



HEADQUARTERS, ARMY SERVICE FORCES  
 OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER  
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

SPSIS-3

10 May 1944.

Mr. J. Rives Childs,  
 American Legation,  
 Tangiers, North Africa.

Dear Childs:

In accordance with my promise, I am sending herewith three items as follows: (1) Your paper entitled "German Military Ciphers from February to November 1918", Register No. 8, (2) "What Poe Knew about Cryptography" by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., (3) Articles Reprinted from the Signal Corps Bulletin.

You will not need to send a receipt for the last two items, but a receipt for the first one is inclosed with the book and I will request that you sign it and return it to me promptly via this same channel.

It was good to see you and I am only sorry that we did not get a chance to spend several more hours together. No doubt, we would have turned up a lot more interesting items like the one you told me about in connection with the books, etc., which our British friends picked up in your city. Incidentally, I have started the inquiry to see what happened so far as we were concerned but thus far nothing has turned up.

With cordial greetings to Mrs. Childs and to yourself,  
 I am

Sincerely yours,

William F. Friedman,  
 Director of Communications  
 Research.

3 Inclosures:  
 Above-listed books.

SPSIS-3

14 January 1944

Dear Childs:

Your letter of 22 December has not reached me in its original form but the copy which you sent through the State Department was put in my hands a couple of days ago.

It was a pleasure to hear from you although I know you understand that I do see things of an official nature from your quarters occasionally. The musical cipher system which is described in the little booklet you sent me is, as you say, so simple fundamentally that things of this sort are encountered only in movies depicting activities of secret agents as concocted by highly imaginative authors. Sorry to say that I know of no authentic instance in which a cipher of this sort has been used in modern times for purposes other than books and movies. You probably know that the very earliest books on cryptography show examples of this type of cipher. I am therefore returning the booklet with thanks for the opportunity to see it.

I recall that Mrs. Friedman told me that you had phoned just before leaving Washington for your present assignment. I was in Walter Reed at the time but I am fully recovered now. The Surgeon General, however, deemed it wise for me to be retired, so I am ~~not~~ in mufti but am still on the same job.

Things must be very interesting out your way and I know that you are enjoying your assignment. I was sorry that I did not get a chance to come to North Africa on my visit to England last spring. I had hoped to get down to Algiers and Cairo but things were pressing here so I had to come back. I enjoyed my visit to England very much.

Reciprocating your cordial greetings and with best wishes for the New Year to you and Mrs. Childs, I am,

Sincerely yours,

William F. Friedman

Mr. J. Rives Childs  
Legation of the United States of America  
Tangier, Morocco

LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tangier, Morocco, December 22, 1943

Dear Friedman:

I have been handed the enclosed suggested system for a musical cipher which has interested me sufficiently to pass it on to you. The system is so simple, fundamentally, that I presume it may have already been considered but I thought it might be worthwhile to let you have a look at it. Of course, it would by its very nature be very limited in the scope of its usefulness but nonetheless it seems to me that there might be occasions when it might prove both practicable and useful. The man who offers it is a Hungarian musician, leader of one of the local orchestras. I would be much interested in having your opinion of it and, if it can be put to any use, whether there is any possibility of obtaining some compensation for the author.

The last time I heard of you I phoned your wife just before leaving Washington and learned to my great regret that you were ill. I do hope things have gone better with you. I can imagine the work with which you must have been burdened

With every good wish and kind regards to you and your wife, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

J. Rives Childs

Enclosure  
BookletColonel W. F. Friedman  
Signal Corps, United States Army,  
War Department,  
Washington, D. C.

Childs