

Basic Detail Report



00004186

Title

X [Flag semaphore]: Wills's Cigarettes: No. 24 signalling series

Date

1910-1911

Primary Maker

WD & HO Wills

Medium

Paper

Dimensions

Overall: 67 x 36 mm

Name

Cigarette card

History

The practice of adding card as stiffeners in paper packets of cigarettes to reinforce the packaging started in the USA in the 1880s. Eventually advertising details were put on the cards and then they graduated to becoming collectibles. Also known as picture cards or trade cards, they were originally issued in products as diverse as

cigarettes and cereals as a marketing tool. WD & HO Wills (part of the Imperial Tobacco Company) were the British pioneers of cigarette cards, starting the practice in about 1887. The first general interest set was issued in 1895 (Ships & Soldiers). In 1897 they started adding short notes on the reverse. By about 1901 some 300 tobacco companies were producing their own series. Production stopped in 1917 due to wartime restrictions and they did not reappear again until 1922. Card production ceased again in early 1940 and never really took off again. Avid collectors could purchase a special album to house their collections by series. This series - Semaphore Signalling - was produced in 1910/1911. Using the primary colours of red and yellow, semaphore signal flags used in the hands of an expert are a fast and efficient means of signalling over short distances in daylight. The flags- one for the left hand and one for the right- are used as an extension of the signaller's arms. A series of positions corresponds with a letter of the alphabet and a numeral from 0 to 9. This type of signalling between ships was first used for naval service at sea by Britain's Royal Navy in 1866. IT is still in use today. Today's Communications and Information Systems Sailor is trained in Morse Flashing light, flag signalling, radio telephone, semaphore, satellite

communication and computer technology. They manage the flow of information in, out and around Navy units.