

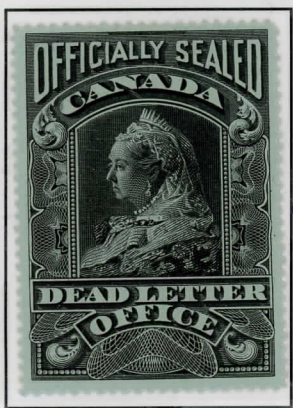
# THE DESIGN



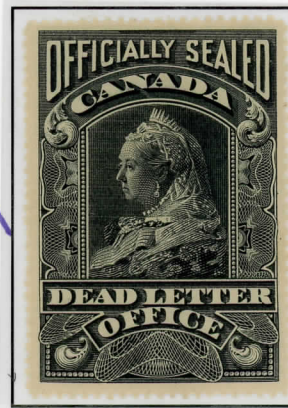
1897

The design of the Newfoundland seal is almost certainly derived from that of the Canadian seal of 1902, and it, in turn, is regarded as being derived from one or more of the Series 1897 Canadian Law Stamps.

All were products of the American Bank Note Company, and the same portrait of Queen Victoria is used in all of the Canadian items. The portrait of Edward VII was engraved especially for the Newfoundland seal and does not seem to have been used elsewhere.

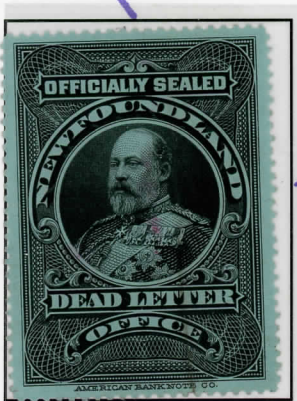


1902

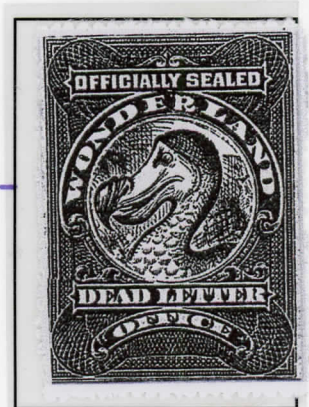


1907

Then there is the Official Seal of British designer Gerald M. King's phantom kingdom of Wonderland. A strong family resemblance demonstrating its origin, but requiring the distinction of a bend sinister.



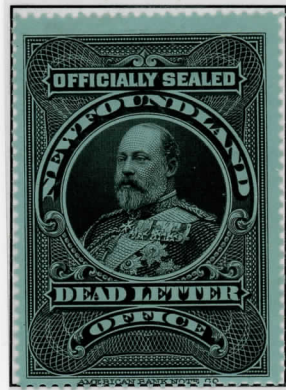
1905



c.1970

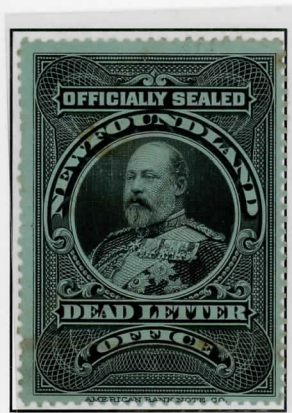
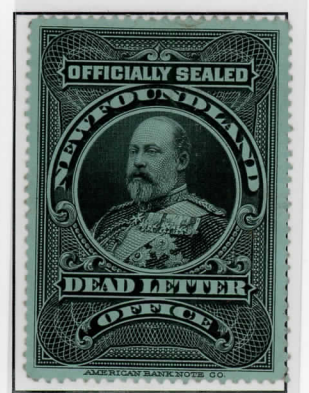
# PLATING

Three seals without a watermark are identified as to their position in the plate. Whether it is significant or only a matter of chance, none of these are in the central portion of the plate. More copies are needed to see if this would help to determine the general position of the watermark.

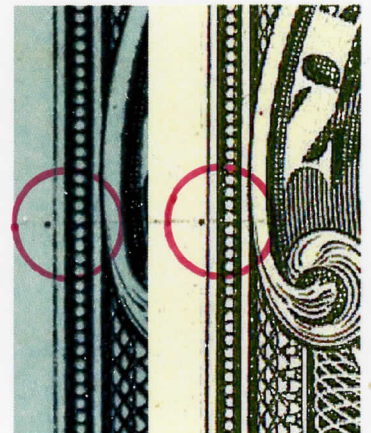


**Position 1.** The clichés on the left side of the plate do not appear to have positioning marks and were perhaps laid down as a guide to place the marks in the balance of the plate. Two unique flaws in the balance of the plate. Two unique flaws in Position 1 can, however, be used for identification: three tiny parallel scratches above the upper left corner and a dash near the bottom left corner. The dot to the left of the 'N' in 'NEWFOUNDLAND' is constant throughout the plate.

**Position 18.** The positioning mark for this seal is directly on the frame line of the seal, which seems to be true for only seven of the positions. The light horizontal rulings used to place the dots can also be seen.



**Position 22.** The mark in this cliché is outside the frame line, which is its most frequent placement. The vertical position of the ruling and the cliché differ from others to make this identification fairly certain.



## USAGE

Since official seals had no monetary value, it was not necessary that they be cancelled, and very few were. Seals were commonly folded over areas where letters had been opened. A crease or lack of gum are the best indications of used seals.

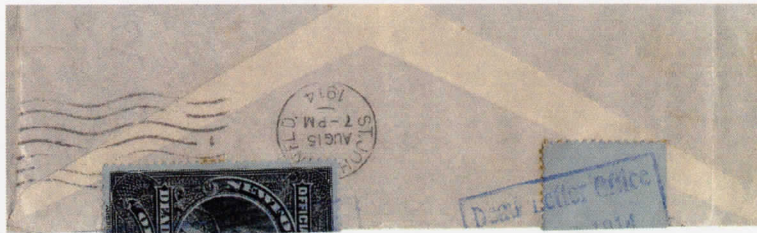


Blue pencil cancel



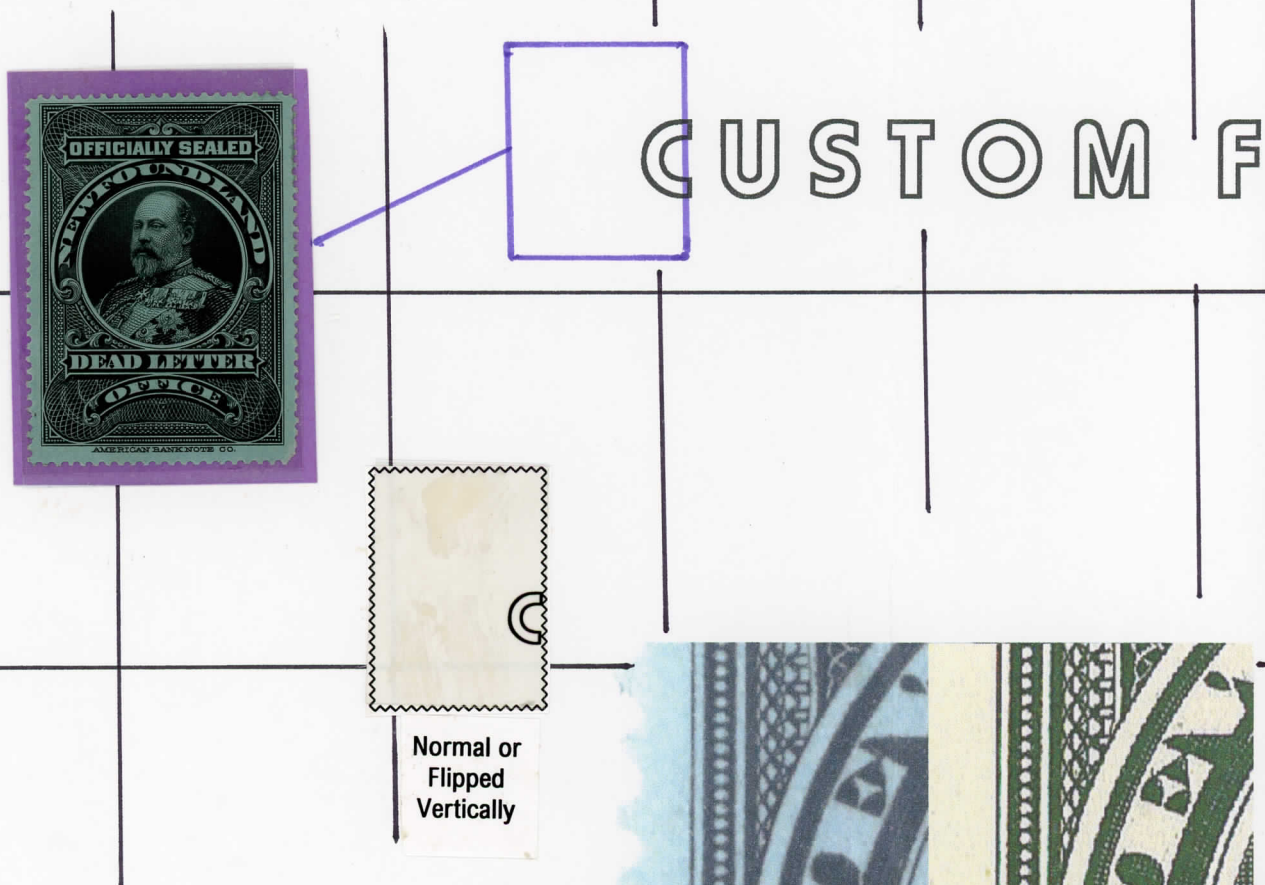
Fold and envelope remnants

The mailing date of this cover being sent to Germany is not indicated, but it presumably left Newfoundland before censorship procedures had been set up and arrived in London after August 4, 1914, the date that mail to Germany was cut off. The cover was stamped "Undeliverable" in London and returned. It bears a receiving cancel of August 15 and was then opened by censors and resealed with the Dead Letter Office seal and its selvage, both tied with a DLO handstamp. Of the four recorded Newfoundland seal covers, at least three are on WWI censored covers, but, since the cover has no return address, the Dead Letter Office may also have been involved.



# THE WATERMARK

Reconstruction of **CUSTOM FINE** is supported by four pieces: three singles including the **C** shown here, a **C** with a partial **U**, and a **TOM**. There was also a block of four showing **M FINE** reported as being sold at auction in 1991, but which has not been seen since and may have been broken up. Based on reported examples, seals showing portions of **CUSTOM FINE** appear to be at least five times less common than those with portions of **JUDICIAL LINEN BOND**. This has led to the theory that **CUSTOM FINE** is on a different portion of the full sheet of paper and only occasionally among those used in the printing.



Only eight of the seals in the plate proof show positioning dots inside the frame line of the seal. Of these, Position 23 appears the closest match. In that position **FINE** would be in the selvage, suggesting the possibility that the separation between the two lines of the watermark may be horizontal rather than vertical.

