

Cipher Expert Dares Zodiac To 'Tell' Name

By Will Stevens

A challenge perhaps unique in the annals of American crime was injected today into the bizarre case of the killer who begins his letters to newspapers: "This is Zodiac speaking . . ."

The challenge came from Dr. D.C.B. Marsh, president of the American Cryptogram Association, and one of the world's distinguished cryptographers.

A scholarly, soft-voiced professor of mathematics at Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colo., Dr. Marsh told The Examiner today:

"The killer wouldn't dare . . . as he has claimed in letters to the newspaper" . . . to reveal his name in a cipher to established cryptogram experts.

Incomplete Truth

"He knows, to quote Edgar Allan Poe, that 'any cipher devised by man can be solved by man.'"

"Zodiac" has not told the complete truth in his cipher messages to The Examiner, The Chronicle, and The Vallejo Times-Herald, Marsh suggested.

"Zodiac" has not done this, Marsh suggested, because to tell the complete truth in relation to his name — in cipher code — would lead to his capture.

Original Claim

A modest scholar, Dr. Marsh then laid down this challenge:

"I invite 'Zodiac' to send to The American Cryptogram Association, care of Dr. D.C.B. Marsh, president, 818 14th St., Golden, Colo., 80401, a cipher code — however complicated — which will truly and honestly include his name — for study by myself

and my colleagues in the association."

Since the Dec. 20 night "Zodiac" shot to death the first of five victims — a 16-year old boy and girl in a lovers' lane near Vallejo — he has mailed intricate code messages in cipher to The Examiner, Chronicle, and Times-Herald.

He claimed, in his original cipher message, that it revealed his identity.

Most of the code was deciphered, subsequently, by Donald G. Harden, a Salinas high school teacher, and his wife.

That message, as decoded by Harden, began:

"I like killing people because it is so much fun it is more fun than killing wild game . . ."

But there were 18 garbled letters at the end — never deciphered.

Today, Dr. Marsh told The Examiner:

"That first code was complicated . . . and the maker obviously knew what he was doing."

But it never, Dr. Marsh said, included the true identity of "Zodiac."

Tunisia Hit

By Huge Rains

TUNIS — (AP) — New torrential rains pounded Tunisia all last night and today, nearly isolating Tunis and Bizerte from the rest of the country.

Broadcasts warned residents of low-lying suburbs to head for higher ground. Basements filled, and some ancient buildings in the Medina showed signs of crumbling.