

"THE BEST DAMN COMBAT CREW EVER"

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FRONT: SGTs. JOE TRAMBLEY, MAX SHEPHERD, OLAF LARSEN, JIM SHANNON, AND HAROLD MCKAY
BACK: Lts. GORDON DODGE, WESLEY PITTS, JOHN ROSIALA AND RALPH MINKER



THREE Delaware men recently completed an orientation course at an Air Service Command station in England. They are: Second Lieut. Chester Adkins, son of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Adkins, Holly Oak; Lieut. Ralph L. Minker, Jr., son of Rev. and Mrs. Ralph L. Minker, of Ferris School, and Corp. Robert G. Hocker, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Hocker, 103 South Bancroft Parkway.

Delaware Pilot Flying B-17 'Blue Hen Chick' Over Europe

The "Blue Hen Chick" is flying high and wide over Europe—bristling with 50 mm. guns and laying blockbusters on Nazi installations.

She's a B-17 piloted by a Delaware man proud of his ship that's carrying on the fighting traditions of his native state.

The young pilot who named his Fortress after the famous Blue Hen's Chicks of the War of Independence is Lieut. Ralph L. Minker, Jr., 20, son of the Rev. and Mrs. Ralph L. Minker. His father is superintendent of the Ferris School for Boys.



Lieut. Ralph L. Minker, Jr.

The youth serving with the 447th Bomb Group of the Third Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force, based in England.

Lieutenant Minker wrote home

telling him of the name with which the ship has been endowed, and the letter has been forwarded to Gov. Walter W. Bacon.

The young officer, who has been overseas about two months, said the ship was built and checked at a Boeing Aircraft factory in the Midwest, then flown to a staging camp where she was assigned to a combat crew to be flown across the ocean for combat in the E. T. O.

The Blue Hen's Chickens, that nickname proudly accepted by all Delawareans, was originally given to Col. John Haslet's First Delaware Regiment in the American Revolution which reported for duty in January 1776. Although often referred to as the Fighting Delaware's Haslet's regiment early won the sobriquet of "The Blue Hen's Chickens."

The name originated from the men of Capt. Jonathan Caldwell's company who took with them game chickens celebrated for their fighting qualities, of the brood of the Kent County Blue Hen.

The regiment fought at Long Island, White Plains, Trenton and Princeton. In the latter battle, Colonel Haslet was killed while leading the advance.

"AND THE BEST DAMN PLANE"!

