

HAWKER and the OSS

A True Tale of Counterespionage in WW II

(Author's name withheld by request)

After being with SI/London where I was a trainer of OSS W/T agents (see Glossary), I went into France, arriving in Paris on August 25th, 1944.

The Germans had not completely cleared out of the city; Skorzeny, Chief of German Intelligence (Abwehr ID), had left behind several "sleeper" agents and would soon be parachuting in many more W/T agents.

By the end of September, X-2/Paris had six enemy W/T agents operating as playbacks under our control.

In October, I was sent to the Delta Base Section (DBS) in southern France to set up a detachment near Lyon, in the Rhone Valley, for OSS/X-2, reporting to headquarters in Paris.

I arrived in Lyon shortly after Operation Anvil (Invasion of Southern France) where we set up our operation in a chateau near Collonges-au-Mont-D'or on October 15, 1944. Our mission was to capture German agents and set them up as playback agents.

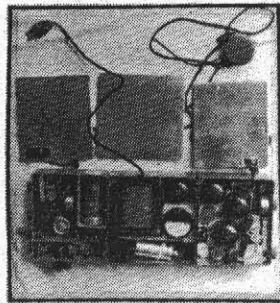
Our first job was to contact the Chief of Police and French Intelligence. During our first meeting at the Fort Montluc Prison we found that they had already captured four sleeper agents within the last two weeks. Our hopes faded, however, when we were told that they had been given "le traitement"—a bathtub filled with icewater and the use of lead pipes.

They agreed to let us have any other agents they might capture and to share tips regarding German agents provided any captured agents would be turned back after the war was over.

We then contacted the media. We requested anyone knowing of a German spy, or even a rumor of such, or anyone observing lights in an apartment or house flickering in rhythm, or anyone hearing key clicks over the radio, etc., to contact us or the police at once. We had a special unlisted phone number for this purpose.

Additionally, we monitored the shortwave bands for any signals that sounded like a possible clandestine operation, using DF equipment, very sensitive amplified field strength meters and other equipment.

When the phone rang with news from our friend, the Inspector, that a Nazi



Eagle's captured spy radio sympathizer was now eating in a local restaurant, we immediately passed our code, "THE BABY HAS ARRIVED" to the members of our unit. Shortly, four of us rushed into the restaurant carrying various weapons (I had a British Sten 9mm sub-machine gun). We saw the agent at once; he was sitting at the counter and looked just as he was described.

He looked up, reached into his jacket pocket, pulled out his poison pill and gulped it down with wine, then fell off the stool onto the floor. I screamed, "THERE GOES OUR BABY." The owner of the restaurant, a woman who had experience in both wars cried, "Un enfant - ce n'est pas un enfant - c'est un Nazi... tuez-le." ("Baby - he's no baby - he's a Nazi... kill him...!")

Rushing him to the hospital, we had his stomach pumped. The doctor said that what saved him was that he had just finished eating a very large meal. The pill had enough arsenic and other poisons in it to kill two horses! But our patient would be laid up for at least a week.

We gave our first German W/T agent the code name "Eagle." I visited him every day, sometimes twice a day. We had around-the-clock guards, one in his room and one outside the door. Eagle was starting to recover. When he was back on his feet we approached him about working for us. He was a citizen of France and didn't want "le traitement" so he agreed at once to work for us as a playback.

We secured a nice, small house up on a hill and put up a long wire antenna for his use. We also requisitioned MP guards for around-the-clock watch.

On the day we took Eagle out of the hospital we recovered his two chutes, his radio, money, etc. which he had buried when he landed. He had his cipher and frequency chart on microfilm in the back of his watch.

His radio equipment worked fine when I made contact with both Paris and London for a test. With Eagle's help we figured out his simple cipher and made up his first message.

The Abwehr frequency was just above the 6 MHz (49 meter) shortwave broadcast band (see glossary). The evening of his first contact was very exciting for all concerned. As the time approached we were all listening, including Eagle. I was using an AR-88 (RCA Receiver) and they were also monitoring back at our chateau HQ. "There they are," said Eagle.

I heard a very rough 200 Hz modulated CW signal calling Eagle: "CNX CNX CNX DE CNV K." The signal was very strong and Eagle responded with his first message telling Abwehr that he had injured his ankle upon landing and that it had taken him some time to get set up. They congratulated him and sent his first instructions (His cipher is shown in Table 2).

Through Eagle, we were able to capture three more German W/T agents (one a paymaster agent), thus furthering our counterespionage. We were able to operate

Eagle without the Germans' knowledge until May 2, 1945, virtually the end of the war.

A la prochaine fois
(Until the next time)
HAWKER

GLOSSARY

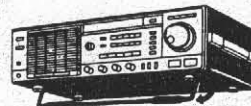
- HAWKER-Code name of OSS Agnt
- OSS -Office of Strategic Services
- X-2 -Super secret counter-espionage branch of OSS
- ETO -European Theater of Operations
- SI -Secret Intelligence
- W/T -Wireless Telegraph
- DF -Direction finding radio receiver
- DBS -Delta Base Section (Lyon, Marseille and Nice, France)
- EAGLE -Code name for German W/T agent
- PLAYBACK
- AGENT -A captured enemy agnt set up to deceive the enemy
- AR-88 -RCA Receiver
- VIGENERE
- TABLE -A well-known table used in conjunction with code or cipher books to encipher & decipher messages between OSS stations & Agents (Table II)

☞ Much more on p.29

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HAWKER & THE OSS from p.13

CODE OR CIPHER

BOOKS -These books contained rows of 5-letter groups, letters in the alphabet picked at random.* Both sending and receiving station would be issued books exactly alike.

*Instead of using random numbers for code or cipher books, a reverse frequency of the language used is best: i.e., each book would contain many more Q's, X's and Z's, etc., so that the enciphered message would have almost an equal number of every letter in the alphabet. This would make it unbreakable.

Transmit Frequencies used by Eagle - 5462 7123 8166 kHz
Frequencies used by OSS - 3150 3180 3276 4099 4345 5572 6390 kHz

INSTRUCTIONS IN THE USE OF THE VIGENERE TABLE
(See Table 1)

To encrypt a message using the Vigenere table simply write the clear text in five-letter groups over the letters in the code book (or a text in a published book can be used). Then, starting from the left vertical column, find the top letter; next, move horizontally to the right until you find the bottom letter. The letter located at the top of that column is the cipher. Decode the same way. Write th cipher over the code book letters and proceed as before. Example: "Travel to Lyon and report on petrol pipeline."*

Clear text: TRAVE LTOLY ONAND
Code Book: CGRET UJHIO LPQET
Msg in Code: JPRJP JQTXQ XCQRQ (ETC.)

Upon receipt, the procedure is simply reversed to decode.

A good cipher man would have the vigenere table memorized in a few weeks of operation and not have to refer to it very often. One radio man could easily handle an average of 1,000 groups a day, requiring three or four hours of cipher time along with one hour of transmitting and/or receiving time.

This method was used by the OSS in transmitting messages between bases and detachments and also in contacting W/T agents behind the lines.

*Actual message received by EAGLE. Later Eagle was dispatched to blow up the pipe-

Polyalphabetic Substitution System

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
A	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
B	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A
C	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B
D	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C
E	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D
F	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E
G	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F
H	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
I	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
J	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
K	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
L	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
M	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
N	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
O	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
P	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
Q	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
R	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
S	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
T	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S
U	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
V	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
W	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
X	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
Y	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
Z	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y

TABLE 1

Vigenere Table

line along with another German agent.

TABLE 2

EAGLE'S SUBSTITUTION SYSTEM

Eagle had a schedule with Abwehr at 1600 GMT every day. He used the following easy-to-remember simple cipher:

Using the day of the week starting under A of the alphabet, complete the remainder of letters not in the spelling of the day. If the day is spelled with two identical letters use X and Z as substitutes for the second letter. Ex:

ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOP QRSTUV WXYZ
 WEDNXS ZAYBCFGH IJ KLMOPQR TU V
 or
 ABCDEF GHIJ KLMNOP QRSTUV WXYZ
 FRIDAY BCEGHJ KLMNOP QSTUVWXZ

On a Wednesday Eagle sent the following message:

NEED EXPLOSIVES TO CARRY OUT MISSION

NEEDE XPLOS IVEST OCARR HXXNX TJFIM YQXMO IDWLL

You can see how easy it was to set up and use. Most important Eagle did not have to darry or hide any codes,

ciphers or instructions. It was easily broken by the frequency method, however, if you had enough copy.

NUMBER CODES AND CIPHERS

Number codes and ciphers are used for many reasons: It is much more difficult to break, especially if enciphered by computer; the agent does not need to learn the letters in Morse code, just the numbers; no phonetics are used with numbers when transmitted by voice.

The Vigenere Table can be used with number codes as follows:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	

(Do not use these numbers; they are for example only)

The number's code is harder to break if the number groups under the letters were changed to random numbers of to more than two-number groups representing each letter.

HANK BENNETT from p.16

you'll get a copy. Canadians please send 75¢ and IRC's or stamps overseas airmail delivery. Send stamps, please; coins are OK but you'll send them at your risk. Full membership is expected to be \$19.99 for 12 months.

I've been writing columns since 1949. Most of them have been on a gratis bases for clubs, but some have been for various magazines on a pay basis. Nonetheless, at no time in those years has a Chief Editor ever taken the time to write to his columnists with a bit of praise. Not so with Bob Grove of MONITORING TIMES.

Bob took time out from his busy schedule the other day to write a short but fine letter of appreciation for past and present efforts and we'd like our readership to know that this publication is headed up by a really fine gentleman!

We were going to start this column out with a story on the trials and tribulations of getting a column together. Seems it got sidetracked a bit so we'll postpone this until next time.

We now have available a list of the top 150 DXers as based on WDX Monitor Service DX Awards. If you'd like a copy it will cost you the pitifully small sum of 50¢ and stamps are fine as long as they have stickum on the back and no postmarks on the front! Send your money and any comments that you'd like to make to your editor, Hank Bennett, P.O. Box 3333, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.

LOS NUMEROS from p.19

your "numbers" loggings and other findings.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

That mysterious Cuban/Soviet Communications Center --The DGI, the 4th largest intelligence service in the world and its expansion in the U.S.--Missiles and deliberate telemetric encryption.

Time now for a Tecate and...

Adios, Havana Moon

*Actual message received by EAGLE. Later Eagle was dispatched to blow up the pipe-