An Accidental Cryptologist: Genevieve Young Hitt
the U.S. Government's First Female Cryptologist

presented by
Betsy Rohaly Smoot

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Genevieve Young Hitt, wife of U.S. Army Colonel Parker Hitt, was the first woman to break
codes and ciphers for the U.S. government. She first worked on an unpaid basis during
Pershing’s Punitive Expedition, and then as a paid government employee at Fort Sam Houston
during World War I. Recently discovered letters and government records shed light on this
remarkable woman, her brief career and her interesting life.

Betsy Rohaly Smoot is a historian at the National Security Agency's Center for Cryptologic
History. She is a member of the Class of 1982 and majored in Geography and Economics while
at Mary Washington.