

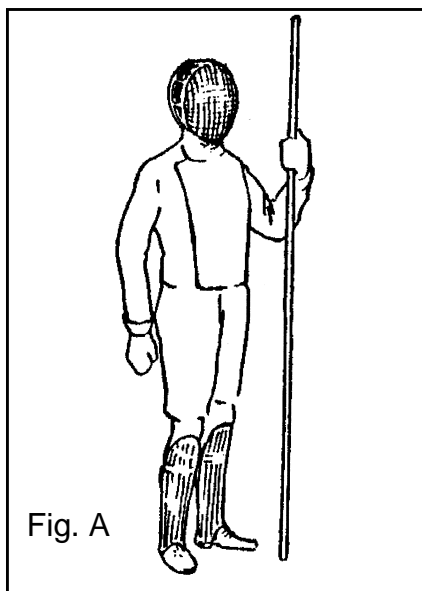
# Quarterstaff

Those amongst you with a martial arts background will be aware that training in weaponry is part of most fighting systems. Stick and swordplay is still integral to many systems of self-defence worldwide. As well as the obvious self-defence usage, weapons-training is an excellent physical training regime

James Figg, the first bare-knuckle champion, was skilled in the use of back sword and quarterstaff. In 1719 he opened 'Figg's Amphitheatre' where he taught the arts of self-defence, [fist fighting and weapon play].

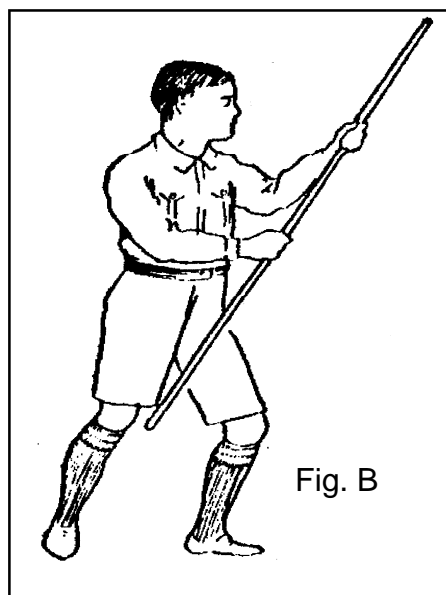
In Britain, eventually, fistic and weapon systems gradually diversified, however a resurgence was enjoyed in the Victorian era when archery, fencing, cudgel-play and quarterstaff were enthusiastically practised. Public schools included boxing, stick and sword play in the curriculum. In the early Twentieth Century a manual was published containing basic quarterstaff for the **Master-at-Arms** badge for Boy Scouts. The accompanying article is a section of '**A manual of drill for Boy Scouts**' by Gibson 1913

This old English sport has, unfortunately fallen into dis-use. This is a great pity, for of all sports it is one of the best for developing stamina.



**Dress.** -A well-padded mask, a pair of boxing gloves and cricket pads and a thick jacket, are all that are required besides the Scout uniform [fig. A]

**On guard.** -The "On guard" position of the feet is practi-



cally the same as in boxing, except that the legs are slightly more bent at the knees. The right hand grasps the staff in the middle, whilst the left holds it about a quarter of the way up the tip end of it [fig. B]

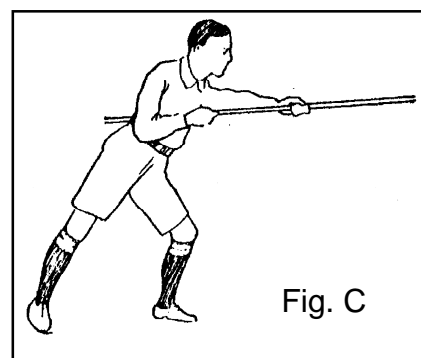
**Note.** -The thin end of the staff to be the "tip," the thick end the "butt."

**Advance** with the forward foot, following up with the rear. Keep the body upright.

**Retire** with the rear foot and follow with the front.

**Jumps.** - Forward and backward jumps should be carried out with both feet at guard.

**Lunge.** - The lunge is the same as in fencing or single-stick, save that you lunge with the left foot. Remember that the thrust is not allowed in quarterstaff play [fig. C]



**Strikes.** - These can be made with either end of the staff. There are six ordinary strikes; -

1. With the butt at the left leg [fig. D]
2. With tip at the right leg.

3. With tip at right flank.
4. With butt at left flank.
5. With butt at left cheek.
6. With tip at right cheek.

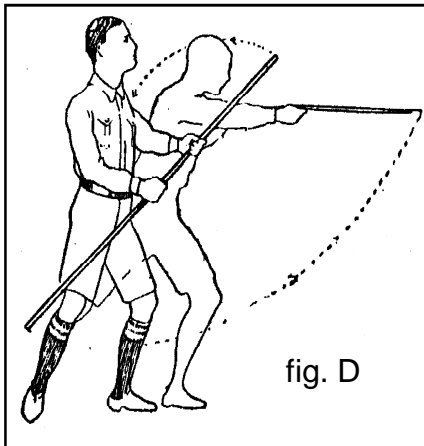


fig. D

1 and 4. Shoot the right arm out and keep the left arm in. 5 Keep left hand out, and pull right down towards you in a circle, and up and away from you, striking down on the left cheek with butt.

2. Keep right hand out and turn the tip, with the left towards you, in a circle, finishing off with an upward cut at the leg. 3. and 6. Pull the right hand towards and push the left out, striking with the tip. [fig. E]

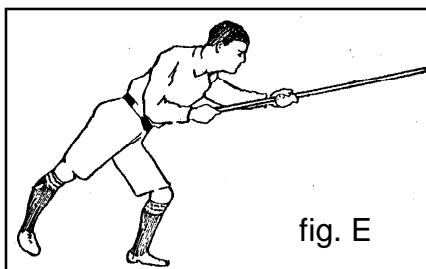


fig. E

**Throw Strikes.** – These differ from the ordinary strikes in that one hand loses its hold with a throwing movement, and catches the staff lower down [or higher up], thus lengthening the attack. All the strikes can be turned into throw strikes by chang-

ing the position of the right hand for butt strikes [fig. F],

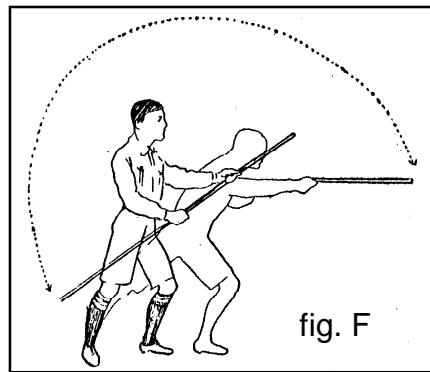


fig. F

and by sliding the right hand to the butt and changing the position of the left hand for the tip strikes [fig. G].

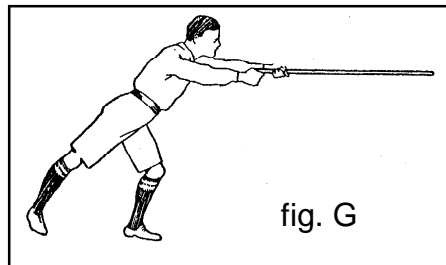
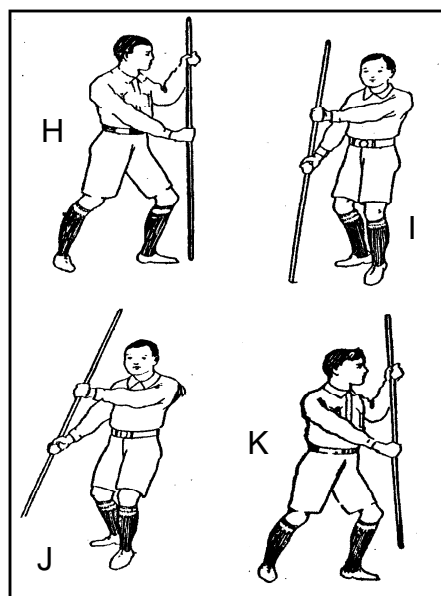


fig. G

**Parries.** – There are five parries corresponding to the six strikes, the head parry taking the two cheek strikes.

1. Left leg parry [fig. H]
2. Right leg parry [fig. I]
3. Right flank parry [fig. J]
4. Left flank parry [fig. K]
5. Head parry [fig. L]



1. Push the right arm across the body and take the strike on the butt. 2. Push the right arm to the right, receiving the strike on the butt. 3. and 4. Receive the blow between the hands. 5. Receive the strike between the hands, keeping the arms well above the head.

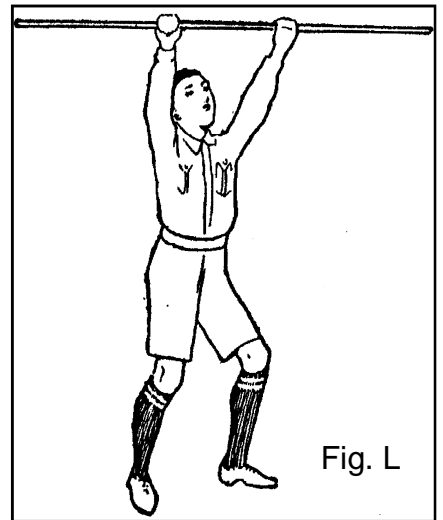


Fig. L

**Feints** – any strike half made and followed by another constitutes a feint. Feints are used to get your opponent's guard in another direction to that in which you intend to strike.

**Time Attacks** – Some fellows are sometimes too fond of feinting. When you think your opponent is going to feint, strike straight away. Your attack will be called a 'time' attack.

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 What practical value is stick training to me? Long and heavy weapons are useful in improving balance, strength and flexibility. The short stick is probably one of the best defensive tools, and remember: it's not illegal to use a walking stick.