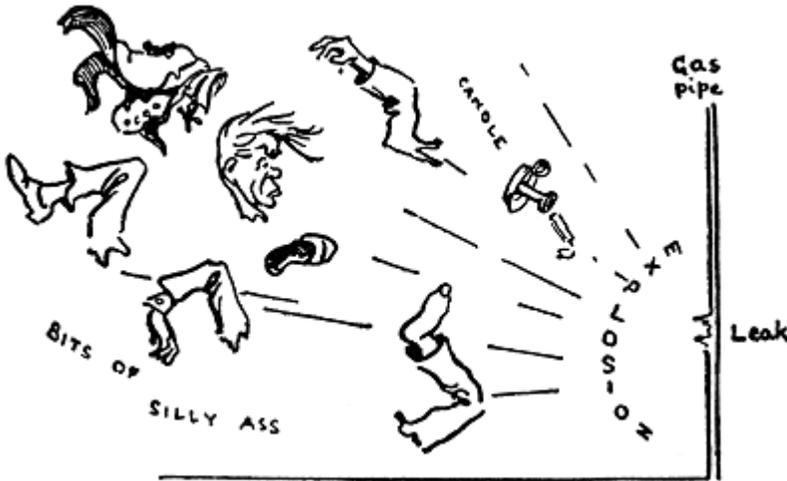


CAMP FIRE YARN NO. 24

ACCIDENTS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

**Panic - Fire - Drowning -
Runaway Horse - Mad Dog -
Miscellaneous**



Every year numbers of lives are lost by panics, which very often are due to the smallest causes, and which might be stopped if only one or two men would keep their heads.

One evening some years ago, on board a ferry-boat in New York harbour, a man who had been catching some crabs thought it would be a good joke to let one of them loose on board the boat. One crab caught hold of the ship's cat and made it squeal, and it jumped into the middle of a crowd of schoolgirls, who at once scattered, screaming. This started a panic among the hundreds of passengers on board. They rushed in every direction, and in a moment the railings broke and eight people fell overboard. Before anything could be done they were swept away by the tide and drowned.

Some years back a man in a town in Russia, on opening his shop in the morning, saw a big black bomb lying on the counter. He rushed out into the street to get away from it, and a policeman seeing him running mistook him for a thief, and when he would not stop he fired at him. The bullet missed him, but hit another man; panic broke out and many lives were lost. After it was over the man went back to his shop and found the bomb still on his counter—but it was not a bomb, it was only a black watermelon!

Some years ago occurred a case of crush and panic among children in a theatre at Barnsley, from no cause at all except overcrowding, and eight children were crushed to death. More lives would certainly have been lost had not two men kept their heads and done the right thing. One man, named Gray, called to a number of the children in a cheery voice to come another way, while the man who was working the show threw a picture on the screen and so diverted the attention of the rest, and prevented a panic. If only one or two people keep their heads and do the right thing on the spur of the moment, they can often calm hundreds of people, and thus save many lives.

When there is a panic among those around you, you may get a sudden desire to do as the others are doing. Perhaps it is to run away, perhaps it is to stand still and cry "Oh!" Well, you should check yourself when you have this feeling. Don't catch the panic, as you see others do—keep your head and think what is the right thing to do, and do it at once.

Rescue from Fire

Instances of gallant rescues of people from burning houses are frequent. One sees them every day in the newspapers. You should study each of these cases as they occur, and imagine to yourself what you would have done under the circumstances. In this way you begin to learn how to deal with the different accidents.

An instance occurred some years ago where a young sailor, George Obeney, stationed at Chatham in H.M.S. *Andromeda*, was walking along the Kingsland Road, when he suddenly saw a house on fire. A woman several stories up was screaming that she had some children there who could not get out. The sailor rushed from his friends and somehow scrambled up the face of the wall till he reached the window below the woman, and broke in the glass so that he could obtain room to stand. The woman at the window above was then able to lower a child so that he could catch it, and in turn pass it down to the ground. Child after child was thus handed down till he had passed six of them to the ground, and finally two women. Then the sailor, overcome by smoke himself, fell insensible, but was caught by the people below. His was an example to you of how to do your duty AT ONCE, without thinking of dangers or difficulties.

A house caught fire at Shoreham Beach, and the local Troop of Boy Scouts was quickly on the scene. They did their work as true Scouts, not only in acting as firemen and getting the fire under control, but also as life-savers in rescuing two ladies and a child, and then in rendering first aid to them and dressing their injuries.

House on Fire!

If you discover a house on fire you should—

1st—Alarm the people inside.

2nd—Warn the nearest policeman or fire station.

3rd—Rouse neighbors to bring ladders, mattresses, carpets, to catch people jumping.

After arrival of fire engines the best thing boys can do is to help the police in keeping back the crowd out of the way of the firemen.



It is not pleasant to be rolled on the floor in a rug or carpet, but that is the way to help a person with his clothes on fire. Take care that your own clothes do not catch fire.

If it is necessary to go into a house to search for feeble or insensible people, the thing is to place a wet handkerchief or cloth over your nose and mouth and walk in a stooping position, or crawl along on your hands and knees quite near the floor, as it is here that there is least smoke or gas. Also, for passing through fire and sparks, get hold of a blanket, if you can, and wet it. and cut a hole in the middle through which to put your head; it forms a kind of sparkproof mantle with which you can push through flames and sparks.

When a fire occurs anywhere near, Scouts should assemble their Patrols as quickly as possible and go off at Scout's Pace guided by the glare or the smoke. Then the Patrol Leader should report to the police or firemen, and offer the help of his Patrol either to form a line to keep the crowd back, or to run messages, or guard property, or to help in any way.

If you find a person with his clothes on fire, you should throw him flat on the floor, because flames only burn upwards, then roll him up in a rug or carpet, coat or blanket. Take care in doing so that you don't catch fire yourself. The reason for doing this is that fire cannot continue to burn where it has no air.

When you find an insensible person (in his fright he may have hidden himself under a bed or table), you should either carry him out on your shoulder, or, what is often more practicable in the case of heavy smoke or gas fumes, harness yourself on to him with sheets or cords and drag him out of the room along the floor, crawling on all fours yourself.

To do this you make a bowline at each end of your rope; one you put over the patient's chest and under his arms, and the other over your own neck. Then with your back to his head you start on all fours to pull him along head first. If the bowline is the right length it will keep his head up off the ground.

Rescue from Drowning

The list of Boy Scout heroes shows you what a large proportion of accidents are due to not knowing how to swim. It is therefore most important that everybody should learn to swim, and, having done so, to learn how to save others from drowning.

A moderate swimmer can save a drowning man if he knows how, and has practised it a few times with his friends.

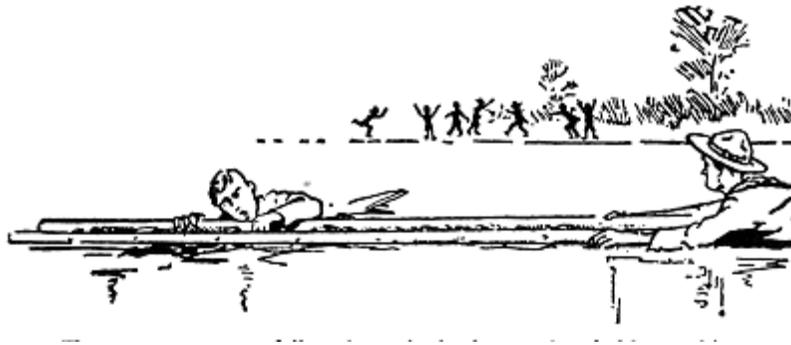
The popular idea that a drowning person rises three times before he finally sinks is all nonsense. He may drown at once, unless someone is quick to help him.

The important point is not to let the drowning person catch hold of you when you get to him, or he may drown you too. *Keep behind him always.*

Put an arm across his chest and your hand under his armpit, telling him to keep quiet and not to struggle. If he obeys, you can easily keep him afloat. But otherwise be careful that in his terror he does not turn over and catch hold of you. If he should seize you by the neck, place your arm round his waist, and the other hand, palm upwards, under his chin, with your finger-tips under his nose. Pull and push, and he must let go. If you find yourself clutched by the wrist, turn your wrist against his thumb and force yourself free.

But you will never remember this unless you practice it frequently with other boys first, each taking turns in being the drowning man or the rescuer.

Any of you who cannot swim as yet, and who fall into the water out of your depth, remember that you need not sink if you take care to do the following things: First, keep your mouth upwards by throwing the head well back. Secondly, keep your lungs full of air by taking in long breaths, but breathe out very little. Thirdly, keep your arms under water. To do this you should not begin to shout, which will only empty your lungs, and you should not throw your arms about or beckon for help, because this will make you sink.



To rescue someone fallen through the ice, push a ladder to him.

If you see a person fall into the water and begin to drown, and you yourself are unable to swim, throw a rope, or an oar or plank right to him, so that he may clutch at it and hold it. If a person falls through ice, and is unable to get out again because of the edges breaking, throw him a rope and tell him not to struggle. This may give him confidence until you can get a long ladder or pole across the hole, which will enable him to crawl out, or will allow you to crawl out to catch hold of him.

Throwing a Life Line

It is often much more use to be able to throw a rope within the reach of a drowning person than to jump in after him and make two to be pulled out.

A good length for a throwing or heaving line is 7 fathoms (42 feet). If you are making up a special throwing line, it should be of nice pliable braided or stranded rope about 1/4 in. in diameter. For long throws it's usually the practice to make a heavy knot in the throwing end; sometimes a small sandbag is fastened to the end to make it carry farther. But mind that you aim the weight to fall across the recipient's outstretched arms, and *not* at his face.

Now decide which hand is going to do the throwing. Most people naturally use their right. On that hand coil up your throwing line very carefully, *clockwise*, making the coils, say, 18 ins, from top to bottom. When about half is coiled on, turn up a finger to separate those coils and coil the rest on to the remaining fingers of your hand.

When you come to the end of the rope, hold it firmly in your left hand with the last three fingers, or, better, have a loop in the end that will fit down over your wrist so you don't



It takes practice to learn to throw a life line correctly, so that you do not get yourself snarled up in it.

lose the end in throwing. Then pass back the second set of coils from your right to the first two fingers of your left hand. Now you have a coil in each hand.

The right-hand coil is the one you throw first, and you follow it instantly with the left coil, *not letting go the end*. Thrown out like this, the line won't tangle up, and it's possible to throw the whole line out straight, so that it will reach the farthest. Sending it out in one coil nearly always results in the coil not opening properly, and a short reach in consequence.

Throwing can be underhand or overhand. The latter is better exercise and almost essential if the line has to be thrown from behind an obstruction, such as a bulwark or wall, or has to be thrown to people in an upper storey in case of fire.

Rescue from Runaway Horses

Accidents sometimes occur from runaway horses running down people. It is well that everybody should know how to stop a runaway horse, and thus to prevent injuries.

The way to stop a runaway horse is not to run out in front of it and wave your arms, as so many people do. Instead race alongside it, catch hold of the shaft to keep yourself from falling, seize the reins with the other hand and drag the horse's head round toward you, turning the horse until you can bring it up against a wall or house, or otherwise compel it to stop. But, of course, for a boy, with his light weight, this is a very difficult thing to do. The share he would have in such an accident would probably be to look after the people injured by the runaway horse.

Miscellaneous Accidents

One cannot go through the whole list of accidents that might come to your notice, but the point is that a Scout should always remember to keep his head, and think what is the right thing to do at the moment, and be the man to do it, even under the most unexpected circumstances.

Scout J. C. Davel, 1st Bloemfontein Troop (South Africa), saw a little girl entangled in some electric-light wires on the roof of a house. Although he was warned not to go to her, as he might be killed too, he climbed up and got her down. Unfortunately, the child was dead.

Scout Lockley, 1st Atherstone Troop, was at a fair looking on at a roundabout (merry-go-round) which was being worked by electricity from a steam engine. The driver of the engine in leaning over got his clothes caught in the machinery, and was being dragged into it when Lockley sprang on to the engine, and, knowing something of mechanics, pulled over the lever, and stopped it just in time to save the man's life.

There is an example of a fellow Being Prepared, knowing what to do, and doing it without a moment's waiting.

PATROL PRACTICES IN LIFE SAVING

Practise forming a "fence" with staffs, for keeping back a crowd. This can be made a game by dividing the Troop into "crowd" and "Scouts".

Instruct Scouts to know the position of neighborhood fire plugs and hydrants, police points, fire alarms, fire stations, ambulances, hospitals, etc.

Practise tying bowline in rope and dragging insensible person.

Do everything possible to get the Scout taught how to swim. In a town with a swimming bath this should offer no difficulty. In the country, the best chance for Scouts to learn swimming is by arranging summer camp near the sea or a lake or river where it is safe to swim.

Practise the various methods of rescue of a drowning person.

GAMES IN FIRE RESCUE

Prepare a heavy smoke fire in a neighboring room or building, while you are in the club room. Secretly arrange with two or three boys that if an alarm of fire is given they should run about frightened and try to start a panic.

Have the alarm given either by getting someone to rush in and tell you of the fire, or by having some explosive bombs fired. Then let a Patrol or two Patrols tackle the fire under direction of their Patrol Leaders. They should shut windows and doors, and send Scouts into different parts of the building to see if the fire is spreading, and to search for people in need of rescue.

These Scouts should have wet handkerchiefs over their mouths and noses. "Insensible" people (or sack dummies) should be hidden under tables, etc. Scouts rescue them by shouldering them or dragging them out and getting them down to the ground. Use jumping sheet, chute etc.

Other parties lay and connect the hose, or make lines for passing fire buckets.

Another party revive the rescued. Another party form "fence" to help the police and fire brigade by keeping the crowd back.