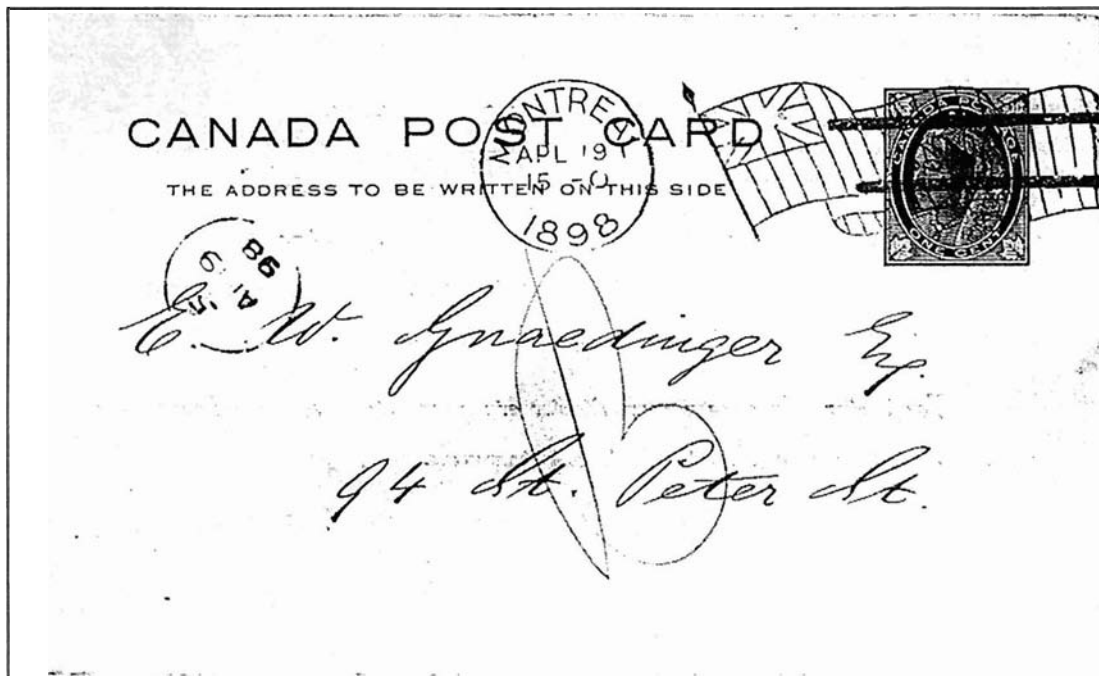


# THE FLAG POLE

Newsletter of the BNAPS Flag Cancel Study Group  
Volume 10 No. 1



Tom Almond provides this EKD of Montreal 8-13, Die VI dated 19 April 1898 at 15:00 with the note, "None of the references that I have found record a Time Mark for the EKD and I have not found an example in the premier collections..." So how about it, has anyone got an earlier Time Mark?

## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Hi! My name is Michael Rixon and this is my first attempt at editing an issue of our favorite newsletter - the Flag Pole. First off, I'd like to extend a word of thanks to Bob Thorne for all his hard work over the last four years. Good luck with your future endeavors Bob!

Well, I certainly hope that the rest of my tenure as editor goes as smoothly as this first issue did.... Two major articles, each tinged with an air of controversy as the battle between "Mr. Bickerdike" and "that Ottawa Exhibitionist" heats up once again. As this issue goes to press, I will be journeying to Perth for the BNAPS St. Lawrence Seaway Regional Group meeting, where both protagonists (??) will be in attendance. Hopefully I will have a full report next time.

A word on layout. The pages are off-centre to allow those of you who wish to bind your newsletters to do so without losing any valuable info. The two-column format allow about 30% more "stuff" in the same space. Finally all complaints, praise, articles, photocopies scribbles and computer disks should be sent to me at the address in the teeny-tiny type below this column.

Chairman: John Robertson, 10 Pergola Rd., Rexdale, ON, M9W 5K5  
Editor: Michael Rixon, 749, rue Agnes, Montreal, QC, H4C 2P9

WORTHINGTON

PLEASE SIGN

Larry Paige  
(GUEST)  
Doug Linger  
Ken Ellison  
B. Raftery (LOOGLY)  
John Robertson  
Don Hennessey  
Bill Robinson

Members attending the Flag meeting in Fort Worth at the recent BNAPS Convention were treated to a discussion by Larry Paige on some of his recent finds, including no date hub varieties indicating 3<sup>rd</sup> class mail. Perhaps Larry can be persuaded to send in few photocopies to share with those of us unfortunate enough to miss the meeting?

# THE BICKERDIKES IN MONTREAL - JULY AND AUGUST 1897

By Geoff Newman

## Background

Following a series of tests in the latter part of 1896 and early 1897, six Bickerdike machines were introduced into regular service in July 1897. It is possible that all six machines were in the post office by Saturday 10 July. However the earliest known use (EKU) of the cancellations suggests they were brought into actual service on Saturday 10 July and Monday 12 July. I am not aware of any of these cancellations dated 11 July 1897.

Hub 1-96 was used with the Flag 1 die K obliterator during a test period of a machine in September 1896, and again in the early December testing, this time in combination with Flag 3. The only known use of Hub 2-96 is with F-3 during a third test period that started in late December 1896. Hub 1 with the year date changed to 1897, and designated 1-97, was used with F-3 when the testing continued for a few days in early January 1897. Finally Hub 1-97 returned in July 1897 in combination with Flag 7 die IV, the period of use that is the subject of this article.

## July/August Usages

Six different dater-hubs and seven different flag-obliterators were used during the months of July and August. It is challenging with the material at my disposal to try and determine the periods of use of the various hub and obliterator combinations. To do this I assigned the dater hubs designations starting with Hub 1-97 (converted from 1-96) and five new hubs designated Hub 3-97 to Hub 7-97.

Three hub and flag combinations appear to have remained constant throughout the full period from the EKU in July to 31 December 1897. They are:



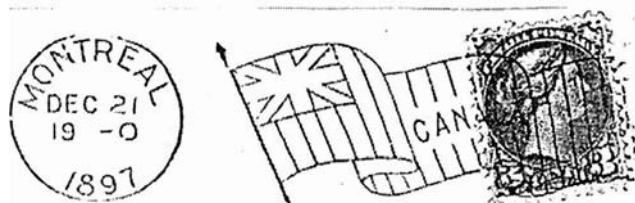
*Hub 1-97 with Flag 7 die IV.  
10 July (EKU) to 31 December 1897.*

The size of the letters used in the hub for *Montreal* are the tallest and biggest of any of the '97 hubs. Note the M begins **below** the date - JUL 10 - and the L ends **below** the date. This is the only hub where this occurs.



*Hub 6-97 with F-7 die II.  
12 July (EKU) to 31 December.*

Hub 6 is similar to Hub 3 (see below), except that the circles of the 8 in the year are much smaller in Hub 6. Hub 6-97 is known used without an obliterator as a Receiving Mark on 13 July, time-marked 22-0.



*Hub 7-97 with F-7 die VI.  
12 July (EKU) to 31 December.*

Hub 7 is sometimes difficult to separate from Hub 5 (see page 3). In Hub 7 the R is wide, the center line of the E is shorter and higher, and the top circle of the 8 of the year is much smaller.

This leaves us with three hubs and four flags that were interchanged.



*Hub 3-97*

## Characteristics:

- letters in *Montreal* are medium-sized compared to the other hubs.
- the letter O in *Montreal* is "fat" and circular.
- the center line in the E in *Montreal* is short and high.
- the mid line in the A in *Montreal* is low and almost horizontal.
- the bottom of the M in *Montreal* always seems to print poorly.

Hub 3 has been found with:

Flag 5 - 10 July to 13 July.  
Not seen for Sunday 11 July.

Flag 7 die III - 13 July only.  
Note this hub was used with two flags on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Flag-5 - 14 July to ? 15 July.  
Have not seen a 15 July.

Flag-7 die III - ? 16 July to ? 13 Aug.  
It may be that this hub and flag combination continued in use to 18 Aug. with less than a day's interruption for the Flag-5 philatelic covers.

Flag-5 - Baker Philatelic covers from 14 to 18 August.  
Flag-7 die III is reported inverted on 17 Aug. '97, but the hub is unknown.

Flag-7 die III - ? 19 Aug. to 31 Dec.



Hub 4-97

Characteristics:

- i) letters in *Montreal* appear to be the shortest and smallest of the hubs.
- ii) the R appears a little shorter than the other letters.
- iii) the mid line of the A is low.

Hub 4-97 has been found with:  
F-7 die I - 10 July to 13 July  
F-5 - 17 July only date known.  
F-7 die V - 19 July to 31 Dec. **With break** in Union Jack.



Hub 5-97

Characteristics:

- i) letters in *Montreal* seem bigger than all the others, except Hub 1.
- ii) the letter O in Montreal is elongated as a race track.
- iii) the top circle of the 8 in the year date is more squat than any other.
- iv) the top of the 7 is usually partly missing, making it a very thin 7.

Hub 5-97 has been found with:  
F-7 die V - 10 July to 17 July. **No break** in Union Jack.  
F-7 die I - 19 July to 31 December.

A note of caution. The year date at the bottom of the hub was a separate piece from the city name at the top of the hub. It is therefore possible - although this has not been observed - to have these two parts of the hub interchanged.

In order to make things easier for those convoluted flag wavers, we present the following:

**Flag-5**  
Only known with Hub 3-97, except for 17 July when it has been reported with Hub 4.

**Flag-7 die I**  
Hub 4-97 from 10 to 13 July.  
I am not aware of any strikes between 14 and 18 July.  
Hub 5-97 from 19 July to 31 December.

**Flag-7 die II**  
Is only known with Hub 6-97 from 12 Jul (EKU) to 31 December.

**Flag-7 die III**  
Is only known with Hub 3-97 from July 13 (EKU) to 31 December. Period(s) of use broken when Hub 3 is with F-5.

**Flag-7 die IV**  
Is only known with Hub 1-97 from 10 July (EKU) to 31 December, including the reported inverted flag of 14 September.

**Flag-7 die V**  
Hub 5-97 from 10 July (EKU) to 17 July.  
Hub 4-97 from 19 July to 31 December.

**Flag-7 die VI**  
Is only known with Hub 7-97 from 12 July (EKU) to 31 December.

Having read through this you can see that there are some unknown dates, questions and probable errors. It would be very much appreciated if Study Group members would send me any photocopies and/or comments they have on any Montreal Bickerdikes between 10 July and 31 December 1897. I will write a follow up, with proper credits, if warranted.

*Continued page 4*

... con't from page 3

If you think the Montreal Hub-Flag combos are complicated you should try the Toronto combos between EKV and 7 September. "But" as they say, "that is another story".

A final comment. It should be very clear from this article that SIX type 7 flag obliterators were put into service between 10 and 13 July. Not five as stated by that *Ottawa exhibitionist* on page 44 of his little pamphlet. While we are at it, be very careful of that little pamphlet when checking on the use of Bickerdikes.



The illustration above clearly shows an F-5 time-marked 14-0. This is not only earlier than a so-called "Proof Impression" of an F-5 time marked 16-0, but is an earlier report than any Bickerdike flag in July 1897, F-5 or F-7!! Can you blame me for raising my fist in frustration when I am aware that Study Group members are being misled?

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We are pleased to welcome three new members to our group this time:

- #75 Donal Donnelly who is mainly interested in the 1897 Jubilee stamps.
- #76 Harry Machum whose flag interest centre on the 1953 Coronation Flag Cancels.
- #77 Robert Lee, one of Canada's most important postal history dealers.

We also note with sadness the passing of two long-time members - they will be missed.

- #10 Alan Steinhart, who died suddenly this September
- #29 Fred Hollenbeck, who passed away earlier this summer.

## BNAPS Flag Cancel Study Group Statement of Earnings and Expenses For the 12 months Ending December 31, 1995

### Revenues

1994-5 Membership dues received in 1995	\$ 50.20
BNAPS subsidy for the <i>Flag Pole</i>	116.00
Bank Interest	<u>2.03</u>
Total Revenues	168.23

### Expenses

<i>Flag Pole</i> - Printing and North American distribution cost for four issues	168.52
Treasurer's office expenses	20.40
Chairman's office expenses	30.00
Bank Service charges	<u>3.00</u>
Total Expenses	221.92*

Net deficit for 1995 (53.69)

### Add:

Deferred membership dues payments to be used for 1996 and 1997 membership fees.	107.46
Surplus from prior years	<u>712.76</u>
	820.22

Total funds on hand as of 31 December 1995 766.53

Funds on hand consist of:

Cash on Hand (Doug Lingard)	0
Bank Balance	<u>766.53</u>
Total	<u>\$766.53</u>

\*No amounts were advanced to other study group officers in 1995 and thus no other expenses are reported.

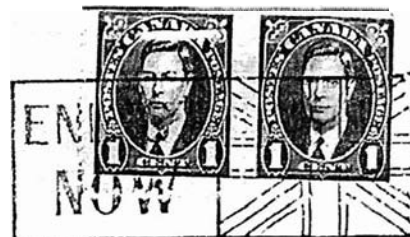
Prepared by  
Doug Lingard (Treasurer)  
March 9, 1996

## ENLIST NOW UPDATES

The photocopies below were supplied by *Cecil Coutts*, who also states that he has received a report of Vancouver Dec. 14, 1941 - a new late date - previously Dec. 13. All the originals were on full covers.



*Calgary*  
New early date Oct. 17, 1941 (previously Oct 18)



*Edmonton*  
New late date Sept. 28, 1941 (previously Sept. 27)



*North Bay*  
March 11, 1942



*Prince Albert*  
A late December use!



*A trio from Victoria dated Jun 3, 7 & 8, 1942.*  
*These seem to be at odds with the reported use of English P die K in Vancouver from June 3-8.*

The *Enlist Now* reports below were received from *Tom Almond* in the UK. Tom also tells us he'll be visiting with another flag collector in a few weeks time and hopes to be able to provide further updates.

Lethbridge	30 March 1942
Lethbridge	13 April 1942
North Bay	19 March 1943
Ottawa	17 August 1941
Regina	12 December 1941

St. John	14 October 1941
Sydney	16 September 1941
Victoria	8 April 1942
Winnipeg	23 August 1941
Winnipeg	11 November 1941

# WHY WAS THE MONTREAL TYPE 8 DIE II OBLITERATOR REPLACED?

By Doug Lingard

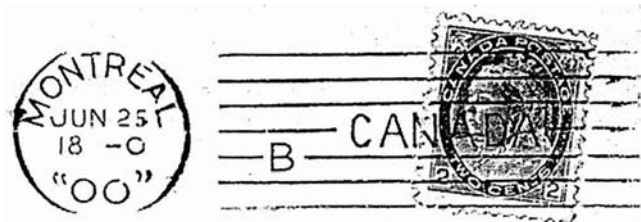
**T**hose who know me, are aware that my main interests in Canadian flag cancels are those used during World War I and II and in conjunction with the 1939 Royal Train. This is because new information is continually surfacing in these fields, while the 1896-1902 flag and machine cancels have been almost "researched to death" through the fine efforts of Larry Paige, David Sessions, Bob Heasman, and Geoff Newman (commonly known to his friends as Mr. Bickerdike). Consequently, we normally count on these folks to unearth any new discoveries on the classical flags and the last time I wrote an article on Canada's early flag cancels, (where I claimed that the Type I "K" flag cancel was actually an experimental Bickerdike machine cancel), some of our more senior members, politely - and in some cases not so politely - informed me that I "had lost all of my marbles". However, it now seems that these folks have accepted this scenario and to the best of my knowledge, none of them is now refuting this fact. In view of how they previously "beat me up" for venturing into their area of expertise, one is just a little bit reluctant to submit this article on the Montreal Bickerdike Type 8 Die II flag cancel, but since my skin is pretty thick, I thought I would give it a shot anyway.

As we all know, indicia A, C, D, and E were added to the Montreal Type 8 double-barred flag cancel obliterated between late January and late April 1900. However, the Die II flag cancel obliterator was not converted, instead it was replaced by the unattractive (to everyone but Geoff Newman) M-5 Bickerdike line cancel. Although earlier writings by Richardson, Sessions and Newman refer to this fact, none of these individuals speculate as to why the Die II obliterator was replaced by the M-5 line cancel.

If you look at the series of Die II cancels on the next page, dated between March 8 and April 19, the probable reason becomes quite clear. The March 8 example shows a clear Union Jack. However, on March 9, the lower left quadrant of the Union Jack starts to fade and by March 13, the diagonal bar has almost disappeared. Note the similarities between both March 13 impressions, the horizontal impression cancelling the stamp and the vertical impression on the left side of the cover, which would appear to indicate that they are not just accidental poor impressions, but were made by a worn or damaged cancelling die.

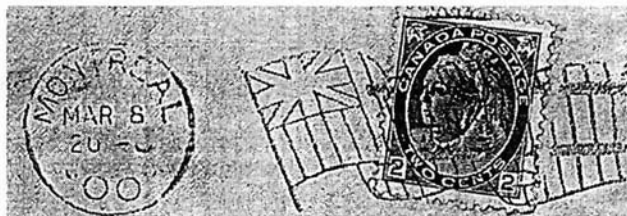
The examples dated April 14 and 19 (the last reported day of use) show further deterioration of the die. So, it would seem that the reason the letter B was not added to this obliterator but was instead replaced by the M-5 line cancel, was due to the deteriorating state of the lower left quadrant of the Union Jack.

This is my hypothesis, but I have been wrong before. If anyone would like to prove me wrong, just send me a photocopy of a very fine impression of a Die II cancel showing a complete Union Jack, dated in mid-April 1900. (Since Mr. Bickerdike has reportedly threatened to get even with me for Sally Flagstaff's Toronto M-6 April Fool's article that appeared in the *March Flag Pole*, this is his chance!) As well, photocopies of any Die II cancels in the March 9 to April 19 (or later) period would be appreciated, to chart the deterioration of this obliterator. Also, since the last of the letters (D) first appears on April 24, 1900, we may eventually discover that the Die II obliterator was used until the Die IV obliterator, with the letter D added, was put back into service. Perhaps someone can narrow this 5 day gap?

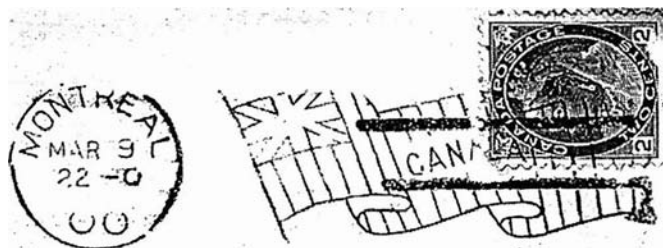


*The Bickerdike M-5 line cancel  
that eventually replaced the Die II flag cancel.*

*The examples on the next page show the evolution of the worn or damaged Die II obliterator and challenge my former friend Newman's invalid assertion on page 98 of THE BICKERDIKE MACHINE PAPERS where he states in his write-up on the M-5, "Its introduction in Montreal is difficult to understand. There is a twenty-day overlap of use with the flag Die II, suggesting that there was nothing wrong with the flag obliterator." If Mr. Newman had only taken the time to do a little original research, he would not have written this sentence which has misled so many of us for all these years.*



*Complete strike, no signs of wear or damage.*



*Note the similarities between the two March 13 strikes (Originally from the same envelope).*



*Two strikes from April 19, the LRD each showing the almost total deterioration of the lower left quadrant of the Union Jack.*