

THE FLAG POLE
BNAPS '93 REPORT
LINGARD WINS GOLD

The Newsletter of the BNAPS Flag Cancel Study Group

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

If you missed BNAPS '93 you missed a great time. We had over 250 members in attendance. Doug Lingard's Flag Exhibit was incredible and the socializing continued well into the late evening.

It was especially pleasant for me to either meet or renew acquaintances with so many of our U.K. and U.S. members.

Fred Langford has already sent us photostats of some of his goodies which no doubt Bob will be sharing in this issue (next issue Ed.).

On a sadder note we were shocked to hear of the passing of member Preston Pope killed in an automobile accident. Preston has contributed quite a lot to the Flag Pole and will be greatly missed.

EDITOR'S REMARKS

This issue is devoted to BNAPS '93, since I had such a good time during the whole convention meeting the members of the study group and all the other BNAPS'ers that attended.

There were discussions about Flag Cancellations while setting up exhibits on Thursday afternoon. Some of the flag group had dinner together Friday evening. We met as a study group on Saturday (see inside). Some of us got together Saturday evening in the hospitality suite and then many Flag collectors dined together at the awards banquet.

There were handfuls of Flag Covers passed from collector to collector all throughout the convention and most members went home with a flag or two from the dealers' bourse. A very successful convention, and thank you to group member and Convention Chairman, Alan Steinhart for a great time.

FLAG STUDY GROUP
MEETING AT BNAPS '93

Our study Group meeting at the convention was a great success attended by over 20 people including at least five visitors from across the pond.

Members attending the meeting:

Tom Almond, Bill Angley, Wayne Curtis, Charles King, Fred Langford,
Doug Lingard, Larry Paige, Mike Rixton, John Robertson, Bill Rockett,
Dan Rosenblat, David Sessions, Dan McInnis, (who joined the group on the spot)
and your editor.

Guests included:

Reg Hiscock, Leigh Hogg, Peter McCarthy, Herb McNaught, Sandy Mackie,
David Nickson and others.

We were welcomed by Chairman John. Treasurer Doug advised we in a solid financial position. Then John introduced our featured speaker David Sessions.

David talked on the Classic Flags leading to the 'Geary' Machine Trials of 1902. Discussion following was lively. The balance of this issue is a copy of David's notes on the Flag portion of his address. Please review your material to see if you might help to answer any of the remaining questions. I will not include the notes on the 'Geary' machines but can send copies to those who are interested.

Many members exhibited at the show but I will report on only one THE GOLD MEDAL FLAG EXHIBIT.

Doug Lingard exhibited 'Canadian Flag Cancellations 1896-1919'. The ten frame exhibit included example of all the major Flag varieties including the new discoveries reported in the Flag Pole over the past 5 years. Presentation read like a book, with an outline of the chronology of machine cancellations starting with Canada's first machine cancellation of March 12, 1896 through WW I, with examples of every WW I flag cancellation.

The exhibit was so complete that Doug made 10 photocopies of the exhibit, had them bound and presented copies to a fortunate few. The research that went into Doug's exhibit forms the basis for the new handbook. To quote member and respected Toronto dealer Alan Steinhart "I took a day and read the exhibit from cover to cover. It's a fascinating story".

Your editor will never forget this convention. I had the opportunity to discuss flags with the greatest people in the world, collectors of flag cancellations.

BNAPEX 93

The Classic Flags - A Summary

With the publication of the flag checklist and thoughts that perhaps we have nearly reached the end of the road to perfection in flag research, now might be a good time to survey what there is left to discover with regard to the chronology of the classic flags and their contemporary machine markings.

Imperials

These are pretty complete as witness the accompanying summary.

Ottawa

Here we have a fluent chronology with no breaks, if we take into account the Sunday dates. This is not to say that Sunday dates are unknown, but they are unusual. One assumes that most Sunday working would involve handstamps, in view of the low volume of throughput, if the post office was indeed working on a given Sunday.

Montreal

We are pretty tight here too, the only possible gaps to be filled are new late dates for the F1 flags. These relate to the F4 Jubilee flags which, given time, we'll look at separately.

The draft checklist shows F1 die B only from 9 ^{June} July, 1896, it having previously been erroneously reported as from 4 June. One assumes it was in use from 6 June, though the wavy line die that preceded the 'B' flag was still in situ at 2pm on 6 June. This time is also the earliest recorded for an F1 flag (die F).

I should like to hear from anyone with a die B flag dated 6,7 or 8 June, 1896.

Bickerdikes

These are shaping up pretty well but there are still a few gaps which diligent searching might close.

Montreal

The changeover from Imperial to Bickerdike took place on 10 July, 1897 (a Saturday) and we have three Bickerdike dies (F5 & F7(i) & (iv)) recorded, the earliest being 2pm. The three Imperial F4 dies are also recorded on 10 July, two at least having been logged at 6pm. 11 July was a Sunday and three other F7 dies were put into use on Monday, 12 July. the remaining F7 (die iii) came into use on 16 July when F5 was withdrawn.

The F7s were used until 12-15 April, 1898, at which time they were converted to F8, with F6 and F9 being used as back-ups between 13 and 18 April. F7 (iii) however, is only recorded to 7 April, 1898, and one would have expected a few more days.

F8(vi) appears not to have come into use until 19 April, which explains F6 and F9 up to 18 April - or does it? With the other five F8s in situ from 16 April there was only room for one additional die, either F6 or F9. Bearing in mind their intermittent use at Ottawa, I wonder whether they gave problems; did they need more frequent cleaning perhaps? This might have given rise to alternation. The overlap is not so great as first appears; die iv of the F8s is only recorded from 10pm on 16 April and 17 April was a Sunday. I can confirm use of F9 on 18 April but would welcome confirmation of F6 on that date.

The next move was the addition of die letters A,C,D & E, which took place over a period between January and April, 1900. This gives rise to a few gaps, possibly because of reluctance to identify the unlettered dies on the part of less dedicated collectors. Thus we have:

F8 (i) to 14 Nov.99	(A) from 25 Jan.00
(iii) to 16 Jan.00	(C) from 8 Mar.00
(iv) to 20 Feb.00	(D) from 24 Apr.00
(v) to 28 Mar.00	(E) from 4 Apr.00.

I would expect the gaps to be closed by better reporting of the unlettered dies but we cannot, as yet, be confident of the early dates for the lettered F8s.

F8(vi) continued in unlettered form to March, 1902. My book says 17 March but I now strongly suspect this should be 7 March.

Bar cancel M5(B) ostensibly replaced F8 die(ii) and as die (ii) is recorded to 19 Apr.00 there seems to be an overlap. However, as F8 (D) & (E) did not appear until 24 and 4 April respectively, the apparent overlap seems reasonable.

F8s A,C & D are all reported to 7 March, 1902, as is M5B. I suspect, as previously mentioned, that F8(vi) also ran to 7 March only. We might therefore expect F8(E) to surface with a new late date between 4 & 7 March, 1902.

7 March was a Friday and the replacement M6s are only recorded from Monday and Tuesday, 10/11 March, 1902. It looks as though things were pretty quiet on Saturday, 8 March!

It is interesting to see that M5 without the B was re-introduced for the period 28 August to 31 October, 1902. One assumes this would be a replacement for one of the M6s, yet all are recorded to late October.

With the introduction of the first International reported as 31 October, 1902, the late dates of 30/31 October for M6s and M5 are reasonable. We might expect die C to have been used to at least 30 October; 28th is the latest reported so far.

Ottawa

Though only having two machines, Ottawa does present its problems. Imperial flag F1 is noted up to 28 October, 1897, while both Bickerdikes F6 & F9 are recorded from 30 October; so Friday 29 October looks quiet.

P.O. Inspector Sweetnam indicated, in a letter of 21 Oct. 1897, two Bickerdike machines at Ottawa; use of F6 & F9 concurrently seems to confirm this. However, as I've said before, they are pretty scarce for two dies in continuous use over more than four months. With F6 & F9 only noted to 2 March and 19 March 1898 respectively, and F8(G) not in service until 29 March, we have only one machine noted for most of March and no machine at all from 20-28 March inclusive. M4 was not introduced until the beginning of June so for the whole of April and May 1898 there is evidence of only one machine.

It is instructive to note here that Jeff Switt is quoted in the Squared Circle handbook as saying that the incidence of squared circle use at Ottawa falls dramatically from the middle of 1898. Perhaps it was only from mid 1898 that Ottawa got to grips with its new-fangled machines!

F8 & M4 are recorded to 4 and 3 March, 1902, respectively and there is a small gap to 6 March when M6B is recorded. The gap does not include a Sunday (2 March). One cannot help feeling that M6A should be reported prior to 16 March, 1902.

M6A & B are noted up to 12 & 14 Nov. 1902, respectively and the first International is recorded on 17 November

Hamilton

The first changeover, from F7 to F8, was unusual in that the new F8s are both reported from 13 March, 1898, a Sunday! The ubiquitous F8 die G was imported for the changeover and is reported on 14 March as is M4 which, in fact, is only known on 14/15 March. One wonders why these 14 & 15 March usages if both F8s were in use on the 13th. I should like to see evidence of F8 on that day, particularly die A. Perhaps anyone with dates 13, 14 or 15 would let me know.

One might expect a new late date for F8 die B (now 21 Jan.02) whereas Die A is 31 Jan.02.

Replacement M6(A) is noted from Monday 3 Feb.02 so no machine use is logged for Saturday 1 Feb. An earlier date for M6(B), now 7 Feb., might be expected, as might a new late date (currently 16 Oct.02); 21 October, to match M6A would be reasonable.

The earliest International so far noted is 23 October, 1902.

Toronto

This is a pretty tidy chronology.

Six F7 flags were in use on 10 August, 1897, including G & H. Die E seems to have been introduced on 11 Aug.(16-0) and A on 12 Aug.(19-0); dies G & H were withdrawn on 11 Aug. (23-0 & 19-0). Fine, except that, at least for the period 16-0 to 19-0 on 11 August, there seem to have been seven dies in operation on six machines!

The changeover from F7 to F8 took place between 22 & 24 Feb.98 and seems to have been done very efficiently. Dies D & F are recorded in both forms on 23 Feb.

With three of the F8 flags A, D & F having been noted up to 3 Feb.1902 one might well expect the other three to match - current reporting is B-1 Feb., C-29 Jan. and E-31 Jan. February 2nd was a Sunday. The latest time mark (D) noted is 4pm and the earliest of the replacement M6s on the same day is 6pm.

The replacement M6s are something of an enigma, with only a couple of days recorded use, starting 3 Feb.1902. Dies A & F have not yet been noted on that day. Four of the dies appear to have been withdrawn next day, while die A is recorded to 5 Feb. and die C to 6 Feb.1902.

The new International machine was up and running at 4pm on 4 February, 1902.

I've deliberately made no reference to the Toronto Exhibition flags of 1901 as these were just temporary replacements during the life of the F8s and do not affect the chronology of the die changes.

Type 4 Jubilee Flags at Montreal

With no written documentation we can only speculate on these three cancellations. We know that F1 flags A, E & F were withdrawn in June, 1897, to accommodate the incoming F4s. In my book I recorded them at 19 June (21-0), 17 June and 18 June respectively. A time of 19-0 has now been allotted to die F on 18 June.

There is little doubt that the F4 flags were expected to be available for Saturday, 19 June, first day of the Jubilee stamps. We might therefore expect to find F1(E) on 18 June and possibly both E & F on 19 June. Die E has in fact now been reported on 21 June but the time mark is 5-0, a time favoured by the perpetrators of the various 'philatelic' Jubilee flags. I am inclined to set this isolated example to one side for the purpose of this review. Of course, if genuine commercial use it would greatly strengthen the case for saying that the F4 dies did not arrive at the Montreal P.O. till the Monday morning.

As no F4 is known, even in philatelic form, on 19 June we can safely assume that the dies were not available on that day, at least not in normal working hours. They were either delivered late on Saturday or on Sunday, if the Montreal Family Herald & Weekly Star' is to be believed. On 26 June, 97, the paper reported on "The Jubilee cancelling stamp.....since its use in the Montreal Post office on Sunday last, the 20th inst...." The reporter was not seemingly present on 20 June so it may well be that the dies were received, fitted into the machines and tried out, possibly samples were sent to the local press. Postal officials may have prepared souvenirs for themselves and others. The date itself is significant in that 20 June, 1837, was the date of Queen Victoria's accession, so the Sunday in question would have been the exact Jubilee date. In this latter case the 'souvenirs' could well have been prepared after 20 June and the Montreal Herald may have seen/received one of these.

Commercial use seems to have commenced in the afternoon of Monday, 21 June, with die 2 noted from 2pm and the other two from 3pm. I have an unaddressed example of die 1 timed at 11am which one can only assume is a trial or a souvenir (or both!)

As you are all aware, a fair number of combinations of dater and canceller exist, the irregular ones are mostly dated 20 or 22 June. the time mark is often 5-0, sometimes 12-0. Remember, at Montreal they used a 24 hour clock so 5-0 is 5am, a time mark not seen on commercial mail

With Bickerdike machines replacing Imperials on 10 July, one might expect this to be the last day of use of the F4 cancel, but a few have been noted with later dates.

At least three Bickerdike machines were in place on 10 July, the earliest so far is timed at 2pm (F5). None of the retained F1 dies have been noted beyond 9 July so these could have been the first to go. Commercial F4s have been noted up to 6pm. One might have expected the remaining three to be replaced next day, particularly as 11 July was a Sunday - there would have been less interference with throughput. With at least two of the three remaining Bickerdikes not being reported prior to 6pm on 12 July, it seems likely that the work was completed on that day; therefore one or more of the Imperial machines could still have been available. After this date the Imperial machines could still have been in the building but would be unlikely to be hooked up to the electrical supply. It might have still been possible to produce a souvenir or two by hand-operating the machines.

Most, if not all, of the post-10 July covers lack a backstamp.

Geary

This one is not strictly flags but I hope you'll indulge me. It concerns a query on the experimental machine at Montreal in 1902. I felt I might not get another chance to put the query to so distinguished a panel!

The chronology is a little different to that shown in my book, as most of you will know, and it seems now to be fairly well settled with just the odd small gap like the rest of the flags and bars. It's just that there are a couple of oddities.

First there is the canceller used on 2 May, it looks like X5 but there are nine bars. I have only had the one report - there's a photostat here. Has anyone else got an example?

Second, a variation on X4 was reported, a few years back, on 4 June, with the note that the irregular bottom bar had been removed and the remaining bars lowered by 2mm in relation to the dater.

I have had a 4 June example for some time but there are traces of the bottom (6th) bar there still, though I agree the lowering of the bars. The obvious difference to me was that it was shorter than X4. I subsequently acquired 5 & 6 June and they match, but the bars seem slightly longer. I have a 3 June photostat which also seems to conform. Measurement of the bar length is a bit hit and miss as I reckon the mailpieces slipped while going through and we get all sorts of differing lengths.

Anyway, examples from 3 to 6 June show lowered bars and (generally) shorter length. Problem is there are a couple of 29 May examples where the bars are not lowered as one would expect but they do look short!

Have we got a new die for 3 to 6 June, was X4 modified, or is it all hallucination?

Current 'Geary' Chronology

X2a 6 Jan 1902 to 28 Jan 1902 (22-0)
2 February was a Sunday; the dater as a backstamp has been noted for 3 Feb(17-0) and 4 Feb(13-0)

X2b 4 Feb 1902(13-0) to 15 Feb 1902
Dater as a backstamp noted for 17 Feb., 16 Feb. was a Sunday.

X1 18 Feb 1902 to 25 Apr 1902(20-0)
27 April was a Sunday.

X3 1 May 1902(15-0) to 1 May 1902(19-0)
These are the only two examples reported.

X5a 2 May 1902(19-0)
This is the only example reported.

X4 3 May 1902(13-0) to 30 May 1902(19-0)
An indistinct example which looks like 2 June has been noted.
1 June was a Sunday.

X4a 3 Jun 1902(17-0) to 6 Jun 1902(19-0)
8 June was a Sunday

X5 9 Jun 1902(19-0) to 16 Aug 1902.