

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706

Dear Miss Weigle,

I thank you more than I can say for your information. I shall, of course, keep it all to myself. It is indeed a fascinating fellow, from a distance, though I suspect that I wouldn't get along very well at close quarters. In the mean time he has sent me a ~~KKK~~ letter (I wrote 30 pp, then 20, and finally relented and send these 3, he said), with only one or two biographical facts, and he more or less decided that I was not likely to help him in what he particularly wants at the moment, a large public controversy. But he did say a word or two about his "decipherment" which needs those quotation marks. Also, in the mean time, I had a look at the manuscript you kindly sent me. The combination of his reluctance to tell me very much biography, especially the innocuous (I think) answers to such a question as 'How did you first find out about the Phaistos Disk?' and of a perfectly ordinary, run-of-the-mill, 'decipherment' just about decided me that he was not worth pursuing, now that I had a sample.

I wrote and sent him one letter suggesting a device for getting him a very limited controversial publicity, namely that I would put one of those Xerox sheets in my periodical as a joke. He may either take me up, or consider it an insult. I've no way of telling until he either answers or doesn't answer.

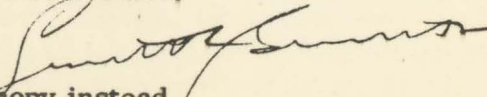
Then I wrote another letter, with his manuscript in front of me, and with the notion that I was not likely to get the sort of information I wanted from him - he writes with a sort of arrogance, at least to what he supposed are ~~Academic~~ Academic types - and rather briefly told him a little bit of what was wrong with his effort, but mostly simply that it was hopelessly wrong, and ordinary, and all of the sort that has been done before too many times. But I haven't sent this one, waiting to see what answer I might get to my earlier one. Now that I have your most helpful information, he seems almost worth following up some more - if only he would cooperate in exchanging information and advice. But I'll have to wait for what he writes. Almost certainly I'll write that letter over, and make at least its form gentler, even if I can't do much about improving his material. He's plainly had more than his share of trouble, even if it sounds as if he may deliberately attract some of it.

If you have thousands of pages of letters, and they are all about his decipherment, then you undoubtedly have a treasure, but are probably to be ~~XXXX~~ pitied if you must try to understand them. The last one I got hold of, a pleasant London lady, ~~as~~ also was capable of writing 30 page letters, and I have more than a thousand ~~xxx~~ pages (not letters) from her. Much of it a fairly extensive manuscript in first draft. She was a little more plodding than P.F.T. and she was willing to examine how she went about things. Essentially all decipherers reach a solution by intuition, and then set about building the evidence to support it. And it is very hard for anyone to work out how intuition works, either his own or someone else's.

P.F.T. is obviously intelligent, as he says, and there are a couple of statements in that manuscript which it would help other decipherers to recognize, but the whole thing won't hang together. And I doubt that he can be shown that it won't hang together. He really ought to spend his energies on poetry, or novels, but they may not pay. Certainly this Disk will not ever bring him in a cent^e, but rather be a constant drain, until he gives it up.

Again, many thanks for your help, and I only hope I may have some occasion to return the favor. And if I discover from our friend anything of interest, I'll let you know.

With best wishes,



I see I did a good job of a carbon copy, so I'll Xerox a copy instead.