

## THE FLAG POLE



### The Newsletter of the BNAPS Flag Cancel Study Group

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#### EDITOR'S REMARKS

This issue of Flag Pole is somewhat late. I have been overseas almost continuously since January and hobbies have taken a back seat. This issue contains a major article by David Sessions on the Bickerdikes. I have had no time to find illustrations and add them to it. I do not have access to a photocopier on Easter Sunday and each copy is being produced directly on my PC. Please let David have any comments as soon as you can.

I have an article on the modern flags and several other goodies on hand for the next issue. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible. The June Flag Pole will be produced on time and it will be illustrated.

Doug Lingard has asked me to tell you that subs are now due. They have been set at C\$5 and US\$5 for Canadian and US members and £3 for British members. Please send them to Doug or myself as appropriate. I would also like to welcome a new member:

51. Preston A Pope, PO Box 1634, San Bruno, CA 94066, USA.

#### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

At the January Philex Show in Toronto we had a mini meeting of the Flag Study Circle; those attending were Doug Lingard, Larry Paige (and his charming wife), Bob Thorne and yours truly. BNAPEX Chicago dates are September 10-12 and we have applied to have a meeting on Saturday September 12, time and place to be advertised in the next Flag Pole.

I hope to meet many of you for the first time in Chicago.

# **THE BICKERDIKE FLAGS - A REVISION AND SUGGESTED PRICING STRUCTURE**

## **David Sessions**

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the BNAPS show in Vancouver, I agreed to publish a revised listing of the cancels produced by the Bickerdike machines as part of the proposed revision of Ed Richardson's handbook. I apologise to all and sundry for taking so long.

It was generally agreed that it was the flag handbook that was being revised so flags only would appear in the main body of the book. However, bars and wavy line cancels, being necessary for sensible study of the flags, are to be listed as appendices. For completeness in this revision, I have included the Imperial bars etc. along with the Geary trials. The Bickerdike trials (Type 3) were covered with the Imperials in the September 1990 Flag Pole.

In due course, an editorial decision will need to be taken with regard to the numbering. Do we retain Richardson's numbers and add (a), (b) etc where necessary? Or do we merely adopt a logical numbering system, in the light of later research, using Richardson as the basis? It makes a lot of sense to start afresh, but there is danger of confusion if auction houses continue to use Richardson numbers - and they will for a considerable time. In my own book **The Early Rapid Cancelling Machines of Canada (ERCM)**, I retained types but avoided numbers in order to avoid confusion; unfortunately references to a type and die number or letter appeared to be too cumbersome for many auction houses who are always looking for a convenient shorthand. Thus Richardson's numbers have prevailed for nearly 20 years and may take some shifting. (Comments to David please; it is very important that we obtain your views. Ed).

### **VALUATIONS**

The valuations overleaf are in Canadian Dollars, they relate to a reasonable impression on a Government Post Card (GPC) or a plain cover. Most collectors prefer full covers so the more common flags on piece have little value. When it comes to the rarities, one is usually happy enough with a piece until a cover comes along. I suggest an arbitrary valuation of 20% of the cover price for a full flag, with dater, on piece.

A particularly fine impression will warrant a premium over the prices quoted, just as a poor one will warrant a discount. Attractive covers, eg. advertising, patriotic, foreign destinations, will always command a premium, which might well be out of all proportion to the flag value in the case of the commoner examples.

First and last days naturally command a premium, but it is difficult to assign an 'across the board' factor. In a number of cases, the first/last day of use has not yet been established and one could pay a substantial premium only to find a more extreme date turn up next week. This gets less likely as time goes by

but, as the revised listing show, there are still gaps in the chronology. For a proven first day a premium of 2 or 3 times the norm would seem reasonable. For some reason, late dates are less sought after than early ones, but a proven last date should warrant at least 2 times the norm. These suggested premiums relate to the bulk of flags, such premiums would not be reasonable in the case of the rarities where use is often only 2 or 3 days.

With the exception of the Type 4 and 5 Jubilees, the period of classic flags (1896-1902) has not thrown up too many philatelic covers. One can argue endlessly over the validity of such items. At its simplest, if it went through the post it has some validity, if it didn't it doesn't, it's little more than a souvenir. But life's rarely that simple. Most serious collectors avoid philatelic covers wherever possible and for this reason their value is usually considerably less than the commercial item. This has been taken into account in the pricing of the Type 5 flag. The philatelic price is based on market price which seems not to have recognised the different categories of the flag. The case of the Type 4 Jubilee flags, dealt with in the September 1990 Flag Pole, is more complicated in that the philatelic varieties do not exist in any other form; the collector striving for completion may therefore feel bound to attempt to acquire them. This is unfortunate as the prices are far too high, in relation to commercial use, for items which were manufactured by one or more opportunists. This is not a case of sour grapes, by the way, I have succumbed like the rest!

#### **VARIETIES**

For the purpose of this listing I have ignored occasional changes in dater and canceller combinations as this was a haphazard affair. Errors might occur when the various parts were removed for cleaning, when a dater was removed to enable the machine to cancel third class mail or when a canceller was removed prior to backstamping. In replacing the parts, if more than one machine was involved, a switch could easily take place. This would have very little philatelic significance. In certain circumstances, changes in dater can be significant. For example a change of dater delineates the periods of use of the Type 5 flag at Montreal or the Type 3 trials.

A substantial premium is often asked for covers bearing flags without the dater, presumably on the basis that this is some kind of error. It was, in fact, the practice adopted in cancelling third class mail, where the impression of the date on the cover was not required. The practice was not always followed and examples are quite scarce due to the low survival of third class mail. Such covers have a place in a flag collection and their relative scarcity does demand a premium. A general pricing in the range \$50-\$100 is not uncommon for this variety but, to my mind, is unwarranted. I recommend a premium of 2 - 3 times basic valuation, with a minimum of, say, \$25. An alternative practice was to remove the date and time indicia. Such a variety is less dramatic than the omitted dater, so any premium would be

very modest.

On the other hand, scant regard seems to have been paid to the reverse situation, machine dater used without canceller; presumably because no flag appears on the cover. However, its place in the collection is every bit as valid as the covers described in the previous paragraph. If anything they will be scarcer than the solo flag but they go largely unrecognised. Probably only the one example would be required in a collection, whereas collectors may seek examples of all the cancellers used solo. Thus demand is not high and a valuation of \$5 - \$10 seems appropriate.

Note that in the listings that follow, the date is shown as day.month.year, eg. 29.12.92.

### BICKERDIKE CHRONOLOGY

#### TYPE 5

##### Montreal

Number	EKD	LKD	GPC	Cover
5-1	10.07.97 14-0	15.07.97 15-0	\$125	\$150 i
5-1a	17.09.97 14-0	17.07.97 15-0	\$200	\$250 ii
5-1b	14.08.97 15-0	14.08.97 15-0		\$75 iii
5-1c	16.08.97 15-0	18.08.97		\$75 i

#### Notes:

- i Dater later paired with F7 die 3.
- ii Dater initially used with F7 die 1; then used with F7 die 5
- iii Dater usually paired with F7 die 2.

Flag die 5 is recorded at Washington DC with a US dater. Probably a demonstration by the Canadian Postal Supply Co. at the UPU Conference; 14.06.97 is the only date recorded.

The die was used commercially from 10 to 15 July, 1897 and, very briefly, with a different dater, on 17 July 1897. The August use listed above relates to covers mainly prepared by/for B Baker of Sherbrooke St. Montreal and is purely philatelic. GPC has not been priced for this as it is not known and unlikely to be found. 5-1a is also not at present known on GPC, but its use cannot be discounted.

An example of Type 5 on cover is known cancelling a revenue stamp and dated 11 October 1897. The cover has the return address of a Montreal stamp dealer and is addressed to L Riel. It appears to be philatelic.

A number of examples of Type 5 are known cancelling Jubilee stamps in blocks or on piece. These are dated 13 and 23 July and are philatelic.

The switching of daters and flag dies has been noted on a number

of occasions, in respect of Imperial and Bickerdike machines. These have not been listed individually as they are normally of little consequence in themselves. An exception has been made in the case of Type 5 to demonstrate the discrete periods of use and the nature of that use.

#### TYPE 6

##### Montreal

6-1	13.04.98	18-0	18.04.98	\$500	\$650
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##### Ottawa

6-2	30.10.97	6-0	02.03.98	\$125	\$150	
6-2a	18.02.98	7-0			\$1000	Invert

#### Note:

The Ottawa invert is still believed to be unique, no other copy having been reported. Valuation of such an item is very subjective. It is scarcer than 1-1, of which at least four covers are known, but 1-1 is essential to a top quality flag collection, whereas 6-2a is only a variety. An arbitrary value equal to that of 1-1 has therefore been placed on this item.

#### TYPE 7

##### Hamilton

7-1 A	16.12.97	23-0	11.03.98	17-S	\$12	\$15
7-2 B	15.12.97	8-0	11.03.98	19-0	\$8	\$12

#### Note:

The 15.12.97 date for 7-2 is probably a proof strike; commercial use has been noted at 8.0 on 16.12.97. Evidence of commercial use on 15.12.97 would be welcome.

##### Montreal

7-3 die 1	10.07.97		12.04.98	18-0	\$6	\$10	
7-3a	25.09.97	15-0	03.01.98	22-0	\$175	\$200	invert
7-4 die 2	12.07.97	19-0	14.04.98	20-0	\$6	\$10	
7-4a			29.03.98	22-0	\$175	\$200	invert
7-5 die 3	16.07.97	12-0	07.04.98	18-0	\$6	\$10	
7-5a	17.08.97				\$175	\$200	invert
7-6 die 4	10.07.97	16-0	14.04.98	12-0	\$6	\$10	
7-6a	14.09.97	18-0	23.12.97	20-0	\$175	\$200	invert
7-7 die 5	12.07.97		12.04.98		\$6	\$10	
7-7a	25.09.97	16-0	25.09.97	24-0	\$175	\$200	invert
7-8 die 6	12.07.97	18-0	15.04.98	14-0	\$6	\$10	
7-8a	03.08.97		04.04.98	21-0	\$175	\$200	invert

**Notes:**

The dates shown for inverts do not, of course, represent periods of use but a span of isolated usages, in some cases examples have been reported at dates between the extremes listed. In most cases one would expect the use to be confined to individual cancelling runs as the error should be spotted fairly quickly. It does seem however, that 7-7a went unnoticed for several hours. It is highly unlikely that the machine was in use throughout the period indicated.

A date of 09.03.98 has been reported for 7-4a and I strongly suspect it is the same item as the 29.03.98 report, not all cancellations are as clear as we would wish! Confirmation would be welcome.

**Toronto**

7-10 A	12.08.97	19-0	23.02.98		\$6	\$10
7-11 B	10.08.97	18-0	23.02.98		\$6	\$10
7-12 C	10.08.97	19-0	22.02.98	19-0	\$6	\$10
7-13 D	10.08.97		23.02.98	12-0	\$6	\$10
7-14 E	11.08.97	16-0	22.02.98	19-0	\$6	\$10
7-15 F	10.08.97	13-0	23.02.98		\$6	\$10
7-16 G	10.08.97	13-0	11.08.97	23-0	\$350	\$400
7-17 H	10.08.97	18-0	11.08.97	19-0	\$500	\$600

**Notes:**

The late date for 7-13 has been confirmed and it was back in use in the form of 8-20 on the same day at 19.0 hours. 7-15 appears to have been converted to 8-22 by 19.0 on 23 February.

It is interesting that Montreal managed, at one time or another, to invert all their Type 7 flags, while Toronto and Hamilton succeeded in not doing so.

Montreal was presumably a busier post office at the time and there should be more Montreal flags generally available than Toronto flags, but the difference seems insufficient to warrant a different valuation.

**TYPE 8****Hamilton**

8-1 A	13.03.98		31.01.02	18-0	\$6	\$8	
8-2 B	13.03.98		21.01.02	18-0	\$4	\$6	
8-2a	22.09.99		27.03.00	19-0		\$200	invert
8-3 G	12.03.98	13-0	15.03.98	9-0	\$450	\$600	

**Notes:**

The late date for 8-1 shows a change of dater. The year 02 in the dater is not in inverted commas. Inverted commas were used around the year in the dater used up to and including 29.01.02.

Surprisingly, there are no reports of 8-2 between 22 and 31 January 1902.

With 8-3 reported in use up to 15.03.98, the use of both 8-1 and 8-2 from 13.03.98 continues to be puzzling. I have not seen examples of either flag dated 15.03.98 or earlier. Please report to David Sessions, a photocopy would be appreciated.

### Montreal

8-4 die 1	15.04.98	22-0	14.11.99	\$3	\$4	
8-4a	21.04.98	22-0		\$125	\$150	invert
8-5 A	25.01.00	18-0	07.03.02 19-0	\$3	\$4	
8-6 die 2	15.04.98		19.04.00	\$3	\$4	
8-6a	08.04.99	18-0	20.06.99 24-0	\$125	\$150	invert
8-7 die 3	15.04.98	19-0	16.01.00 20-0	\$3	\$4	
8-7a	07.07.99			\$125	\$150	invert
8-8 C	08.03.00		07.03.02 19-0	\$3	\$4	
8-8a	06.08.00			\$200	\$250	invert
8-9 die 4	16.04.98	22-0	20.02.00 17-0	\$3	\$4	
8-9a			24.01.00 19-0	\$125	\$150	invert
8-10	24.04.00		07.03.02 21-0	\$3	\$4	
8-11 die 5	14.04.98		28.03.00 13-0	\$3	\$4	
8-11a	04.08.98		07.03.00 17-0	\$125	\$150	invert
8-12 E	04.04.00		04.03.02	\$3	\$4	
8-13 die 6	19.04.98		07.03.02	\$2	\$3	
8-13a	29.04.99		02.12.99 19-0	\$125	\$150	invert

### Notes:

The date of 02.03.98 for 8-6a listed in ERCM cannot be correct. Is it a Type 7 die 1 invert? Confirmation is needed.

Three reports of inverted flags on 08.04.99 have been received. Two are reputed to be die 5 and the other die 2, which suggests misreporting. However, examination of photostats suggests that both flags were inverted on the same day - most unusual!

A late date for 8-13 of 17.03.02 was reported, but this is unlikely and is assumed to be 07.03.02.

Similar comments apply to inverts to those made about the Montreal Type 7 flags. Although the scarcity of each individual date is similar, there seem to be substantially more examples of unlettered Type 8 inverts, whereas only the one report of a lettered Type 8 is recorded. As most collectors are satisfied with just one example of the various types inverted, the price for Type 8 unlettered flags has been trimmed slightly.

A gap of several weeks between some of the unlettered Type 8 dies and their successor lettered dies is unusual. One would have expected closer proximity in view of the number of these markings.

### Ottawa

8-15 G	29.03.98	6-0	04.03.02 21-0	\$8	\$10
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## **Toronto**

8-17 A	24.02.98	19-0	03.02.02	15-0	\$3	\$5	
8-17a	17.12.98	15-0			\$200	\$250	invert
8-18 B	24.02.98	15-0	01.02.02	18-S	\$2	\$3	
8-19 C	24.02.98	11-0	29.01.02		\$2	\$3	
8-20 D	23.02.98	19-0	03.02.02	16-0	\$2	\$3	
8-21 E	23.02.98	19-0	31.01.02	24-0	\$2	\$3	
8-22 F	23.02.98	19-0	03.02.02	15-S	\$2	\$3	
8-23 G	23.02.98	15-0	23.02.98	23-0	\$750	\$850	

### **Notes:**

8-20 has been reported on 15.02.02; this seems most unlikely and no confirmation has been received, so reference to the date will be deleted.

Dies C, D, E and F all seem to have suffered a change of date late in January 1902, it is quite likely therefore that all six current dies did. Perhaps members would look closely at dies A and B in January and February 1902 and report their findings.

## **TYPE 9**

### **Ottawa**

9-1	30-10-97	4-0	19.03.98	\$75	\$100	
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### **Montreal**

9-2	13.04.98	18-0	18.04.98	13-0	\$450	\$500
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## **TYPES 10, 11, 12**

### **Toronto**

10-1 A	03.05.01	15-S	07.09.01	20-S	\$20	\$25	
11-1 B	01.05.01		07.09.01	21-0	\$20	\$25	
11-2 C	08.05.01		07.09.01	19-0	\$20	\$25	
12-1 D	14.05.01	19-0	07.09.01	14-0	\$20	\$25	
12-2 E	17.05.01	19-0	06.09.01	15-S	\$20	\$25	
12-2a	14.07.01	23-0	11.08.01	23-0	\$400	\$500	invert
12-3 F	17.05.01	19-0	06.09.01	11-0	\$20	\$25	

### **Notes:**

Richardson's Handbook listed die D as inverted 14 July and 11 August; the ERMIC listed die E on the former date and die D on the latter. Larry Paige says both dates are correct, but both relate to die E. What is more, both are on postcards, both are Sunday dates and both are timed at 23.0! A photocopy of the 14 July example indicates that the die letter is practically illegible, but other characteristics of the flag pinpoint it as die E. I have not seen the 11 August example.

**TYPE 13****Victoria**

13-1	08.08.01	22.08.01	\$750	\$850
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This is reputed to be a hand roller, It is certainly not a Bickerdike machine.

**NON-FLAG DIES USED IN BICKERDIKE MACHINES****TYPE M4****Hamilton**

M4	14.03.98	15.03.98	9-0	\$250	\$350
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**Ottawa**

M4	03.06.98	4-0	03.03.02	21-0	\$6	\$8
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**TYPE M5****Montreal**

M5 B	31.03.00	19-0	07.03.02	17-S	\$7	\$10
inverted	06.04.00	19-0	31.10.01	24-0	\$100	\$125
B omitted	28.08.02	20-0	31.10.02	17-0	\$40	\$50

Note :

The inverted die is recorded on at least six separate occasions.

**TYPE M6****Montreal**

M6 A	11.03.02	18-0?	30.10.02	19-0	\$10	\$12
M6 B	11.03.02		30.10.02		\$10	\$12
M6 B invert	23.04.02				\$125	\$150
M6 C	11.03.02	20-S	28.10.02	19-0	\$10	\$12
M6 D	10.03.02	19-0	30.10.02	18-0	\$10	\$12
M6 E	10.03.02	16-0	31.10.02	17-0	\$10	\$12
M6 F	11.03.02	12-S	31.10.02	19-0	\$10	\$12

**Ottawa**

M6 A	16.03.02		12.11.02	21-0	\$10	\$12
M6 B	06.03.02		14.11.02		\$10	\$12

Note:

The dater with die A has inverted commas around '02', most examples of the dater with die B do not. Early March dates for die B show inverted commas whilst an example dated 18 March does not. Was the original die B dater put into the 'A' machine when it came into use?

**Hamilton**

M6 A	03.02.02		21.10.02	9-0	\$10	\$12
M6 B	07.02.02	18-	16.10.02	9-0	\$10	\$12

**Toronto**

M6 A	04.02.02	19-S	05.02.02	15-S	\$150	\$200
M6 B	03.02.02	19-S	04.02.02	21-S	\$150	\$200
M6 C	03.02.02		06.02.02	17-0	\$150	\$200
M6 D	03.02.02	18-0	04.02.02	21-0	\$150	\$200
M6 E	03.02.02		04.02.02	21-0	\$150	\$200
M6 F	04.02.02	11-S	04.02.02	23-S	\$150	\$200

**Note:**

An isolated use of die C has been reported at Toronto dated 19.04.92 20-S. This is odd as one would have expected that the M6 dies at Toronto, having been used for only two/three days, were sent to Montreal where use of similar dies is recorded from 11 March.

**NON-FLAG DIES USED IN IMPERIAL MACHINES****Montreal**

M1(a)	10.03.96	19-0	20.03.96	21-0	\$60	\$75
M2(a)	23.03.96	17-0	10.04.96	24-0	\$20	\$30
M2(b)	22.04.96	14-0	05.06.96	17-0	\$20	\$30
M3(a) A	29.05.96		04.06.96	11-0	\$60	\$75
M3(a) B	29.05.96	17-0	06.06.96	14-0	\$60	\$75
M3(a) C	29.05.96	21-0	05.06.96	21-0	\$60	\$75
M3(a) D	29.05.96		05.06.96		\$60	\$75
M3(a) E	29.05.96		05.06.96	19-	\$60	\$75
M1(b)	30.01.97	18-0	30.03.97	18-0	\$25	\$35
M3(b)	10.03.97	18-0	18.03.97		\$50	\$60
M3(b)	30.03.97	19-0	06.04.97	19-0	\$50	\$60
M3(c)	10.03.99	17-0	05.07.00	18-0	\$15	\$20

**Notes:**

M2(a) is reported at 15-0 on 23.03.96; this appears to be a test piece.

M3(b) is paired with a different dater in each of the two short periods of use.

**THE GEARY TRIALS**  
**Montreal**

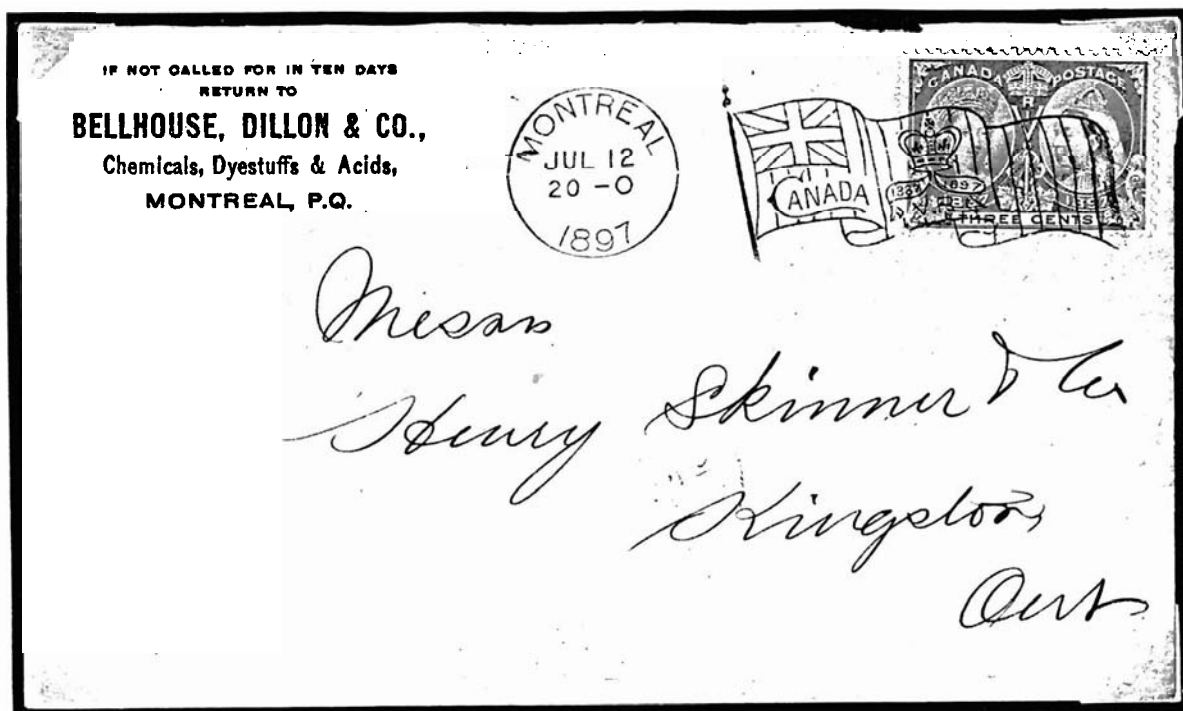
X2(a)	06.01.02	28.01.02	22-0	\$75	\$100
X2(b)	04.02.02	15.02.02		\$100	\$125
X1	18.02.02	25.04.02	20-0	\$40	\$60
X3	01.05.02	15-0	01.05.02 19-0	\$400	\$500
X5(a)	02.05.02				
X4	03.05.02	13-0	30.05.02 19-0	\$50	\$75
X4(a)	03.06.02	17-0	06.06.02 19-0	\$200	\$250
X5	09.06.02	16.08.02		\$50	\$75

**Notes:**

X5(a) has been reported as a variation on X5; I have not seen it and would welcome a photocopy of any Geary used between 25 April and 4 May, 1902.

Similarly, X4(a) is reported as a variation on X4. Clear examples of X4 measure about 2½" in length, whereas X4(a) measures around 2". However, smudged cancels make measurements imprecise. A ruler placed in line with the top of the lowest bar of X4(a) runs near the bottom of the '1'. Examples are noted between 3 and 6 June 1902. Members are asked to check their X4's and report their findings.

**SOME NICE BICKERDIKE COVERS**



IF NOT DELIVERED IN FIVE DAYS  
RETURN TO  
THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE  
MONTREAL, QUE.



W a Stuart  
Naperville

Out

IF NOT DELIVERED IN FIVE DAYS,  
RETURN TO  
The Dominion Cotton Mills Co.,  
MONTREAL,



Mr. Rennie, Esq

Toronto

Out