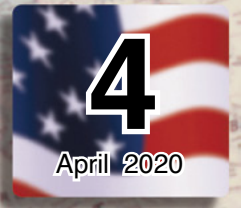
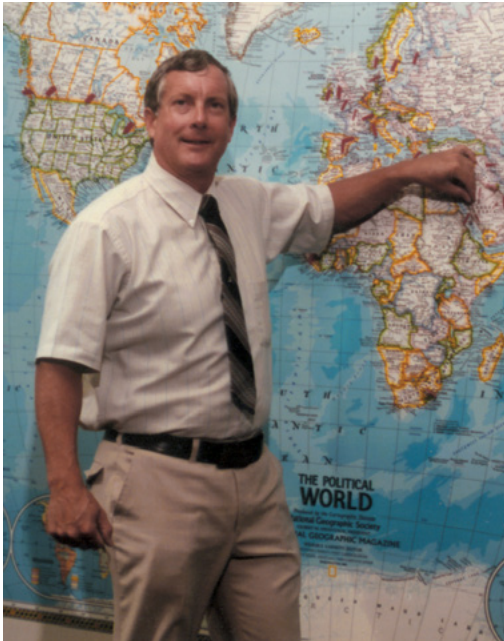


The Meter Setter



Carl Doran

(1943-2020)



In 1967, Ford Meter Box president, Stan Ford, placed an ad in *The Wall Street Journal* for an Export Department Manager. That ad reached Carl Doran who applied and was selected for the position over 100 other applicants.

The Export department was previously managed by Richard V. Ford from his home in New Jersey. In preparation for his retirement, Ford Meter Box saw an opportunity to increase market share internationally by creating a formally organized Export department. With Carl at the helm, he and his staff entered new markets and formed relationships that remain strong to this day.

In 1990, Ford Meter Box was named “Exporter of the Year” by *Indiana Business*. In his interview, Carl stated that overseas prospecting was a job that “you can’t pay someone else to do. You have to do it yourself.”

Often, Carl would regale co-workers with stories of his travels in the company newsletter. He described visiting a Saudi Arabian foundry where workers molded iron without shoes or gloves. In Baghdad, he broke bread with customers and recounted how the bread was thrown in a charcoal wood stove and baked on the wall. He reported taking public transportation in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where bus fare was two Riyals (which was slightly less than 50 cents)!

He thought the best food was in Taipei, Taiwan. The people of San Jose, Costa Rica, were the friendliest, and the city of Stockholm, Sweden, was the cleanest. The prettiest beaches were in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Kabul, Afghanistan, had the most exotic culture.

In 2008, Carl retired after 41 years of service. He spent his retirement years between Indiana and Florida enjoying golf, yoga, and Tai Chi. Ford Meter Box is grateful for Carl’s service over the course of four decades. Carl will be remembered for his leadership, exotic stories, and fierce dedication to Ford Meter Box customers and the waterworks industry.



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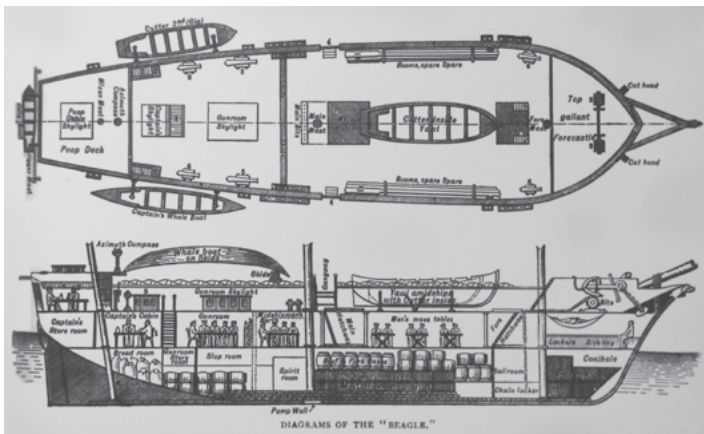
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HMS *Beagle*

HMS *Beagle*, the British vessel that carried Charles Darwin on the voyage that brought the scientist enduring fame for his theory of evolution, was launched 200 hundred years ago on May 11, 1820. Except for three or four ships that were involved in maritime disasters, the *Beagle* is probably the world's most famous ship.

Originally built as a ten-gun brig, the *Beagle* underwent two conversions that outfitted it for other duties and assignments. Workers first converted *Beagle* for duty as a surveyors' vessel. It made three voyages as a survey ship before being readied for coast guard service.



Darwin boarded the *Beagle* in December 1831 when it left Plymouth on its second surveying voyage. Robert FitzRoy, who commanded the vessel, gained almost as much fame—at least in British naval history—as Darwin himself because of the voyage.

The *Beagle* was but 90-feet in length, and officers, crew, equipment, and supplies filled every available space. Darwin shared his cramped quarters with two other men and slept in a hammock slung above the table where he worked during the day.

The little vessel was hard to handle in heavy weather, and it took on great volumes of water when waves sloshed over the deck. Darwin noted these conditions in his diary on March 30, 1833: “It was pathetic: At noon we took a great wave, and it is a sight for a landsman to remember. One of our [life] boats was knocked to pieces and was immediately carried away, the water being deep on the deck. The same wave filled our decks so deep that if another had followed it is not difficult to guess the result..

At last the ports were knocked open and she again rose buoyant to the sea.” Life aboard was difficult, but during the course of the nearly five-year voyage, Darwin was able to spend extended periods ashore while captain and crew carried out their surveying duties. He spent those times observing wildlife and gathering plant specimens, bones, and fossils.

Even though physical conditions on board were not always pleasant, Darwin was fortunate that he was on a ship captained by a man with exacting standards. FitzRoy was in a financial position to provide certain things denied by the Admiralty. He objected to having the ship armed with iron cannons because they interfered with the workings of the magnetic compass. The navy would not pay for brass cannons, so Fitzroy met the expense himself.

Concerned about navigation, FitzRoy insisted on carrying 18 chronometers on the *Beagle*. Some of these he paid for himself. An accurate timepiece was essential in determining longitude at sea. Perhaps no ship was ever better equipped in this respect.

The *Beagle* at times carried as many as 65 officers, crewmen, and cabin boys, all of whom jammed into the little vessel. Captain and crew had to make room for a variety of supplies. The ship carried some 19 tons of water in iron casks, coal and wood for galley fires, and yards and yards of spare canvas and rope. Space also had to be made for provisions, carpenter's supplies and arms and powder.

Four years into the voyage, Darwin appears to have had enough. “I loathe, I abhor the sea & all ships which sail on it,” he wrote.

But on October 2, 1836, safely back in England once more, Darwin wrote, “I reached home late last night. My head is quite confused with so much delight.”

The *Beagle* had carried its passengers around the world, but without Darwin aboard the voyage would be forgotten today.

There was one more surveying voyage in the *Beagle's* future. Then it was stripped down to serve as a British Coast Guard vessel before being taken to the tidal flats at the mouth of the Thames and broken up.

by Pete Jones

Image Credit: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HMS_Beagle_diagrams.JPG” title=”via Wikimedia Commons”>HTO / Public domain

Please send questions or comments to Pete Jones at peteinwabash@comcast.net.