



A CRYPTO CHALLENGE BY CRYPTOOL

# A SECRET MESSAGE FROM CASTLE MANSFELD

An enciphered postcard – sent 1902 from a castle to a  
simple bookseller

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Eisleben is a small city where Martin Luther (1483-1546) began and ended his life.

Over a hundred years ago, a bookseller once lived quite close to the church where Luther was christened. His name was Paul Winkler and just a few blocks away was his store, where today lays a modern hospital.

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1902, the postman delivered a postcard addressed to Paul Winkler at Hohethorstraße 6 in Eisleben.

It had been deposited only 10km away in Mansfeld with a 5 cent stamp.



The front of the postcard shows Castle Mansfeld, which was originally built by the aristocratic family *von Mansfeld*.

They owned many manors, including Burg Örner and the beautiful Mansfeld castle.

The manors were mainly given to family descendents over the years, but in bad times, they were sold to other aristocrats or wealthy businessmen.

Today Castle Mansfeld serves as a youth hostel for the German Protestant church.

A recent photo shows that it remained nearly completely untouched over the years.

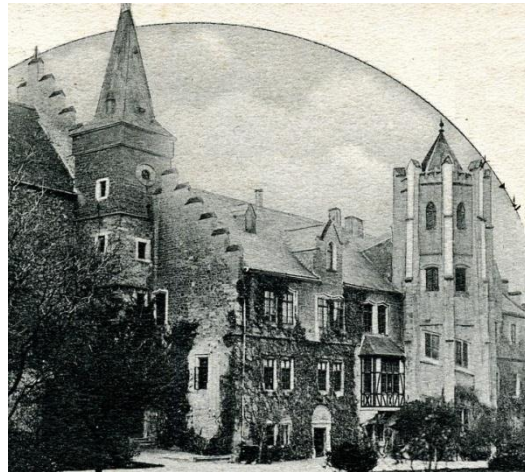
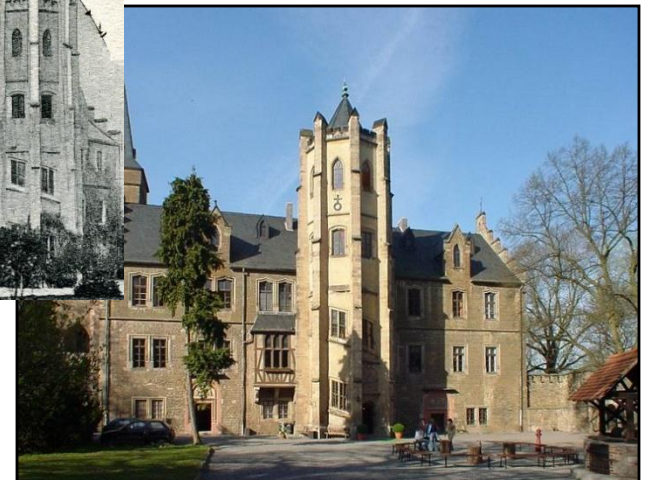
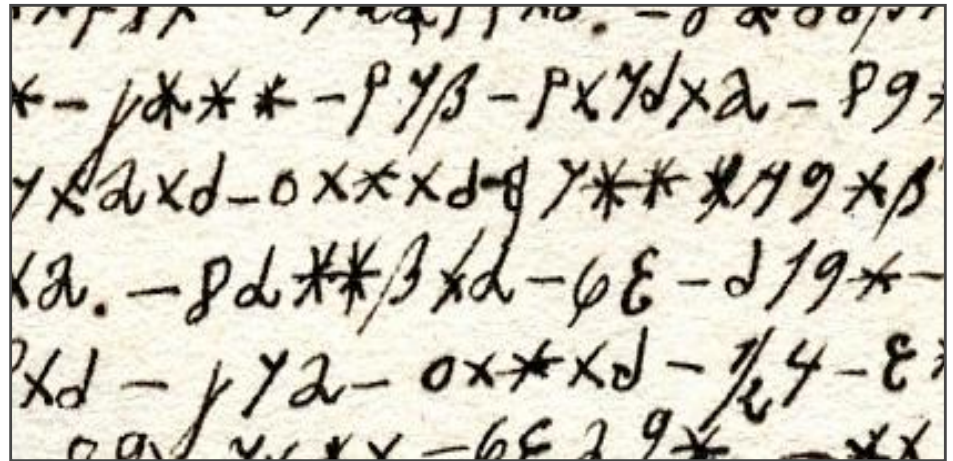


Foto: Detlef Mewes – Public Domain



Besides the date – September 5, 1902 – the card contains no readable words.

It does, however, contain some handwritten lines, presumably intended to be read by Paul.



Unfortunately, they were written in cipher, but if you spend a bit of time, you might be able to figure out who wrote these lines.

It has something to do with secret love and a rendezvous. This was pure romance in a time when a young aristocratic lady shouldn't have had anything with a simple bookkeeper.

Find out who it was who wanted to meet with Paul!  
(The text is simple but in German.)



Schloss Mansfeld, 1. 5. Sept. 1902  
im inneren Hof

P.\*.2./\*x++x2p\*79x-77d-6e-q220x222  
0eβ-219\*\*f9x-0x22p9d.-8222β10-7x2=  
6x-79\*-p2\*\*-p7β-px7d2-89xpx222  
83127x22d-0x22d97\*\*279xβ-219\*-  
22222.-82\*\*β22-6e-219\*-772-  
22p9d-772-0x22d-74-822-  
4x7-89x7x22-6e29\*. -2x76x2-  
2x02xβ-x2-22βx-77226-  
x2++x2β79x-7d-22-8222-  
β20-89x7d.-

87x22-2x22\*79x2-0220x-8x26xβ-672-px7d-  
\*774x2-βf\*-6x7d2-β22x-2e97x.

Ft-+222x2p-77x6x28x22d.-