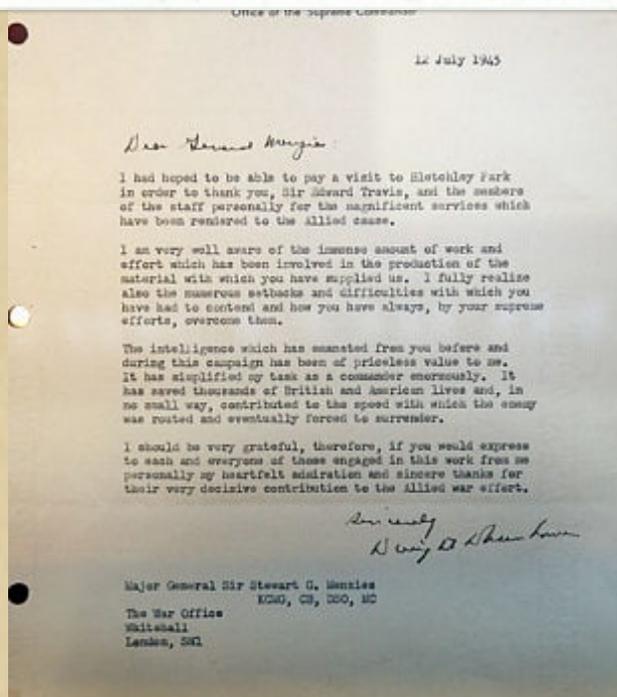


This article tells of a secret letter from General Eisenhower praising the code breakers of Bletchley Park for their contribution to the Allied victory in Europe of World War II.

Source:

Sawer, Patrick. "Letter reveals Bletchley Park code breakers secretly thanked by General Eisenhower for "priceless" work." The Telegraph. Online. Posted 1:07 pm GMT March 15, 2016. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/12194670/Letter-reveals-Bletchley-Park-code-breakers-secretly-thanked-by-General-Eisenhower-for-priceless-work.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter>.



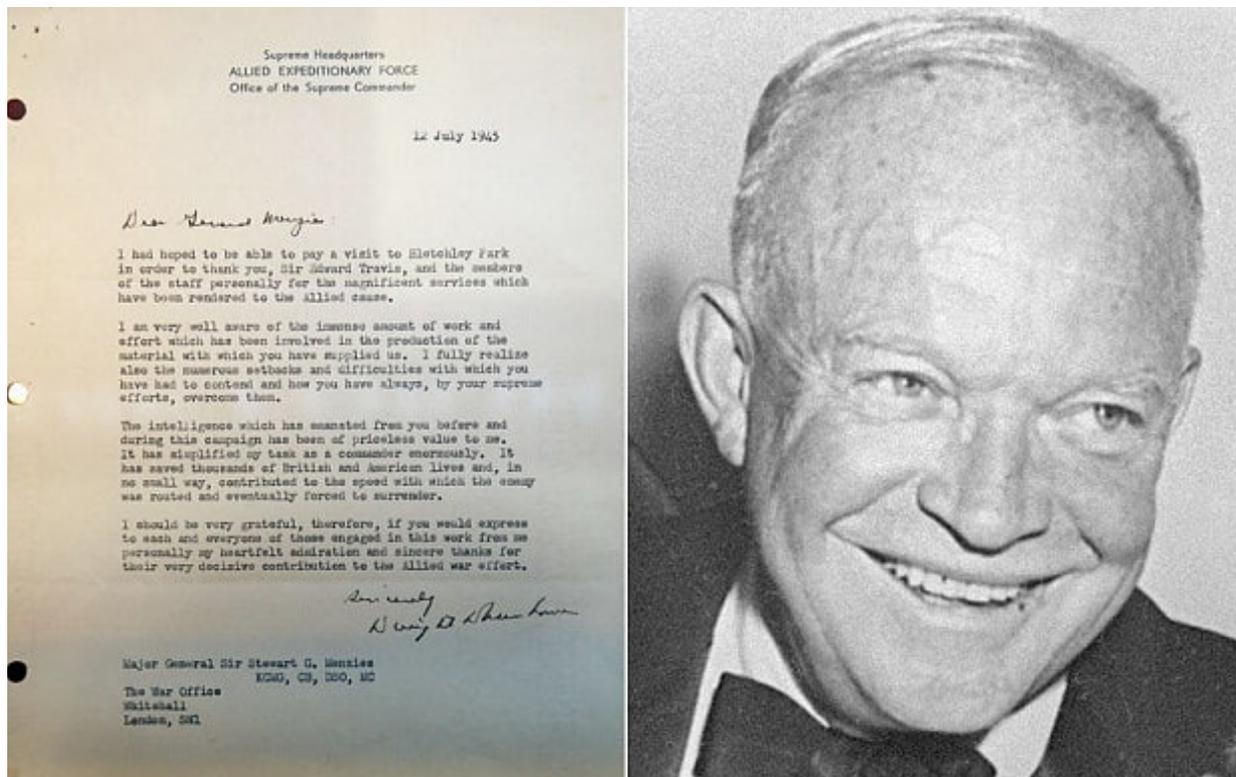
A previously secret letter from US President Dwight D Eisenhower praising the "priceless" work of the Bletchley Park code breakers in helping to win the war went on public display for the first time yesterday.

The letter was sent at the end of the Second World War by General Eisenhower, who had been Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, to Sir Stewart Menzies, wartime chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, and had previously hung on the wall of the office of the Chief of MI6.

It has now been put on public view, illustrating the importance the US Government placed on the work of the Bletchley Park code breakers in helping to defeat the Nazis.

Letter reveals Bletchley Park code breakers secretly thanked by General Eisenhower for "priceless" work

By Patrick Sawyer



A previously secret letter from US President Dwight D Eisenhower praising the "priceless" work of the Bletchley Park code breakers in helping to win the war went on public display for the first time yesterday.

The letter was sent at the end of the Second World War by General Eisenhower, who had been Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, to Sir Stewart Menzies, wartime chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, and had previously hung on the wall of the office of the Chief of MI6. It has now been put on public view, illustrating the importance the US Government placed on the work of the Bletchley Park code breakers in helping to defeat the Nazis. It is the first time anyone outside of the closed world of the secret intelligence services will have seen the document.

In the letter, dated 12 July 1945, President Eisenhower expressed his "heartfelt admiration and sincere thanks", stating that the intelligence from Bletchley Park had been "of priceless value to me", adding that it had "saved countless British and American lives and, in no small way, contributed to the speed with which the enemy was routed and eventually forced to surrender".

Eisenhower, who told Sir Stewart he had hoped to visit Bletchley Park to thank staff personally, states: "I am very well aware of the immense amount of work and effort which has been involved in the production of the material with which you have supplied us. I fully realize also the numerous setbacks and difficulties with which you have had to contend and how you have always, by your supreme efforts, overcome them."

The letter, which was written eight years before Eisenhower was elected President, remained in the MI6 Chief's office during the tenure of Sir John Scarlett, who was head of British Secret Intelligence Service from August 2004 to October 2009.



Former MI6 chief John Scarlett talks to the media as the letter from U.S. President Dwight D Eisenhower is put on display Photo: AP/Frank Augstein

Mr Scarlett, who unveiled the letter yesterday, said: "I was proud of this letter, but only came to appreciate the full significance of Eisenhower's words after taking over as Chairman of the Bletchley Park Trust in 2012.

"Only when you look at the detail of what happened immediately before and during D-Day, and when you see the confidence Eisenhower placed in the intelligence when taking remarkably brave decisions, do his words begin to take on their full meaning."

As Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, General Eisenhower was responsible for planning and supervising the invasion of North Africa in 1942–43 and the successful invasion of France and Germany in 1944–45.

Dr David A Hatch, a historian with the US National Security Agency (NSA) said the letter showed how heavily the US had relied on the skills of the Bletchley Park code breakers, including Alan Turing, whose pioneering work enabled Britain to crack the German's Enigma code used to send orders to U-Boats targeting Allied shipping, saving countless lives and hastening the end of the conflict.

He said: "Before World War Two, no American officer had education or experience in intelligence, none that reached senior level anyway. Eisenhower had to be taught how to use intelligence. Had to be taught, in fact, what it was. This is Eisenhower's acknowledgement of what he had learned because of the work that was done at Bletchley Park."

Dr Hatch added: "The intelligence produced at Bletchley Park was an integral part of their campaign, or what Eisenhower called a crusade, against tyranny. It represents Eisenhower's recognition of the joint effort of American and British cryptologists in providing the information that resulted in wise decisions that were used to defeat Nazi leaders in battle."

The team at Bletchley Park grew from just 200 in August 1939, at the outbreak of war, to more than 8,000 men and women by the end of the conflict.

Supreme Headquarters
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
Office of the Supreme Commander

12 July 1945

Dear General Menzies:

I had hoped to be able to pay a visit to Bletchley Park in order to thank you, Sir Edward Travis, and the members of the staff personally for the magnificent services which have been rendered to the Allied cause.

I am very well aware of the immense amount of work and effort which has been involved in the production of the material with which you have supplied us. I fully realize also the numerous setbacks and difficulties with which you have had to contend and how you have always, by your supreme efforts, overcome them.

The intelligence which has emanated from you before and during this campaign has been of priceless value to me. It has simplified my task as a commander enormously. It has saved thousands of British and American lives and, in no small way, contributed to the speed with which the enemy was routed and eventually forced to surrender.

I should be very grateful, therefore, if you would express to each and everyone of those engaged in this work from me personally my heartfelt admiration and sincere thanks for their very decisive contribution to the Allied war effort.

*Sincerely
Dwight D. Eisenhower*

Major General Sir Stewart G. Menzies
KCMG, CB, DSO, MC
The War Office
Whitehall
London, SW1