

Re: Voynich manuscript a hoax?

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/sci.crypt/2003-12/1919.html>

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Date: 12/31/03

Date: Wed, 31 Dec 2003 00:39:29 -0800

Paul Rubin wrote:

- > *Nature* article linked from Slashdot:
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- > <http://www.nature.com/nsu/031215/031215-5.html>
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- > *It describes a Cryptologia* article (in press) claiming that the VM may
- > *be a hoax produced with a 16th century encryption device called a*
- > *Cardan Grille.*
- >
- > *Anyone know more about this?*
- >

A quick check of "Decrypted Secrets: Methods and Maxims of Cryptology" by F.L. Bauer reveals Geronimo Cardano (not "Cardan") pioneered the grille method and discussed it in a book titled "De Subtilitate" printed in 1550 (AD or CE if readers want to get picky. :-)) Cardano "insisted on copying out the message three times to remove any regularities in the size or spacing of the letters" (pg. 22 of cited book, 3rd edition) – maybe that is a tie in to the triple letters/symbols mentioned in the article.

Just checked the second edition of Kahn's "The Codebreakers", too– pages 143 – 145 cover Girolamo Cardano and his grille in some detail. BTW, Cardano is also the inventor of the first (but imperfect) autokey cipher.

HTH,

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