

2815 S. Abingdon St.
Fairlington, Va.

4 February 1945.

Dear Prof-

It was good to get the pleasant note on your Christmas card and I wished at the time that I could have paid you and the college a visit at Christmas time. I thought particularly of the Chapel services and the informal evening parties, either at Cunard Hall or in one of the faculty houses, that I associate with the holiday season. I did get a three day vacation, so to speak, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, but in attending a family get-together near Philadelphia there was no time to run up to Staten Island. It has been widely observed that this was a sober holiday period despite the lavish spending spree in which the nation engaged. I have heard that you had one particularly grievous problem at that time with the Sociology Department. From what I have heard, I can't understand it all, but I did wish that you had not had to be saddle with such a situation.

The family is well and flourishing mightily. Joan enjoys her school despite the very peculiar and very casual way in which several of her teachers work her. Today we all went ice skating, the second time this year we've done it. We miss the lake that used to be so near our home on Staten Island. Lydia is pretty well occupied with the vigorous young one, Betsy. I doubt seem to get a great deal accomplished outside of my routine work. There is always plenty of it to do so I frequently bring some of it home for working over at night. A few times I've not gotten around to working at home, as for example today when the weather was so fine, I had to be outside. There's so much reading to be done, I also welcome the chance to

regards to Wada and best wishes and strength to you.

Sincerely, Harold.

rest my eyes a bit.

My work is very interesting, for many of the records of overseas transportation (military) are getting back to Washington, so in addition to correspondence between Washington and the various overseas theaters and interviews with men who have come back on a new assignment or who have made a trip to some of the fronts, I have the standard type of material one uses for research work. I see and deal with a great many men who are engaged in operational work and they have an operations man's point of view, not a historian's. A few that are interested in historical work seem to feel that a historical treatise can be gotten up like an operations account or plan. To write almost contemporary history, however, with the time limitations they put on you (so much seems to be expected to be turned out in a given period), and with the limitations of available documents, the fallibility of men's memories, and the preoccupation of key men, places a greater premium than ever ^{on} careful weighing of the material that is available. I've had some pretty good arguments with authorities over the fact that nothing should be written, though collection of documents and studying can be proceeding, until it is possible to do a reasonably thorough job, for otherwise the resulting product is valueless. I have been overruled, however, and given to understand that the writing must go forward. That's what I meant by turning out work in a given period, above.

Despite what the foregoing paragraph seems to imply, I by no means intend to imply that contemporary historical work here is valueless. While it lacks the obvious benefits of more leisurely and complete research, it profits by certain benefits that come from contacting men who are engaged in the work and whose memories, while fallible, are nevertheless fresher than they will be twenty years hence. Having finished work on the story of Greenland and North Africa (about 275 pages of the latter) and nearly finished the Sicilian campaign,

I am also working on the Italian campaign. In a few weeks I shall tackle the invasion of the continent, a work which could take at least a year, of course I need reports dealing with all theaters in so far as they are sent in to the Transportation Corps and not the Army Top Brass, as they come in, so I'm afraid to that extent. I pause me for following the old habit and using the margin.