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# SELF DEFENSE

## FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

With  
Illustrations



By **BILLY C. SANDOW**

Revised from the Author's System of Rough and Tumble  
Wrestling and Hand-to-Hand Fighting Taught by him  
in the U. S. Army during the World War.

**Price 50 Cents**

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JAN 27 1919





**BILLY C. SANDOW**  
Physical Culture Expert; Instructor U. S. Army  
Manager and Trainer of Ed "Strangler" Lewis

## Introduction

It has been necessary to revise my book on In-fighting for the U. S. Army, which was published as a text on the subject at Camp Dix, N. J., in order to have it conform to the needs of the civilian as a means of self-defense against the thug or thief.

That a practical method of self-defense for civilians serves a need is a well-established fact. And that the system best adapted to one's need should be other than a knowledge of the so-called manly art of self-defense, or boxing, is one of the lessons learned from this great war. The students of war early discovered that boxing served no other purpose than the double one of teaching the leads and parries of the bayonet and the building up of a fighting spirit. It was the experience of our Allies, and later of the U. S., that there was need for some other method of hand-to-hand fighting.

The Infantry School of Arms, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, made a study of trench warfare. Early in 1918 it published a confidential booklet entitled "Hand to Hand Fighting," under the authority of The Training Committee, War College Division, General Staff. It is breaking no confidence to quote two pertinent paragraphs from the introduction. They are as follows:

"Experience has shown that a disarmed man coming to blows in the trenches with a disarmed enemy soldier has almost always lost his head and confined himself with strug-

gling uselessly, because he did not know any blows or holds which would have sufficed until someone came to the aid of one or the other of the adversaries.

“Never use your fists, as the fist is the least effective of nature’s weapons; it is practically impossible to put an enemy hors de combat with the fist, since the military equipment protects the solar plexus, and the most violent blow on the point of the chin has no other effect than that of cutting cleanly the skin.”

These two paragraphs prove conclusively that self-defense is not boxing; that some other form of combative skill is necessary. As proof that wrestling has long been considered a more certain and practical form of self-defense let me quote from an article by Dr. B. F. Roller, the noted heavyweight wrestler, which appeared in the New York Herald, Oct. 10, 1915:

“For sometime the adherents of boxing appropriated the word ‘manly,’ and called boxing ‘the manly art of self-defense.’ As a matter of fact fighting is never justified except in self-defense, and as self-defense anything that is necessary and effective is manly. In my opinion, however, when self-defense is necessary there are other methods fully as manly and much more effective than boxing.”

This same former American champion wrestler challenged Jess Willard, following his victory over Johnson, to go to the gymnasium with him, and before a jury of newspaper men and city officials settle for all time the question of which is the better method of self-defense—boxing or wrestling. Willard did not accept the challenge.

The author of this book had the good fortune to have his system of In-fighting taught at Camp Dix, Camp Hancock, and at various other camps and cantonments in the U. S. A. He was also privileged to study the various systems formerly used. In editing this book his object has been to publish only such holds and blows as one in civil life would be called upon to use when attacked by the bully. In short, the system explained in the following pages is a simple and practical way of rendering helpless an opponent in the least possible time.

Attention is called to the fact that this system of self-defense is not a text book for the clean sport of wrestling. It is a short cut to successful self-defense, and his experience in teaching his more elaborate system for use in warfare permits him to state that the lessons contained in this book may be learned in a period of two weeks if one devotes an hour a day to its mastery.

It is the author’s hope that those who study this system may never have need to use it. The student must ever remember that the knowledge gained from a study of these pages must never be applied except when he is compelled to defend himself.

A few extracts from letters of various officers of the U. S. Army are printed on another page. They clearly show the official military opinion of my system of In-fighting used in the service.

(Signed) BILLY C. SANDOW.

Rochester, N. Y., January 25, 1919.

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## Hints for Beginners

Study the leverage and you will have no difficulty in beating your man. This system is the most natural method, the most effective under all circumstances, and requires no special preparation in the way of clothing.

When you are the under man keep on moving constantly, thus not only preventing your opponent from securing a hold, but also enabling you in the change of position to secure a good hold on him.

Go through the motions quickly and with vim, whether on the defensive or offensive. Be as aggressive as possible, then your opportunities for success will be increased.

This system is an unsurpassed means of self-defense. Get behind your opponent as quickly as possible as it is the safest position. In all wrestling a position behind is considered one of great advantage, especially among high class professionals. There are many methods of getting behind; the best one is given here, namely, the go behind originated by the author.

Under certain conditions you can convert an adversary’s resistance to your own good ends. For instance, suppose you wished to turn him to the right, force him to the left and he, thinking that you are in earnest, will resist by exerting his strength toward his right side. Now your moment for determined, definite action has come. Your foe is straining in the very direction you desire him to go, so, swift as a flash of light you change your tactics and force him to the right. Your power will thus be supplemented by his own, if you are quick, for he will not have had time to correct his error.

Once a small man masters this system he is no longer despised, he can overcome brute force and physical strength.

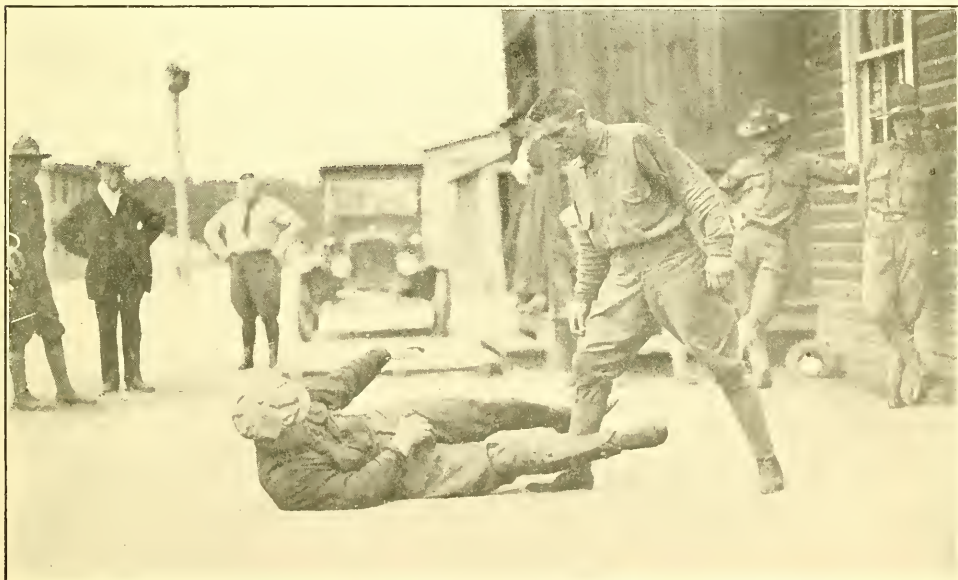


No. 1—THE GO BEHIND

No. 1—THE GO BEHIND ORIGINATED BY "BILLY" SANDOW

It is possible to break an opponent's leg by a quick ground throw. This is a great weapon of attack from a standing position, and is the best defense for all front attacks.

The aggressor throws himself forward, feet first, and plants his right or left heel, as the case may be, from the standing position used, in the opponent's ankle, kicking his feet from under him and knocking him down with your left or right leg, as the case may be; you grapevine the victim's leg. By grapevining is meant to lock both legs around opponent's limb, locking your own feet at the ankle. Then grasp the toes and ankle and apply the twist or shoot forward and apply the strangle hold.



No. 2—THE GO BEHIND

When the aggressor is in position 4 he is out of reach of all harm and is safely beyond all side rolls and other holds and at the same time in a position to secure any one of the many different locks or holds.



No. 3—THE GO BEHIND

Photos No. 1 and 2 show the aggressor in the act of throwing his body forward, the throw is similar to that of a man sliding for a base.



No. 4—THE GO BEHIND

This position shows the culmination of the go behind. After throwing your opponent to the ground, the attacker can now move forward and secure strangle and head butt from the rear, see Plate No. 27.



No. 5—THE GO BEHIND

Illustrates correct position of go behind. When the aggressor strikes the opponent's ankle he destroys the opponent's equilibrium, so this clever throw will send your opponent sprawling.



No. 6—THE GO BEHIND

If the aggressor fails to knock his man down he dives at the opponent's left foot, the right hand grasps the heel on the outside, the shoulder strikes solidly against the inside of the opponent's knee, which is grasped at the same time by the aggressor's left hand. The opponent's knee is quickly flexed and he is forced to the ground.



**No. 7—THE GO BEHIND**

The opponent is held with your leg. The aggressor raises the left foot and plants it in the opponent's knee. This method is effective and will throw the opponent to the ground.



**No. 8—THE GO BEHIND**

Hooking the toe of one foot behind your opponent's ankle, kick just below the knee cap. As a means of defense it is almost invincible if properly performed. A hard blow with the flat of your foot will break your opponent's leg.

If you merely wish to throw your opponent, just pull his ankle forward and push against his knee until he falls backward.



**No. 9—FRONT STRANGLE**

Grab the head, bringing it forward and down; drive knee into jaw and apply full strangle hold, driving thumb into "Adam's apple." After securing strangle hold, drop opponent to ground immediately so as to prohibit him from obtaining any other hold on you.

**Note:**—A strangle hold always means the placing of one forearm across the front of your opponent's neck. This should be strengthened by use of the other arm. The aggressor's forearm is pressed against the neck and the thumb driven into the "Adam's apple." Complete strangulation is only a matter of time. It takes a strangle hold but a few seconds to render a man absolutely incapable of effective resistance.



**No. 10—BACK STRANGLE**

The rear strangle can be secured in two ways. If you are face to face rush at your opponent, butting him in the jaw or jab two fingers in his eyes; jump to his side and rear, at the same time bringing the arm forcibly across the throat, and pull him backward, then take a full strangle hold, at the same time drive right foot to back of opponent's right or left knee throwing him out of position and force him to the ground and strangle.



No. 11—BACK STRANGLE

Bring the left arm around your opponent's neck, the forearm is brought forcibly against the throat, now grasp the left wrist with the right hand, and pull your opponent backward.

To make the hold even more powerful, aid your arm by pushing the opponent's forward with your head and shoulders at the same time pulling backward.





No. 12—ARM AND LEG HOLD

In obtaining this hold, both movements are secured at the same time. To secure the leg hold, strike down, forcing arm through crotch, then continue, the arm following through to obtain hold. With the other hand grasp the opponent's near arm at wrist to secure leverage, your head passing under his arm pit. The opponent is then in position to be thrown over shoulder by raising body up quickly, using neck and back as main leverage points. The whole movement must be executed rapidly to be effective.



No. 13—ARM AND LEG HOLD

When your man is in the position shown in Plate 13 you can throw him forward to the ground with force enough to stun him or knock him out.



No. 14—FLYING MARE

Seize opponent's wrist with both hands, step in with back to your opponent, twist arm from you and draw it over shoulder. With arms as lever, bend forward quickly, giving your hips an upward twitch and pull forward on the imprisoned arm. The defensive man is plunged headlong over your shoulder.



No. 15—BLOCK FOR WAIST LOCK FROM BEHIND

When your foe obtains the waist lock, you lock one or both of his arms between elbow and shoulder. If only one is secured, raise shoulders and roll to that side, bringing opponent to the ground, then other disabling holds will follow. It is very necessary that his arms be grasped above elbow or he can work out of the hold. Be sure your opponent's feet are off the ground before you attempt to throw him, the defensive man is then thrown sideways over the hip of the aggressor.



**No. 16—ANOTHER BLOCK FOR WAIST LOCK FROM BEHIND**

If your opponent's hold is low, reach back and grasp nearest foot, pull it up, straddle and sit on the leg, at the same time using your weight. Then fall backward and at same time give foot a sharp twist and release hold, turn quickly as opponent falls and follow up with throat attack.



**No. 17—ANOTHER BLOCK FOR WAIST LOCK**

Reach up and catch hold around his neck, draw his head forward, go down on right knee and pull opponent with you; quickly shift to a strangle hold. This is a good defense for a short man to use when attacked from the rear.



No. 18—ATTACKING LEG FROM REAR

Attack opponent from rear by grasping opponent's left ankle with your right hand, at the same time strike him with your right shoulder and raise the leg as high as possible, throwing opponent on his face.



**No. 19—FOLLOW UP FROM No. 18**

When the defensive man is brought to the ground the attacker steps over with his right leg and straddles and sits on the near leg of the defensive man above the knee, grasps the foot and raises up over the attacker's leg. This plunges the head of the defensive man forward on his face. The imprisoned leg should be drawn up as high as possible to give the longest leverage, in which position it is possible to break the leg.



**No. 20—TOE HOLD OVER THE LEG**

When the foot is forced forward as shown in plate 19 the attacker brings the opposite thigh against the imprisoned leg, at the same time rolling his weight forward on the victim's foot, enabling the attacker to hold his opponent with his limbs, attacking his throat with both hands.



No. 21—THE WING LOCK

When first coming to a clinch it is quite natural for an opponent to reach in for a body hold. This affords an excellent opportunity for you to secure the wing lock. Slip your arm over and above the elbow of your opponent's extended arm and jerk him toward you, keeping his arm pinned to your side.



No. 22—FOLLOW UP FROM No. 21

Now drive the palm of your right hand to his chin, at the same time stepping in with your right foot, pivoting on your left. Now bend forward, forcing your opponent backward hold your leg firmly on the ground and bend the upper part of his body over your hips. With your back to the opponent hold his arm tightly and closely to you, the hips are placed well under the weight of opponent. The mistake is commonly made here in dropping to the knees before the opponent's feet leave the ground. The proper way to execute this hold is, after turning the back to the opponent throw your hip backward, forcing the opponent from you until his feet leave the ground. Then pull down on his right arm and at the same time push violently backward against his chin, forcing him to the ground.



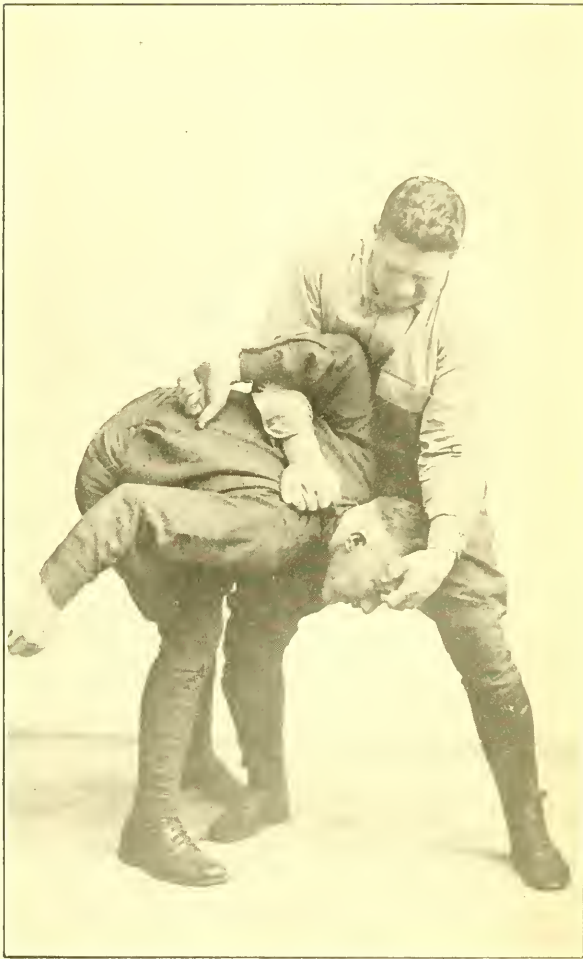
**No. 27—STRANGLE AND HEAD BUTT FROM THE REAR, ON THE GROUND**

After throwing your opponent to the ground with the go behind, force his head back with strangle hold, at the same time butting opponent with your head. By applying full pressure on strangle hold it is impossible for an opponent to break away.



**No. 28—HAMMERLOCK**

Seize wrist with both hands, giving wrist sudden twist toward body. Raise arm and slip under; bend opponent's arm up his back by a sharp blow at the elbow. Jerk arm up suddenly, causing it to break at shoulder. At the same time apply back strangle hold.



No. 29—BACK HAMMER

Another method of warding off straight blow or knife attack. If opponent leads with his right ward off the blow by blocking his arm with your left at his wrist, stepping to his side cross your right arm over his elbow and lock your hands at his rear, force the imprisoned arm upward by applying pressure upward at the wrist and downward on the upper part of the arm. The opponent can be held securely with one hand by grasping the shirt with your right hand after forcing his right up the back. This leaves your left arm free to further cripple your opponent.



# Extracts From Communications of Various Officers Dealing With Sandow's System of In-fighting Taught in the U. S. Army

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The Division Commander fully realizes that all organizations are being taxed under the present schedule, but considers that a man possessing a knowledge of "defensive wrestling" so dangerous to an enemy that the time given to this instruction will be extremely well spent.—Headquarters 87th Division National Army, Camp Dix, N. J., July 19, 1918. BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL STURGIS.

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The School of Wrestling and Fighting conducted by Mr. B. C. Sandow in this division, was a decided success.—Major General Sturgis to Commanding General, Camp Dix, N. J., July 16, 1918.

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It is my belief that this course is much more valuable than boxing as an asset to a man in a hand to hand combat, in which all rules of sportsmanship are laid aside.—G. H. Farrell, Major Infantry, U. S. A., Commanding, to Commanding Officer, 3rd Group MTD MGTC, Camp Hancock, Ga., NOV. 16, 1918.

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I believe that this work given by Mr. Sandow is of inestimable value to a man, both while in the service and after his return to civil life. It imparts to the men a confidence in their ability to protect themselves on the defensive and to put their opponent out of business when on the offensive.—John D. Austin, Major, Infantry, U. S. A., Camp Hancock, Ga., to Commanding Officer, Nov. 25, 1918.

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The bearer, Mr. B. C. Sandow, has just completed a course of instruction with the officers of this Division which has proven of such great value that the Commanding General, General Sturgis, has recommended that it be taught in connection with the School for Bayonet Fighting, for officers, at Ft. Sill, Okla. This course, in his opinion, is much superior to boxing.

Mr. Sandow is an expert at this line and his course of instruction as given at this camp, has proven extremely valuable.—A. R. Harris, Major, General Staff, Assistant Chief of Staff, 87th Division, Camp Dix, N. J., to Commanding Officer, Infantry School of Arms, Ft. Sill, Okla., July 23, 1918.

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I think you will agree with me when I say that too much attention has been given to boxing at the various camps, this to the exclusion of wrestling. I would suggest that such men as Mr. Sandow and other authorities on wrestling be utilized to give instruction at the various camps. Perhaps a selected class of officers or civilians could be trained and then sent around to teach the system.—J. Drain, Major, The Infantry School of Arms, Fort Sill, Okla., to Major W. B. Loughborough, U. S. Infantry, General Staff, Washington, D. C., August 13, 1918.

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I believe this course is much more valuable than boxing.—General Sturgis, Camp Dix, N. J.

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