

'One Great Sporting Maple Leaf': Bobby Kerr and the Debut of a Canadian Symbol

By Robert K. Barney

For Canadians, the enduring late 19th and early 20th century debate between adherents of sustained British imperialism and those champions of Canadian sovereignty closed in December 1964 by dint of a Canadian Parliamentary act establishing a new national symbol, one that henceforth removed the British ensign from national flag and federal governmental identifications and replaced it with a simple red maple leaf embossed on a white background between two panels of red. This is the primary identification symbol, the logo, indeed the brand, by which Canada is now recognised throughout the world.

The birth of the maple leaf logo's legitimization in both national and international context points to a role played by the Canadian Olympic Committee, the embryo saga of which was superimposed on the initiatives of the nation's first Olympic team, the 1908 aggregation of male athletes that competed in the London Games of 1908. And, the single individual who most represented, indeed showcased the "Canadian symbol-to-be," was Robert "Bobby" Kerr, the sole gold medallist of those 37 individuals composing the Canadian Stadium Team at London in 1908.¹

Robert "Bobby" Kerr



He was born on 9th June 1882 in the town of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh in present day Northern Ireland. When he was five years old Kerr's parents immigrated to Canada, eventually settling in Ontario in the bustling 19th century steel manufacturing city of Hamilton, the so-called "Pittsburgh of Canada."² In Hamilton's

long and storied sports history, Kerr continues to be celebrated as one of the founders of the city's lengthy and distinguished sporting and Olympic tradition.³ Kerr's athletic *forte* was speed afoot. The gift of "running fast," he inherited from his ancestral antecedents; the refinement of that ancestral-given gift was nurtured by a cadre of amateur sports-minded coaches and officials who, by the opening of the 20th century, guided the fortunes of Hamilton's young and aspiring track and field athletes. From the time he was a teenager until age 26 and the climactic event upon which this essay focusses, young Kerr carved an indelible national and international record of sprinting achievement.

His particular specialties were the 100 and 200 metres sprints, events in which he reigned in supreme status in Canada from 1904 to 1910.⁴ The supreme occasion in Kerr's athletic career occurred at the 1908 Olympic Games in London, England. He did not know it at the time, but he was to become an Olympic gold medallist and the most celebrated representative of Canada's mission to present a new symbol of its nationhood to its global companions – the red maple leaf as a signifier of "things Canadian" in place of the "dominant and domineering" British ensign. The finite role of the 1908 Olympic saga in the concerted efforts by Canadian "sovereignists" against their imperialist adversaries has yet to be unfolded. This remains a further mission, one beyond this very short examination.

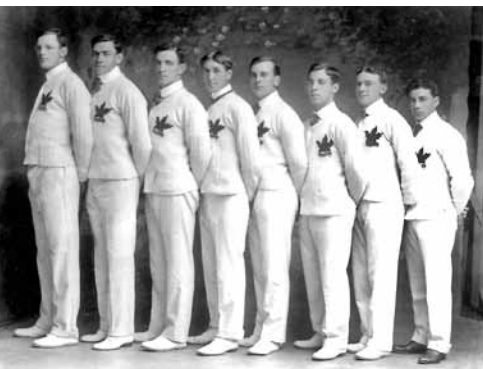
When John Hanbury-Williams, Military Secretary to Governor-General Lord Earl Grey,⁵ was given responsibility for organising Canada's first Olympic team for the London Games of 1908, his first matter of business was to resolve a bitter dispute between two relatively neophyte amateur sport governing bodies, each of which felt it spoke for the nation on amateur eligibility affairs. In what can now be judged as a masterpiece of "persuasion diplomacy," stark philosophical differences between the Toronto-based CAU (Canadian Amateur Athletics Union) and the Montreal-based AAFC (Amateur Athletics Federation of Canada) were temporarily put aside for the sake of "national unanimity."⁶

Hanbury-Williams' enunciation, declared at the end of his opening remarks before a "peace gathering" of the belligerent parties, set the tone. "If we can come to an understanding today," stated Hanbury-Williams, "we



Bobby Kerr with a collection of his sprinting prizes

Off to England, Bobby Kerr 2nd row, 2nd from right.



1908 Stadium Team Executive Committee: Robert Kerr second from right (left image), right: Kerr far left, standing.



shall have done something, and it is time that something was done. Of course we shall be better pleased if the flag [of truce] is run to the top and left there – only to be replaced by one that bears the emblem of one united body – one, if I may use an eccentric expression, great sporting maple leaf."⁷

Springing from those remarks, the Canadian Olympic Team symbol of a red maple leaf was adopted and affairs moved forward towards mounting a team, the entire "national effort" legitimized by a combination of municipal, provincial, and federal financial grants.⁸ There was a further legitimization of the entire endeavor being a national effort: nation-wide regional qualification tests and final selection trials. At the final 100 and 200 metres Olympic qualifying trials held on 6th June 1908 in Montreal, Bobby Kerr "dominated his competition."⁹ Of Kerr and his prospects in London, the *Ottawa Evening Journal* proclaimed: "Bobby Kerr of Hamilton, Canada's premier sprinter, is one of Canada's gentlemen. He is a classy boy from the roof of his hat down, and here in Canada we believe him to be as good as the best of them (...) Kerr is a grand handicap runner and frequently has to concede 12 yards in a hundred. He wins all over the country, and probably has more prizes than any athlete of the younger brigade in the country (...) he is a very stylish runner."¹⁰

Less than two weeks later Bobby Kerr was given a glorious send-off by well-wishing Hamiltonians and entrained to Montreal where he boarded the steamship *Tunisia* for the Atlantic crossing to England, a voyage that Kerr described as: "very pleasant, it took

us 9 days (...) There were 30 of us, so we had a great time together. We practiced on board the boat daily, mostly to keep down weight, as the meals were very tempting."¹¹

Arriving in the port of Liverpool, the party boarded railroad cars for the 4 hour, 193 mile journey to London. "The trains are funny little coaches," wrote Kerr, "with side doors, but they can go."¹² Canada's Olympic headquarters were established at 65 Sinclair Road in Kensington West, a fifteen minute walk from the newly built and magnificent White City Olympic Stadium.¹³ Of London itself, Kerr was amused: "London is certainly a great city. The traffic is something awful, a funny thing here is everyone keeps to the left, one of our bicycle boys forgot this one day and was fined 10 shillings."¹⁴ Of King Edward, Queen Alexandra, and Londoners in general, Kerr also had thoughts. "I have seen the King and Queen and other members of the Royal Family," he wrote, "The King is a fine looking old gentleman, the Queen is all painted up. The people here are very loyal to them, especially the working men, who stand on the curb as they drive past and wave their hats at them. I am surprised at the English people, and I have changed my opinion of them, there are some fine people here, we only get the scrubs in Canada."¹⁵

It is obvious that Bobby Kerr was a religious man, a *devotee* of the Methodist faith. Almost half of his storied 18th July letter dwelled on "going to church" in England. "Sundays we generally go to church twice a day," he related, "I have been to City Road Chapel, the home of Methodism where John and Charles Wesley preached (...) the old house where John Wesley lived stands outside."¹⁶ It is obvious, too, that Bobby Kerr was well liked and respected by his teammates, an individual who contributed to the close knit bonding of the team.¹⁷

Between the time of his arrival in England on 22nd June and the formal opening of the Games of the Fourth Olympiad on 13th July, Kerr was indeed a busy athlete. In his 18th July letter to his sister Dina residing in the western Canadian prairie town of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, he described events. "I suppose Jennie¹⁸ has told you of the nice sendoff I received in Hamilton. I certainly appreciated it and the only way to return my thanks is by winning over here. So far I have been doing well, in 3 race days I have won 2 beautiful gold medals, 3 silver cups, 1 silver tea set, and one gold cup which I keep for one year valued at \$500."¹⁹ And all this, before the Games even opened! Following one of those "race days," the 4th July finals of the British Track and Field Championships, London's *Daily Telegraph* was prompted to exclaim: "R. Kerr, the Canadian sprinter and five time champion of the Dominion showed a clean pair of heels to all our short distance men. He won the 100 and 200 yards races in surpassing style (...) in all his four races, the two preliminaries and the two final heats, Kerr carried his

The Stadium "Marching Team," Kerr is front row, far left, seated on chair.



white jersey emblazoned with the design of the *maple leaf in red* readily to the front. He is a sprint runner such as amateur athletics has seldom known."²⁰

'Coming Out' Soirees

At approximately 2:45 on the afternoon of Monday, 13th July 1908, on the occasion of the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the Fourth Olympiad, a contingent of thirty-two Canadian athletes entered the Shepherd's Bush Olympic Stadium and marched smartly to their assigned marshaling place on the infield of the recently constructed grand athletic edifice.²¹



Of the eighteen nations represented in the proceedings that overcast summer afternoon, the Canadians made an especially indelible impression. Their spanking new uniforms, adorned with the red maple leaf emblazoned on the left breast of their dress sweaters, were the envy of other teams as well as the object of admiration by many of the some 40,000 spectators on hand for the occasion. Grouped on the stadium infield behind their "Canada" name standard and what at the time passed for the Canadian national flag,²² they awaited the arrival of King Edward VII, charged with opening the fourth Olympic Games of the modern era. Promptly at 3:30 P.M. the King proclaimed the only message he was invited to deliver: "I declare the Olympic Games of London open." A fanfare of trumpets from the Royal Guard followed; then the national anthem "God Save the King," during which the national flags of each Olympic team were dipped. Finally, a colourful parade by the national teams assembled wound its way around the stadium's running track, past the Royal Box, and out the exit.

This singular occasion in the chronicle of Canadian nationalism abroad was marked by history's first-ever presentation in international context of that enduring symbol which today binds the nation and identifies Canada across the world – the universally – recognised

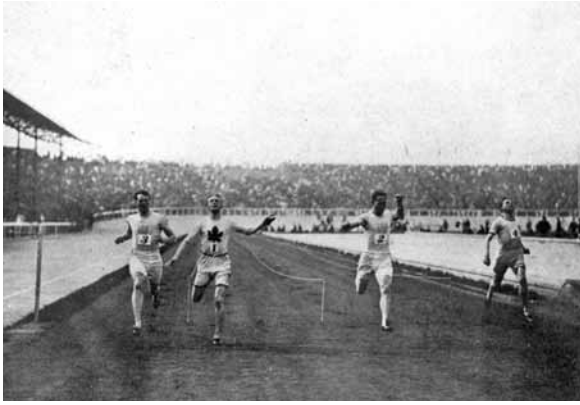
red maple leaf emblem. Of the thirty-two Canadian athletes who took part in those stadium ceremonies, one was prompted to report his impressions of the historic event and the striking uniforms. Two weeks following the opening ceremonies, the *Brantford* (Ontario) *Exposition* published the reflections of William "Billy" Wood, the premier long-distance runner and athletic pride of the "Telephone City."²³ "The reception suit [dress uniform], and also the one in which we paraded before the King," enthused Wood to his home-town newspaper, "is: white shoes, white trousers, white sweater jacket, with small red maple leaf on one side, with the word 'Canada' underneath, white collar and blue sailor tie, and white cap with a small red maple leaf on it, also with the word 'Canada' on it. We all attended Lord Strathcona's Dominion Day reception in a body, attired in this costume, and were the hit of the evening, being complimented time after time about our natty uniforms. And again everyone was proud of Canada."²⁴

William Wood was not the sole acclaimer of the new uniforms and the red maple leaf insignia. John Howard Crocker, who wrote the final report of the Canadian Olympic team's appearance at the 1908 Games, noted: "The Canadian Team, from the first day, took a prominent part and the Maple Leaf was ever before the people helping to carry out those ideals hoped-for by the International Committee (IOC)."²⁵ Following the conclusion of the Games, *The Times* pointedly remarked on the Canadian team and its colourful insignia: "The Canadian Olympic Athletes furnish a good example of the combination of physical excellence with other qualifications which make athletics a higher thing than they may sometimes appear to be on the surface. The bearers of the red maple leaf have shown throughout these games a dogged pluck and a cheerfulness in the face of disappointment, which the representatives of none of the other nations have surpassed."²⁶

Following their historic opening, the Games themselves unfolded. Two of the premier track and field events on the Olympic programme, the 100 and 200 metres sprints, took place before a huge international audience. Once again, the red maple leaf gained celebrated high profile posture as the recognisable symbol of an aspiring nation. Kerr's performance in the finals of both the 100 and 200 metres insured that fact. In his report of the 100 metre sprint final on 22nd July, team manager Crocker wrote: "... Kerr was second easily to Walker, beating Rector the U.S. runner by 6 inches, but the judges gave Kerr third place."²⁷ In the 200 metre sprint final held on 23rd July there remained no doubt as to the winner.²⁸ Stated Crocker: "R. Kerr won this event, beating a field of 76 competitors."²⁹ In each event's finish line photo, the red maple leaf on Kerr's thrust-forward chest proclaimed a message: "this was Canada." No Union Jack obscured the point.

The front ranks of Canadian Olympic Team entry into Stadium. Kerr is pictured in middle of third row of those four abreast.

Bobby Kerr at finish of 200 metre sprint. Right: Jubilant teammates celebrate his victory.



Canada's National Flag: The Triumph of the Maple Leaf

A fundamental question persists: what relationship, if any, did the Canadian Olympic Committee's maple leaf expression of national identity forged in 1908 have in the ultimate construction of the Canadian national flag with its distinctive red maple leaf, an initiative that spelled the beginning of the demise of the traditional and ubiquitous British Ensign as a symbol of Canadian national identity?

I offer the following. The issue of a Canadian national flag penetrated parliamentary proceedings in Ottawa as early as the mid-1920s. For years, what had passed for a national flag aroused controversy in both public and private forums. Caught in this web of conflict were French cultural forces, strong sentiments of English imperialism, and sectional nationalism. In 1925 the Privy Council of Parliament struck a committee to research a design for a national flag. The committee never reached a decision. Two decades later, directly following Second World War, Parliament appointed a similar committee. Design submissions were solicited from the public at large. Over 2,600 were received. A recommendation never advanced beyond committee. The subject of a national flag, though, continued to be aired in parliament on an almost annual basis, continually cast aside in the face of more pressing matters and political expediency.³⁰ In early 1964, with the nation's 1967 centennial celebrations rapidly approaching, Prime Minister Lester Pearson revived the national flag issue. A Senate and House of Commons joint committee was established; design submissions were once again solicited.

An early respondent to the Joint Committee's call for submissions was George Francis Gilman Stanley, storied professor of history at the Royal Military College in Kingston.³¹ Writing to John Matheson, Member of Parliament and House of Commons Representative on the "Flag Committee," Stanley submitted a recommendation for the national flag's design.³² His design was supported by a strong rationale underscored by simplicity and

neutrality – the design ignored connotations of ethnicity, religion, region, or former sovereignty – each of which at one time or another were present in various editions of Canadian flags prior to 1964, and, as well, stimulated heated debate in parliament on each occasion that the flag issue was raised. Stanley's flag design presented Canada's national colours, red and white,³³ and featured a bold rendition of a large red maple leaf centered in the flag's middle panel of white, itself set between two panels of red. On the morning of 15th December 1964, after thirty-three days of passionate and at times heated debate, documented by 252 speeches, Stanley's maple leaf flag design was approved by a 163 to 78 vote. On 15th February 1965 the red and white maple leaf flag became the official flag of Canada.³⁴

There is no doubt that embedded in George Stanley's creative mind regarding a maple leaf national symbol was his awareness of Canadian Olympic matters. When he was 21 years of age, an impressionable student at the University of Alberta, he celebrated, along with the rest of Canada, Vancouver's Percy Williams' startling gold medal victories in both the 100 and 200 metres sprints at the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam. In 1994, in a lengthy reminiscence published in the Moncton *Times-Transcript*, Stanley, retired in nearby Sackville from his career-ending role as 25th Lieutenant Governor of the Province of New Brunswick, and still a celebrity at 87 years of age, was asked to comment on his inspirations in designing the national flag. In doing so, he reminisced: "As a boy, I was so impressed with a picture of Percy Williams winning the gold medal in the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam. As he breasted the tape, you could see the large maple leaf on his jersey and there was no doubt that everyone knew it was Canada."³⁵

In his now famous letter to John Matheson setting forth his detailed design and rationale for a national flag, Stanley wrote: "The traditional heraldic device or emblem of Canada is the maple leaf (...) This emblem has official sanction by its inclusion in two provincial coats of arms and in the official coat of arms of Canada. It has been used by Canadian troops in two world wars, and by Canadian Olympic Teams



Percy Williams wins gold in 100 metre sprint at Amsterdam in 1928.

(including the colors red and white). It appears to have universal acceptance both in and outside Canada as a distinctive Canadian emblem."³⁶ Indeed it did, as Percy Williams demonstrated to the world in 1928 and as Bobby Kerr and Canadian Olympians have consistently demonstrated since the moment of the symbol's first Olympic appearance in 1908.³⁷

A Final Thought



And so it came to be, the red Maple Leaf as the official symbol of Canadian domestic and international recognition. The pioneers of this phenomenon were those Canadian Olympians of 1908 and those that followed them in ensuing Olympic Games.

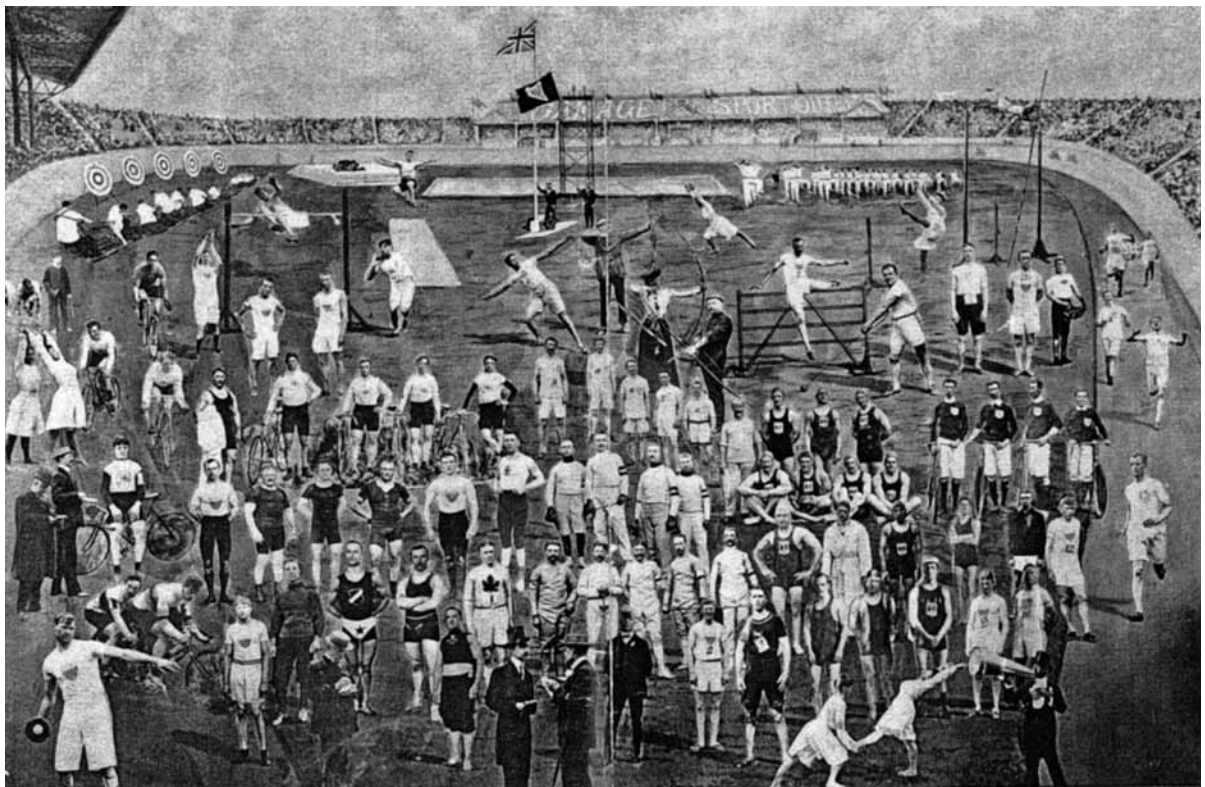
The red Maple Leaf symbol remained a constant in Canadian Olympic logo history, displayed before the rest of the world as Canada's national identification symbol. In a most remarkable photo-montage of the gold medal winners of the epic 1908 Olympic Games, Bobby Kerr, arranged in the center of the front rank of athletes,

stands clad in his maple leaf-embazoned singlet, erect, proud, the telling symbol on his chest announcing to the world —"Canada."³⁸ And this, two decades before George Stanley's 1928 "Olympic inspiration" prompted by Percy Williams.

On 15th February 1965, the Canadian national flag, as the world knows it today, first flew. The historic "hope" enunciated by John Hanbury-Williams in November 1908, "the emblem of one united body," had come to pass, ushering in a new fixture on the Canadian annual calendar, "National Flag Day." ■

- 1 The Stadium Team was the title bestowed on the largest single "team segment" of those 87 athletes who competed in the London Games, among them tennis and lacrosse players, oarsmen, and marksmen. The Stadium Team, numbering 37 athletes, was composed of 5 cyclists, a wrestler, a fencer, a swimmer/diver, 2 gymnasts, and 27 track and field men, all of whom competed in events held in the great White City Olympic Stadium located in the Shepherd's Bush section of London. Though foil and épée fencer Percy Nobbs technically performed outside the stadium on fencing pistes located in a Franco-British Exhibition pavilion, he was consistently identified as a member of the Stadium Team proper.
- 2 Mallon and Buchanan put Kerr arriving in Hamilton with "his family" in 1899 "when he was 17 years old." See, Bill Mallon and Ian Buchanan, *The 1908 Olympic Games: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2000), pp. 49–50. The authors cite no source. The citation for Kerr's year of immigration to Canada at age five is: Press Release, "Tigertown Triumphs," *The Hamilton Spectator-Memory Project* (Souvenir Edition). 10th June 2006, p. 56.
- 3 Bobby Kerr died in Hamilton at age 80. His death closed a life of achievements that included: induction into the Canadian, Ontario, Hamilton, and Olympic Sports Halls of Fame, a Hamilton city park named after him, noteworthy service in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces of the Great War in Europe, and managerial appointments to the 1928 and 1932 Canadian Olympic teams. A variety of sources report on Kerr's life, among them, of course, the standard Wikipedia references.
- 4 Bobby Kerr "cut his teeth" in world class sprint competition when he ran in the 60, 100, and 200 metres events at the St. Louis "Olympics" in 1904. He failed to qualify for the finals in any. See, for instance, Bill Mallon, *The 1904 Olympic Games: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1999), pp. 50–52. By contrast, in the twilight of his track and field career he continued to dominate the Canadian sprint scene. In Winnipeg in September 1910, Kerr posted marks of 9.8 and 21.6 seconds in winning both the 100 and 220 yards events, respectively. Each effort tied the Canadian record for those events. See "World's Records Broken at Labor Day Sports," *Winnipeg Telegram*, 12th September 1910. The connotation "World's Records Broken" referred to a third event Kerr ran

The Newington montage of 1908 gold medallists, Kerr front and center.



- that Labor Day in 1910, the 150 yards sprint. His world record breaking time was recorded at 14.2 seconds.
- 5 One can grasp the essence of Hanbury-Williams' noteworthy military career and service to the English crown from his obituary. See, "Major-Gen. Sir John Hanbury-Williams: Soldier and Diplomat," *The Times of London*, 21st October 1946. For an abbreviated biographical treatment of Hanbury-Williams, see, Richard Hanbury Tenson, *The Hanburys of Monmouthshire* (Printed by the National Library of Wales, 1995), pp. 365-366. For his unique service on the Russian-German front during World War I, see John Hanbury-Williams, *The Emperor Nicholas II: As I Knew Him* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1923). For his IOC membership activities, see Robert K. Barney, "Tsar Nicholas II's Comrade in Arms: IOC Member John Hanbury-Williams," *Journal of Olympic History*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 56-62.
 - 6 The issues between the two bodies focused on interpretation of the word "amateur." The CAAU favored a strict interpretation, the essence of which ruled that an amateur athlete who participated in a sporting contest in which professional athletes were involved, automatically became professionals themselves, and therefore, ineligible for amateur competition, i.e., "tainted by association." The CAAF favoured a more liberal application, i.e., one in which amateur athletes could participate in events featuring professionals and still retain their amateur status. The bitter controversy is best treated in Daniel B. Reid, "The Amateur Athletic Union of the United States and the Canadian Amateur Athletic Union - 1897 to 1914: A Study of International Sporting Relations," unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Western Ontario (now Western University), 1990, pp. 12-32. See also, Keith Lansley, "The Amateur Athletic Union of Canada and Changing Concepts of Amateurism," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971.
 - 7 Cited in "Truce Declared Between Federation And C.A.A.U.," *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 2nd December 1907. See also, "Permanent Athletic Peace May Result From The Conference," *Montreal Daily Star*, 2nd December 1907.
 - 8 The final "Government Funding" figure in support of the 1908 Canadian Olympic Team totaled \$18,500-\$15,000 from the Federal Government, \$2,000 from the Province of Ontario, \$1,000 from the Province of British Columbia, and \$500 from the City of Toronto; nothing from Quebec, a fact that led Governor-General Earl Grey to exclaim: "Quebec's disgrace, which to the shame of Canada has been tolerated so long." See Governor-General Earl Grey to John Hanbury-Williams, 29th March 1908, Box 25, Canada 1908-1909 [File 1]: Grey File III: Correspondence Earl Grey, 1908-1909, Library and Public Archives of Canada (hereafter LAPC). The revenue figure (\$18,500) was in turn complemented by \$1,025 in personal subscriptions, balanced against an expense total of \$20,797.84. After the Games, the remaining deficit was covered by the results of a "call for private donations." See P. D. Ross, "Canadian Olympic committee: Final Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Statement of Receipts and Expenditures, 1908," LAPC, Jack Davies Fonds, MG 30 C 164, Box 19 (COC-COA Olympic Games) File 3, COC Final Report. On the matter of the "national trials" for track and field, for instance, numerous "regional qualification trials" were held, followed by two distinct final qualification tests for Olympic Team selection, one in Montreal and one in Toronto. Both occurred on 6th June 1908. In Montreal, the hurdles, jumps, and all track events up to and including distances of 1500 metres were carried out. In Toronto, the weight events, pole vault, and all running events longer than 1500 metres were organised, including, of course, the marathon.
 - 9 Kerr may have "dominated his competition," but his winning time in the 100 metres final (11.4 seconds) was considerably slower than his best. See "The Olympic Finals Held in Montreal," *Montreal Daily Star*, 8th June 1908.
 - 10 See "Records of Men Going to the Olympic Games," *Ottawa Evening Journal*, 11th June 1908.
 - 11 Letter from "Bob" Kerr to Dina and Morley Emery, 18th July 1908, p. 2. I am grateful to Randi Thompson, great-grand niece of Bobby Kerr's for sharing this document with me. Mrs. Thompson, who resides in Buena Vista, Saskatchewan, together with her cousin Mike Wikman of Regina, Saskatchewan, are two of several "custodians" of Bobby Kerr's records and memorabilia. The eight page handwritten letter, displaying remarkable penmanship, to his sister Dina and her husband Morley, at that time residents of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, is the most enlightening source yet found on the Canadian Olympic Team's passage to England, and its subsequent settlement in London for the Games.
 - 12 Ibid.
 - 13 Ibid. Kerr's letter related that the original quarters engaged for the Stadium Team in London were rooms in the "First Arms Hotel." But, as he indignantly stated: "this was no place for athletes." Kerr was much more salutary of new quarters secured at 65 Sinclair Road, which, in effect, became the Canadian Olympic Team Headquarters, as proclaimed on handsome letterhead stationery: "[the Sinclair

- Road accommodation] is a large boarding house, 15 Minutes walk from the stadium. We are comfortably quartered, although the food is not the best at all times, however, it is not bad when we are all together."
- 14 Ibid., p. 3.
- 15 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
- 16 Ibid., p. 5.
- 17 Before leaving Canada the Stadium Team formed an eight member "executive committee," which in turn elected its officers (president, vice-president, and secretary). Kerr was one of the 8 elected members. The elected president was pole-vaulter Ed Archibald; the vice-president, triple jumper J. Garfield MacDonald; the secretary, cyclist William Anderson.
- 18 "Jennie" was Bobby Kerr's sister, a Hamilton resident. She did indeed witness the vigorous celebration staged by Hamiltonians in bidding farewell to their two Olympians, Bobby Kerr and marathoner John Caffrey.
- 19 Ibid., p. 1.
- 20 As cited in "Star's Special Olympic Man Writes About Games," *Montreal Daily Star*, 18th July 1908.
- 21 In his final report to the Canadian Olympic Committee authorities following the Games, John Howard Crocker, manager of the Stadium Team, wrote: "On opening day thirty-five athletes dressed in neat cream white uniforms, under the direction of Mr. Long, of the Montreal Athletic Association, marched before the King in a manner well pleasing to all." See J. H. Crocker, *Report of the First Canadian Olympic Athletic Team, 1908* (Submitted 20th August 1908), Crocker Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, D. B. Weldon Library, Western University, London, Ontario, p. 4. Crocker's memory lapsed when noting that "thirty-five" athletes marched in the Opening Ceremonies parade. The formal photograph of the "Marching Team" taken before the Opening Ceremonies, as well as the photograph of the Canadian contingent shown marching in the stadium itself, clearly show thirty-two uniformed athletes; five of the 37 Stadium Team members were missing (marathoners Tom Longboat and Arthur Burn, hammer thrower Cornelius Walsh, cyclist William Morton, and fencer Percy Nobbs). The schedule for the Opening Ceremonies set by the Organising Committee was rigidly followed. Fortunately for all – competitors, officials, spectators, and Royal Party – a thunder shower occurring in the morning, threatened again in the afternoon, but "held off" sufficiently that the Opening Ceremony festivities were completed without interruption. See *The Fourth Olympiad, London, 1908, Official Report*, Theodore Andrea Cook (ed.), London: The British Olympic Association, 1909, pp. 47-49. Of the Shepherd's Bush precinct, Bobby Kerr rendered an enthusiastic observation: "Regarding the Franco-British Exhibition, which is alongside of the Great Stadium, it is a fine sight, we have badges and are allowed in and out at any time. The Canadian Exhibition is especially fine, lots of good old grain from the North West, it is here we can get any of the Canadian Papers to read, which makes it quite convenient. The Stadium is a wonderful place, capable of holding 100,000 people, although the attendance so far at any of the games has been very disappointing." See Kerr to Dina and Morley Emery, p. 6.
- 22 The "name-standard" for each national Olympic team participating in the Opening Ceremonies was referred to as an "entablature." The Canadian entablature was carried in the Opening Ceremony parade of nations by Montreal swimmer/diver Robert Zimmerman. The "flag of Canada" that Torontonians pole-vaulter Ed Archibald carried during the 1908 Opening Ceremonies displayed Great Britain's well known "Union Jack" in the upper left hand quarter. Embossed in the center of the flag's remaining space was a composite of the "quartered arms" of the nine Canadian provinces existing at the time – Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.
- 23 Brantford's nickname, of course, is derived from the 1876 invention of the telephone by the man who became the town's first internationally-known citizen – Alexander Graham Bell.
- 24 See "Billy Wood – A Second letter," *Brantford Exposition*, 26th July 1908. The natty dress uniforms were issued to the Canadian team members for the first time shortly before their appearance at the 1st July Dominion Day reception hosted by Lord Strathcona, Canadian High Commissioner to England. There is one further qualification to Wood's otherwise correct description of the uniform. Wood was incorrect in his statement that the uniform cap featured a small red maple leaf. It did not. As proven by a slide microscope magnification of the cap, the logo featured a stitched red outline of a maple leaf, complete with stitched leaf veins in red, but the greater part of the cap's maple leaf logo's interior was white. The cap logo did present the notation "Canada" embellished beneath the maple leaf. The "Canada" embellishment was manufactured as a separate piece and subsequently mounted beneath the maple leaf itself; the same is true for the sweater's logo arrangement. As an added note, of the exactly one dozen Canadian runners who "started" in the storied 1908 Olympic marathon, William "Billy" Wood was the first of his teammates to cross the finish line. He finished in 5th place.
- 25 See J. H. Crocker, *Report of the First Canadian Olympic Team*, pp. 3-4.
- 26 *The Times of London* (undated), cited by Crocker in his *Report ...*, p. 4.
- 27 Kerr ran 11.0 seconds to win heat #10 in the preliminaries, 11.0 once again to win heat #2 of the semi-finals, and, in the final, ran 11.0 for a third time in placing third "inches behind 2nd." See Mallon and Buchanan, *The 1908 Olympic Games*, pp. 46-49.
- 28 Kerr ran 22.2 seconds to win heat #11 in the preliminaries – tying the Olympic record. In the semi-finals he ran 22.6 to win heat #1. In the final he again ran 22.6, to capture the gold medal in convincing fashion.
- 29 See Crocker, *Report*, p. 7.
- 30 The historical evolution of events leading to the ultimate adoption of the first parliamentary-approved Canadian national flag is related best by the flag's creator. See George F. G. Stanley, *The Story of Canada's Flag: A Historical Sketch* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1965).
- 31 The word "storied" is not an overstatement. By March 1964, the date of his submission, Stanley (1907-2002) had been a Rhodes Scholar (1930); authored several noted works on Canadian history, of which his *Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* (1936) was his first; served with merit in the Canadian Forces in World War II; and risen to the position of Dean of Arts at RMC.
- 32 Stanley's letter to Matheson is a fundamental document in understanding the evolution of Canada's national flag. See G. F. G. Stanley to John Matheson, Esq., 23rd March 1964, Alan Beddoe Papers, MG30, D252, Vol. 9, LAPC. Beddoe, a resident of Ottawa and a heraldry expert, conferred with Stanley on the flag design question. See also, Stanley, *The Story of Canada's Flag*, p. 65.
- 33 Following World War I, Canadian political leaders, prompted by support from a general Canadian public, pressed for greater "freedom of action" for themselves. One manifestation of this action was the request for a tangible expression of Canadian national identity, the end result of which was an English crown-approved Canadian coat of arms. On 21st November 1921 King George V signed the proclamation. It was then that the official Canadian colours became red and white. The original Canadian coat of arms bore four maple leaves, all in the colour green. In 1957, under the administration of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, the coat of arms was approved for all government purposes and the color of the maple leaves therein changed from green to red in accord with the "national colours." See Stanley, *The Story of Canada's Flag*, pp. 31-33.
- 34 The story of parliamentary debate and action on the final flag issue is told best by Stanley himself. Stanley, *ibid.*, pp. 63-73.
- 35 Lourdes Richard, "Quiet Vindication: Thirty-years later, designer of Canada's flag now wonders what the flap was all about," *Moncton Times-Transcript*, 15th December 1994.
- 36 See Stanley to Matheson, 23rd March 1964. Parentheses in original.
- 37 Though Stanley's first impressions of the maple leaf in Olympic context dated to 1928, the red maple leaf symbol as a national identification logo dated to 1908; the Canadian Olympic Team's decision to emblazon the red maple leaf on their uniforms as a national identification logo was a practice followed religiously in subsequent Olympic Games, 1912 to the present, albeit at times with modern stylized versions of the red maple leaf insignia.
- 38 The distinguished and celebrated British peer, Lord Desborough of Taplow, the indefatigable head of the Organising Committee for London's 1908 Olympics, appears in the foreground wearing a top hat. The montage, the artistic work of Robert Newington, received copyright protection on 25th November 1908. See Copyright Registry – Fine Arts, Document 202 (46.810), Image Reference 0001, 25th November 1908, The National Archives (United Kingdom): <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/Details?uri=C12473393>.