

419 Dock St., Wilmington, N. C., Aug. 1st, 1935

Dear Friedman:

Thanks for your letter, received this morning. - I am sorry to hear the report of your father. We can go just so far before we reach the limits of the medical science- or art- or both.

When you suggest that I give you an inkling of what I have in mind for the fall, you put me on a spot. How to give an inkling without actually saying just what I intend is a problem. The whole thing may amount to an absolute zero, and in any case will not be a matter of great importance. Well, let's see: if anything comes of it at all, it will gratify you as much as me. It doesn't involve publishing anything by either you or me. It does involve my writing (not for publication or public delivery) a paper that will provide an (affirmative) answer to the question, "Is Cryptography a Science?" - Now, there is an inkling. All I have said is leading, and none of it misleading. Whether you can guess from this what I am driving at, I don't know. It is possible. I want to whet your curiosity.

And now, tit for tat, or tat for tit: what's on your mind?

I have turned bald. It happened this morning when I read what you had to report about the \$8,000. Damn somebody to me unknown. What are the present prospects?

I am working at the cryptographic library. I have two on hand just now - your index of coincidence for study, and the Field Codes for relaxation. The Coincidence is a pretty piece of work. Did Yardley help you with it? (God help your wife and children when you get home after reading that!) - I am making some notes, as I wrote, marking a few mis-prints, etc. If a note ever sounds curt, that is, of course, not meant to be the case - brevity is the soul of wit. You have not quite escaped the cryptographer's temptation of ~~the~~ using "obvious," "patent," or similar words at certain points which get my goat. You see, if it's patent to you, and not to me, you make me feel like a damn fool. I may be one, but that is no reason why you should make me feel like one, is it?

reasons

There are various why I don't get an apartment as you suggest. One is the expense. That is a real one, but not the only one. - The Club is closed, my belongings are in storage, and I have until October to find an abode. It is possible that the Club will get another place, and it is possible that it will dissolve. So I'm up in the air. - You might ask me why I don't move to the Harmonie. There are reasons against that too. You married men are the wise ones - you get rid of your worries. Which puts me in the damn fool class once more!

Time for one of my five daily smokes, a few pages of reading and a nap. Greetings to your family and to you.

Cordially

S/lu.