1945

Hardin, Herbert G. - 1945 (photostat)

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12 January 1945

1st. Lt. Herbert H. Hardin
663rd Ord. Am. Co.
APO 513 c/o PM NYC

Dear Prof:

Pardon the salutation, but if you ever rise to the Presidency I'll still call you "Prof" as a hangover from law school days. How are you and the family? I trust that you are well and happy. I am well, but could hardly call my present state of mind a happy one. I have been here in the European Theatre of Operations for quite some time now, helping to "pass the ammunition" as you can see from my outfit designation. It's a pretty rugged deal, as we sometimes occupy ringside seats and then at times we are in the bleachers. I definitely prefer the bleachers in a show of this sort but even the bleachers are vulnerable due to the fact that some years ago the Wright Brothers conducted rather a successful experiment at Kitty Hawk, N. Carolina. Reach back in that bountiful supply of information you retain in your hallowed cranium and you will have no difficulty interpreting my reference to the Kitty Hawk episode. (smile). Yes, they finally decided to do something concrete about putting an end to the war which explains my presence here, so far away from my usual habitats. Seems as though they would have consulted me first, however, they didn't.
I received a copy of the University Bulletin a few days ago, and really enjoyed the pictures and information it contained. I have a bone to pick with the publishers however—said bone being to wit: Why was not my name included in the directory of Howardites in the Armed Forces? Is it that I am not claimed by my own school? Or do I have to wait until I become a General? What's the deal? Why I had just been championing the Alma Mater in a bull session with my fellow officers who came from Fisk, Wilberforce, Tenn. State and N.Y.U. respectively, when the Bulletin arrived; imagine my discomfiture when they called my attention to this flagrant omission. I demand an explanation or I shall advise my atty. One from A. Ransome to institute suit at once. Smile.

About myself there is little to say other than that I am at present Executive Officer of my company & second in command. Functionally, I am Depot Commander, Summary Court Officer and Unit Mail Censor. We have been working very hard and our life is a tough one as we move from one location to another quite frequently as the battle sites change and they cannot fire a weapon without ammo, which is where we come in. The weather here is positively unbelievable. Before winter set in with its snow, sleet and ice the mud was two feet deep and now the snow is in about the same proportion. Then again we are not in nice steam heated
heated apartments but most of the time in pup tents. Ask one of the R.O.T.C. boys to show you one and you'll get what I mean. Our boys are doing a remarkable job here, and are receiving credit for their operations. Hardly a day passes without mention being made via "Stars & Stripes," the Army daily paper, of the heroic actions of our boys in the E.T.O. Those of us who are here and see the terrible things that war as it is now fought, can do to a country, will do all in our power as citizens when we return to see to it that our children never have to be bothered with a war in their lifetime. I wish you could see the ruins and the utter poverty, the sickness, the pitiable condition of the people who have been in the path of the war. The cities can never be rebuilt. The harbors etc. torn up beyond repair. One thing the war will make for the U.S. is good citizens and good husbands. When a fellow gets back he will appreciate all of the things he formerly accepted as commonplace. He will appreciate a home, a wife, a family. He will want to think and act as a sober, respectable citizen. He'll be tired and easy to please. His values will have done a complete about face. I can see this every day in the conversations of the men, in the letters they write. They want security, education, and a normal life and they're going to get it too.
If you find time from your varied duties as Secretary of our center of learning to answer this missive, I am cognizant of the fact that you probably receive hundreds of letters from the boys in the Services. I would like to make a request—would you find out for me what steps the law schools of the country are making for refresher courses for law graduates who haven't taken a bar examination before being inducted and who want to do so upon return to civilian life? Will such a course be offered? A general review course, of say, one year. Could that be offered at Howard? I would appreciate an answer to my query as someday I aspire to rise to the much sought after rank of Civilian. Happy Day!

Give my regards to any faculty members of the Law School who are still around.

My best regards to your family. By the way, I have a family of my own now: a wife, and 17 mos. old baby girl who reside in Philadelphia.

Trusting that you will find time to reply, I am, sincerely yours,

Herbert G. Hardin