

EXECUTIVE DIVISION
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BRANCH

In replying refer to

4151-526
H. I. 8WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON.

May 31, 1919.

Captain J. A. Powell,
Riverbank,
Geneva, Ill.

Dear Captain Powell:

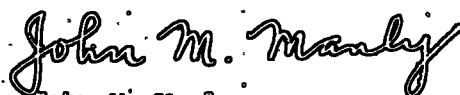
Since your letter came we have been so busy that I have postponed replying to you day after day and now I find myself within a few hours of leaving Washington and the service and consequently haven't time for more than a line.

Meanwhile I have seen Colonel Fabyan's letter to the Adjutant General.

The Colonel seems constitutionally incapable of stating anything fairly and correctly. He knew that messages 2, 3, and 4 of Mr. Chopard's series were not admitted as representing the system used by the American Telephone and Telegraph people; yet he represents to the Secretary of War that they were. He now induces you to put up some messages for him under conditions that furnish a very pretty variation of the problem of deciphering two messages with the same running key; and then instead of stating fairly what he has done, he represents you as representing H. I. D. and as putting up the messages without instructions from him.

It is true - and has been known from the first - that the solution of two messages with a running key is easier with a table of reciprocating alphabets like these than with any other sort of table, and that with such an alphabet any element common to two messages can be made to cancel. The T. and W. people have attempted to use the system in such a way as to avoid the dangers arising from these facts. If they have not done so, let Colonel Fabyan show that they have not. In other words, let him decipher their test messages. It is not the alphabets but the method of using them which is open to discussion.

Sincerely yours,


John M. Manly,
Captain, U. S. Army.

dbm