

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER
WASHINGTON

December 29th, 1919.

My dear Colonel Fabyan:

[I was hastily summoned to my mother's bedside about a week ago because of her desperate illness and therefore, did not receive, until my return on Saturday, the little tape message which you had prepared, which demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt, that you had not only broken the one hundred fifty messages prepared on the printing telegraph according to the method used last year by the Signal Corps, but that you had also reconstructed the running key which enabled you to prepare messages to be sent to the Chief Signal Officer, to General Churchill and to myself, all of which were this morning put through without mishap, on the cipher machine here, using our key tapes according to existing methods.

You have done a great work and your contention of last March is sustained - that the method of using the printing telegraph cipher as used last year by the Signal Corps was decipherable. This is, perhaps, the toughest individual cipher you have ever had to tackle. To the victor belong the spoils! I am waiting General Squier's return so that he personally can convey to you the remarks which would otherwise have to be 'rubber-stamped' by a subordinate.] Hence, you will understand the delay in his acknowledgement of your message. He is on leave and will return soon.

For your private information, and not for publication, I am enclosing a copy of letter which I have this date written to General Churchill. I don't want Colonel Fabyan to think that Colonel Mauborgne is unappreciative of what Riverbank has done. I am going to put this thing over if I can. I expect some opposition from Yardley but General Churchill is a bigger man than some people think and perhaps Major Yardley's opposition will not amount to very much in General Churchill's opinion. I feel satisfied that the Chief Signal Officer will back me up in this matter; however, I am well aware that there are many slips 'twixt the cup and the lip and am taking time by the forelock to let you know what I am trying to do.

I should like, however, to get an honest opinion from you as to the two questions which I can't help but harp on, or on at least one of them, because you have already told me that you are unable to give any further consideration to this modified form at the present time. Colonel Hitt is satisfied that at least one of the two methods proposed is indecipherable. What say you?

I am enclosing a copy of the deciphered tape, which you sent to me. Wishing you the compliments of the season, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

J. G. Mauborgne
Lt. Col., Signal Corps.

Encl.