

7-24-2004

Letter from Mavis Batey

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Recommended Citation

"Letter from Mavis Batey" (2004). *Bulmash Family Holocaust Collection*. 2014.1.239.
<https://digital.kenyon.edu/bulmash/499>

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24 July 2004

Dear M^r Graham,

Thank you very much for your letter. I know that schoolchildren have become very interested in codes during this year & having D-Day on the curriculum. When my granddaughter asked me to talk to her class I received a wodge of thank you letters in code! You may be interested in the enclosed telephone conversation with a reporter which starts off by saying 'But what amazed them was having to keep your mouth shut for 30 years!'. In reviewing a book about Enigma I was asked to say what special skills & lessons were to be learned from the Bletchley experience. As I emphasise in the article there was no training as machine code-breaking was without precedent but what I came up with as an answer was 'determination to crack the problem whatever it took'. No odds against you, lateral thinking and connecting seemingly

unrelated evidence & above all total commitment to the job & keeping your mouth shut in the knowledge that men's lives depended on it."

It was above all else team work, nobody was looking for promotion or making headlines. Unfortunately for those 'veterans' who are still alive it is the press that will make the headlines and stories as in this one. Although the interview is my own words you would think that I broke the Guevara machine myself - there is all the difference between breaking messages once the mechanism of the machine is known and that initial stage of producing the theory - this was done in the Spanish Civil War, when they first used the Guevara machine operationally by my boss, the ace-cryptographer, Dilly Knox.

They do have very good school visits laid on for Bleckley Park - there is a very good website.

with all good wishes

Mavis Bates