Officers’ Club
Roswell Army Air Field
Roswell, New Mexico
Sunday evening
April 30, 1944
Dear Dad,
I now have sixty hours of flying a B-17 to my credit and have passed my instru-
ment and solo checks. All I have to do now as I complete my transition training
is to fill in time requirements for night, formation, instrument solo, bomb ap-
proach, high altitude and cross country navigation flying. Shipping orders may
be announced at any time during the next thirty days for our transition train-
ing will be finished ahead of schedule, it was fast but thorough; a third of our
class has been eliminated. As usual, when a shipping date draws near, rumors
abound, but as far as I can see it seems as if I will ship to Lincoln Army Air
Field, Lincoln, Nebraska, (not Salt Lake City) for assignment to an operational
unit for approximately twelve weeks of final training with combat crew and
plane before flying to war as: 1. first pilot of a B-17; 2. first pilot of a B-24
(since B-17 production is now B-29 production); 3. co-pilot of a B-29.

Two things gripe [sic] me in considering the future: 1. that I have to fly planes
that are a chore to maneuver [sic]; 2. that I will not participate in the European
invasion.

If you have a chance it would be worth your while to see "The Memphis Belle,"
the Air Forces movie of a bombing mission over Germany. Some of the combat
planes shown probably came from Roswell for planes fresh from the factory are
sent here for a breaking in period before being assigned to a combat crew. I
wish I could show you a Fort and take you for a ride in one. I am sure that you
would find it most interesting riding in a 40,000 to 70,000 pound four fan 4,800
horsepower combat

bomber. The B-17 was originally designed in 1929, first built in 1935 as an
experiment — a four engine bomber, a bomber that could defend itself. If the
Fort were allocated four 2,200 horse engines it would today be the fastest yet for
when she gets up to 25,000 feet her ground speed she can register a ground speed
of 300 miles per hour. The Fort has a crew of ten, six gun stations, eight separate
[sic] radio sets, main and reserve oxygen systems, 27,000 gallon fuel capacity,
eight ton bomb capacity, wing de-icing system, prop anti-icing system, four
turbo superchargers, Hamilton Standard three bladed hydromatic adjustable
pitch propellers [sic] on Wright Cyclone fans, life raft, emergency flares, main
and emergency hydraulic brake system, main and alternate vacuum system, six
escape hatches, main and emergency electric systems, in short, every-
thing conceivable to insure a perfect bombing mission against all emergencies.
Among others I received letters from Mr. Baker and Mrs. Hanning last week.
By now I am hopelessly behind in my correspondence.
Tell Mother that I received her cookies and they were fresh and delicious. Also
tell her that I would like two links removed from my identification bracelet.
Tomorrow I get paid $268.25. I will pay $35.00 for board, buy a pair of shoes,
two towels, a half dozen socks and a gaberdine dress summer uniform and work
uniforms. After all is taken care of I will send the rest home.
Yours,
Lee