



Signal Corps Photo

Mixing the Preparation That Will Decide Whether a Suspected Letter Contains an Invisible Message

SINGLE SPY EFFORT IN 50,700 LETTERS

Chemical Tests by Base Censors Reveal One Case of Treachery

SOME INNOCENT ATTEMPTS

Search for Codes in Suspected Documents Another Laborious but Fascinating Job

Evidence of the loyalty of the American soldier is contained in the records of the Base Censor of the A.E.F.

Out of 50,700 letters held up by the Base Censor for various reasons and submitted to chemical tests to determine whether they carried information of value to the enemy concealed by the use of invisible ink, only one case of actual treachery on the part of a member of the A.E.F. was discovered, the records show.

If there were traitors or spies in the American Army attempting to get military information to the enemy during the great Allied offensive that crushed Germany, they did not, apparently, attempt any tricks with the mails.

Examination of the 50,700 letters was made in the laboratories of the Base Censor and covered the period from September 23, 1918, to February 6, 1919.

The work in the laboratories of the Base Censor, which, for obvious reasons, cannot be described in detail, is performed by a staff of four officers and five enlisted men, all experts in their line.

Secret Chemical Test

This force closely examines all mail addressed to neutral countries and selected letters directed to the United States. Some of the suspected letters are subjected to a simple test which requires only a few minutes; others are put through a secret chemical test which is infallible in the detection of the use of invisible inks.

Examinations of suspected mail involves also a search for codes, a laborious job, but as fascinating to those to whom the task is delegated as is the work in the laboratories.

Testing of the 50,700 letters turned over to the laboratory experts by Capt. B. A. Adams, Base Censor, disclosed quite a few cases wherein soldiers endeavored to inform relatives or friends in neutral countries, such as Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, of their whereabouts. In some of these instances information of value to the enemy was found. But, according to Captain Adams, there was no intention on the part of the writers to be disloyal or to aid Germany, except in one case, the details of which are secret.