



ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"



May 3, 1918.

Dear Marie,

The Company has been digging trenches this afternoon and I am a little tired from the snappy pick swinging, so will only write about telegraphy this time. You say you are crazy to learn but I want to caution you that it takes practice with lots of patience - the same as music or anything else. And here is the point:

If you try it at all do your best - not simply to be able to tap the key like some "ham," but really strive for some degree of perfection.

If you don't want to go at



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it seriously the same as you do your eloquence, do not waste your time — for no time is so utterly wasted as time spent doing a thing half way.

I don't want to scare you away from learning to telegraph but simply want to warn you not to start something that you haven't the interest nor enthusiasm to see through.

So think it over and let me know if you want to learn to be as good an operator as the average commercial radio operator.



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Girl radio amateurs
have shown real ability,
and right now the
government has women
teaching telegraphy
to Signal Corps recruits.

And again let
me say that you have
the "stuff" in you to make
a first class operator,
not a "Morse butcher,"
as we call one who
chops out the dots and
dashes in rag time.

Telegraphy is similar to
playing the piano in that
one has to consider "time" and
rhythm, also one must
hold the fingers, wrist
and forearm correctly to



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Send well with the key.
 When you hear the clatter of telegraph instruments in an office, did you ever stop to think that every little combination of dots and dashes forms a letter? Take the word "receive" for instance:

Morse	=	R	E	C	E	I	V	E
		"	.	"	.	"	"	.
Radio	=	"	.	"	.	"	"	.

The American Morse is a little harder to receive because if the letters are run together, an ~~RR~~ R ("") can't be distinguished from ~~ER~~ E I (E!) nor a C ("") from I E (!E)



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However, the European Morse (radio) is better because there are no spaces between parts of one letter.

K is (—·), C is (—·—·), Y is (—·—·—·) instead of (" ").

Of course I am taking it for granted that you know what a dot or a dash, or a space is; if you don't be sure to speak up.

The slightest error in time length of the dots, dashes, and spaces makes one's best efforts a jumble of unreadable Morse.



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(6) So you see one must cultivate that sense of time and rhythm the same as you do in music. It is easier in telegraphy than in music but at the same time more important.

"And" (A N D) will sometimes sound like "pid" (P D) if it is sent rapidly without proper spacing.

Well you see I am making an awful fuss about accuracy and clearness in transmitting (sending) because anyone with enough practice can read telegraphy at any speed when it is sent properly.



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Suppose you were learning to read and write in Greek or any language in which the writing is absolutely different than English. You would first have to learn to draw (not write) each letter, which would be similar to "sending" in radio; and then you would have to learn to recognize each letter, written by another person, which would be similar to "receiving" in radio.

If this is too big a strain on your imagination, then just consider how a 1-B pupil learns to read



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write.

I am pointing this out to make you see how very simple receiving in radio is.

At first you will think of C as dash, dot, dash, dot (-.-.) but after a while you will forget the dots and dashes and think of the sound of the combined dots and dashes.

For instance when you read you don't look at each separate letter in a word but you see the whole word at a glance and recognize it without thought of the letters composing it.



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I am analyzing these steps in one's progress in learning telegraphy simply to make you see that it is simply a matter of time and patient practise.

Now for the amount of practice for best results. I wouldn't advise practising too long at a time — and only when you are "all keyed up" for it. If you feel that you can spare a half an hour or forty minutes each day you will learn fast, and I believe you will like it and find it well worth the effort.

If you decide to try it, I want you to use



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my telegraph key, as it is
a J. H. Bunnell key, which
is the best on the market,
and is almost "brand new."

Also you may find that
sending board of mine
useful — do you remember
the thing I mean?

Well I have a
lot more to tell you if
you want to go ahead so
tell me one way or the
other in your next letter.

When you get
started, if you do, you will
be surprised to find
how easy it all is.

Will have to call ten
pages enough this time.
My next letter will be "nice". Forrest.



Miss Ava Marie Shaw

389 Highland Avenue

Beloit, Wisconsin

From

F. W. Bassett.
Co A-6, 7th, U.S.
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Kansas

NATIONAL WAR WORK COUNCIL
OF THE
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
OF THE UNITED STATES
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