

1

Sunday noon

[February 28, 1943]

Dear Dad,

Gradually a semblance of order is coming out of the chaos of the last several days...

My first impressions:

There were hundreds of planes lined up at the Glenn L. Martin plant outside of Baltimore. It was really an impressive sight to see all the new planes, the huge plant and airfield and the numerous mushrooming villages nearby.

I saw Stowell and Springer in Union Station while waiting for the Silver Meteor which came at 9:30 (at last). We had a fairly comfortable journey down in this really classy streamliner. Six of our like were on the train with us. The two Dickinson boys went on another train however. We arrived in Miami at 10:30 Friday night after a monotonous journey through the poverty stricken south.

Finally (12:15) a truck came for us and we were taken to the Cadillac Hotel. They weren't expecting us so we were temporarily assigned to the Hotel Good and given our mess equipment - two steel plates, knife, fork and spoon. We were followed by eight more (including Stowell and Springer) at 12:30 and twelve more at 2:30. We got two hours sleep before being called for breakfast at 4:45. (We have fifteen minutes to dress, wash and line up outside.)

Meals have been very good although not like mother's, and we have to stand in line from thirty to sixty minutes beforehand.

We just stood around and waited most of Saturday. We were taken from Flight 635 and assigned to Flight 629 in the Coral Reef Hotel. We thus filled out a flight which had been formed Wednesday last of Pennsylvania boys. Mickels of Dickinson, Phi Psi, was one and I am at present one of six with him in one room although I will probably have another room shortly as they are shipping quite a few out.

We just came in from getting our outfit except for gas masks, ties, handkerchifs [sic] and certain sizes of certain things. Hyde, Stowell and Springer are still in my group and I have seen other Dickinson boys for they are in 635 mostly.

My address is -

AAC Pvt. Ralph Minker

TSS 1129 Flight 629

BTC 9

Miami Beach

Florida

I'll write more later but probably will be rushed for the next few days. Don't send any packages yet.

Tell everybody hello for me.

Yours, Lee