

REF ID: A65382

*Station Republican Army.*

*Some weather info*

*NY-4*

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pursuant to E.O. 13526

FIRST DETAILED INTERROGATION OF TWO  
ITALIAN SIGS OPERATORS

Name:	SAGUATTI, Franco	MERLO, Enrico
Rank:	Pte	Pte
Unit:	12 TP, 4 MANTOVA BN, 1 ARMY REGT, MONTE ROSA ALPINE DIV	
FP No:	81687/D	81687/D
Captured:	31 Dec 44, nr MOLAZZANA, Fifth Army Front	
Secret No:	M 45/22	M 45/23
Interrogated:		CSDIC, CMF, 15 Jan 45

NO  
NY4

Subject of Report: M ROSA Div: Sigs Training, Eqpt and Procedure, Meteor Signals in Code.

1. PREAMBLE

(a) SAGUATTI

PW is a 19 yr old ry employee (telegraphist) from BOLOGNA. Conscripted into Republican Army. Of average intelligence and answered questions willingly.

Function: ex-WT operator: Reliability: Fair  
LT operator

(b) MERLO

PW is a 19 yr old ry employee (telegraphist) from nr PAVIA. Conscripted into the Republican Army. Answered questions, but has little infm of value.

Function: LT operator Reliability: Fair

2. HISTORY AND MOVEMENTS

(a) SAGUATTI

1 Jun 44	Called up to BOLOGNA Area HQ and sent to GERMANY to a Camp at HEUBERG where 4 Bn, 1 Arty Regt, ITALIA Div was in tng.
10 Jul 44	Transferred to 12 Tp, 4 MANTOVA Bn, 1 Arty Regt, M ROSA Alpine Div at MUENSINGEN (WUERITTEMBERG).
25 Jul 44	Arrived with unit at GENOA. Unit then moved at short intervals to CHIAVARI, SAN COLOMBANO, and, on or about
15 Aug 44	Arrived with unit at GRAVEGLIA, nr CHIAVARI, where unit remained for over two months (parts of it moved to GENOA-QUARTO in the meantime, and others to MELE, nr VOLTRI, and came back later).
4 Nov 44	Arrived at the front in the region of CASTELNUOVO di GALFAGNANO.
31 Dec 44	Captured nr MOLAZZANA.

(b) MERLO

2 Jun 44 Called up to TORTONA Area HQ and sent from there to HEUBERG Camp.  
Subsequent movements as for SAGUATTI.

3. TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

PW were not trained as wireless operators (in GERMANY), as 1 Arty Regt of M ROSA Div already had enough operators by the time they joined it (MERLO stated that this was because numbers of recruits came from ry offices in N ITALY and were acquainted with telegraphy, therefore wanted little tng). They were trained as LT operators and maint men. After the Div arrived in ITALY, SAGUATTI was given tng on "b" and "k" sets and taught to encipher and decipher messages (see para 5 below). Tng was usually carried out by Italian officers and NCOs.

4 MANTOVA Bn was equipped with "k" WT sets. East troop had two sets, one for the OP and one for the GPO's Comd Post. However, WT comms were only used when LT did not work, Field telephones were of the FF 33 type.

~~TOP SECRET~~CSDIC/CMF/Y 27.4. CALLSIGNS, FREQUENCIES AND CODENAMES (SAGUATTI)

Callsigns were made up of three symbols and issued monthly to HQ Regt by the Div Sigs Offr. Regt sent them down to Bn HQ for the whole month and the NCOs i/c stns were given callsigns for a period of ten days. Frequencies were allotted in the same way. Both callsigns and frequencies were supposed to change daily at midnight. Often frequencies were changed without requiring sanction from Div Sigs Offr, because of poor reception.

PW stated that as far as he knew callsigns and frequencies were allotted to units in the Div after computation by Italian personnel (cf CSDIC(MAIN)/Y 19 App "A", para B.)

Telephone codenames (according to both PW) were changed every twenty days. As an example PW quoted codenames which were used on 30 Dec 44 (sub-units having same codename plus numbers).

HQ 4 MANTOVA Bn	:	FONTANA
OP 12 Tp, 4 MANTOVA Bn	:	FONTANA 121
HQ 12 Tp, 4 MANTOVA Bn	:	FONTANA 122

PW told forward interrogators that WT (?) callsigns were usually made up of three letters, but now states that both figures and letters were used. It is believed that PW most probably referred to RT comms when quoting the following example, i.e. on 30 Dec 44 callsign of 12 Tp was TUR, letters being spelt with the aid of names of Italian cities, viz TORINO, UDINE, ROMA.

5. CIPHER (SAGUATTI)

Cipher used by 1 Arty Regt, down to troop level, was of the box-square type. PW was only slightly acquainted with it compared with Sources interrogated previously. All he knew was the general principle on which it was worked and that it was issued to units by the Germans, some of the docs received by his Tp being printed partly in the German language. Keys changed daily.

6. METEOR SIGNALS IN CODE (BARBARAMELDUNGEN) (SAGUATTI)

PW stated that at 12 Tp HQ there was a receiving set (German made) used for listening in to Meteor Signals (BARBARAMELDUNGEN). He could only speak of transmissions of such signals as at Sep 44 when he was doing WT work. At that time transmissions were supposed to be made from a place in the vicinity of MILAN and they took place daily at 1215, 1815 and 0315 hrs. When the unit moved into the line he heard that these transmissions (or orders for listening in?) were at two-hourly intervals, but he could not say whether they took place on the hour, quarter past the hour, etc. For further details see App "A".

7. PERSONALITIES(a) Italians in 1 Arty Regt M ROSA Div (end Dec 44)

Lt-Col GROSSI	OC
Major PACE	OC 4 MANTOVA Bn
Lieut LAGOSTENA	Grd Offr ("AIUTANTE MAGGIORE") in 4 Bn
Lieut SAVINI	At Bn HQ
Capt SANZO	OC 10 Tp
Capt SCARLATTA	OC 11 Tp
Capt WOLPARI	OC 12 Tp
Lieut MALVICINI	GPO 12 Tp
2/Lt SAIBENE	OP Offr 12 Tp
Sjt BONONI	WT operator at HQ 4 Bn
Cpl LORENZI	" " " " "
L/Cpl CANONICA	" " " " "
Pte CARLESCO	" " " " "

Pte	PINATO	WT Operator at HQ 4 Bn
Cpl	PEA	WT Operator in 12 Tp
Pte	MUFFI	" " " " "
Pte	TOMMASI	" " " " "
Pte	TURRINI	" " " " "
Sjt	CASATI	I/c LT det in 12 Tp
Pte	DELLABORA	In LT det in 12 Tp

(b) German

CSM	RUCK	German instructor in LT (FF33) at HEUBERG Tng Camp (10 Jul 44)
Sjt	BUCHNER or BUCKNER	Instructor in use of Cipher, with Liaison Unit to M ROSA Div (Sep 44)
2/Lt	WENISCH	German LO to 12 Tp, 4 MANTOVA Bn (Dec 44)

(c) Additional Italian non-sigs personnel in M ROSA Div (Nov 44)  
(PW Sources in CSDIC(MAIN)/Y 19.)

Gen	CARLONI	GOC
Major	MARGARINO	GSO 2 (Ops), at Div HQ
Lieut	ROCCARINO	Adjut XXIII Recce Bn
2/Lt	VALEPARAISO	On staff of Recce Bn. Comes from TUNIS
Lieut	ZIRON	OC 2 Sqn, Recce Bn
2/Lt	SARTORO	Admin Offr Recce Bn
2/Lt	REITER	OC 1 Sqn
2/Lt	ROMAGNOLI	OC 1 Tp
WO (Maresciallo)	GATTI	I/c Mule Tpt Column in 2 Sqn
WO (Mar.Capo)	PIZZIRANI	In 2 Sqn
Lieut	LIBERA	OC 3 Sqn
2/Lt	MASSA	OC Eng Pl, 3 Sqn
WO (Mar.Maggiore)	PROFILI	In " " "
WO (Mar.Capo)	RENDINI	In 1 Alpini Regt
Capt	GIGLIOTTI	OC 1 Bn, 3 Regt
Lieut	SEBBA	OC HQ Coy, 1 Bn, 3 Regt
Lieut	COLOSIMO	OC 5 (Hy) Coy, 1 Bn, 3 Regt
2/Lt	GRASSO	In " " " "
2/Lt	SPOTORNO	In " " " "
2/Lt	NAPOLITANO	In " " " "

A.G.B.

C.S.D.I.C.  
C.M.F.,  
22 Jan 45.

*R.P.F. EDWARDS*  
(R.P.F. EDWARDS)  
Lt-Col.  
Comdt CSDIC, CMF.

METEOR SIGNALS IN CODE (BARBAR/MELDUNGEN)  
(ref para 6 of att report)

Signals of meteor data were sent in two-figure code. According to PW wind velocity (from 1 to 12), barometric pressure and direction of wind were given. Messages began with a number of two digits which gave the key to the code, followed by the date and the spotheight ("quota") of the place where the meteor observations had been made. After that followed figure-bigrams. These were taken down on a special form provided for the purpose and which was drawn up on the lines of sketch 1. The figures (bigrams) in column 1 of sketch were printed on the form in that order. Source did not know if they were meant to indicate time of flight, or height of apex of trajectory above line of sight. All he could say was that he was certain column 1 looked as illustrated, and that, of the three figure-bigrams following the group already printed on the form, the last one indicated the velocity of the wind (from 1 to 12). Barometric pressure was indicated by either the first or second figure-bigram (NOT counting that printed on the form), as was direction of wind. The direction of wind was indicated by means of German Field Compass (MARSCHKOMPASS-ZAHLEN) bearings (double hundred mils).

(NOTE:- PW GEESE (of CSDIC(MJIN)/Y 25) when asked to supply the order in which meteor data was given in signals stated that it was given in the following order and contained these elements;

- 1) Velocity of wind (LUFTGESCHWINDIGKEIT)
- 2) Humidity of air (LUFTFEUCHTIGKEIT)
- 3) Decimal places of ballistic pressure (DEZIMALEN DES BALLISTISCHEN LUFTGEWICHTES).

It is thought that PW GEESE's info is more reliable.)

Sketch 1

10	53	25	40
15	..	..	..
20	..	..	..
25	..	..	..
30	..	..	..
40	..	..	..
50			
60			
70			
80			
90			

In this example 53, 25, 40 are meteor data in code.

In order to decode a message a monthly table was used which contained over 100 key numbers - see sketch 1. (PW stated he was sure key numbers went beyond the 100 mark, to about 150). The key number in messages gave the starting place in the table for decoding. Thus if the example above was signalled in key No 35, the encoded message was placed along the table from key numbers 35 - 45 incl and the decoding figure-bigrams were deducted from the figure-bigrams in the signal. Thus 53, 25, 40 (groups signalled) less 49, 20, 30 (figure-bigrams opposite key No 35) would give clear 04, 05, 10.

Sketch 2 - Decoding Table

1			
2			
3			
..			
..			
35	49	20	30 +
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
..			
..			
100			
101			
..			
..			
149			

+ Addition groups  
(subtracted when  
decoding)

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AC of S, G-2, AFHQ.....	1
G-2(Sigs "I"), AFHQ.....	2 - 4
S.I.S., AFHQ.....	5
G-2(P/W), AFHQ.....	6
GSI(s), 15 Army Group.....	7
MI 8, War Office.....	8 - 10
File.....	11 - 13