



THE CANADIAN DEAD LETTER OFFICE

*The British North America
Philatelic Society
Dead Letter Office
Study Group
Newsletter*

Jul - Aug 2011

Issue 7

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**DLO CANADA
EDMONTON BRANCH**
**The Lonely CDS
of 1912**

*Article by
Brian Plain*

Next BNAPS DLO Annual Meeting

Taking into consideration the small size of our study group I thought we might be able to have our Annual Meeting held over lunch this year at the local hotel restaurant so that we may make good use of all too valuable time. The meeting is scheduled for 12 to 1 on Saturday September 3. I will post the restaurant where this meeting will take place.

We would like to ask any members to bring a few items of interest for show and tell. I will bring in copies of the latest newsletter. We should be able to get out three newsletters at a minimum this year.

Chairman's Desk

Another summer is almost over and it's time for the BNAPS convention in North Bay. I am sure that all those that attend will have a wonderful time and I only wish that other commitments hadn't made it impossible for me to be there. Convention bourses always hold surprises, so I do hope that everyone will be able to find something for their collection – especially some new DLO or UMO material.

A DLO Study Group luncheon is planned for the show. I hope that those attending will give their suggestions about articles for future newsletters, and perhaps be willing to write an article on their favorite topic. Such submissions can only improve the newsletter and increase its readership.

The past few months have seen few new discoveries, but have seen a number of reports that help to flesh out and expand the range of dates of several markings. Please continue to send such information along to me so I can keep updating the databases.

I wish you all the best of conventions, and I will hopefully see you all at BNAPS 2012.

Brian

***The Canadian Dead Letter
Office Study Group***

The Canadian Dead Letter Office Study Group comes under the sponsorship of The British North American Philatelic Society (BNAPS)

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Dues 2010:

\$20.00 CDN
(hardcopy)

BNAPS

www.bnaps.org

Editor's Comments

This issue of the Canadian Dead Letter Office Newsletter includes a lot of small but significant items of interest to the DLO collector.

Brian has an article on an interesting Edmonton steel handstamp, and a nice internal DLO note with handstamp.

Bill Walton had posted a very nice early Dead Letter Return envelope on ebay, and allowed us to write a small article on the item.

Also included are other articles continuing on Previously Unknown Handstamps / New Handstamps, A Modern Mercury with pics of various departments, and more information from the Postmaster's Information book.

Recent Auction & Sale Listings

If anyone sees anything that should be listed please contact the editor or Brian Plain.

D.L.O. CANADA / EDMONTON BRANCH

by Brian Plain

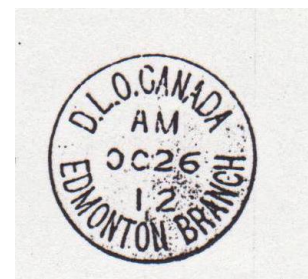
The Lonely CDS of 1912

Edmonton was not on the list of cities selected to receive a Dead Letter Office in July 1898. The Post Office Circular of June 1st of that year assigned responsibility for undeliverable mail from Alberta to the regional office in Winnipeg. Nonetheless, by 1910 it became clear that some DLO service between Winnipeg and the Pacific Coast was necessary. British Columbia had already been granted a second office in Vancouver that opened in 1902, so opening of further offices was not without precedent. The earliest strike of any kind from Edmonton is a proof of EDM3a-a2, which is dated August 12, 1910. Several other handstamps were proofed in the following months, which indicated that Edmonton was a very busy office.

On October 26, 1912, a circular date handstamp was proofed. Its database listing is shown below, along with a scan of the proof.

TYPE	WORDING	SIZE	PROOFED	ERD	LRD	#
EDM1-a1	D.L.O. CANADA / EDMONTON BRANCH	22.5mm	26/10/12	(03)/45		1

Although Dead Letter Office handstamps from Edmonton are known in use throughout the following years and as late as January 1944, the circular date stamp handstamp has proved to be elusive. A single example is now known that may provide an answer as to why the device was not used.



Shown below is a large CANADA POST OFFICE envelope bearing the printing information 6.D.—100,000—18—12—42. It was used by the District Superintendent of Postal Services at the Edmonton DLO to return a registered, undeliverable letter to an individual in Kelowna BC. The cover bears an EDM4a-b1 handstamp dated March 2, 1945, a registration box, likely EDM7-a1, and is rated as 13¢ postage due. The reverse of the cover shows that the D.L.O. CANADA / EDMONTON BRANCH handstamp, without indicia, was struck five times to seal the envelope. The cover traveled on the CAL & VAN RPO and arrived in Kelowna where the shortfall was paid on March 7 1945.

The absence of indicia is interesting. A similar handstamp for Regina appears in the proof book dated AM/MR 14/14, but its use has not been recorded at the time of this writing. One may postulate that the Edmonton handstamp was sent without date slugs and was simply put aside as not being of much use, particularly when there were several other handstamps available. To extrapolate, one may further imagine a similar cause for lack of use of the Regina datestamp. If any of our readers are aware of a strike of either dater, I would appreciate a report and scan.



THE CANADIAN DEAD LETTER OFFICE

1869 RETURNED DEAD LETTER Envelope - Dead Letter Office. #2,000-10-69

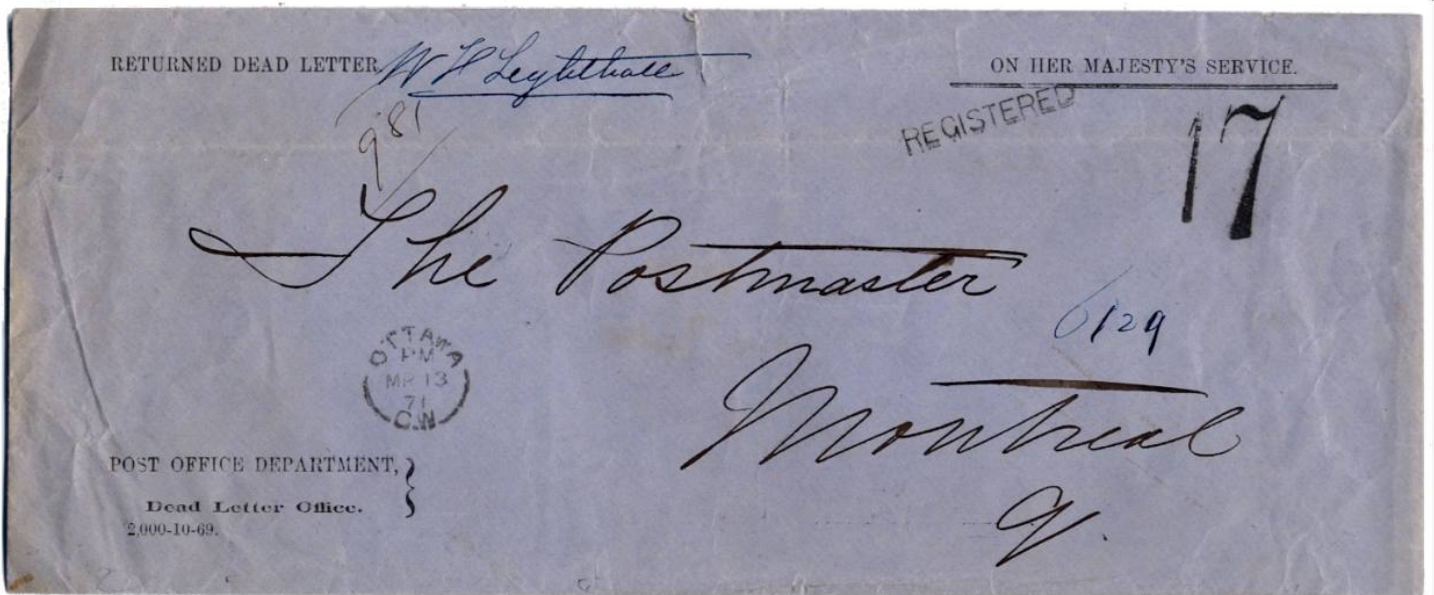
by Gary Steele

A very interesting Dead Letter Post Office cover turned up on ebay recently, listed by Bill Walton.

With a print run of 2,000 dated in October 1869, this is one of the earliest post-Confederation return envelopes so far reported.

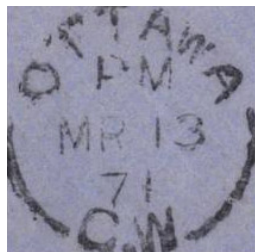
Note that this cover was REGISTERED and rated at 17 cents due. I am assuming from the different size of type that two separate handstamps were used to make the rate.

Another significant item on this cover is the rare oval wax seal on the reverse. This was used at the Dead Letter Office prior to decentralization in 1898.



Mailed on March 13 1871 at the Ottawa Dead Letter Office, this is a Registered Dead Letter Office Return envelope.

Rated at 17 cents postage due, it was received in Montreal, C.W. on March 14 1871 (b/s).



New Handstamp

by Gary Steele

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

G

MAR 8 1921

OTTAWA, ONT.

Many Dead Letter Office handstamps do not appear in the proof books. Until an actual item is found, catalogued and compared against other known markings, there is no way to know of its existence.



With few exceptions, most Ottawa oval DLO handstamps are scarce. The one shown here is the first known example of this previously unknown marking. This is a large marking at 53x33mm, with the only other type 2b marking of this size being used at Montreal.



Although most DLO ovals, particularly those from smaller offices, have neither a letter nor a number several different daters from larger offices are known to include such elements. It has been assumed that the addition of letters or numbers in the handstamp was to aid in identifying the individual clerks at these larger offices.

This cover was mailed at Vancouver on July 28 1920 to Peira, N. Rhodesia. It was franked with Admiral coils that show part of the beginning strip. On September 20 1920, it was forwarded to S. Rhodesia where it was held until January 1921. Failing of delivery, it was marked UNCLAIMED/ADVERTISED and then sent to the Returned Letter Branch in S. Rhodesia. This office in turn forwarded the cover to the Canadian Dead Letter Office on Jan 21 1921 where it was received on March 8 1921. It was date stamped with a small circle #15 (very high number), opened and returned to the sender in a Canada Dead Letter Office Return envelope. No additional handstamps were placed on this cover, however, the enclosure, if it survived, would be able to tell the rest of the story.

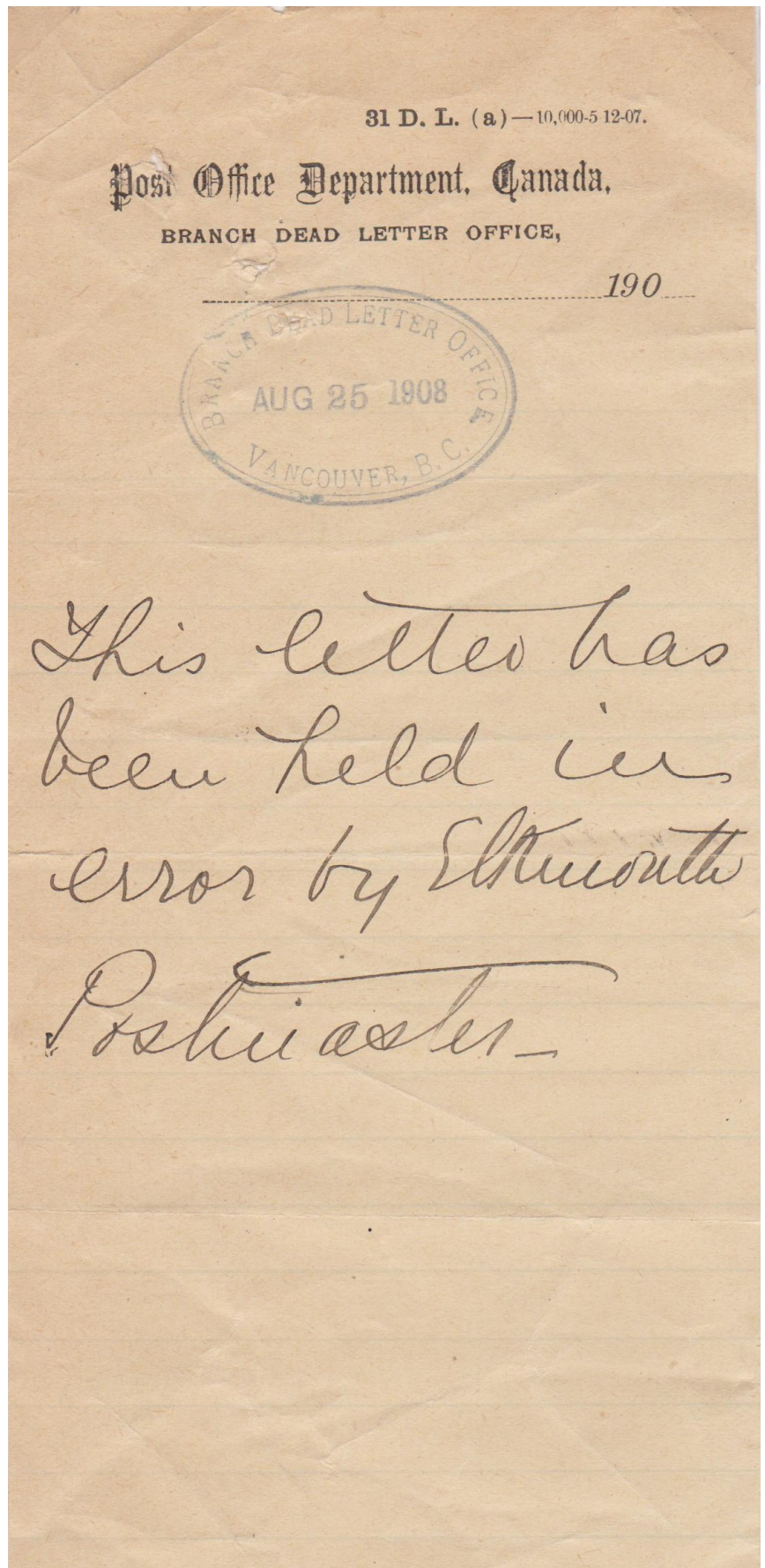
The DLO Paper Chase
(The first of a series)

By Brian Plain

This occasional series will deal with some of the paper and documents used during the daily operations of the Dead Letter Office.

The item shown, bearing the printing information **31 D.L. (a)—10,000-5-12-07**, was used by the Clerk in Charge of the Branch Dead Letter Office in Vancouver to explain to its recipient the reason the reason for the delay in delivery of a mailed item.

The document bears a VAN2b-c4 datestamp dated August 25, 1908.



A Modern Mercury

by Gary Steele

Although a separate department within the post office, the Dead Letter Office was connected to other elements of the postal processing system office on a regular basis due to its 'end point' status for mail whose forward momentum had been stalled. Interactions with the other departments occurred on an individual schedule that was unique to each office. There were, however, regulations that required regular transmission of undelivered items from the post office to the DLO, and a further requirement that the DLO itself (in Ottawa) prepare and submit an annual report to the Postmaster General.

The two pictures shown may not represent the DLO, but the material being handled would definitely have been forwarded to a Dead Letter Office if they could not move forward due to failure to comply with postal regulations

on your part delay your mail and add to the worries of the Postal Service.

1. Over 2,000,000 items reach the Dead Letter Office each year. This employee has opened a "Dead Letter" to ascertain the sender's address, and is returning the letter, in a special envelope, subject to a postage charge.
2. Incorrectly and illegibly addressed mail is sent to the Directory Section—These men are looking up correct street addresses.
3. Short paid letters are annoying to your friends from whom "Postage due" is collected on delivery. Overweight letters are weighed and endorsed to indicate the amount of postage to be collected on delivery.
4. Oversized or very small envelopes cannot pass through the Cancelling Machine, and are laid aside for Hand cancelling. Envelopes not larger than 9½" x 4½" or smaller than 4" x 3" speed delivery.

POSTAL POINTERS

Address your mail fully, clearly and without misleading abbreviations . . . Place your return address in the upper left hand corner . . . Never enclose coins or other hard objects in letters . . . Send remittances by Post Office Money Order or Postal Note . . . Properly pack parcels . . . Prepay postage fully . . . Place the stamps in the upper right hand corner . . . Register valuable articles . . . Give your correspondents your correct Post Office address . . . Mail early.



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Item #3 shows a gentleman weighing individual letters to see if they are short-paid. If so, they may then have been sent to the DLO, especially if it proved impossible to collect funds from the addressee.

Picture #4 shows a gentleman handling small and large envelopes. When an item exceeded regulations, and could not be returned, it would be opened and examined for the senders mailing address. Again, if the mail could not move forward, it would be sent to the DLO.

Dead Letter Office Per Postmaster's Information Book 1940

Continued...

'Page 75. Section **569. Making up Returns.** –

(2) An account form 9 D.L. (g) properly filled in, date stamped and signed by the Postmaster must accompany the return.

(3) The original number, office of origin and address of each registered article is to be entered on the reverse side of the account.

(4) The dead letters, etc., and account form are to be enclosed in envelope 1 D.L. (g) which is to be plainly addressed and legibly date stamped in the lower left hand corner.

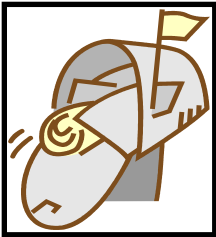
(5) If the articles comprising the dead letter return are too bulky to be enclosed in the envelope, they should be made up into a parcel and envelope 1 D.L. (g) used as an address label, form 9 D.L. (g) to be placed in the package.

(6) If it is necessary to make up a bag, form 9 D.L. (g) is enclosed in envelope 1 D.L. (g) and placed in the bag (which should be on fitted with a lock). The tag attached to the bag must be fully addressed and legibly date stamped.

(7) When any dead registered mail is included, the whole return is to be forwarded under registration, otherwise the return may be sent by ordinary mail.

Comments:

There have been printed over the years various sizes of specially printed envelopes used to send material to the District Dead Letter Offices. I had sent a few of these to Marc Eisenberg in the past; as of this date I do not know where these reside. I will post any info I find on these in the future. Some are of a fairly large dimension.

Member's Mail

We would like comments, suggestions, notes on articles, and questions posted in this section. This will be a forum for trying to use the expertise of all members. There will also be a Bulletin Board that we can use in-between newsletters to hash out certain key points and then have more concrete notes for the newsletters.

**Want List and For Sale**

Wanted – Documents related to the Dead Letter Office, Canada prior to 1900 bcplain@shaw.ca

For Sale - Canada covers, precancels, plate blocks and other postal history. If nothing showing in your area please email with your want list.

www.canadapostalhistorycovers.com

Wanted - DLO handstamps on cover 1954 down, Registered Ambulance/Return Letter Envelopes with Wax Seals, any DLO correspondence with handstamps and Moose Jaw Local Office. Please e-mail gary.steele@ns.sympatico.ca

Wanted – Place your ad here

Wanted - Mail Service Suspended covers from the Second World War with or without DLO handstamps, please e-mail and I will advise if any particular country is still required: gary.steele@ns.sympatico.ca

For Sale - 1 Cent Jubilee 1897 covers with and without combinations of other stamps. Please email for list or any specific needs. Also have precancels off cover and cancelled stamps gary.steele@ns.sympatico.ca