

Folder 6: Ralph L. "Lee" Minker, Jr., April – June 1944
Roswell Army Air Field, New Mexico

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday evening April 3, 1944	Lee Minker	Bernice Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Excited to have his first flight in a Flying Fortress. Worn out from the work of maneuvering the big plane. Technical description of the B-17, hopeful in will be able to make it through the demands of transition flight training. Instructions about uniforms being bought in Wilmington. Trip to Carlsbad, NM. Food has greatly improved.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday evening April 5, 1944	Lee Minker	Ralph Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
First pay as an officer, buying war bonds, details of budget and savings account. Scheduled to start instrument flying. Regrets that training has kept him from church services.			
Names: Bob Davis and Ted Strous [Dickinson College]			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday evening April 6, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Reflective about past Easter services with the family. Wants to keep in touch with events from home.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday evening April 10, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Transition training behind schedule. Pictures and packages arrived, questions about activities at home and Ginger [German Shepherd dog], has not received any clippings from home.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Monday evening April 17, 1944	Lee Minker	Ralph Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Tired and lonely after accelerated B-17 training and ground school. Feelings about the B-17 have changed from "sweet ship" to "damn truck." Political view of the Roosevelt/Wilkie ticket in the election.			
Names: Hal Sites, Mike Zographone			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Tuesday afternoon April 25, 1944	Lee Minker	Bernice Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Passed B-17 instrument check, 50 hours flight time, has passed chief requirements. Wishes he could fly to Wilmington on a cross country. Enjoys reading newspaper from home. List of boys they know in the service.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday evening April 30, 1944	Lee Minker	Ralph Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Has 60 hours flying B-17, list of further requirements. One-third of class wash out, rumors about orders and which plane he will fly. Frustrated that he will not participate in European invasion. Asks them to see the documentary <i>Memphis Belle</i> to understand the Fort [Flying Fortress]. Technical description of B-17. Report of pay.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Wednesday evening May 3, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Too busy to write, brief note with \$100.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday noon May 7, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Birthday letter to mother, longing for home, hope for a world of "peace and cooperation." Tuned in to the Kentucky Derby while flying due to powerful receiver. Amused by Tokyo Rose on the radio.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Sunday noon May 7, 1944	Lee Minker	Shirley Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Has completed B-17 transitional training, shipping orders uncertain.			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday evening May 11, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Homesick, weather in the west is monotonous, misses the green and flowers. Suggests investing in building and loan with his savings for after the war.			
Names: Howell Finn, Bill Virgin, [Dickinson College], Mike Houlihan			

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday noon May 18, 1944	Lee Minker	Ralph Minker	Roswell AAF, NM
Cheered by talking with the family on Monday evening, bored by military life. Frustrated at waste of time, dull lectures of filler training, not eligible to fly more hours. Analysis of shift of production from the B-17 to B-29. Irritated with worker strikes that cause loss of P-51s needed for bomber protection. Blue Rocks, questions about events at home, directions for maintaining the garden. News of friends in the service.			
Names: Howell Finn [Dickinson College], Leland Inscho			

Note: There is a gap in correspondence from May 18, 1944 – June 29, 1944. He had an unexpected visit home sometime during mid-June. Letter from his mother indicates he was home on his birthday.

Date	Writer	Recipient	Place
Thursday evening June 29, 1944	Lee Minker	Edna Minker	Tampa, FL
Train trip down through North Carolina. Waiting for assignment to operational training. Bothered by the humid weather. Listened to Thomas E. Dewey accept Republican nomination, questions his experience as a wartime president. Give pilot wings to Julia [Taylor]. Asks they keep everything he sends home for a scrapbook. Questions about Blue Rocks, encourages mom and dad to take a vacation.			