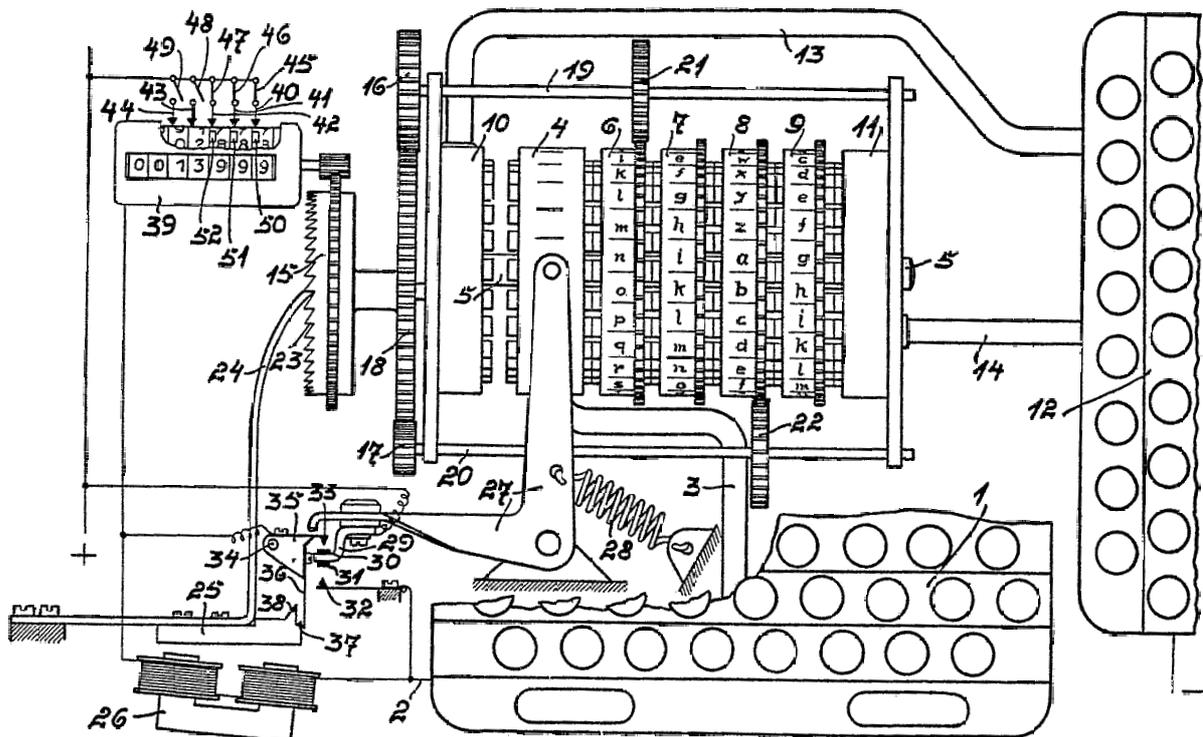


1918 First Enigma Patent

The official history of the Enigma starts in 1918, when the German **Arthur Scherbius** filed his first patent for the Enigma coding machine. It is listed as patent number 416219 in the archives of the German *Reichspatentamt* (patent office). Please note the time at which the Enigma was invented: **1918**, just after the First World War, more than 20 years before WWII! The image below clearly shows the coding wheels (rotors) in the centre part of the drawing. Below it is the keyboard and to the right is the lamp panel. At the top left is a counter, used to count the number of letters entered on the keyboard. This counter can still be found on certain Enigma models.

Arthur Scherbius' company **Securitas** was based in Berlin (Germany) and had an office in Amsterdam (The Netherlands). As he wanted to protect his invention outside Germany, he also registered his patent in the USA (1922), Great Britain (1923) and France (1923).



This image is taken from patent number 193,035 that was registered in Great Britain in 1923, long before WWII. It was also registered in a number of other countries, such as France and the USA.

During the 1920s the Enigma was available as a commercial device, available for use by companies and embassies for their confidential messages. Remember that in those days, most companies had to use morse code and radio links for long distance communication. The devices were advertised having over 800.000 possibilities.

In the following years, additional patents with improvements of the coding machine were applied. E.g. in GB Patent 267,482, dated 17 Jan 1927, the Umkehrwalze was added and a later patent of 14 Nov 1929 (GB 343,146) claims the addition of the Ringstellung, multiple notches, etc. One of the drawings of that patent shows a coding device, that we now know as The Enigma, in great detail.

