send him "eats." They are urging people to write on V-Mail.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
January 8, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice and friends had a "super" fun skating party. A captain from the 15th Air Corps came for dinner, he had served in both Africa and Italy and was stationed in England. She is excited to see the Air Force movie <i>Winged Victory</i> . The puppy, Pilot, has developed a habit of killing chickens, they haven't told Ralph Sr. Lee's last letter was dated Dec. 9.			
Names: Arthur Avery, Jim Buchanan			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 3, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice reviews her mid-term exams, which she passed. Tells Lee that their mother has written letters to all of his crew. The Junior Chamber of Commerce is presenting a show to build a recreation hall for the noncoms at the Air Base. Want to knit Lee some socks but khaki wool is not available.			
Names: Kenneth Mould			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 12, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Her friend, Walt [From] is now coaching the basketball team at Ferris. She caused a commotion at church by wearing a pair of silver earrings Walt gave her. The young people's choir sang at an interdenominational and interracial service where they had a fine time.			

Date	V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
February 26, 1945		Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice reports on the ongoing struggle to find a way to get mail to him in a timely way. is quite busy with her operetta and difficult homework. Mother is still trying to find 6-20 film. They heard General MacArthur on the radio from Manila. Taking the clippings Lee sent to school so the German teacher can translate them.				
Names: Meredith Ballard				

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
March 1, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
A friend had a baby, Bernice can't imagine being a mother. Her chemistry experiment blew up. She is unsure of what she wants to study, but does want to go away to school. Lee's trombone teacher, Mr. Knowles, is being drafted, despite being about 40 years old, married with children.			
Names: Mr. Knowles.			

Date	V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
March 26, 1945		Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is on spring break. She tells him that the performance of <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> went across well even though she is sick and doctoring her voice. Received a package from Lee with letters and other items. More reports of singing with the choir.				

Date	V-Mail	Writer	Recipient	Place
April 9, 1944 [date is an error, actual date is 1945]		Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Spent all week taking Co-op Exams, then Saturday taking College Entrance Exams. Shirley was elected maid-of-honor to the May Queen at college. She is in the midst of working on the senior yearbook. No jelly beans were available at Easter this year.				

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
April 20, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The family is anxious, no letter from Lee for a month; asks him to write, their parents are worried. [He was on leave in England.] She has only one more month of high school left. Pilot, their puppy, is becoming a big dog, more so than his mother.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
May 8, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Reports on the rumors of the end of the war in Europe. Doubts if there will be much celebrating as there is still a lot to finish in the Pacific Theatre. A friend's younger brother was killed on Iwo Jima.			
Names: Otsie Durnan, Bob Durnan [killed in action on Iwo Jima, March 10, 1945]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
May 21, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice is struggling with finals at school. They left the grandmothers at home when they went to church as Olaf Larsen [Lee's radio man] was expected to call. Shirley graduates next week, asks that he send her a card.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday May 23, [1945]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Answering his letter of May 8. Plans for Shirley's graduation. Walt has been accepted by Lee's alma mater [Dickinson College], plans to join the Navy in July. Bernice and Shirley have both tried out for principal parts with the Brandywiners.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
June 1, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Received the news of his promotion [to captain], wants him to rush home for her graduation on June 13. Bernice was accepted to Centenary Jr. College in Hackettstown, N.J.; a relief because all the schools are filled. Wanted a topaz bracelet for a graduation gift, but they are nonexistent since the war. Bernice and Shirley are learning to drive, she will need to get a permit, as it is the law now.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday, June 2, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Ralph Sr. went to Dickinson for graduation and his 25 th class reunion. Both sisters had their hair ala the Ingrid Bergman style. Eager to see the photographs from the negatives Lee sent.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday June 9, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
School is ending next week, holding a seat for Lee for the commencement. Bernice is in rehearsal for the newest play with the Brandywiners. She anticipates a girls party at the beach where there will be no adult chaperones. The letter continues to next Sunday, she reports on family activities.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 2, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice received her brother's gift of a book of Wordsworth poems. They have curtailed their writing, expecting him to be home on the 4 th . [Lee had sent a cablegram, but plans changed.] They are all disappointed with the delay. Wishes she could be back at Rehoboth Beach. Walt enlisted in the Navy. Shirley got her driver's license.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 9, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
The Brandywiners' show is progressing slowly. Bernice is searching for a job, but summer jobs are hard to find. As the war is winding down, life on the homefront is becoming a bit more normal. A friend and her soldier husband have arrived home; like Lee, Meredith wants only to sleep, have milk and ice cream. Bernice and Shirley bought Julia [Taylor] a jewel case for her birthday. George Wolf, a friend of Shirley's, came for the weekend, she thinks they will be seeing a lot of him.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
July 13, 1945	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice attended the wedding of one of Shirley's friends from college. She saw Charles Gibson, who had been in the Army in Germany and France has returned home, and is readjusting to civilian life. Has not been able to locate a paying job so is doing volunteer work for the AWVS and selling bonds on Saturday morning. Julia liked her present.			
Names: Charles Gibson [home after 3 years in the Army.]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday [August 16, 1945]	Bernice Minker	Lee Minker	Wilmington, DE
Bernice shares the family's deep disappointment when Lee's letter came saying he was delayed again, the paper had reported the 709 th [Lee's squadron] landed in Boston yesterday. The rest of the letter is a description of the wild celebration in Wilmington that the war was over! She is getting ready for college, is excited to get started.			