



The Secret in Building 26: The Untold Story of How America Broke the Final U-boat Enigma Code

Jim DeBrosse, Colin Burke

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For the first time, the inside story of the brilliant American engineer who defeated Enigma and the Nazi code-masters

Much has been written about the success of the British “Ultra” program in cracking the Germans’ Enigma code early in World War II, but few know what really happened in 1942, when the Germans added a fourth rotor to the machine that created the already challenging naval code and plunged Allied intelligence into darkness.

Enter one Joe Desch, an unassuming but brilliant engineer at the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, Ohio, who was given the task of creating a machine to break the new Enigma settings. It was an enterprise that rivaled the Manhattan Project for secrecy and complexity—and nearly drove Desch to a breakdown. Under enormous pressure, he succeeded in creating a 5,000-pound electromechanical monster known as the Desch Bombe, which helped turn the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic—but not before a disgruntled co-worker attempted to leak information about the machine to the Nazis.

After toiling anonymously—it even took his daughter years to learn of his accomplishments—Desch was awarded the National Medal of Merit, the country’s highest civilian honor. In *The Secret in Building 26*, the entire thrilling story of the final triumph over Enigma is finally told.

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