

America's Archives

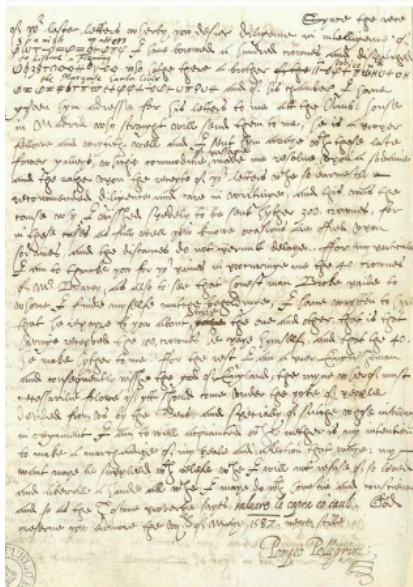
Often enchanting stories of historic documents and artifacts (including sometimes ones that are postally related)—and how things that may have once seemed rather ordinary can turn out to be national treasures. On other occasions, they immediately become artifacts of history the minute they were created.

America's National Archives Keeps Track of Spies!

Every American owes a debt of gratitude to our Congress for establishing the National Archives—the eternal repository for every kind of tangible item pertaining to not only America's history, but that of the world. Shown on this page are highly important, rare and extremely valuable communications and documents relating to espionage—beginning with an incredible letter pertaining to the British defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. This is about as fascinating as history gets!

THE SPANISH ARMADA. Great Britain's Lord Walsingham's duty was to protect Queen Elizabeth I, not only from plots inside England, but also from the danger of invasion. Philip II, King of Spain, wanted to remove her from the throne and replace her with a Catholic monarch. By 1585 the two countries were at war - and Spain's navy was as big as England's and the Netherlands' combined.

Walsingham wanted to find out if and when Spain was going to invade. One of his spies in Europe was Antony Standen, a restless and adventurous Catholic who had left England for Scotland in 1556. In 1565 Standen went to France and in the early 1580s he seems to have settled in Tuscany. In Florence Standen used the pseudonym 'Pompeo Pellegrini'. He made friends with Giovanni Figliuzzi, Tuscan ambassador to Madrid and an excellent source of information about developments in Spain. Although Walsingham was probably in contact with Standen from about 1582, it was not until the spring of 1587 that a regular correspondence began and Standen started to receive £100 a year from the Queen for his service as a spy. Standen tipped off Walsingham about Spain's impending invasion of their huge Armada!



Letter from the spy who gave away the Spanish Armada. From "Pellegrini" to Lord Walsingham, 1588.



"TREASURE" spied for us.

By the time the World War II had started and Nathalie Sergueiew agreed to work for the German Abwehr, she had already decided that her real loyalties lay with the Allies and she would do all she could to help them from within the German intelligence system.

Nathalie Sergueiew was one of many agents who double-crossed the German secret service during the Second World War. Between 1943 and 1945 Sergueiew's contacts in the Abwehr believed her to be a loyal German spy. In reality, she was sending them deliberately misleading messages composed by the British secret service. As 'Treasure', Sergueiew did valuable work for MI5 yet her British spymasters began to suspect that she lacked discretion and commitment.

At right: Information about German espionage methods from MI5 interviews with Sergueiew, November 1943

Fred Schmitt's PERSPECTIVE

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The featured article in this issue of our newsletter deals with the colorful advertising and promotional mail that has been with us since the first postage stamp was developed. Certainly, this type of mail qualifies under the heading of collectable paper ephemera—but there are many other categories of paper items that were once considered "junk"—but are now highly sought after.

Our firm, however, is concerned with—in a broad sense—communications. Postal covers, manuscripts, documents, family and/or wartime correspondences, or just about anything that connotes paper being used for human interaction between individuals.

In many cases too numerous for us to recount here, we hear from people who have found something along these lines that they were just about to toss into the trash. But they decided to call us first, just in case. Often, the result of our purchasing for good money a box of material that the owners thought to be rather worthless.

For these reasons, we urge you to always consider calling us whenever you run across anything that looks like what we have described above. All through our 53 years in business, we've had many opportunities to delight people by paying money for materials they thought were "junk!"

Third Method

4. For the other method shown her by DELIDALISE, SERGUEIEW was to take what looked like an indelible copying pencil and with it scribble on a sheet of paper so that one side of it was completely covered. This sheet of paper was then to be used as a carbon. It apparently left no trace on the sheet of paper underneath.

5. Yvonne DELIDALISE took away SERGUEIEW's experiments in both these methods of secret writing, saying that she would have them developed. SERGUEIEW, however, never saw the results and can give no more information.

Fourth Method

6. The final method of secret writing in which SERGUEIEW was instructed was that given her for her mission to this country. For this she was to use the pellets given her by KLIEMANN before her departure from Paris (see para. 112 1st Report). She was instructed in their use in the flat at 29 Avenue de l'Opera (see para. 109 1st Report).

7. A pellet was to be heated in a clear flame which would not discolor it. When the pellet was melted she was to take a wooden toothpick and dip it in the liquid. When it was dry she would re-dip it and continue doing so until all the liquid had been absorbed and a new pellet reformed on the end of the stick. This could now be used as pen for her secret writing. She would then take a sheet of paper (non-shiny surface) and rub the paper evenly with cotton-wool. On the side she rubbed she was to write her cover letter in ink or pencil, preferably the former. Her letter in invisible writing was then to be written on the same side of the paper but at right angles to the visible text. If SERGUEIEW used a double sheet which entailed 4 written sides, the invisible writing was only to be done on the first and third pages.

8. Her cover letter was to be signed "SOLLANGE". It was left to her as to whether she made use of the code for her invisible writing, but this was considered unnecessary.