



Canadian Dead Letter Office Reorganization Handstamps

Purpose:


The exhibit shows the **new style rectangle Dead Letter Office handstamps** due to a major **Post Office reorganization in 1948**. Onward, all mail directed to several Dead Letter Offices **were to be sent only to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver** depending upon the point of origin and destination. Mail containing valuables that could not be redirected and mail suspected of being illegal or of a fraudulent nature would be forwarded to the Dead Letter Office in **Ottawa**.

Treatment:

In January 1948 Ottawa was the first Dead Letter Office to be restructured according to the dates on proofs, followed by Montreal, Toronto and finally Vancouver in July 1948. The Dead Letter Offices will be shown in this order. Additional proofs were made at subsequent dates up to November 1948, including replacement proofs up to 1952. A gradual reduction in use occurred in 1953 and 1954. There are a few proofs after 1948 but not of this particular design, thus not included in this study.

Items are usually listed by type, dimensions, lettering including periods, commas and dashes. This will result in a general chronological order, but not for every item.

The listing for each item includes the lettering of the handstamp and indicia, major and subtype of handstamp, dimensions, important variations as compared to similar handstamps, if a strike proof was taken and importance such as Previously Unknown, Only Known Copy (**OKC**) or Earliest (**ERD**) and Latest (**LRD**) reported dates of use. Throughout the exhibit are numerous previously unknown, unreported, earliest and latest reported dates discovered by the exhibitor.

The Dead Letter Office is an important division of the Canadian Post Office as it would not be able to function without the clearing of undeliverable items. These handstamps are new and the last mainly used by the DLO before the name change to the Undeliverable Mail Office (UMO). Items of special interest are bordered in red. 

Plan:

Page:

- 1 - Title Page
- 2 - 4 Ottawa DLO
- 5 - 9 Montreal DLO
- 10 - 12 Toronto DLO
- 13 - 16 Vancouver DLO

Proof Strikes:

Restructuring of DLO to four offices including replacement handstamps:

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Ottawa | January 11, 1948 | #1, 3, 4, 6, 8 |
| | March 21, 1948 | #2 |
| | July 16, 1948 | #9 |
| | September 21, 1948 | #5 |
| | November 21, 1948 | #10 |
| | November 23, 1948 | #7, 11 |
| | September 8, 1950 | #10 Replacement proof |
| Montreal | July 3, 1948 | #1-12 |
| | October 25, 1950 | #2, 9 Replacement proof with month spelled out |
| | No proof known | #3 Replacement handstamp with month spelled out |
| Toronto | July 3, 1948 | #1-7 |
| | No proof known | #10 New Subsequent number handstamp |
| Vancouver | July 3, 1948 | #1-7 |
| | September 25, 1952 | #6 Replacement proof with month spelled out |

Ottawa Dead Letter Office

In 1948 eleven Ottawa DLO rectangle proof strikes were produced numbered **1 to 11**. **Of the eleven only five of the numbered handstamps have been reported to date.** The earliest being Feb 8, 1949 and latest Feb 12, 1954. Ten reports of the five handstamps are all that are known at this time.

A replacement handstamp #10 was proofed Sep 8, 1950 with periods after the day and month similar to handstamps #7 & #11, with only one copy of each reported to date.

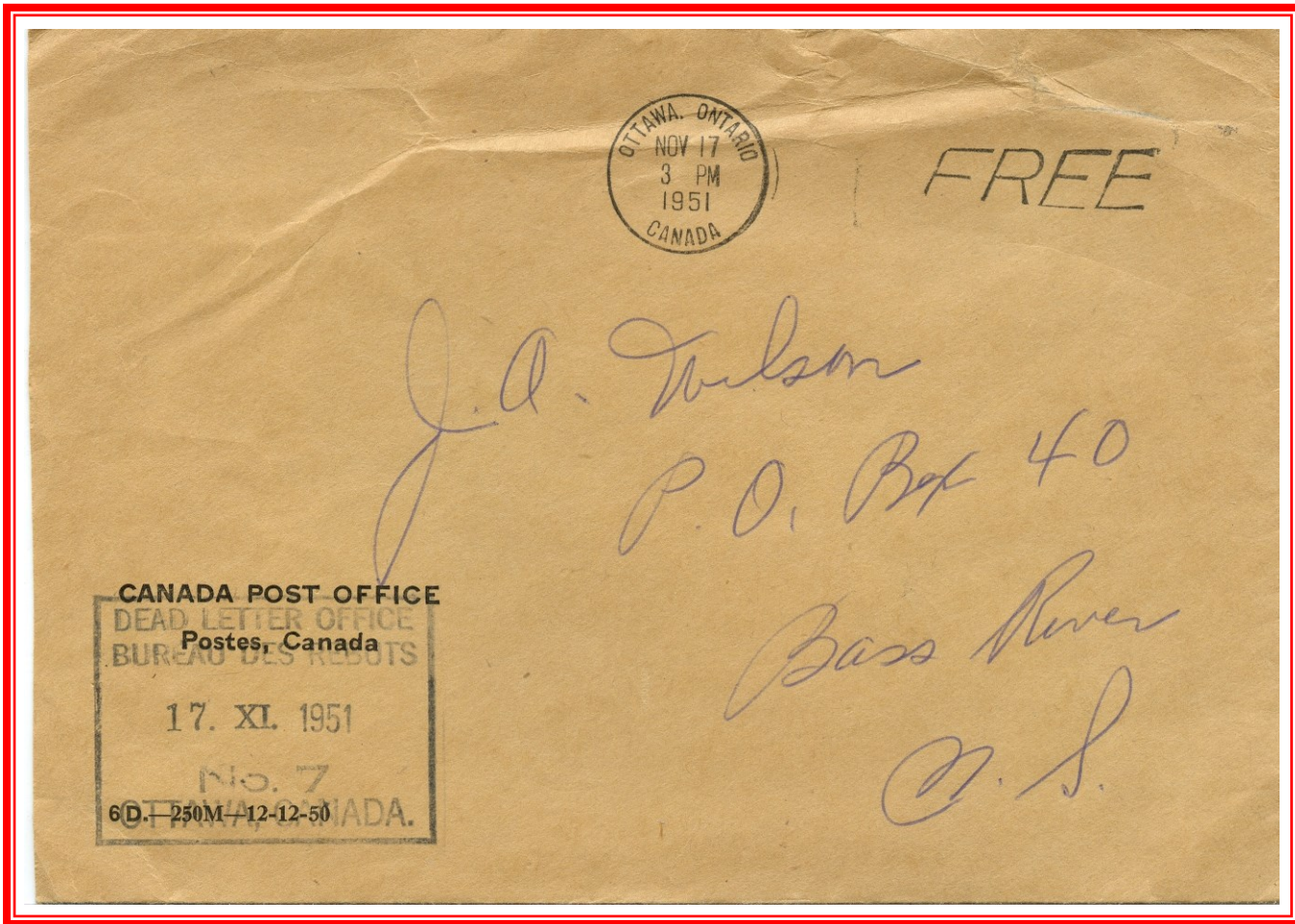
All handstamps are single frame with dimensions of 46mmx35mm, sans-serif and capitalized.

**DEAD LETTER OFFICE
BUREAU DES REBUTS
17. XI. 1951
No. 7
OTTAWA, CANADA.**

Ottawa No. 7

Ottawa handstamps have the month in Roman numerals

**Only
known
copy**



Dead
Letter
Return
envelope
6D. with
enclosure
on page
4 with
same
date of
No. 11
handstamp

Proof strike 23. XI. 1948

Note periods after day and month.

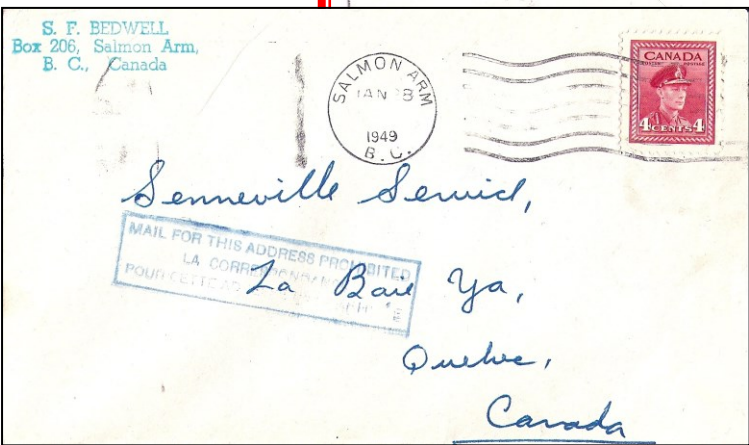
**DEAD LETTER OFFICE
BUREAU DES REBUTS
8 - II 1949
No. 8
OTTAWA, CANADA.**

Ottawa No. 8

Earliest reported of all similar Ottawa handstamps.

Dots or dashes
can appear
between or after
the day & month

**MAIL FOR THIS
ADDRESS PROHIBITED**



Scan 60%

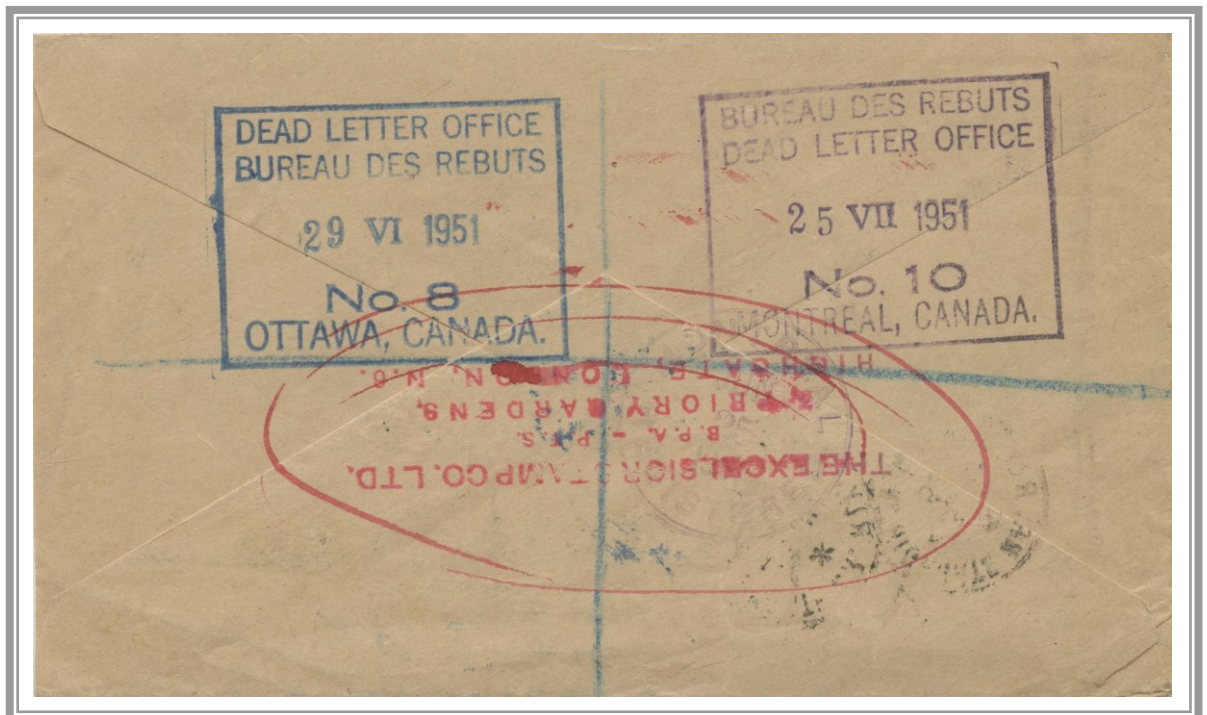
**DEAD LETTER OFFICE
BUREAU DES REBUTS
29 VI 1951
No. 8
OTTAWA, CANADA.**

Latest reported date VV

Scarce use by
two DLO
Offices
Ottawa &
Montreal

No. 8
Blue ink

Proof strike
11 I 1948



**DEAD LETTER OFFICE
BUREAU DES REBUTS
14. VI. 1950
No. 11
OTTAWA, CANADA.**

Ottawa No. 11

Only known copy

Note
periods
after
day &
month



Proof
strike
23. XI. 1946

**DEAD LETTER OFFICE
BUREAU DES REBUTS
17. XI. 1951
No. 10
OTTAWA, CANADA.**

Replacement Handstamp Ottawa No. 10

Only known copy

46mmx35mm

This is the enclosure
of **No. 7** DLO
handstamp
cover on page 2.

**Proof strike
8 IX. 1950
replaces 21 XI 48
proof strike.**



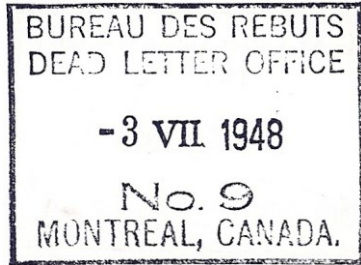
Montreal Dead Letter Office

In 1948 twelve Montreal DLO rectangle proof strikes were produced numbered 1 to 12. **Of the twelve all are now recorded as used.** The earliest being Aug 6, 1948 and latest Mar 16, 1954.

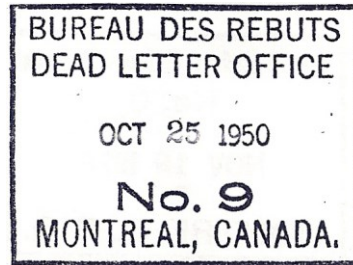
All handstamps are single frame with dimensions of 47mmx35mm, sans-serif and capitalized.

Replacement handstamps with the month spelled out numbered 2, 3 and 9 have been reported, with no overlapping of older handstamps. Numbers 2 and 9 were proofed on OCT 25 1950, no proof strike is known for the number 3 handstamp. Dimensions are 46mmx35mm for all number 2 handstamps, and 47mmx35mm for number 3 and 9 handstamps.

Proof strikes:



Month Roman Numerals



Month spelled out

BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
25 IX 1948
No. 1
MONTREAL, CANADA.

Montreal No. 1

Month in
Roman
Numerals

Earliest reported
date for the
#1 handstamp

Proof strike
3 VII 1948

to Germany

Return to sender cover
with German labels:

"zur Devisenüberwachung
zollamtlich geöffnet"

translates to

"opened by customs for
currency clearance"

Scan 75%



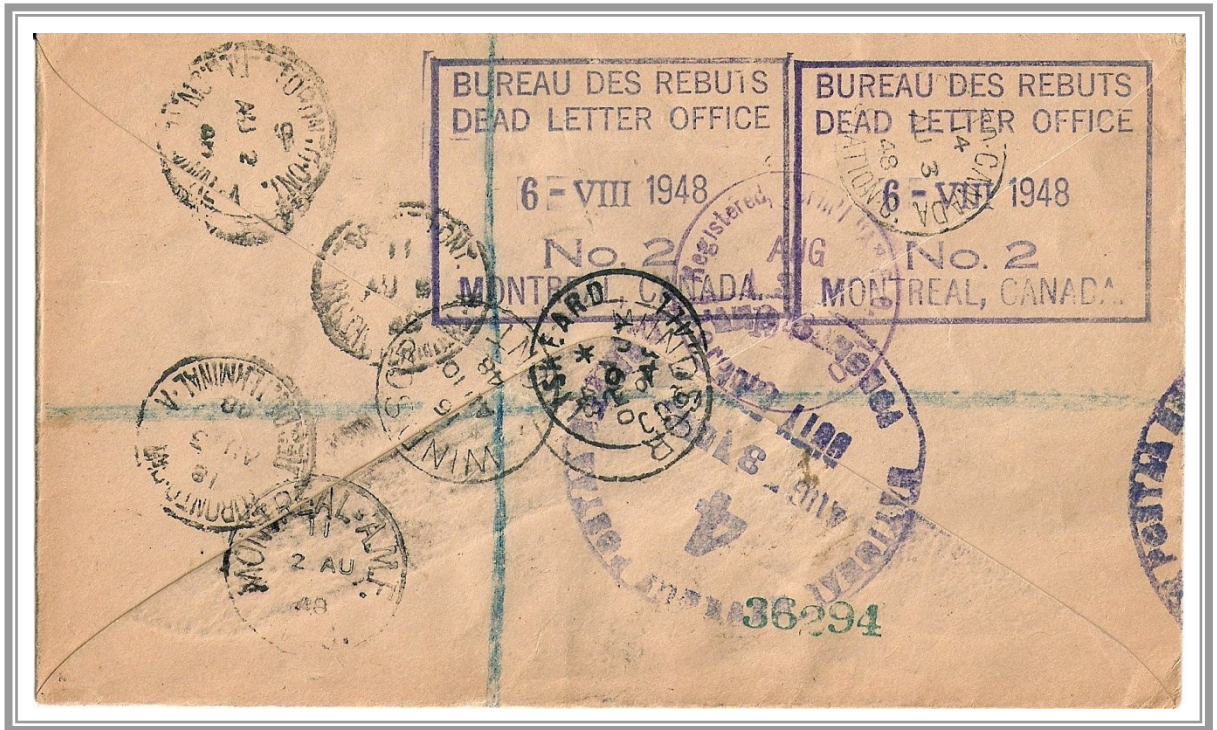
**BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
6 - VIII 1948
No. 2
MONTREAL, CANADA.**

Montreal No. 2

vv **Earliest reported date of 2 known**

Two same dated handstamps received & processed.

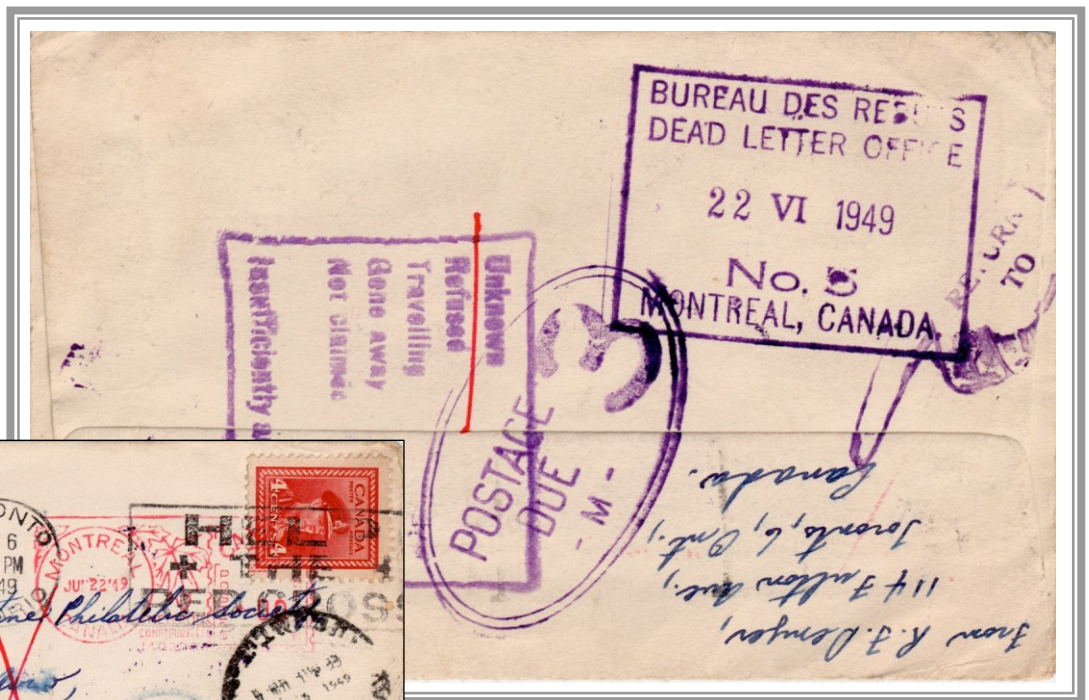
Used 34 days after proof strike
3 VII 1948



**BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
22 VI 1949
No. 5
MONTREAL, CANADA.**

Montreal No. 5

DLO handstamps of this type were often used on foreign mail incoming to Montreal & Vancouver



to Israel

POSTAGE / DUE

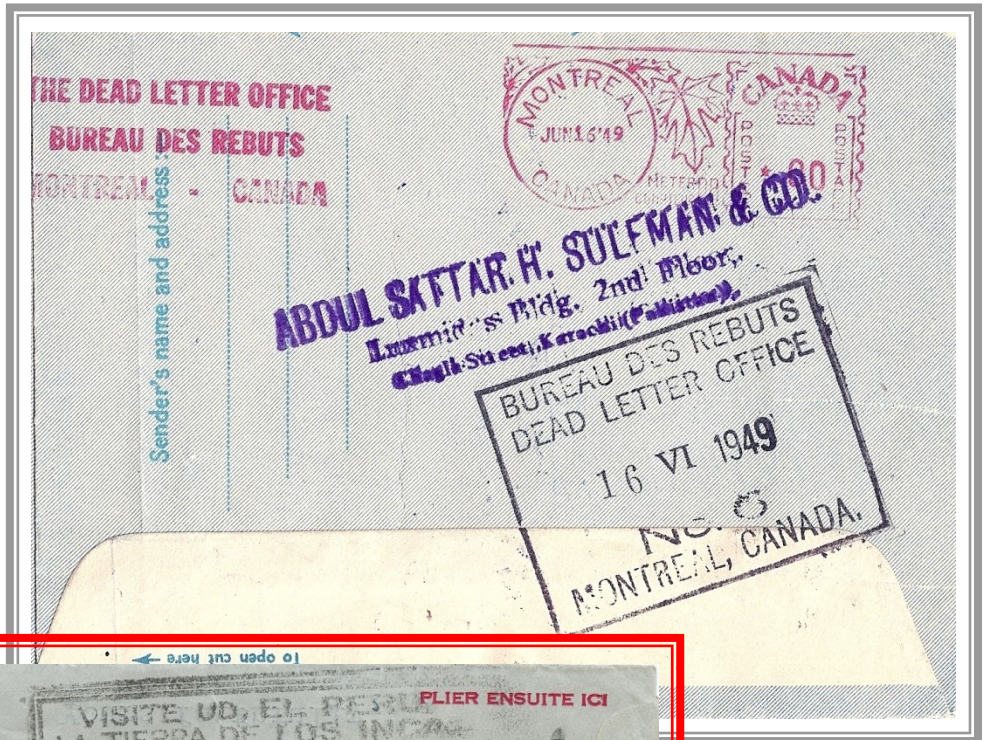
- M - 3

is the three cent Dead Letter Return fee

BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
16 VI 1949
No. 6
MONTREAL, CANADA.

Montreal No. 6

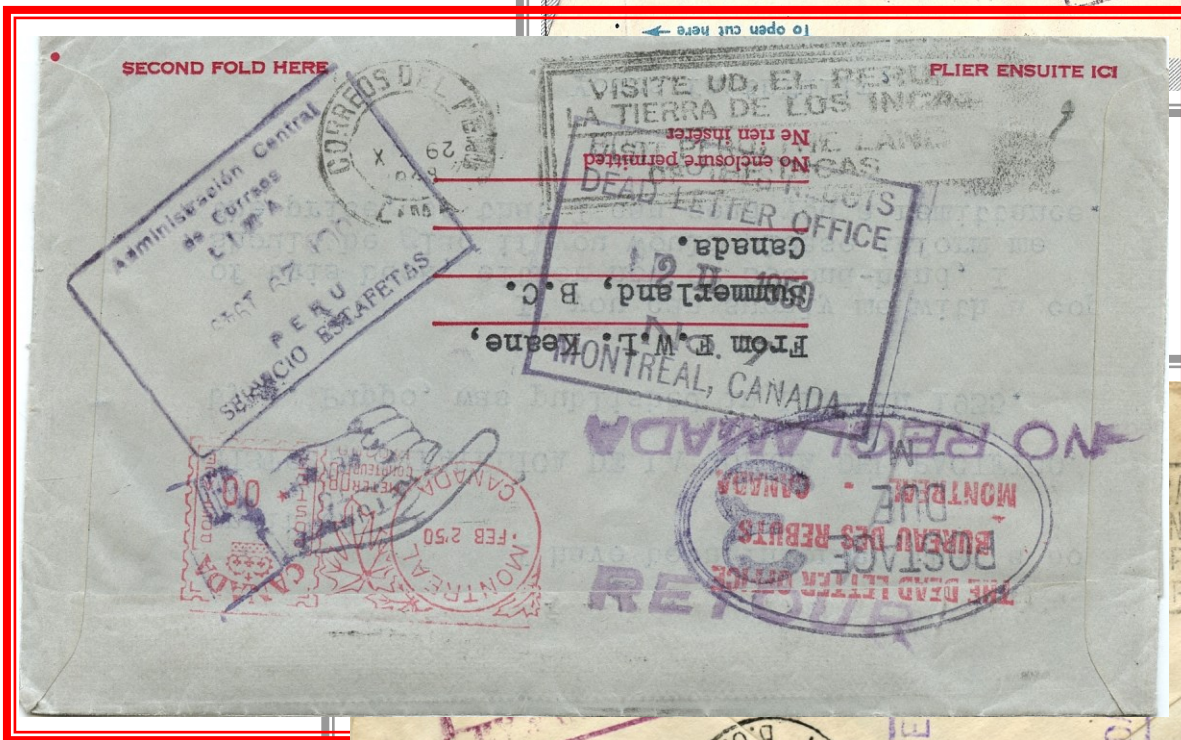
Earliest reported date



BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
2 II 1950
No. 7
MONTREAL, CANADA.

Montreal No. 7

<< Recently only
proof known,
OKC, new find



BUREAU DES REBUTS
DEAD LETTER OFFICE
19 XI 1948
No. 9
MONTREAL, CANADA.

Earliest reported date

Montreal No. 9

Toronto Dead Letter Office

In 1948 seven Toronto DLO rectangle proof strikes were produced numbered **1 to 7**. **Of the seven only four of the numbered handstamps have been reported to date**. The earliest being Dec 22, 1948 and latest Nov 20, 1953. **Seven reports of the four handstamps are only known at this time**.

All handstamps are single frame with dimensions of 47mmx35mm, sans-serif and capitalized.

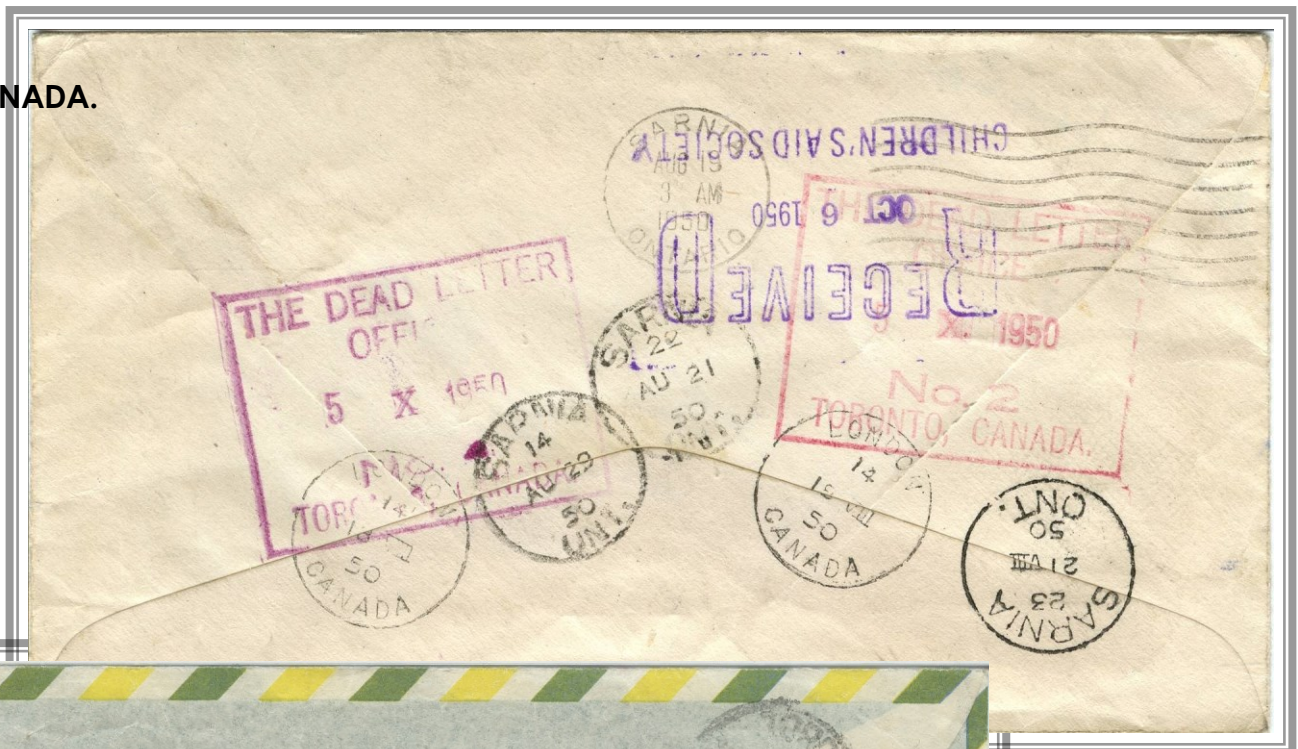
A **replacement handstamp #10** has been reported, with the month spelled out, no proof known. Only one copy has been reported to date for Jan 28, 1952. Dimensions 48mmx33mm.

**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
5 X 1950
No. 2
TORONTO, CANADA.**

Month in
Roman
Numerals

**Only four
numbers
#2, #3, #4
and #5
have been
reported
to date.**

**Toronto No. 2
Previously only proof known, recent finds**



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
20 XI 1953
No. 2
TORONTO,
CANADA.**

**Latest reported
date by almost
2 years over any
regular DLO
Toronto h/s.**

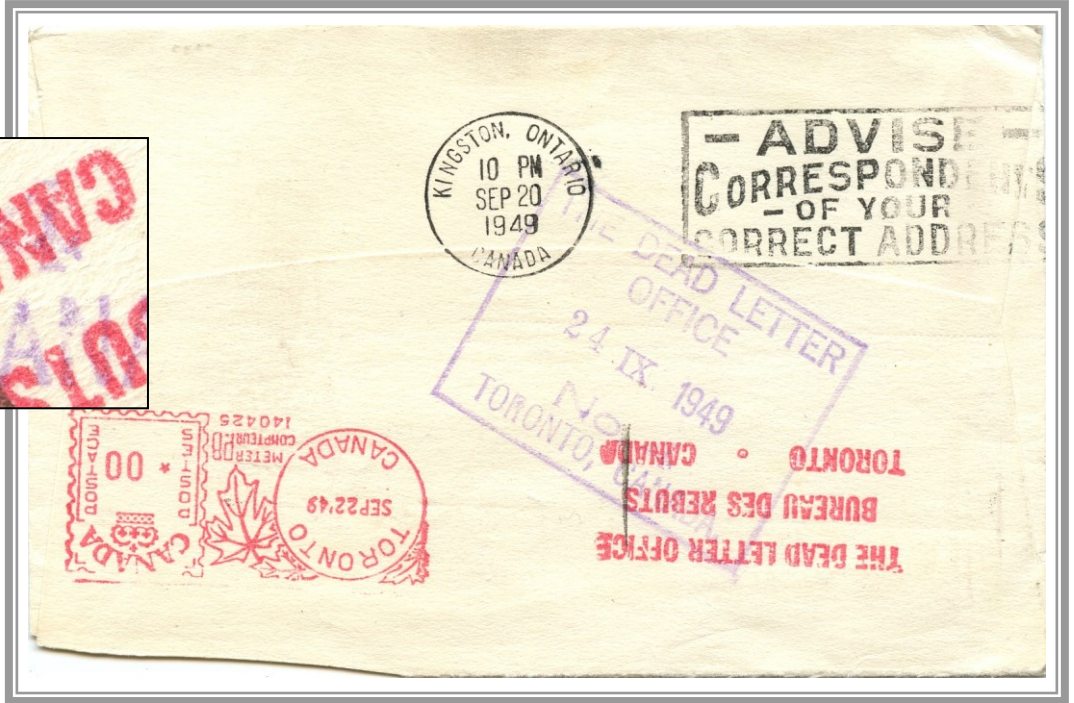
THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
24 IX 1949
No. 4
TORONTO, CANADA.

Toronto No. 4

Previously only proof known, recent find, ERD



Proof strike
3 VII 1948



THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
4 V 1951
No. 5
TORONTO, CANADA.

Toronto No. 5

Proof strike
3 VII 1948

to Falkland
Islands



Previously only proof known, okc

Four plus month journey
Dec 16, 1950 to May 4, 1951

Scan 75%

THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
JAN 28 1952
No. 10
TORONTO, CANADA.

New Subsequent Toronto No. 10

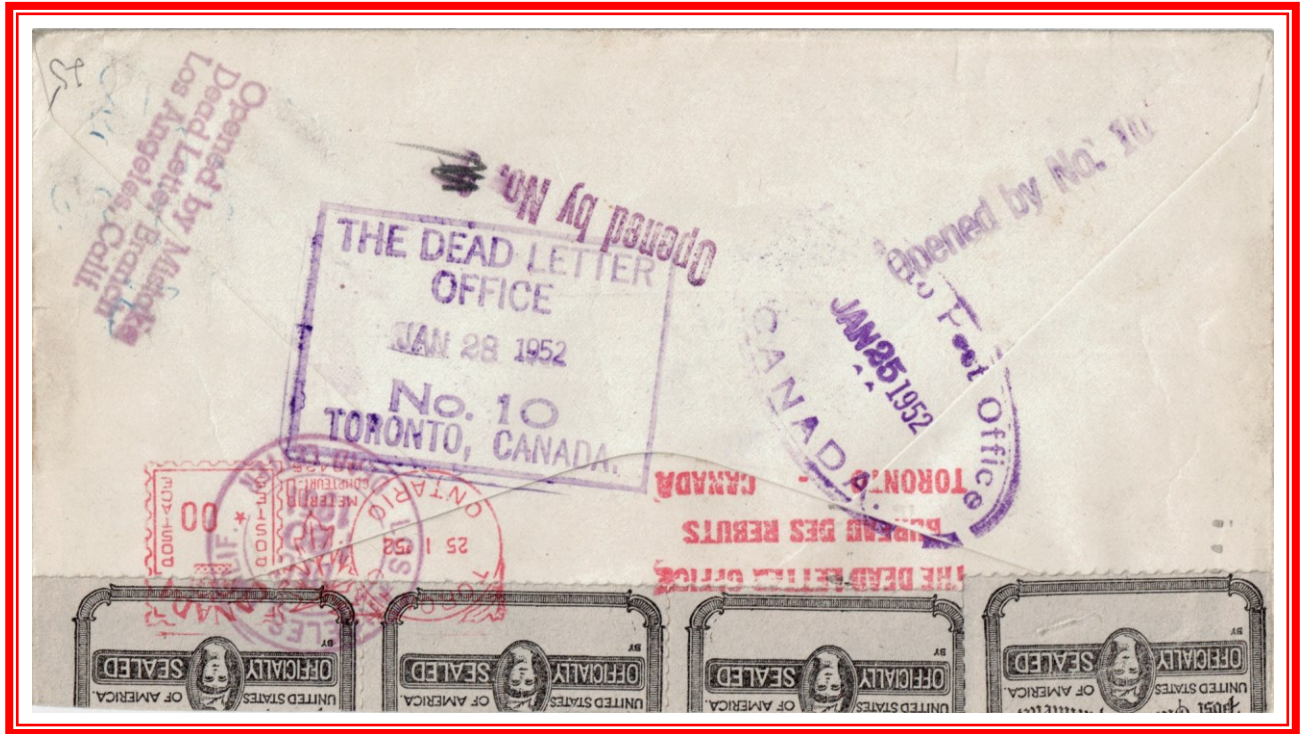
48mmx33mm

Previously unknown, okc, new find

Month
spelled out

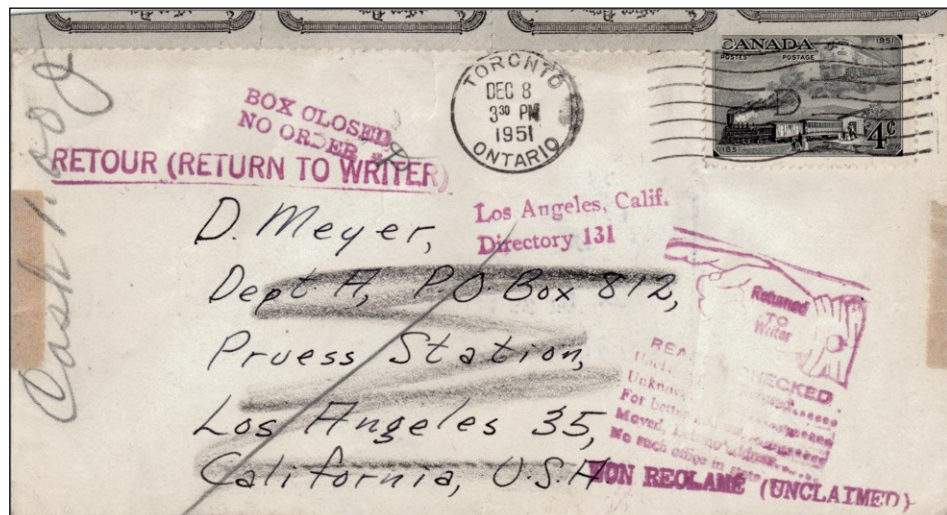
Different
dimensions
than
previous 7
proofed
handstamps,
subsequent
used as no
'No. 10'
with Roman
Numerals
reported or
proofed

No proof
known



Opened by Mistake
Dead Letter Branch
Los Angeles, Calif.

Four Officially Sealed labels applied to reseal the cover then returned to Canada to the Toronto Dead Letter Office Jan 25, 1952, per Pitney Bowes meter machine imprint. **Opened by No. 10** DLO clerk in Toronto and handstamped with **No. 10 subsequent rectangle handstamp**, returned to sender in Return Dead Letter envelope.



Front scan 75%

Vancouver Dead Letter Office

In 1948 seven Vancouver DLO rectangle proof strikes were produced numbered **1 to 7**. **All the numbered handstamps have been reported to date.** The earliest being July 8, 1948 and latest June 12, 1954. Fewer than 10 of each have so far been reported.

All above handstamps are single frame with dimensions of 46.5mmx35mm distinctly different than the other cities numbered handstamps. The lettering is sans-serif and capitalized.

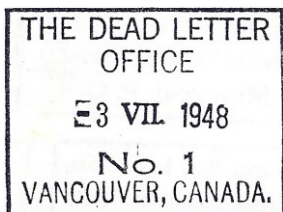
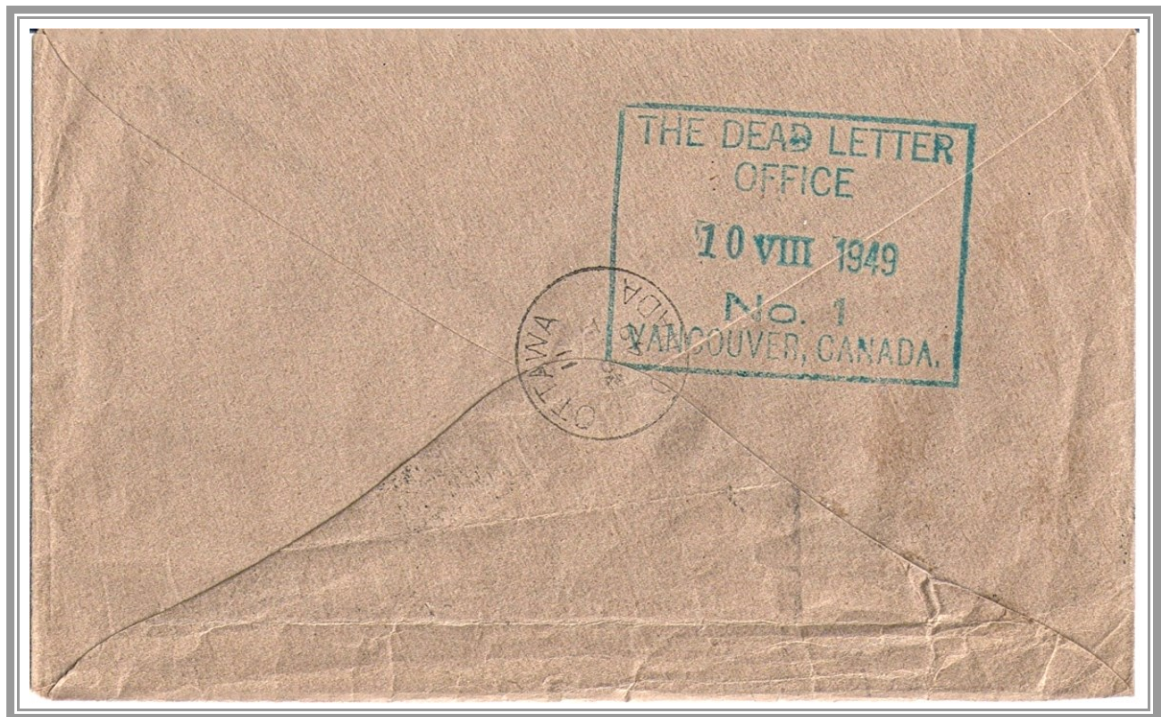
There is a replacement handstamp #6 with the month spelled out, proofed SEP 25 1952 with dimensions of 47mmx34mm. Only three copies have been reported to date all owned by this exhibitor.

**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
10 VIII 1949
No. 1
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

Vancouver No. 1

Earliest reported date

Month in
Roman
numerals



Proof strike

Hobart, Tas. Aust. 1 JUN 1949 to Ontario, Canada '**Returned for better direction.**'
via Ottawa and forwarded to the Vancouver DLO 10 VIII 1949.

Of the six different ink colours used on DLO handstamps all are known for the Vancouver office: black, violet, red, purple, blue and green.

**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
12 IV 1954
No. 2
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

Vancouver No. 2

**Latest reported date
of all Vancouver handstamps**

SALVAGED FROM
T.C.A WRECK'

Month in
Roman
numerals

From April 8, 1954
Flight 9 Montreal
to Vancouver
collided with a T33
NATO jet trainer
leaving Winnipeg
to Edmonton leg,

Due to partial
address
destruction
sent to
Vancouver
DLO.

Proof strike
3 VII 1948

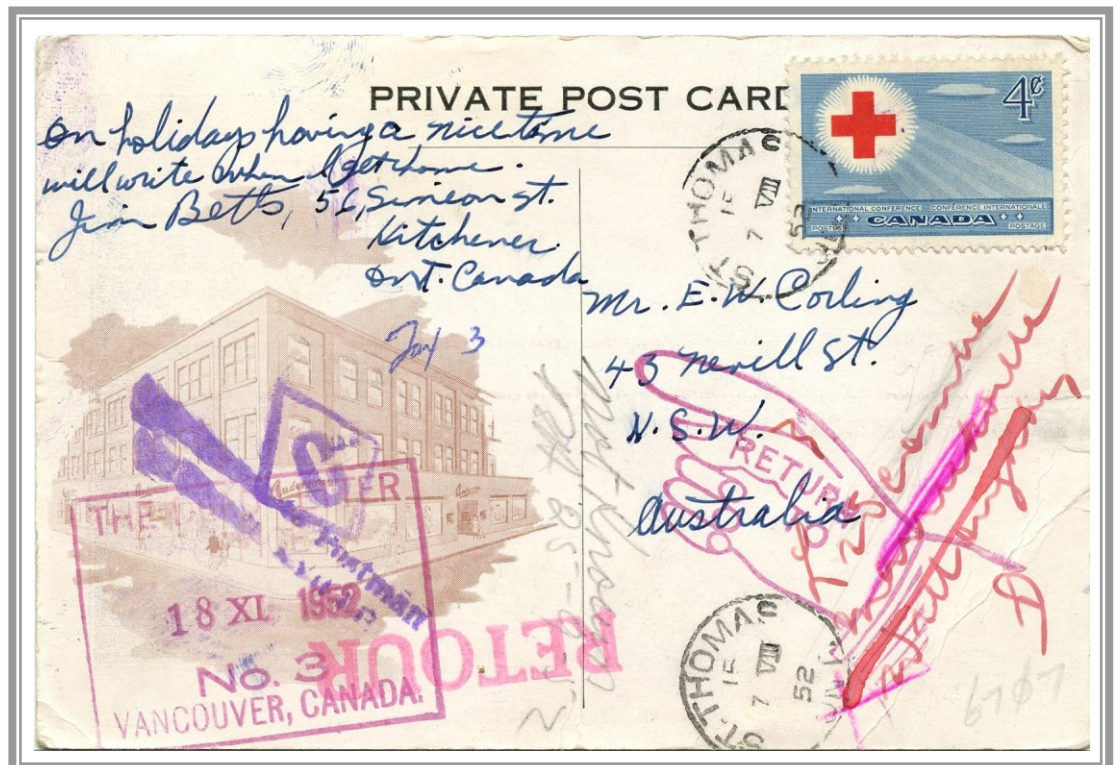


**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
18 XI 1952
No. 3
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

Vancouver No. 3

Month in
Roman
numerals

Proof strike
3 VII 1948



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
4 IX 1951
No. 4
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

Vancouver No. 4

Seldom seen
on the front
of DLO
covers

Un-paid due
to Excise
stamp,
sent to DLO

Proof strike
3 VII 1948



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
3 X 1951
No. 5
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

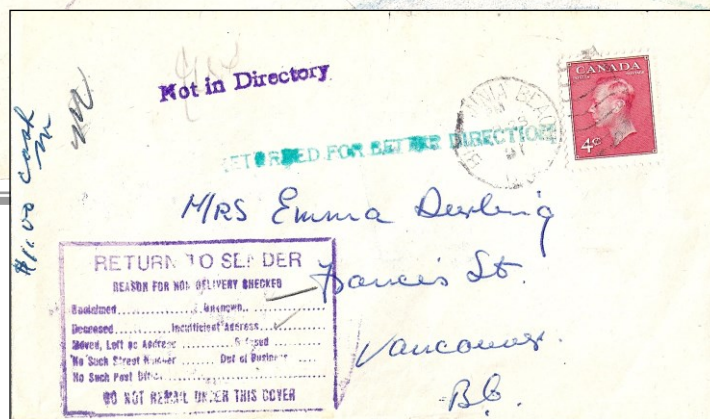
Vancouver No. 5

Vancouver No. 7

Latest reported date



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
1 X 1951
No. 7
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
8 VII. 1948
No. 6
VANCOUVER, CANADA.**

Vancouver No. 6

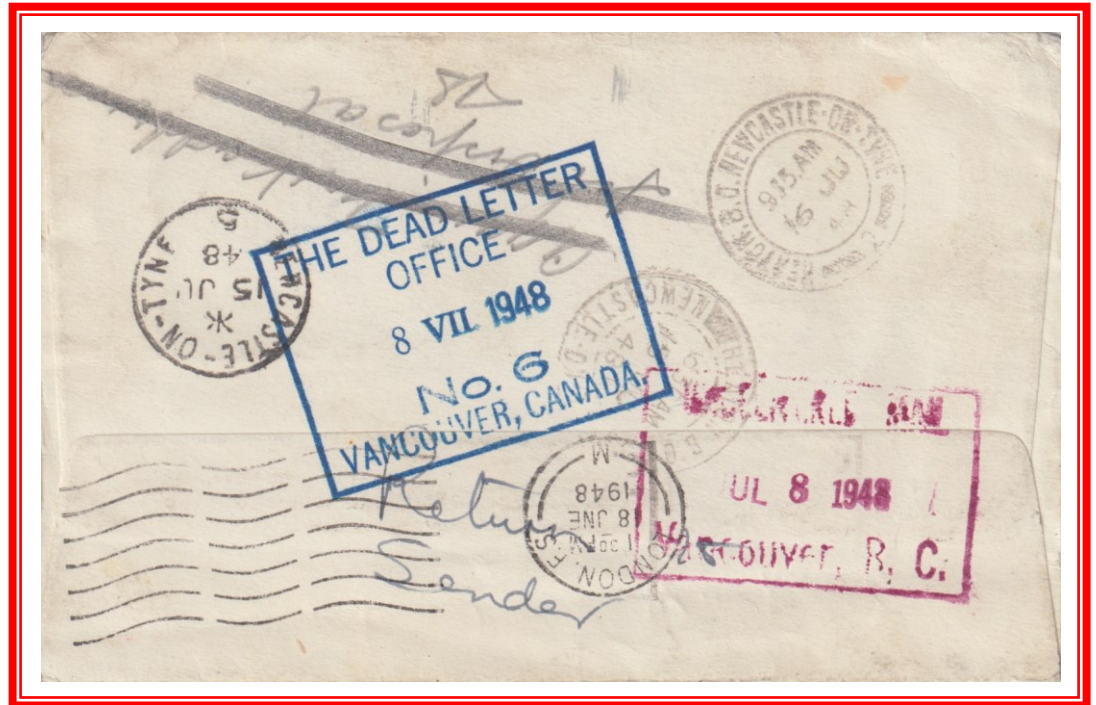
Earliest reported date of all four cities

Sans-serif
all caps.

Month in
Roman
numerals

**Used 5 days
after proof strike,
very clear imprint**

Proof strike
3 VII 1948



**THE DEAD LETTER
OFFICE
DEC 29 1953
No. 6
VANCOUVER, CANADA**

Replacement Handstamp Vancouver No. 6

Latest reported date of 3 known

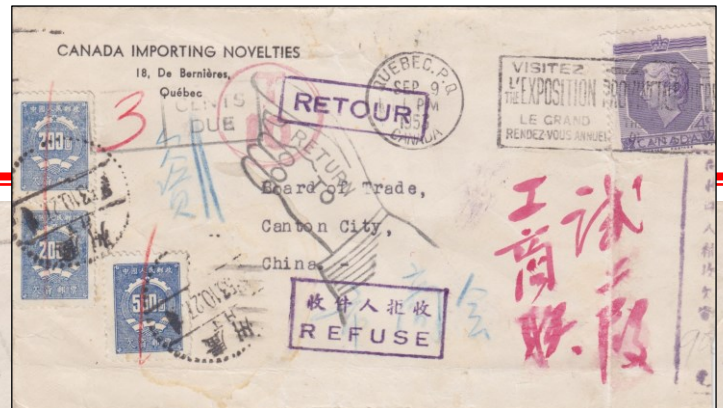
47mmx34mm

Sans-serif
all caps

Proof strike
AUG 25 1952

**This is a much
different hammer
than the previous
numbered DLO
handstamps. It
is a different size and
the date is spelled
out rather than
Roman numerals**

**Also, there is
no period
after 'CANADA'**



**In mid-1954 the Dead Letter Office (DLO) name changed to the
Undeliverable Mail Office (UMO) resulting in the decommissioning of these types of handstamps.**