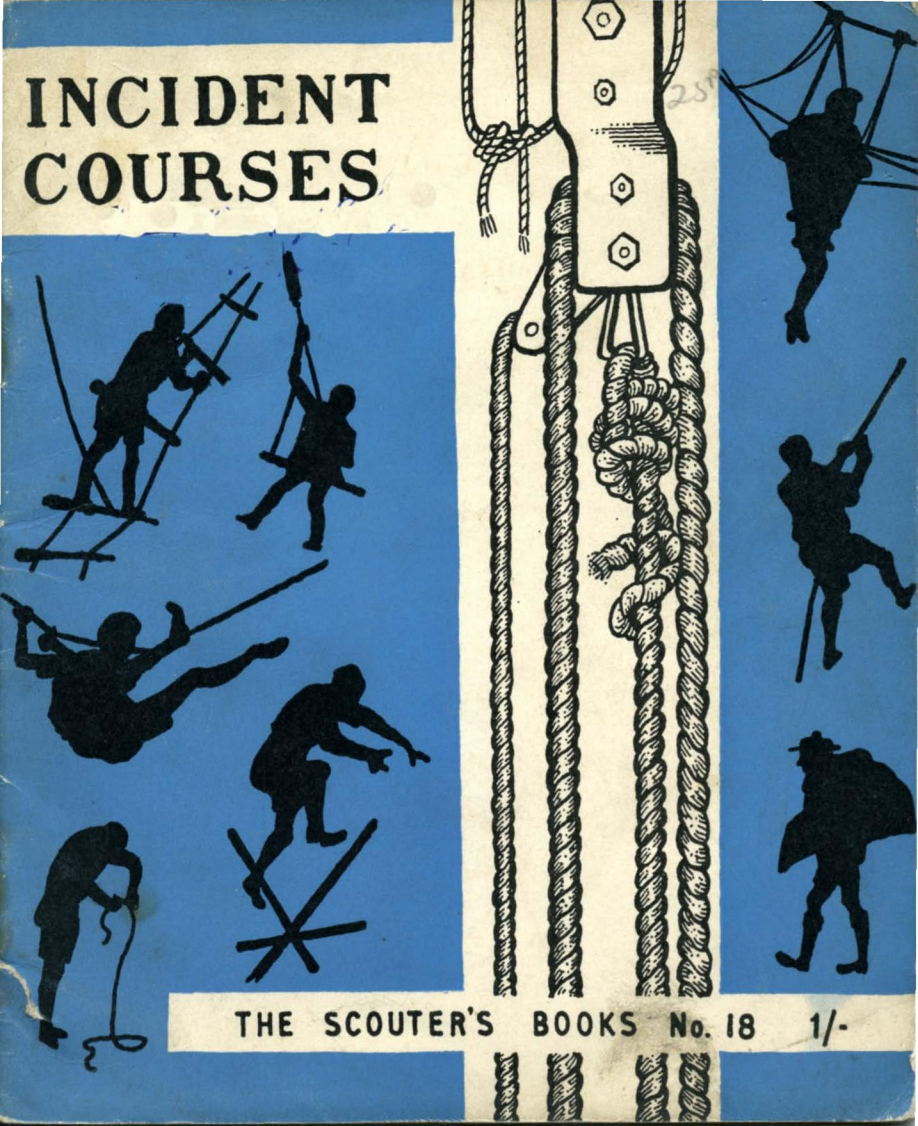
# INCIDENT COURSES



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## INCIDENT COURSES

Since the introduction of the Venturer Badge, Incident Courses have become an increasingly popular part of Seoul training – and rightly so – since, if properly organised, they provide valuable opportunities for the development of Leadership, Initiative, Resource and Teamwork which qualities are of great importance in the modern world. Not only this, they also enable Scout training to be applied practically in an adventurous way in surroundings that may otherwise offer little scope for real adventure. Like the rest of our activities, however, they must be used skilfully if the full benefit in terms of character training is to be obtained. Merely doing certain activities has little value in this respect unless their underlying purpose is understood and their potentialities are developed by careful planning on the part of the Scouter. The purpose of this little book is to suggest how this may be done and how some of the snags can be avoided.

The general idea of an incident course is that the Patrol goes on a journey during which certain practical problems or incidents have to be dealt with. There are several methods of arranging a course, some of which are better than others. A good method is, to arrange the incidents round a circular course and have each Patrol starting at a different incident. This is better than a straight course as the waiting at the start and finish of the course is avoided and also each patrol tackles incidents at different stages of use. Since the standard of an incident is bound to vary with use it is only fair that these differences should be evened out as far as possible. An alternative method is one in which the umpire or examiner accompanies each Patrol and gives them their instructions when they reach the right spot. This method has advantages over the other methods in that fewer examiners are required but it is not satisfactory for competitions as it is not easy to compare the performances of the different Patrols. It finds its main application in the training and testing of a small number of Seniors.

The large Venturer Badge Test usually organised on a District basis is best run by a combination of both methods so that there is a permanent examiner at each incident and a travelling examiner with each Patrol, thus gaining the advantages of each method and making for smoother organisation. The value of this arrangement is that the travelling examiner sees the same boys at different incidents and so he can make a better assessment of the qualities of leadership and teamwork while the examiner at each incident is better able to compare the achievement of each Patrol.

## PLACE

An area of rough ground with streams and woodland is ideal but courses can equally well be run in built up areas where such incidents as road accidents and houses on fire are particularly suitable. The potentialities of each area should be exploited to the full, and incidents should be chosen to make use of any natural advantages of the site. An actual inspection of the ground is essential not only to enable this to be done but also because conditions change and one can never be sure that some new development has not made the map out of date.

The length of the course should be determined by the nature of the terrain, the ages of the boys concerned and the time available. For Boy Scouts 3 miles on foot is quite long enough over rough ground but courses for Seniors could well be longer. Normally the purpose of the course is not to test endurance and as the incidents are the first essential they should not be sacrificed for the sake of a long journey. On occasion incidents could be combined with a long hike of say 20 miles for some such event as a District Senior Scout Competition, but this is not a desirable way of testing for the Venturer Badge.

## TIME

The time required varies from course to course but a reasonable allowance is 20 to 30 minutes per incident and an hour for every three miles travelled on foot. This means that a ten mile course containing eight incidents requires about seven and a half hours. To this must be added time for preparing the incidents and time for clearing up afterwards. If less time is available it is better to shorten the course rather than cut down the number of incidents. The minimum time for a Venturer Badge Course would be about two and a half hours allowing for six-twenty-minute incidents fairly close together. The timing of a circular course needs careful planning otherwise patrols may tend to arrive at a particular incident too quickly. The route and the time required for each incident should be such that the time taken to tackle an incident and reach the next one is equal for each incident. Thus the incidents may take different times if the distances between them are adjusted accordingly.

## PLANNING THE COURSE

There should be a variety of different incidents each taking roughly the same time. The incidents suggested below can be divided into seven types so that variety can be obtained by having an incident of each type. Inspiration for new ideas can be obtained from the ground survey by trying to make use of any unusual objects or situations 'en route'. Alternatively old incidents may suggest new variations or it may be possible to find a novel application of some item of Scout training. If the course has some central theme (e.g. an emergency caused by a hurricane) this may suggest situations in which Scout training can be applied. There should be no excuse for the continual repetition of the same ideas when so many variations are possible. Neither should it be necessary to provide two similar incidents in the same course.

Many a course has been spoiled by a Patrol getting lost 'en route' so this should be guarded against as far as possible. Trails are notorious in this respect so if they are used on obstacle courses sealed instructions should be given to each Patrol in case they get lost.

The ideal incident is one which : –

a) can be achieved by the *boys* with the equipment available and in the time allowed.

b) enables all the members of the Patrol to take part as a team.

c) requires planning, leadership and teamwork.

d) provides scope for resource and initiative and the application of Scouting skills.

e) provides a challenge that is meaningful to the *boys.*

f) has a clearly defined object.

g) is suited to the ages and capabilities of the boys concerned.

This is rather a tough specification and few incidents will fit it perfectly, but often considerable improvements can be made by modifying an original idea.

The instructions for each incident should be as watertight as possible so that the Patrol is quite clear what it has to do. The 'story' should be simple and as far as possible related to real life. In first aid incidents, in particular, the story is most important. It should give the supposed time and place of the incident and the patrol should be quite clear as to how far the realism extends.

The 'examiner' or person in charge of each incident should keep an eye on safety precautions so as to prevent any undue risks being taken. This is important in rescue stunts where there is a live 'casualty' and also in some pioneering projects.

## NUMBERS

When planning a course it is necessary to decide the following : –

the number of incidents.
the number of boys taking part.
the number of boys in each Patrol.
the number of Patrols.
the number of helpers and examiners.

These are to some extent inter-related and will vary from course to course. Thus the number of examiners and helpers available will limit the number of incidents and this will affect the number of Patrols that can take part. For a Patrol Competition the normal Patrols will of course be used but for the Venturer Badge there is some choice as to the number of boys per Patrol. This will be related to the total number of boys and the number of incidents but small Patrols are to be preferred as they ensure that every member is fully occupied during an incident. Perhaps the ideal Patrol size is four.

For a Venturer Badge test the ideal situation is for there to be two boys taking the test in each Patrol so that they each have to lead at several incidents. This system enables boys to gain experience as members of a Patrol before taking the test themselves. In some districts it may not be possible to arrange sufficient courses for this so it may be necessary for all the boys in a Patrol to be taking the test. In this case each boy will lead in turn and it should be arranged that each has to lead at least twice. The minimum number of incidents for the test is five and if more than eight are provided the time required to complete the course becomes rather excessive. If it is necessary for the maximum number of boys the best arrangement is to have eight incidents and Patrols of four so that thirty-two boys can take part.

## NIGHT COURSES

Incident courses at night have added romance and are particularly suitable for some incidents. Other incidents may become much harder at night and so this is, one way of increasing the standard of a test which may be useful when other means of achieving this are not available. Care should be taken to ensure that the incidents are not too difficult and, in particular, lights should be available where they are needed. There is obviously more chance of getting lost at night and the timing may have to be more flexible. In some cases, to avoid any difficulty, it may be advisable to notify the Police that a course is taking place.

## JUDGING

The method chosen for judging a Patrol Competition is not very critical provided that it is fair, but for the Venturer Badge test it must be chosen with care if the full value of the badge, in terms of character training, is to be obtained. Before any detailed method can be worked out the purpose of the badge must first be decided. This can be taken to be the development of qualities of leadership, teamwork, resource and initiative and the ability to apply Scout training to practical problems.

The examiner should first aim to make an objective estimate of each boy's abilities. This requires some skill if a satisfactory estimate is to be made but adherence to the following rules may reduce some of the more obvious errors.

(i) Observe details and discount general impressions.
(ii) Try to avoid personal prejudices and to correct estimates in which these prejudices may be at work.
(iii) Use reasonable standards.
(iv) Look for those qualities that the badge is designed to develop.

When each boy's achievement has been determined it can then be decided whether he has passed or failed. This is not such a simple matter as is often imagined. No firm standard can be laid down because, in Scouting, badges are awarded for *effort* rather than ability.

This principle was expounded by B. P. and is of fundamental importance. It can only be applied in practice if the examiner knows something of the potentialities and circumstances of each boy. Each case must be judged individually, taking regard not only of the standard attained but also: –

a) of the opportunities open to the boy for practical training.

b) the amount of effort he has put into it.

c) his age.

d) his standard of intelligence.

Because the Venturer Badge is an important qualifying badge for the Queen's Scout award it is vital that the testing should be done well. It is just as much a mistake to make the standard too easy for the obviously bright boy as it is to make it too hard for his less intelligent brother. The passing of a badge may be a welcome reward to the boy if he has worked hard and conscientiously to gain the badge, but the award will not be appreciated if the standard expected of him is too low. In particular the standard should not be so low that the boy who turns up on the off chance of passing is able to pass with ease. On the other hand the badge must not be made impossibly hard for *any* boy. If a boy is failed on his first attempt and then has another go his persistence should be taken into account when assessing the amount of effort required.

## MARKING

If the course is being run as a Patrol Competition then a satisfactory method of marking is to allow the umpire at each incident to use his own system of marking and then at the end to place the Patrols in order of merit. If there were four Patrols the first would get four points, the second three and so on. The number of points for each incident could then be totalled to determine the winning Patrol.

The Venturer Badge course requires a more elaborate system of marking. At each incident there are four factors involved: Leadership, Teamwork, Resource and Initiative, Achievement. Each of these can be marked out of five. At each incident one member of the Patrol will be the leader and will be marked for leadership while the rest will be marked for teamwork. Each individual will be marked for resource and initiative and the Patrol as a whole for practical achievement. At the end of the course all the marks should be tabulated and the total score in each of the four categories should then be determined for each boy. It can then be decided whether a boy has passed or failed as described above. In some cases, notably first aid incidents, it is not easy to estimate the standard of achievement and in these cases the best method is to list various things that should be done and to give a mark to each according to its

importance. On adding up these marks the total achievement can be more accurately determined and this can be given a mark from one to five. This may appear to be a complicated scheme but it does enable the examiner to obtain a fairly comprehensive picture of the performance of *each* boy rather than a vague general impression of the Patrol as a whole.

A simpler but less satisfactory method is for each examiner to prepare a mark chart listing the various things that the Patrol should do and also including marks for leadership, teamwork and initiative. The main disadvantage of this scheme is that the final total mark gives no indication of the abilities of the different boys in a Patrol but this does not matter if the course is being run with only one boy in a Patrol taking the test as he leads at every incident.

## ORGANISATION

Good organisation is vital to the success of *any* Incident Course and the more ambitious the course the more exacting are the requirements. Methods of organisation will vary according to local conditions and personal needs but are generally similar for most courses. The organiser will need a team of helpers who may be Scouters, Rovers, Scouts, Parents or anyone else he can "rope in" depending on the type and purpose of the course. Some of these will take part in the planning of the course while others may only be required for the course itself. Having decided on the place, time and purpose of the course and the expected number of boys taking part the next task is to visit the site so that the course can be planned to *suit* the ground and to make use of any natural features. After this the incidents can be planned in detail and arrangements made for any equipment required. Also to be decided are the marking scheme to be used and the arrangements at the start and finish of the course.

On the day itself the organiser must ensure that every one knows exactly what their job is and he must see that the organisation works as smoothly as possible. The person in charge of each incident will require to know when each Patrol is due to arrive at his incident, where it should be coming from and what instructions the P.L. should be given in order to reach the next incident. He should also know what to do if any difficulty arises – such as accident, loss or damage of equipment, Patrols arriving too quickly or Patrols not arriving at all. The organiser should keep in touch with the situation at each incident, as far as possible, particularly at the start of the course when some unexpected snags may occur on trying out an incident for the first time. At the end of the course arrangements must be made for the return of Scouts and equipment and the results of the course should be available as soon as possible. In the case of a course for the Venturer's Badge test the results should be issued individually rather than announced publicly.

## LIST OF INCIDENTS

The incidents given below have been chosen to illustrate the various types. They are not given in great detail as the ideas should be modified and adapted to suit the conditions of any particular course. Most of them are intended for Venturer Badge Courses, but they can generally be made suitable for Boy Scout Competitions by simplifying the conditions. The time required and the standard of each incident will depend so much on the exact specification and conditions that no time or standard can be stated.

### 1. PIONEERING PROJECTS

For a satisfactory Pioneering Project the site must be suitable, the necessary equipment must be available and the project must be possible in the time allowed. The equipment can either

be provided on the spot or else carried by the Patrol. When building bridges it amy be necessary to have one member of the Patrol on the other side of the river if the site and project concerned do not allow it to be tackled from one side only. An alternative idea is to have an 'ignorant well-wisher' on bank who is willing to help if told what to do but who has no knowledge of knots. The 'examiner' should keep an eye on the safety precautions and see that excessive strain is not placed on any of the equipment. In this connection it is worth remembering that one inch circumference rope is the minimum size for taking a person's weight and a larger size is needed if the rope is more or less in a horizontal position as in an aerial runway.

*Transporter.* This is the well-known method of crossing a fairly narrow stream by means of swinging sheerlegs placed in the middle of the stream bed. The bridge can be constructed from one side of the river only, if an extra spar is available to push the first man into the upright position. Two fairly long spars are required.

*Commando Bridge.* This is simply two horizontal ropes fixed one above the other that are used as handrail and footrail. If the bridge is fairly long some simple straining device is desirable. It is normally built between two trees but as a variation one or even both ends can be fixed to spars suitably guyed and supported. The bridge can also be built between two trees several feet above the ground which is a possible variation when no river is available.

*Flag Pole.* This sounds a fairly uninteresting project but there is quite a lot of construction involved if it is made from staffs. It is best built on a hill top in the hope that there will be a wind blowing at the time to add to the fun. The Patrol should be required to fly a 6 foot flag from it when completed.

*Electric Fence.* The problem here is to get the whole Patrol over a fence that is supposed to be electrified and therefore cannot be touched. There are various ways of doing it. The height of the fence should depend on the circumstances and the materials available. If possible have one that rings a bell on contact.

*Bottle in Pond.* A bottle (perhaps containing instructions for next part of journey) floating in a pond – 'tank of sulphuric acid' – has to be retrieved without getting wet. A suitable tree with overhanging branch should be available but the bottle should not be placed directly under the branch otherwise it can be reached by someone climbing down the rope without the rest of the Patrol taking part. If no pond is available an area marked out on the ground will do almost as well but it is not so exciting.

*Runway.* The construction of a large aerial runway is rather too much for an ordinary obstacle course but the use of an already completed runway makes, an enjoyable incident for a Boy Scout Patrol.

*Pond Beacon.* Working only from the bank the Patrol have to erect a beacon in the middle of a pond (or 30 foot diameter area if no pond is available) that can be lit from the shore after it is in position. An old billy or other container should be available to light the fire in.

*Lookout Pole.* This is simply a pole with rungs fixed at intervals and a seat at the top so that, when erected, it can be climbed up and used as a lookout.

*Cycle Transporter.* The problem is to lash two cycles together in such a way that they can be used to transport a large bulky object.

*Broken Underwater Cable.* The two ends of a broken underwater 'cable' must be fished out of the water so that a join can be made. The 'cable' should not be visible at the points

where it leaves the water at either bank but its rough position should be marked so that the break can be located.

*Further Ideas.*

Swinging pole bridge.
Tree platform.
Raft.
Tower.
Line Thrower.
Movement of large object.

## 2. PHYSICAL ABILITY STUNTS

These are incidents that require mainly physical skill for their completion. Some of them might also be classed as pioneering projects but where physical ability predominates they have been included in this section. They should require skill and 'guts' rather than brute strength and should call for leadership and teamwork. Safety considerations are again important and the 'examiner' should see that no one over exerts himself or tackles something that is too difficult for him.

*One-rope Bridge.* This is a single horizontal rope stretched fairly taut that is best crossed by the Dead Man's Crawl method. The hanging underneath method ('slothing') is unsatisfactory except for very short distances as anyone finding it too tiring on the arms has no option but to drop off. To do the Dead Man's Crawl one stands astride the rope and leans forward so that one is lying on the rope. Then one leg is hooked over the rope behind with the instep resting on top of the rope and the knee bent. The other leg is kept *straight.* It is then possible to pull one-self along sliding on top of the rope and, provided the hanging leg is kept straight, there is no danger of dropping off.

*Giant Stride.* In its simplest form this incident consists of a rope fixed to the overhanging branch of a tree so that one can swing across a stream and, by letting go at the right moment, arrive dryshod at the other side. A more advanced project is when the tree is on the opposite side of the stream. In this case there is the problem of getting the rope fixed to the branch. This is tackled by tying a loop in the end of the rope and then throwing it over the branch. When this has been done there are two ways of attempting to retrieve the loop, either it may be pulled back with a long pole or else another line with a hooked weight at the end can be thrown through the loop. A stick should be fixed through a loop before it is thrown, in such a way as to hold it open so that the second line may be thrown through.

*Tree and Wall Climbing.* For this incident the Patrol are required to climb over a wall or similar obstacle or to climb up and down a tree by a particular route. The main interest centres around getting the last man up as he will have no one on the ground to help him. This can be quite difficult if the wall is high but ropes and staffs may be used to provide a simple foothold.

*Rope Ladder.* This may be combined with the previous incident but can make quite a difficult project on its own if it is required to reach a fairly high branch of a tree. There are several types of ladder the easiest of which is one with two ropes (1" circ.) and short rungs fixed to the rope with Marline Spike Hitches. A rather harder ladder to climb is one which has only one rope. In this case it is essential to place both feel on the same rung at the same time.

*Abseiling.* This is a method of getting down a cliff by sliding down a rope. It does not perhaps make a sufficient incident for a Venturer Badge Journey but it is a useful activity and may well be incorporated in some other incident such as a Cliff Rescue. The method used is to

fix the rope to a tree or other firm object at the top and to throw the other end over the cliff (taking care to see that it reaches to the bottom). Then, standing astride the rope with the back to the cliff, to pick up the rope behind one with the left hand and place it over the right shoulder. In this position the rope goes 'through the legs, round and across the chest from left to right, over the right shoulder and across the back to the left hand. The rope in front is held *loosely* in the right hand. In this way it is possible to slide down the rope controlling the speed of descent with the left hand. There is no need to hold on tight with the right hand, which is only used for balance, as there is plenty of friction round the body.

*Motyron.* Eight motor tyres are hung from a strong rope a few feet from the ground and the object is to crawl through from one end to the other.

*Further Ideas.*

Stilt Walking.
Pole vaulting.
'Crevasse Problem' (getting from one tree to another without touching the ground).

## 3. FIRST AID STUNTS

First Aid Stunts require careful planning and preparation to make them as realistic as possible so that the treatment can be applied as it would be in a real accident. The required treatment should be easily possible in the time allowed as rushed and hastily performed first aid is of little value. The arrangement of an incident can be considered under the following headings: –

(i) Story. This needs to be worked out first of all in fair detail, care being taken to see that the required treatment is appropriate.

(ii) Instructions. These should state the supposed time and place of the incident and should make it clear how far the realism extends particularly in regard to sending a message for help.

(iii) Scene. The scene must be set with adequate props and be as true to *life* as possible.

(iv) 'Make up'. Methods of 'making up' the casualties depend on the materials available. These are considered below. It should always be possible to *observe* the necessary 'signs' of the injury. If no other method is available a small label fixed to the appropriate part of the body can be used. This is much better than telling the patrol what is wrong.

(v) Acting. The casualty and anyone else taking part should try and act as naturally as possible. They must know the full story of the incident and, if conscious, be able to answer questions and to give their name and address. The casualty must know the symptoms that he is to portray and how to react to treatment.

There are many ways of faking injuries of which the use of 'Plastifol' wound replicas is perhaps the best for Scout purposes. (Further information can be obtained from Browning's Laboratory and Supply Co. Ltd., Hull). These are made from plastic and are simply stuck onto the skin with the spirit gum provided. Other methods require the use of coloured putty and grease paint. Very effective results can be obtained but a fair amount of time and skill is required. A satisfactory form of imitation blood can be made by colouring some flour and water paste (make like custard from 2 heaped tablespoons of flour) with Scarlet Lake water colour paint. Use of imitation blood is best restricted to special incidents as it is rather messy for ordinary First Aid practice. As well as the 'make up' of wounds, burns and fractures, there is also the facial 'make up' to be considered when the casualty is suffering from shock or

suffocation. In each case vaseline is put on first as a base. For shock the face is covered with pale yellow grease paint (stick: Flesh No. 5). This may be all that is needed but the result can be improved by shading round the eyes and the hollows of the cheeks with a Dark Blue Liner. The grease paint should be smoothed over to obtain a satisfactory result. No powder is required as the skin is supposed to be clammy. For suffocation (asphyxia) the face, hands and other exposed parts should be covered with grey grease paint and dark blue should be applied to cheeks, ear lobes and lips.

*Road Accident.* One form of this incident that is fairly easy to rig up concerns a car and a cycle. The cyclist may be suffering from wounds and fractures and the driver and passengers in the car may be suffering from shock. Many other variations are possible and the treatment will depend to some extent on whether the incident takes place in town or country.

*Serious Burns.* These include scalds and chemical burns and may take place at home, in factory or at camp. They may be associated with electric shock or house or clothing on fire. Shock 'make up' is important.

*Serious Bleeding.* This is not a very easy injury to fake unless the correct apparatus is available. In its simplest form this consists of a length of plastic tubing with a polythene bottle at the end. Imitation blood is required and this can be made as described above. The tubing should be fixed to the arm or leg in line with the artery so that the bleeding can be stopped by correct use of the pressure point. If no apparatus is available an alternative method is to soak a rag in imitation blood and to fix one corner on the wound so that the other end hangs down. This will serve to indicate severe bleeding when the patrol first see the casualty but it is otherwise not very realistic.

*Fractures.* These can occur in many situations including falling from a tree or downstairs as well as those mentioned elsewhere. Fractures can be simple or compound and can occur in any part of the arm or leg or in the collar bone. Other rare or more serious fractures are also possible but no specialised treatment should be expected.

*Unconsciousness.* This condition may occur because of brain injury, suffocation due to drowning or gas poisoning, shock, electric shock or illness. As it does not form part of the Ambulance Badge no special treatment should be expected but this should not prevent it being an incident as the general treatment should be known.

*Mountaineering Accident.* This calls for different treatment from normal due to the remote situation of the accident. The Patrol should, if possible, be given a map of a mountain area and their supposed grid reference so that they can work out how they are going to send for help.

## 4. RESCUE WORK

The incidents described in this section might also be classed as First Aid Stunts but here we are primarily concerned with *rescuing* a casualty and the amount of actual First Aid required should be kept to a minimum, otherwise the incident becomes too complicated to be tackled in the time available. It is better to have a live 'casualty' where possible but if this involves undue risk a dummy may have to be used. The story should be such as to make the required treatment correct in the circumstances concerned.

*House on Fire.* There are many variations of this incident depending on the buildings available. Smoke can be produced by lighting a fire in a bucket and covering it with grass but it may be necessary to wait twenty minutes or so before it is thick enough to make an effective incident. The incident may involve some of the following: calling Fire Brigade and taking other

appropriate action; searching for 'casualties' including crawling through smoke and taking the correct safety precautions; putting out fire if small; moving casualty or lowering by rope and applying first aid treatment for burns or asphyxia. The 'casualty' should be in such a position that he can only be reached by crawling through smoke but at the same time he has plenty of fresh air to breath while waiting. Thus he could be placed by a window with the fire between him and the door.

*Cliff Rescue.* This may involve abseiling down the cliff to the casualty and moving him to the top or bottom. If the casualty is to be lowered by rope a fireman's chair knot or better still a triple bowline should be used. To take the strain a turn of the rope should be taken round some secure object such as a tree which must be covered with sacking. Anyone climbing on the cliff should be protected by a safety line fastened round his waist by a bowline and held by someone at the top who should be firmly belayed (i.e. tie by the waist to tree or other firm object) and who should take the strain by passing the rope under the right arm, across the back and over the left shoulder and holding with both hands.

*Casualty in Tree.* This is a variation of the last incident for use when no cliff is available. To make the situation plausible the casualty can be supposed to be an airman. As with the previous incident the 'injury' should be relatively minor such as a broken arm.

*Ice breaking.* Rather more imagination than normal is required for this one but it can be made into quite a good incident. A hole is required so that only part of the casualty is above the ground and a ladder or something similar should be available but it need not be placed in too obvious a position.

*Gas Poisoning.* This situation calls for the same methods as those used for rescuing a casualty in smoke except that the gas may be heavier than air. The casualty should be 'made up' to show that he is suffering from axphyxia as described in the section on First Aid.

*Further Ideas:*

Rescue from swamp or quicksand.
Drowning.
Electric Shock.
Attempted Suicide.
Rescue from island or flooding.
Dangerous animal.
Underground rescue.
Rescue of person trapped in derelict building.

## 5. OBSERVATION STUNTS

Observation stunts require careful thought if they are to make satisfactory incidents for Patrol competitions and badge tests. It is important that they should not be too greatly dependent on memory or intelligence. The element of chance should be kept to a minimum for a stunt that depends mainly on luck has little training value.

Although decoding does not come strictly under this heading, nevertheless many of the above considerations apply. It may be a good activity to include in a Patrol Competition, but as an item in a badge test it has serious limitations. Often it requires too much luck, too little teamwork or leadership and is too greatly dependent on the standard of intelligence.

Some form of observation may be required for many of the incidents included in the other sections and trails may be used to connect them provided that safeguards are taken so that a

Patrol does not get lost and thus spoil the rest of the course. Under this heading are included observation, reporting, trailing, tracking, stalking and camouflage.

*Escaped Prisoner.* An escaped prisoner is known to be hiding in a certain area of woodland. His exact position can be found by following a trail. He must be caught.

*Spying.* Some incident or other takes place at a certain spot. The Patrol must find out what happens without being seen and then make a report and take some preventative action.

*Crime.* A murder or burglary has been committed and the Patrol must find out what they can by observing the scene of the crime and possibly by interviewing any bystanders.

*Smuggling.* Patrol is given a fairly bulky object which it mast get to another point some distance away without being caught with it. This incident could take place at night or in a busy urban area. In the latter case disguises should be provided.

## 6. TECHNICAL STUNTS

These are stunts involving the application of some Scout skill, other than those included above, such as mapping, estimation, signalling, fire fighting, decoding or tent pitching.

*Signalling.* As a variation from Morse or Semaphore the following code can be used. It has the advantage that no preliminary knowledge is required. The alphabet is first tabulated as shown so that each letter is described by a pair of figures; the one at the top being taken first. Thus N is 4, 3 or Q is 2, 4. To signal each figure is sent as a number of dots or flag-waves and a pair of figures describe each letter. This code is rather slow but is surprisingly accurate if used with care. Various methods of signalling can be used. At night, a candle in a large tin with a piece of cardboard as a shutter has been used with success over a half-mile range.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D | E | 1 |
| F | G | H | I | J | 2 |
| K | L | M | N | O | 3 |
| P | Q | R | S | T | 4 |
| U | V | W | X | Y | |
| | | | | Z | 5 |

*Fire in Tree.* There are various stories for this incident, one of which is known to the writer as Johnson's Peril. Red ants come out at dusk in about 20 minutes time. They are dangerous but are only known to climb trees to the height of 6 feet. You require a cooked supper so build a fire up a tree at least six feet off the ground.

*Bears.* This stunt is useful in the case where there is only one examiner travelling with the Patrol. At a suitable spot he tells them that there are some bears in the vicinity who will attack in about 8 minutes unless they are protected by three large fires.

*Fire on Raft.* A cable (length of sisal) crossing over a river about 2 feet above the water must be sabotaged by burning it through the middle.

*Find the Beacon.* A lantern is placed some distance from the point where the Patrol are They are provided with a suitable map and compass and told to plot the position of the beacon on the map and then to draw a sketch map showing how someone can get to it. When this has been done the lantern is put out and the map removed and the Patrol are then required to find the beacon by means of their sketch map.

*Island Projects.* A skeleton bridge leads to a very small island on which the Patrol are required to light a fire, pitch a tent, erect a flagpole and draw a sketch map of .the island.

*Compass Course.* If compass directions are not used to direct the Patrols round the obstacle course itself then a compass course can form one of the incidents. This is a fairly simple project, the length and difficulty of which should be altered to suit the type of country.

*Further Ideas.*

Buried treasure (3 bearings give position).
Estimation.
Sketch map or panoramic sketch.
Map reading (e.g. use map showing contours only).

## 7. INITIATIVE STUNTS

These include all those stunts that do not require the application of any basic Scout training but call for resource and initiative. As always each incident should require leadership and teamwork, and should be possible of attainment. There are a great many possibilities, but it is often difficult to turn an idea into a really effective stunt.

*Frightened Child in Tree.* The Patrol have to deal with a child who has climbed a tree and then has become too frightened to get down.

*Foreigner.* The Patrol meets a foreigner who is in distress but can speak no English. They must try to help him.

*Good Turn.* An obvious chance for a good turn is provided on the route which the Patrol must follow.

*Icebergs.* All except the P.L. have become snow-blind (blindfolded) when they reach an iceflow they must cross one at a time under the P.L's. directions, using two icebergs (boxes) to walk on.

*Snakes.* Venomous snakes will attack in about 3 minutes, so get all of Patrol at least 12 feet off the ground. Treat any casualties for snake bite.

The time and height should be adjusted to suit the available trees.

*String Trail.* This is the well known incident in which the Patrol are blindfolded and have to follow a string trail over various obstacles. This is quite a good incident for Boy Scouts, but is not so good as a Venturer incident unless care is taken to see that leadership is required if the trail is to be completed successfully.

*Crossing the River.* The Patrol has boat or raft with which to cross a river. Members of Patrol are 'man', 'cabbage', 'goat', 'wolf'. Only two may cross, at a time of which one must be the man. The problem is to get the whole Patrol across in such a way that at no time are the cabbage and goat or goat and wolf left together without the man, since wolf eats goat and goat eats cabbage.

*Mad Professor.* A mad professor has escaped and is known to be carrying 4 small hand bombs (flour bombs). The problem is to persuade him to throw the bombs so that no one is hit, so that he can be captured. A hit causes serious chemical burns unless the powder is immediately removed with water.

*Bulk Transport.* For this incident, the Patrol have to carry a large bulky object over a number of obstacles. As it contains 'fragile instruments' it must be moved with care. (A balloon fixed to the base and a mug of water on top add to the difficulty).

*Noises Off.* In times of emergency it may be necessary to concentrate on the job in hand under difficult circumstances, so for this incident the Patrol are given a simple project to do, during which all sorts of distractions are provided. A suitable project would be to encypher a message and send it over a field telephone, part of which has to be rigged up following the instructions provided.

## TRAINING FOR THE VENTURER BADGE

Training for the Venturer Badge is an important part of the Scouter's job which should not be left to the boys to do on their own. This training can be divided into two parts: –

(i) Organisation and leadership of Patrol.

(ii) Practical skills.

Theoretical training which should be closely combined with practice incidents includes Leadership, Power of Command, Planning and Organisation, Teamwork and how to tackle the various types of incident. The practical training should start with simple incidents and then progress to harder ones as the standard improves. This should provide plenty of fun, but the purpose behind the training should be pointed out to the boys and an 'inquest' should be held after each incident so that good and bad points can be discussed, paying particular regard to Leadership, Initiative, and Teamwork. Praise should be given wherever possible but if a project has been tackled badly it should be repeated soon afterwards so that the points can be pressed home.

No Scout should be allowed to enter for the badge until he has had quite a lot of training and practical experience so that the test is a real climax and the badge is a reward for effort and achievement. It *is* worth remembering that the purpose of the badge is not to pick out those who already have leadership ability but to develop it in those who have not.

**Notes on How to Tackle an Incident**

(i) Immediately deal with any urgent tasks. This normally occurs only in first aid stunts where serious bleeding, lack of breathing or further danger to the casualty require immediate attention.

(ii) Find out what the problem is. Invite suggestions from the rest of the Patrol. Think and *then* decide what to do.

(iii) Give each member of the Patrol something to do, using the talents of each one to the best advantage and tackling the most important tasks first.

(iv) Give clear, simple orders to each person by name and suited to his ability.

(v) Remain at the centre of things in order to keep control over the situation and think ahead so that everything can be done as speedily as possible. Do not be afraid to change the original plan if necessary.

(vi) Remember that good leadership does not mean doing all the work yourself!

In the case of physical ability stunts, the Leader should see that someone with the necessary ability tackles the incident first so as to inspire confidence and then he should look after the weaker members of the Patrol.