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DOMINION LAND SURVEY MONUMENTS

SUMMARY OF A SCHEDULE SHOWING THE VARIOUS CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED SINCE 1871 IN CHARACTER OF MONUMENTS USED IN DOMINION LANDS SURVEYS.

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SOME time ago the writer had the opportunity of preparing a schedule showing the various changes that have occurred since the year 1871 in the character of monuments used for marking township, section and quarter section corners in the Dominion Lands System of Survey.

In general, official survey monuments have consisted of one, or a combination of several, of the following: (1) Wooden post, (2) iron post, (3) earth mound, (4) stone mound, (5) pits (or trench in the case of most witness monuments).

As each new edition of the Manual of Instructions for the Survey of Dominion Lands was issued by the surveyor-general, various changes, more or less important, relative to each component part, or to the character of the monument as a whole, were called for. As an example, the case of witness mounds might be cited. Bearing trees alone or an ordinary mound and pits not necessarily on a surveyed line were at one time permitted. Subsequently wooden, and then iron, posts in connection with witness mounds have occupied positions in the centre and at the edge of the mound and in the trench of varying width surrounding the mound.

But of general importance is the relation of the post, which generally marked the corner, to the mound and pits which frequently referenced it. In such a monument the relative importance of the component parts are probably post, pits, mound. But experience has shown that the post and then the mound (or vice versa) frequently disappear leaving only, after some years, traces of pits to

original survey and further knowing what instructions were issued to govern the erection of monuments at that date.

On the official plans of townships now issued sufficient information is given to show at what date a monument was erected or renewed. The very condensed general statement to follow, it is hoped, will be of use not

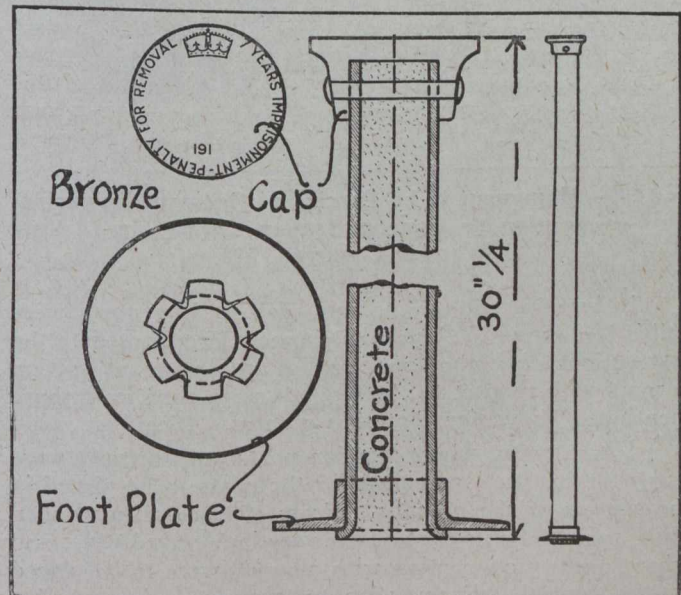


Fig. 2.—Standard Survey Post, 1916.

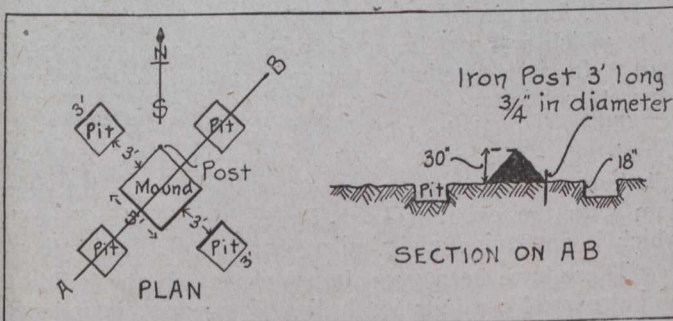


Fig. 1.—Monument at Ordinary Section Corner in Wooded Country, 1908-1915.

reference the corner. Unfortunately, the mound and pits did not in the past always occupy a constant relation to the post and when traces of pits or any other part of an obliterated monument (except the post) are found, doubt of the true position of the corner (within several feet) can in some cases only be dispelled by finding the date of the

only to surveyors for whom information on a more elaborate and detailed scale has been or is being prepared, but to engineers who occasionally have more interest in land boundaries or land ties than the actual fence lines. The information is abstracted from the schedule previously referred to, which in turn was compiled from information contained in the annual reports of the surveyor-general for the years 1882, 1886 and 1908 and from the different editions of the Manual of Survey published in the years 1871, 1881, 1883, 1890 (preliminary 4th edition), 1892, 1903, 1905, 1910 and 1913. There can, of course, be no guarantee that the surveyor has always closely followed his instructions. In some cases the surveyor's field book shows that he did not. Further, monuments on the ground were sometimes not as shown in his notes.

According to instructions issued to surveyors, iron posts at township corners (since 1881 instructions have called for iron posts at all township corners) were, when mounds were erected, never to be placed in the centres of the mounds (except in the case of stone mounds erected