



The Patrol Books . No. 8

SIGNALLING FOR THE PATROL

by

R. H. HARRISON

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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“CALLING UP . . . !”

BY the time you read this, the story of H.M.S. *Amethyst* and her heroic fight against the Chinese Communist guns, and her dash down the River Yangtse to freedom will have passed into British Naval History. As I write this however, the whole world is still thrilled with the news of the escape. One particular part of the story has caught the imagination of everybody; and that is the gallant part played by Telegraphist Jack French, D.S.M. (incidentally an ex-member of the Ashburton Troop) who hour by hour and day after day alone kept the little ship in touch with the outside world.

H.M.S. *Amethyst* is a frigate – not a very large ship, and her duties in the Far East took her up the River Yangtse in China. The Chinese Communist Armies were on each side of the river, and attacked the little ship and hit her 53 times, eventually driving her on to a mud bank. There she stayed for three months, meanwhile repairing her damage. One very dark night she suddenly made a dash for it and in spite of every effort on the part of her enemies to prevent her, she managed to escape.

All the long weeks that the ship was trapped in the river, she was kept in communication with Admiralty in London by wireless. Very powerful transmitters send out messages in morse all over the world. Of course they are in code so that they cannot be understood except by the people who are supposed to receive them. Each ship or station has a call sign – a special name or letters and only listen out for their own call sign, or signals addressed to all ships. When they hear their call sign they take down the message. That saves a lot of time and trouble, because a message that “Able Seaman Bloggs is to come home from Gibraltar” need not be read by the telegraphist of the Commander-in-Chief in Australia. Of course, small ships have to have their messages back to Admiralty relayed by the nearest shore station.

In the same way as ships are given their instructions, so are aircraft, armies and even our civilians in other countries. In fact this morse code business is controlling the lives of thousands of people all over the world; so it would be quite a good idea if we got to know something about it.

Morse was invented in 1837, and the name of the man who invented it was – Mr. Morse! – an American. He also invented the telegraph and was the first man to think of having an Atlantic Cable. At first morse was only used in America, but in 1851 which is nearly a hundred years ago, other countries thought it would be a good idea to use it as well, so an International Conference was called and the Morse Code was adopted for the whole world.

Semaphore signalling is mostly used between ships but before the telegraph was invented it was used to send messages from London to Portsmouth by means of mechanical arms worked by handles attached to sort of bicycle chains. These semaphore arms are also used on Naval ships, but are fast dying out; particularly as Radio Telephony (R/T) is being increasingly used for short distances, Why not try making a pair of Semaphore arms? (for use from the Troop Room roof to the S.M.’s house perhaps). It would not be very difficult for you handymen – a strong pole, some plywood arms made from a box and a few items which a friendly cycle shop would be glad to be rid of – two old chains and ratchets.

Semaphore is easier to learn than morse and although not so useful can be great fun, so we will have a yarn about that later on.

As well as signalling by morse and semaphore, there are several other ways, and although you are not required to know them for Scout tests it would be a poor sort of Scout who could

not, for instance, tell what flag a certain ship in the harbour or river was flying; so we will have another yarn on coloured flag signalling presently. Flag signalling was used by the ancient mariners (not the one the poem was written about) and was used in the British Navy in 1665 and in the Merchant Navy in 1857. This Merchant Navy Code became the now well known International Code used by all ships.

During the last war convoys of merchant ships were guarded by warships so they too had to use the Merchant International Code. Since the war the Navy has come into line with the American Navy and now they all use the same coloured flags as the Merchantmen.

CHAPTER • • — — —

THE MORSE CODE

If you are going to be a signaller you will want to know the best way to learn the codes. You will have to do a bit of learning, but there is no need to sit up all night with wet towels round your head. There are a number of different ways of learning morse and I will just suggest one that I used when I first learnt it and which I have never forgotten (at least, not much!)

We all know E. I. S. H. and T. M. O., I think. That is: one dot, two dots, three dots, four dots and one dash, two dashes and three dashes. Well, that is seven out of 26 letters or more than a quarter already. Below is a little lecture on Signalling – the first letter of each word represents the morse shown. You will notice that the morse is in opposites so that you can remember them; also that one dot is added each time up to three and then start again but add a dash.

Answer • –	Not – •
Unless • • –	Distinguished – • •
Very • • • –	Bad – • • •
When • – –	Guessing – – •
Commences – • – •	
("C" has no opposite).	

That's another nine letters, so we now only have ten left to learn.

Flash • • – •	Quickly – – • –
Read • – •	Kindly – • –
Long • – • •	Yarns – • – –
Patiently • – – •	Xercise – • • –
Judicious • – – –	
Zeal – – • •	
("J" and "Z" have no opposites).	

F, L, and Q are the most difficult letters to remember so another way to memorise them is –

F. Two dots First;

L. Two dots Last;
Q. God Save the Queen.

— • —

A way of remembering the letter P is “A pip at each end.”

Now, we’ve got that learnt; how about practising them? I think the Patrol should make a couple of buzzers, which could be quite fun to practise with especially if you can split the patrol into separate rooms and have head phones leading into the “transmitting room”. Go and see your local wireless dealer, I expect he has some old headphones, and possibly an oscillator which he would let you have cheaply.

The first thing is to make a buzzer and the following is a description of a simple design: –

First obtain a block of wood 6 in. by 8 in. by ½ in. Mount on this either a buzzer unit which you can buy, or use that part from a door bell with the striker arm removed. The tapper key can be fixed alongside this, and have a box at the back to hold the battery. On the next page is a diagram showing how to wire up the components and terminals.

I remember when I was P.L. of the Owl Patrol and my cousin was P.L. of the Woodpigeons, we used to have a field telephone composed of headphones with flex between them, and we used to climb up trees and talk to each other from tree top to tree top; by inserting an oscillator and key into the circuit you could be your own unit of the “resistance movement” – that’s an idea for your patrol, isn’t it?

Before we go any further with ideas of using our now good knowledge (I hope) of morse, I think we had better learn a bit about procedure. That sounds a bit frightening, but all it means is that we don’t try to shout each other down over the air (or the wires, as the case may be).

To call up, arrange for the listening stations, (the rest of the patrol) to have a name or names – also have a collective name and call sign – when you want to talk to them all. Have you heard the wireless broadcasts of the Battle of Britain when the pilots of the fighters are talking to their control on the ground – the name of “F for Freddie” has become a household word through the film “Target for Tonight”.

The General Call, which is repeated until stations answer is YE, VE, VE run together, so that it is thus: –

• • • – • • • • • – • • • • •

To answer this call make the letter K – • – or – • – • — (last dash drawn out) to indicate that you have heard and are ready to receive. If you are not ready make Q, which means wait, and then a K when you are ready.

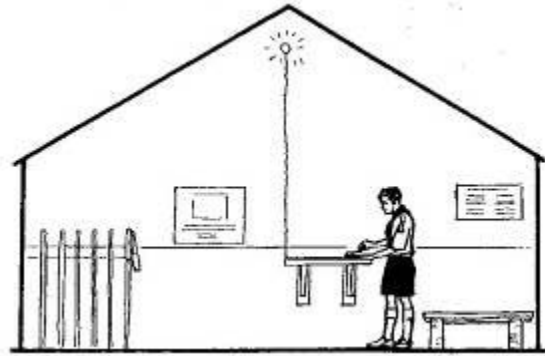
The proper form of message is first the Originator (that is, the person who wrote the message) followed by the time of origin, which is made by what is called a date/time group made up of the date followed by the time in 24 hour clock. Thus 8.30 a.m. on the 1st of the month would be 010830. This is followed by the Addressee (that is the person for whom the message is intended). Then make a break sign of I’s • • • • before starting the message proper.

The end of a message is indicated by AR run together thus • – • – • This is acknowledged by R • – • if you have received it all right. Should you want the message repeated make the letters IMI run together thus • • – – • •

As well as the sending and receiving of morse by sound a great deal of fun can be had with the using of a light. When I joined the Navy I had to watch a flashing lamp many hours a day

until I could read it easily – I thought I was quite good when I left my training course, but the first time I saw ships “talking to each other” by light in the River Clyde I couldn’t understand a word. So don’t get disheartened, practice makes perfect.

There are many ways of using a flashing lamp and a good one to start with in your Hut or Troop room is to have a small electric bulb fixed high up on the wall at one end with the wires leading down to your tapping key.



It would be a good idea to give realism to the flashing lamp to paint a picture of a ship on the wall, so that the lamp shows from a mast or the bridge.

When you have got pretty good at reading and sending, organise a Saturday afternoon outing for the Patrol and try out the real thing.

Try and persuade Skipper that a couple of old Service Signalling lamps from one of the surplus stores would be a good item of Troop Gear. Better still, why not the patrol raise the money themselves? The best type of lamp is an “Aldis”, this is the kind where the lamp stays on all the time but a trigger moves a reflector which throws the beam in the direction required. They can be used over quite long distances in daylight.

If you live in a town, a good plan would be to divide the patrol into two and signal from side to side of the river or from bridge to bridge, perhaps. Another stunt would be to get permission to use the flat roofs of a couple of buildings and signal to each other from them. A Scout in uniform with a smile and an explanation of what was wanted would soon persuade the “gruffest” caretaker. Perhaps Skipper could persuade some of the Parents Committee to arrange it. I can visualise the Owls and the Woodpigeons signalling across the great cities of the British Isles! Of course you could do Semaphore as well in the same way.

You chaps who live in the country have an easier time perhaps, as you have got the hills, rivers and cliffs already to hand. An Ordnance Survey map will soon show you good spots to choose. Whether you live in the town or the country, don’t forget that a Scout is courteous and leave your thanks to anyone who helps you, caretakers or landowners.

Sometimes it is quite difficult to think of things to signal when you have arrived at your sending position. It is a good idea to ask questions so that you can be sure by the answer that the rest of the patrol are actually reading it! What is the colour of Bill Bloggs’ hair? for instance, or why not a General Knowledge or Scout Quiz. It is always quite fun to have a little humour when signalling, but don’t forget Scouts are not the only ones who can read morse. I remember in the Navy we used to signal popular tunes line by line, each ship taking turns.

While we are still on our roof or hill top, in our minds at any rate, it is just as well to mention one or two points about the actual signalling. You probably know that a dash is three times the length of a dot, but the important thing when signalling is to run the parts of a letter together and leave larger

spaces between letters. The only really good way to read morse is to read word by word, not letter by letter. Keep the letters in your mind, and then call out the whole word to whoever is writing down. Never refer to a letter as being dot dash or long, short, but always “di, dah” for then it brings into your mind a picture of the sound or flash. If you do not run your morse together it will be very difficult to read. For instance • – • (R) might be taken as ETE or AE or EN.

I haven’t mentioned numbers: well, until you are jolly good at letters I should just spell out the numbers.

Numbers are made up of five dots or dashes (the longest letter is made up of four dots and dashes, so it is easy to distinguish numbers). Start with one dot and four dashes and then add a dot and subtract a dash up to five and then the reverse; dashes in place of dots for 6 to 0.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. • – – – | 6. – • • • • |
| 2. • • – – – | 7. – – • • • |
| 3. • • • – – | 8. – – – • • |
| 4. • • • • – | 9. – – – – • |
| 5. • • • • • | 0. – – – – – |

FLAG DRILL – 1



PREPARE TO SIGNAL POSITION:

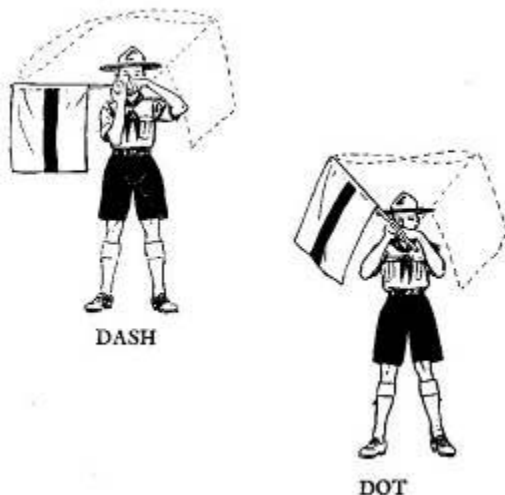
Stand comfortably with feet apart, weight on soles of feet, body slightly forward, flag gathered in left hand.



READY TO SIGNAL POSITION:

Right hand should always be above left. Keep hands in front of face level with nose. Elbows away from side of body. Look straight ahead – not at flags.

FLAG DRILL – 2



The movements should be made with wrists only; the arms and body, although not held rigid, should not come into play. To keep the flag unfurled move it in such a way that the point of the stick describes a figure of eight. The above illustrations explain this clearly.

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

NUMERALS			
1	• — — — —	6	— • • • •
2	• • — — —	7	— — • • •
3	• • • — —	8	— — — • •
4	• • • • —	9	— — — — •
5	• • • • •	0	— — — — —

NUMERALS SIGN	ERASE SIGN
• • — • •	• • • • • • • •

The Morse Alphabet and Numerals.

CHAPTER . . . – –

MORSE GAMES AND STUNTS

Well our afternoon's expedition is over and we are back in the Troop room and we want to have some games which will help those Tenderfeet to become useful members of our signalling patrol.

1) Probably the simplest game for teaching single letters is "Touch something beginning with the letter so-and-so". Points to be given for the first, and one whack for the last to touch the right object. Even the youngest and dullest Scout can get quite quick at recognising letters from a buzzer or light after playing this game for a little while.

2) Each Scout is given a call sign (one letter to start with), the P.L. or Scouter whistles or makes various call signs – only the Scout with the call sign allowed to move. Anyone moving out of turn forfeits points.

3) Have a competition to see how many different ways you can make morse, e.g. long and short jump, short and long cough, laugh, etc. A relay race with each Scout having to think of a new method might be fun, or go round the Troop or Patrol each demonstrating a different method or else fall out. Go on until only one remains.

4) There are numerous stunts which you can try out which will bring in morse – for instance, patrol notices can be in morse, and you can write it like this : –



5) How about winking in morse – quite a sport in a bus or train with a pal sitting opposite but I shouldn't try it in school!

6) Morse can be tapped out in many different ways with feet or hands or perhaps you can even waggle your ears in morse! If you have got a convenient water pipe you can imagine you are in Dartmoor Prison and tap messages to your friends as the convicts are supposed to do on the pipes from cell to cell.

7) One thing I have never tried, but have always wanted to, is smoke signals. A very smoky fire and a blanket (a jolly old one I should think) are used and the smoke is released in puffs. It might be better to have a special code for this, different letters meaning special things. It always sounds a bit complicated – what happens to the smoke when the blanket is down on the fire? If you succeed perhaps you will write and tell me, I'd like to know if it works.

8) You all know that beating of drums in the jungle is used by natives to send messages from tribe to tribe. Quite a lot of fun could be had at camp or on a Saturday afternoon in the country sending out signals in this way. I say in the country on purpose – it is much more realistic and also "native tom toms" in the Church Hall is apt to annoy local residents! The patrol could either do morse on a drum or drums or evolve their own code. It is a bit difficult to make morse on a drum – you might try a roll for a dash and a beat for a dot. If you had two drums you could use one for dots and the other for dashes, providing you arranged which was which beforehand.

9) How about making a kite and fixing a flashing light to it and have the wire leading down to your buzzer, you should be able to signal a long way like that. Incidentally that is what

submarines did during the war when they went near into the coast and signalled to their agents ashore. That could be the basis of a super Wide Game.

One Patrol or patrols guard a piece of countryside, one of their number being an enemy agent, or you could have two if more are playing, but of course unknown to the others in the patrol. Another patrol are the crew of an enemy submarine and cruise along the line of “coast” previously agreed upon. Good cover must be available. The idea of the game is for the submariners to fly a kite and send a message to the agent or agents to do a certain thing, such as putting a chalk cross on a bridge to indicate it is blown up. If the agents succeed, of course, they have won.

In addition to trying to intercept the message and stop the agents the defenders will also try to destroy the submariners. This can be done by “destroyers”, say not more than three Scouts together using balls made of thin material or paper with flour or chalk inside, as ammunition. A hit on a submariner kills him – destroyers cannot come within 15 yards (approximately 7½ fathoms) of the submariners. The more destroyers you use, the less you can watch your agents, unless the agent is chosen to be in a destroyer, in which case he will have to talk himself out of it – for once with his “crew” he cannot leave them until he reaches “dry land”.

Now that the whole patrol are dead keen on this signalling business why not arrange a special outing for them? The London Telecommunications Headquarters at Faraday House, Queen Victoria Street can be visited, and is a most interesting place. Get your S/M to write and arrange for a visit.

Perhaps less exciting, but quite interesting is your local telephone exchange.

Another good place to visit is Lloyd’s Station at Beachy Head, where messages from passing ships may be seen being recorded. Arrangements must first be made with Lloyd’s Register of Shipping in London.

Or what about a visit to a lighthouse? or lightship? You could return the kindness of being shown round by taking along books and newspapers.

Our civil airports are also interesting places to visit if you are interested in flying, and who isn’t these days? They also have a lot to do with signalling.

H.M. Ships visit coastal resorts during the summer, and are open to the public often. Take any opportunity you can of seeing their wireless rooms and Visual Signalling Departments.

CHAPTER –

SEMAPHORE

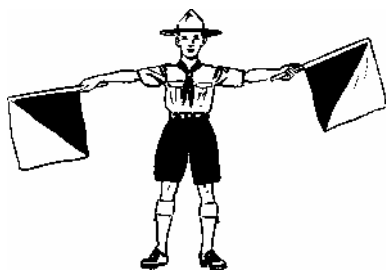
Semaphore signalling does not seem quite so modern in this electrical age but it has a lot of advantages, the chief of which is that it does not need any equipment and you can signal at any time you need or want to. I remember when I was a small boy, before I was a Scout, and I am sorry to say, I was never a Wolf Cub, that I was down at Seaford in Sussex for the day with my parents. After we had had a picnic on the beach we wandered along by the cliffs, when suddenly we saw far in the distance some people waving, and it seemed that they were in trouble. They were, for they were cut off by the rising tide, and couldn’t climb the chalk cliffs and couldn’t get back along the beach. By this time quite a crowd had gathered round us, and a man asked me if I could send semaphore. I felt most miserable when I had to say I couldn’t. However, he stood up on a breakwater, and began to wave his arms about. After a while he

informed the admiring crowd that he had told the marooned people that help was coming by boat. I there and then decided to learn semaphore, though I have often wondered since whether those marooned people really read his message. Anyhow, they were picked up by the lifeboat very shortly afterwards.

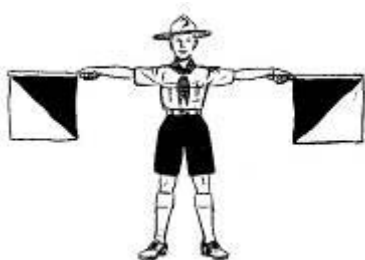
You notice that I said he waved his arms about, well, that is not, of course, the correct way to make semaphore. It may look as though you are waving your arms about when you get good at it but actually you must pause so that each letter is a definite angle.

When I first joined the Navy, one of the first things I saw was a class of signal ratings making semaphore in time to the music of “ The Teddy Bear’s Picnic “. It is a jolly good tune for that purpose. The idea was to give rhythm to the signalling, if you are jerky you soon get tired. I can imagine the patrol having a “swing session” whilst practising their semaphore!

WATCH YOUR ANGLES!

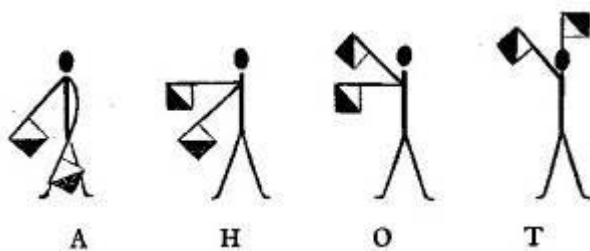


This Scout is supposed to be sending the letter R but at a distance it might well be taken for the letter L.

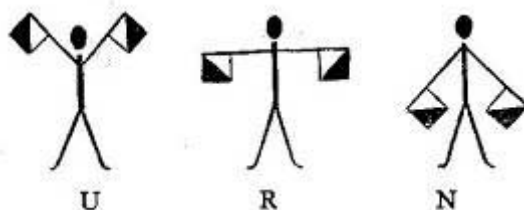


The arm and the flag should form one straight line. Practise in front of a mirror.

Now then, how about learning the semaphore alphabet. You will know that the alphabet is made of “ circles” beginning with just single arm positions for A—G and then double arms positions with the arm with which you are reaching across always above the other one. These circles begin with the following letters A. H. O. T.—thus: —

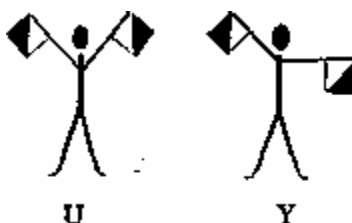


If we know these four letters A. H. O. T. it is not very difficult to build up the rest; especially if we learn three more “turning posts”. They are U. R. and N. – thus: –

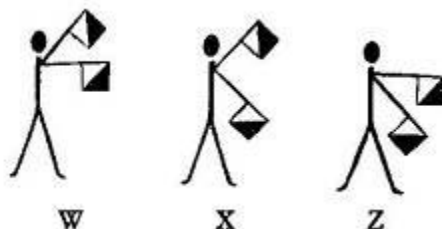


I expect you all know what an urn is; that large dixie with a tap on that the Vicar's wife uses in the Village Hall for making the Social Evening's cup of tea.

Well, an urn is usually hot, so if we remember A HOT URN we have got 7 of the 26 letters in the alphabet. B. C. D. E. F. and G. being in the first circle are fairly easy to remember, so that makes 13 – we know half already. The rest fit in between, so by thinking of the ones we know we can soon work out the others. There are one or two which are a bit more difficult than the others. Y. W. X. Z. I put them in that order purposely. Y follows U which is quite sensible because it does so in a great many words – BUY and GUY for instance:



W is like O, made by reaching over, only on the opposite side. X is made by just dropping the lower (left) hand and Z by following that by dropping the upper right hand – thus:

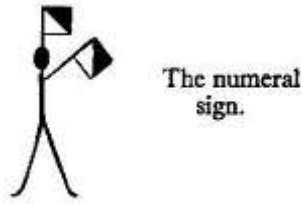


I always like to remember X by thinking that my arms go right on through me and out the other side, thus making an X:



Numbers can be signalled by making the numeral sign and then the letters:

A – 1; B – 2; C – 3; D – 4; E – 5; F – 6; G – 7; H – 8; I – 9; K – 0.



When you are ready to go on with words again you make J which also means Alphabetical.

All this sounds very complicated, and it is rather; so the best plan is to spell numbers out except when you come to the time of Origin which has been mentioned in the Morse Section.

The same applies to Semaphore as to Morse, the only really efficient way to read a signal is to read word by word, not letter by letter. Never acknowledge a word (done by making the letter T) until you are sure you have got it correctly – if you do not answer, the sender will make it again more slowly. If you still cannot get it *then* you can spell it out to whoever is writing down for you. An even better plan is to keep your arm up in the position T while you are reading and only drop it if you fail to get a word.

If when you come to read the message you have received you cannot make out a word, you signal the following:

W B – : that is, please send Word Before the one I have correctly; or of course W A – : Word After.

Or if you have made an awful mess of it,

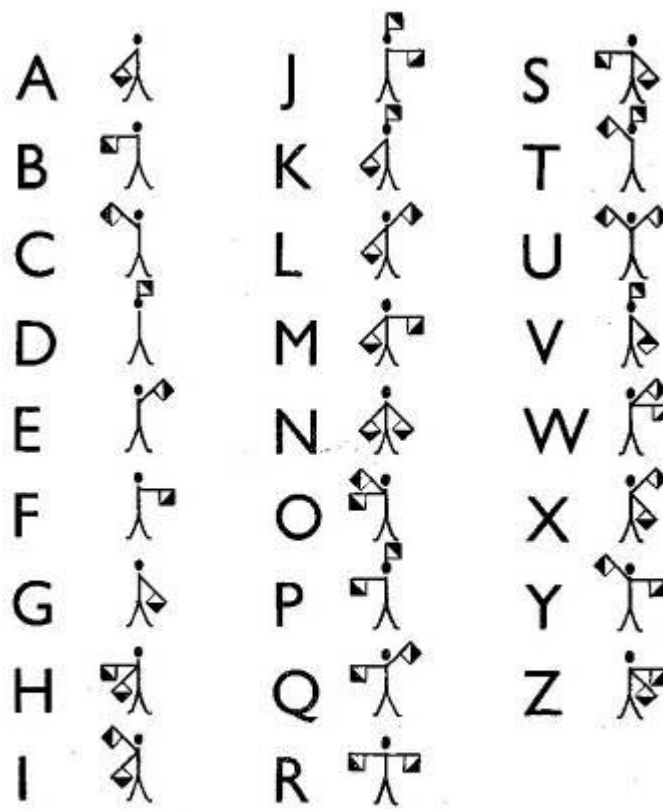
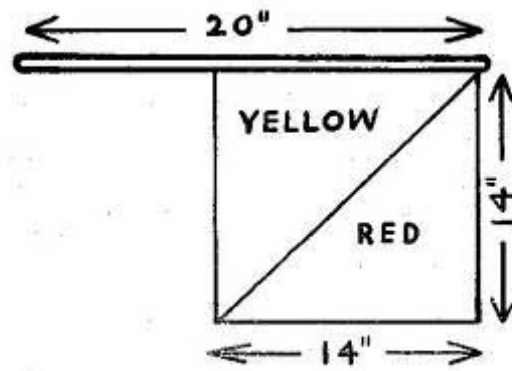
A B: All before: or A A: All after.

Then the sender will make the appropriate part again.

Now that we have got all that in our heads – I hope! – how are we going to use it? Well, there are a lot of ways of having fun by means of Semaphore. I remember being fascinated watching two Chief Yeomen of Signals semaphoring to each other by means of using their faces as the circles and pointing to various parts to indicate the angles of letters. How about that for a private patrol code? These two Chief Yeomen also used what they called “short arm semaphore”, that is, instead of stretching out their arms they just made the letters in front of their bodies, using their wrists to make the angles. Of course this was only for short range signalling, say from the ship to the quayside when berthed.

While on the subject of “short arm signaling”, it must be mentioned that signalling flags (which are best red and yellow divided diagonally) need only be quite small, in fact most sailors like to have as small a pair as possible on nice short sticks; its not so tiring, you see. About the size of a pocket handkerchief is quite big enough. One so often see Scouts with enormous great flags getting practically buried by them. Usually the smaller the Scout, the bigger the flag. Scout staves seem to have the same tendency.

It would be a good idea if each member of the patrol made a pair of semaphore flags to suit himself. They are quite easy to make. Bunting is best but any material will do. Have two colours, red and yellow will look more professional. Turn one edge over and sew up so that the stick will remain inside even when you are very strenuous; there is nothing more annoying than a flag flying off the stick, especially if you are on that roof top or bridge; it's bound to go over the parapet. If you can hem the flags it will be a better job. Of course you could get your mother or sister or girl friend to do it for you, but I think Scouts should be able to use a needle or a sewing machine.



**ERASE
SIGN** 

The complete Semaphore Alphabet.

CHAPTER •••••

SEMAPHORE GAMES

Now, how about one or two games bringing in Signalling just to polish up your memories? These can be used either for morse or semaphore, or if you are very hot stuff mix up the two in one game.

A game my Troop always like is making of letters by the patrol lying on the floor in the right shape. Why not signal the letters or to reverse it – call the letters out and have the semaphore design made by the patrol divided in half lying on the floor. P.L. and 3 and 5 versus 2nd, 4 and 6 would be a good plan.

EXAMPLE –



The letter M

A relay with a catch in it for those who go to sleep in relays is to give each scout in the patrol a letter or letters; when a letter is signalled the scout from each patrol with that letter runs to a chair in front of the patrol, takes a scarf from the back of the chair and runs and places it on the back of a chair placed an equal distance behind the patrol. The scout with the next letter that is signalled has got to take the scarf from the rear chair to the front one. You will be surprised how many start off for the wrong chair.

General Post by signalling is quite fun. In a circle of chairs each chair has a letter on it. Those sitting on the chairs take the letter of the chair they are on. One chap is in the middle. Two letters are signalled; the two chaps sitting on the chairs with those two letters have to change places – the one in the middle has to try to get the vacant chair – the Scout without a chair goes in the middle.

This is a game for Semaphore only – unless you have a large number of buzzers or lamps. Players in a straight line across the Hut – a letter is called out and each Scout makes that letter, anyone wrong or slow takes a step forward. Players nearest the starting line at the end wins.

Make a set of cards with the Semaphore emblems on the front and the letters on the back. Patrols are drawn up in columns as for a relay with a number of the cards at the other end of the hall, similar sets opposite each patrol. A letter and a number is called out – the Scout in each patrol with that number runs up and picks out the right card. First correctly picked out, wins.

The same cards can be used for a variety of Kim's game.

You can, of course, buy the cards, but it is more fun, and thriftier to make them.

Position of "Ready".



CHAPTER – ••••

FLAGS

I said at the beginning of this book that we would have a yarn about the flags that ships wear – yes, ships wear flags, not fly them.

If you were going over a bridge one day looking at a ship, as so many Londoners do over London Bridge, and a stranger, seeing you were a Scout, asked you what the white and red flag divided in half vertically meant, you would feel very pleased with yourself if you could answer with the air of authority that “That ship has got a pilot aboard”, or if it was a yellow and blue vertical striped flag, three of each, it would mean “I require a pilot”.

Why not learn the flags of the International Code and their single letter meanings and become a real expert? You can get a chart from Messrs. Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd., 52/58 Darnley Street, Glasgow, showing the flags in colour or you can find them in *Brown's Signalling*. Of course, by various combinations of flags all sorts of signals can be made, but to read them you would need to have the Code Book, although *Brown's Signalling* does give quite a lot of the code groups.

A good way to learn the flags is to make a pack of cards with one flag painted on each one. By the time you have made them you will probably know them, but they will be handy to carry in your pocket and refer to when you want them.

If you could rig up a mast either inside, or better still, outside your Headquarters, you could hoist signals in the proper manner. A suitable code could be made up to show what time the next Patrol Stunt was.

O : Owls.

P : Peckers.

W : Woodpigeons.

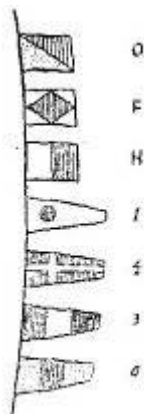
A – G: Monday to Sunday.

H : The Pig and Whistle.

I : St. Georges Church,

and so on. I am making this up as I write, so can you.

A message might be hoisted thus: –

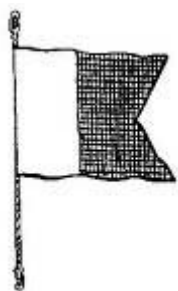


“Owls meet *outside* the Pig and Whistle Saturday 1430.”

Of course the Troop would have to have the code. You could have all sorts of signals hoisted if you erected a good flagstaff with a gaff or yard arm when you are at camp.

The best way to fix the flags to the halliards is to have clips on the toggles of the flags. The best are metal with a groove in so that by turning them to one side you can slide them into each other. Any ship's store or yacht suppliers would supply them.

The flags themselves are best made from bunting, so that the colours do not run. The thin rope or cord to fix them with should be short at the top, or hoist of the flag, and longer at the bottom, thus: –



This is to make sure you are not flying the flag upside down!

By the way a flag with a piece bitten out of it like the above is called a burgee.

When you are hoisting a signal don't forget to clip on the bottom end, otherwise you will find you have made your hoist and you cannot get it down again without shinning up the mast to fetch it. I remember letting go of a very long hoist aboard a destroyer on a very windy day – it trailed out astern in an almost straight line looking like Mother's washing. Fortunately everyone thought it looked rather funny so I did not get into trouble!

Now, how can we make use of flag signals indoors? Although we like to be out as much as possible there are occasions when we have to be indoors. How about a model mast with painted paper flags to hook on? If you only could make one, quite a lot of useful information could be gained, and an amusing time could be spent by having a copy of *Brown's Signalling*, and sending and decoding messages. There are enough messages in that book to keep you busy for some while. Or make up your own codes again. Of course, everyone will want to be the Admiral and hoist the flags, so it would be better if you could have more than one mast and set of flags, and so could repeat or answer the signals.

Another way of using miniature flags, and a good way to learn them at the same time practising your Kim's game, is to have a number of the flags on cards on a tray as for Kim's game, and try to write down after a short observation which letters were on the tray. If you cannot remember the letter, then draw the design of the flag – or both.

CHAPTER – – • • •

MISCELLANEOUS SIGNALS

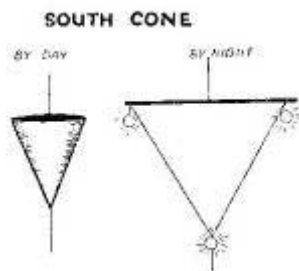
Before we leave the subject of signalling, there are one or two odd ideas which are worth thinking about for use with your patrol. We have talked about codes of various sorts, including those you make up yourselves. Why not have a series of private signs which are only understood by your patrol? For instance, when the S.M. comes round for Inspection, instead of the P.L. saying "Owl Patrol Alert" the patrol mysteriously come to the alert without any apparent order being given. Actually the P.L. has tapped his right heel down, or flicked his fingers, or even waggled his left ear. In the same way other signs could be invented for "Dismiss" or "Corners" and so on.

I expect most of you use hand signals in your Troops and Patrols, but just in case you don't the more usual ones are explained on page 19.

A really good Troop or Patrol is on its toes watching for these signals and carries out all its movements silently and swiftly.

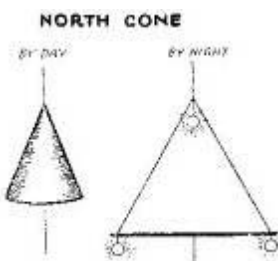
Variety should always be aimed at in a Patrol meeting, so no excuse is made for switching from hand signals to a completely different subject: Gale Warnings.

We have all heard Gale Warnings given out on the wireless, and may even have noticed an expression such as "South Cones hoisted in such and such an area." Do you know what this means? If you live near the coast you will be able to see these signals hoisted by coastguards and Naval Establishments when there is a gale warning.



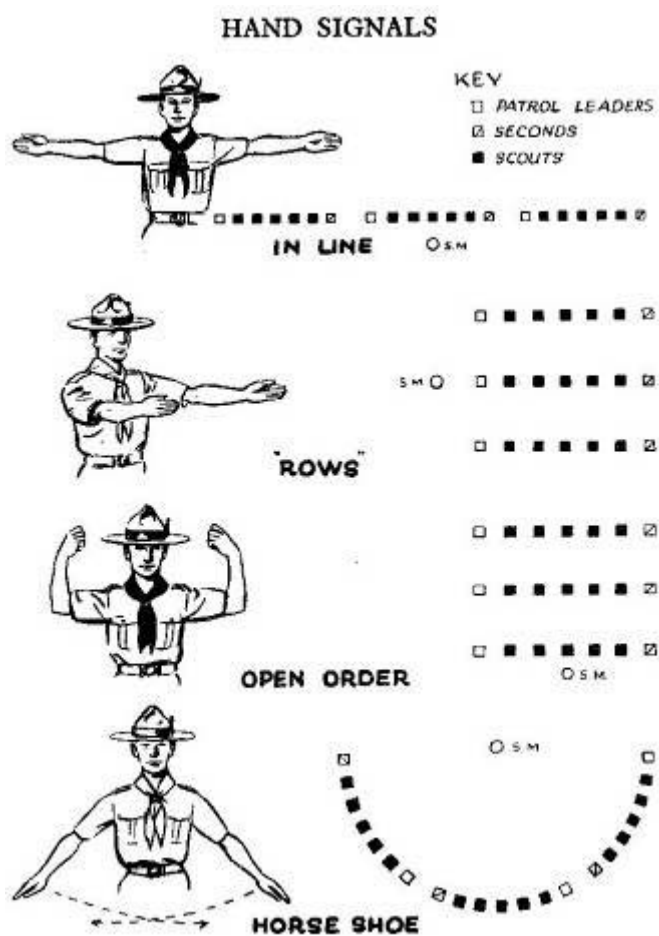
The Cones are made of black canvas. South Cone for gales commencing from a southerly point, or if expected to change from East or West to South.

North Cones for gales commencing for a northerly point, or if expected to change to northerly from easterly or westerly.



Signalling For The Patrol

When one of these signals is hoisted it indicates that a telegram has been received from the Meteorological Office by the station exhibiting the signal, that a gale is expected in the vicinity of the Station.



CHAPTER – – – • •

THE LAST WORD

If you have read right through this little book to here, you must be quite keen on this signalling business. I hope you are, because it is a jolly good subject in which to be interested. Some chaps think that signalling is rather dull, well, so it is, when you stand at one end of your Hut and signal to Bill Bates standing 30 feet away. It would be much easier to shout to him (I expect you do, if you can't read a word!) So, if you want your patrol to be keen, see that they do the real thing, and then it is really thrilling. Of course, you have got to do a certain amount of hard labour at first to learn the alphabet, but then anything worth doing is usually a bit difficult. Even if you are still in the learning stage do try and get out, and be *at least* out of shouting distance.

Don't be put off because you think it is going to be hard work, or that it is out of date. Even if signalling takes a longer time it is still often the only means of communication. I don't subscribe to the motto which the Chief Yeoman of Signals in my first ship had put up – "It's quicker by boat". You haven't always got a boat!

APPENDIX

Right from the start of your practice use code words when calling out letters – it will save you many mistakes. There are a number of different forms of these, but the one standardised for the Services is as good as any and knowledge of it may prove of value to you later. It is as follows: –

A – Able	J – Jig	S – Sugar
B – Baker	K – King	T – Tare
C – Charlie	L – Love	U – Uncle
D – Dog	M – Mike	V – Victor
E – Easy	N – Nan	W – William
F – Fox	O – Oboe	X – X-Ray
G – George	P – Peter	Y – Yoke
H – How	Q – Queen	Z – Zebra
I – Item	R – Roger	