

They began talking to each other in Italian. I said I thought it was very discourteous to discuss me in a language I did not understand. "I have nothing more to say. Good day". I think they were a bit taken aback for they just bowed and walked out.

A Red Cross parcel I never received but they did send me a couple of rubbishing books. Very old paper back 'True love type' - not my type. They were evidently going to try another scheme for a few days later there was a knock at my door and in walked two South African soldiers, who introduced themselves as Sgt Oosthuizen and Cpl Amit. They had been taken some months earlier and had apparently been asked to come up and talk to me and make me feel more at home.

When I asked them what they were doing in this centre they said they had been sent to Rome for punishment as they were caught digging a tunnel in the P.O.W. camp at 'Samona'. To me this sounded a very fishy story and so we talked of cabbages and kings and everything but the war, though they did once or twice try and get me to talk of our Unit and my Regiment etc.

I heard more of these two, when I arrived at my next P.O.W. camp at Pia Schenzo. On arrival at that camp I went to the camp barber who had been a P.O.W. at Samona and lately transferred to this camp. Hearing that this Sergeant had been at Samona I mentioned the two I had met in Rome and their story. He told me that their story was a pack of lies. He said the lies had asked for volunteers to broadcast and these two had. So I was right - they were a couple of Stool Pigeons. Pretoria eventually (as I had reported them to our senior British Officer) received the information through devious ways.

I remained on in the same room but my meals were no longer from the mess when they realised that neither of their plans had worked and they, I noticed had put on an extra couple of guards.

However, one of the guard commanders a young Sgt Major, who spoke a little English, offered to get me some soap, such as it was, cigarettes, pencil and paper and these items were debited to my account as we got no money.

One day there was a real flap on, everyone rushing round, and presently a van pulled up and out got two British Officers, well guarded and they were rushed upstairs and I was confined to my room.

My friendly guard commander told me a few days later that these two had been dropped near by to blow up a dam but were not successful.

The two South African Stool Pigeons told me that they had received Red Cross parcels so I immediately demanded an issue. They must have still been expecting to get some information for they issued me with not one but actually two. Well, they could go on expecting.

I was very glad of this for the next day my friendly guard commander said as all was very quiet, I could go upstairs and have a quick chat to the two British Officers. I think the guard commander was keen on knowing what they had done, for he was definitely not a fascist. They told me that they had not been altogether successful but had managed to do a lot of damage to some of the machinery which would upset things for some time. To them I was able to give one of my Red Cross Parcels and I also sent word to the Italian O.C. that parcels were to be sent to these two officers.

I think they had had enough of me after two weeks, for I was told that I was being transferred to a camp up North. When the day for my transfer arrived my escort of two officers marched me through part of the town to the railway station. The one officer spoke a little English so I suggested our going into a wayside cafe for a cool drink and these I found later had been charged to my account.

As there were quite a lot of people on the street I tried to give my guards the slip, while they were busy eyeing the girls. I was not successful as there were three other Italian Officers close behind and I was stopped.