

Dead Letter Office Wax Seals & Boxed Registration Handstamps

The exhibit studies the Dead Letter Office Wax Seals and Boxed Registration Handstamps used only on Registered Canadian Dead Letter Office Return envelopes.

EXHIBIT BREAKDOWN:

Oval Wax Seal - 1870's to July 1, 1898:

The Canadian Dead Letter Office / Branch was located only in Ottawa up to decentralization on July 1st 1898 into various branches across the country.

Crown Wax Seals - July 1st 1898 to late 1940's:

Branch DLO offices were created July 1st 1898 in the larger Canadian cities of Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Victoria. Subsequent openings occurred in Calgary, Edmonton, Quebec, Regina and Vancouver. Some offices do not have any known reports.

Boxed Registration Handstamps – 1920's to 1980:

A few Branch DLO offices used boxed registration handstamps with the letters 'DLO' or words 'Dead Letter Office' in them. In the 1950's 'Undeliverable Mail Office' or 'UMO' replaced 'DLO' and 'Dead Letter Office'. Later use Montreal registered Dead Letter Return envelopes are known.

DLO Background:

The Dead Letter Office received and treated mail matter that could not be forwarded to its final destination. This included mail addressed for delivery in Canada, mail posted outside of Canada and addressed for delivery in Canada, and Canadian mail originally addressed to foreign countries then returned because it bore insufficient forwarding information. Items initially sent by registered mail or of value were returned to the sender in a Registered Dead Letter Office Return envelope.

DLO Wax Seals and Boxed Registration handstamps only appear on Registered Dead Letter Return envelopes, but not on every Registered DLO Return Envelope. An envelope with a Wax Seal may not have a boxed registration handstamp and not every registered DLO Return envelope may have a wax seal.

RESEARCH:

Throughout the exhibit are previously unknown, unreported, earliest and latest reported dates discovered by the exhibitor. To prepare this exhibit extensive original study, cataloguing and listing of types were used.

STRUCTURE:

The listing for each item includes the lettering on the Wax Seal and/or handstamp, dimensions, and important variations. Also will be noted if a Proof Strike was taken, and importance such as Previously Unknown, Only Known Copy (**OKC**) or Earliest (**ERD**) and Latest (**LRD**) reported dates.

Fewer than five of each item is known to exist or have been reported. **SIGNIFICANT ITEMS**



**POST OFFICE DEPT^E CANADA
DEAD LETTER OFFICE**

**Oval Wax Seal
Pre July 1st 1898**



Lion & Unicorn oval wax seal
only used prior to decentralization
of the Ottawa DLO July 1st 1898.

26 x 24mm

A very fine perfectly intact Ottawa
Wax seal. April 11 1896 registered
to Moosomin Assa. via C. P. RY.
WEST OF WINNIPEG 1. West. On
April 15 1896, received in Moosomin.

Less than 10 known copies

No proof
known

An article on the actual contents by Bob Lane,
and a subsequent article on this cover by the
author was reported in the PHSC Journal 2009.

The enclosed Dead Letter is returned by direction of the Postmaster
reason thereon assigned.



D.L.O. CROWN WAX SEALS

After Decentralization July 1, 1898:

Branch D.L.O. Offices with Crown Wax Seals

After decentralization, several Dead Letter Offices of the larger cities used Wax Seals with the letters 'D.L.O.' over a substantial period. Due to the very low number reported it appears they were not used very often. A red wax was used to seal the back flap on registered DLO return covers, showing the imprinted lettering:

'D.L.O. CANADA • "City inserted here" BRANCH •' with a large crown in the middle.

Although there are some proof records of Wax Seals not all have been proofed such as Halifax. Since there is no date within these impressions, the envelope production date or a date stamp usually provides an adequate time frame of use. Some proofs have a manuscript date with month and year. None are known for Ottawa.

The following Wax Seals are listed in the order of the opening of DLO Offices:

D.L.O. CANADA

• OTTAWA BRANCH •

Ottawa Wax Seal
Three Point Crown

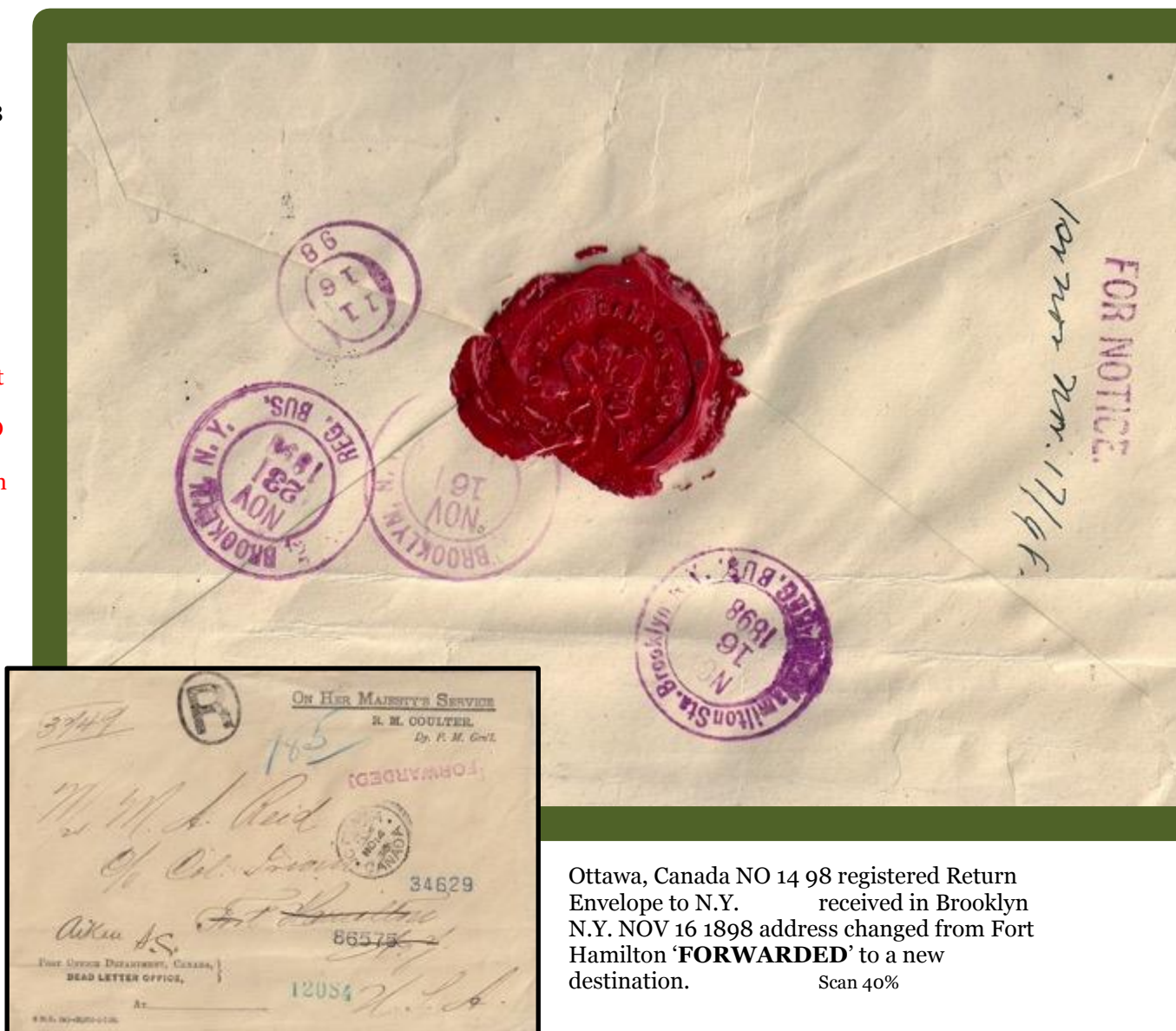
EARLIEST REPORTED DATE OF ANY BRANCH DLO WAX SEAL

26.5mm

NO 14 98

This envelope
5 D.L.
20,000
2 - 7 - 98
is the first
printing
after DLO
decentralization
in 1898.

No proof
known



Ottawa, Canada NO 14 98 registered Return Envelope to N.Y. received in Brooklyn N.Y. NOV 16 1898 address changed from Fort Hamilton 'FORWARDED' to a new destination. Scan 40%

D.L.O. CANADA
• OTTAWA BRANCH •

29mm diameter Rounded Crown

Ottawa Wax Seal
Rounded Crown

New Research

Note the use of different Crowns during different reigns. On the previous page the Three Point Crown Ottawa Wax Seal and below the Round Crown Ottawa Wax Seal. The diameters are also different with this one being 2.5mm larger.



Scan 60%

Proof strike
Aug 1915



Ottawa, Canada FREE franking NO 22 39 on registered DLO Return Envelope
6. D - 200,000 -21-9-38 received in Windsor NO 23 39

**D.L.O. CANADA
• HALIFAX BRANCH •**

**Halifax Wax Seal
Three Point Crown**

1 of 3 KNOWN

27.5mm
diameter

No proof
known



This wax seal
was
still in use in
1939



6 D. L. (a) – 15,000-15-1-16

Very small printing quantity for this 6 D. L. cover

D.L.O. CANADA
• MONTREAL BRANCH •

26.5mm diameter

Montreal Wax Seal
Three Point Crown

LATEST REPORTED DATE of 2 KNOWN

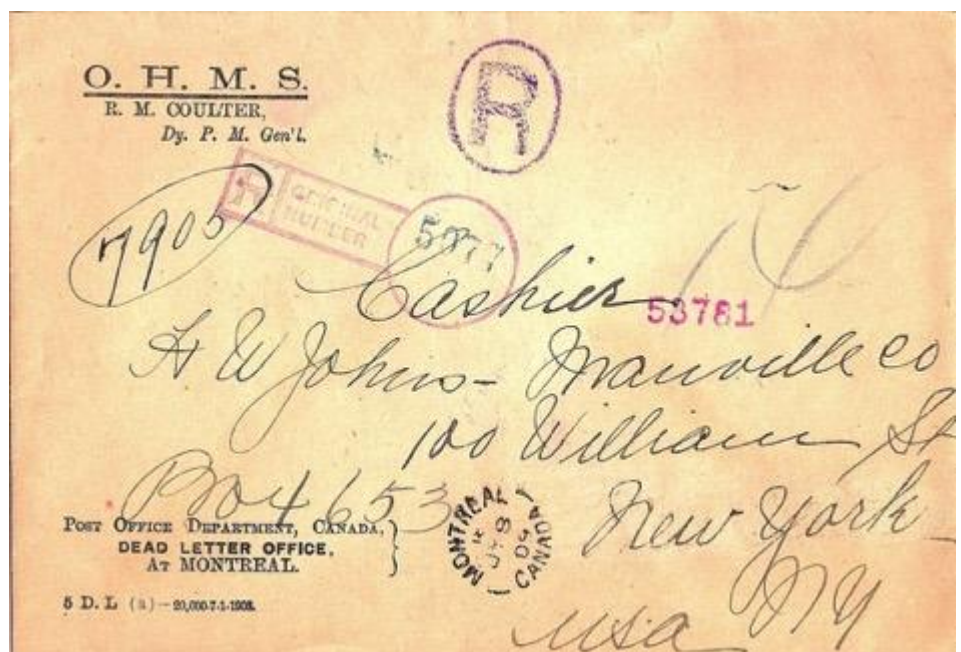


The above Montreal wax seal is of the first type of crown with a tri-point top similar to the Halifax seal.

Later on a more rounded Wax Seal was proofed as seen below:



Proof strike Dec 1916



**D.L.O. CANADA
• TORONTO BRANCH •**

**Toronto Wax Seal
Three Point Crown**

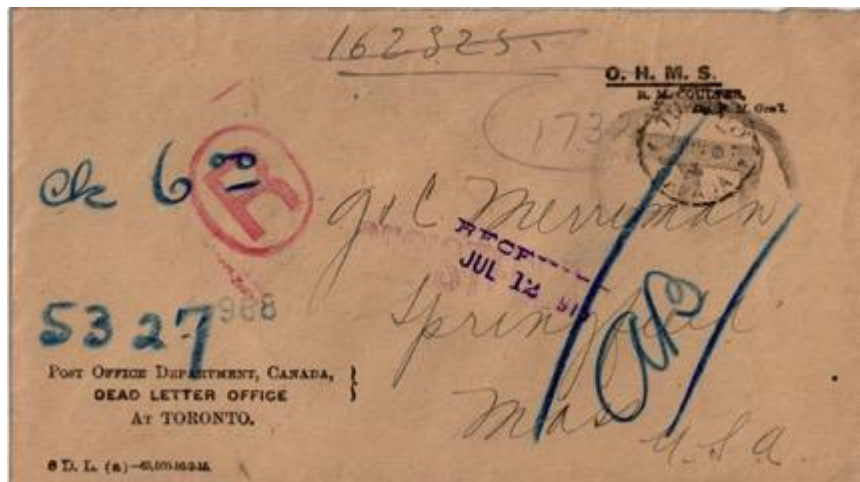
26mm diameter



No proof strike
of the Three Pointed
Crown type known

There are two types
of Wax Seals for
Toronto, Three Pointed
Crown & Rounded Crown

Rounded Crown
Proof Strike Dec 1912



Scan 75%

Toronto JUL 10 1915 received in Springfield, Mass. JUL 12 1915

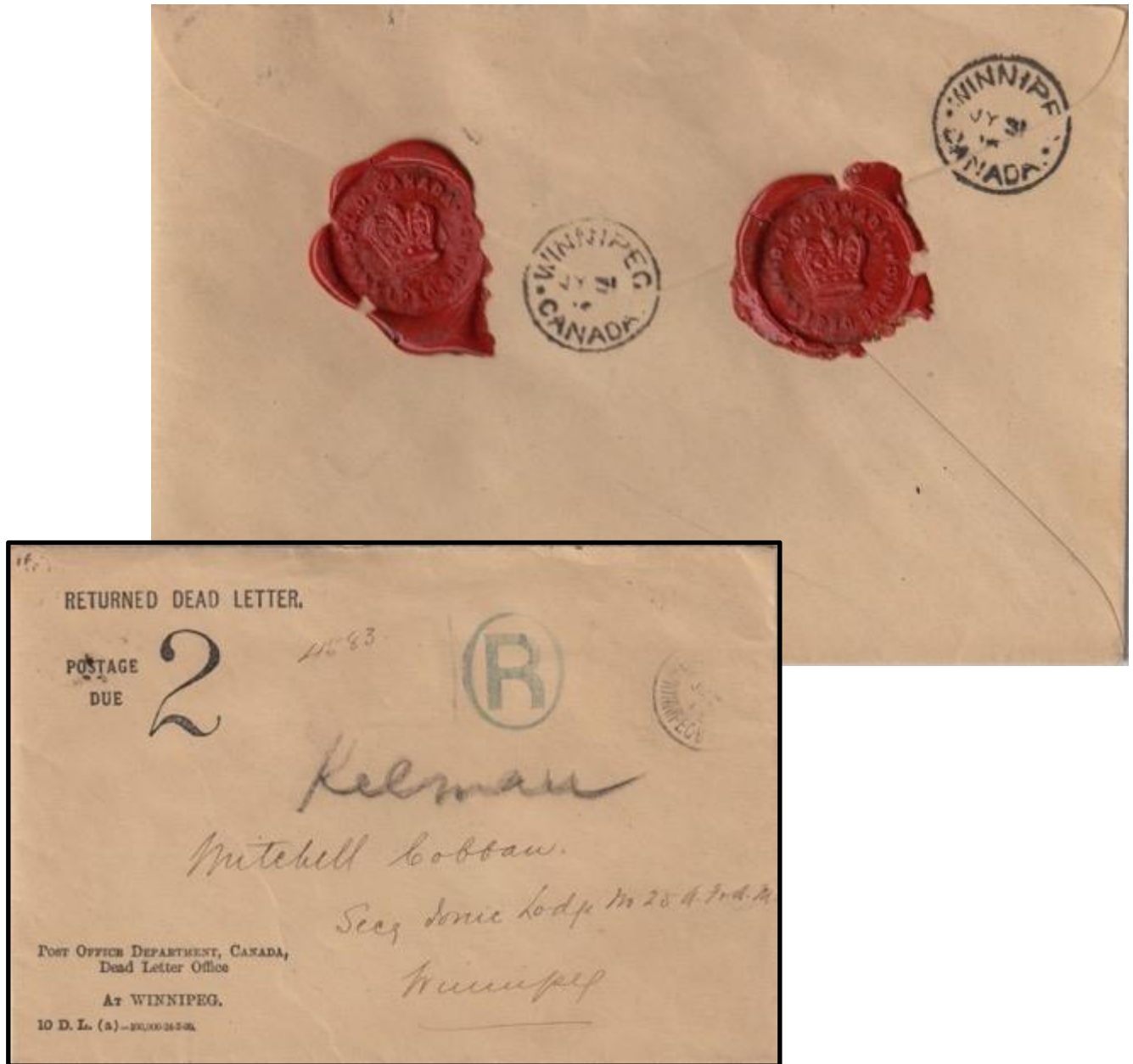


Only proof known

D.L.O. CANADA
• WINNIPEG BRANCH •

Winnipeg Wax Seal
Three Point Crown

26.5mm diameter



Scan 75%

Winnipeg Branch DLO JUL 31 19 registered Returned Dead Letter mailed within the city charged postage due of 2 cents 'Large '2''

Note the envelope # **10 D. L. (a) - 100,000-24-09** dictates a particular use for a certain period and can be used by other Branch DLO's.

No proof known

CALGARY, ALBERTA, DISTRICT
• DEAD LETTER OFFICE •

Calgary Wax Seal
Beaded Crown

30mm diameter

PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED OKC

Unique type
wax seal

Proofed April 1931



D.L.O. CANADA
• REGINA BRANCH •

29mm diameter Rounded Crown Wax Seal

Regina Wax Seal
Rounded Crown

ONE of TWO KNOWN,
REPORTED by EXHIBITOR



Rounded Crown Proof strike
July 1917

Similar to the second Ottawa Wax Seal Rounded Crown proofed in 1917. Regina registered returned dead letter forwarded to Winnipeg, Man. NO 16 39

D.L.O. CANADA
• VANCOUVER BRANCH •

Vancouver Wax Seal
Three Point Crown

28.5mm diameter



Vancouver SP 23 18 to Lillooet, B.C. SP 25 18
2 cents postage due collected (2 x 1c)

No proof known

Note the large **R** oval registration handstamp used instead of a Boxed Registration handstamp. There are no known copies of any Vancouver Boxed Registration handstamp.



D.L.O. BOXED REGISTRATION HANDSTAMPS

D.L.O. Boxed Registration Handstamps were used after July 1st 1898 by Branch D.L.O. offices up to the early 1950's other than Montreal, an anomaly with reports to the early 1980's. There are no reports of an Ottawa handstamp. These handstamps are four to five times scarcer than Wax Seals.

R
Dead Letter Office
HALIFAX, N. S.
ORIGINAL NO.

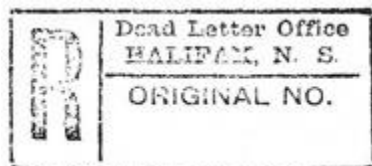
Halifax D.L.O. Registration Handstamp

47.5 x 21mm

EARLIEST REPORTED of 2 KNOWN
BOTH IN EXHIBITORS COLLECTION



Halifax MR 15 39 to Kentville, N.S. MR 16 39



Proof strike December 1926

R and **ORIGINAL NO.** sans-serif
Dead Letter Office and **HALIFAX, N.S.** seriffed



Two perfect strike Halifax, N.S.
D.L.O. Wax Seals

R
MONTREAL, P. Q.
BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
No.

Montreal D.L.O. Registration Handstamp

The Montreal DLO Boxed Registration handstamp is the only one used during the UMO period.

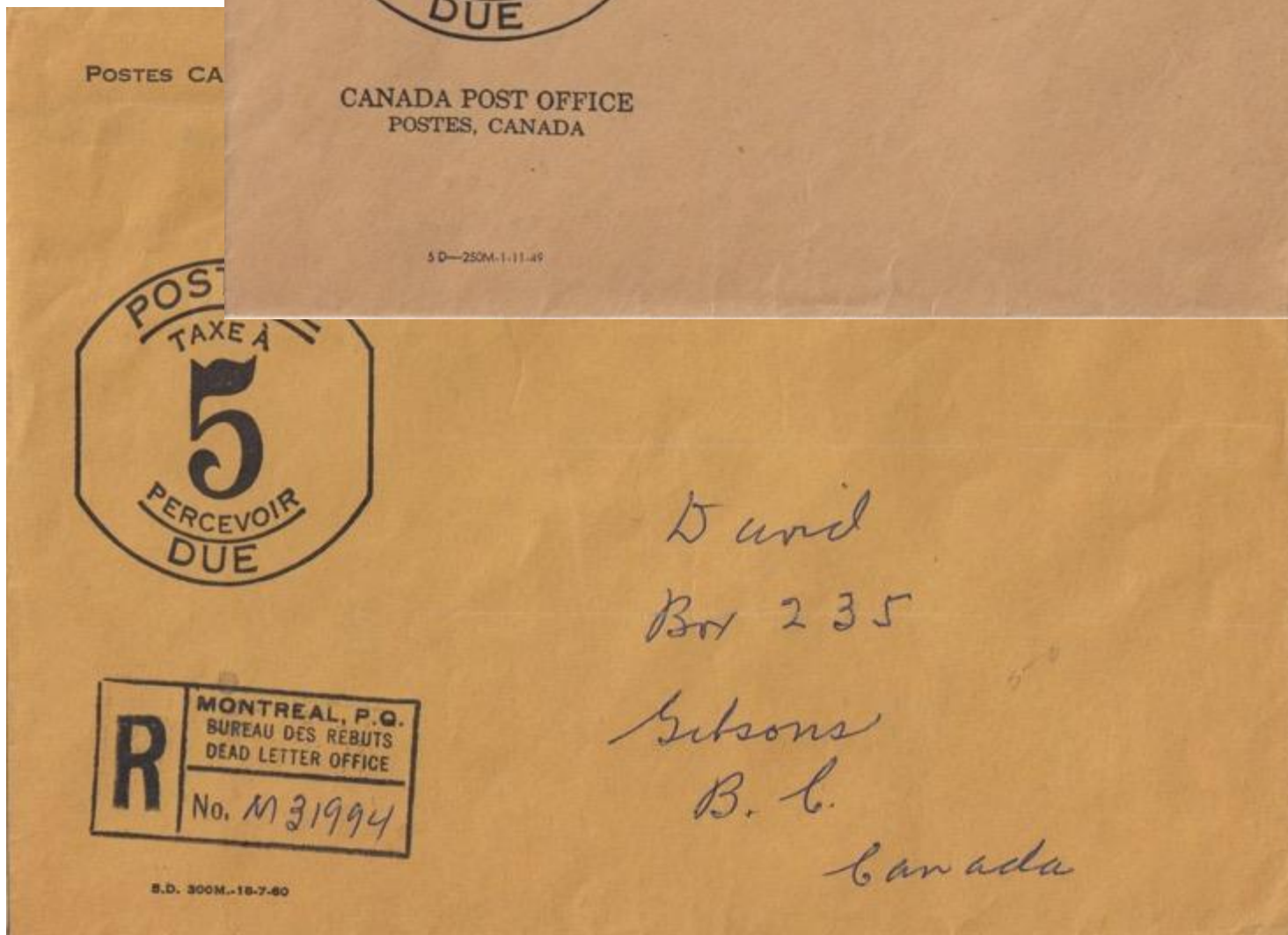
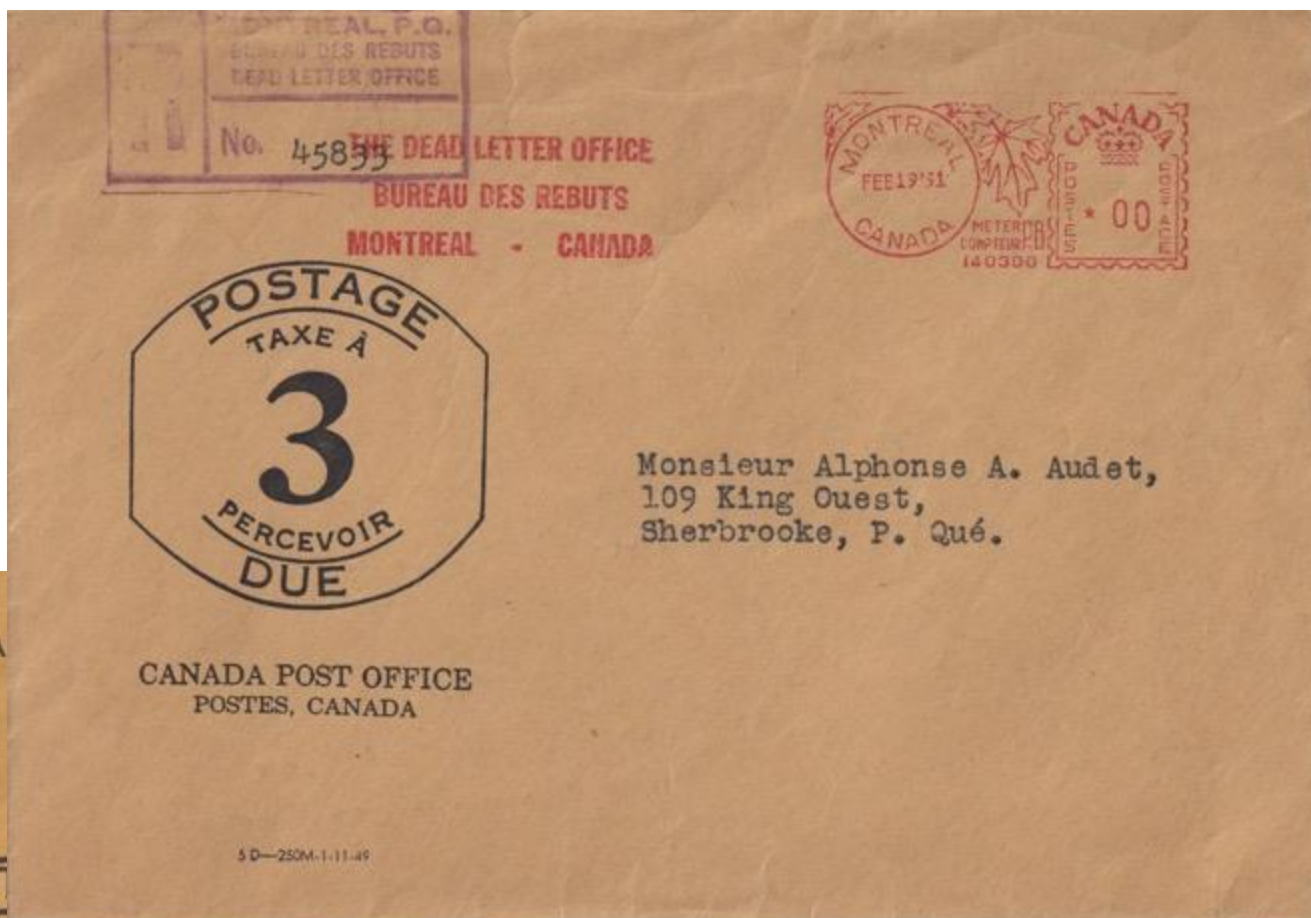
Note used
during DLO
period 1951

47.5 x 23mm

Sans-serif,
all caps

No proof
known

Purple &
Black ink
varieties



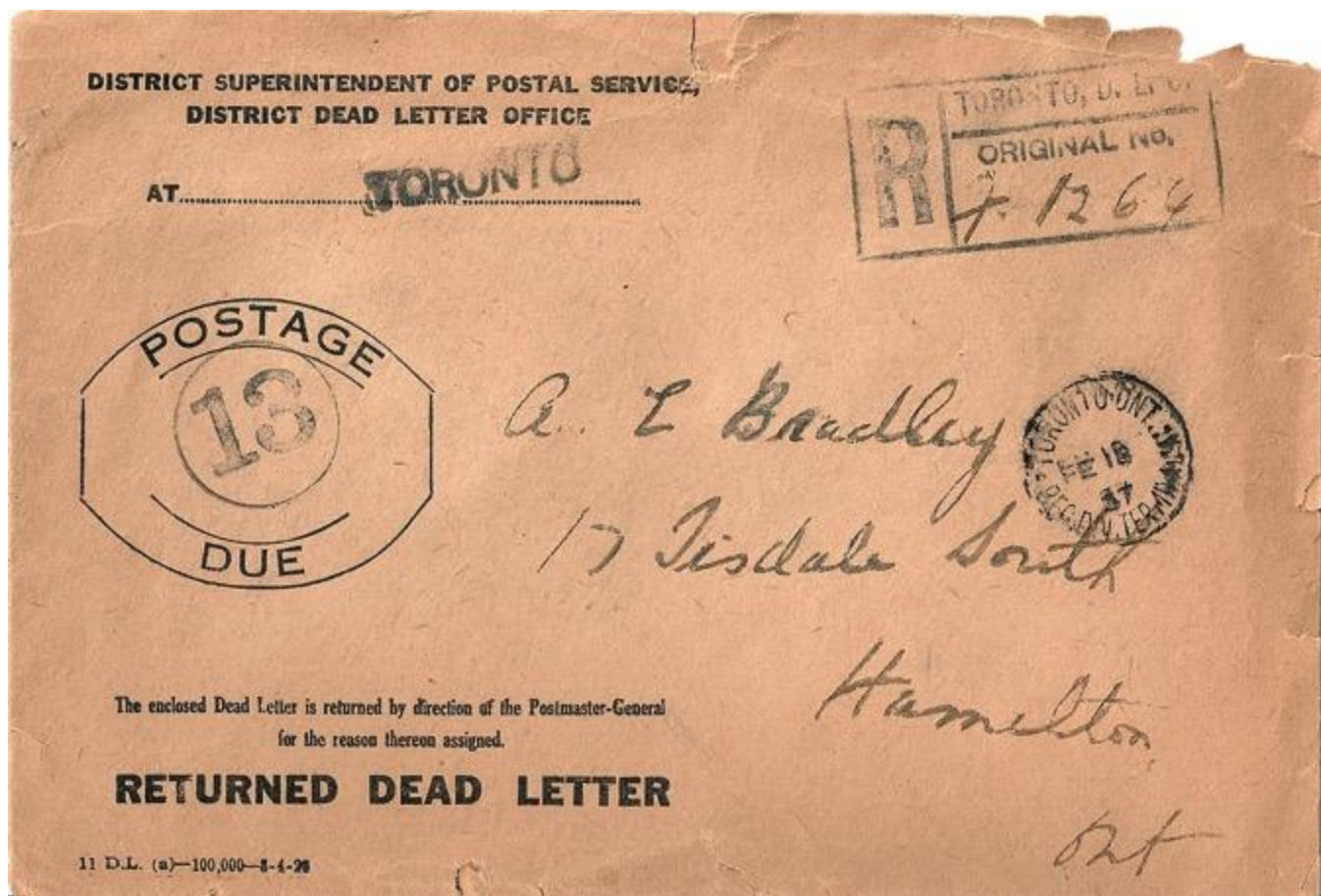
R
TORONTO, D. L. O.
ORIGINAL No.

Toronto D.L.O. Registration Handstamp

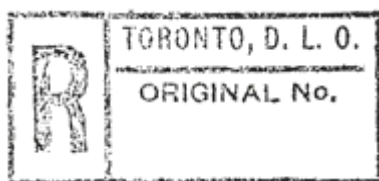
49 x 23mm

All letters sans-serif and caps except 'No.'

1 of 2 KNOWN



Very seldom seen 13 cents postage due for 10-cent registration fee and 3-cent DLO return fee.



Proof strike October 1927

Registered D.L.O. return envelope Feb 18 1937
to Hamilton with D.L.O. boxed registration
handstamp and two three point crown Toronto
Wax Seals over back flaps.



R
TORONTO, D. L. O.
No.

Toronto D.L.O. Registration Handstamp

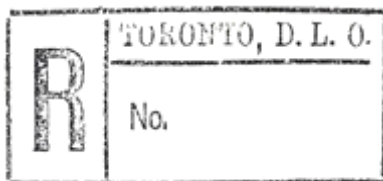
49 x 23mm
KNOWN

EARLIEST REPORTED DATE of TWO



Note: Difference in lettering and **'ORIGINAL'** missing compared to the D.L.O. Registration handstamp on the previous page

'TORONTO, D. L. O.' seriffed
and caps except **'No.'**



Proof strike June 1939

Registered D.L.O. return envelope Oct 27 1947
to Hamilton with D.L.O. boxed registration
handstamp and two three point crown Toronto
Wax Seals.



LATEST REPORTED DATE
of ALL REPORTED WAX SEALS

**R
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
WINNIPEG, MAN.**

Winnipeg D.L.O. Registration Handstamp

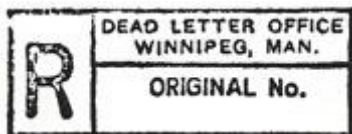
48 x 19mm

EARLIEST REPORTED DATE of THREE KNOWN



Note: There is no 'ORIGINAL' or 'No.'
Showing in this D.L.O. Boxed Registration handstamp

Sans-serif,
all caps



Proof strike December 1922

Registered D.L.O. return envelope Nov 16 1946
to Hamilton with Winnipeg D.L.O. boxed registration
handstamp.

Note no D.L.O. Wax Seals used during this late period.



The End of an Era

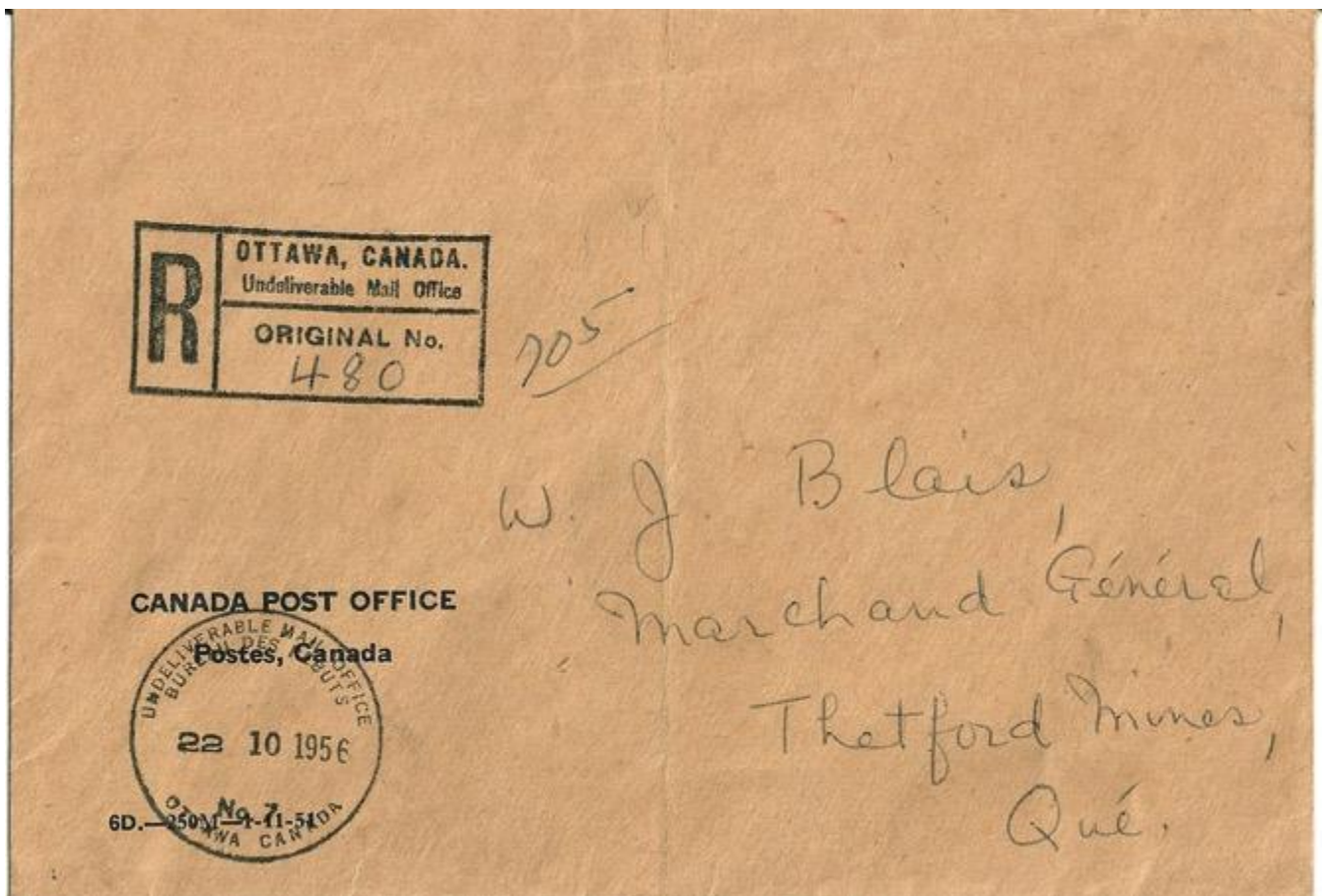
As with other Dead Letter Office handstamps the Wax Seals and D.L.O. Boxed Registration handstamps used for DLO Registered Return Dead Letters gradually disappeared due to Post Office reorganizational changes starting in January 1948.

The use of DLO handstamps was not cancelled immediately as the Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver Rectangular DLO dated handstamps were actually issued in 1948 and used as late as 1954.

R
OTTAWA, CANADA
Undeliverable Mail Office
ORIGINAL No.

Undeliverable Mail Office

1 of 2 REPORTED KNOWN



Shown above is the style of Boxed UMO Registration handstamp
used to replace the DLO Boxed Registration handstamps.

Although the earliest Undeliverable Mail Office (UMO) handstamp appears in 1950, common usage does not appear till the mid fifties. The earliest reported Ottawa UMO so far is 1956 with few reports to-date.