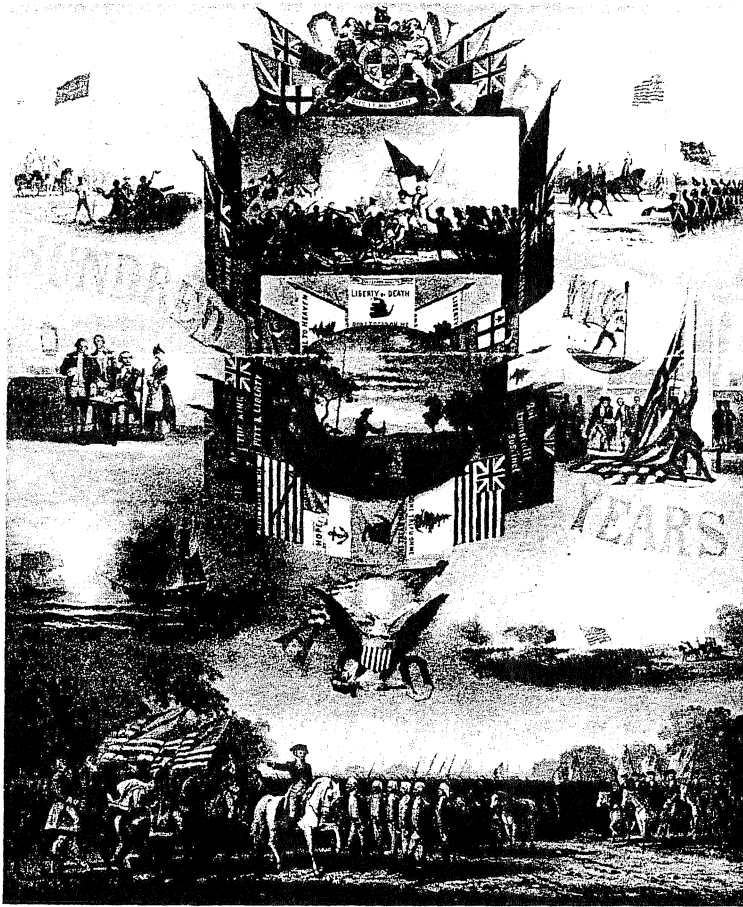


"ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO"



The acquisition by the National Flag Foundation of a 105-year-old painting "One Hundred Years Ago" by William H. Willcox was described, and a special edition was presented to NAVA members, at the ninth biennial meeting of the International Congress of Vexillology in Ottawa this past August. It was executed in 1876 as a part of the U.S. Centennial Celebration.

After having been missing for perhaps several generations, the work turned up in 1971 in an antique shop in Vermont and was later, in 1976, acquired by an art gallery in Manhattan. George F. Cahill, NFF president, saw the painting while it was on exhibition there and, through a generous donor, was able to obtain the painting in 1980. Its first public display was at the Boy Scouts Jamboree in Virginia this summer, with a copy presented there to each Scout and Scouter present.

Quite by accident, following a clue supplied by Whitney Smith, Mr. Cahill learned that the artist had also authored a book, similarly entitled, describing the painting and its purpose. It is not known how long the two pieces, apparently created to be a pair, have been separated. Only one copy of the original 65-page book, privately produced, has been found, this in the New York Public Library. The National Flag Foundation acquired photocopies of the book, thus reuniting, so to speak, the two works. An attractive limited edition was published especially to be included with the reproduction to be given at the jamboree and, later, in Ottawa. NAVA member and historian Gary Grahl headed up the research project, and was the author of the paper presented by Mr. Cahill at the Congress.

FAIV OFFICERS ELECTED

The following Officers were elected at the Ninth International Congress of Vexillology held in Ottawa, August 24-27, 1981: President, Dr. Hugh R. Boudin of Belgium; Secretary General for Congresses, Dr. Ottfried Neubecker of the Federal Republic of Germany; Corresponding Secretary General, Dr. Whitney Smith of the United States of America.

Representing NAVA at the election which was held on August 27th was Rev. John R.B. Szala.

You are invited...

to make NAVA NEWS an interesting vehicle of vexillology by sending to the editor items of interest regarding flags. Original tearsheets from newspapers, magazines and other sources will be much appreciated and returned, if you so indicate. Please be sure to note the source of the information and date of publication. Also, original essays are encouraged and solicited.

Thank you for your cooperation.

The painting is an illustrative history of the U.S. flag, grouping, as outlined by the artist-author's preface, "the principal events in our struggle for independence." Beginning at the top of the picture with the shields bearing the St. George and St. Andrew crosses, Willcox shows the transition, in 33 items, from these ancient devices of England and Scotland to the arms and flag of the United States. The painting contains a rather unusual and striking feature also in the portrait of President Lincoln, which can only be seen by squinting.

"One Hundred Years Ago" is apparently a complete departure from the landscapes in which the artist specialized. A member of the Hudson River Valley School, Willcox was born in Williamsburg (later Brooklyn), N.Y. in 1831. During the Centennial era he lived in Philadelphia where he painted and wrote the works described above. The painting will, in time, be on permanent display in the Bicentennial Room, to be constructed as an extension to the Flag Plaza in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle.