

Return to Sender Mail, A Few Interesting Items



The cover above has a generic post office rubber stamp applied showing eight reasons why this item could not be delivered. In pencil, it shows the word "moved", the address crossed off and an arrow toward the circled return address. This cover from 1979 took an interesting route - Athens to Calgary to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

For mail to be delivered to the addressee, mail must have adequate postage and the correct address. Most mail arrives correctly. But every so often, the mail cannot be delivered for a number of reasons and is returned to sender. Here are a few examples of **RETURN TO SENDER** mail showing various markings to indicate this required action. Many varieties of markings are used in different countries and at different times. As a result, such **R.T.S.** covers travel twice as far as correctly addressed mail.



The cover on the right has three specific rubber stamps probably because the addressee was not at the address and thus could not be delivered. This cover from 1973 travelled from the USA to Japan to the USA.

Return to Sender Mail

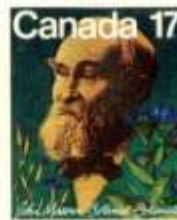


CALGARY PHILATELIC SOCIETY
Box 1478, Station M, Calgary, AB T2P 2L6

Return to Sender
NFA

Coleen Bryant

██████████
Calgary, AB ██████████



MOVED / UNKNOWN // DEMENAGE OU INCONNU
RETURN TO SENDER
RENOI A L'EXPEDITEUR
T2P 2L6

Yellow post office "Return to sender" sticker applied. In addition, someone at the address added the black felt note. What does "NFA" stand for?? Perhaps not found at address.



CALGARY PHILATELIC SOCIETY
Box 1478, Station M, Calgary, AB T2P 2L6

RETOUR À L'EXPÉDITEUR

Refused by addressee
Ritradé par le destinataire

Crik Stevaux

Box 22

Golden, B.C. V0A 1H0

Wrong Ad



2015-05-07
POST OFFICE / BUREAU DE POSTES



MOVED / UNKNOWN // DEMENAGE OU INCONNU
RETURN TO SENDER
RENOI A L'EXPEDITEUR
T2P 2L6

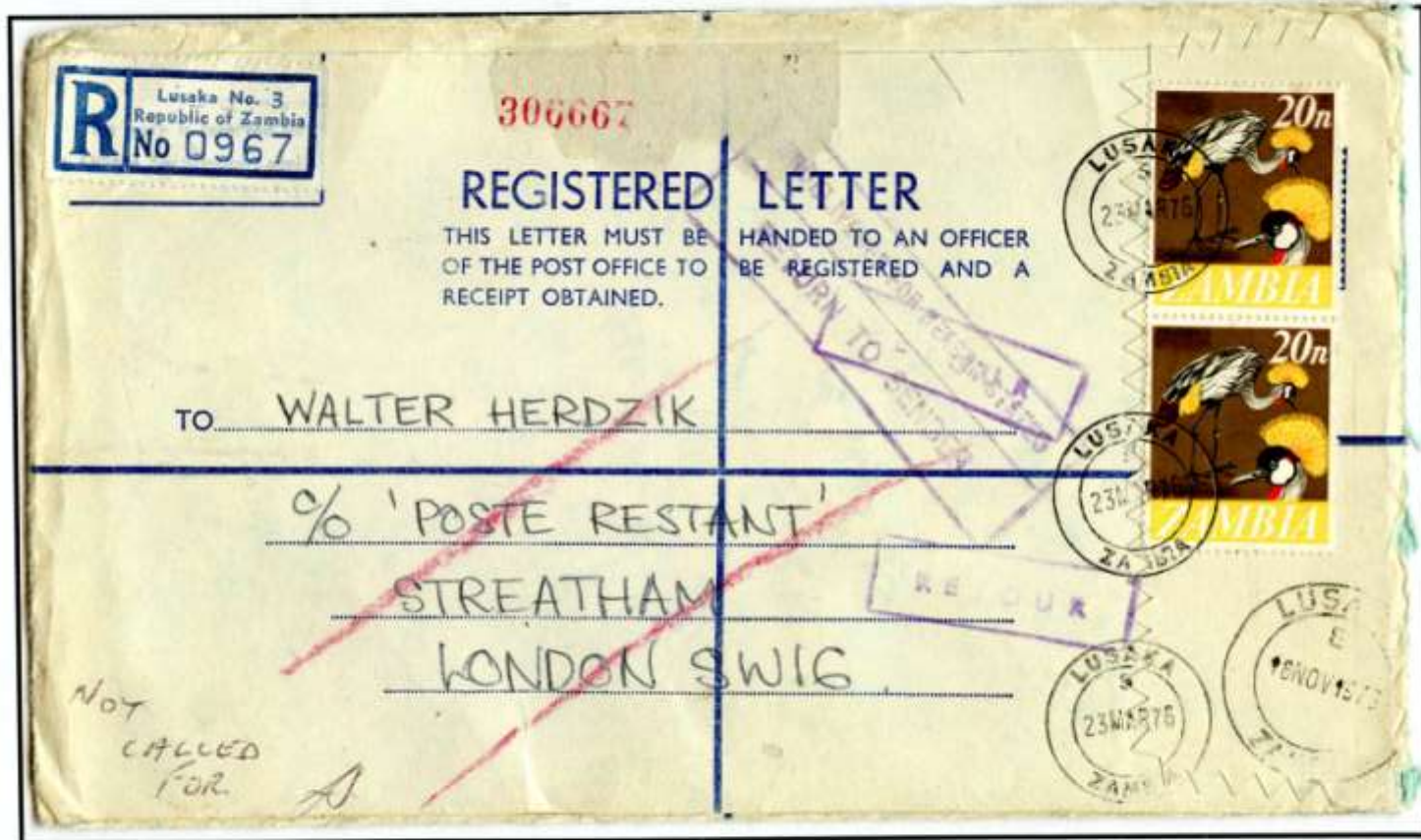
Yellow post office "Return to sender" sticker applied. An additional hand-stamp is provided on the left indicates person named at the box number is "unknown".

Return to Sender Mail

Posted Lusaka, Zambia
Received London, England
Returned to Lusaka, Zambia
Forwarded to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Posted 23 March 1976
Returned from London, date unknown
Returned to Sender 18 November 1976
Forwarded to addressee in early 1977

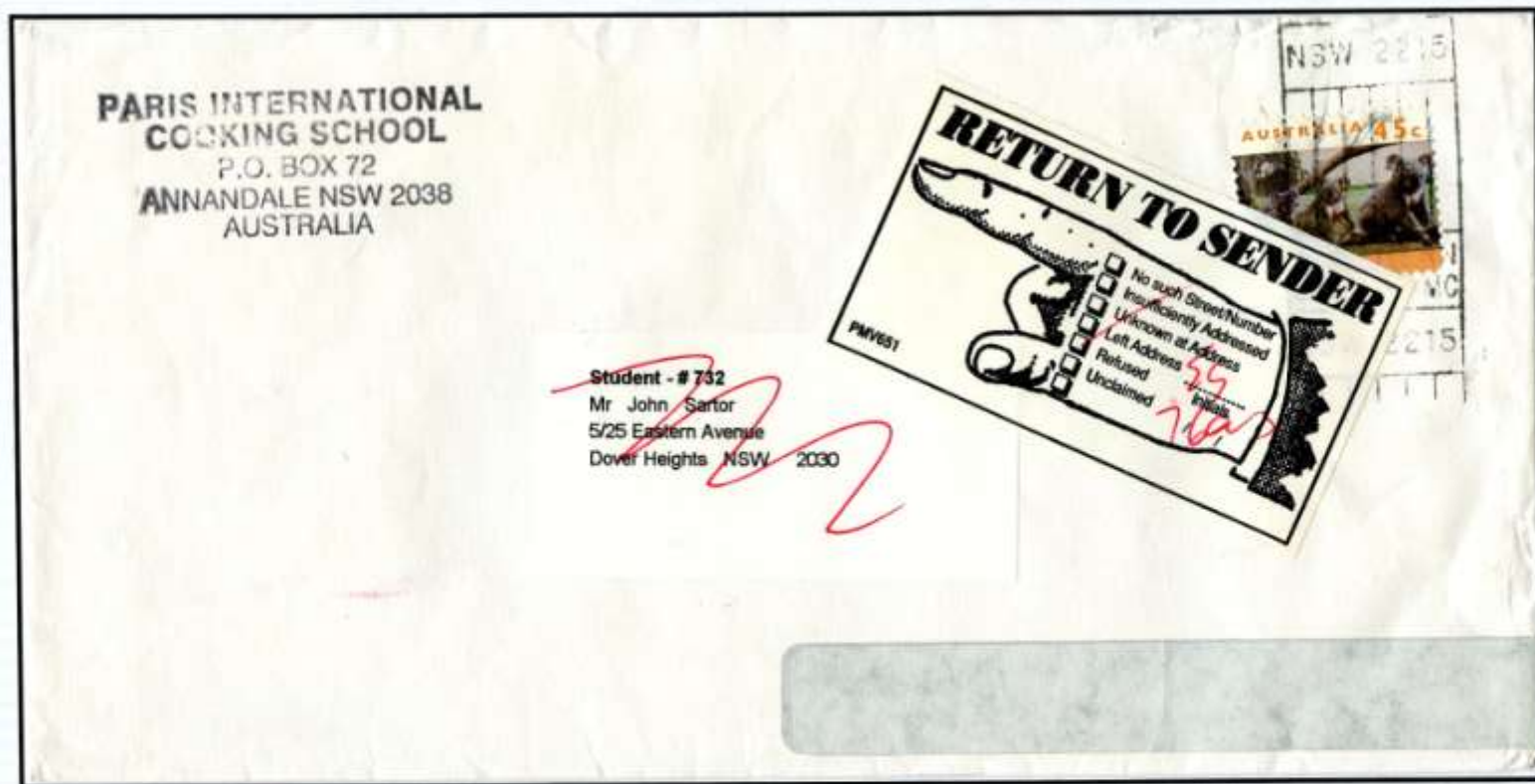
A
well
travelled
envelope!



This registered letter was addressed to the author who was travelling in Europe after a 2 1/2 year work contract in Lusaka, Zambia. The author did not know that the sender, Mr. Philip J. Coburn, a co-worker at Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka, was going to send mail to a Post Restante address in London. This letter remained in London for an estimated seven months - originally posted on 23 March 1976 and returned to Lusaka on 18 November 1976 as indicated by the postmarks shown here. At the bottom left in manuscript is written "Not Called for". There are two purple rubber stamps indicating the letter is to be returned to sender. The sender, Philip Coburn, then sent this item in a separate envelope to a correct Edmonton address. Because this item was registered, it was tracked and eventually made its way to the addressee.

Return to Sender Mail

LARGE and obvious "RETURN TO SENDER" label applied (postal item "PMV651" on bottom left corner)



The date that this was mailed is not evident as the "RETURN TO SENDER" sticker has been placed over the postage stamp and postmark applied. The 45 cent stamp comes from the "Threatened Species" series from 1992, thus this item was produced in 1992 or shortly after. The post code on the cancel reads "NSW 2215" which no longer exists in an internet search of the Australian postal codes. This letter was sent from the Annandale area (post code 2038) just west of downtown Sydney to Dover Heights (post code 2030) about ten kilometers east, just north of Bondi Beach.

The red pen mark cancels the address and appears to tick the box that says "Refused" with initials and post clerk number. The Paris International Cooking School has operated in Sydney since 1990 and offers eight week cooking classes (internet).

Return to Sender Mail

Incomplete Address on Letter



If the address is incomplete, a letter cannot be delivered, particularly in a large city. Brooklyn is a large city within the city of New York and it is not expected that the postal clerk handling this item would know the address this was intended for. With the large amount of mail, a clerk does not have the time to search for the correct address and thus it is quickly marked for return to the sender. There are thus three distinct postal markings in purple from Brooklyn:

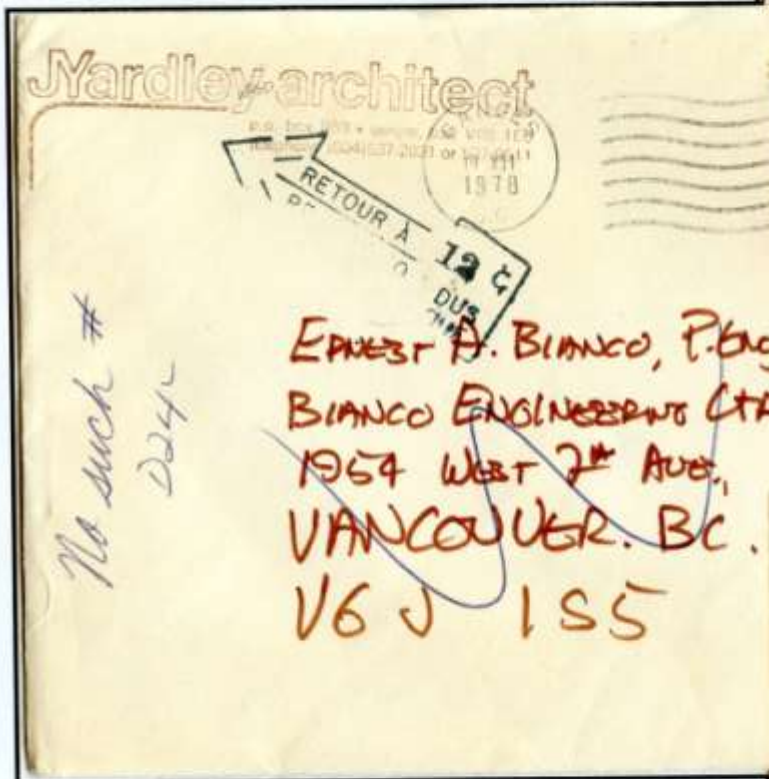
- 1) Return to sender / By Brooklyn, N.Y.P.O. and date
- 2) Undeliverable As Addressed / Do not Post Again
- 3) Insufficient address

There is no indication when this was received by sender. It was roughly opened as shown by the torn edge on the right.

Return to Sender Mail

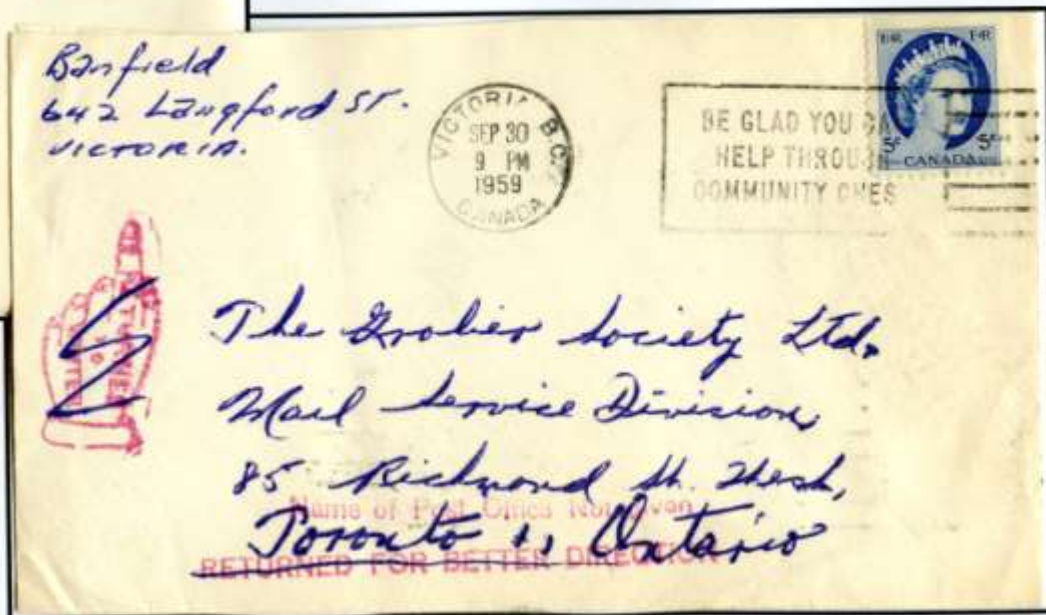
Address Problems - Fingers and Arrow

1983 cover with finger.
Return address is on back.



1978 cover with arrow.
Rubber stamped business address.

1959 cover with finger.
Note "Post office not known" stamp.



Return to Sender Mail

Returned to Sender for Additional Postage



This postal stationery letter was originally postmarked by what appears to be 26 November 1922 (as examined with a bright light over the 4 cent stamp). It only had 2 cents postage and appears to be short paid for delivery to Belgium. A postal clerk flagged it for insufficient postage and applied three marks:

- 1) Rubber stamp with finger stating "Return to sender"
- 2) Rubber stamp "Return FOR / Additional POSTAGE"
- 3) Manuscript "Dues 3 c" in pencil to the right of finger

After the letter was returned to sender, the 2 stamps of 1 cent and 4 cents were attached and returned to the post office. The two stamps appear to be obliterated by a smudged black mark. However, there is a roller cancel on the back from Washington dated December 1922 with the day not inked. When the letter arrived in Belgium, it was redirected from Antwerp in manuscript to "Coblence". "Coblence" is now "Koblenz" (German spelling) in the Rhineland in Germany.

Return to Sender Mail

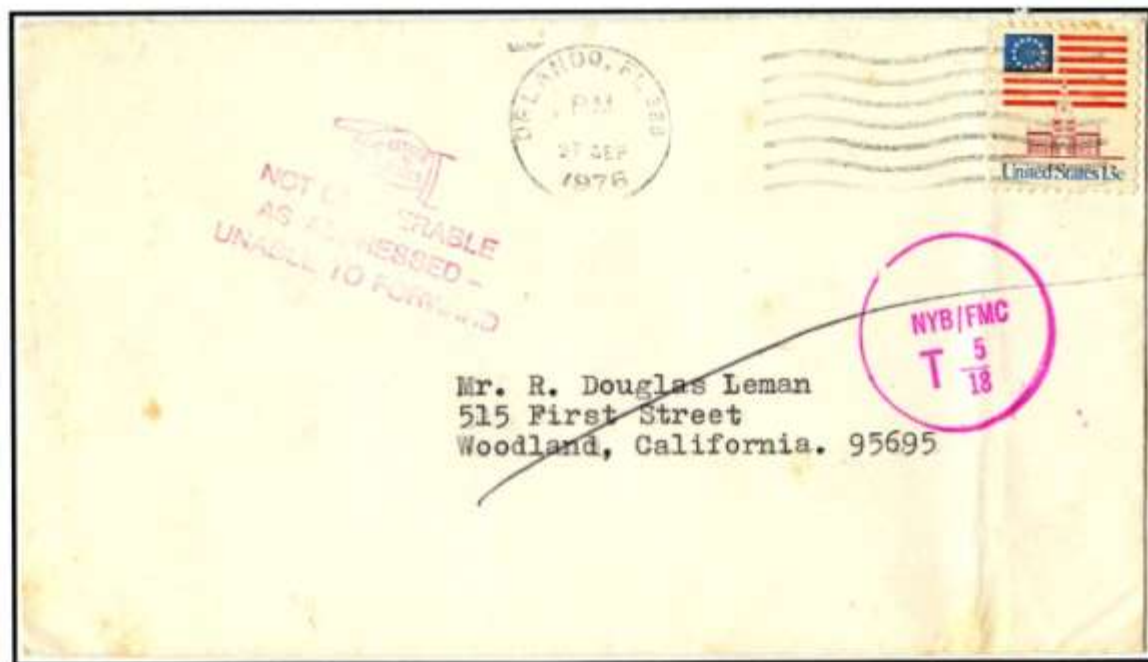


Interesting Appropriate Slogan Cancel

This letter from England had an incorrect address and no return address for its return. It has an appropriate slogan roller cancel. The reason for return "RETOUR-INCONNU" means return - not known. Where it was returned to is unknown, but perhaps the deal letter office or sold to a stamp dealer along with other similar items?

Unknown Surcharge Marking

In addition to an incorrect address for the named addressee, an uncommon postage due surcharge was applied before attempting a delivery to Woodland California. As Mr. Leman was not there, he could not have paid the surcharge. While this letter was posted at Orlando, Florida, the return address on the back is from Rome, Italy. An internet search for the surcharge from "NYB/FMC" comes out blank.



Return to Sender Mail

Returned to Sender - Posted in Zambia to France, and Returned to England

Back of Cover ----->

Based on the marking on front, this cover could not be delivered as addressed and was eventually returned to the address on the back - Bognor Regis, England



<-----Front of Cover

List of markings as identified on the front

- 1) Posted at Lusaka on 16 April 1963 with red roller cancel "POSTAGE PAID IN CASH", probably a mass mailing of advertising or printed matter contents.
- 2) Addressed to "R Champion Co. / 28 R. Morand / XRE / France". The city or town "XRE" is a mystery, or a non-existent location, thus it could not be identified.
- 3) Overlay on the boxed Postage Paid in Cash is a black stamp "RETOUR / A L'ENVOYEUR" - return to sender.

- 4) The two green markings are obvious and "P.T.O" means 'please turn over'. Manuscript "Voir au dos" means "see on the back".
- 5) The other black stamp at centre left is "_____/ A L'adresse indiquée", probably for "not at the address indicated".
- 6) The small black triangle and boxed XI/9 or 6/IX may indicate a postage due marking.
- 7) The red pen marks on the front indicate to turn over the cover for instructions, which circle the return address of the sender on the back.
- 8) Conclusion - this is a well travelled cover that proves the mail must get through or it is returned to sender, even if to another country other than posted.