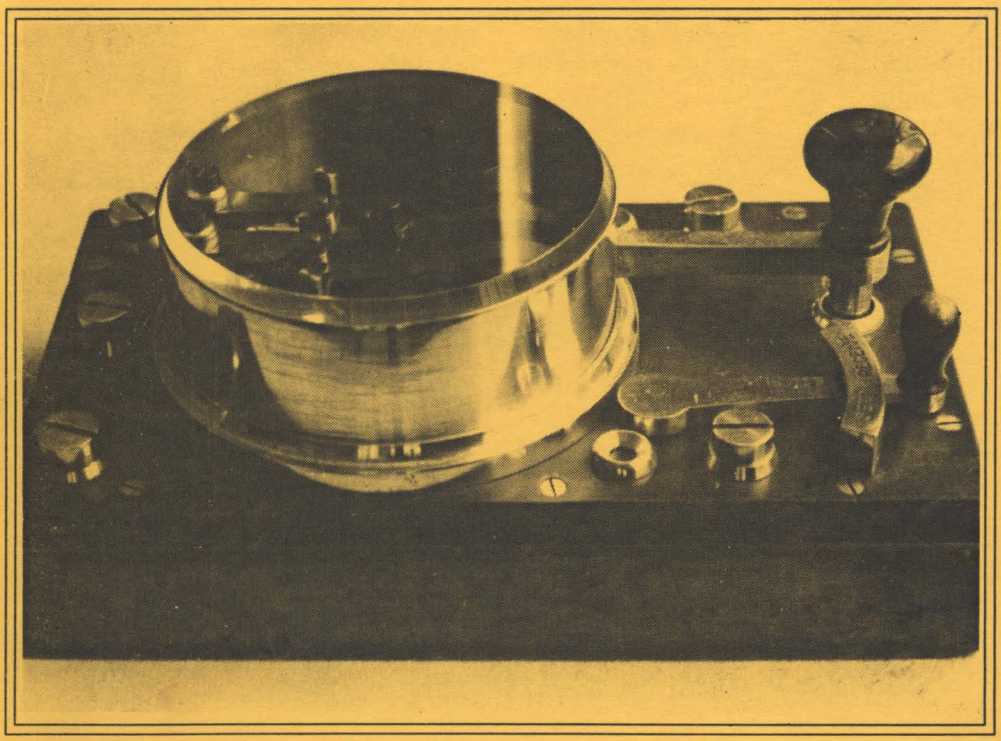
Number 17 – Autumn 1990

Morsum Magnificat



Magazine for Morse Telegraphy

Morsum Magnificat

magazine for morse telegraphy

MORSUM MAGNIFICAT was first published in Holland, in 1983, by the late Rinus Hellemons PA0BFN. Now published in Britain, it aims to provide international coverage of all aspects of Morse telegraphy, past present and future. MORSUM MAGNIFICAT is for all Morse enthusiasts, amateur or professional, active or retired. It brings together material which would otherwise be lost to prosperity, providing an invaluable source of interest, reference and record relating to the traditions and practice of Morse.

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ON OUR FRONT COVER

From the collection of R. E. Barratt G4WJB of 172 Coneygree Road, Stanground, Peterborough PE2 8LQ, GPO Key No. 9401 in immaculate condition with polished brass and glass cover. Any information on the number range of this key type would be welcomed by G4WJB.

Comment

As I forewarned you in MM16, this issue of *Morsum Magnificat*, the first of the 1990/91 subscription year, incorporates some changes of style and layout. Mostly, these are to take advantage of the sort of things which the new computer system does easily and well, rather than those that require a lot of time-consuming and messy 'cut and stick' – the traditional scissors and paste method of laying out pages of a publication. The only exception to this is that the photographs will continue to be processed and pasted in using the traditional methods. When I'm happy that we can achieve the same quality using the computer, we shall make the change.

You've already seen the new title logo and front cover layout. The type-face used in the logo, for those that like to know these things, is called Zapf Chancery, designed by one Hermann Zapf. The same type-face has been used for new headings for our regular columns and features. Comments received after I mentioned that there were to be some changes have ranged from 'leave the cover alone – it's unique and very special!' to 'good, and you should change the title to "Magnificent Morse"'. I don't think we should be quite that drastic, but I hope that you will approve of what has been done.

The only other real change is the gathering together of all the news at the front of the magazine, and there certainly is a lot of news this time! Personally, I feel that it is very encouraging that there is so much going on in the world of Morse, at a time when so many people have written it off as being a dead mode. Tony and I would welcome your views on whether you like to see a good selection of news items. I'm not saying that there will be a similar amount in future issues; it depends entirely on what we get to hear about. We also, as always, welcome your comments on the magazine generally, and your contributions in the form of stories, history or anecdotes.

Geoff G3GSR

Contents

MM Issue No. 17

News

Advance Notice – Morse Memorial Meeting at Maassluis

Make a note in your diary now! *MM* readers are invited to attend the 3rd MM meeting which will be held in Maassluis, Holland, in a pub near the harbour, on Saturday 27 April 1991, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Samuel F. B. Morse. There will be no formal programme, just the opportunity to meet other *MM* and Morse enthusiasts, friends old and new, all wanting to talk about their favourite subject!

A transceiver will be installed to provide a hot-line for those attending to exchange greetings with others celebrating the same event in the UK, USA, and elsewhere. Readers from outside Holland, particularly the UK, will be especially welcome (Maassluis is located near Rotterdam, which is just ten minutes by train from the Hook of Holland). For more information please contact **Dick Kraayveld PA3ALM, Merellaan 8, 3145 XE Maassluis, Holland. Tel: 01899-18766**

European CW Association

As from 1 September 1990, the new chairman of EUCW is Oscar Verbanck ON5ME, who is President of the Super High Speed Club. The retiring chairman is Tony Smith G4FAI, nominee of the G-QRP Club, who has held office since January 1988.

EUCW is an association of European independent amateur radio clubs dedicated to supporting, encouraging, and defending amateur radio CW activity. Through the Association, individual clubs exchange ideas and information, and arrange activities of benefit to all amateur CW operators on an international basis.

EUCW's Fraternising CW Party will be held on November 17 – 18 and is open to all amateur CW operators whether members of EUCW clubs or not. Full details are given on the next page.

A new EUCW Award bearing a map of Europe 'at the time of Samuel F.B. Morse' is in preparation and will be launched on 27 April 1991 as part of EUCW's contribution to the Morse bi-centennial celebrations.

Member clubs of EUCW are AGCW-DL (Germany); Benelux QRP; BTC (Belgium); FISTS; FOC; G-QRP; HCC (Spain); HSC (High Speed Club); INORC (Italy); SCAG (Scandinavia); SHSC (Super High Speed Club); UFT (France); and VHSC (Very High Speed Club). The combined membership of all EUCW clubs is in excess of 10 000.

European CW Association - Fraternising CW Party 1990

Open to all amateur radio and SWL stations in Europe. All contacts 2 x CW. Stations may be worked (SWLs logged) once on each band on each day.

Dates: 17th and 18th November, 1990.

Frequencies: 3520–3550 (80m), 7010–7030 (40m), 14 020–14 050kHz (20m)

Schedule: Nov 17 1500-1700 UTC, 40m and 20m.
1800-2000 UTC, 40m and 80m.
Nov 18 0700-0900 UTC, 40m and 80m.
1000-1200 UTC, 40m and 20m.

Call: CQ EUCW – Please keep to the times and frequencies shown to allow others QRM-free QSOs.

Classes: A – Licensed members of EUCW organisations, using more than 10W input or 5W output.
B – Licensed members of EUCW organisations, using QRP (less than above).
C – Other licensed amateurs, using any power.
D – Short-wave listeners.

Exchanges: Class A – RST/QTH/Name/Club/Membership number.
Class B – Same as class A.
Class C – RST/QTH/Name/NM (NM = 'not a member').
Class D – To claim points, the exchanges of both stations in QSO must be logged.

(EUCW member organisations are: AGCW-DL, BQRP (Benelux QRP), BTC, FISTS, FOC, G-QRP, HCC, HSC, INORC, SCAG, SHSC, UFT, and VHSC)

Scoring: Class A, B, C – 1 point with own country, 3 points with other countries.
Class D – 3 points for each complete logged QSO.

Multipliers: 1 for each EUCW member organisation worked or logged per day and band, for all classes.

Logs: Log must show Date, UTC, Band, Callsign, Information sent, Information received, Points claimed for each contact. A Summary Sheet should show Name, Address, Own call, Score, and Details of rig used, including power used. Signature.

Logs should be sent, not later than 19 December 1990, to the Contest Manager: Guenther Nierbauer DJ2XP, Illingerstr 74, D-6682 Ottweiler, W. Germany.

Awards: Certificates will be awarded to the first 3 stations in each class.

SUPPORT EUCW – SUPPORT CW!

East to West EU QRP

The OK QRP Group, in association with the G-QRP Club, are organising this event, from 1600 UTC, Friday September 28 to 2359 UTC, Sunday September 30. The weekend is designed 'to bring together QRP operators throughout Europe and some adjacent areas of Asia, hopefully strengthening the bonds between QRP operators and providing new data on the operation of QRP circuit paths.' Writing in *SPRAT*, journal of the G-QRP Club, Gus Taylor G8PG reports that publicity in eastern Europe for the event has been massive, with the British club featuring in the USSR magazine *Radio* for the first time.

Europe will be divided into two areas. Area A will be HA, LZ, OK, TA (including Asia), SV, all USSR republics including Asia, YO and YU. Area B will be all other European countries as included in the DXCC list.

Only CW contacts between the two Areas will count, maximum 5W output, on frequencies 28.060, 21.060, 14.060, 7.030, and 3.560MHz, all ±10kHz. Minimum exchange RST, power output in watts, and name of sending operator. Separate logs for each band should show date, time, RST sent, and RST, power and name received. A cover sheet should show name, call and address of entrant; power, equipment and antennas used; total contacts made and number of DXCC countries contacted in the other Area. Any special details such as outstanding contacts may be mentioned.

Send logs to **OK QRP Group, U1 Baterie 1, 16200 PRAHA 6, Czechoslovakia**, within 30 days. Various Certificates of Merit will be awarded, including three to stations in each Area considered to have made contacts of outstanding merit taking into account power, distance and frequency. Additionally, a G4ZPY paddle key, donated by Gordon Crowhurst G4ZPY, will be awarded to the highest UK scorer in the event.

High Speed Telegraphy Championships

A report from the HST Working Group Co-ordinator, Y. Starostin UV3AED, was presented to the recent IARU Region 1 Conference in Spain. As this was only a beginning, the Championships held at Hannover in November 1989 were considered by members of the Working Group to be generally satisfactory, with national teams from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the USSR, and individuals from Italy, Germany, France and Holland taking part. UV3AED comments that due to the inexperience of both himself and the organising society (DARC) the formal side of the event could have been better arranged but 'the sports level of the championships was high'.

In the light of experience gained, the Working Group met after the championships to review the rules for future events. The Group recommends

that World championships shall take place every two years with Regional championships taking place in the intervening years.

On this basis the next IARU Region 1 event is due to be held next year and the Chairman has already approached various national societies asking if one of them will be prepared to act as organising society for 1991. There is no information at this time concerning the possibility of the proposed World championships, or of championships organised by the other IARU Regions.

HOT-Party

The AGCW-DL cordially invites you to a HOT-Party (Home-brew and Oldtime Equipment Party) for equipment either home-brew or more than 25 years old. A home-brew or old-time TX or RX may be complemented by a modern commercial RX or TX.

Date: 3rd Sunday in November (18 Nov. 90, *17 Nov. 91*)
Time/QRG: 1300 – 1500 UTC: 7010 – 7040kHz
1500 – 1700 UTC: 3510 – 3560kHz
Mode: CW; PA input below 100 watts
Call: 'CQ HOT'
Class A: TX and RX home-brew or older than 25 years
Class B: TX or RX home-brew or older than 25 years
Class C: QRP TX below 10 watts input or 5 watts output, home-brew or older than 25 years
Control: e.g. 579001/A (starting 001 on both bands)
Scoring: Class A with A, A with C, C with C = 3 points
Class B with A, B with C = 2 points
Class B with B = 1 point
Logs: must include a short description of home-brew or old-time equipment. Send not later than 15 December 1990 to **Dr H. Weber DJ7ST, Schlesierweg 13, D-3320 Salzgitter 1, Federal Republic of Germany.**

Suspended

The Slow Morse Service of the Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society has been suspended indefinitely.

Information from Mercury, *Journal of the RSARS, July 1990.*

SU on CW

Ahmed Hassan SU1AH will be active on CW in the next two months, on Saturdays after 1800Z on 20 metres.

From Egyptian Echos, *Newsletter of the Egypt Amateur Radio Society.*

Death of Jan Noordegraaf

I regret to report that Jan Noordegraaf died in July, at the age of 62, after a long illness. He was a well known author in his own country and he was a strong supporter of, and contributor to, the Dutch edition of *MM*. When *DMM* ceased publication, he was happy to transfer his allegiance to the English edition although he was already ill at that time. Several of his fine contributions have already appeared in *EMM*. There are several more on file which we still hope to publish. *TS*

MTC Morse Anniversary Celebrations

The Morse Telegraph Club, which celebrates Samuel F.B. Morse's birthday every year with landline communications and Chapter social functions across the USA and Canada, hopes to co-ordinate its celebrations for the 200th anniversary with amateurs in other countries via on-the-air CW activities.

There will be more information in the next issue of *MM*. In the meantime, anyone interested in setting up special stations to celebrate the anniversary please register their interest or intentions with Tony Smith. SAE/IRC appreciated.

US Memorabilia Catalogues

A list of books of cable and radio tariffs and rules for sale is available from **Charles B. Goodman, 636 W. Grant Avenue, Charleston, IL 61920, USA**. Send 2 IRCs. Also Catalogues of Railroadiana and Telegraph Instruments at US $1.00 each plus postage.

Dr Joseph H. Jacobs, 60 Seaview Terrace, Northport, NY 11768, USA, publishes an 8-page illustrated list of mostly J. H. Bunnell memorabilia, parts and equipment for sale. Send 2 IRCs for a copy.

New Exhibit at Smithsonian

A dazzling new exhibit at Washington, DC's Smithsonian Institution, which opened May 16, traces the information revolution from Samuel F.B. Morse's first primitive telegraph to the modern day computer.

We visited the exhibit ... We saw Samuel Morse's earliest 1835 telegraph and the paper tape bearing the first long-distance telegraph message in 1844 ... We even tapped out CQD (Come Quick Danger) and SOS in both spark and CW in a re-creation of the *Titanic*'s radio room ...

The Smithsonian's ham station, NN3SI (the only NN ham prefix ever authorised) was not in operation, but was due to be re-installed ...

Condensed from W5YI REPORT, *June 1 and July 15, 1990.*

VF to the Rescue – Postscript

I think I should clarify or enlarge on one or two points in my story (MM14, p.40). Regarding RUV (Rikisutvarpid), it was only a few years ago that this station started transmitting round the clock. Back in 1950 they closed down around midnight, apart from sending weather reports at 0100 to 0115Z. Therefore they didn't fire up just because of the RVC crash but they did extend their nightly transmission.

Regarding the ice hump Bardarbunga, in the midst of glacier Vatnajokull. The reason this area wasn't searched was the constantly inclement weather. Those who have fondled the Gibson Girl need no telling that this was an emergency transmitter with a built-in hand-cranked generator. Finally, the ski-plane that got stuck. Loftleidir (Icelandic Airlines) bought the plane where it was and sent a party to dig it up (literally!) and pull it off the glacier. Its last known whereabouts was in a scrap-yard in the Philippines.

Reynir H. Stefansson

NZART Discusses Morse Test

The NZART annual Conference held on 2 June 1990 had two conflicting proposals (remits) before it. The Wellington VHF Group Branch suggested that NZART should develop a policy on the desirability or otherwise of a Morse code test being required to qualify for a licence to operate on frequencies below 30MHz. The Branch felt that there was need to develop a definitive policy on the subject as part of the preparation for the next World Administrative Radio Conference, and that the IARU and the NZ Radio Frequency Service should be advised what that policy is. A discussion paper circulated around the world, via packet radio, setting out in detail why the branch felt that 'Morse code testing continues to be an ineffective and obsolescent part of examining candidates for operating amateur stations on frequencies below 30 MHz.'

By contrast, the Wanganui Branch asked the Conference to direct the Council of NZART to take all appropriate steps to ensure that the present operating and technical standards pertaining to the amateur service, including the use of the CW mode, are maintained. The Branch's view was that in the light of the ever-increasing complexity of modern communications it would be well to adhere to the basic tenets of amateur radio and continue to foster and promote the the ability to communicate using CW.

At the conference the Wellington branch remit was 'carried by voices' (as opposed to a show of hands or a vote count), and the Wanganui branch remit was 'lost by voices'. *MM* is now attempting to clarify what this means in terms of NZART policy relating to the international regulations.

NZ Novice Code Test Speed Option

'The NZART (New Zealand's national amateur radio society) has completely taken over the running of the Amateur theory examination. The first exam has been held and was favourably received. We don't run the Morse test yet but that will almost certainly follow in due course.

'After representations, the RFS (Radio Frequency Service) has agreed to conduct our Novice code test at 6wpm (as before) but with the option of receiving it as 12wpm characters with increased spacing.

'We think this is a big step forward which will aid those going for the Novice test considerably. Many found that listening to "real, correctly spaced" 6wpm code was a painful business, and gave no help in studying for 12wpm (our full licence speed).

'We hope this option will encourage more "no-code" licensees to take the Novice test, use CW on the air, and proceed to the full licence faster. Our experimental evidence is that it is much quicker to acquire the code in this manner.'

Contributed by Gary Bold ZL1AN.

New Australian CW Trophy

As a result of a submission by a group of CW enthusiasts in Australia and New Zealand, the Wireless Institute of Australia is to award an annual 'Clive Burns Memorial Trophy' to the highest scorer in the CW section of the annual VK Novice contest.

The late Clive Burns VK3CQL, who died in 1987, gave unstintingly of his time and expertise over many years to encourage newcomers into amateur radio, and particularly promoted interest in high quality CW operation. In 1983 he established the daily 'Earbashers' net on 80 metres through which he, and a number of others, helped listeners and participants improve their CW skills or upgrade their qualifications.

Beginning this year, the trophy, an engraved wall plaque, has been established as a memorial to him and, in continuation of his years of effort, as an encouragement to the promulgation of CW activity in amateur radio in Australia.

Condensed from Amateur Radio, *journal of the WIA, May 1990.*

Slow Morse

The Radio Society of Kenya transmits slow Morse at 12–15wpm on 7.075MHz every Monday at 1600GMT. The transmissions are made by 5Z4FN, with announcements on LSB both before and afterwards. Any DX signal reports to 5Z4FN, PO Box 45681, Nairobi, Kenya would be appreciated. ✚

REFLECTIONS from Uncle Bas – 12

Responsibilities

by Bastian van Es PA0RTW

A beautiful summer evening, virtually no wind and the sea as smooth as a mirror. We had left the port of Corpus Christi in Texas a few hours earlier and, via inland waterways, had reached the open sea in the Gulf of Mexico.

On the bridge, as usual, apart from the captain, were a few mates, the quartermaster and the American pilot. There were no problems in getting the ship safely through the narrow waterways, past devious sandbanks. Assuming the electronic equipment such as radar, loudhailer, depth-recorder and gyro-compass to be performing nicely, the presence of the radio officer can be more of a nuisance than a help when navigating in tricky waters. In other words, keep out of the way or at least try not to be conspicuous.

Be alert and stand by, however, because in the event of failure of this equipment you are the direct and absolute cause of the malfunction. Captains are in the habit of making that perfectly clear in the presence of a dozen witnesses. That some of it was bought secondhand at an auction makes no difference whatsoever and just to mention this fact puts the radio operator in peril of his life, in a manner of speaking.

Before we reached the sea I copied some weather reports for the Gulf and the Caribbean but considering the beautiful conditions at the time nobody really wanted to know. There was some hurricane activity near Puerto Rico but that was more than a thousand miles away so there was no reason to panic.

Everything Under Control

After the pilot left and we were on course for the west point of Cuba everything was still under control. As usual I was monitoring the distress frequency, 500kHz, and as was customary after leaving port I signalled

KLC, Galveston Radio, that we had left Corpus Christi and were bound for Miragoane, Haiti.

We had a weekly service between the bauxite mines of Haiti and the smelting factories in Corpus Christi. Because these trips had been going on for years the operators of KLC hardly woke up when we passed by on the horizon. Having copied several traffic lists from American and European coast stations and, as expected, hearing no mention of our callsign I drowsed away in the chair by the operating table.

Curious Swell

Within a few minutes of reaching the Gulf the movement of the ship, which had been hardly noticeable, increased uncomfortably. Although there was no wind the sea had a curious swell and a very peculiar surface. It must be said that a self-discharging bauxite carrier, especially without cargo, is very unstable. Even in quiet waters it rocks like a pendulum of a grandfather clock.

One gets used to this, although when the conditions described occur on a beautiful summer's day one does become slightly uneasy in the stomach. I couldn't help thinking about the Norwegian bulk-carrier which, after leaving Narvik, fell silent and was never heard of again. It had capsized and all her crew were drowned with her.

The captain, also noticing the movement of the ship, wanted to inform the owners of the situation by radiotelephone, and tell them he intended to change course slightly and reduce speed. The radiotelephone equipment was remotely controlled from the bridge but the cabinet was fixed to the deck right behind my seat in the radio cabin. Apart from cleaning it once in a while, I had nothing to do with its operation or adjustments.

A Small Problem

It had one little problem however. A dynamotor converted the ship's voltage to the required supply for the transceiver, and when this was switched on from the bridge a terrible squeal was emitted from the dynamotor, subsiding after the tubes warmed up. The effect of this can be imagined, when one is dozing away in a perfectly quiet radio shack and this tremendous noise blows you out of your chair.

While the captain had his radio contact with the owners, the ship's movement became increasingly fierce. Drawers fell out of cabinets, pens and pencils fell off my table, doors banged, it was a somewhat chaotic

situation. Most of the equipment and furniture was fixed to the deck and the bulkheads so one can hardly speak of disaster.

However, I had forgotten to take care of the heavy typewriter which I thought was quite safe on its rubber mat on the operating table. After an enormous roll of the ship, it slid across and struck the radio-telephone transmitter, crushing part of the front panel while the

... MURDER IN HIS EYES...

carriage-return lever of the machine went right through the Anode Current Meter, short-circuiting the High Voltage. An enormous flame and within seconds the entire transceiver was on fire.

Captain's Fury

In most radio cabins there is no fire extinguisher, so in those first few seconds I was at a loss what to do. In the meantime the captain became extremely angry when all that came from his telephone horn were a few growling noises. Normally a very wise and indulgent person, he was capable of executing the culprit on the spot when things did not go to his liking.

He stormed into the radio cabin with curses on his lips and murder in his eyes. The sight of the fire stopped him in his tracks however and his angry curses were forgotten for the time being.

Once again it was shown that a real captain is always in command. He evaluated the situation immediately, ordered the boatswain to fetch fire extinguishers, and in no time the situation was under control.

For the rest of the trip we had to do without radiotelephony and even up to my last day on that ship the radio cabin smelt of burnt transformers and dynamotors. This was strange really because it was a very small transmitter. ✚

EUCW Straight Key Day 1990

A beginner's view

This was no ordinary day for me. I started practising at the end of May, using a nice 'pump' from Kent Keys, so as to be ready for June 23. In retrospect, it seems I underestimated the problem when I read in the advance publicity, 'use the hand key for relaxed QSOs'!

I have never perspired so much as during this SKD. The beginning was OK, everyone is fresh in the morning. My first contact with FB1MPA was not too bad but I quickly got tired and excited at the same time. I don't think I was the only one; mistakes and silences were quite revealing, and by the evening not many were still pumping.

An exception was John, G0KCA, who was consistently good all day long. He was using 'my' Kent brass pump and I now know what I might achieve ... after some years of practice!

Many used old keys and, as I said to G0DRT, old keys are like old wines. Peter was using a 50 year old RAF key and his fist was pure joy to copy. F1JDG/P was also using an aircraft type SARAM heavy key, but he could switch to a light Japanese key for QRQ.

I realise now that working a straight key is more than just a sport. It is like 'Haute École', you need to have a natural sense of balance and rhythm and be able to achieve it without expending too much energy and effort in order to last the day with consistent and regular sending. It was quite revealing to hear some unexpected speeding-up at the end of some words!

I was mainly working on 7 and 14MHz and most stations I heard were 'G' stations which tells us something, I guess, about the culture and origins of the 'G' amateur community.

Here in France, with my friends in UFT, we'll try to catch up. See you next year!

Dominique Bourcart FD1OEB

Q and Z Codes

by Gerald Stancey G3MCK

Reading the *MM Q/Z Codebook* was a real eye-opener. One's imagination could run riot thinking about the circumstances under which some of the more unusual codes would be used. It also clearly illustrated that as a body the amateur fraternity makes very poor use of these codes. For example, even with such a common code, the majority of amateurs send 'my QTH is ...', which strictly means 'my my location is is'. Or does it? One list of Q-codes would show that it should be read as 'my my latitude and longitude are is'!

This brings me to the second point, which is the lack of standardisation in the meaning of the codes. This is especially the case with the neglected Z-codes. These contain some very useful phrases which do not appear in the Q-codes.

I have two suggestions:

1. We make more use of these codes and use them correctly.
2. We adopt the meanings already published by the RSGB and ARRL. The reason being that these have already received wide publicity in the amateur world.

Specific examples of useful Z-codes from the above sources are:

ZAN I am receiving nothing.
ZAP Please acknowledge.
ZCL Send your call-sign intelligibly(!!!)
ZGS Your signals are getting stronger.
ZGW Your signals are getting weaker.

(Please note that there are no more copies of the MM Q/Z Codebook *available at present, though depending upon demand, we may have a further supply printed – Ed.)*

Army Radio-Telegrapher?

by Bill Pierpont N0HFF

My brother-in-law has been a skilled violinist from childhood. He played in, and later directed orchestras, and finally graduated from our municipal university with a degree in music and psychology. Because his parents had moved out of town he lived with me during his last year of college. During that time he says we practised Morse code together to some extent, with the idea that he could qualify for a first ham ticket and I would get relicensed.

But this was not to be. WWII arrived, and he was drafted into the US Army. After basic training he was shipped to North Africa, then shortly afterwards assigned to special training as radio operator. There, together with a half-dozen others sitting in a tent in a cork forest in Tunisia, he studied Morse code by the method of contrasting letters (A – N, F – L, etc.). After two or three weeks – less than half way through the course – he needed surgery. Pulled out of training, he was sent from one hospital to another across North Africa until a surgeon with the requisite skill was found. Recovery was slow, and when he finally rejoined his battalion radio training was almost over, and the outfit had to move into southern Europe. They asked him if he could do ten words a minute in code. His answer: 'Well, I probably could, but it would have to be pretty good code.' Apparently it wasn't good enough, so they put him to driving trucks and Jeeps in a tank battalion.

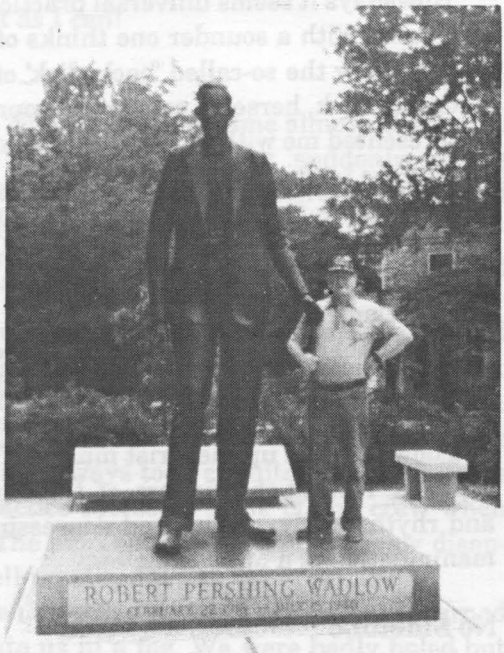
Between periods of driving he would often visit radio operations because he enjoyed reading out the messages as best he could. Through this he came to know most of the activities of his battalion.

On the occasion of interest to us, the battalion was under orders to get everything loaded up and ready to advance. While waiting to carry out his duties he was sitting in the radio truck listening to their particular section. Although it was a very short message, the regular operators failed to get it and were about to request a repeat. But he had been listening, understood it perfectly, and felt a concern that if the operators asked for a

repeat headquarters would be irritated and cast a shadow on the operators' skills. So he said: 'Don't bother, they said "Unpack and stay there".' As you can imagine, the regular operators were more than a little reluctant to order the battalion to stay there on his say-so. Yet he did convince them that he had correctly read the message, and that it did say 'Unpack and stay there'. It was soon obvious that he had been right.

This story came out one day while he was visiting us and I had a regular schedule in Morse with my brother. I was surprised to discover that he had been following a good bit of it quite well: I didn't even realise he knew the code. I had completely forgotten we had ever practised it together – strange, since my interest in methods of learning the code has always been intense, and just prior to that time I had carefully examined the Candler system. Our practice together must have been minimal, and his military training had been so short, and without any systematic follow-up. It impressed me deeply that after over forty years of absolute non-use, he still knew the code. So little training, too. That makes me stop and think. Did his musical background make up for a lack of training? ✚

The World's Fastest and Tallest



Harry A. Turner W9YZE, World Hand Key Speed Champion, at 35wpm (see MM12, p.24), alongside the statue of Robert Pershing Wadlow, the world's tallest man at 8ft 11.1in (272cm). Robert Wadlow died 50 years ago in July 1940.

Both men are mentioned in *The Guinness Book of Records* and both hail from Alton, Illinois. Harry Turner is still a keen telegrapher and enjoys reading *MM*. ✚

I Like the Sound of Morse

by Denis A. Whitbread G4VGS

As a schoolboy my interest in radio was aroused first by the construction of a crystal set and then, with help from my schoolmaster and others by the building of a three-valve broadcast receiver. From this start my interest progressed until as a young man of 17 years the desire to become a licensed radio amateur led me to learn Morse. My first instructor was an ex-Territorial Army Royal Corps of Signals man who produced a GPO brass sounder on which to give me practice. He operated the armature by hand to produce the long-remembered clicks.

Nowadays it seems universal practice to think of Morse symbols as dits and dahs. With a sounder one thinks of 'iddies' and 'umpties' so as not to be misled by the so-called 'back click' of the armature. A lady Post Office Counter Clerk, herself a competent sounder operator, hearing of my interest presented me with a brass and mahogany Post Office Morse key which I still have to this day.

To further my training, I joined the 54th Divisional Signals of the Territorial Army and soon passed my 'Group E' trade test at 8 words per minute, sent and received on the buzzer circuit of a Field Telephone D Mk III. Came the war and the unit was embodied in the war-time army.

With others, I was sent to Hounslow Barracks to receive intensive training in Wireless Telegraphy. I recall the morning exercise where each would grasp his limp right wrist in the left hand and flap the right hand up and down to tone up the wrist muscles. This would be followed by sending practice, resting the fingers of the right hand on the edge of a table and rhythmically raising and depressing the right wrist to emulate the manipulation of a Morse key.

No Sidetone

In fact I did not touch a key until my training was complete. Having obtained my 'Operator, Wireless and Line, BIII', I was posted to a W/T

station within the barracks. I soon became accustomed to the 'Key W/T 8 Amp MkII'. Sidetone was not used, sending being monitored by the key clicks. Indeed, among us operators it was a matter of pride not to require sidetone.

Soon afterwards I was posted to a W/T station in Nelson Barracks, Norwich. The NCO in charge of the station was Corporal Syd Dawes, a time-served Royal Corps of Signals man recalled from reserve. Each day he sat at the Morse key and without switching on the W/T would send a whole page from the newspaper, complete with punctuation, in beautiful 'square' Morse. He never tried to persuade me or the other three operators to practice, but without any compulsion we began to take down his sending, and in turn practised on the key.

Soon we could all comfortably read and send at better than 20wpm. Since then I have always tried to emulate the beautiful machine-like sending of Syd Dawes. 'Individual' styles have never appealed to me; I dislike the slurred symbols, variable dash lengths and bouncy 4s, 6s, Bs and Vs beloved by some old timers. By no means do I set myself up as an example, I merely mention the goal I set for myself but which I have never satisfactorily achieved. There is one exception to my own rule; in sending $\overline{\text{VA}}$ I like to send EEETET as fast as I can!

Day Dreaming

The messages we sent were in cipher. Morse became almost automatic. Often I would day-dream while sending or receiving, suddenly coming down to earth and having to ask the distant operator where I had reached in the message; or realising that the sending had stopped, that a completed message was in front of me, and that the other operator was waiting for an 'R'.

Eventually with Syd Dawes, now a Sergeant, and others, I was posted to 63 Heavy W/T Section and despatched to PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq). We travelled out on the *Windsor Castle*, luxurious by troopship standards. Syd Dawes and I were asked to train some of the crew in Morse. One evening in mid-Atlantic (troopships always took circuitous routes!) I was in the dining saloon sending practice Morse to some of the crew when there was a tremendous crash. The ship shuddered and the crew disappeared like magic to carry out well-practised drills.

At first we thought we had been attacked by a submarine but it turned out that the *Orion* had veered into us in a fog. We were badly holed but limped to Freetown where temporary repairs were carried out enabling us

to complete our voyage to Bombay, where we joined the *Lancashire* for the trip to the Gulf.

Sounders Again

In Paiforce I once more came across sounders. They were of a type called 'Duburne' (that may not be the precise spelling). Each was in the form of a mahogany box some 6 inches square by 3 inches deep. The armature was a black steel tube about ½ inch in diameter and 4 inches long, resembling a piece of miniature electric-cable conduit, pivoted horizontally on top of the box. One end was located between two adjustable set-screw stops and was biased to one side by a light adjustable coil spring at the other end. The armature was pulled from the biased position by the action of an electro-magnetic coil positioned close to the armature.

This instrument was very sensitive; by adjusting the gap between the stops and the armature, and between the armature and the coil, and with very light spring tension, it would operate well on remarkably low line current. There was a metal cover that the operators propped up under one of the set-screws and this served to amplify the clicks. The sound was very 'tinny' but with practice pleasant to read.

Pie Money

These sounders were operated almost exclusively by Indian P & T operators enrolled in the army as senior NCOs for the sole purpose of operating. They performed no other military duties. As operators they were remarkable. In their civilian occupations they had to send or receive at least 400 telegrams a day to qualify for 'Pie money'. A Pie was about 1/16 of an Anna, about ⅛ of an old penny. They received one Pie for each message over 400 in a day. As a result of this incentive all seemed to have contracted 'operators' cramp', a combination of writers' and Morse senders' cramp which knotted up the hand as with arthritis.

It was permanent and incurable. They had all learned to send with the other hand until this too succumbed to the cramp. From then on they just put up with the quite painful affliction, changing with amazing skill from hand to hand when sending or receiving. Not surprisingly, their handwriting was poor and their Morse at times odd.

Break ($\overline{BT}$) was an umpty, a veritable shower of iddies and an umpty. A 6 was an umpty and any number of iddies more than four; a 4 the other way round. There were other idiosyncrasies that I learned but have since forgotten. Nevertheless, they were fine operators and could shift traffic

with speed and accuracy, often under 'low' line conditions when the beat was scarcely audible.

Listening to the beat of these sounders I soon got used to them and would sometimes take or send a message for the fun of it, much to the delight of the P & T operators who would do all they could to help and encourage me. One thing I remember. You never 'called' a distant station; you 'rolled' it, or were 'rolled' by it.

The war over, I rejoined the Post Office on the administrative side with no involvement in the technical side of the business. However, I retained an interest in radio, constructing my own radiogram, a 6in screen TV from ex-RAF radar equipment, two oscilloscopes and various items of test gear.

Straight to the 'A' Licence

On retirement from the Post Office I obtained a Technician's job at the local comprehensive school. With the coming of CB many of the children obtained sets. I bought one and had great fun working, mostly with the youngsters. CB re-awakened my desire to become a licensed amateur. In 1983 I passed the RAE and the Morse test and went straight for an 'A' Licence. My Morse test was not without trauma however. Receiving was no problem but lack of practice and a touch of arthritis made my sending poor.

On test I stumbled, nerves took over, and I made a monumental hash of the sending. There was no way the examiner could give me a 'Pass'. I badgered the poor man, for I knew that normally I was more than competent, but quite rightly he was adamant. However, I persevered with my practice and eventually passed the test, so it all came right in the end.

It was not until I was in my sixties that I achieved my boyhood ambition to become a licensed radio amateur. Now I use little other than CW on the HF bands although I do use fone on 2m and 70cm. I have not yet regained the sending skill I was once so proud of and I fear I never shall. I use an electronic keyer and an iambic paddle but faultless manipulation eludes me.

Yet I still get a great thrill hearing those magic sounds in the headphones conveying intelligence to and from the four corners of the world. To me, wireless telegraphy sent manually and received and decoded in the brain is a delight, a joy which I know is shared by many others, some very much better than me, who show me their patience, and others perhaps not so accomplished to whom I can show my patience.

Long live wireless telegraphy, and thank you Professor Morse! ✚

In Praise of Simplicity

by 'Rich' PY3DK

We are accustomed to think linear. We instinctively associate a duplication of loudness with a duplication of power. But the human ear is exponential or logarithmic.

In terms of frequency, a duplication corresponds to one octave. Thus 50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1600, 3200, 6400 and 12 800Hz represent 8 octaves. There is always one octave between any two of the above numbers, although this is more of interest to a musician than a radio amateur.

The human ear, however, is exponential to the intensity of sound. If this has powers of 1, 10, 100, 1000, 10 000, etc., the auditive perception is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.

The S-meter takes this into account and is calibrated exponentially. Each S-point needs a duplication of the voltage which enters our receiver through the antenna. If, say, 1 microvolt causes a deflection of S1, we need 2 microvolts for a deflection of S2, 4 for S3, 8 for S4, 16 for S5, 32 for S6, 64 for S7, 128 for S8 and 256 for S9.

According to Ohm's law, however, a duplication of voltage corresponds to a quadruplication of power. Thus if a station with 1000W output causes our S-meter to indicate S8 we would have:

1000W for S8	16W for S5
250W for S7	4W for S4
63W for S6	1W for S3

So is there really an advantage in quadruplicating our power to gain one S-point on the other side, barely perceptible to the ear? We know that CW is the most efficient mode of communication relative to the cost and simplicity of the equipment involved. Or to put it another way, that CW has the highest efficiency/cost or highest efficiency/simplicity ratio, apart

from occupying only about 1/20th of the bandwidth that SSB does. So why use a linear amplifier to gain 2 S-points at most without the corresponding benefit in reception that a directional antenna would give at lower cost?

I work with a maximum output of 80W and often go down to 10W and even 1W when conditions are good. You would be surprised how little difference it makes to the report from the other side. I live in an area of very low field intensity of TV signals, the nearest TV stations being 100km distant, and I have never had any complaint about TVI.

If you have money to spare, invest in the antenna. Put up a simple beam, a 2-element Yagi or quad instead of the ground plane or dipole. Do not buy a shiny new transceiver because it has 50 knobs instead of the 10, or has 144 memories instead of the 4 (or none) that your present rig has. Don't get a linear either which draws 1 or 2kW and heats up your shack.

Small and simple is beautiful! Or, as Einstein once said: 'Everything should be as simple as it can be, but not simpler'. ✚

PSE QRS

Heard sometime ago, when the first G4s came on the air. This G4A.. was pedantically thumping out CQs at 12wpm. I was tempted to reply but then, right on frequency, came some bright tulip tuning-up. There was a brief burst of data followed by a few seconds silence. Then a further tune-up and more data.

This went on all the time the G4 was calling CQ and when he finally got round to '+K' there was another tentative burst of data. 'QRZ' says the G4..., 'PSE QRS' ...

I hadn't the heart to tell him that RTTY stations rarely slow down!!

Geo Longden G3ZQS, in FISTS Newsletter.

Know Any Good Sources?

From time to time someone writes in to ask if there are still any surplus stores, junk or antique shops about, where surplus equipment, old keys, and other telegraphic items, etc., can be obtained. If you know of such a source in your locality (UK or elsewhere), please send details to *MM*. This information would be of interest to many readers, particularly if they happen to be visiting your area and can use some of their time visiting your local 'Aladdin's Cave'!

Frederick George Creed – Inventor Extraordinary

by Fred Barnes G4LDE

In the history of telecommunications the names of Morse, Cooke and Wheatstone come readily to mind, but that of Frederick George Creed is rarely mentioned although the Creed High Speed Automatic Printing Telegraph System revolutionised newspaper communications in the early twentieth century. His inventive genius goes unsung.

He was born on 6 October 1871 in Mill Village, Nova Scotia near the fishing port of Canso, where the transatlantic cable lines terminated. Leaving school at the age of 14 he began his career as a check boy for the Western Union Telegraph Company at Canso and taught himself telegraphy. Three years later he became a telegraph operator with the Central and South American Telegraph Cable Company in Peru and later at their office in Iquique, Chile.

This was the age of hand-operated Morse circuits and Wheatstone automatic telegraphy, which necessitated the manual punching of the Morse 'Stick' perforator to make the coded message on punched tape. It was a boring and laborious job and Creed was consumed with the idea of finding an easier and quicker way to achieve this. With vague drawings and a machine that looked something like a typewriter, Creed tried to get the Cable company interested but to no avail.

To Glasgow

In the Spring of 1897, he sailed for Britain, getting a job in Glasgow as an operator with the *Glasgow Herald* newspaper where he sought the advice of Lord Kelvin, the owner, about his idea for a keyboard perforator to speed up operations. Lord Kelvin thought there was nothing in the idea and dismissed it, even though Creed pointed out that events abroad reported in the *Herald* were a week old – and probably came by Reuter's pigeons!

Creed was undaunted. With his first week's wages he bought an old Barlock typewriter for fifteen shillings and rented a garden shed for a

further five shillings, working for the next year to develop his prototype. Lord Kelvin then saw the possibilities and offered him technical facilities to complete his work. In 1904 Creed had a room at the top of 156 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, and the following year had a business address which read 'Creed – Makers of Telegraphic Equipment'. This, at the time, might have appeared as wishful thinking, but in 1906 Creed burst into the *Herald* with a strange contraption based on a typewriter keyboard crying 'I've done it! And it works!'

Remarkable Machine

This machine, developed in his garden shed, was the Morse Keyboard Tape Perforator, operated by compressed air, which eliminated that 'stick' perforation job. The *Glasgow Herald* reported: 'Through the first decade of the century there was little change in the methods of telegraphy – the tape being prepared by stick punches, fed to the line at high speed, and the resulting Wheatstone tapes were written up by hand at the Glasgow end. From now on, the low bar punching tape for Wheatstone working will be much lightened by the use of the Creed perforator, a remarkable machine which does three times the work of an ordinary stick puncher. The perforators are being constructed by Mr James White, well-known electrician, for the inventor, Mr F.G. Creed.'

Creed was on his way. He now concentrated on the receiving end of the Wheatstone system which produced the Morse code by a pen and ink device on a paper tape which had to be decoded by a skilled operator. He gathered a small team of mechanics around him and produced two further machines, the receiving reperforator, which produced Morse punched tape from the incoming signals, and the Morse tape printer which transcribed the tape into plain language. Thus was born the 'Creed High Speed Automatic Printing Telegraph System'. The *Glasgow Herald* became the first of a long line of newspapers to adopt this system.

Creed, frustrated by the slowness of the Post Office to take up his machines, although they had placed a token order for a dozen, decided to move his works to London to be nearer the Postmaster General! In 1909, with nine faithful employees he moved from Glasgow to Croydon. Earlier he had formed a close association with a well-known Danish telegraph engineer, Harald Bille and in 1912 they became a limited company, Creed and Bille. When Bille died in a railway accident in 1916, however, the company retained only the name of Creed – a name which was to dominate newspaper telegraph rooms, 'Creed rooms', for the next thirty years.

Breakthrough

The first big breakthrough came in 1912 when the *Daily Mail* became the first national daily newspaper to adopt the Creed system. Other newspapers followed and export business developed with orders from Denmark, India, Australia, South Africa and Sweden. During the First World War the company supplied two sets of equipment to the Central Telegraph Office in London which worked on circuits to Southampton and Grimsby. Other equipment produced included tube amplifiers (the radio of its day), spark transmitters, air compressors, high tension generators, bomb release gear, high explosive (HE) shells and fuses.

In the 1920s, The Press Association (PA) news agency, faced with the problem of ensuring simultaneous reception of news by all its subscribers, opted for the Creed system and in all several hundred units of Morse equipment came into use on the PA systems serving every morning and evening paper in the country.

In Universal Use

By 1931 the first Creed invention with some modifications and improvements was in universal use by the Press and the Post Office. The latter were at first concerned that many of their telegraphists would be redundant and it wasn't until Creed further developed his machines to incorporate keyboards, perforators and transmitters into one machine that they adopted the system.

In the 30s, with the advent of the 5-unit code, it was the death knell for Morse. Voice frequency circuits at the Post Office used the familiar tape printer from which was produced the well-known telegram format: and from that machine came the even better known Creed teleprinter still in use in many amateur RTTY stations today. As early as 1924 Creed had developed the first British teleprinter which was to work over many Murray Multiplex systems acquired by Creed from Donald Murray of New Zealand. But the story of the teleprinter must be told elsewhere!

A Man for His Time

Creed resigned from the board of Creed and Co on 8 March 1930 at the age of 59 because he could not countenance his employees being permitted to play on the sports field on the Sabbath! All his life he was a devout Christian, non-drinker and non-smoker. 'My employees, and that includes the highest to the lowest, either keep the Sabbath or they lose me,' he said. They lost Creed!

As far as telegraphy is concerned, he bowed out in 1930. From then until his death in November 1957 he worked on other inventions of little note. His contribution to British telecommunications, however, was vast, affecting Morse telegraphy world-wide. Without him who would have made this contribution? He was a man for his time. May he not be forgotten. ✚

It's Always the Keyer

by Ted Teeuwisse PA3AMA

I have the greatest admiration for amateurs who, having no connection with professional radio engineering are, nevertheless, successful in getting their A-licence – a licence which qualifies them for Morse signalling and copying. I make a deep bow to these folk. A number of them, of course, prefer to use the microphone, but there are always some who go on to use CW.

The signals from an experienced hand-keyer sound as a symphony to my ears, but many 'progress' to more or less automatic keys. Key-men who are used to them can adjust these things so they are nice to listen to, but I want to raise a warning finger!

I often hear automatic-key users with very defective sending; lots of mistakes, stuttering, errors, wrong adjustment, slurred dots and dashes, and so on. For this there are various excuses, such as 'this keyer is playing up', 'this darned keyer won't do what I want', 'this keyer here ...', 'this keyer there ...'.

I never hear, 'Sorry, my fault!' No, it's always the keyer! What do I think then? 'Old man, take the hand-key as you were taught!'

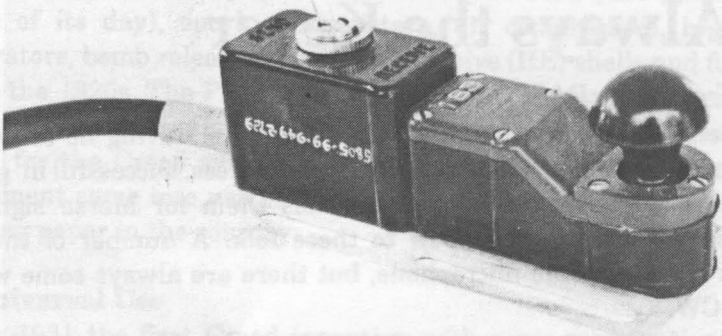
My friends! Take a few tips from an old buddy in the profession of keying ... Practice hand-keying, develop a nice wrist at normal speed and come on the air with that! If you do use an automatic speed-key adjust it correctly for normal speed so you can't overdo it. Practice a lot and don't go on the air until you are competent.

But keyer or no keyer, keep practising with the hand-key. You will be surprised at how much manual ability can be lost after a year of only automatic working. Practice for half an hour a day if you can. Why not QRP on 28.060 where you can gain two goals; develop a nice wrist and help retain the 10-metre band. Remember the motto – 'use it or lose it!'

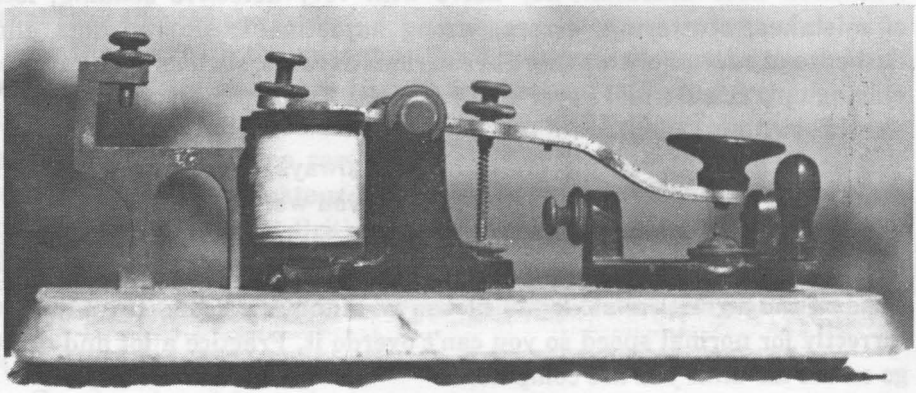
(From DMM11)

Showcase

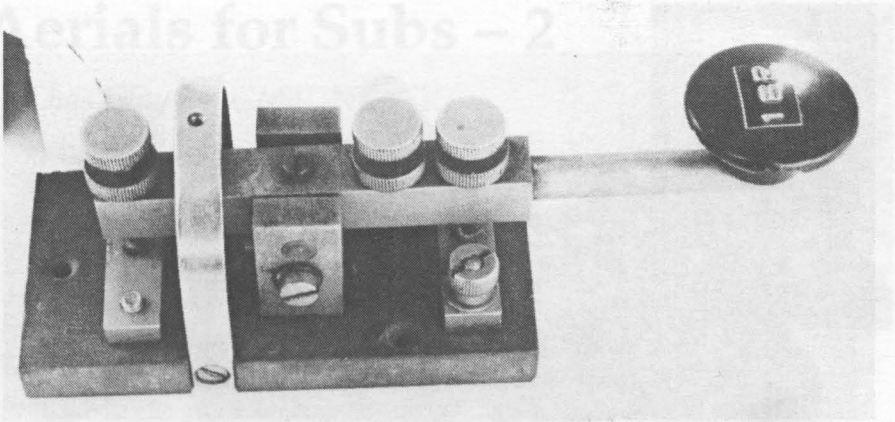
Featuring keys and other collectors' items of telegraphic interest. If anyone can add to the information given please contact T.S.



English, McMurdo. Further information required.
COLLECTION: John Elwood W7GAQ. PHOTO: Ray Nelligan



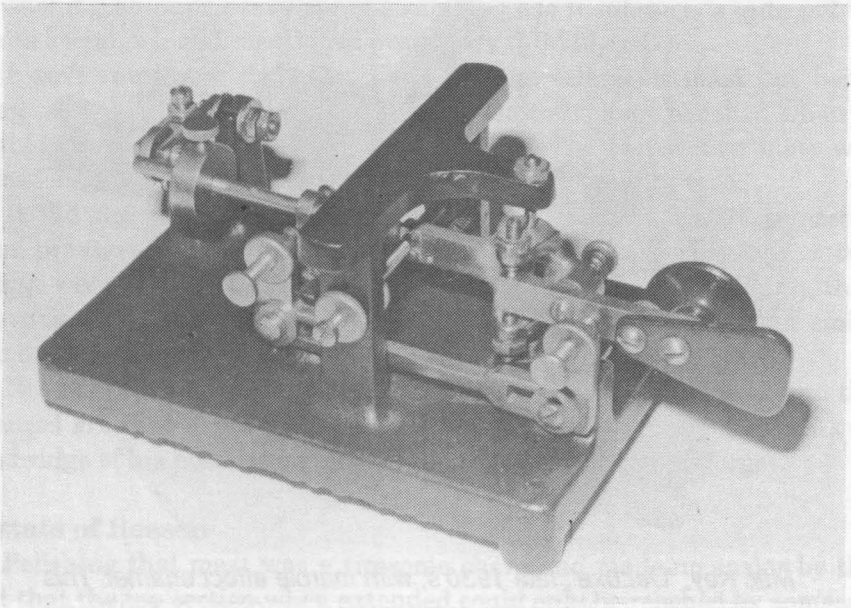
A mystery object picked up at a flea-market in Montevideo, Uruguay. The part on the left is the standard 'sounding' part of a sounder, but the moving arm is missing. From the shape of the key lever, it is American in origin. Can anyone help to identify it? Collection/Photo: Jacques Rial CX9ABE



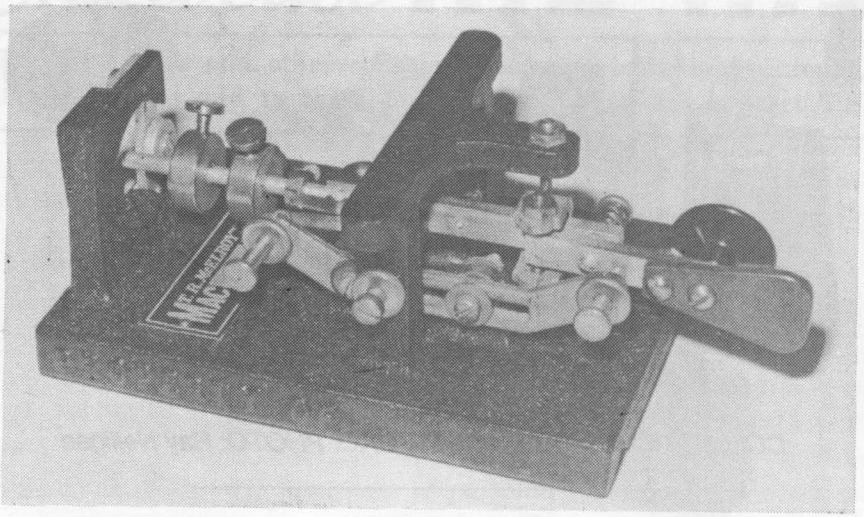
Unknown. Information required.
COLLECTION: John Elwood W7GAQ. PHOTO: Ray Nelligan

THE MAC KEY

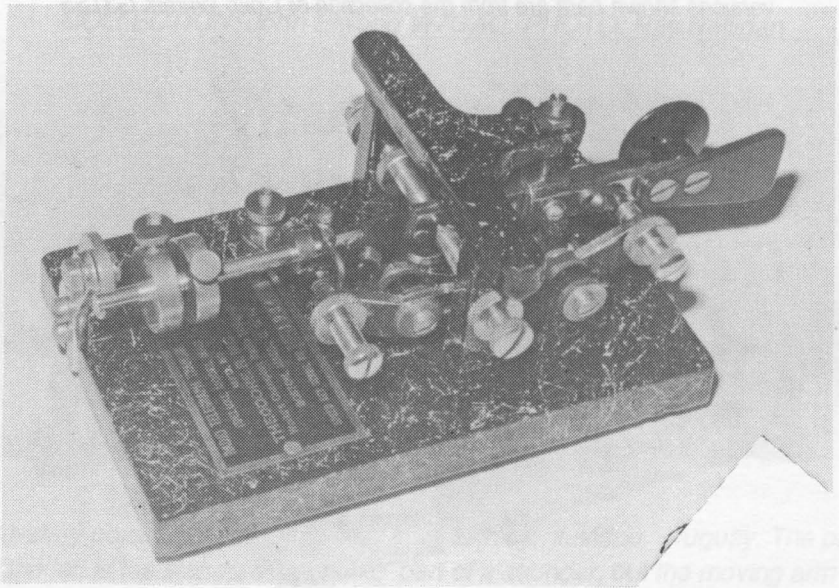
In 1934, Ted McElroy, the World Champion speed telegrapher produced the 'Mac Key', a bug which could be turned on its side to be used as a hand key. The three versions shown here are from the collection of Colin Waters G3TSS



Mac Key, 1934, with black base. PHOTO: Colin Waters



Mac Key, mid 1930's, with black crackle base and tin-plated fittings. PHOTO: Colin Waters



Mac Key, 'DeLuxe', late 1930's, with marble effect enamel. This model has a dot 'U' spring damper fitted. PHOTO: Colin Waters

Aerials for Subs – 2

by Chas Claydon GM4GNB (SK)

The Well-polished Mast

Back in the Thirties, a British L-class submarine had a choice, depending on operational requirements or weather conditions, of three types of aerial radiator. These were the Main Aerial, a centre-fed single wire supported by an insulator at each end and a telescopic mast, or the Diving Aerial which was a shorter twin wire held out from the bridge coaming by short spurs with insulators and only used when the mast was down and the boat cleared for diving. The third method, rarely employed, but necessary for communication purposes if the fixed aerials were unusable, due to washing down or heavy spray swamping the insulators, was to put up a kite aerial, which I mentioned previously (MM15, p.47).

I can't remember the exact height of the telescopic mast but being brass and this being the Royal Navy, it had to be kept polished when in harbour or laying alongside the parent ship. The two-section mast was raised and lowered by a hand winch with a large brass handle.

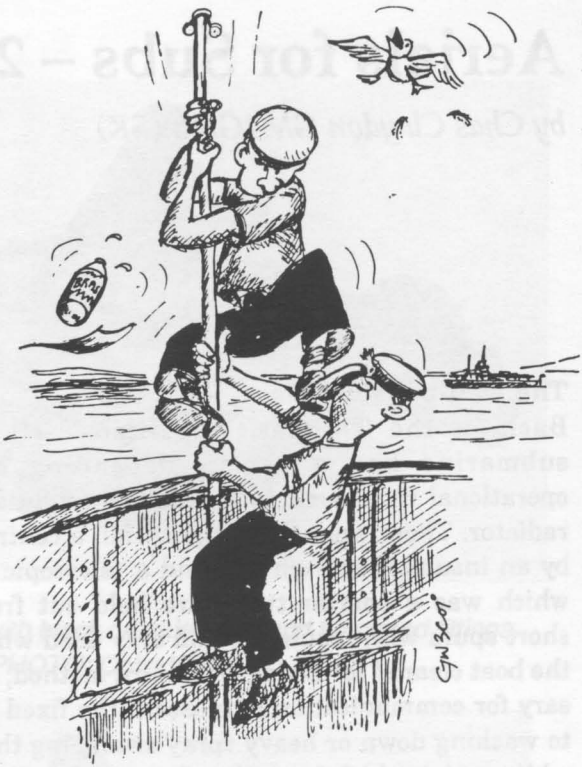
It did not do to forget to engage the check pawl before releasing your pressure on the handle once the mast was fully extended or two things were sure to happen. The mast would come down with a run, thus provoking the Captain's wrath, and the handle would fly up and smite you on the mazzard.

Neither of these options was pleasant, particularly the latter and the chances are that if you happen to see someone with a very deep kink at the bridge of his nose, he's probably an ex-telegraphist who forgot.

Dictate of Reason

Polishing that mast was a tiresome chore and made no easier by the fact that the top section when extended could only be reached by someone about ten feet tall. The equation was solved in our case thus ... Shorty

Watts, the leading telegraphist was five feet four inches in height and weighed less than eight stone. I was five eleven and weighed in at eleven stone nine. Reason therefore dictated that Shorty be the top man with the Brasso and that I support him on my shoulders.



...WITH BOTH HANDS...

The operation was complicated further by the fact that the bottom man had to take up position on a narrow ledge about seven feet from the deck of the bridge while the top man had to climb up also then climb onto his partner's shoulders. This then, was the pattern of things until one fateful morning when I had returned aboard after a roaring evening on the bottled lightning, with a monumental hangover.

Demonic

We had taken up position on the narrow ledge and Shorty was busy up above with cotton waste and Brasso when some invisible demon thrust a red-hot bayonet through my temples. I gave an involuntary twitch and shudder that had Shorty dropping the cleaning materials to clasp the mast with both hands.

He embarked on a brief but vitriolic character assessment before retrieving the materials and cleaning was resumed. After another involuntary St Vitus-like twitch on my part however, Shorty climbed down and announced that we would still be the same height if I stood on his shoulders.

Compressed!

We changed round and I took over on the high-wire as it were. I must admit that I was not at peak operational efficiency that morning and the cleaning proceeded but slowly in spite of Shorty's shrill adjurations from below to get a move on, as well as personal reflections on my character and parentage. I could feel his legs quivering as he stood on that narrow ledge and I tried to speed up things a bit but the whole situation was resolved by it starting to rain and that ended brass polishing for the day. We climbed down and Shorty, purple-faced, leaned against the bridge coaming and indicating the area of his nipples gasped, "I've got ruddy grooves down to 'ere". ✚

Readers' ADs

WANTED

'Code course', as advertised by Ted McElroy in *QST*, October 1945 and December 1954. If anyone knows of the existence of a copy please let me know. Anything else he wrote for publication is also of interest. Wm. G. Pierpont N0HFF, 2418 N. Fountain, Wichita, KS 67220, USA.

Copy of *Radio Communication*, January 1984. Robert Coleman G4RJC, 31 Kingfisher Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 1ER.

Alice on Line Again

and Tennant Creek Too!

by John Houlder

Last year, the Sydney Morsecodians Fraternity brought the old Alice Springs telegraph static back to life with a 3000 mile 'line' link Canberra. MM13 described it as their 'greate exploit yet'. This year, as John Houlder explain, they have had even greater success, but with a little disappointment too. They also have plans for next year's 200th anniversary of the birth of Samuel F.B. Morse.

We were scheduled to operate full-time from Saturday 21st to Sunday 29th April. Fred Ryan (VK1RY) from Canberra and Reg (Curly) Moger drove up in Fred's Toyota Coaster bus which is fitted out with radio equipment. I visited a friend's place for a nightly 'sked' to keep tabs on their progress. They arrived in Alice on the 16th with the intention of carrying out some restoration work on the old equipment, including rewiring the operating table.

As a result, we had a few impromptu circuits when I went over to the Canberra terminal, at the National Science and Technology Centre (NSTC), in my lunch hour. The week coincided with the NSW and Victorian school holidays and the interest from the public was overwhelming, so much so that it was often difficult for me to get away and return to my office!

The Big Day

This year the Northern Territory Police got into the spirit of the occasion (Australia's National Heritage Week). They dressed in period costume and 'borrowed' a camel train for the occasion. Each morning they set out from the station, complete with an aboriginal tracker in uniform, to patrol the outskirts of Alice Springs. From time to time we transmitted messages back and forth containing information on the bushrangers they were supposed to be chasing. At night they returned to the telegraph station to camp in a tent and cook over an open camp fire.

Anzac Day, 25th April, the 75th anniversary of the landing of the Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli, was the big day at Alice

Springs. The townspeople, as well as the normal tourists, were invited to the telegraph station and were plied with tea/coffee, scones, and damper.

The blacksmith shop was opened up and this, together with the police camel train and the operation of the telegraph link to Canberra provided a great deal of interest. Around 3500 people passed through the station that day, including the Chief Minister for the Northern Territory who took a great interest in the exchange of messages between Alice and Canberra.

Near Miss with Gallipoli Link

Before leaving for Alice we were approached by the NSTC to see if we were interested in discussing with the local Wireless Institute the possibility of exchanging messages with Turkey on 25th April. The upshot was that the Institute designed and constructed an interface between the Morse landline terminal in Canberra and their HF radio equipment.

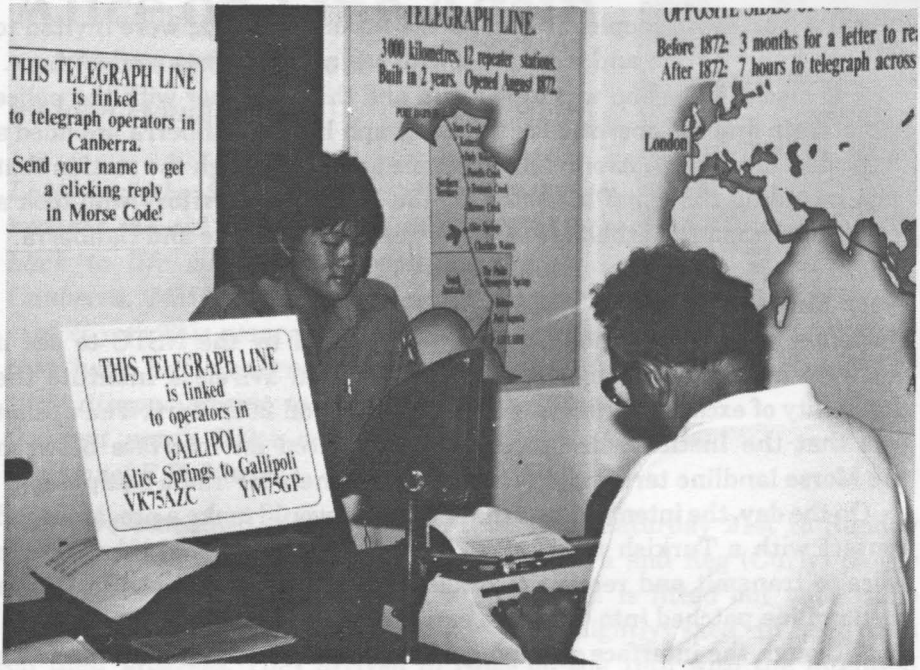
On the day, the intention was that Canberra would make a pre- arranged contact with a Turkish radio amateur, and then we would take over in Alice to transmit and receive messages from the Gallipoli peninsula via the landline patched into the radio equipment at Canberra.

Although the interface worked perfectly (we had tested it by receiving Naval signals transmitted from Canberra), the atmospheric conditions on the day were very poor. We were monitoring signals in Fred Ryan's bus and although we could hear Canberra calling the Turkish operator we only heard him reply with a very weak signal. His response was for a QSY and we never heard him again. It was a nice try, if a little disappointing. However, we intend to use this interface arrangement again next year from Alice during the Samuel F.B. Morse 200th birthday celebrations.

Tennant Creek Re-opened

On Friday 27th, Fred and Reg travelled 300 miles north to the old telegraph station at Tennant Creek, another of the original eleven manned repeater stations on the Great Overland Telegraph Line. That day I was involved in exchanging messages between Alice and Canberra on behalf of the Northern Territory Minister for Tourism to his Federal counterpart in Canberra (both being in attendance during the transmissions), concerning the re-vamping of a famous art prize known as the 'Alice Prize'. The Minister was very impressed with the re-opening of the telegraph station and offered us every assistance to make sure it becomes an annual event.

Tennant Creek was connected to the circuit on Saturday, 28th April, and with the aid of a combiner unit at Alice we had Tennant Creek, Alice



Reg (Curly) Moger receiving a message from Canberra, with one of the Alice Springs Telegraph Station rangers, Andrea Lim, taking a keen interest in the proceedings

Springs, and Canberra on the one circuit. It was the first time Morse had been heard at the old Tennant Creek station for 55 years.

That night, an open-air ball was staged at Tennant Creek and although Canberra closed at 5pm we kept the Tennant Creek – Alice Springs circuit working until 10pm. I was on deck at Alice and it was a delightful atmosphere as I sat at the camp fire with the camel police and the telegraph station rangers. I sipped the odd ale under a brilliant central Australian night and listened for the sounder through the window.

Tennant Creek would call me as people came in for a demonstration between dances at the ball. I shall always remember that night. I am sure the kerosene lamp in the telegraph station together with the atmosphere created by the camp fire, plus the police in period costume, re-created fairly closely just what it was like in Alice at the turn of the century.

One afternoon I was working Canberra when one of the many bus loads

of tourists arrived. I saw one elderly chap taking a deep interest and learned that he was a retired Post Office operator from County Cork, Ireland. He explained that Ireland used double current signalling and consequently he had never used a bug key (jigger) as we were using.

He wanted to know how long the line to Canberra was and I informed him that it was in the order of 3000 miles. His eyes lit up and he told me the longest line he had ever worked was about 200 miles. I persuaded him to 'take the seat' and use a hand key to talk to Canberra. He was a little reluctant at first, saying he was very rusty but he was surprisingly good and he enjoyed himself immensely. I think it was probably one of the highlights of his trip. He also won the applause of fellow bus passengers!

Adelaide Too

A crew of Adelaide operators arrived on 29th April and for the next week they manned the Alice – Canberra circuit as well as another between Alice and Adelaide. I returned home on 1st May. During this second week Dr Guy Squires, great grandson of Sir Charles Todd, planner and organiser of the legendary 1872 line visited Alice Springs. The boys in Canberra were alerted and they composed an appropriate message which they transmitted to him. I understand he was delighted to find the station, which was named after his great grandmother, Alice Todd, working once again after so many years.

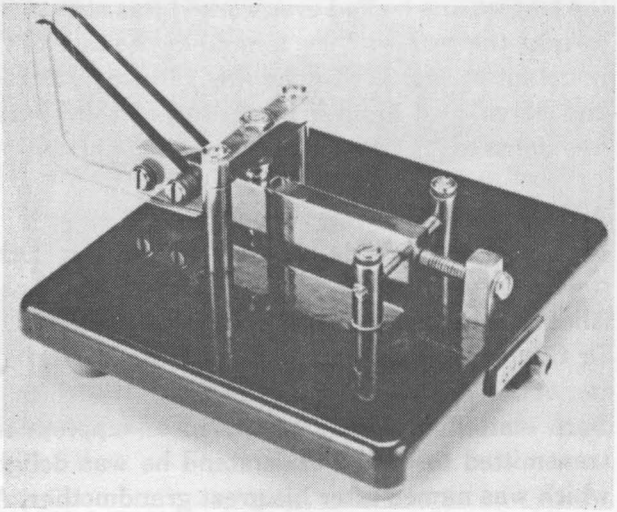
Morse Anniversary Next Year

After our return from Alice I had a discussion with the Director of the National Science and Technology Centre in Canberra. The NSTC is very keen to get involved in next year's Samuel F.B. Morse bi-centennial birthday celebrations. As luck would have it, the 27th April 1991 coincides with our week at Alice Springs which is 21 – 27 April. The Director wants to involve us as well as the local Wireless Institute to obtain world-wide contacts. He is also keen to arrange some sort of competition for the day with, possibly, the landline patched into the radio at Canberra from time to time.

Discussions to explore these possibilities are continuing. In the meantime the NSTC would be pleased to hear from any amateur radio clubs/groups around the world planning to celebrate the anniversary who would like to link in with the NSTC's own celebrations via CW skeds. Those interested should write to Dr Bill Burch, The National Science and Technology Centre, PO Box E28, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT, Australia 2600, as soon as possible. ✚

One of the newest key manufacturers in Britain is G4ZPY Paddle Keys of Ormskirk in Lancashire. MM asked Gordon Crowhurst G4ZPY about his products and how he started.

G4ZPY Keys



G4ZPY single paddle key, on heavy steel base. Note the single spring arrangement (see text). The latest model now has a spring tension adjuster

'We started our business three years ago from nothing. I had been unemployed for eight years and here in the north-west of England, at 56, I was considered "over the hill". I had made keys for several friends who kept saying I should make them commercially but I didn't have the confidence to do this.

It was only when I met my fiancée, Brenda, that she convinced me to "have a go". At our first rally, at Belle Vue, Manchester, my work was well received. I only had paddle keys at the rally but so many people suggested I make pump keys that I knew I had to start.

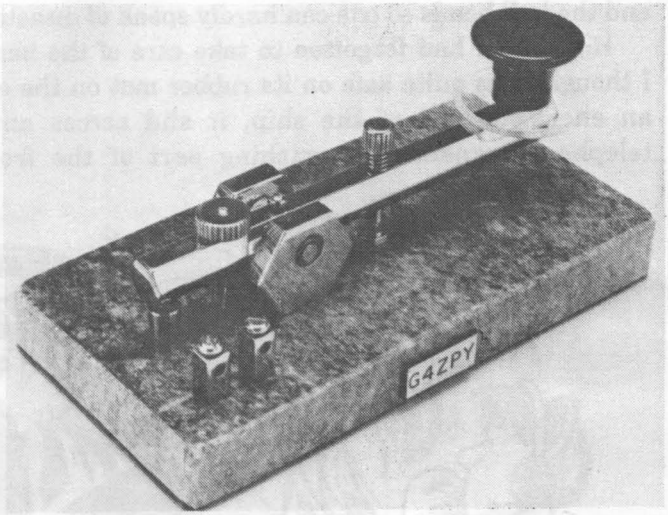
After much deliberation and a few calculations, I made my first hand-key, mounted on Lakeland Stone. I was lucky first time. I came up with a perfectly balanced key in highly polished brass. No-one made a polished brass key, so I realised that was my niche in the market.

Paddles

The first key that I made entirely to my own design was my single paddle. The Mk1 didn't get further than the drawing board. I made twelve Mk2s, posted them to customers and some short time later wrote to each one offering to upgrade them to Mk3 free of charge. I had realised that

having a spring each side of the paddle was no good as one fought against the other. They had been adjustable but the arrangement was not up to the standard I was seeking.

They worked perfectly at slow speeds, but at high speed there was a tendency for contact bounce. My Mk3, 4 and 5 models all have the same single spring arrangement. People marvel that it works. It just does! (Gus Taylor G8PG, who initially tested the prototype Mk3 single paddle, and later acquired one of these keys for himself, was asked by *MM* for his views on it. He comments, "I have now used it for several years and find it pleasant in operation. It is well made, well finished, and should give satisfaction to the average amateur operator.")



G4ZPY straight key, available mounted on Lakeland stone, marble, or mahogany

I was an admirer of another manufacturer's twin key. However, I felt it had several faults. Brenda persuaded me to design and build my own twin paddle and she now owns the prototype, personalised with her name. It was an instant success. I knew it the moment I touched the paddles. I have slightly improved it since then and now sell the Mk3.

Aiming High!

I am constantly looking for ways to improve my keys. It's not that I am dissatisfied with them. I am simply a perfectionist, my own worst enemy! I am always ready to listen to constructive criticism as I aim to build up the reputation of having the world's best keys!

We introduced Britain's first gold-plated trophy keys, individually "made to order". This was really done as a publicity stunt, not thinking anyone would buy them, but I was wrong! We have at present (May 1990) orders for six trophy models from the USA alone. Our keys have taken off

big there, including several gold-plated twin paddles. One collector has ordered one of everything, plus a tentative order for four more trophy models this year.

We make twenty-seven variations of our keys, which I believe to be the largest selection of hand-built keys in the world. We also endeavour to cater for all pockets. Except for our key in kit form, we give a two year written guarantee with all keys over and above the customer's statutory rights and, as yet, have never received a claim under our guarantee. Every key is tested before dispatch, and at rallies we usually ask customers to try the feel of the key they have selected before parcelling it up.

Around the World

Since we started we have sold keys to nineteen countries world-wide, including Japan. Among our customers are the Royal Corps of Signals, a Chinese shipping line, and members of the Royal Guard of the Sultanate of Oman. We are hoping, soon, to extend our sales into Eastern Europe.

If readers of *MM* would like further information about our keys please send an s.a.e. (or two IRCs if you are outside UK) to G4ZPY Paddle Keys, 41 Mill Dam Lane, Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancs L40 7TG, England. We will reply by return of post. Incidentally, if people with disabilities tell us of their particular needs we may be able to modify our keys to meet their needs, sometimes for no extra charge.' ✚

Tonic Virtues

Q. How does the tonic train method of transmission compare with spark, as regards ability to span long distances?

A. Favourably. Although less effective than pure CW, tonic train has some of its virtues and possesses considerable carrying power.

(500 Wireless Questions Answered, *1924.)*

Morse Problem

A man always sent dots and dashes,
And did suddenly come out in rashes,
To the doctor his wife did him force,
Who said it was 'cos of his Morse,
But that man still sends Morse – of course.

Ian Poole G3YWX

The Hebrew Telegraph Code

by Donald K. deNeuf WA1SPM (SK)

The State of Israel was created in 1948 at which time the inland telegraph system consisted only of Morse circuits between offices in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel-Aviv. Before the outbreak of the 1948 hostilities, the international telegraph facilities comprised a submarine telegraph cable between Haifa and Cyprus extended via Alexandria by relay to other cable networks, and a duplex channel between Jerusalem and Cairo, thence via radio to London. Following reconstruction after the Declaration of Independence in 1948, the quantity and type of facilities grew by leaps and bounds with world-wide connections.

The Hebrew telegraph code is rarely shown in code history reviews and it comes to light in a most comprehensive manual of codes and keyboards of the world together with an interesting treatise on cryptology. This is the *Radioteletype Code Manual*, published by Joerg Klingenfuss DL5WL, (Hagenloher Str. 14, D-7400 Tuebingen).

Hebrew had been a dead language for some 2300 years before it was revived by the Jews as their common language. There is no other case in history where a dead language has been resurrected. The code is shown here. It will be noted that the telegraph character may appear more than once alongside the Hebrew letter when diacritical marks are involved, but this poses no problem for one fluent in Hebrew. The telegraph code for all practical purposes has gone into disuse with the advent of teleprinters which accommodate the Hebrew characters. ✚

א	Aleph	•–
בּ	Beth	–•••
ב	Veth	–•••
ג	Gimel	––•
ד	Daleth	–••
ה	Heh	–––
ו	Vav	•
ז	Zayin	––••
ח	Kheth	••••
ט	Teth	••–
י	Yod	••
כּ	Kaph	–•–
כ	Khaph	–•–
ל	Lamedh	•–••
מ	Mem	––
נ	Nun	–•
ס	Samekh	–•–•
ע	Ayin	•–––
פּ	Peh	•––•
פ	Feh	•––•
צ	Tsadi	•––
ק	Koph	––•–
ר	Resh	•–•
שׂ	Sin	•••
שׁ	Shin	•••
תּ	Tav	–
ת	Thav	–

Landlines in the RAF

by Robert K. Taylor G4KTI

In 1943 I was posted to No. 33 Flying Instructors' School at Norton in Southern Rhodesia, about 28 miles from the capital, Salisbury (now Harare in Zimbabwe of course).

My duties there over the next couple of years, as a ground wireless operator, included some time operating our link with the outside world, namely a sounder line to the Group HQ in Salisbury. We always referred to it as the 'Post Office Sounder', and as the local Post Office in Norton village also used a sounder, which could be heard clicking when one went to the counter, it is possible that our equipment was supplied by the Rhodesian Post Office when the RAF station was opened.

Frightening

Be that as it may, it certainly gave me a fright when I first walked into the Signals Office on being posted to Norton! I wondered how anyone could ever learn to read it, but after a couple of weeks sitting in with another op it was all plain sailing. In those days I suppose I was reasonably competent at Morse, not like today after a break of 40 years before taking up amateur radio.

Almost all the traffic was in plain language and our station callsign was NO for Norton. This often caused our ears to twitch when traffic was being passed between other stations on the net and the word 'no' occurred in the text. I think there were about six stations in the net, all around the Salisbury area, but there was little or no traffic between individual stations, it being almost entirely direct to and from Group HQ.

On evening shift towards the end of the war, when there was next to no traffic, we used to hang the telephone on the sounder case and adjourn to the telephone exchange next door, opening the tele-op's key so that we could monitor the sounder while playing cribbage with him.

Oscillator

Incidentally, I had previously had a twelve month stint in the Middle East, part of which I spent at El Ballah. The airfield there was the bed of a

dried-up salt water lake just to the west of the Suez Canal, about midway between Ismailia and Port Said. We had a land-line there too, but used an oscillator instead of a sounder.

As I remember it, the oscillator was Air Ministry equipment housed in the usual grey box, about one foot all round, but I have no recollection of its reference number. The traffic was to and from Ismailia and all in cipher.

A Nice Thought

I don't expect this is of much interest technically, but it has given me much pleasure to indulge in this bit of nostalgia. It is nice to know that somewhere some small piece of RAF history, in the shape of the sounder, is being preserved.

We tend to forget these small but vital items which are, not unnaturally, over-shadowed by the glamour of the aircraft. But then I'm as bad as the rest as I tote my camera round the airshows! ✚

Naughty!

I was told of a Swedish station who was obviously getting a bit frustrated with half of EU sitting on him calling CQ TEST. He lit the blue touch-paper when he sent, quite fictitiously, 'S7... de SM6... 73 CUAGN.'

He must have sat back and relished the ensuing chaos, with just about every EU who could raise a watt screaming for the elusive Seychelles station. Naughty Naughty ... *Geo Longden G3ZQS, in* FISTS Newsletter.

Book Reviews

The Vibroplex Collector's Guide and *Introduction to Key Collecting*

reviewed by Colin Waters G3TSS

Tom French W1IMQ obtained his amateur novice licence in 1956. His first key was a US military surplus J-38. Today as an Extra Class licensee he still uses that same key for QRS contacts with new amateurs.

His J-38, together with a Vibroplex Zephyr, started him on the hobby of key collecting. He decided to start off with Vibroplex keys which have an interesting history, with common models still obtainable at reasonable prices, but he found very little material available to guide him.

He researched the company's ads, the original patents and various magazines to find out all he could about them. He then realised that the information he had compiled could be helpful to other key collectors. The result was The Vibroplex Collector's Guide, *published early in 1990.*

The enthusiastic reception of this Guide encouraged Tom to write a further book, designed to help those beginning to collect keys. His Introduction to Key Collecting *is based on his own experiences. He told* MM, *'I haven't been in the hobby so long as to have forgotten what problems the beginner will encounter, and what information he might find useful ...*

'I am sure there are many collectors who have spent much time and effort gathering information on the keys in their collections. I hope the publication of my books inspires them to write their own, or at least to contribute information to MM *so that all of us can share their knowledge.'*

The Vibroplex Collector's Guide

There can be little doubt that, had it not been for Horace G. Martin's quest to enable the vast amount of telegraph traffic to be passed more easily, especially by those suffering from 'glass arm', the semi-automatic speed key as we have come to know it would not have been developed.

While it is easy to speculate that someone, sooner or later, would have developed the principle I think it is also fair to suggest that those keys which are copies, some blatantly so, of Martin's 1907 Improved Vibroplex

Radio Operated Automobile

Builders and Operators of America's First Radio-Operated Automobile

"THE AMERICAN WONDER TOUR"

Francis P. Houdina Co.

1477 BROADWAY

New York

Address Reply to:

Apr. 30th, 1926
Greenville, S. C.
General Delivery

J. E. Albright & Co.,
825 Broadway
New York City
Attention Mr. La Hiff

Dear Sir:

This is to advise that two VIBROPLEX are used by STATION 2XAX, the portable radio transmitter used to control "America's First Radio Operated Automobile."

These instruments have been in use for some time, and have proven very satisfactory. Our operators are well pleased with the results, because it is much easier and quicker to handle this radio operated driverless car, by using these instruments instead of the old type keys. We also find these instruments constructed of best materials which enables them to withstand the various weather conditions to which they are subjected.

It is with pleasure that we thank you for the opportunity of using an instrument of this kind, because we are always ready to give any manufacturer of products of this kind a letter of approval, not because of their co-operation, but because they hold up to a policy that is bound to give satisfaction; Workmanship, High grade materials, and accuracy.

We wish to thank you again for your attention and wish to "boost" the VIBROPLEX thruout the balance of our continental tour, with your approval.

We beg to remain
Respectfully
FRANCIS P. HOUDINA CO.
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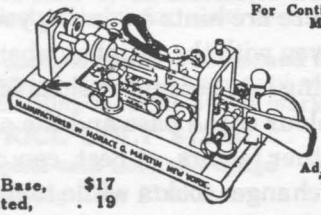
Use The Improved Martin

Reg. Trade Marks. Vibroplex Bug Lightning Bug

VIBROPLEX

The World's Greatest Sending Device

For Continental, Morse or Navy Codes



Adjustable To Any Desired Speed

Japanned Base, $17
Nickel-Plated, . 19

Over 100,000 Morse and Wireless operators use the Vibroplex because it is EASIER, QUICKER and MORE ACCURATE than the old key

It transmits with amazing ease CLEAR, CLEAN-CUT signals at any desired speed. Saves the arm. Prevents cramp, and enables anyone to send with the skill of an expert.

Special Radio Model

Equipped with Large Specially Constructed Contact Points. Requires no relay **$25**

Every amateur and licensed operator should know how to send with a Vibroplex. Easy to learn. Sent anywhere on receipt of price. Money order or registered mail. ORDER YOURS NOW!

THE VIBROPLEX CO., Inc., 825 Broadway, New York

A 1926 Vibroplex advertisement, featuring a letter written by a very satisfied customer to J.E. Albright & Co, Horace Martin's agent

surpass in terms of both quality of signal and general ease of handling the sometimes curious designs produced by other manufacturers.

I can think of few other technically intricate instruments in use today that have remained virtually unchanged in over 83 years. Surely this fact alone is enough to suggest that Martin's design was the ultimate mechanical answer to the problem.

The Vibroplex Collector's Guide is more than just a catalogue of instruments offered by a single manufacturer. It is the story of the development of the mechanical speed key from the 1903 Autoplex to the chrome and gold Vibroplex Presentation model available today, and to the Brass Racer iambic keyers designed after the Company's long association with the Albright family had ceased.

The book describes in chronological order the keys produced by the Company and the patents associated with those keys. It would take someone more experienced than me to criticise any omissions or question any of the information contained in the text. From a personal view, however,

and taking the book simply as its title suggests, I do feel there is a lack of photographs of actual keys, although if available these would, of course, have greatly increased production costs. The book does contain many copies of old advertisements for the keys which partly make up any deficit and the patents themselves make fascinating reading.

There are hints on dating your Vibroplex bug, now not an easy proposition even with the serial number available. This guidance basically consists of taking into account various factors including the use of nickel or chrome, the colour of the base and the address on the Company nameplate. These and other factors, at best, can only provide a very approximate dating as some changes took a while to filter through the system.

Unfortunately for collectors outside the USA it would seem that few pre mid-1920s models have found their way out of that country. The book should enable collectors, like myself, to know what is missing from our collections. Whether we will ever complete these collections is another matter. However, the Guide will go a long way to improve our chances and will help place those keys we already have in their proper historical perspective.

Introduction to Key Collecting

I suspect that the vast majority of those actively engaged in Morse code transmission, either in an amateur or in a past-professional capacity, have a great interest in keying devices. Almost all of us have a collection, however small, of Morse keys laying around in the junkbox – or perhaps proudly displayed among the books on the library shelves. There are a few, however, who take this fascinating hobby more seriously, spending much time collecting, and then restoring, old keys or researching information on their manufacture and original use.

For the beginner or the already experienced collector, Tom French provides valuable advice and information which should enable the reader to enjoy this intriguing pastime more fully. He describes the pitfalls to be avoided and outlines the correct approach to follow to progress towards a worthwhile collection. While he solely covers the American scene, much of the advice given is relevant for any country.

He starts with a short history of telegraphy itself, from its conception during the 1830s, including the later transition from American Morse to the International code of today, to the emergence of CW, the eventual displacement of landline and spark telegraphy, and the development of modern radio telegraphy.

A 1926 Bunnell advertisement for their 'Gold Bug' and the 'Double Speed' side-swiper

Even the most experienced collector should benefit from the detailed chapters on the 1962 FYO paddle, predecessor of today's superb Bencher Ultimate; the tangled history of Speed-X, from the early Logan models, through their association with Johnson, to today's Nye Company keys; McElroy; and Vibroplex, the latter two being probably the best known of all the semi-automatics.

We are also introduced to the idea of collecting keys 'on paper'. I have had to follow this concept myself with an early British made bug key which I fear may now be unobtainable.

Throughout the book, the author warns us to avoid turning this hobby the way that many other collecting hobbies have gone, ruined by investment orientated collectors and dealers.

With its exceedingly readable text, the book is well balanced and well illustrated with photographs of actual keys or copies of old advertisements for them. As Tom French remarks, 'Reading this book won't make you an expert on keys; only further study and experience can do that ... I don't

know anyone who knows everything about all keys. Each of us holds a piece of the puzzle.'

Availability

Both titles are available direct from the publisher. *The Vibroplex Collector's Guide* by Tom French W1IMQ costs US$14.95, plus postage.

Introduction to Key Collecting, also by Tom French W1IMQ, costs US$9.95, plus postage.

Surface mail: $2.00 per order, independent of quantity or destination. Airmail, Europe: *VCG* $6.00, *IKC* $4.00, together $8.00. Australia/NZ: *VCG* $7.00, *IKC* $5.00, together $11.00. Payment only in US funds. For other countries, inquire before ordering. Published by **Artifax Books, PO Box 88, Maynard, MA 01754, USA**

QTC (I Have a Message for You) – A Seagoing Radio Officer's Scrapbook

reviewed by Geoff Arnold G3GSR

Raymond P. Redwood, author of *QTC*, was born in Manchester, England and learned the Morse code during WWII whilst stationed at an RAF base near London, intercepting messages to U-boats.

After the war, seeking adventure, he became a 'Marconi-man' on British ships, and it was on one of his voyages that he met and fell in love with a girl from New York. He became a US citizen and spent twenty years as a 'Sparks' on US ships.

Now, with the planned introduction of the satellite and computer based Future Global Maritime Distress & Safety System (FGMDSS) in 1999, and the phasing out of Morse communications, Ray Redwood has decided it is time to tell the story of seagoing radio officers through the twentieth century.

QTC is largely about the personal, human side of wireless at sea, rather than the technical aspects. Beginning with the origins of marine radio, and the people who influenced its development, he proceeds through stories of (as the book-jacket puts it) 'adventure, surprise, romance, travel, heroism, achievement, biographies, autobiography and humour.' He recounts several of his personal experiences and escapades – one or two of them you might possibly not wish your maiden aunt to read about – but to judge from my own seagoing days, which were of the same era, totally believable!

Ray also looks at two marine disasters where radio officers played a very significant role, the loss of the *Titanic* and the fire on the *Morro Castle*. On the basis of his own extensive research, he tries to fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge of the 'whys and wherefores' of these events. Not everyone will agree with his conclusions, but he will certainly get you thinking!

The books most forcefully poses the question: how safe will seafarers be when the trained hand and ears of the 'Sparks' are there no longer? What happens when there is no power coming from the engine-room of a sinking ship, and all the sophisticated electronic gadgets are dead? It answers: 'The lives of all will depend on a battery providing power for an emergency Morse machine – and a human fist on a Morse key to operate it. They can never do away completely with Sparks.'

I am sure that many of us who have sat beneath the ship's radio room clock, with its distinctive silence-period and auto-alarm signal segment markings – 'King Clock', Ray calls it – will identify with his story. Although it concentrates on the human side, *QTC* also has a selection of photographs showing how shipboard radio installations have progressed over the years.

All in all a fascinating book, and one which I can certainly recommend to any reader with seagoing connections.

Honoured

The Veteran Wireless Operators Association in the USA recently announced that, 'In recognition of his many years of service as Radio Officer in the merchant marine and as the writer who successfully published *QTC* which concentrated on the human interest aspect of radio communications at sea, it it is pleased to award its 1990 Marconi Memorial Gold Medal of Achievement to Raymond P. Redwood.'

Availability

QTC (I Have a Message for You), published in hardback under ISBN 0-945845-00-6, has 376 pages 9 x 6in with 109 illustrations.

Orders should be sent direct to the publishers, **Sequoia Press TX, 2502 Cockburn Drive, Austin, Texas 78745, USA**, with a remittance for US $15.00 plus $2.00 shipping.

Readers in the UK can make their payment for the book in Sterling by sending a cheque for £10.00 to **Barclays Bank, 12 High Street, Great Dunmow, Essex, quoting Capital Advantage Account 0074-2589.** ✚

Just rambling...

Our Jack – Still Adventuring!

Jack Sykes G3SRK, whose adventures as a young 'Sparks' have appeared in *MM* from its earliest days, hit the headlines in the British newspapers on June 19. Flying from Syracuse to San Antonio recently, 88-year-old Jack choked on his in-flight chicken. A US Air Force doctor on board cut a hole in Jack's throat with a borrowed penknife to loosen the meat and get Jack breathing again. After an emergency landing at Memphis, Jack found himself in the Elvis Presley Memorial Hospital with a paralysed arm. He is now back home in Slaithwaite, and making a good recovery.

Irrepressible Jack sent me his own account of his latest adventure, headed 'They cut his throat to save his life!' Although never a pop music fan, he says 'If there had been no Elvis Presley there would have been no Memorial Hospital, and quite possibly no Jack Sykes ... it is said that converts always make the best worshippers and I have no wish to prove an exception.'!

I'm sure everyone will join me in sending Jack our very best wishes. *MM* still has a number of his stories on file awaiting publication and we look forward to seeing them in print soon.

Morse Anniversary

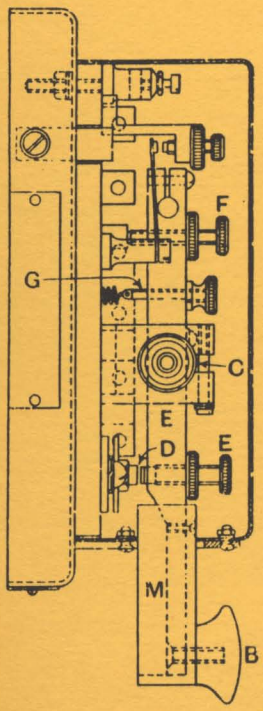
News is beginning to appear in *MM* of various proposals to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Samuel F.B. Morse on 27 April, 1991, including an *MM* meeting at Maassluis. If your own club or organisation has not yet made plans to celebrate this important anniversary in some way, why not give them a gentle reminder?

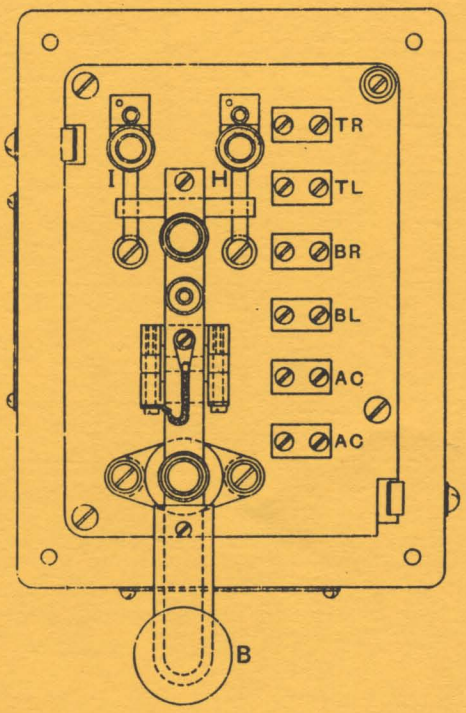
MM itself is planning to celebrate the occasion by making the Spring 1991 issue a special one with an emphasis on Morse himself and his work. Would any readers having old books, magazines, etc., containing references of any kind to Prof. Morse, which might be of interest for the special issue, let me have copies of them?

Case Shift

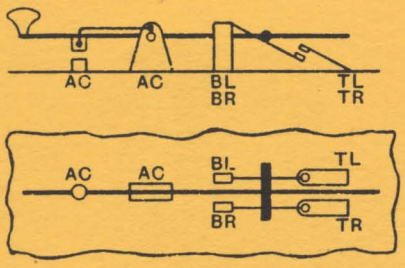
My thanks to 'Anon' who, following my request in the last issue for information on 'case shift' symbols, told me of the RAF's use of the pro-sign for underline ($\overline{\text{UK}}$) which extends the meaning of this signal to 'underline or capitals'.

73, Tony G4FAI.

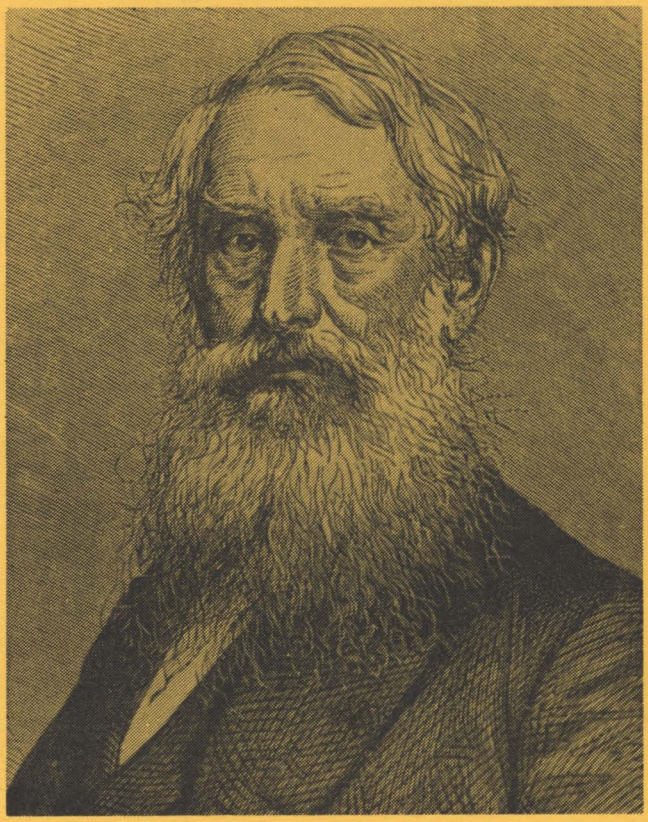




Arrangement and electrical connections of the Marconi Manipulating Key Type 365A. Subsidiary make and break contacts at H and I are operated by means of an insulating bar fitted through the main bar of the key. (See also MM16 p.15)



From Handbook of Technical Instruction for Wireless Telegraphists, *by kind permission*



Sam.: F. B. Morse..