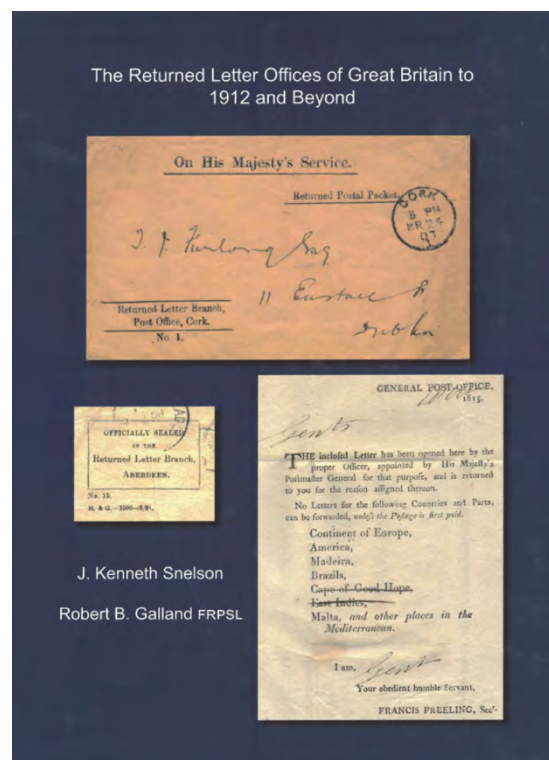




Errata and Addenda (December 2023)

The Returned Letter Offices of Great Britain to 1912 and Beyond



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Returned Letter Envelopes of Great Britain 1852 – ca 2020

Including a Complete Classification

Robert B Galland and J Kenneth Snelson

In the *Returned Letter Offices of Great Britain to 1912 and Beyond* (referred to as RLOGB in text), published in 2017, we described the development and roles of Returned Letter Offices (1). We also provided lists of relevant stationery items known to us at that time. These included wrappers and envelopes for undeliverable mail, detained for postage notices, form letters and labels.

The Postmaster General approved the replacement of wrappers by envelopes for returning undeliverable mail on 19 January 1852. Envelopes from Period I and early Period II show features seen on the wrappers which preceded them. These include an explanation, caution about sending valuables and an imitation seal. From then there was a gradual change in the type of envelope seen with different sizes, different purposes, different designations and different coloured paper all being seen. In addition, on several occasions standardisations of envelopes took place. These factors have led to a complex family of envelopes developing over more than 150 years. Major changes in design of or printing on envelopes are listed as subtypes. Minor changes have been excluded so as not to over complicate the Tables many of which, for example those of the PR types, are already rather long.

We have previously illustrated the reason for different designations, the range of numbers printed on envelopes (purpose and size) and devised a description-based classification (RLOGB page 185). The complete classification is shown here for the first time. It divides envelopes into seven Periods from their introduction in 1852 to 2020, near to the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

In RLOGB our description of envelopes ended in about 1920, midway through Period V. The aim of this publication is to update and complete the classification of envelopes used for returning undeliverable items. The text is divided into two parts. Part 1 describes an overview of all seven Periods of the classification. New information for and corrections to RLOGB are also included. In Part 2 envelopes of Period V are completed and those of Periods VI and VII are described. The same style has been used as in the original book.

Scarcity

A similar scale is used to that described in RLOGB (page 114). D signifies the rarest and A the commonest envelopes. However, in this update numbers to define each category have not been used, except in the rarest category. Modern envelopes are more common than both wrappers and earlier envelopes so calculating numbers known would be impossible. In the new system rarity is indicated by shades of blue, the lightest being the rarest. Comparison of the two scarcity scales is shown in *Table 1*.

Category	RLOGB: Numbers known (Wrappers and early envelopes)	Update and Completion: Rarity (Later envelopes)
A	20+	
B	11-20	
C	6-10	
D	0-5	1 etc
	In this, the rarest group, actual numbers recorded by the authors are shown. *indicates that this type of envelope is only recorded in the Post Office Archives at The Postal Museum	

Table 1. Indication of Scarcity. As further items come to light the relative scarcity should remain approximately the same.

Part 1: Classification and Updates

Seven time periods are defined. Envelopes are then categorised based upon the designation printed on them. The principle of the classification is that each item is preceded by the period in which it belongs, followed by relevant letters from its designation. These letters are highlighted in the Tables below. Any number printed on the envelope follows and the classification can be further refined by adding a suffix for the year of usage of a particular item. An example of how system works is illustrated by classifying the envelope in *Figure 1*. It is a Period II envelope from the **London Returned Letter Branch, Circulation Department**, number **22**, used in **1863**. It would, therefore, be classified as II-L(RC)-22-63. This illustration is 80% full size, where sizes of images are significantly different from the original this is noted.



Figure 1. Type II-L(RC)-22-63 envelope (80%).

In each period there is a summary of the relevant envelopes followed by new information not recorded in RLOGB. *Tables 2, 5, 16, 25 and 30* for Periods I to V show in normal typeface envelopes already described. Envelopes shown in bold in Periods V, VI and VII are those not previously classified or described (*Tables 29, 35 and 36*). Additions are also shown in bold where necessary.

New information comprises new items, changes in scarcity and date range of known usage and corrections. Changes in scarcity are only included for the rarer items.

Sizes of envelopes are recorded to the nearest half cm to capture intentional changes in size but avoid assigning new type to insignificant variations. Almost all types of envelopes vary in size by 2 or 3 mm depending on the setting of the folding machine. DM numbers are those described by CF Dendy Marshall (2).

Period I

This covers all envelopes without printed numbers. They have been seen used 1852-1894. Numbers shown in *Table 2* have been assigned by the authors based on size and purpose of those envelopes with numbers which have been previously defined (RLOGB pages 187-188). The only offices known with envelopes without printed numbers are London, Edinburgh and Dublin. Inverness was included by Marshall, probably in error (2).

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub types
I-L(D)-Nos 1 to 10, not inclusive	London	Dead Letter Office	Includes envelopes for inland paid letters, those with a caution and for return of underpaid foreign letters
I-L(DC)-Nos 1 to 6, not inclusive		Dead Letter Branch Circulation Department	Includes envelopes for inland paid letters and those with a caution
I-L(RC)-Nos 1 to 7, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch Circulation Department	Includes envelopes for inland paid letters and those with a caution, for inland unpaid letters with an act on the front stating that undelivered mail is to be paid by the sender and envelopes for registered mail
I-L(G)-No 1		General Post Office	For returned paid letters
I-L(BG)-Nos 1 & 10		Returned Letter Branch General Post Office	For returned paid letters and one with OHMS on the front and the printed act inside regarding payment of undelivered mail
I-D(D)-Nos 1 & 4	Dublin	Dead Letter Office Dublin	Returned paid letters and returned letters with the printed act on the front regarding payment of undelivered mail
I-D(B)-No 1		Dead Letter Branch Dublin	For returned paid letters
I-D-Nos 1 to 27, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch Dublin	For returned paid and redirected letters and returned paid book packets
I-D(G)-Nos 2 to 14, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch, General Post Office Dublin	For returned paid and registered letters and with no purpose stated
I-E(D)-Nos 1 to 4, not inclusive		Dead Letter Office Edinburgh	For returned paid letters and one for returned letters with the printed act on the front regarding payment of undelivered mail
I-E(O)-No 1	Edinburgh	Returned Letter Office Edinburgh	For returned paid letters
I-E(B)-Nos 1 & 7		Returned Letter Branch GPO Edinburgh	For returned paid and registered letters

I-E-Nos 1 to 34, not inclusive		Returned Letter Office GPO <i>Edinburgh</i>	For returned paid, registered, unpaid, redirected, circulars and packets
I-E(RC)-No 21		Returned Letter Office <i>Circulation</i> Department <i>Edinburgh</i>	For returned unpaid packets

Table 2. Period I envelopes.

Period I-E – Returned Letter Office General Post Office Edinburgh 1870-1889 (RLOGB page 199)

New item

Type	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
1 (v)	Returned <i>Paid</i> Letter	White	15 x 8.5	1870	1
Same as I-E-1 except that it has a red seal on the back.					

Table 3. Additional Returned Letter Office General Post Office Edinburgh envelope.

Scarcity

Type I-E-16 (i): change from D (1) to D (2) and known to be on white paper.

Period I-D(G) – Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Dublin 1870--1894 (RLOGB page 203)

New Items

Type	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	DM Number	Scarcity
22	Returned Redirected Letter <i>Figure 2</i>	Blue	15 x 8.5	1886	275	1
To replace I-D-22 on page 202, which does not exist.						
27	Returned Paid Book Packet <i>Figure 3</i>	Blue	25 x 12	1887	276	1
To replace I-D-27 on page 202, which does not exist.						

Table 4. Additional Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Dublin envelopes.



Figure 2. Type I-D(G)-22 envelope (80%).



Figure 3. Type I-D(G)-27 envelope (70%).

Scarcity

Type I-D-1 (iii) change from D (1) to D (2) (RLOGB page 202).

Period II

This includes all numbered envelopes that precede the standardized numbering scheme introduced in the mid 1890s. Almost all of these were used between 1860 and 1896 (there is an example of II-E-18 used in 1903. In this period all of the provincial RLBs were established, and a wide

variety of numbers were assigned for very specific uses e.g. Returned Redirected Circular. The numbering schemes were not the same in different offices.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub types
II-L(BG)-Nos 5 to 12, not inclusive	London	Returned Letter Branch General Post Office	For returned paid and unpaid letters, returned paid and unpaid book packets and with no printed purpose
II-L(RC)-Nos 1 & 22		Returned Letter Branch Circulation Department	For returned paid and unpaid letters and with no printed purpose
II-L(R)-No 1		Returned Letter Office London	For returned paid letter
II-L(O)-Nos 1 to 34F, not inclusive		Returned Letter Office General Post Office	For returned paid, unpaid, unaddressed and redirected letters, paid circulars and with no printed purpose
II-L-Nos 1 to 47, not inclusive		Returned Letter Office General Post Office London	For returned paid, unpaid, registered (including charged), unaddressed, redirected and underpaid letters, paid packets, paid, underpaid and redirected circulars, returned postcards and with no printed purpose
II-L(G)-No 24		General Post Office	For outgoing foreign mail
II-L(B)-No 9		Returned Letter Branch General Post Office London	For returned paid packet
II-E-Nos 1 to 18, not inclusive	Edinburgh	Returned Letter Office GPO Edinburgh	For returned paid and registered letters, circulars and postcards
II-D-No 8	Dublin	Returned Letter Branch Dublin	For returned paid letters
II-relevant telegraph code- Nos 1 to 32a, not inclusive and not all numbers for each Office	Provincial Offices	Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, followed by Aberdeen (AB), Belfast (BE), Birmingham (BM), Bristol (BS), Cork (CK), Glasgow (GW), Inverness (IV), Leeds (LS), Liverpool (LV), Manchester (MR), Newcastle (NT), Nottingham (NG) and Plymouth (PY)	For returned paid, unpaid, unaddressed, redirected and registered letters, postal packets (with and without Free added), paid and unpaid book packets, circulars, postcards and redirected circulars. Not all purposes for each Office

Table 5. Period II envelopes.

Period II-L(G) – General Post Office (RLOGB page 204)

New item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
24	24 <i>Figure 4</i>	None stated on outside	Blue	15 x 8.5	1865	1

On the outside there is nothing printed to suggest that this envelope is for returned letters. However, the text underneath the flap confirms that this type was used for outgoing foreign mail (*Figure 5*).

Table 6. Additional General Post Office envelope.

Period II-L(BG) – Returned Letter Branch General Post Office (RLOGB page 205)

New Dates

Type II-L(BG)-6 range now 1861-1862 (page 205).

Type II-L(BG)-11 range now 1866-1867 (page 205).

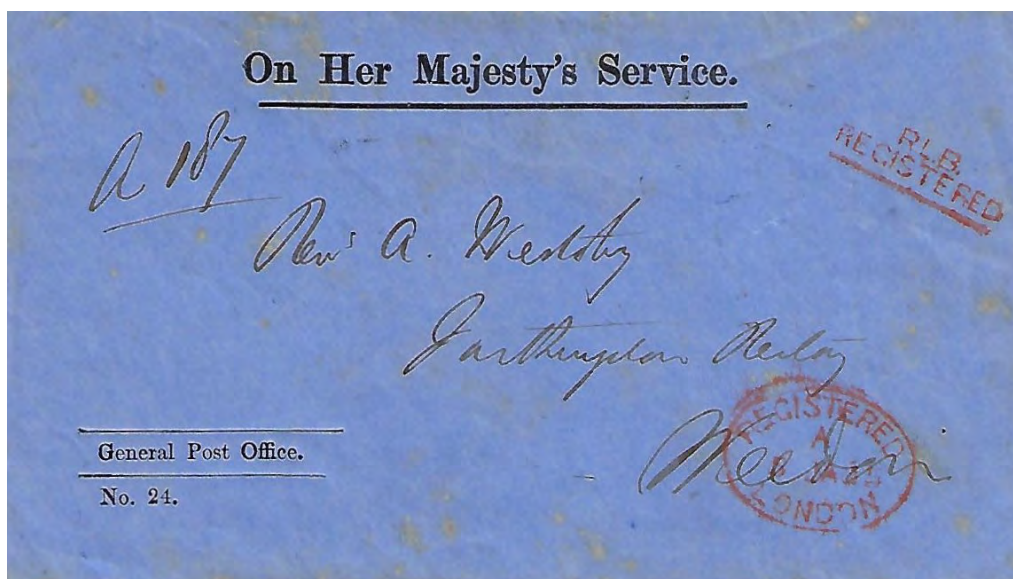


Figure 4. II-L(G)-24 envelope (80%)

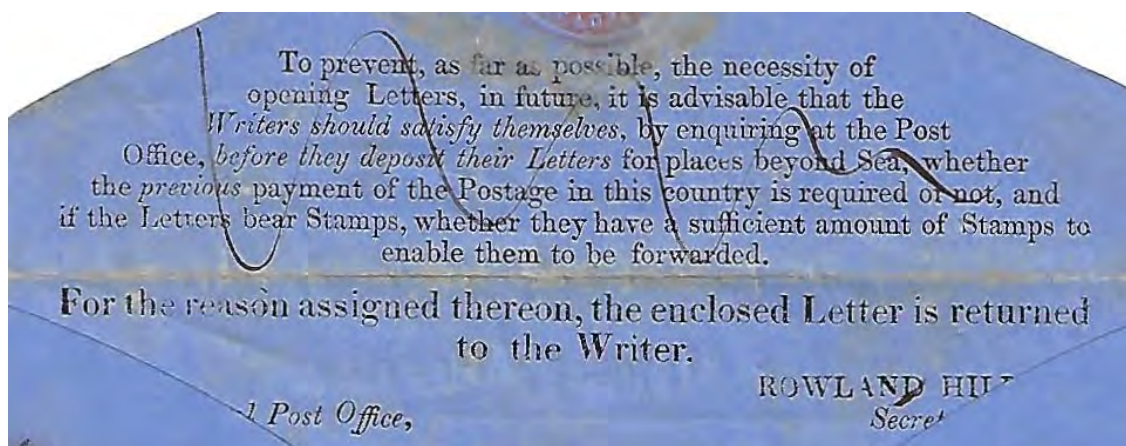


Figure 5. II-L(G)-24 envelope. Details beneath flap (150%).

Period II-L(R) – Returned Letter Office London (RLOGB page 207)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
5	5 Figure 6	Returned <i>Unpaid</i> Letter	Blue	19 x 10	1881	1

Table 7. Additional Returned Letter Office London envelope.

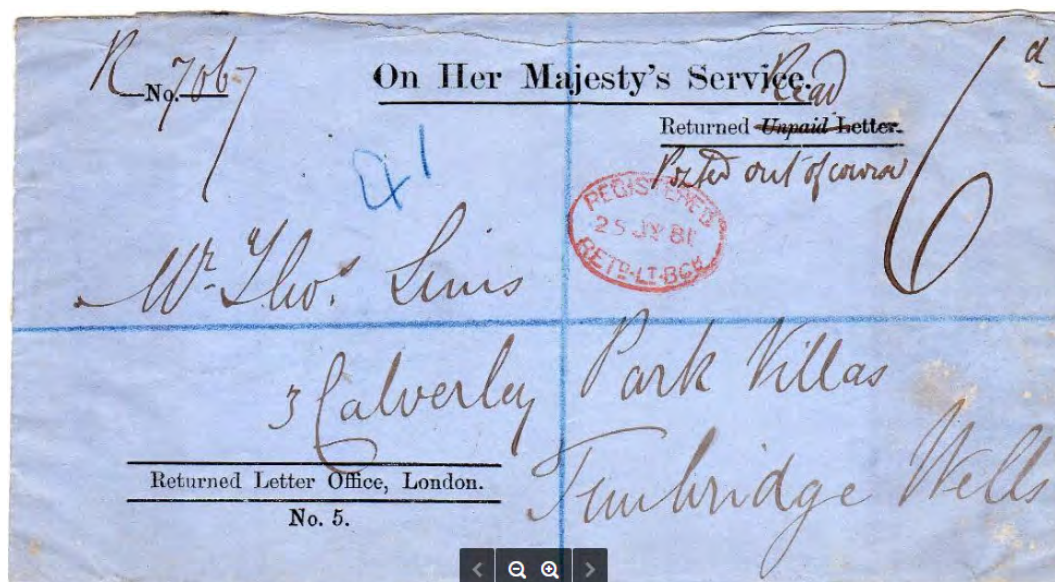


Figure 6. Type II-L(R)-5 envelope (75%).

Period II-L(O) – Returned Letter Office General Post Office (London) (RLOGB page 208)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
9 (i)	9	Returned Paid Packet	Blue	23.5 x 11.5	1872	1
As II-L(O)-9 Except that (No. 9) is in brackets.						

Table 8. Additional Returned Letter Office General Post Office (London) envelope.

Scarcity and new dates

Type II-L(O)-9: change from D (1) to D (2) and extend date range 1868-1869.

Period II-L – Returned Letter Office General Post Office London (RLOGB pages 209-213)

New Items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
1 (iii)	1	Returned Paid Letter No.	Buff	15 x 8.5	1892-1893	1
With blue lines and R handstamp, II-L-1(ii) has a printed R.						
9 (i)	9	Returned Paid Packet	Buff	24 x 12	1880	1
As II-L-9 except on buff rather than blue paper.						
33 (ii)	33	Returned Redirected Letter	Buff	14.5 x 8.5	1880-1886	1
Two subtypes noted: until 1884 narrow spacing of <i>Returned Letter Office/GPO London</i> , subsequently it is wider.						

Table 9. Additional Returned Letter Office General Post Office London envelopes.

Scarcity

Type II-L-1R change from D (1) to D (2) (page 209).

Type II-L-32 change from D (1) to D (2) (page 212).

New Dates

Type II-L-1R range now 1877-1889 (page 209).

Type II-L-11 (i) range now 1883-1894 (page 210).

Type II-L-24 (i) range now 1881-1891 (page 212).

Type II-L-32 range now 1896-1897 (page 212). This envelope is on buff paper, not blue as indicated in the table on page 212.

Type II-L-33 range now 1874-1876 (page 212).

Period II-L – Returned Letter Office General Post Office (London) (RLOGB page 214)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
47 (i)	47	Returned <i>Paid</i> Letter	Blue	23.5 x 11.5	1891	1

As II-L-47, except that No. 47 is not in brackets *Figure 7*.

Table 10. Additional Returned Letter Office General Post Office (London) envelope.



Figure 7. Designation on Type II-L-47 (i) envelope (150%).

Type II- AB– Returned Letter Branch Post Office Aberdeen (RLOGB page 218)

New Item

Type	No.	Purpose	Paper	Size cm.	Years	DM No.	Scarcity
30 (i)	30 <i>Figure 8</i>	Returned Paid Letter	Buff	13 x 10	1893		1

Table 11. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Aberdeen envelope.

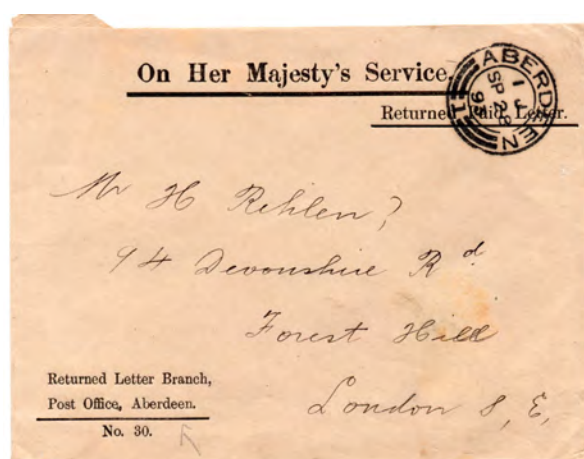


Figure 8. Type II-AB-30 (i) envelope (60%).

Type II-BS – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Bristol (RLOGB page 222)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
11	11	Returned Unpaid Packet	Buff	25 x 12	1899	2
Two subtypes noted: one has Returned to left of Post (<i>Figure 9</i>); the two words are aligned in the other type.						

Table 12. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Bristol envelope.



Figure 9. Type II-BS-11 envelope (50%).

Type II-LV – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Liverpool (RLOGB pages 227 - 228)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
5 (ii)	5	Returned Paid Letter	Buff	15 x 8.5	1881-1892	
Two subtypes noted: one has Returned to left of Post; the two words are aligned in the other type.						

Table 13. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Liverpool envelope.

Scarcity

Type II-LV-5(iii) change from D (1) to D (2) (page 227).

Type II-LV-6 change from D (1) to D (page 227).

Type II-LV-9 change from D (1) to D (page 228).

New Dates

Type II-LV-6 range now 1887-1889 (page 227).

Type II-LV-6(i) has incorrect date: 1877 should be-1892 (page 227).

Type II-LV-9 range now 1880-1883 (page 228).

Type II-MR – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester (RLOGB page 229)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
7	7 <i>Figure 10</i>	Returned Paid Packet	Blue	23.5 x 10	1880	1

Table 14. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester envelope.

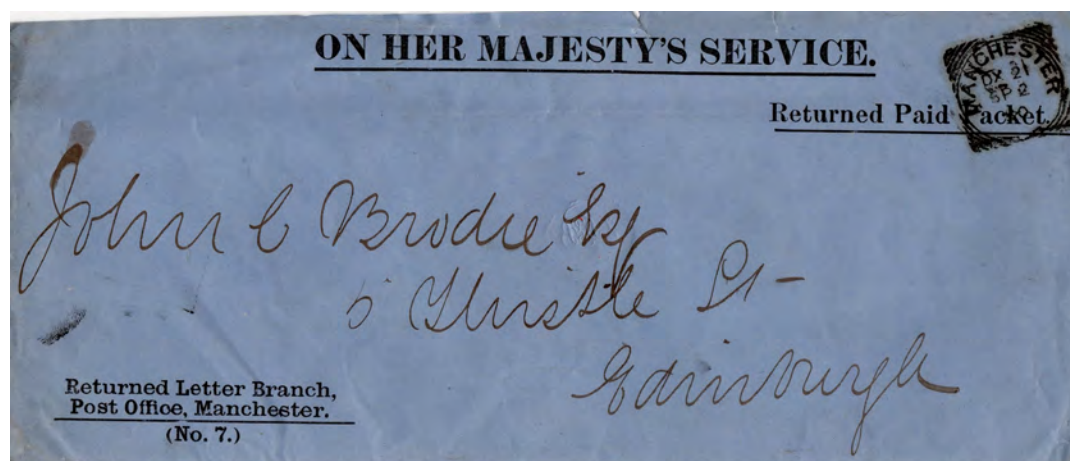


Figure 10. Type II-MR-7 envelope (60%)

Type II-NT – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Newcastle (RLOGB page 230)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
2	2 <i>Figure 11</i>	Returned Paid Circular	Buff	15 x 8.5	1895	1

Table 15. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Newcastle envelope.

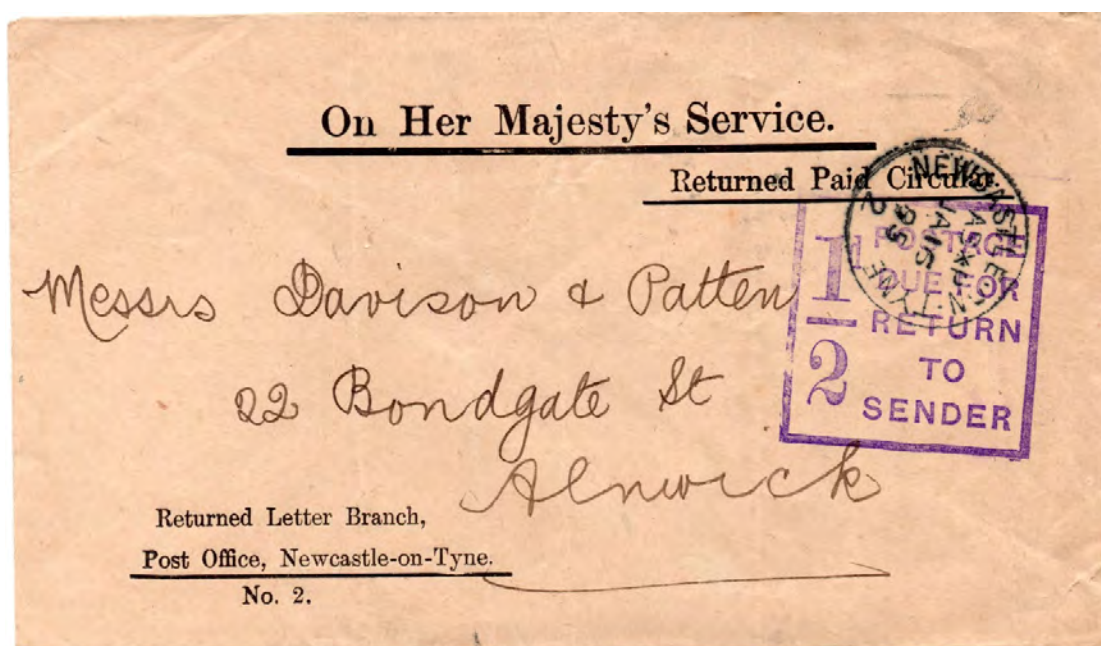


Figure 11. Type II-NT-2 envelope.

Type II-PY – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Plymouth (page 231)

New Dates

Type II-PY-9A range now 1897-1900.

Periods III and IV

These cover all envelopes using the rationalized numbering scheme introduced at all offices in the mid-1890s.

Period III

Covers envelopes from Queen Victoria's reign headed ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE. These have been seen used 1896-1906.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub types
III-L-Nos 1 to 30, not inclusive	London	Returned Letter Office General Post Office London	For returned postal packets, registered letters (with and without Free added) and charged postal packet-returned

III-RLB-No 13		Returned Letter Branch Post Office	For returned registered letters
III-CRLO-No 49		Pre-printed envelopes to be sent to the Controller Returned Letter Office	For undeliverable registered letters
III-relevant telegraph code- Nos 1 to 33, not inclusive and not all numbers for each Office. For Aberdeen RLO GPO, (G) precedes the code	Provincial Offices, including Dublin and Edinburgh	Returned Letter Office Post Office, followed by Aberdeen or Inverness	For returned postal packets (with or without Free added), registered letters and charged postal packet-returned. Not all purposes for each Office
		Returned Letter Office General Post Office, followed by Aberdeen, Edinburgh or Inverness	
		Returned Letter Branch Post Office, followed by Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cork, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham or Plymouth	
		Returned Letter Branch General Post Office, followed by Cork, Dublin or Glasgow	

Table 16. Period III envelopes.

Period III-L – Returned Letter Office General Post Office London On Her Majesty's Service (RLOGB pages 243-244)

New items

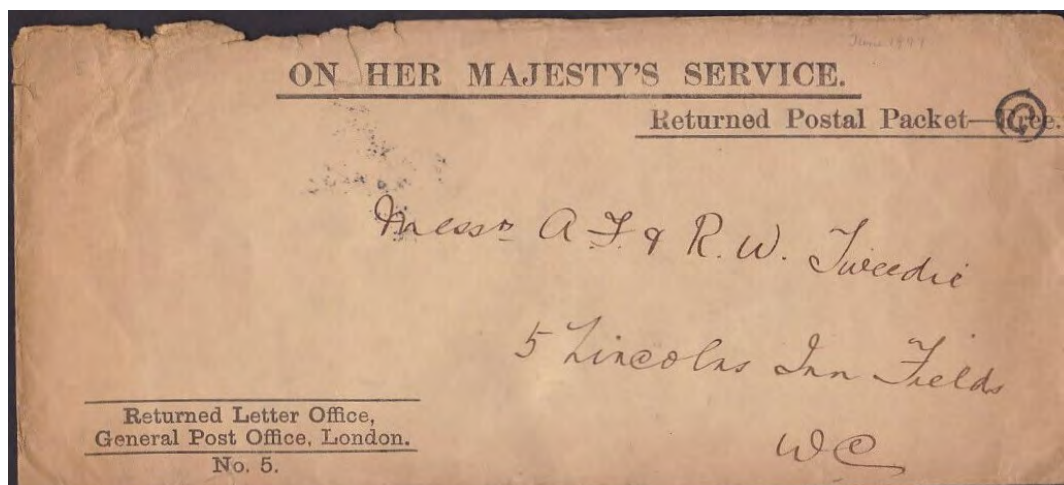


Figure 12. Type III-L-5F envelope (60%).

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
3F	3	Returned Postal Packet-Free	Buff	18 x 10	c1897	1
Similar to Figure 205 RLOGB.						
5F	5 Figure 12	Returned Postal Packet-Free	Buff	23.5 x 10.5	1897	1
28 (ii)	28	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	15 x 8.5	1897	1
Small d in ½d Due for Return box, same as III-L-28, but box on left not right Figure 13. Reverse shown in Figure 14.						

Table 17. Additional Returned Letter Office General Post Office London On Her Majesty's Service envelopes.



Figure 13. Type III-L-28 (ii) envelope (70%).

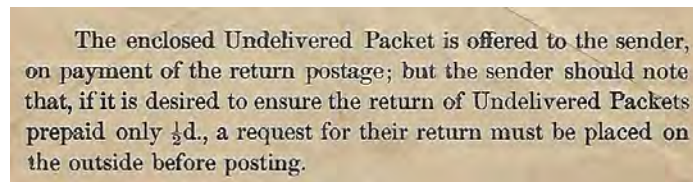


Figure 14. Type III-L-28 (ii) envelope, text on reverse.

New Dates

Type III-L-1F extend date range to 1896-1897 (RLOGB page 243).

Type III-L-12F (i) extend date range to 1897-1898 (RLOGB page 243).

Type III-BM – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Birmingham On Her Majesty's Service (RLOGB page 250)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
29	29	Returned Postal Packet ½d Due for Return	Buff	13 x 10	1903	1

Similar to Figure 238, text on back similar to Figure 237b, both on page 241 RLOGB.

Table 18. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Birmingham On Her Majesty's Service envelope.

Type III-BS – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Bristol On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 251)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
7	7	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30.5 x 13	1896	1

Figure 15, which is similar to Figure 213 on page 235 RLOGB.

Table 19. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Bristol On Her Majesty’s Service envelope.

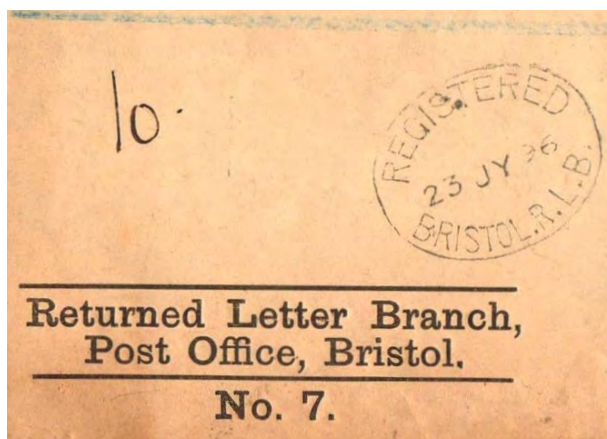


Figure 15. Designation of III-BS-7 envelope (150%).

New Dates

Type III-BS-1F extend date range to 1897-1899 (RLOGB page 251).

Type III-BS-1 extend date range to 1898-1899 (RLOGB page 251).

Period III-CK(G) – Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Cork On Her Majesty’s Service

Correction

Not previously seen and incorrectly included in **Period III-CK** table from which it should be deleted (RLOGB page 252).

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size cm.	Years	DM Number	Scarcity
12F	12 Figure 16	Returned Registered Letter–Free	Blue	14 x 9	1901	292	1

Table 20. Correction: Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Cork On Her Majesty’s Service envelope.

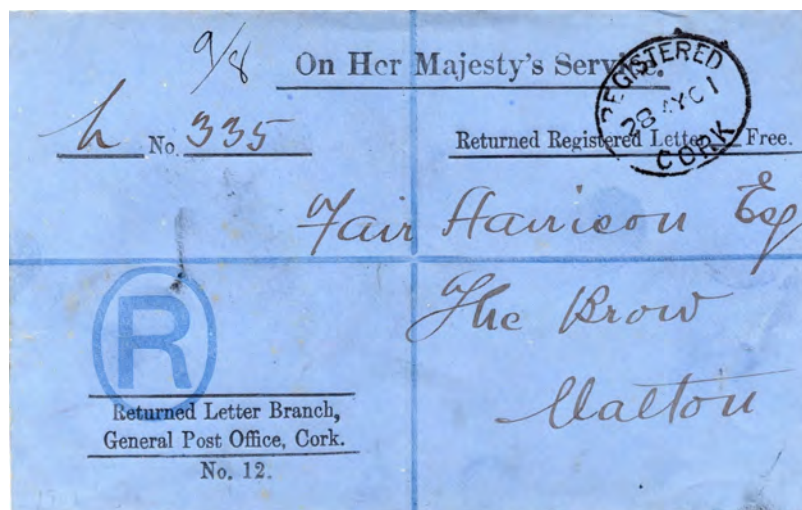


Figure 16. Type III-CK(G)-12F envelope (75%).

Type III-E – Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Edinburgh On Her Majesty's Service (RLOGB page 253)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
1F	1	Returned Postal Packet–Free	Buff	15 x 8.5	1897	1

Similar to Figure 201, RLOGB page 232.

Table 21. Additional Returned Letter Branch General Post Office Edinburgh On Her Majesty's Service envelope.

Scarcity

Type III-E-1 scarcity now D (4) instead of D (1) RLOGB page 253.

New Dates

Type III-E-1 extend date range to 1899-1901 RLOGB page 253.

Type III-GW – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Glasgow On Her Majesty's Service (RLOGB page 254)

Scarcity

Type III-GW-1 used in 1900, scarcity D (2) RLOGB page 254.

Type III-GW-8 used in 1900, scarcity D (1) RLOGB page 254. We had not previously seen an example.

Type III-LS – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Leeds On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 257)

Correction

Type III-LS-7F alter size to 30.5 x 13 cm RLOGB page 257.

Type III-LV- Returned Letter Branch Post Office Liverpool On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 258)

New Items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	DM Number	Scarcity
15F	15	Returned Registered Letter-Free	Blue	23.5 x 10.5	1901		1
Similar to Figure 225 in RLOGB							

Table 22. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Liverpool envelopes.

Correction

Type III-LV-2F alter date range from 1897-989 to 1897-1898 RLOGB page 258.

Type III-MR – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 260)

New Item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
2	2	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	13 x 10	1898	1

Table 23. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester On Her Majesty’s Service envelope.

Type III-NT – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Newcastle-on-Tyne On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 261)

New Dates

Type III-NT-17 (i) extend date range to 1898-1901 RLOGB page 261.

Type III-NG – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Nottingham On Her Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 262)

New Items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
2F	2 Figure 17	Returned Postal Packet–Free	Buff	13 x 10	1897	1
2	2 Figure 18	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	13 x 10	1899	1

Table 24. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Nottingham On Her Majesty’s Service envelope.

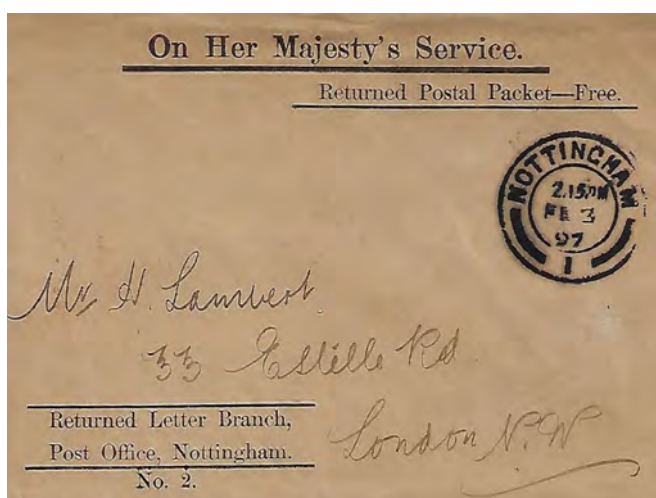


Figure 17. Type III-NG-2F envelope (80%).

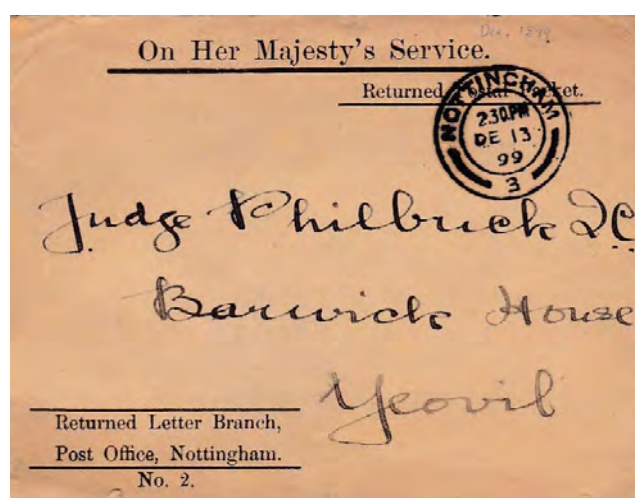


Figure 18. Type III-NG-2 envelope (80%).

Period IV

Covers envelopes headed ON HIS MAJESTY’S SERVICE. These have been seen used 1901-1924.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub types
IV-L-Nos 1 to 28, not inclusive	London	Returned Letter Office General Post Office <i>London</i>	For returned postal packets and registered letters
IV-L(B)-No 13		Returned Letter <i>Branch</i> General Post Office <i>London</i>	For registered letters
IV-RLB-Nos 6F & 13		<i>Returned Letter Branch</i> Post Office	For returned postal packets (Free) and returned registered letters

IV-relevant telegraph code- Nos 1 to 30, not inclusive and not all numbers for each Office. For Edinburgh RLB GPO, (B) precedes the code	Provincial Offices, including Dublin and Edinburgh	Returned Letter Office Post Office, followed by Aberdeen or Inverness	For returned postal packets (with or without Free added) and registered letters. Not all purposes for each Office
		Returned Letter Office General Post Office, followed by Aberdeen or Edinburgh	
		Returned Letter Branch Post Office, followed by Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cork, Glasgow, Inverness, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham or Plymouth	
		Returned Letter Branch General Post Office, followed by Dublin or Edinburgh	

Table 25. Period IV envelopes.

Period IV-L – Returned Letter Office General Post Office London On His Majesty’s Service (RLOGB pages 245- 246)

New Dates

Type IV-L-1 extend date range to 1901-1910 (RLOGB page 245).

Type IV-L-4 extend date range to 1902-1911 (RLOGB page 245).

Type IV-L-13 extend date range to 1901-1902 (RLOGB page 246).

Type IV-L-13 (i) extend date range to 1906-1907 (RLOGB page 246). The date 1901 originally included was incorrect.

Type IV-L(B) – Returned Letter Branch General Post Office London On His Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 247)

Scarcity

Type IV-L(B)-13 (i) change from D (1) to D (3).

Type IV-BE – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Belfast On His Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 249)

Correction

Type IV-BE-1 (i) Error on second line 1906-1907 (RLOGB page 249).

No line above *Returned Letter Branch* should read *No line above Returned Postal Packet*.

Type IV-BE-5. Not previously seen, size 23.5 x 11.0 (not 10.5) cm, used in 1902 *Figure 19*.

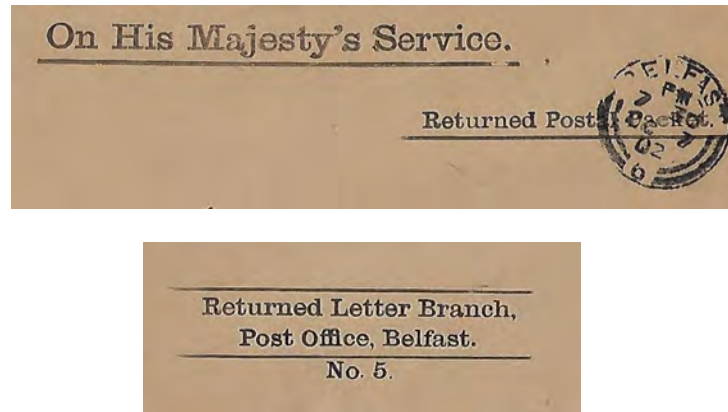


Figure 19. Parts of Type IV-BE-5 envelope.

Type IV-LS – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Leeds On His Majesty's Service (RLOGB page 258)

New item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
19	19 <i>Figure 20</i>	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	35.5 x 15.5	1903	1

Table 26. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Leeds On His Majesty's Service envelope.

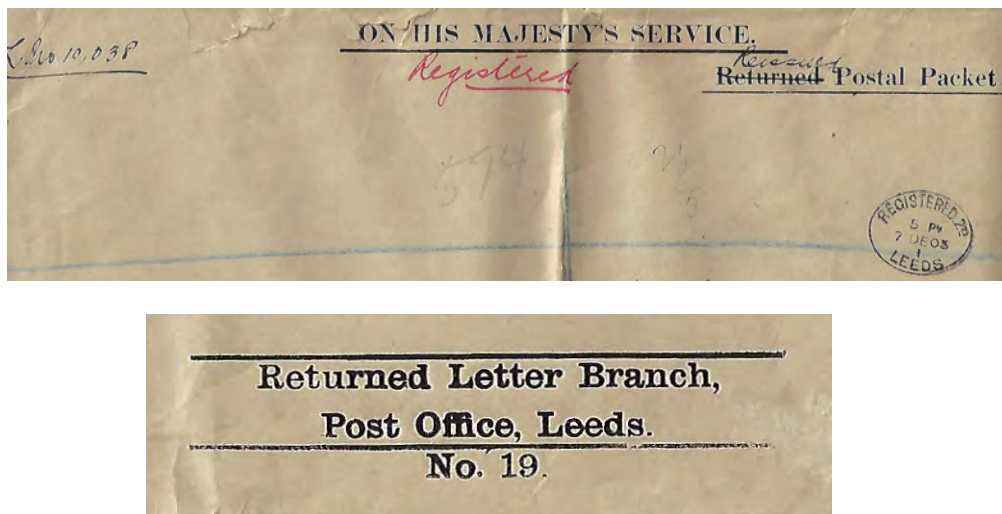


Figure 20. Parts of Type IV-LS-19 envelope.

Type IV-LV- Returned Letter Branch Post Office Liverpool On His Majesty's Service (RLOGB page 259)

New Dates

Type IV-LV-1 date range 1904-1905 RLOGB page 259.

Type IV-LV-3 date range 1902-1908 RLOGB page 259

Correction

Type IV-LV-15 (i) date recorded as 19015 should be 1915 RLOGB page 259.

Type IV-MR – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester On His Majesty's Service (RLOGB pages 260-261)

New Items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	DM Number	Scarcity
15	15	Returned Registered Letter	Blue	23.5 x 10.5	1901		
Flap at back, similar to Figure 226 in RLOGB							

Table 27. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Manchester envelopes.

New information

Type III-MR-8. Not previously seen, size 25 x 15.0 (not 14.5) cm, used in 1902, *Figure 21*.

New Dates

Type IV-MR-2 date range 1909-1911 RLOGB page 260.

Type IV-MR-3 date range 1911-1912 RLOGB page 260.

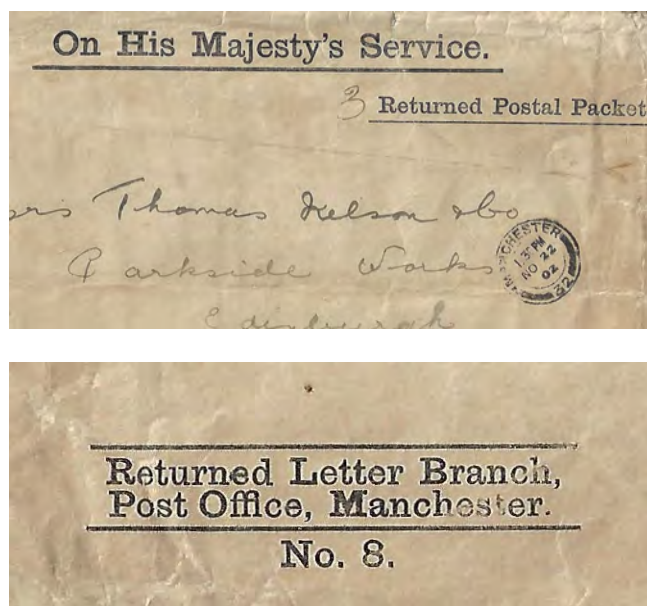


Figure 21. Parts of Type IV-MR-8 envelope.

Type IV-NT – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Newcastle-on-Tyne On His Majesty’s Service
(RLOGB page 262)

New items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
4	4	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 12.5	1906	1
6	6	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	26.5 x 13.5?	1906	1

Table 28. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Newcastle-on-Tyne On His Majesty’s Service envelope.

Type IV-NG – Returned Letter Branch Post Office Nottingham On His Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 263)

New items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
1	1	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	15 x 8.5	1911	1
15	15	Returned Registered Letter	Blue	23.5 x 10.5	1901	1
31	31	Returned Postal Packet ½ Due for Return	Buff	c 18 x 13	1902	1

Table 29. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office Nottingham On His Majesty’s Service envelope.

Type IV-RLB – Returned Letter Branch Post Office On His Majesty’s Service (RLOGB page 264)

New Dates

There is an example of IV-RLB-13 used from Dublin to London in 1903. It is similar to Figure 257 in RLOGB but the spacing is different. The date range should be 1903 – ca 1916.

Period V

The start of this period for offices other than London was the introduction in England and Scotland of POST OFFICE RLB envelopes around 1907 with no office name. Some offices in Ireland had used RLB envelopes with no office name from 1899. For London, the period starts with the reorganization of 1912 when the London Returned Letter Office became part of the London Postal Service. Envelopes from this period have been seen used 1907-1960.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub types
V-L(O) Nos 1 to 4	London	Returned Letter Office , London Postal Service GPO L ondon	For returned postal packets
V-L Nos 1 to 28, not inclusive		Returned L etter Section, London Postal Service GPO London	For returned postal packets

V-PR Nos 1 to 18, not inclusive		Post Office RLB No	For returned postal packets and returned registered letters
V-RP Nos 8 to 34, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch Post Office RLB No	For returned postal packets
V-relevant telegraph code, Nos 1 to 15, not inclusive and not all numbers for each RLB	Provincial RLBs	Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, followed by Birmingham, Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool or Manchester	For returned postal packets, returned letter packets, registered letters
V-relevant telegraph code, Nos 1 to 5, not inclusive and not all numbers for each	Head Post Offices	Returned Letter Branch Post Office followed by Brighton, Hull or Southampton	For returned postal packets
V-L(IS)-Nos 1 to 8, not inclusive	London	Inland Section London Postal Service London E.C.1	For returned postal packets
V-L(GMP)-No 3A		Returned Letter Section General Post Office Mount Pleasant London E.C.1	For returned postal packets
V-L(MP)-Nos 1 to 28A, not inclusive V-L(MPe)-Nos 1 to 4		Returned Letter Section Mount Pleasant London E.C.1	For returned postal packets. Known with war economy and economy instructions (two types)
V-L(MB)-Nos 3A & 4A		Returned Letter Branch Mount Pleasant London E.C.1	For returned postal packets
V-P-171L1-175L12		Post Office	Known in two formats: ...(late R.L.B. No. -) and number alone, without RLB. Each for returned postal packets and registered letters. The former with war economy (two types) and economy instructions (one type)
V-P-162 to 177, not inclusive			
V-Pe-170 to 174, not inclusive			
V-PR(2)-Nos 3 to 15 not inclusive (2) included to differentiate from V-PR-1-18 above		Post Office RLB (No. is not present after RLB)	For returned postal packets and registered letters
V-RP-Nos 27 to 180, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch Post Office	For returned postal packets
V-E-172L3	Edinburgh	Returned Letter Branch General Post Office, Edinburgh	Only known as: ...(Late R.L.B. No. -)
V-GW-Nos 14 to 173X, not inclusive	Glasgow	Returned Letter Branch Post Office, Glasgow	For returned postal packets and registered letters
V-R-Nos 26 to 130, not inclusive	London	Pre-printed envelopes to be Returned to the Post Office	Miscellaneous including those with no stated purpose, for stamps found loose, rebuts and registered letters

Table 30. Period V envelopes.

Period V-L(0) Returned Letter Office London Postal Service G.P.O. London (RLOGB pages 266)

New item

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
1	1	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	15 x 8.5	ca 1912	1

Table 31. Additional Returned Letter Office London Postal Service G.P.O. London envelope.

Type V-PR- Post Office R.L.B. (RLOGB pages 268-271)

Reclassification

As described later, two items from this group have been reclassified.

Old Classification	New Classification
Type V-PR-5(i)	Type V-PR(2)-5
Type V-PR-14(iv)	Type V-PR(2)-14

Table 32. Reclassification of Post Office R.L.B. envelopes.

New items

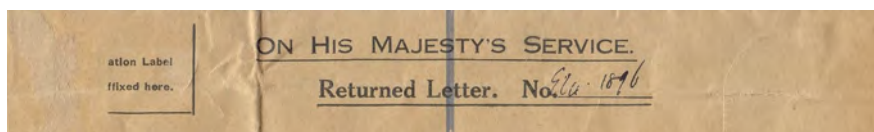


Figure 22. Heading of Type PR15(iv) envelope (60%).



Figure 23. Type PR17 (ii) envelope Dublin to Liverpool (60%)

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
15 (iv)	15 <i>Figure 22</i>	Returned Letter	Buff	23.5 x 10.5	1933	1
OHMS in sans-serif capitals.						
17 (ii)	Post Office RLB No. 17. <i>Figure 23</i>	Returned Letter No.. Regn Fee 2d Top left (Irish Printing)	Buff	13.5 x 10	1919	1

Table 33. Additional Post Office R.L.B. envelopes.

Correction

Purpose of PR-12 (iv) should be Returned Letter and not Returned dispatch (RLOGB page 270).

Type V-RP-Returned Letter Branch Post Office R.L.B. No. (RLOGB page 272)

New items

Type	Number	Purpose	Paper	Size (cm)	Years	Scarcity
28A	R.L.B. No. 28A. Low position	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	27.5 x 18	Ca. 1928	*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (122/6074) <i>Figure 24</i> .						
28A (i)	R.L.B. No. 28A. High position	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	27.5 x 18	Ca. 1937	*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (122/6077).						

Table 34. Additional Returned Letter Branch Post Office R.L.B. No. envelopes.

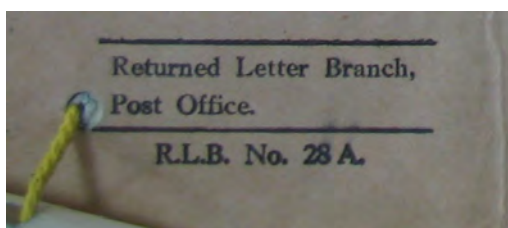


Figure 24. Designation of Type V-RP-28A envelope (120%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (3).

Period VI

The start of this period was the change to On Her Majesty's Service following the accession of Queen Elizabeth II.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub type
VI-RP-Nos 32, 34 & 37; 180	London	Returned Letter Branch, Post Office	For returned postal packets and rebuts
VI-R-162		Returned Letter Branch	For returned postal packets
VI-L(MP)-3A to 178, not inclusive		Returned Letter Branch, Mount Pleasant, London, E.C.1	For returned postal packets
VI- L(MPP)- Nos 3A to 449, not inclusive MPP due to inclusion of Post Office		Returned Letter Branch, Mount Pleasant Post Office, London, E.C.1	For returned postal packets
VI-MR-447	Manchester	Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Manchester.	For returned postal packets
VI-GL-Nos 15 to 177, not inclusive	Glasgow	Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow	For returned postal packets, registered letters and rebuts
VI-PR(2)-Nos 5, 7 & 15 No. is not present after RLB, similar to V-PR(2)- and in contrast to V-PR- (<i>Table 30</i>) where No. is present	London	Post Office, Returned Letter Branch	For returned postal packets and registered letters
VI-P-Nos 162 to 453, not inclusive		Post Office	For returned postal packets and registered letters

Table 35. Period VI envelopes.

Period VII

The start of this period was the removal of On Her Majesty's Service after October 1, 1969 when the Post Office was changed from a government department to a corporation.

Summary

Type	Designation of Envelopes		Sub type
VII-P-Nos 447 to 453, not inclusive	London	Post Office	For returned postal packets and registered letters
VII-RP-450		Returned Letter Branch, Post Office	For returned postal packets
VII-SW-447	Swindon	Returned Letter Branch, Swindon	For returned postal packets
VII-MR-447	Manchester	Returned Letter Branch, Manchester	For returned postal packets
VII-BA-447	Bath	Returned Letter Section, Bath	For returned postal packets

VII-BM-447	Birmingham	Returned Letter Section, <i>Birmingham</i>	For returned postal packets
VII-R-453	London	Pre-printed envelopes to be <i>Returned to the Post Office</i>	For registered letters
VII-ThePO-Nos 2001 to 2026, not inclusive		<i>The Post Office</i>	For returned postal packets and registered letters
VII-RM(L)-Nos 2001 & 2024 Crown		<i>Royal Mail (Crown Left)</i>	For returned postal packets
VII-RM(C)-Nos 2001, 2025 & 2026 Includes transition from buff to white envelopes	London, Belfast and Portsmouth	<i>Royal Mail (Crown Centre)</i>	For returned postal packets
VII-RM(B)-Small, medium and large	Belfast	<i>Royal Mail (Crown Centre), charge in a Block</i>	Purpose no longer stated
VII-RM(B)-P- Large	Belfast	<i>Royal Mail (Crown Centre), charge in a Block, made from Polythene</i>	Purpose no longer stated

Table 36. Period VII envelopes.

Part 2: Completion of Period V, and Periods VI and VII

Period V

In The Postal Museum there are 10 files on standardization of RLS and RLB envelopes from 1928 to 1953 (POST 122/6074 to 6083). Files contain, among other things, memos which explain the changing features of envelopes. These include the small, but significant, increase in size of envelopes with the same number, their usage in different offices and replacement of envelopes by those with a different number or size. There are also indications of the numbers of envelopes used. It is clear from these data that only a small proportion of envelopes produced has survived.

Between January and April 1928 are a series of memos regarding the RLB and RLS series (3). In January 1928 discussion centred around standardising sizes of these envelopes so that they would be the same as standardised H. M. Stationery Office stationery. The point was made that RLB envelopes should be slightly larger than common commercial sizes so that envelopes to be returned would fit inside them. A memo dated 5 January 1928 from the Assistant Controller to the Controller of Post Office Stores states, in part:

...the sizes and shapes of the envelopes used in the Returned Letter Section, London, numbered in the R.L.S. series, are being reviewed with a view to conforming them to the sizes standardised by H.M. Stationery Office, and in this connexion it is asked that a specimen of the latest print of each envelope numbered in the R.L.B series may be forwarded for comparison...

These were sent on 11 January and a comparison of sizes was returned. In another memo from the Assistant Controller, LPS, IS dated 25 January argues that:

...before proceeding further with any attempt to alter the existing sizes of the R.L.S. envelopes, it will perhaps be stated whether or not it is the intention to bring the R.L.B. envelopes into standard sizes. The principal objection, here, to this operation is that the envelopes of both series (this Office uses R.L.B. envelopes in cases of emergency) are used entirely to return to origin letters that have failed to reach the addressees, and the envelopes must, of necessity, be a little larger than the various corresponding commercial covers in use, so as to take the returned letters comfortably. It is experienced here that the existing sizes of both series meet this requirement...

RLS Envelope	Existing size (inches)	Nearest larger standard size (inches)	Minimum increase in paper per envelope (square inches)	Average quantity of envelopes used annually
19	14 x 6	15 x 6	12	2,500
28	12 x 8	12 x 10	45	31,000
26				
380	10 x 6 $\frac{7}{8}$	10 x 6 $\frac{7}{8}$	15	2,500
8	10 x 6 $\frac{1}{4}$			50,000

5	9¾ x 4⅞	9⅞ x 4⅞	1	50,000
4	7 x 5	8 x 5	10	450,000
3	7 x 4	7 x 4¾	10½	500,000
1	5¾ x 3½	5¾ x 4¾	14¾	175,000

Table 37. Data from January 1928 on consequences of changing sizes of envelopes.

He concludes by illustrating *Table 37* (he does not have RLB data) and suggests that it would be no less efficient and more economical to continue using current sizes of envelope. This objection was over-ruled in a memo of 14 March 1928:

...It is important that the Post Office envelopes should be brought into conformity with the new standard sizes...

Proposals were made regarding envelope size and numbering as shown in *Table 38*. It was felt that by altering the sizes along with introducing two new envelopes *...the complete range of sizes thus set up will fully meet the requirements of the Returned Letter Section...*

RLS	RLB	No.	Size (inches)
1	-	170	5⅝ x 3½
3	-	171 & 175	5¾ x 4¾
4	14	173	7 x 4¾
New envelope (4a)	37	-	8 x 5
5	5 & 15	-	9⅞ x 4⅞
8	27	174	10 x 6⅞
380	38		
New envelope (28a)	New envelope (28a)	-	11 x 9
26	-	-	12 x 10
28	28	-	
19	-	176	15 x 6

Table 38. Standardisation of sizes of differently numbered envelopes.

During 1931 discussions centred around the introduction of envelope No. 162 (4). In January Mr. W Moseley, Sorting Clerk Telegraphist, suggested slightly enlarging RLB No. 170 (*Figure 25*). To that end a specimen envelope was prepared at Portsmouth 6¼ x 4 inches in size (*Figure 26*). There were favorable comments from Southampton, Bournemouth and Manchester, supporting an envelope of 6¼ x 4 inches as allowing discontinuation of envelopes 170 and 171 and reducing the need to use No. 173 (*Figure 27*). The point was made that No. 170 was rarely used as the size was *...inconvenient...* (*Figure 28*). On the other hand, No. 171X was frequently used but envelopes often had to be folded to fit into an envelope of this size (*Figure 29*).

On 23 April a letter from London LPS agreed that RLS 1, 3 and 4 (similar to 170, 171 and 173) met their requirements. A typed memo dated 9 May 1931 describes annual usage of 170, 171 and

173 (700,000, 1,250,000 and 750,000 respectively) and indicates that the nearest standard size to that proposed is 6¼ x 4½ inches.

There is a Draft Notice for a PO Circular Announcing No. 162 and RLS3A even though London emphasized that they did not need a larger size (*Figure 30*). Attached to the draft is a No. 162 envelope which has an indistinct handstamp **Copy of New or Revised Print / TO REMAIN WITH PAPERS** (*Figure 31*). Envelope No. 162 was approved in October 1931. The earliest that we have recorded is 1937, although No. 162x has been seen from 1934 (*Table 49*).

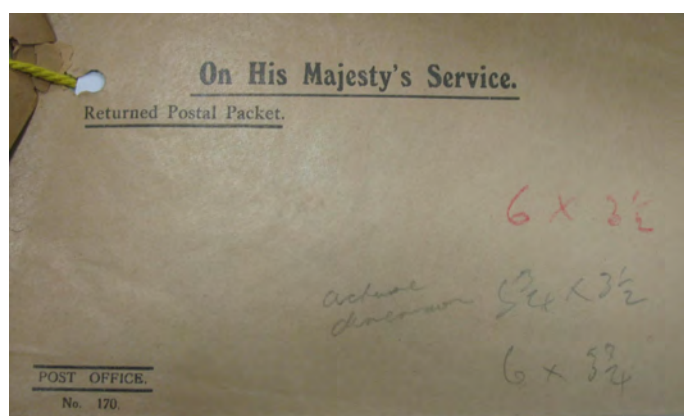


Figure 25. Manuscript annotations on RLB 170 envelope. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

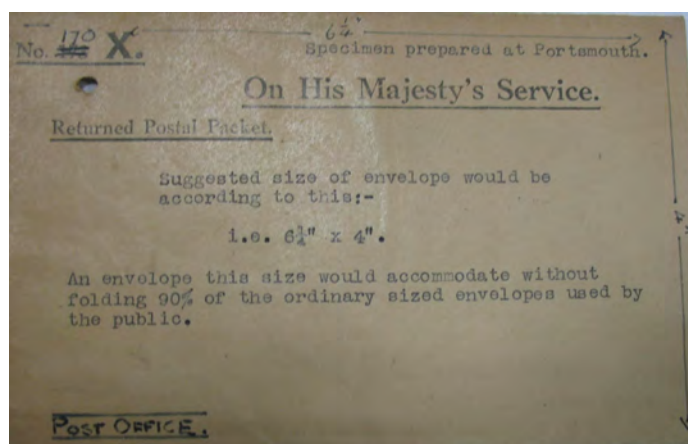


Figure 26. Typed annotations on RLB 170X envelope. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

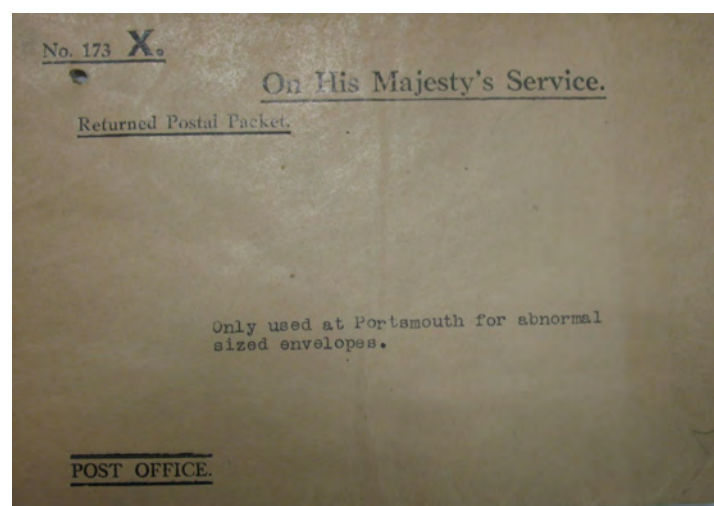


Figure 27. Typed annotation concerning the limited usage of 173X envelopes. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

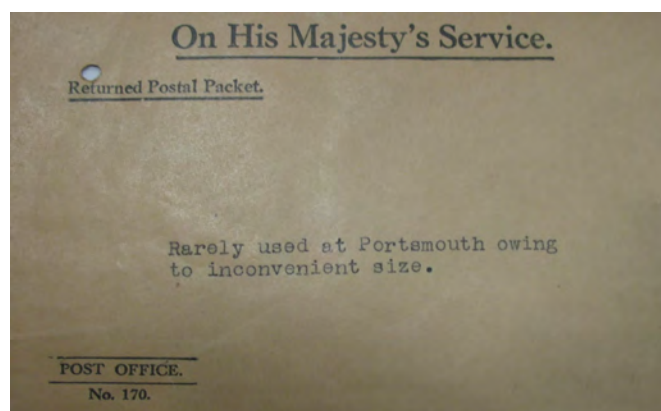


Figure 28. Typed annotation that RLB 170 was of an inconvenient size. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

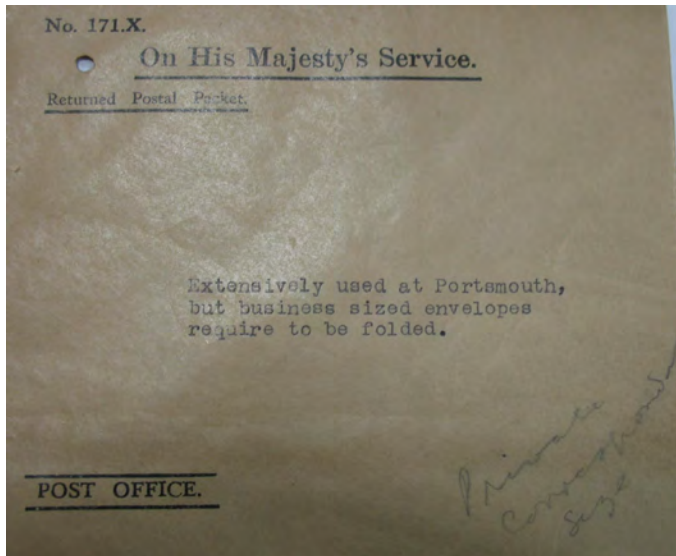


Figure 29. Typed annotation that 171X required contents to be folded. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

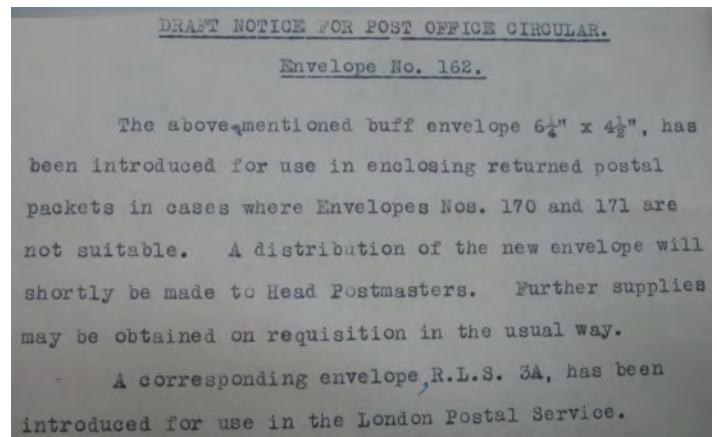


Figure 30. Draft notice attached to Figure 31. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

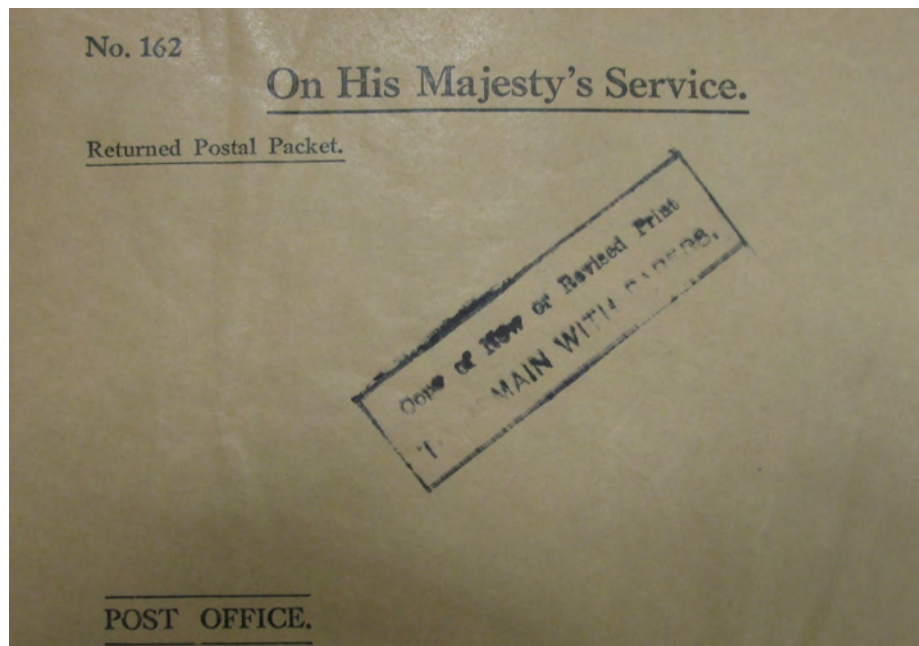


Figure 31. Final version of 162 envelope. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (4).

Dissatisfaction with and revision of envelopes for undeliverable registered mail was the subject of several memos throughout 1936 and 1937 (5, 6). The Assistant Controller of LPS IS complained on 28 August 1936 that envelope RLB 175X had substandard gum and insufficient space for registration particulars of the enclosed letter. He enclosed suggested alterations on an example of an existing 175X envelope (*Figure 32*). Returned Letter No. has been crossed out and re-sited on the left. Subsequently, there is a handwritten note from Postmaster Surveyor Spilsbury (Birmingham

RLB datestamp Sept 21, 1936) proposing a different layout (*Figure 33*). Returned Letter and No. are on different lines. On 1 October there is a handwritten memo to the Stores Dept that future printing should follow Sample A, although the words Returned Letter Number should be slightly more to the right than shown. In addition, they should be printed in smaller type than that of the existing printing.

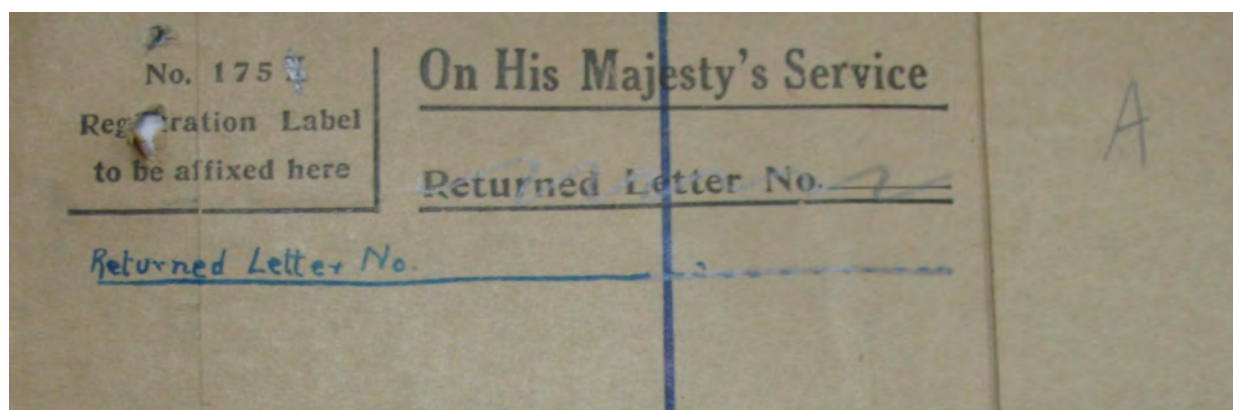


Figure 32. Essay A for an envelope for undeliverable registered letters. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (5).

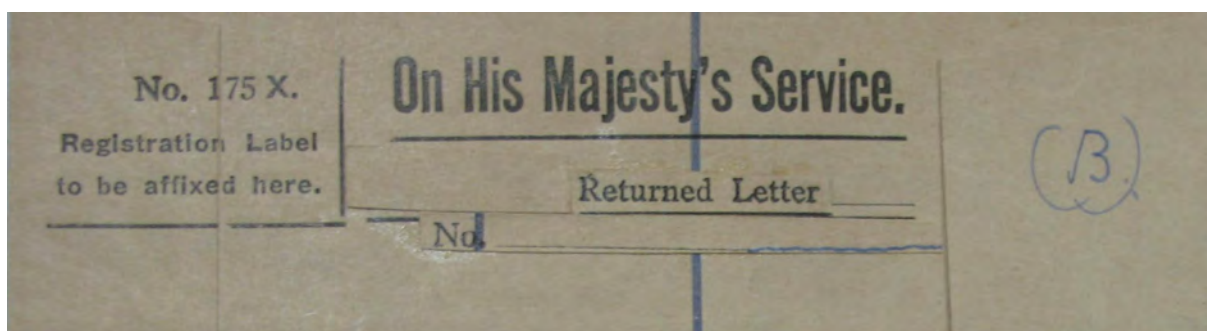


Figure 33. Essay B for an envelope for undeliverable registered letters. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (5).

In August 1937 there were suggestions that the 175X registered envelope should be made larger (increasing its length to 6½ inches) to accommodate PO standard registered envelopes in sizes G and F. The Divisional Controller LPR IS responded on 30 August that envelopes RLB 14 and 15 already met this need. Stores Department added on 11 September that RLB 14 and 15 were normally only available in offices with RLBs, however, they were also issued to offices where the postmaster had a salary of £600 or more per annum. On 9 October, the North Wales District commented that if RLB 14 and 15 were made available to all Head Offices there would be no need to make 175X bigger. POST 122/6077 also contains a list of envelopes in use at the end of 1937 (*Table 39*). A description and their purpose are included.

Serial Number	Description	Size (inches)	Purpose
Envelopes in ordinary Stock Series, available generally			
49W	Glazed brown, Demy, Bag-shaped		To return registered envelopes to RLO
123	Thick buff, Demy		None defined, to Divisional Controller, RLS, Mount Pleasant
130	Thin buff	5¼ x 6⅞	For postage stamps found loose
162		6¼ x 4½	Returned Postal Packet
170X		5⅝ x 3½	
171		5¾ x 4¾	
173	Thick buff	7 x 4¾	
174	Glazed brown	10 x 6⅞	
175		5¾ x 4¾	
176	Thick buff	15 x 6	Returned Postal Packet
Envelopes in RLB Series issued to Returned Letter Branches and selected Head Postmasters			
RLB 5	Thick buff	9⅞ x 4⅞	
RLB 6		11 x 5	
RLB 7		12 x 5	
RLB 14	Glazed brown	7 x 5	Returned Letter No.....Registered
RLB 27	Thick buff	10 x 6⅞	Returned Postal Packet
RLB 28	Glazed brown	12 x 10	
RLB 28A		11 x 8	
RLB 32		15 x 10	
RLB 34		14 x 9	
RLB 37	Thick buff	8 x 5	Rebuts
RLB 38	Glazed brown	10 x 6⅞	
RLB 15 (in manuscript)	-	-	Registered (in manuscript)

Table 39. Envelopes in use at the end of 1937 (6).

Subsequent decisions included: No. 171 to be abolished in view of nearness of size to envelopes 162 and 173, RLB 14 to be transferred to ordinary stock series, RLB 27 to be abolished as No. 174W of similar size was available and RLB 28A to be transferred to ordinary stock series (*Figure 34*). Stores agreed on 7 March 1938 but suggested delaying the notice announcing the abolition of No. 171 until the large stock was almost used up (6). The notice to discontinue No. 171 was issued 8 February 1939 (*Figure 35*).

ENVELOPES FOR RETURNING UNDELIVERABLE POSTAL PACKETS

In order to increase the range of sizes of such envelopes available for use at Head Offices generally, two envelopes which have hitherto been numbered in an RLB series will in future bear numbers in the ordinary series, and will be known as envelopes No. 177 and 180 respectively. Further details of these envelopes are given in the separate notice under New, Revised or Obsolete Forms, Books, etc.

The attention of Returned Letter Branches is also drawn to the entry in that notice relating to envelope RLB 27.

NEW, REVISED OR OBSOLETE FORMS, BOOKS, ETC.

Serial Number of Item	Description of Item	New, Revised or Obsolete	Whether distribution is to be made to Subordinate Offices on receipt of supply	Remarks
Envelope No. 177.*	Envelope — Returned Postal Packet. Manilla, Registered 7" × 5".	Renumbered	—	Late RLB 14. Old stocks to be used up.
Envelope RLB 27.*	Envelope — Returned Postal Packet. 10" × 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".	Obsolete	—	Old stocks to be used up. Superseded by Envelope No. 174 W.
Envelope No. 180.*	Envelope — Returned Postal Packet. Manilla 11" × 8".	Renumbered	—	Late RLB 28A. Old stocks to be used up.

Figure 34. Undated part notices attached to card. (Late 1937-early 1938). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

MISCELLANEOUS—(continued)

NEW, REVISED OR OBSOLETE FORMS, BOOKS, ETC.

Serial Number of Item	Description of Item	New, Revised or Obsolete	Whether distribution is to be made to Subordinate Offices on receipt of supply	Remarks
P 410D	Annual Report of the Postmaster to the Head Postmaster.	Revised	—	Distribution already made.
Envelope No. 171.	Thin buff $5\frac{1}{4}'' \times 4\frac{3}{4}''$. Unaddressed returned postal packet.	Obsolete	—	Old stocks may be used up.

Initial supplies of the revised forms mentioned above have been sent by the Stores Department to all Head Offices concerned.

Failure to receive a supply within ten days of this notice should be reported to the Stores Department. As soon as the supplies of the revised forms come to hand the existing stocks should be made waste.

Figure 35. Part of Notice of Discontinuation of envelope 171. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

On 17 May 1949 there was a memo regarding the change of envelope RLB 32 to a bag shape, in other words, opening at the end rather than the side. This was deemed acceptable and the new supply was put to stock on June 9, 1949 (7). Similarly, on 4 October 1949 a handwritten memo suggested that the size of RLB 7 be changed from 12 x 5 inches to 12 x 6 inches and also made bag shaped (8). On 17 November, a note from the Supplies Department confirmed that supplies of these new RLB 7 envelopes had been obtained.

Finally, on 4 May 1953 a memo from supplies states that the current order for No 175 sized $5\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ inches is being accepted but that future orders will specify $6 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ inches (9).

Table 30 summarises all designated groups of envelopes in Period V. The six groups not listed in bold font have already been described in RLOGB, the remainder are described here.

Period V-L(IS): Inland Section, London Postal Service, London E.C.1

All types preceded by V-L(IS)-.

Designations are in two or three lines as shown in *Figures 36 and 37*.

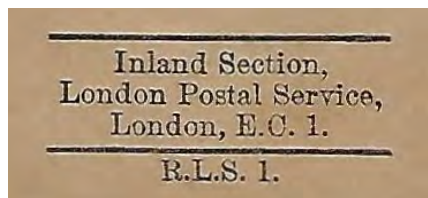


Figure 36. Three lined designation of V-L(IS)- envelopes.

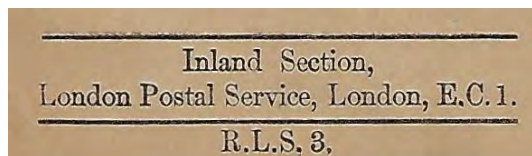


Figure 37. Two lined designation of V-L(IS)- envelopes.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
1	R.L.S.1 <i>Figure 38</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	April 1926-March 1927	
Designation in three lines. Minor typesetting difference in relationship of OHisMS to RPP.							
1 (i)	R.L.S.1	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	January 1931	1
Designation in three lines.							
2	R.L.S. No. 2. <i>Figure 39</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.7 x 10	March 1925-March 1926	3
2 (ii)	R.L.S.2	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	Likely 12.5 x 10	September 1925-August 1929	5
Inland Section designation small (35 mm) in 1925, 1926 examples, larger (38 mm) subsequently.							
2 (iii)	R.L.S.2 <i>Figure 40</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.5 x 10	August 1930-September 1936	4
Designation in three lines. Dot after 2 omitted in 1934 example.							
3	R.L.S. 3 <i>Figure 41</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 10	November 1925-April 1927	
3 (i)	R.L.S. 3 <i>Figure 42</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	October 1929	1
3 (ii)	R.L.S. 3 <i>Figure 43</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	May 1930-October 1934	
Designation in two lines. Slight variations in height.							
3A	R.L.S. 3A <i>Figure 44</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	February 1932-September 1933	
Designation in two lines. Slight variations in height.							

4	R.L.S. No. 4 <i>Figure 45</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 13	November 1925	1
4 (i)	R.L.S. 4.	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 13	January 1927- October 1927	2
With no line below number (January 1927); with a line (October 1927) (<i>Figure 46</i>).							
4 (ii)	R.L.S.4	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	July 1930- July 1931	
4 (iii)	R.L.S.4 <i>Figure 47</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 13	November 1930	1
Designation in three lines for number 4 envelopes.							
5	R.L.S. No.5	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	1925	1
Designation in three lines.							
8	R.L.S. 8. <i>Figure 48</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 18	February 1928	1
Designation in three lines.							

Table 40. Period V-L(IS): Inland Section, London Postal Service, London E.C.1. envelopes.
Envelope numbered 380 (*Table 38*) has not been seen.

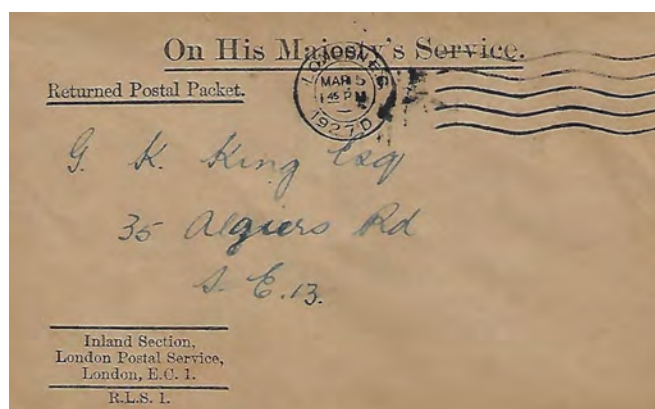


Figure 38. Type V-L(IS)-1 envelope (60%).

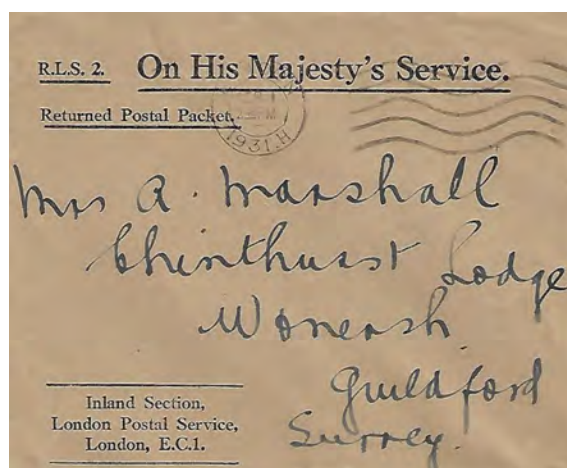


Figure 40. Type V-L(IS)-2 (iii) envelope (60%).

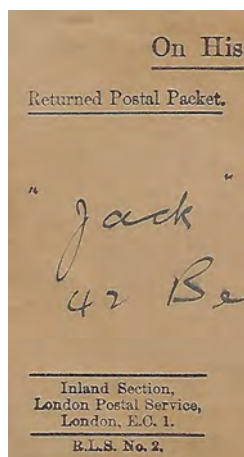


Figure 39. Left side of Type V-L(IS)-2 envelope (60%).

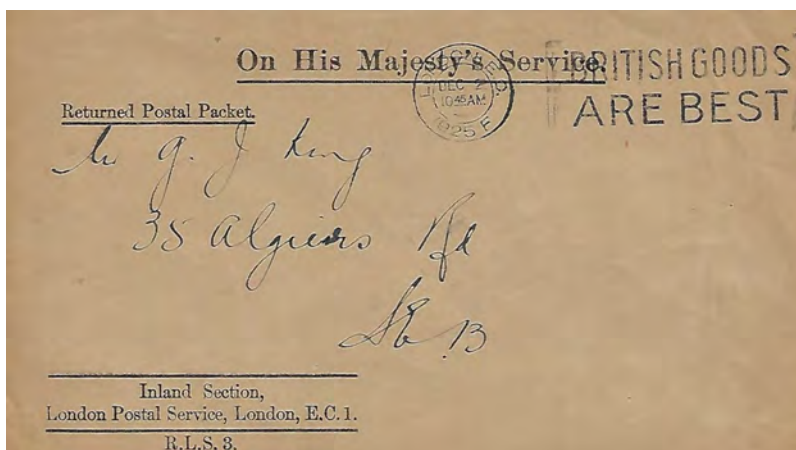


Figure 41. Type V-L(IS)-3 envelope (60%).

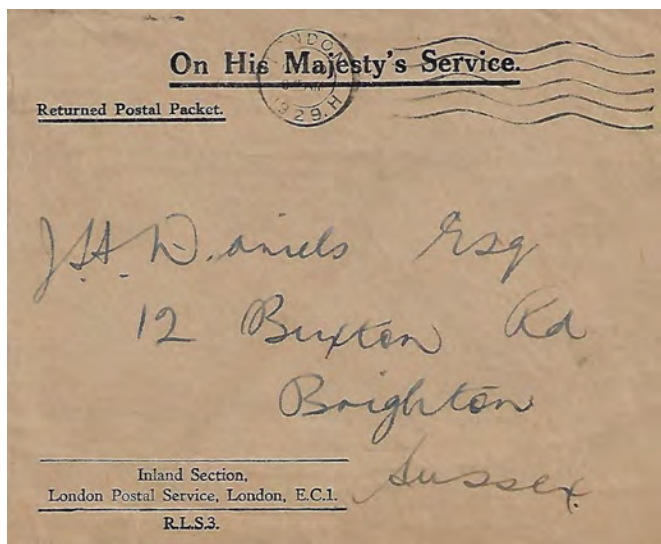


Figure 42. Type V-L(IS)-3 (i) envelope (60%).

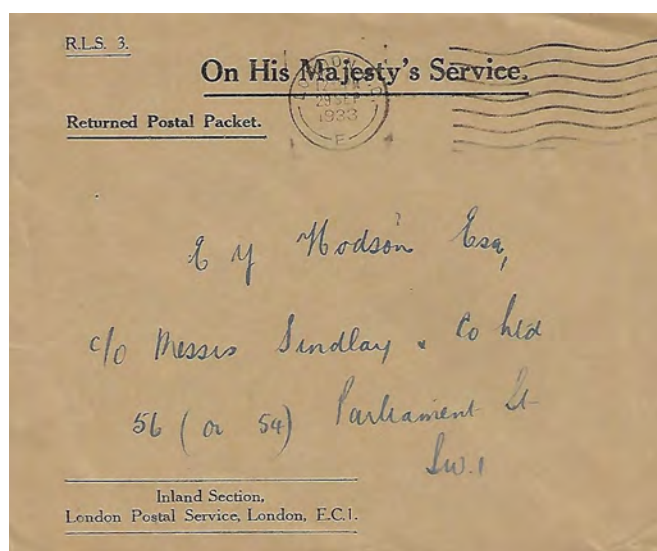


Figure 43. Type V-L(IS)-3 (ii) envelope (60%).

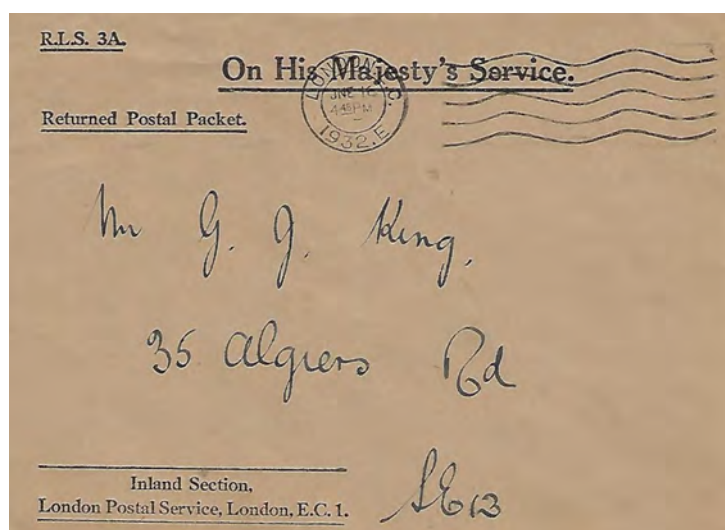


Figure 44. Type V-L(IS)-3A envelope (60%).

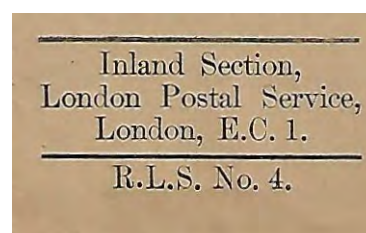


Figure 45. Designation of Type V-L(IS)-4 envelope.

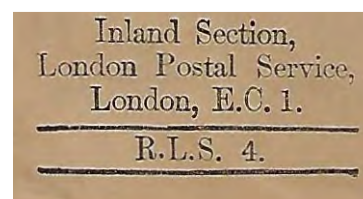


Figure 46. Designation of Type V-L(IS)-4 (i) envelope, with line below number.

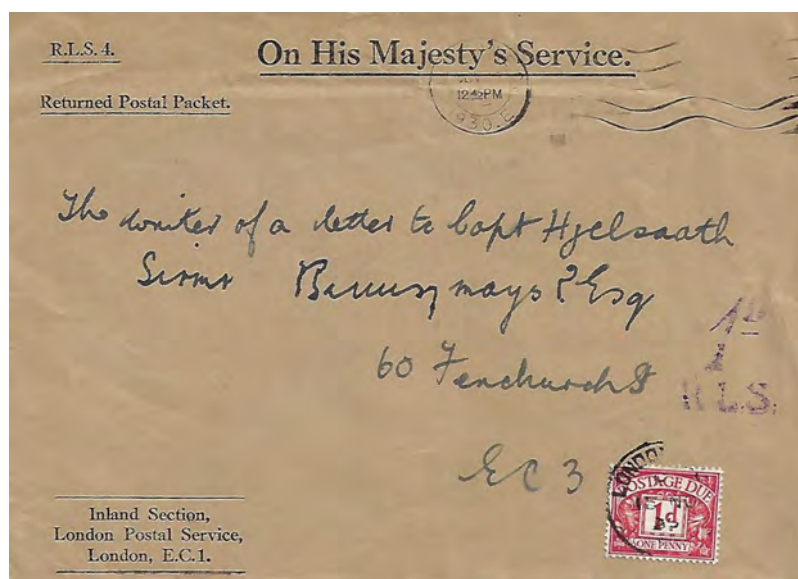


Figure 47. Type V-L(IS)-4 (iii) envelope (50%)

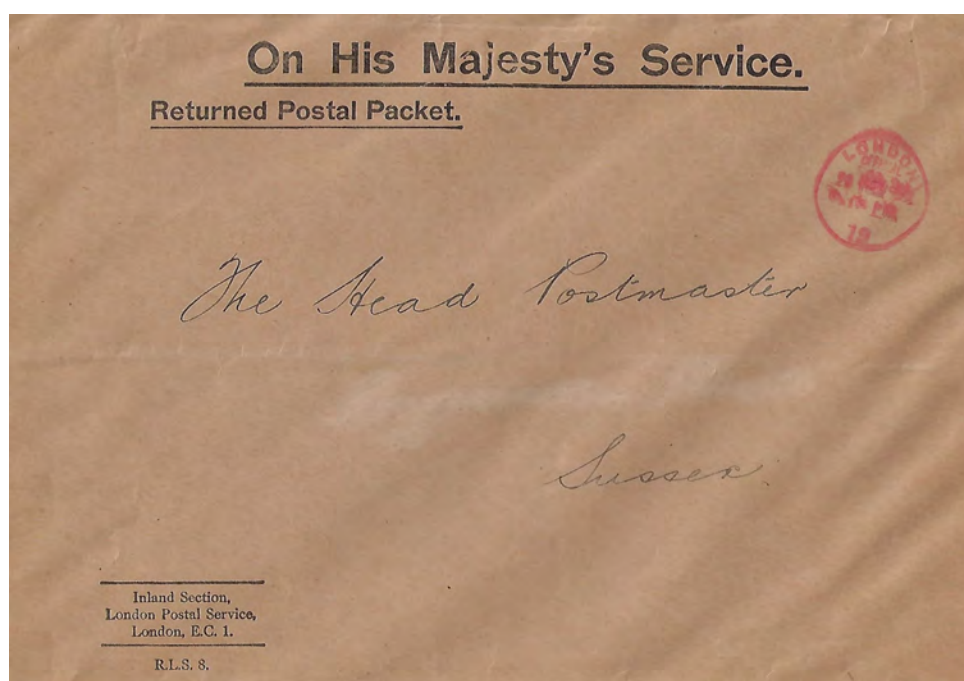


Figure 48. Type V-L(IS)-8 envelope (50%).

Period V-L(GMP): Returned Letter Section, General Post Office, Mount Pleasant London E.C.1.

All types preceded by V-L(GMP)-.

The designation is in four lines.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
3A	R.L.S.3A <i>Figure 49</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	September 1934	1

Table 41. Period V-L(GMP): Returned Letter Section, General Post Office, Mount Pleasant London E.C.1. envelopes.



Figure 49. Type V-L(GMP)-3A envelope (75%).

Period V-L(MP): Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1.

All types preceded by V-L(MP)-.

The designations of all of these are in three lines, except RLS 3 and RLS 7 which are in two lines. There are no lines above the designation in RLS 4a.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
1	RLS 1	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14 x 9	July 1940-August 1941	2
No stops between initials.							
2	RLS 2	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	13 x 10	July 1935-July 1946	
No stops between initials. Minor typesetting differences seen.							
3	RLS 3 <i>Figure 50</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	November 1936-April 1951	
No stops between initials. Minor typesetting differences seen; OHMS not underlined from about 1947.							
3A	R.L.S. 3A	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	November 1934-May 1935	2
Stops.							
3A (i)	RLS 3A <i>Figure 51</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	September 1936-March 1942	
No stops between initials. Minor typesetting differences seen. OHMS in lower case, underlined.							
3A (ii)	RLS 3A	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	September 1946-January 1949	
No stops between initials. OHMS in upper case, not underlined.							
4	RLS 4	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	1935-November 1940	4
No stops between initials.							
4a	R.L.S. 4a <i>Figure 52</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	20 x 13	November 1938-May 1939	3
Stops, lower case a. Lower case OHMS, underlined.							
4a (i)	R.L.S. 4a	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	20 x 13	March 1946	3
As 4a except OHMS, not underlined.							
5	R.L.S. 5	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23+ x 12+ (cut down)	1936-1939	2
Stops, upper case OHMS underlined.							
7	R.L.S. 7	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30 x 12.5	January 1944	1
No stops, upper case OHMS underlined.							

28A	RLS 28A <i>Figure 53</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	28 x 20.5	July 1939	1
No stops, RPP in upper case.							

Table 42. Period V-L(MP): Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1. envelopes.

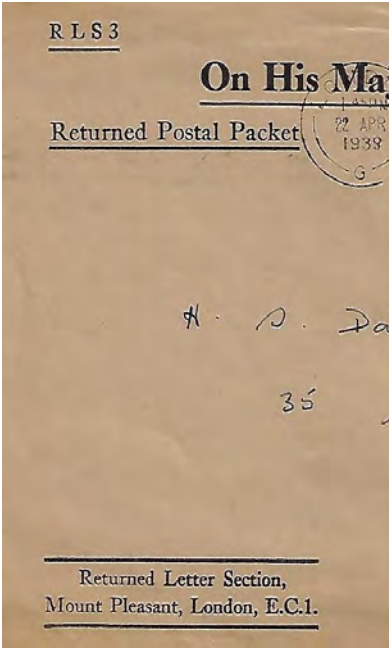


Figure 50. Type V-L(MP)-3 envelope (70%).

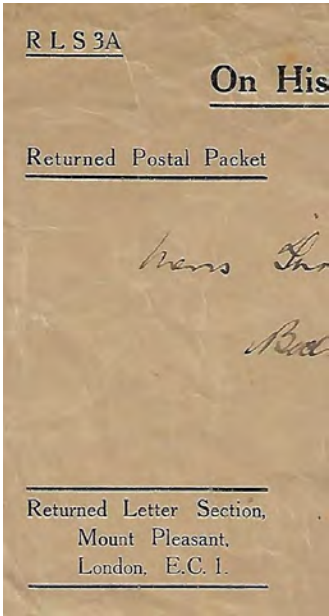


Figure 51. Left side of Type V-L(MP)-3A (i) envelope (70%).

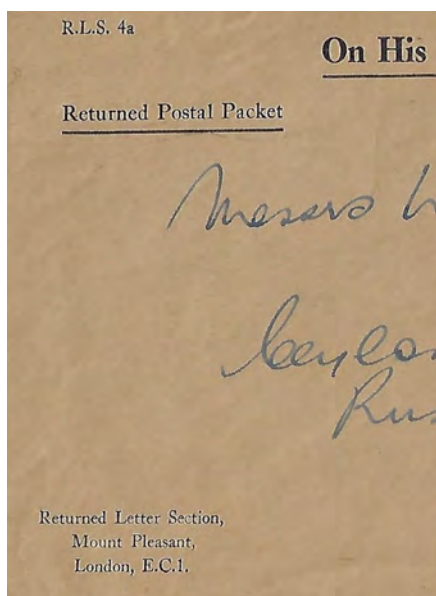


Figure 52. Left side of Type V-L(MP)-4a envelope (60%).

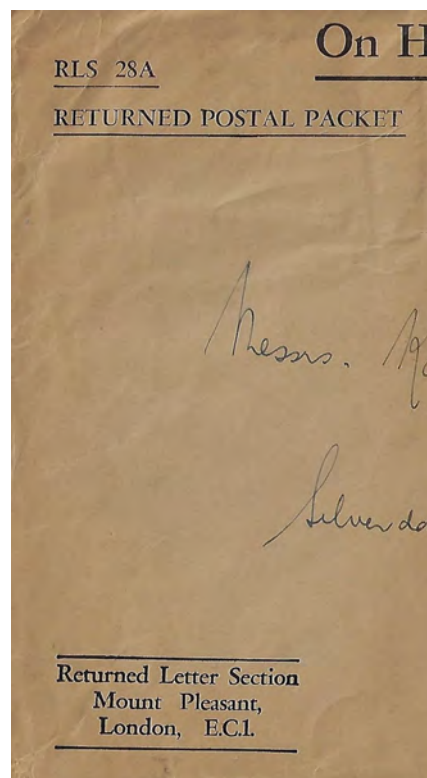


Figure 53. Left side of Type V-L(MP)-28A envelope (50%).

The next two groups (War Economy or Economy) have economy instructions printed on them (Figures 54, 57, 58 and 61).

War Economy

All types preceded by V-L(MPe)-.

The designations of all of these are in two lines, except RLS 3A and RLS 4 with War Economy instructions moved to the right which have designations in three lines.



Figure 54. Details of WAR ECONOMY instructions.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
1	RLS 1	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14 x 9	November 1942-April 1945	
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined in early examples, not underlined by 1944.							

2	RLS 2	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.5 x 10	January 1943-1944	3
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined.							
3	RLS 3	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	December 1942	1
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined.							
3A	RLS 3A	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	May 1942-1943	
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined.							
4	RLS 4 <i>Figure 55</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 13	December 1942	1
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined.							
4 (i)	RLS 4	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 12.5	August 1943	1
No stops. OHMS in lower case, underlined. WE is placed at the lower right <i>Figure 56</i> .							

Table 43. War economy. Period V-L(MPe): Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1. envelopes.

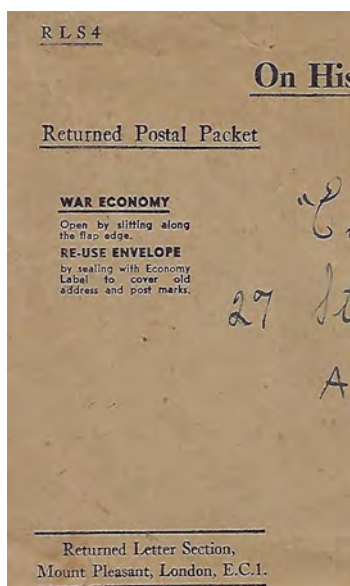


Figure 55. Left side of Type V-L(MPe)-4 envelope (60%).



Figure 56. Type V-L(MPe)-4 (i) envelope (60%).

Economy (long version, Figures 57 and 58)



Figure 57. Details with ECONOMY central and not underlined.



Figure 58. Details with ECONOMY left and underlined.

All types preceded by V-L(MPe)-.

Designation in three lines (RLS 1) or two lines (RLS 2).

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
1 (i)	RLS 1 <i>Figure 59</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14 x 9	April 1946- May 1955	4
No stops. OHMS in lower case, not underlined. ECONOMY central and not underlined (<i>Figure 57</i>).							
2 (i)	RLS 2 <i>Figure 60</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	13 x 10	June 1946- November 1953	
No stops. OHMS in lower case, not underlined. ECONOMY on left and underlined (<i>Figure 58</i>).							

Table 44. Economy (longer text). Period V-L(MPe): Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1. envelopes.

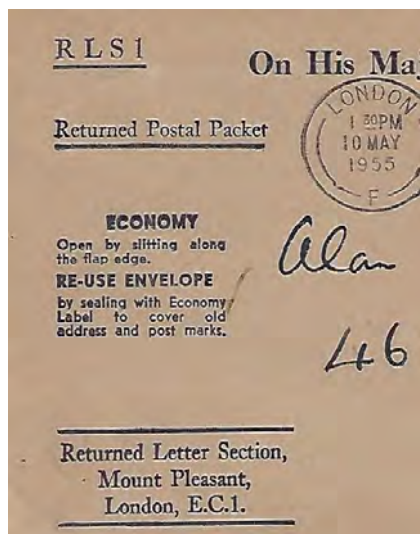


Figure 59. Left side of Type V-L(MPe)-1 (i) envelope (80%).

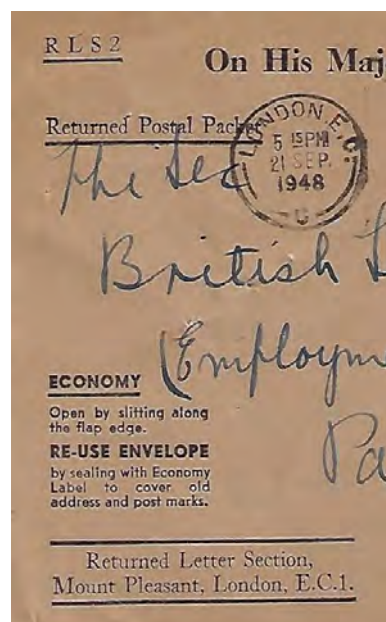


Figure 60. Left side of Type V-L(MPe)-2 (i) envelope (80%).

Economy (short version, *Figure 61*)

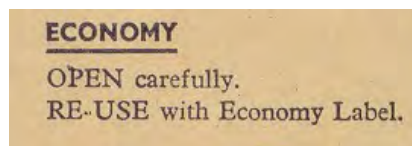


Figure 61. Details of shorter version of ECONOMY instructions.

All types preceded by V-L(MPe)-.

Designation in two lines.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
2 (ii)	RLS 2 <i>Figure 61</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.5 x 10	1954-April 1956	3

Table 45. Economy (shorter text). Period V-L(MPe): Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1. envelopes.

Period V-L(MB): Returned Letter Branch, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1.

All types preceded by V-L(MB)-.

All of these have the designation in three lines.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
3A	LDN.RLB. 3A <i>Figure 62</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 12.5	1950- November 1951	2
Stops as shown, OHMS upper case and not underlined. Designation not between lines.							
4	LDN.RLB4 <i>Figure 63</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 13	February 1951-June 1951	2
Stops as shown, OHMS lower case and not underlined.							

Table 46. Period V-L(MB): Returned Letter Branch, Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1. envelopes.

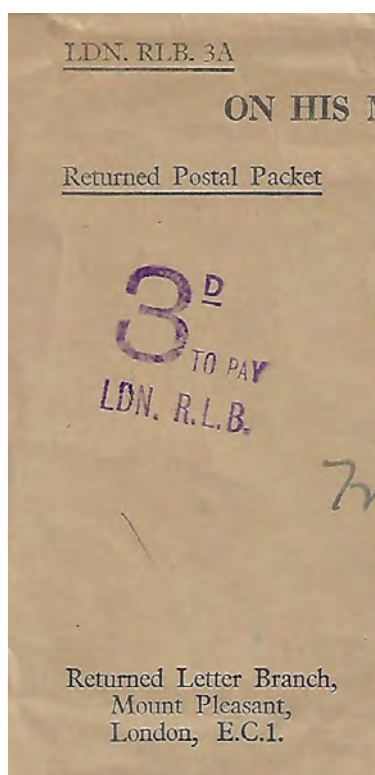


Figure 62. Left side of Type V-L(MB)-3A envelope (80%).

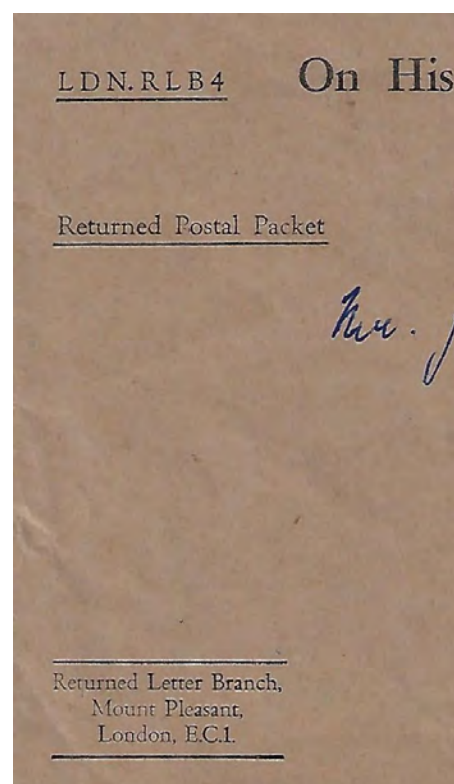


Figure 63. Left side of Type V-L(MB)-4 envelope (80%).

Period V-P: Post Office

All types preceded by V-P-. (*late R.L.B. No. -*) below Post Office

Type	Number		Late RLB number	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position						
170L1	170	Low	1	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	May 1925	1
171L2	171	Low	2	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.5 x 10	January 1925	1
173L4	173	Low	4	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12.5	January 1924-September 1925	3
174L8	174 <i>Figure 64</i>	Low	8	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 15.5		1
One unused example also known.								

Table 47. Period V-P: Post Office (late R.L.B. No. -) below Post Office envelopes.



Figure 64. Type V-174L8 envelope (50%).

For registered letters

These have Returned Letter on them instead of Returned Postal Packet.

Type	Number		Late RLB number	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position						
175L12	175	Low	12	Returned Letter No.	Buff	15.4 x 10.2	May 1924- February 1927	4
One unused example also known <i>Figure 65</i> . All examples seen have blue cross and black printing.								

Table 48. Period V-P: Post Office (late R.L.B. No. -) below Post Office envelopes for returned registered letters.

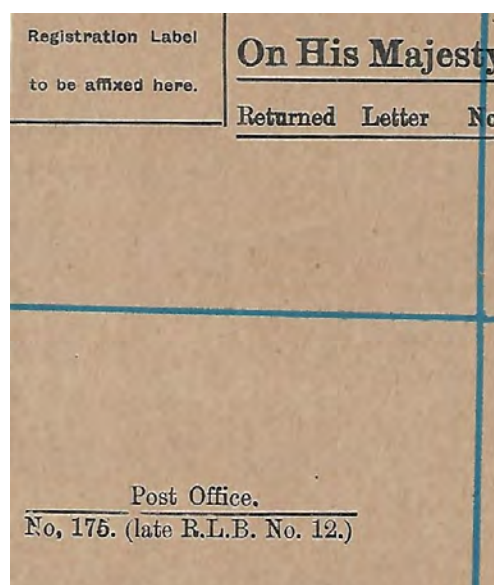


Figure 65. Left side of Type V-175L12 envelope (75%).

A number alone on envelopes

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
162	No. 162	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	February 1937-March 1950	
<p>No stops. Lower case OHMS, underlined. Examples with heavy and light font seen. Variations in length: OHMS 7.2-7.5 cm; RPP 3.4-4.6 cm; PO 2.5-3.2 cm. Longer PO and shorter RPP occur together and vice versa. Known with and without serifs on OHMS and RPP.</p> <p>There is an unused example which has stops after OHMS, RPP and PO. OHMS is 7.8 cm long and No. 162 is in a larger typeface <i>Figure 66</i>.</p> <p>There are two unused examples in The Postal Museum.</p>							
162 (i)	No. 162 <i>Figure 67</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	1948 (?) - May 1954	
<p>No stops. Upper case OHMS not underlined. From 1951 POST OFFICE has no lines above or below it; before then it had lines like its predecessor.</p>							
162X	No. 162X.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	August 1934-January 1936	
<p>There is an unused example which has stops after OHMS, RPP and PO.</p>							
170	No.170.	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	15 x 9	December 1924-April 1930	
<p>Stops after 170, OHMS, RPP and PO. Longer gaps noted between No. and 170. in examples up to 1924. Before 1928 the O in OHMS was a vertical oval and the cross bar of H was v-shaped, OHMS 6.5 cm long. From then the O was rounder and the cross bar horizontal, OHMS 7 cm long, letters of RPP are sans serif (<i>Figures 68 and 69</i>).</p>							
170 (i)	No.170 <i>Figure 70</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14 x 9	October 1938-August 1952	
<p>No stops after 170, OHMS, RPP or PO. OHMS and RPP seen with and without serifs. Between 1940 and 1952 the lines above and below PO and the line below RPP were removed.</p>							
170X	No. 170. X. <i>Figure 71</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	1931	1
<p>Stops present including after X</p>							
170X (i)	No. 170 X <i>Figure 72</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	October 1930-April 1938	
<p>Known with and without stop after 170. During 1937 X seen which is smaller and not in bold typeface.</p>							
171	No. 171. <i>Figure 73</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	13.5 x 11	February 1924-	

						October 1927	
Stops. From 1828 the O in OHMS is a vertical oval. One unused example is known.							
171 (i)	No. 171.	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	November 1928-June 1929	2
Stops. Larger size. Round O in OHMS. There is an unused example in The Postal Museum with a round O							
171 (ii)	No. 171 <i>Figure 74</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	March 1939-June 1939	2
No stops.							
171X	No. 171. X. <i>Figure 75</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	September 1931-?	
Stops were present until 1933/34. Then no stops. Variable gap between No. and 171X. Examples from 1938 have a small x. An unused example is known with large X and stops.							
171X (i)	No. 171x. <i>Figure 76</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	August 1938	1
OHMS in Bold Sans Serif, number underlined.							
172	No. 172.	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 12.5	April 1925-November 1925	3
Known in two forms: Round O in OHMS with square stops after OHMS and RPP, RPP shorter; vertical oval O in OHMS with a break on the right side of the underlining, a high cross bar to the H and round-oval stops after OHMS and RPP, RPP longer (<i>Figures 77 and 78</i>). Two unused examples are known.							
173	No. 173 <i>Figure 79</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12.5	1926-1932	4
Stops after OHMS, RPP and PO. An unused example is known.							
173 (i)	No. 173. <i>Figure 80</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	Some as above, but mainly smaller at 18 x 12	September 1937-1946	
No stops. OHMS is in lower case and underlined. In addition, variations in typesetting regarding size and shape of figures and letters are known for 173 (i)-(iii). A 1940 example with OHMS in bold sans-serif similar to <i>Figure 81</i> is recorded. An unused example is in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).							
173 (ii)	No. 173.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	Apr 1945-April 1947	4
No stops. OHMS in lower case, there is no underlining.							
173 (iii)	No. 173. <i>Figure 82</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	November 1948-November 1954	
No stops. OHMS in upper case, there is no underlining.							
173 (iv)	No 173	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	January 1956	1

No stops. Lower case OHMS, underlined. Printed instructions on front regarding putting name and address on outside of envelope <i>Figure 83</i> .							
173X	No. 173 X. <i>Figure 81</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 12	July 1933- 1952	
Stops after OHMS, RPP and PO are present until mid-1930s. Typesetting variations are common; number is sometimes underlined or flattened in shape, size of gap between No. and 173X varies. The X is huge in some 1934 examples (<i>Figure 84</i>). By 1950 there were no lines above and below PO (<i>Figure 85</i>).							
174	No. 174. <i>Figure 86</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 15.5	Unused example	1
Stops, upper case OHMS.							
174 (i)	No. 174 <i>Figure 87</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 17.5	July 1937	1
No stops, lower case OHMS.							
174W	No. 174 W. <i>Figure 88</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 17	January 1934	1
Stops.							
174W (i)	No 174 W	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 17		*
No stops. Unused copy in The Postal Museum POST 122/6077 (<i>Figure 89</i>).							
176	No. 176	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	Long 37 x 15		*
Stops. Unused copy in The Postal Museum POST 122/6077 (<i>Figure 90</i>). RPP on the right.							

Table 49. Period V-P: Post Office envelopes.

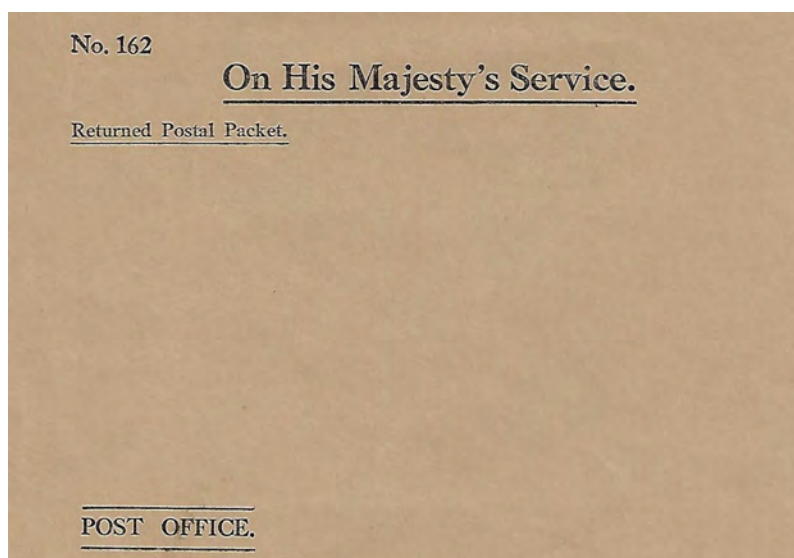


Figure 66. Type V-P-162 envelope. Unused with stops after OHMS and Post Office (60%).

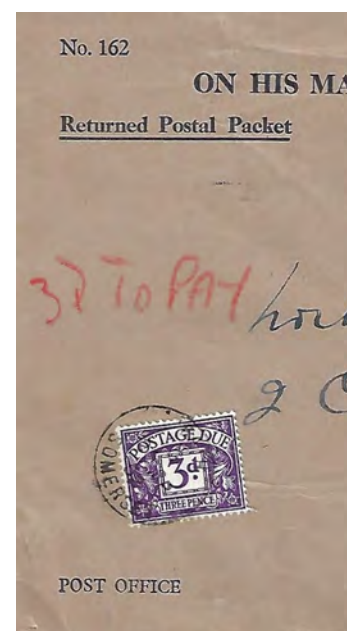


Figure 67. Left side of Type V-P-162 (i) envelope (60%).

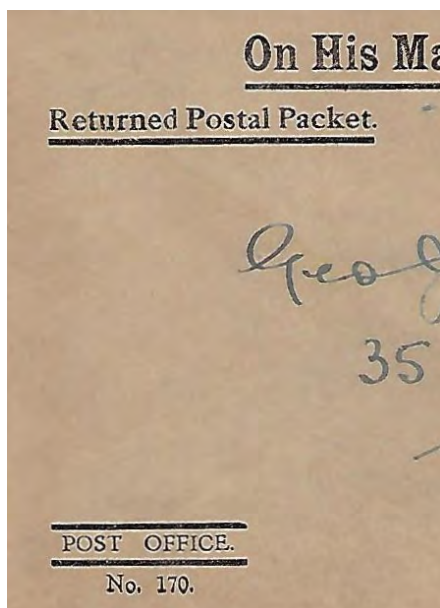


Figure 68. Left side of Type V-P-170 envelope (90%).

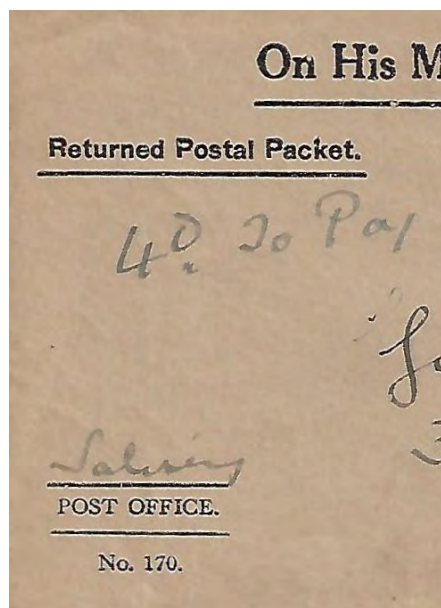


Figure 69. Left side of Type V-P-170 envelope with RPP sans serif (90%).

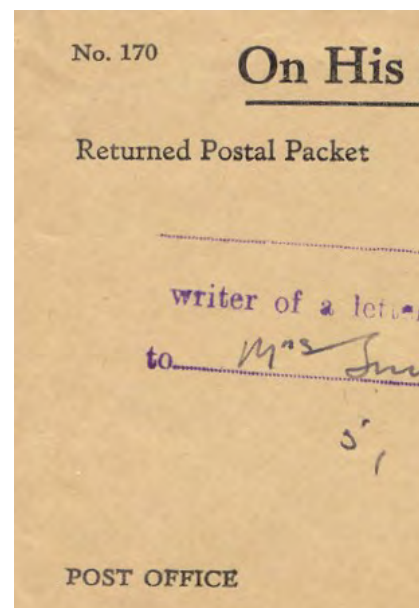


Figure 70. Left side of Type V-P-170 (i) envelope (90%).

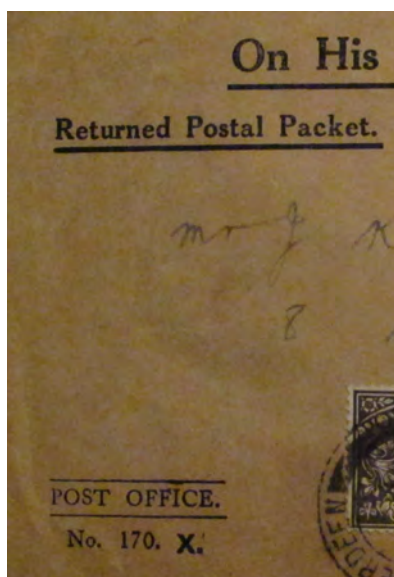


Figure 71. Left side of Type V-P-170X envelope (90%).

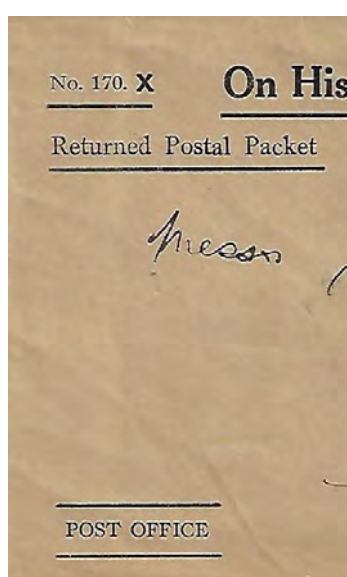


Figure 72. Left side of Type V-P-170X (i) envelope (90%).

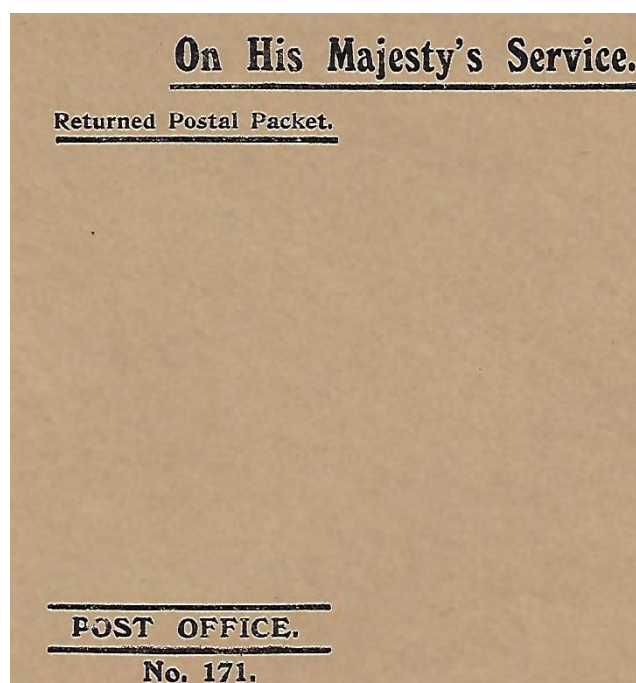


Figure 73. Left side of Type V-P-171 envelope (90%).

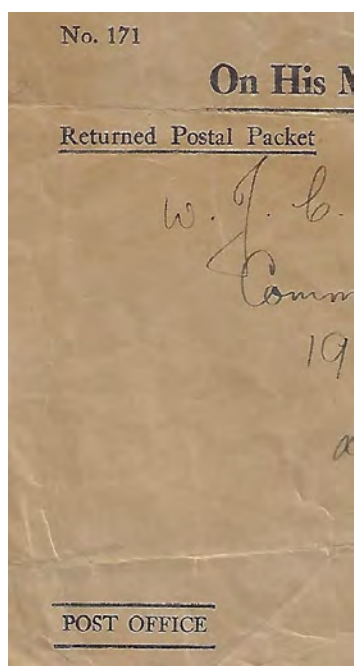


Figure 74. Left side of Type V-P-171 (ii) envelope (90%).

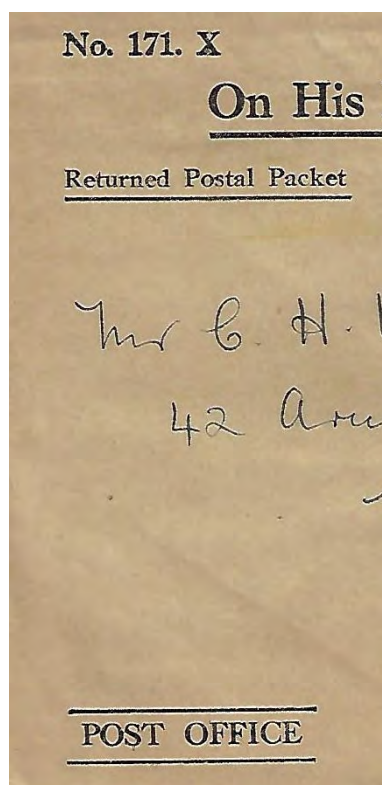


Figure 75. Left side of Type V-P-171X envelope (90%).

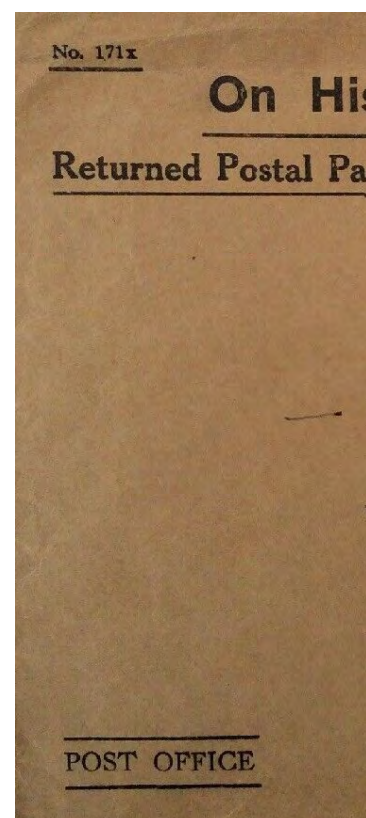


Figure 76. Left side of Type V-P-171X (i) envelope (90%).



Figure 77. Top of Type V-P-172 envelope showing round O in On (90%).

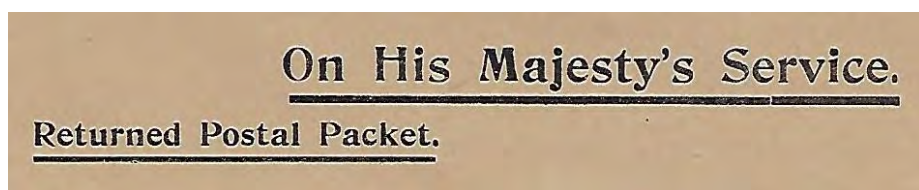


Figure 78. Top of Type V-P-172 envelope showing oval O in On (90%).

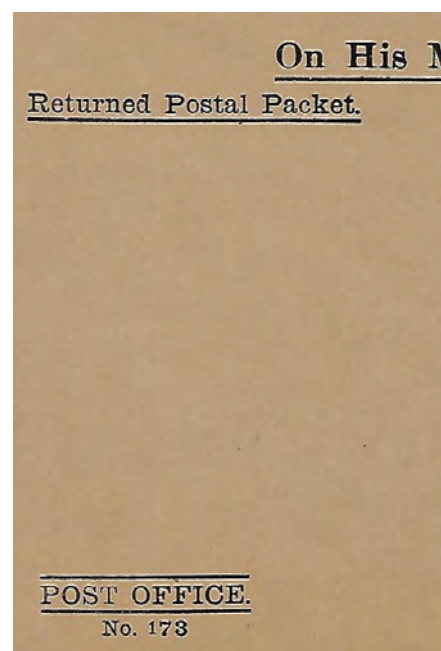


Figure 79. Left side of Type V-P-173 envelope (70%).

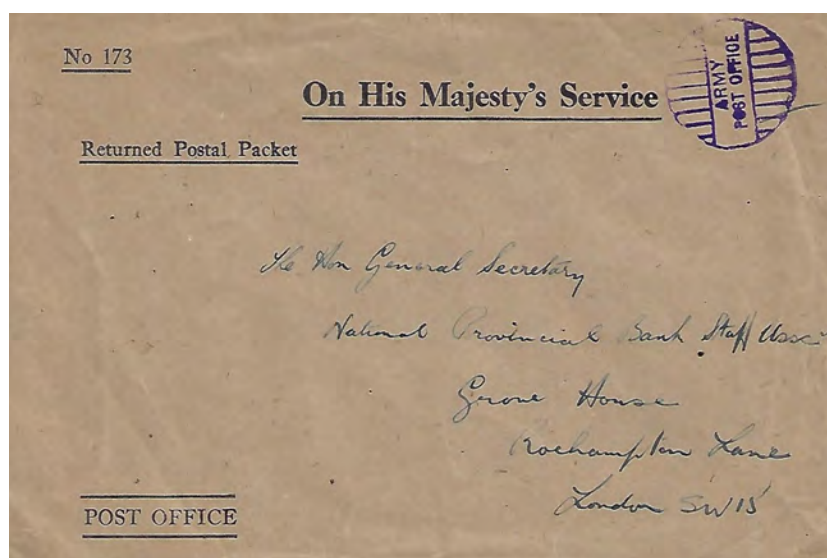


Figure 80. Type V-P-173 (i) envelope (60%). Used in Army Post Office.

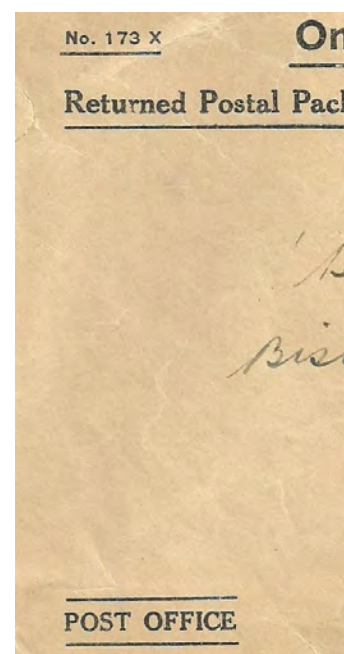


Figure 81. Left side of Type V-P-173X envelope (70%). With bold sans serif OHMS.

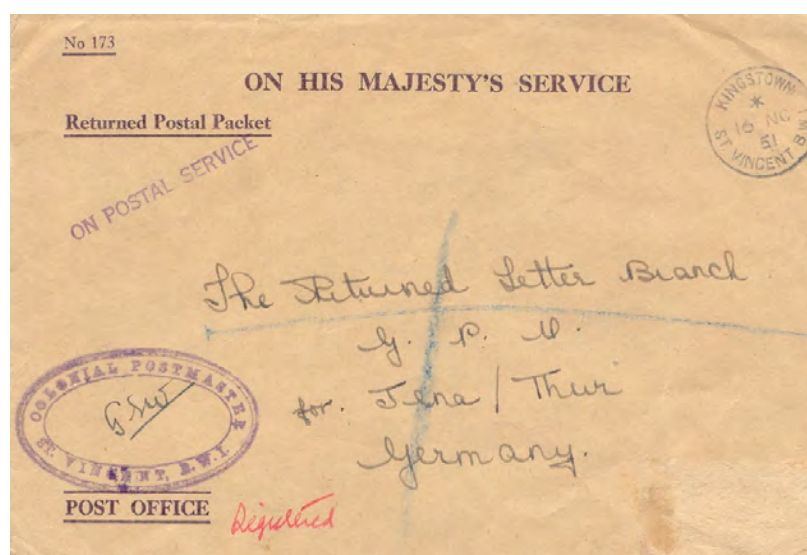


Figure 82. Type V-P-173 (iii) envelope (60%). Used in St Vincent.

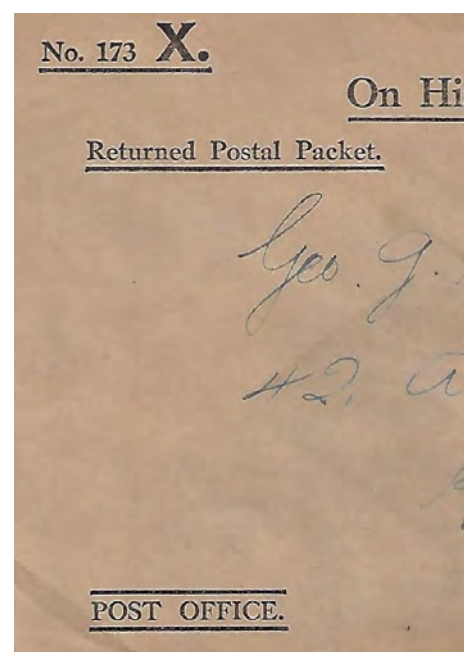


Figure 84. Left side of Type V-P-173X envelope (70%).

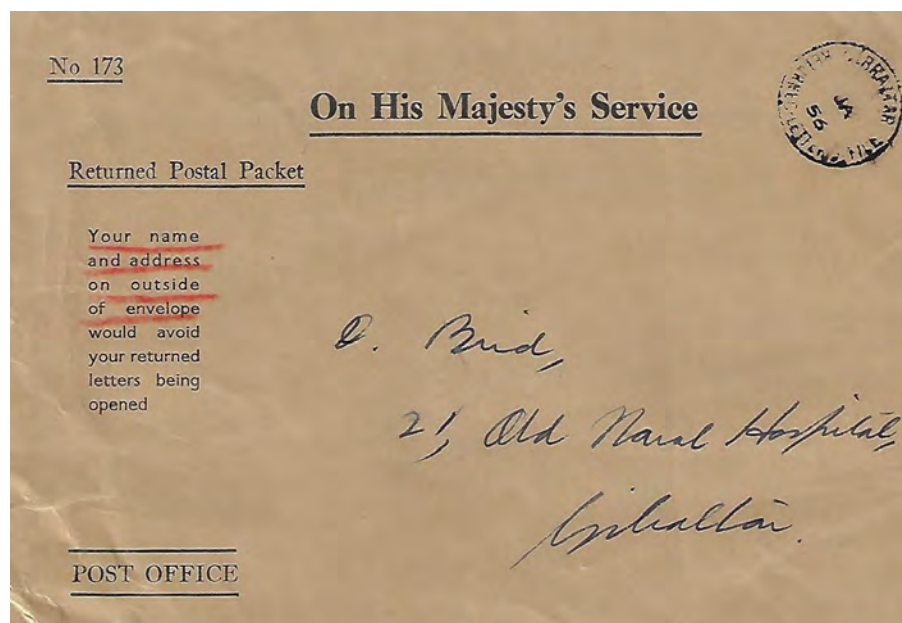


Figure 83. Type V-P-173 (iv) envelope (65%). Used in Gibraltar.

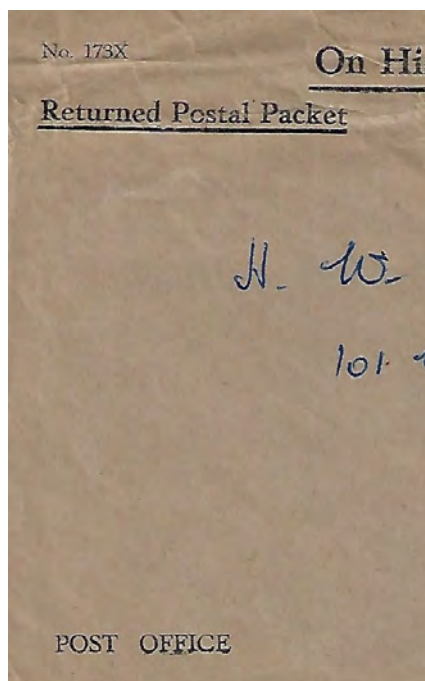


Figure 85. Left side of Type V-P-173X envelope (70%). No lines above and below Post Office.

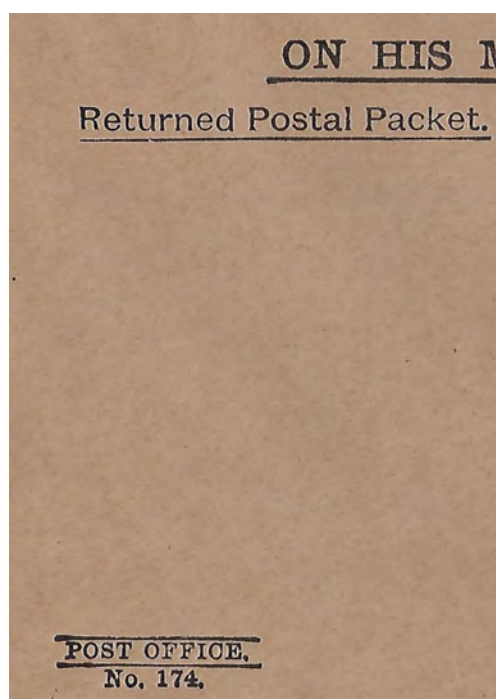


Figure 86. Left side of Type V-P-174 envelope (55%).

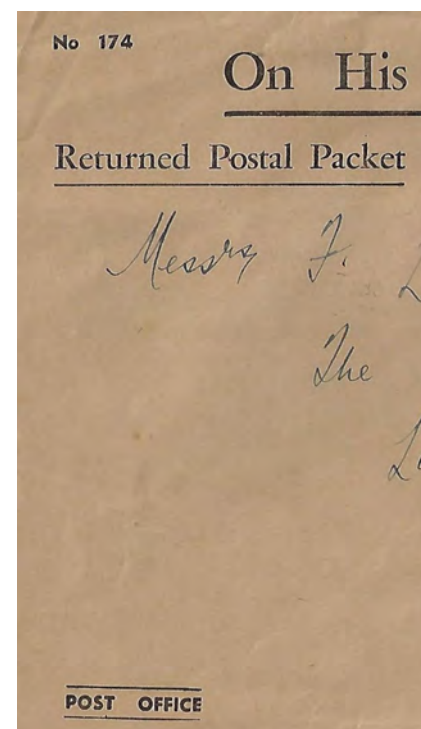


Figure 87. Left side of Type V-P-174 (i) envelope (55%).

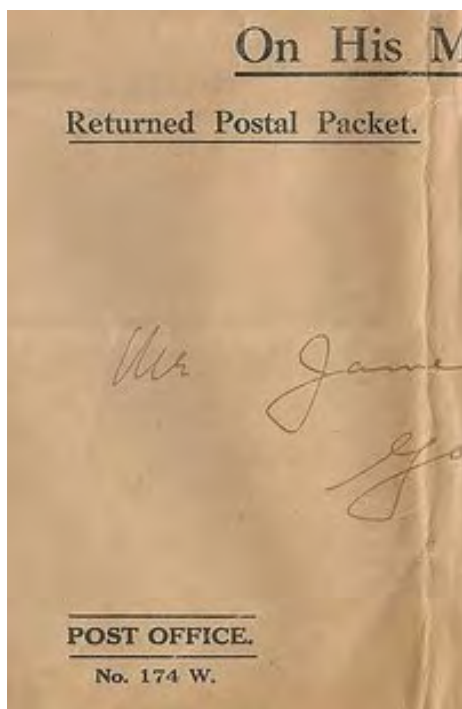


Figure 88. Left side of Type V-P-174W envelope (55%).

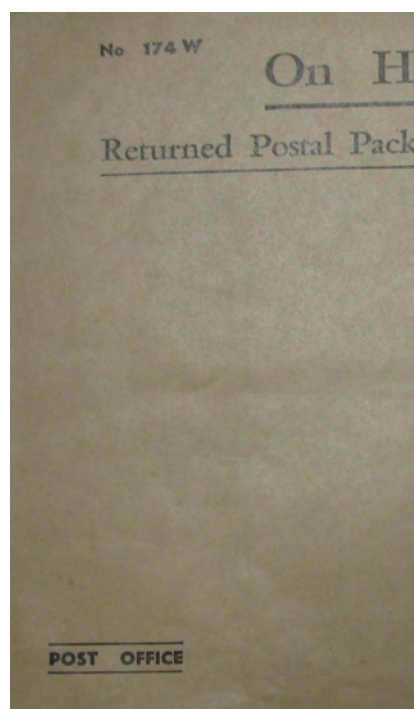


Figure 89. Left side of Type V-P-174W (i) envelope (55%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

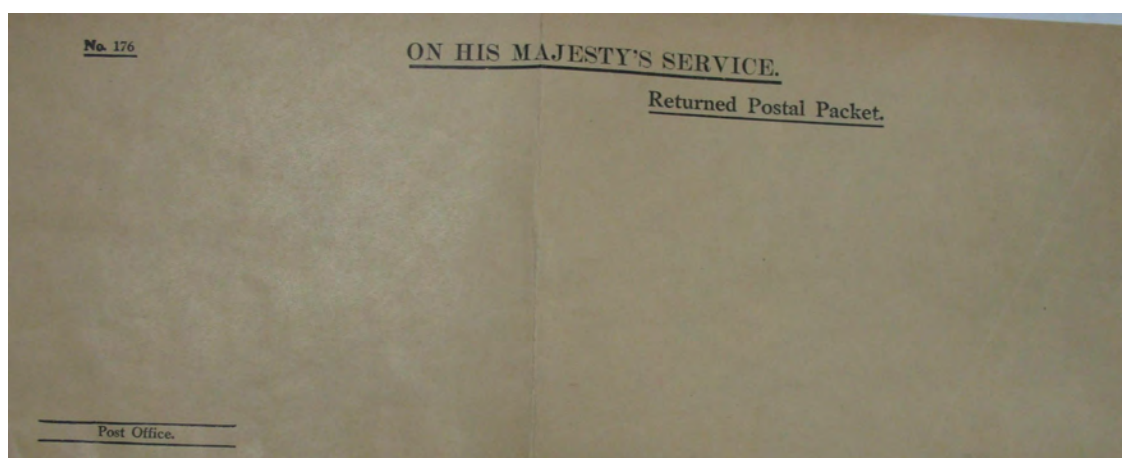


Figure 90. Type V-P-176 envelope (40%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

Usage of 173 envelopes is unusual. In addition to usage for internal mail a number of examples have been seen which have been used for army post. They are also seen used abroad. This includes use in Bermuda, Gambia, Gibraltar, Manilla and St Vincent (*Figures 80, 82 and 83*). Similarly examples of 173X are known used in Barbados and Gambia during 1937.

For registered letters

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
175	No. 175.	Low	Returned Letter No.	Buff	15.5 x 10	October 1928-May 1932	4
Stops. Generally, blue cross and blue printing (<i>Figure 91</i>). An example from April 1929 and an unused copy both have a blue cross and black printing.							
175 (i)	No. 175.	Low	Returned Letter No.	Buff	15 x 12	January 1931-January 1935	2
Stops, larger size from now on. Dark blue cross and black printing.							
175 (ii)	No. 175	High	Returned Letter No.	Buff	15 x 12	September 1940-July 1960	
Returned Letter No. is moved from a high central position to a lower position on the left. Without full stops. Dark blue cross and black printing 1940-1944; blue cross and black printing 1942-1945; the example with very late usage, 1960, has a blue cross and blue printing (<i>Figure 92</i>), there is a similar, unused example in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6083). From the mid 1940s the typesetting of OHMS is clearly different and from 1945 it is not underlined.							
175X	No. 175X. <i>Figure 93</i>	Low	Returned Letter No.	Buff	14.5 x 12	February 1934-August 1945	2
175X envelopes are smaller than 175 envelopes. Stops after OHMS are square (<i>Figure 94</i>). Blue cross and black printing.							
175X (i)	No. 175X.	High	Returned Letter No.	Buff	14.5 x 12	October 1944	1
No stops. Blue cross and black printing. There are also unused examples known with (<i>Figure 95</i>) and without stops and different typesettings.							
177	No 177. <i>Figure 96</i>	High	Returned Letter No.	Buff	18 x 12.5	April 1939-September 1952, one late use: May 1962	
No stops. Blue cross and black print until 1940, then blue cross and blue printing. Examples from 1948, 1951 and 1962 seen with OHMS not underlined. Closure flaps are generally square (as are Period VI equivalent envelopes) examples from 1951 and 1962 have been seen with pointed flaps.							

Table 50. Period V-P: Post Office envelopes for registered letters.



Figure 91. Left side of Type V-P-175 envelope (70%).

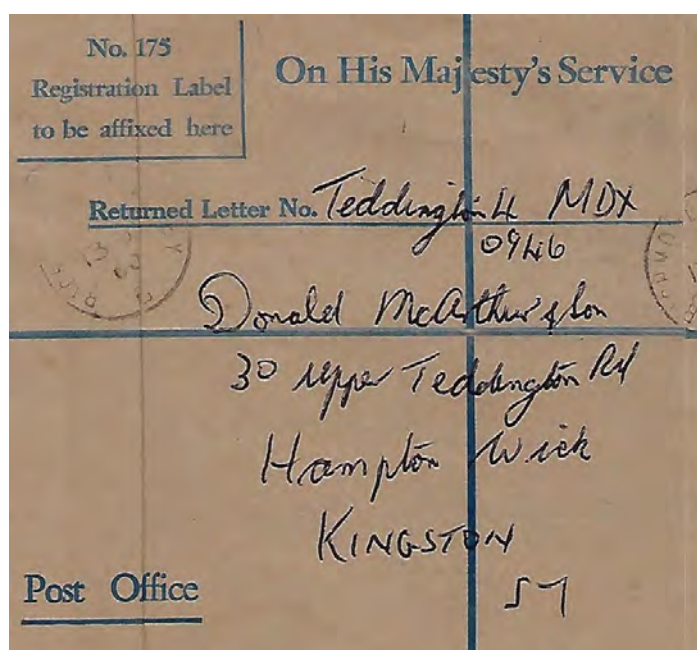


Figure 92. Left side of Type V-P-175 (ii) envelope (70%).

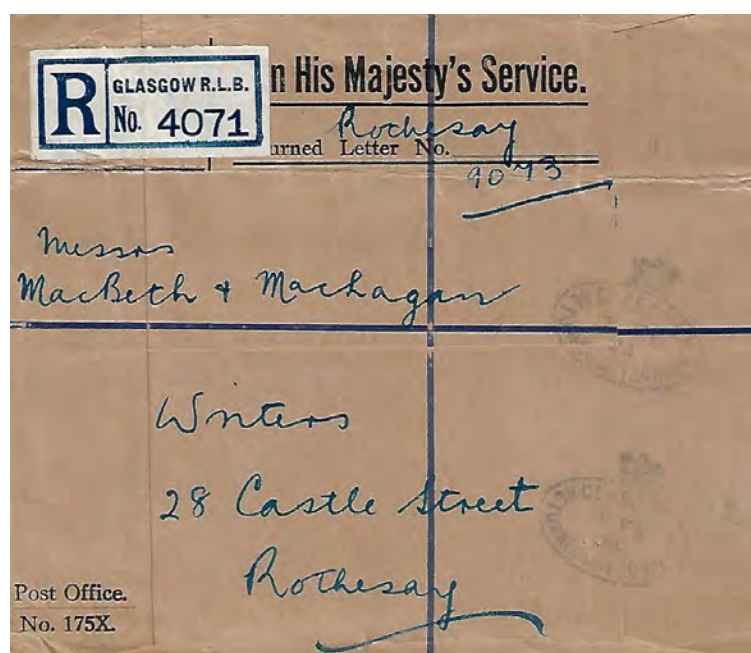


Figure 93. Type V-P-175X envelope (70%).



Figure 94. Enlargement from Figure 93 to show square stops.

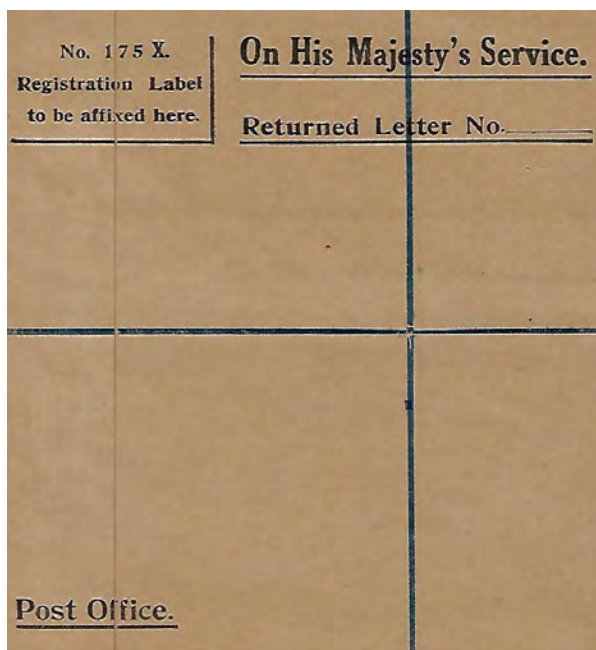


Figure 95. Left side of Type V-P-175X (i) envelope (70%).

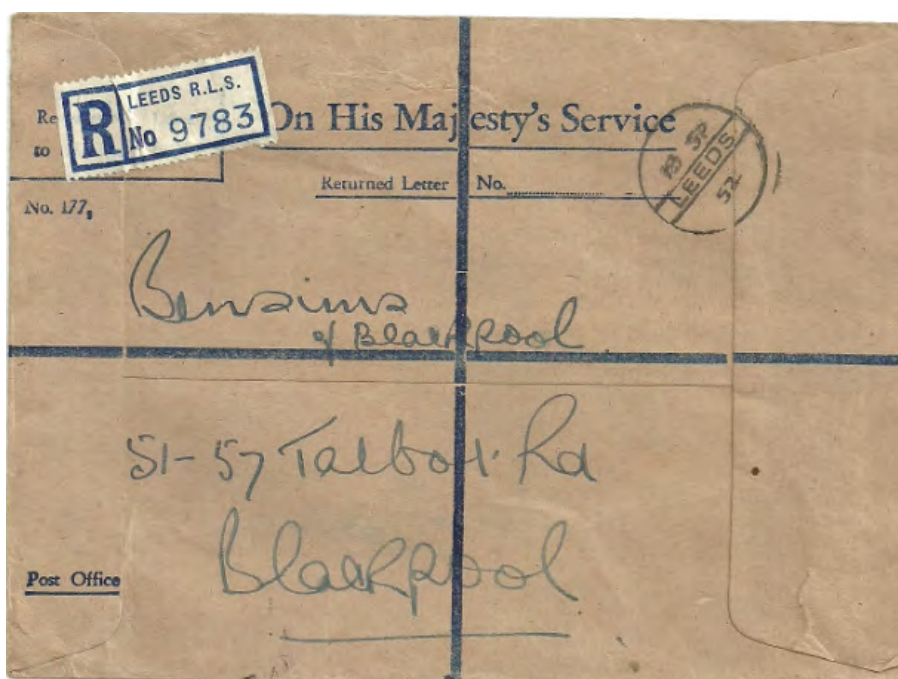


Figure 96. Type V-P-177 envelope (70%).

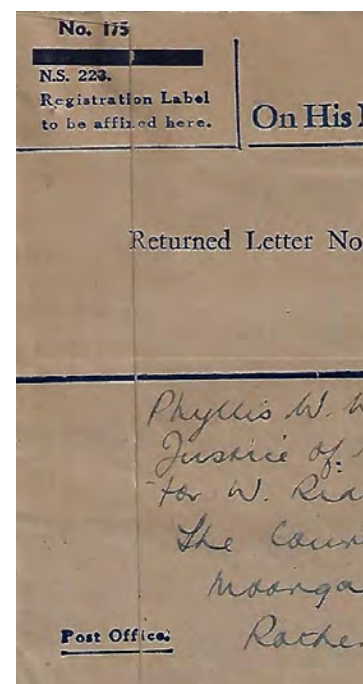


Figure 97. Left side of Type V-P-175 (iii) envelope (75%).

For registered letters modified from another type of envelope

N.S. 223. in the registration box has been crossed out (or nearly so in *Figure 97*) and No. 175 added.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
175 (iii)	No. 175	High	Returned Letter No.	Buff	15 x 12	May 1947-June 1951	2
Blue cross and blue printing							

Table 51. Envelopes for registered letters using modified envelopes.

War Economy

All types preceded by V-Pe-.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
170	No. 170 <i>Figure 98</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	February 1946-July 1946	3
No stops. PO between lines.							
174	No. 174 <i>Figure 99</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 17.5	1942-September 1944	2
No stops. Different style of instruction. The 1942 example was sent from Singapore and has an Army PO handstamp.							

Table 52. Period V-P: War economy, Post Office envelopes.

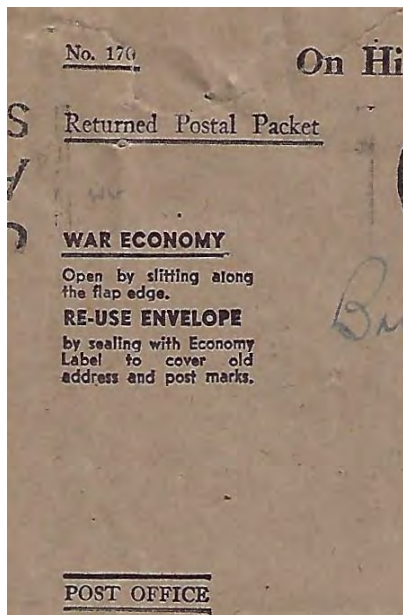


Figure 98. Left side of Type V-Pe-170 envelope (90%).

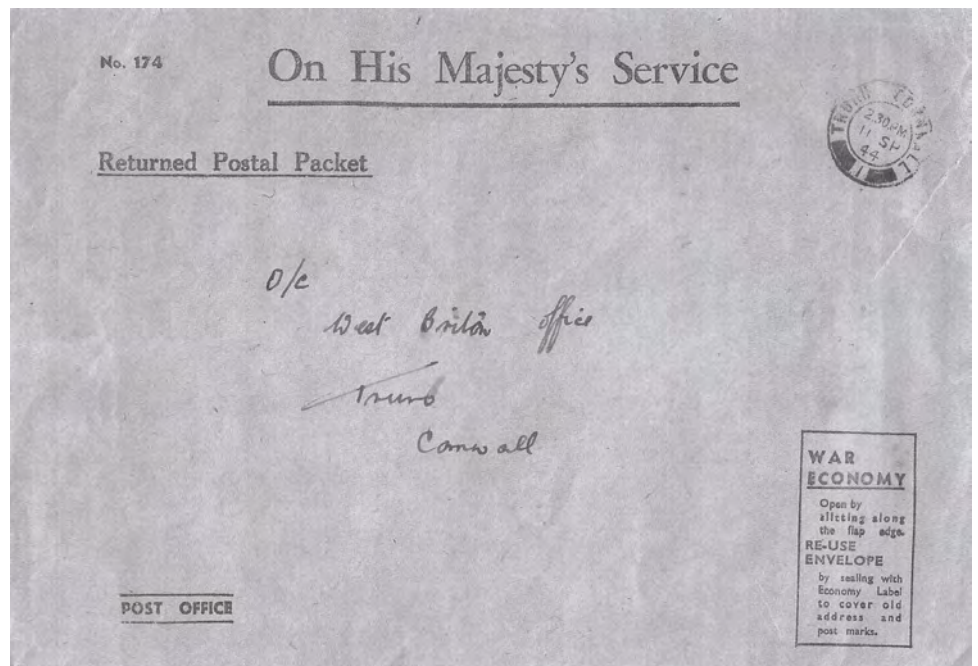


Figure 99. Type V-Pe-174 envelope (50%).

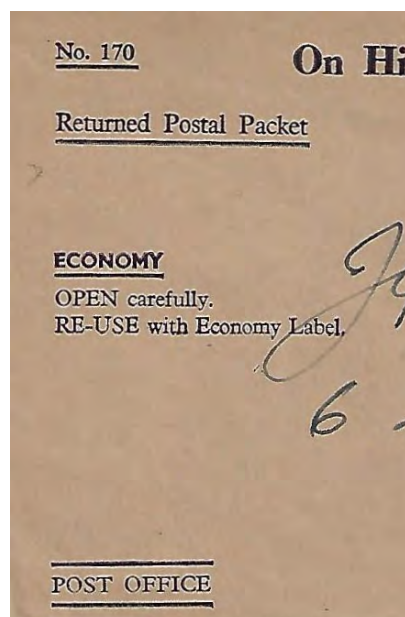


Figure 100. Left side of Type V-Pe-170 (i) envelope (90%).

Economy (short version, *Figure 61*)

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
170 (i)	No. 170 <i>Figure 100</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	March 1950-September 1955	
No stops. Lines above and below PO March 1950-June 1954; no lines May 1953-September 1954. The September 1955 usage is from Port Louis, Mauritius.							

Table 53. Period V-P: Economy (shorter text), Post Office envelopes.

Period V-PR(2): Post Office, RLB

All types preceded by V-PR(2)-.

These envelopes are distinguished from those of the V- PR series by not having No. after RLB. Recognition of V-PR(2) envelopes as being separate from V-PR envelopes has resulted in a reclassification of two items from RLOGB pages 267-271. They are Type V-PR-5(i), RLOGB Figure 268 on Page 268 and Type V-PR-14(iv) on page 270.

The number is printed in either a low or high position.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
3	R.L.B.3. <i>Figure 101</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	?	?	October 1922	1
5	R.L.B.5. <i>Figure 102</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	June 1920-April 1929	
Stops after OHMS, RPP, PO in early examples, by 1929 that after PO absent. An example dated June 1920, with slightly different type setting to <i>Figure 102</i> , was previously classified V-PR-5(i) (RLOGB page 268).							
5 (i)	R.L.B.5	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	July 1937-1938	3
Use of stops is variable. RLB (without stops) has been seen <i>Figure 103</i> . There is an unused example in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).							

6	R.L.B.6. <i>Figure 104</i>	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	27.5 x 13	March 1934	1
Stops after OHMS, RPP, PO. RPP is on the right.							
6 (i)	RLB 6	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	28 x 13.5	? 1937	*
No stops, RPP on the right, unused example in The Postal Museum (POST 622/6077).							
7	RLB 7	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30.5 x 14.5		*
No stops, RPP on the left, four unused examples in The Postal Museum (POST 622/6078). From 1949 the flap is on the right side not the top and OHMS is in lower case (<i>Figure 105</i>).							

Table 54. Period V-PR(2): Post Office, RLB envelopes.

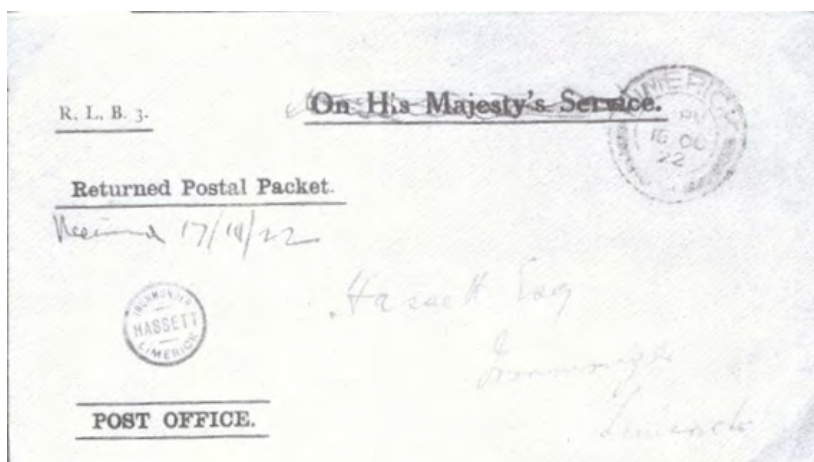


Figure 101. Type V-PR(2)-3 envelope (10).

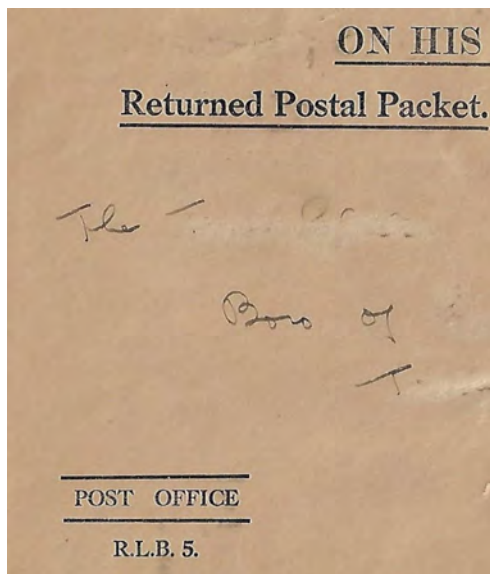


Figure 102. Left side of Type V-PR(2)-5 envelope (60%).

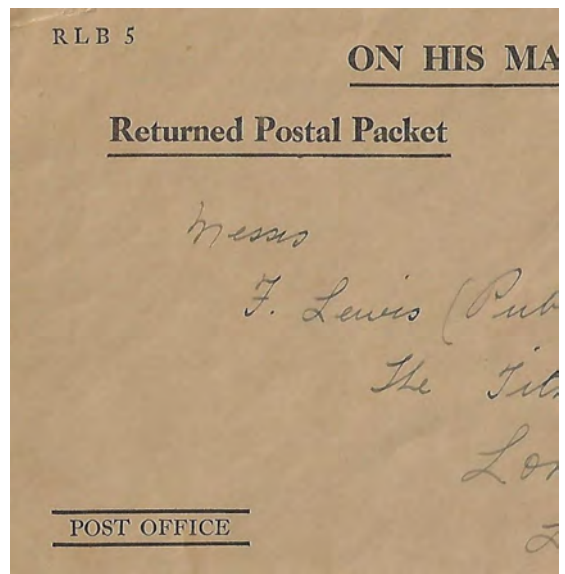


Figure 103. Left side of Type V-PR(2)-5(i) envelope (60%).

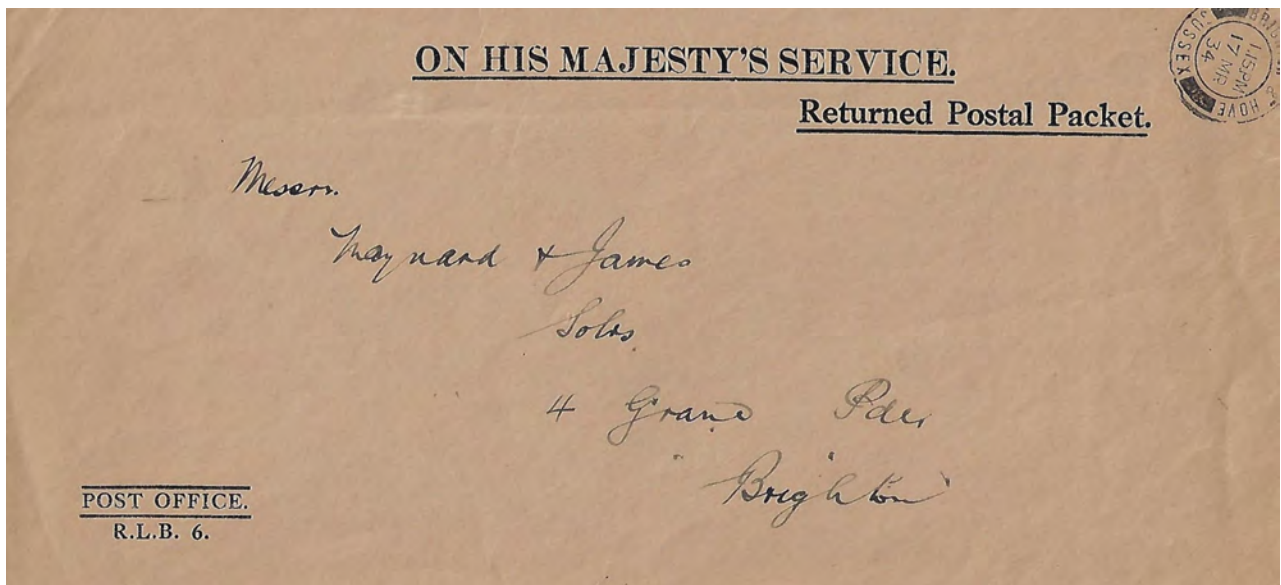


Figure 104. Type V-PR(2)-6 envelope (60%).

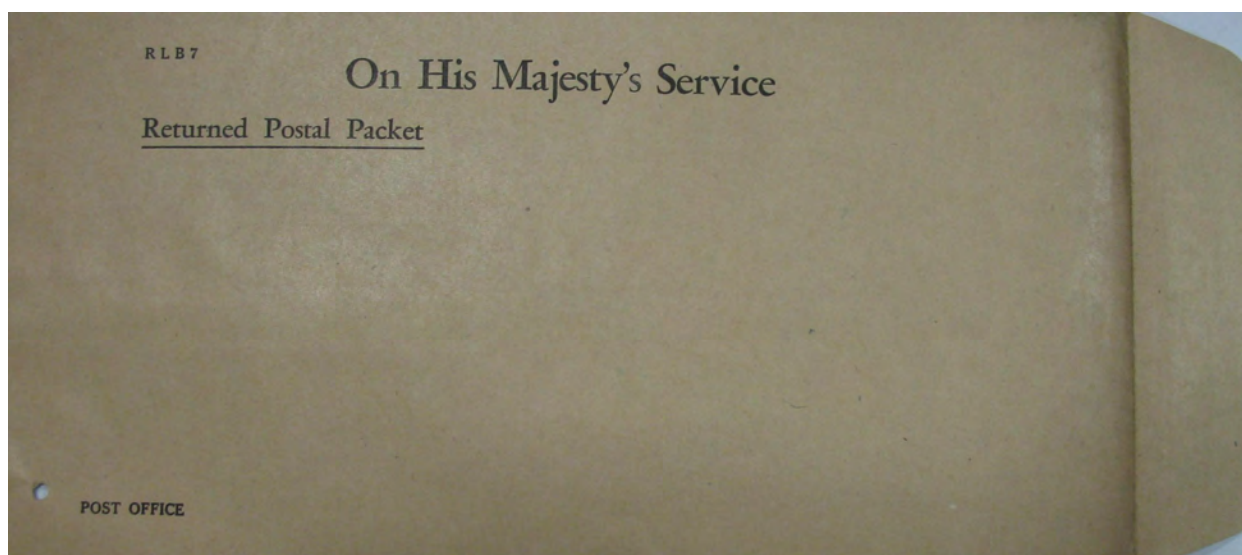


Figure 105. Type V-PR(2)-7 envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (8).

For registered letters

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
14	(R.L.B.14.)	Low	Returned Letter	Buff	18 x 12.5	1920-December 1925	
Stops. Blue cross and black printing. One unused example is known. Previously classified as V-PR-14(iv) (RLOGB page 270).							
14 (i)	R.L.B.14 <i>Figure 106</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	18 x 12.5	July 1935-May 1940	
No stops in used examples seen, unused examples seen with and without stops (latter: The Postal Museum, POST 122/6077). Blue cross and blue printing. Different typefaces noted.							
15	(R.L.B.15.)	Low	Returned Letter	Buff	23.5 x 11	February 1928-September 1935	3
Stops. Lower case OHMS, blue cross and black printing. There is an unused example with OHMS in upper case and a blue cross with blue printing.							
15 (i)	(R.L.B.15.) <i>Figure 107</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	23.5 x 10.5	July 1935	1
Stops. Blue cross and black printing. An unused example is known.							
15 (ii)	RLB 15 <i>Figure 108</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	23.5 x 10.5	Jan 1935 - 1959	
No stops. Blue cross and black printing. Unused example (The Postal Museum, POST 112/6077). By 1959 the printing was in blue with a blue cross, unused example (The Postal Museum, POST 112/6085).							

Table 55. Period V-PR(2): Post Office, RLB envelopes for registered letters.



Figure 106. Left side of Type V-PR(2)-14(i) envelope (55%).

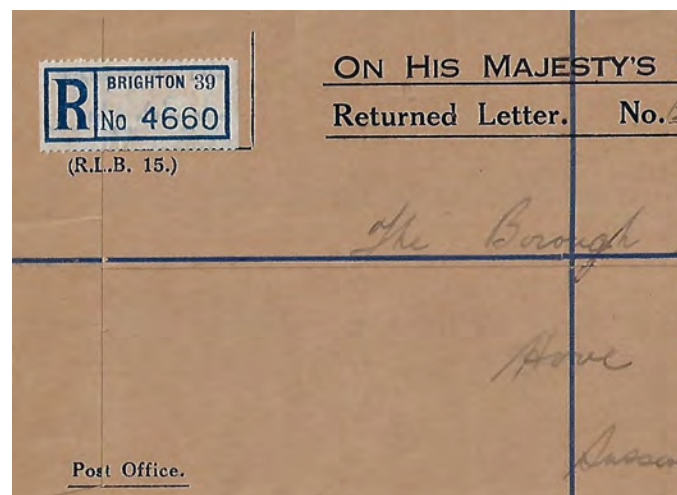


Figure 107. Left side of Type V-PR(2)-15 (i) envelope (60%).

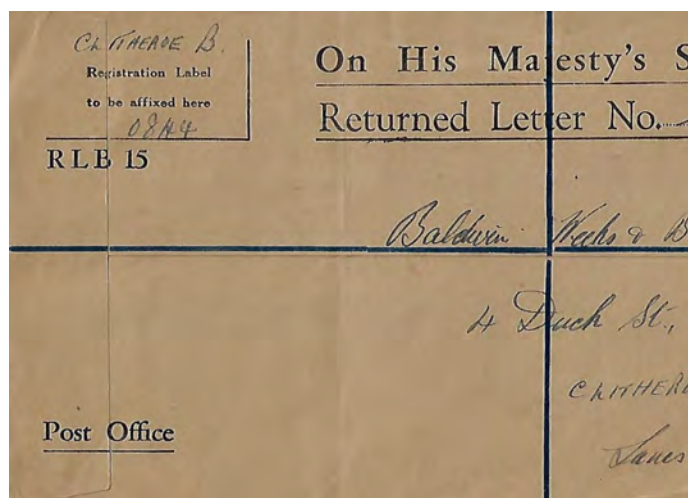


Figure 108. Left side of Type V-PR(2)-15 (ii) envelope (60%).

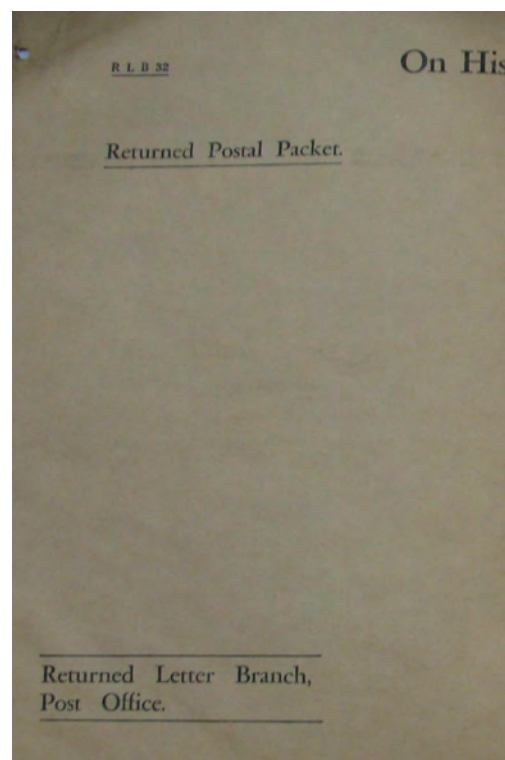


Figure 109. Left side of Type V-RP-32 envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

Period V-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office

All types preceded by V-RP-.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
27	RLB 27		Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 10		*
No stops. RPP on left, OHMS in upper case. Unused copy in The Postal Museum (122/6077).							
28	RLB 28	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30 x 20		*
Stop after PO. RPP on right. RPP on the right, OHMS in lower case. Two unused copies in The Postal Museum. In one <i>HER</i> replaces <i>His</i> in manuscript <i>Figure 125</i> .							
32	RLB 32 <i>Figure 109</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	35 x 20		*
Stop after PO. RPP on the left. Three unused copies in The Postal Museum (122/6077), OHMS in lower case, underlined in example with opening at top and not underlined in that with opening on the right.							
34	RLB 34	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	35 x 20		*
Stop after PO. RPP on the left. Unused copy in The Postal Museum (122/6077).							
180	No. 180 <i>Figure 110</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	28 x 20		*
Stop after PO. RPP on the right, OHMS in lower case. Unused copy in The Postal Museum (122/6082).							

Table 56. Period V-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office envelopes.

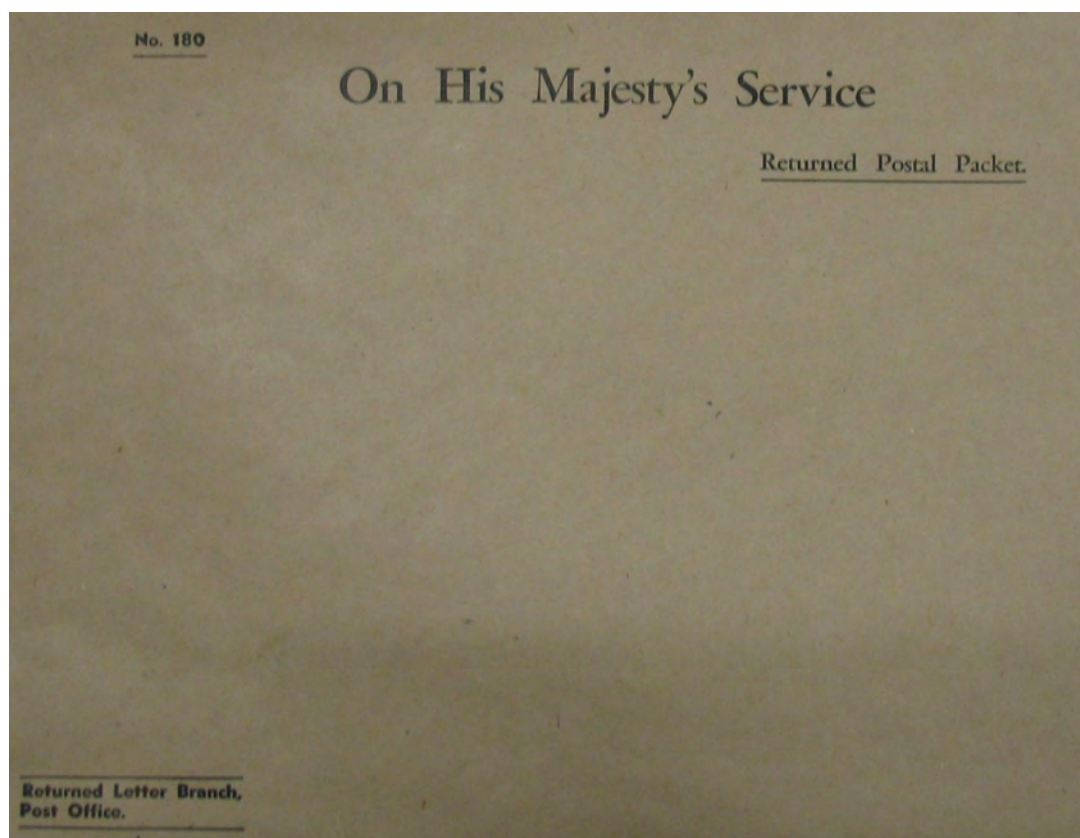


Figure 110. Type V-RP-180 envelope (55%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (11).

Returned Letter Branch, General Post Office, Edinburgh

Only known with (Late No. -) after number, see also *Tables 47 and 48*. All types preceded by V-E-followed by the new and late numbers.

Type	Number		Late RLB number	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position						
172L3	172. <i>Figure 111</i>	Low	3	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 10	October 1926	1

Table 57. Returned Letter Branch, General Post Office, Edinburgh envelopes with (Late No. -) after number.

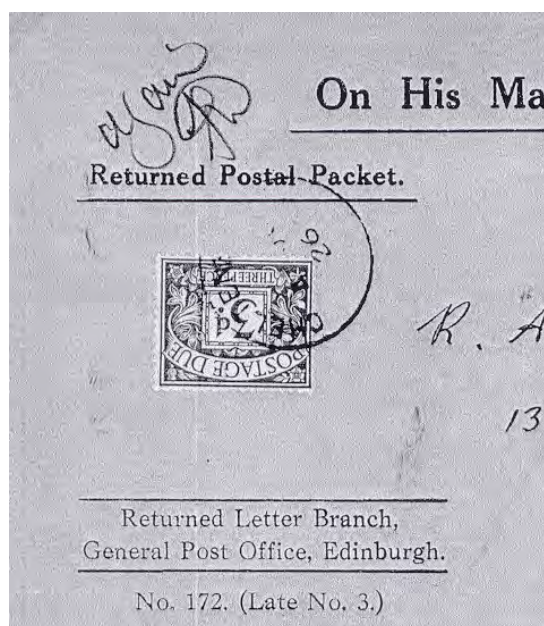


Figure 111. Left side of Type V-E-172L3 envelope (80%).

Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow

All types preceded by V-GW-.

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
170X	No 170X. <i>Figure 112</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	March 1944	1
Stop after X, no others.							
171	No. 171 <i>Figure 113</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	12.5 x 10.5	December 1941	1
Stop after designation, no others.							
171x	No. 171x <i>Figure 114</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 12	September 1942	1
No stops.							
172	No.172.	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 10.5	January 1926-April 1929	2
Stops.							

173	No.173	Low	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	?	Ca 1935	D (1) 1
No stops.							

Table 58. Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow envelopes.

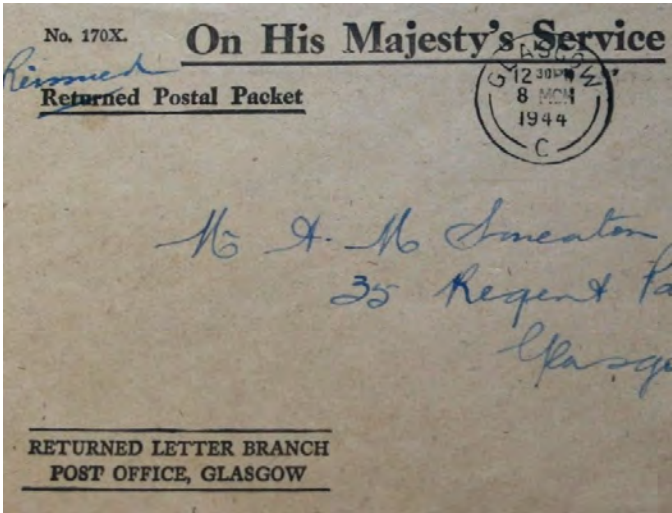


Figure 112. Type V-GW-170X envelope (75%).

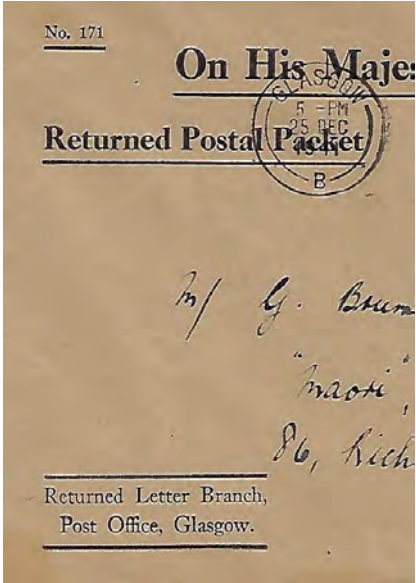


Figure 113. Left side of Type V-GW-171 envelope (75%).

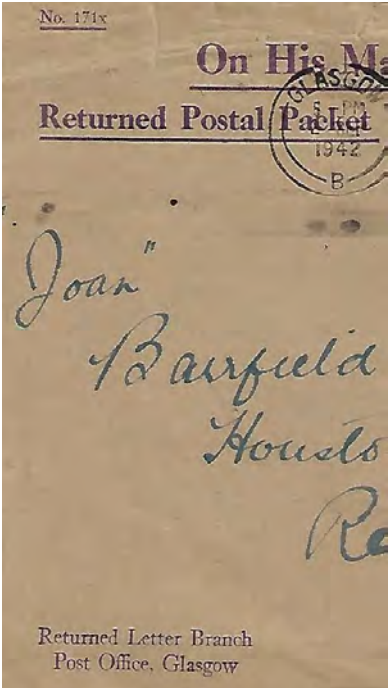


Figure 114. Left side of Type V-GW-171X envelope (75%).

For registered letters

Type	Number		Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position					
14	R.L.B. 14 <i>Figure 115</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	17 x 13	October 1942	1
Blue cross and blue printing.							

Table 59. Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow envelopes for registered letters.

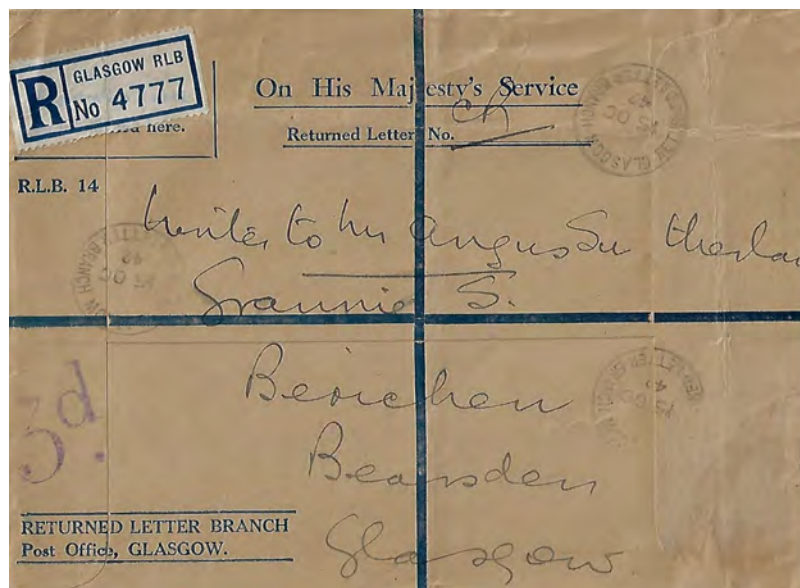


Figure 115. Type V-GW-14 envelope (60%).

Pre-printed envelopes to be Returned to the Post Office

These can be considered as being non-specific or for a defined purpose. The ones so far seen are mainly unused and mainly from The Postal Museum. It is possible that some of these should not be described in this Classification, notably numbers 3, 26, 38 and 49 in blue. They are included here for completeness.

All types preceded by V-R-.

No defined purpose

Type	Number		Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position				
26	R.L.B. No. 26. <i>Figure 116</i>	Low	Pale buff	25 x 14		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 31-88). Attached to note dated 8 December 1916 from Aldborough House Depot Dublin proposing change in size of RLB envelopes making them closer to stationers' standard sizes.						
123	No. 123 <i>Figure 117</i>	High	Buff	25 x 12.5		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).						

Table 60. Pre-printed envelopes to be Returned to the Post Office.

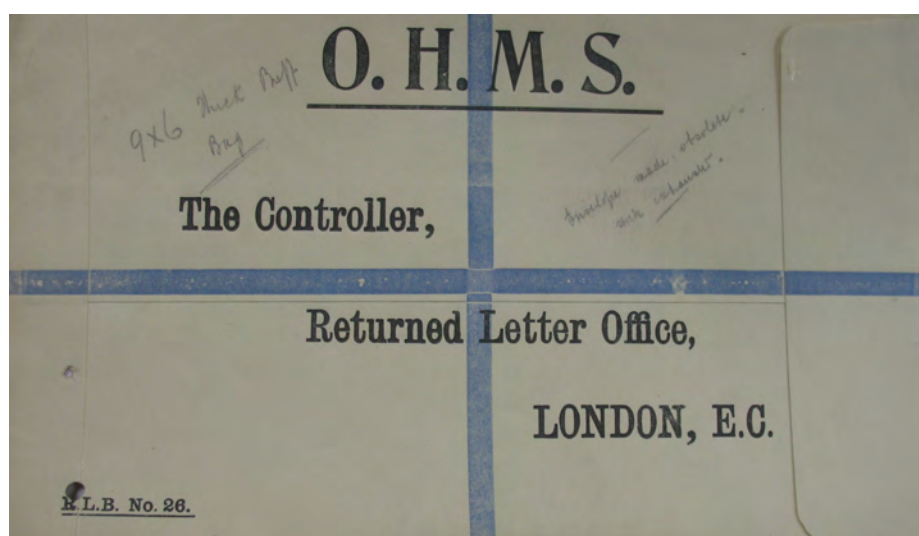


Figure 116. Type V-R-26 envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (12).

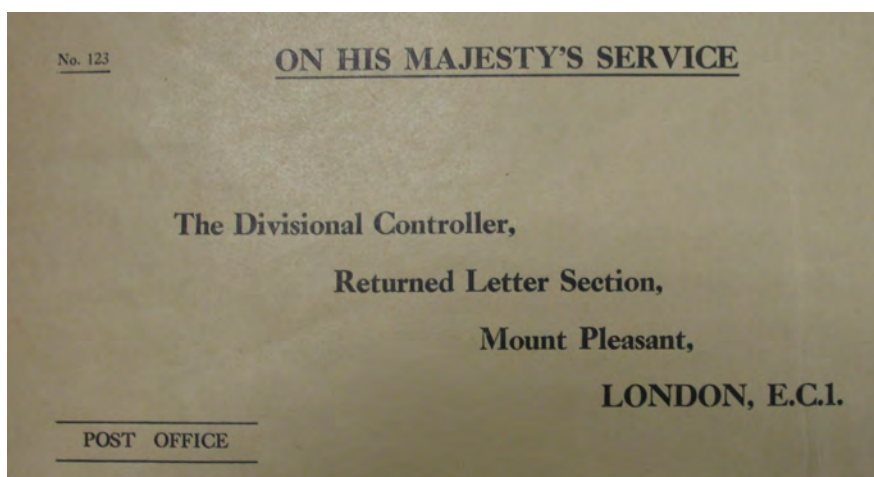


Figure 117. Type V-R-123 envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023). (6).

For stamps found loose

Type	Number		Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position				
3	No.3. <i>Figure 118</i>	High	Buff	12.5 x 7.5	Unused only	1
130	No. 130 <i>Figure 119</i>	High	Buff	13 x 8		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).						

Table 61. Envelopes for stamps found loose in the post.



Figure 118. Type V-R-3 envelope (75%).

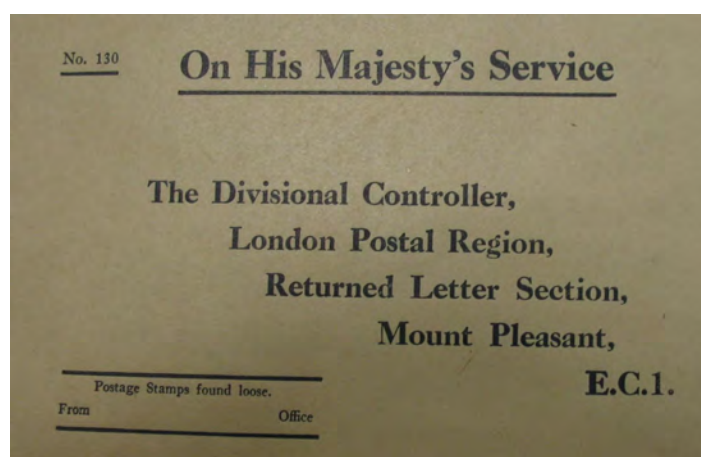


Figure 119. Type V-R-130 (75%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

Rebuts

Type	Number		Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position				
37	RLB 37 <i>Figure 120</i>	High	Buff	20 x 12.5		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).						
38	R.L.B. No. 38. <i>Figure 121</i>	High	Buff	25.5 x 17.5		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6077).						

Table 62. Rebuts envelopes.

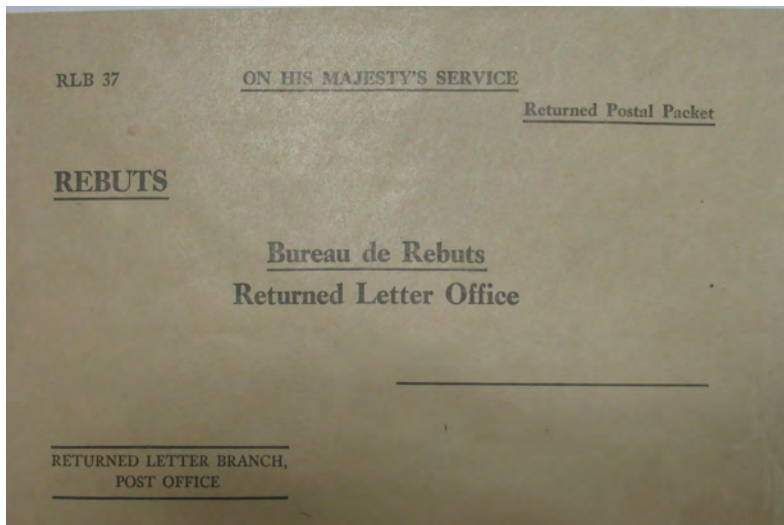


Figure 120. Type V-R-37 envelope (75%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

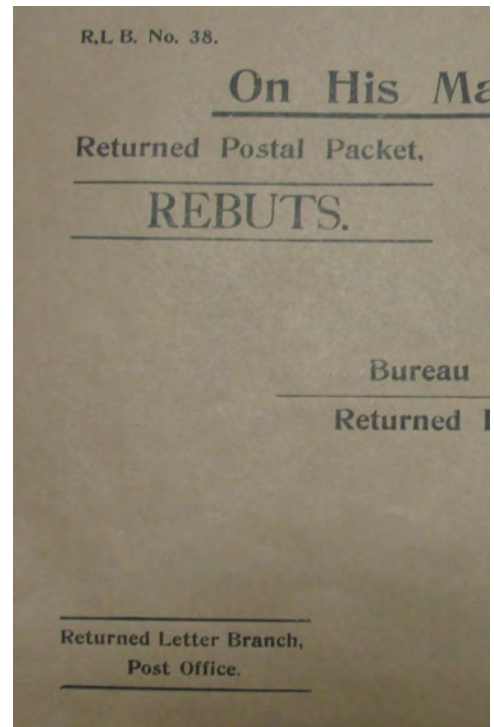


Figure 121. Left side of Type V-R-38 envelope (55%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (6).

For registered letters

Type	Number		Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Description	Position				
49	No. 49. <i>Figure 122</i>	Low	Blue	25 x 12.5		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 31/88). Attached to a 1907 memo suggesting replacement of specific PO envelopes with those with a generic PO RLB designation.						
49 (i)	No. 49. <i>Figure 123</i>	Low	Buff	25.5 x 12.5	Unused only	1
49W	No 49W. <i>Figure 124</i>	High	Buff	25 x 12.5		*
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 31/88). Attached to letter dated 14 August 1918 to Liverpool postmaster concerning abolishing RLO envelope No. 49.						

Table 63. Envelopes for returning registered envelopes to the Returned Letter Office.

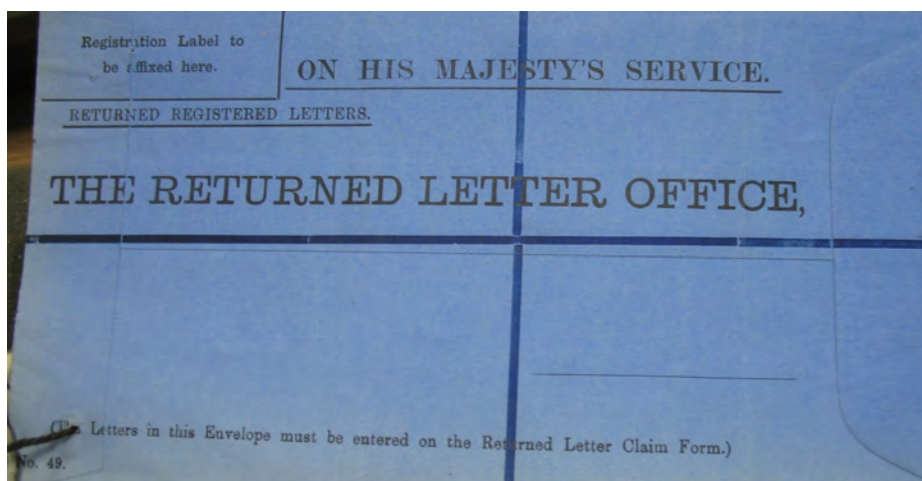


Figure 122. Type V-R-49 envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (12).

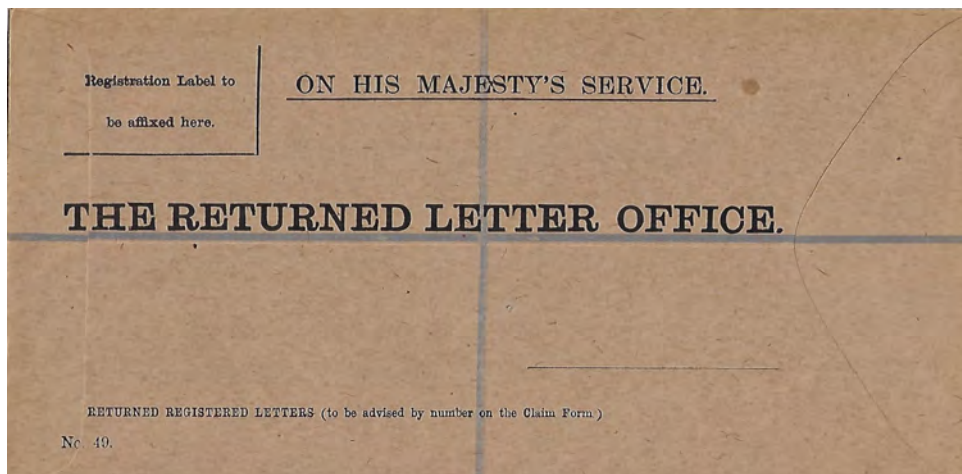


Figure 123. Type V-R-49 (i) envelope (50%).

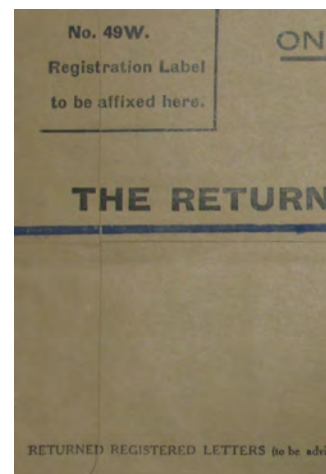


Figure 124. Left side of Type V-R-49W envelope (50%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (12).

Period VI

Used envelopes are not infrequently seen where members of PO staff have replaced *His* by *Her*. In addition, there are examples of envelopes with *His* officially crossed out. These form two groups: essays in the Post Office Archives or when old stock was being used up. *Figure 125* shows part of an RLB 28 envelope which was attached to a 1956 memo and marked up for a new printing (*Table 56*).

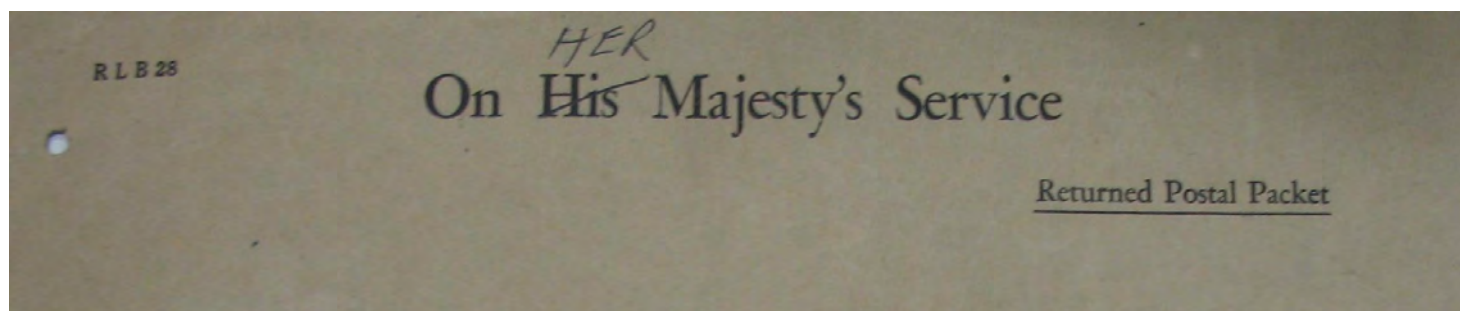


Figure 125. Top of RLB 28 envelope marked HER in manuscript. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (16).

There is considerable correspondence in the PO Archives relating to changing the heading of envelopes following the death of King George VI in February 1952. A memo of 29 February 1952 suggested no changes to be made to envelope RLB 7 at that time (13). However, another dated 5 January 1953 (14) indicates that an interim reprint of RLB 7 was authorized in April 1952 and enquires about any changes that might be needed. The answer was that there were to be no alterations other than the new samples should have On Her Majesty's Service printed on them. On 29 January 1953 it was agreed that RLB 180 should be reprinted, bag-shaped and with Her included (11).

Examples of utilising now redundant envelopes are shown in *Table 64*. Envelope No.162 was derived from envelope No.48. *Figure 126* shows an original envelope dated August 1955. Different types of obliterations were used as illustrated in *Figures 127-130*. In *Figure 129* No.162 is to the right.

Type	Original envelope	New envelope	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
VI-P-162(His)	POST OFFICE DAILY LIST No.48 <i>Figures 127-129</i>	162	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	September 1955-July 1956	5
VI-170(His)	No. 170 (V-Pe-170) <i>Figure 130</i>	170	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	June 1956-June 1961?	2

Table 64. Returned letter envelopes made from redundant envelopes.

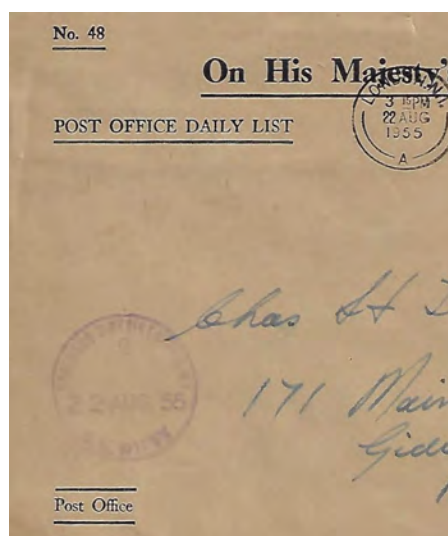


Figure 126. Left side of No 48 PO Daily List envelope (60%).

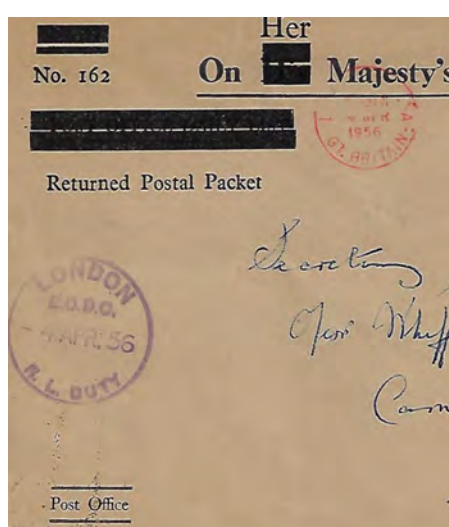


Figure 127. Left side of Type VI-P-162(His) envelope (60%).

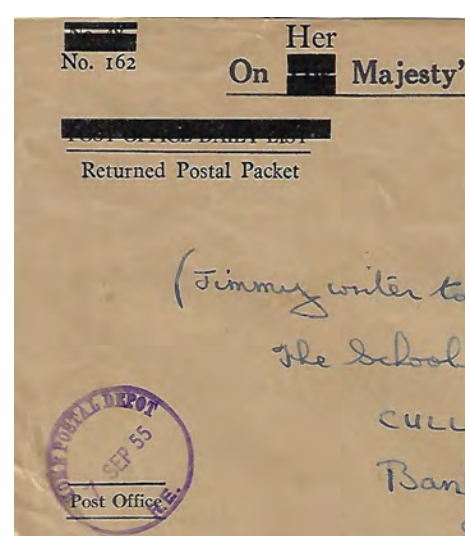


Figure 128. Left side of Type VI-P-162(His) envelope (60%).

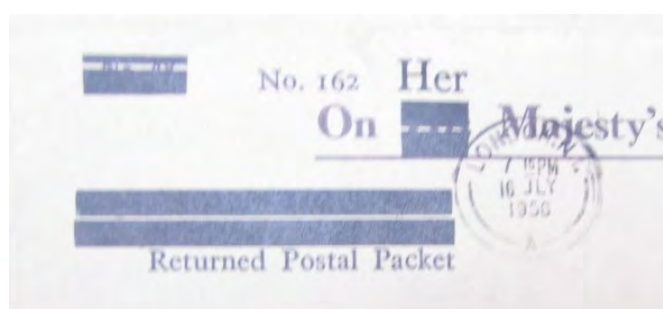


Figure 129. Top left side of Type VI-P-162(His) envelope.

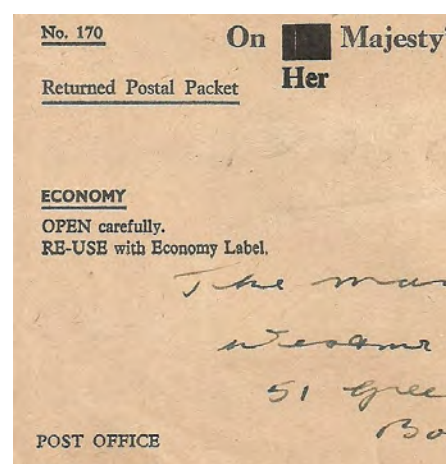


Figure 130. Left side of Type VI-P-170(His) envelope (70%).

The fate of several envelopes is discussed in memos over the next few years. On 4 May 1953, one from supplies confirmed that the current order for envelope No.175 size 5¾ x 4¾ inches was being accepted but that future orders will specify a size of 6 x 4½ inches (9). Between December 1957 and June 1958 there was further correspondence regarding its reprinting. The initial question was whether the new design of flap was adequate. The discussion then moved to the purpose of No 175 and if it were used for returning money then perhaps a linen envelope should be used. The conclusion was that since the RLBs had not complained about the paper the construction of No.175 should remain the same (15).

On 19 January 1956 Supplies requested changes in envelope No.170 before it was reprinted. An essay was included showing removal of the economy instruction and addition of Post Office

(Figure 131). There was further correspondence claiming that No.170 was rarely used as it was too small and asking whether an Official Paid medallion should be printed on the envelopes (16). The new order went ahead without the medallion.

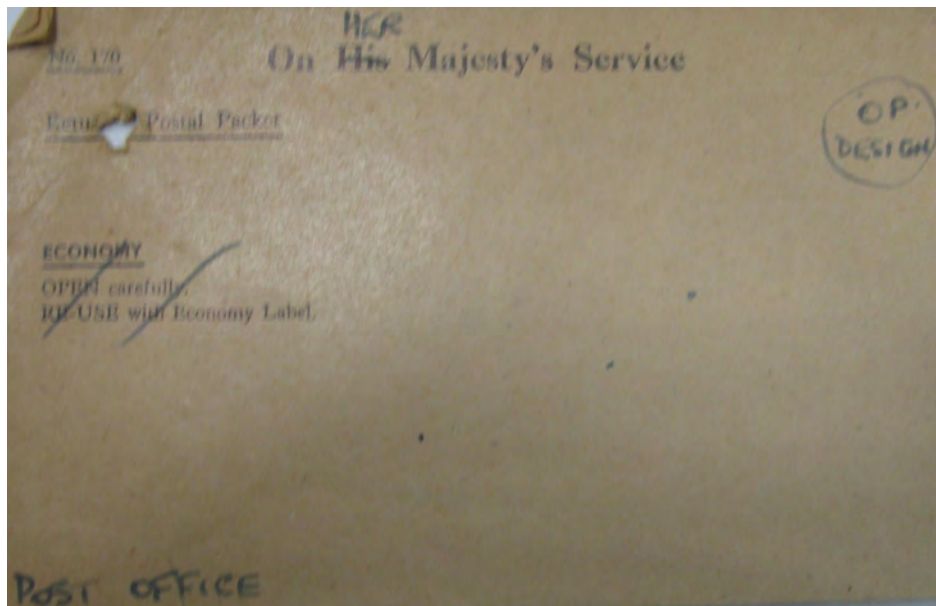


Figure 131. Essay for changes to No. 170 envelope (70%). © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (16).

A memo of June 1956 (16) included details of annual usage of RLB envelopes used by Head Postmasters (*Table 65*).

Envelope number	Approximate annual usage
162	2,000,000
170	350-400,000
174	100,000
176	20,000
180	30,000
175 (Registered)	50,000
177 (Registered)	75,000

Table 65. Annual usage of RLB envelopes mid 1956.

The memo goes on to say:

...There are other similar envelopes viz RLB 5, 7, 15, 28, 32 and 34 (and various equivalent envelopes specially printed for the LPR RLB) whose use is confined to "RLB" offices (Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester) ...

It also points out that if the Official Paid design were to be printed on envelopes, then they must be kept under security conditions. This may be the reason why the idea was not adopted.

POST 122/6086 clarifies the usage of envelope RLB 7 (17). A memo, dated 20 September 1956, points out that these envelopes have not been ordered since 1950. It asks if they should be made to conform to standards and made similar to RLS7 and whether Ldn RLB7 was necessary in addition to RLS7.

In a memo dated January 1954 from the Superintendent, Mount Pleasant is the following explanation:

...There seems to be a bit of confusion over these envelopes. The stock item is RLB 7 and appears on requisitions RLB 44 D and P 2 D... All special prints for the Divisional Contr Mount Pleasant were previously in the RLS series, now numbered Ldn RLB to distinguish them from the stock RLB series.

RLS 7 (now re-numbered Ldn RLB 7) is not therefore proper to appear on any periodic requisitions...

A typical requisition form is shown in *Figure 132*.

Figure 132. Details of requisition form. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (17).

POST 122/6088 deals with replacement of envelope No.162 by No.447 (18). It includes a sample marked up with the change to 447 and the first proof which are shown in *Figures 133 and 134*. There is a requisition from Supplies for the new envelope dated 26 July 1966. A draft notice for a Post Office Circular indicating that No.447 was replacing No.162 and that stocks of No 162 should be used up is shown in *Figure 135*. The note in red pen dates it 20.9.67.

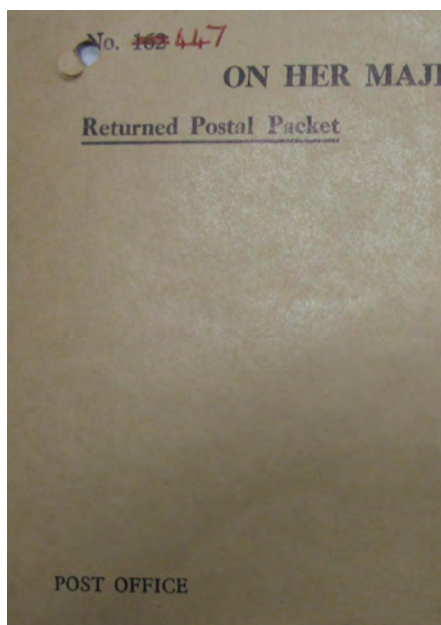


Figure 133. Left side of draft for envelope 447. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (18).

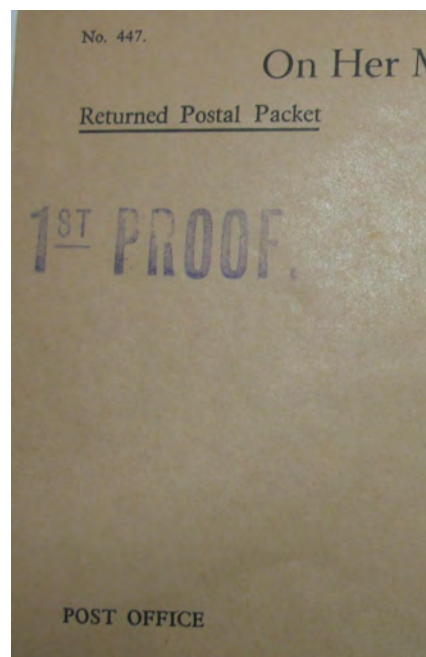


Figure 134. Left side of proof for envelope 447. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (18).

SD 3170 S

DRAFT NOTICE FOR POST OFFICE CIRCULAR
+ COMPLETE EDITION
TELEPHONE
DF762 Forms, etc. - Storekeeping changes. DF 762

Number	Description	New etc.	Distribution To S.O's	P1127E Head-ings	M1037 Head-ings	Remarks
Encl. to 447	Buff; 4.5" x 6.4" for returning ordinary inland letters	New	-	26	-	Supersedes Encl. No 162 existing stocks of which should be used up. POC notice DF 162 of 2/1/66 deletion agreed Cwp 15.9.67

+ Delete words not required.

Initial supplies of the new and revised items will be sent to all offices concerned. Failure to receive a supply within ten days should be reported to the Supplies Department.
+ As soon as the supplies of the revised items come to hand the existing stocks should be made waste. Obsolete and suspended items with one blank side to be used as plain paper; others to be treated as waste.

R(p.t.) 3135P10/63 2m

Figure 135. Draft circular regarding replacement of envelope 162. © Royal Mail Group Ltd (2023) (18).

Table 35 summarises all designated groups of envelopes in Period VI. Eight groups are described.

Period VI-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office

All types preceded by VI-RP-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
32	RLB 32	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	32.5 x 24		1
Unused, attached to 1956 memo in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084).							
34	RLB 34	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	32 x 20		1
Unused, attached to 1956 memo in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084).							
180	No.180 <i>Figure 136</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	26 x 20	November 1969	3
Two unused copies in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6082 and POST 122/6084).							

Table 66. Period VI-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office envelopes.

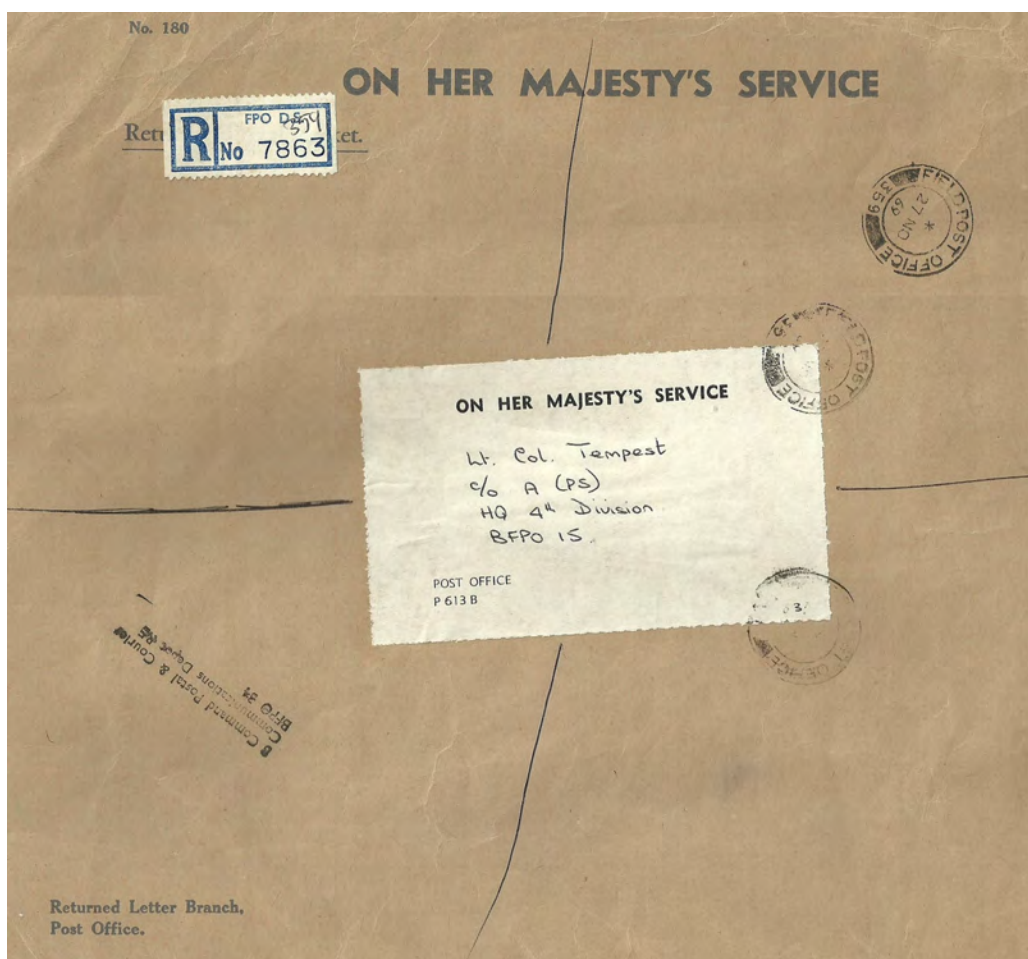


Figure 136. Type VI-RP-180 envelope (50%).

Rebuts

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
37	RLB 37 <i>Figure 137</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	21.5 x 14	October 1960	1

The example illustrated was used in Stanley, Falkland Islands, to return undeliverable letter to the UK.

Table 67. Period VI-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office Rebuts envelopes.

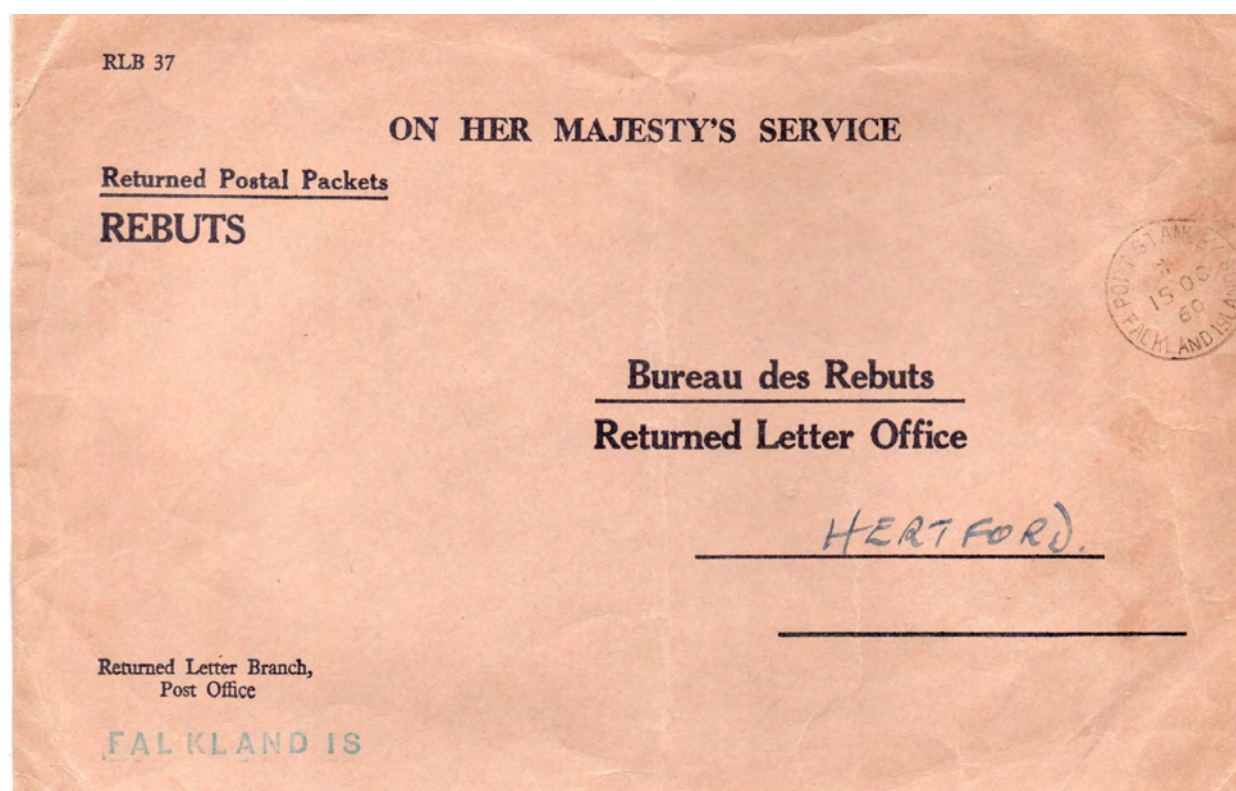


Figure 137. Type VI-RP-37 envelope (75%).

Period VI-R: Returned Letter Branch

All types preceded by VI-R-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
162	162 <i>Figure 138</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.5 x 11.5	July 1958- November 1962	3
Early example without stop after 162, later ones with stop. An example dated July 1958 is 16 x 12.5 cm in size.							
162 (i)	162	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.5 x 10.5	July 1964	1
Stop after 162.							

Table 68. Period VI-R: Returned Letter Branch envelopes.

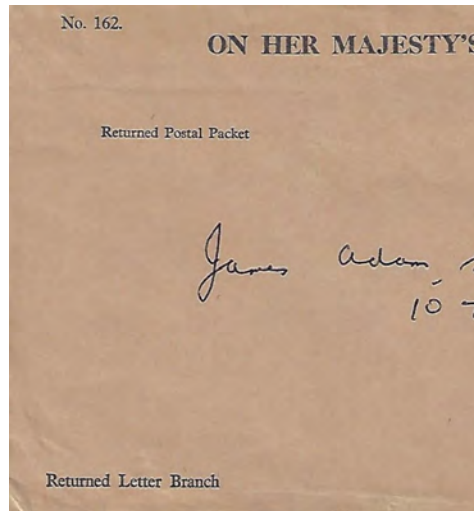


Figure 138. Left side of Type VI-R-162 envelope (60%).

Period VI-L(MP): Returned Letter Branch, London Mount Pleasant, London, E.C.1.

All types preceded by VI-L(MP)-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
3A	LDN RLB 3A <i>Figure 139</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 12.5	September 1962- February 1963	3
178	LDN RLB 178.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	March 1963	1

Table 69. Period VI-L(MP): Returned Letter Branch, London Mount Pleasant, London, E.C.1. envelopes.

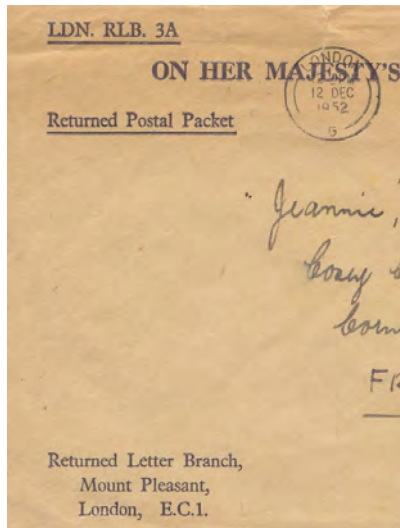


Figure 139. Left side of Type VI-L(MP)-3A envelope (60%).



Figure 140. Top left of VI-L(MPP)- 3A (SPL) envelope.

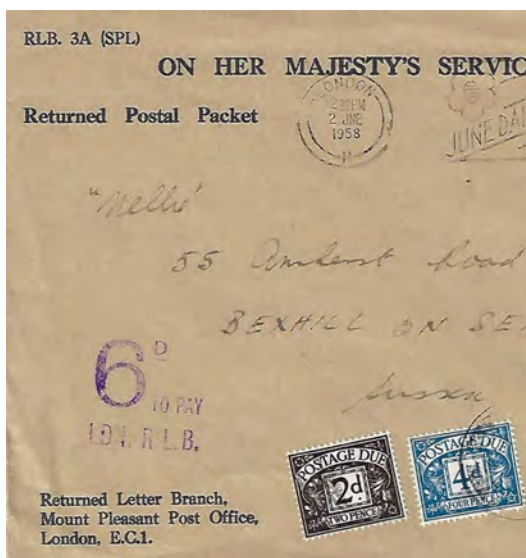


Figure 141. Left side of VI-L(MPP)- 3A (SPL) envelope (60%).



Figure 142. Top left of VI-L(MPP)- 3A (SPL)(ii) envelope.

Period VI-L(MPP): Returned Letter Branch, London Mount Pleasant Post Office, London, E.C.1.

All types preceded by VI-L(MPP)-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
3A(SPL)	RLB 3A (SPL) <i>Figure 140</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	January 1955-June 1958	
OHMS sans serif.							
3A(SPL) (i)	RLB 3A (SPL)	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	May 1958-1959	2
OHMS with serifs <i>Figure 141.</i>							
3A(SPL) (ii)	RLB 3A (SPL) <i>Figure 142</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	May 1958-August 1963	
OHMS with serifs and the letter J extending below the other letters. Minor typesetting variations are seen in 3A(SPL) and 3A (SPL) (i); the main one is the length of RPP increasing from 4.4 to 5.7 cm in length from mid-1958.							
4a	RLB 4a (SPL)	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	24 x 16.5	June 1964	1
447	447 (SPL) <i>Figure 143</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.4 x 11.5	May 1967	1
449	449 (SPL) <i>Figure 144</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	December 1967	1

Table 70. Period VI-L(MPP): Returned Letter Branch, London Mount Pleasant Post Office, London, E.C.1. envelopes.

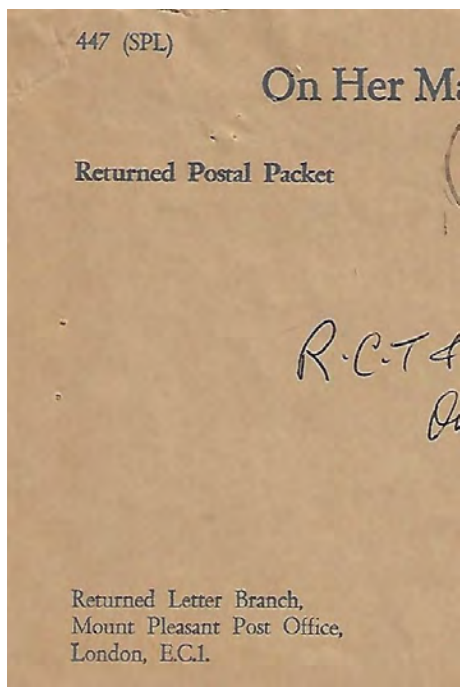


Figure 143. Left side of Type VI-L(MPP)-447(SPL) envelope (60%).

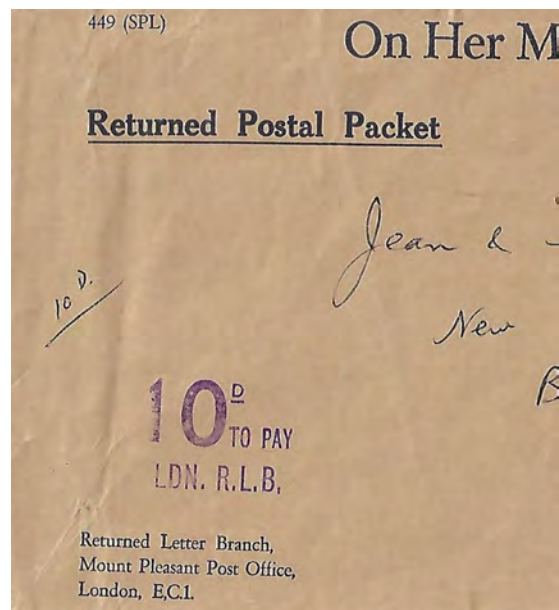


Figure 144. Left side of Type VI-L(MPP)-449(SPL) envelope (60%).

Period VI-MR: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Manchester

All types preceded by VI-MR-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No.447. (SPL) <i>Figure 145</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.4	May 1969	1

Table 71. Period VI-MR: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Manchester envelopes.

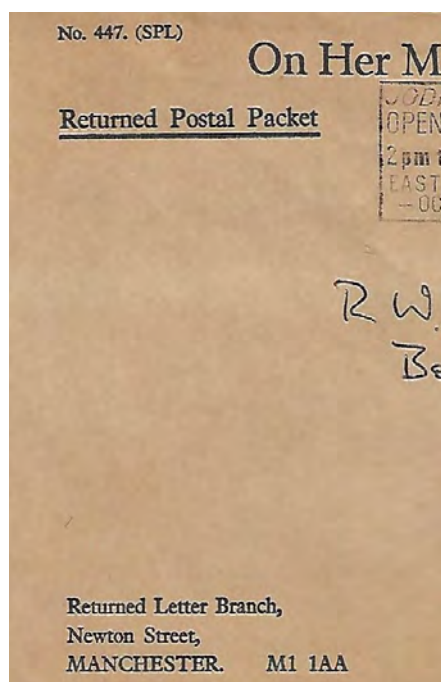


Figure 145. Left side of Type VI-MR-447(SPL) envelope (60%).

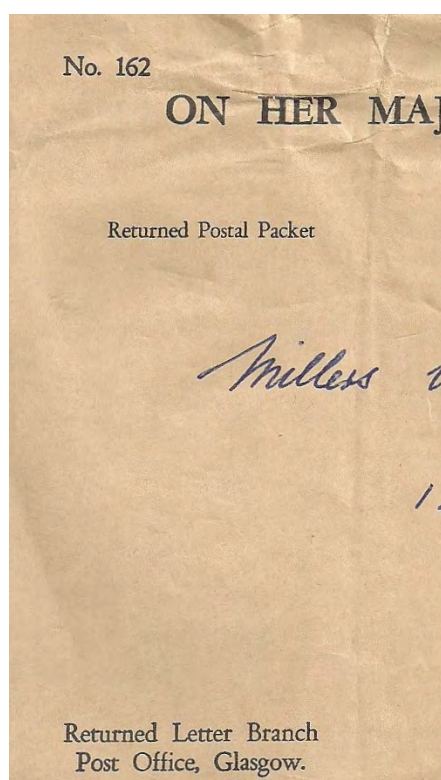


Figure 146. Left side of Type VI-GW-162 envelope (70%).

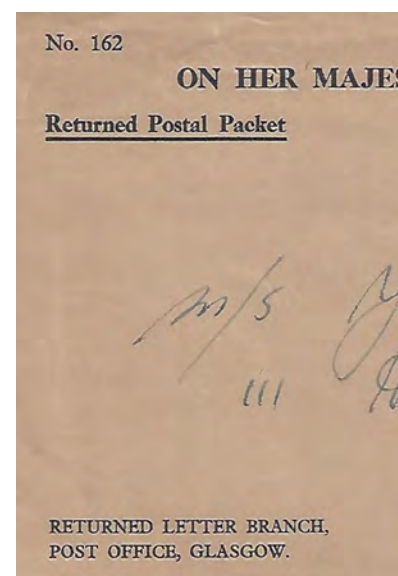


Figure 147. Left side of Type VI-GW-162 (i) envelope (60%).

Period VI-GW: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow

All types preceded by VI-GW-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
162	162 <i>Figure 146</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 13	Approx. 1960	2
Lower case designation, RPP not underlined.							
162 (i)	162 <i>Figure 147</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.4 x 11.6	January 1962	2
Upper case designation, RPP underlined.							

Table 72. Period VI-GW: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow envelopes.

For registered Letters

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
15	(R.L.B.15.) <i>Figure 148</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	25.5 x 12.5	May 1964	1
175	No.175 <i>Figure 149</i>	High	Returned Letter14	Buff	14.5 x 12	November 1962	1
177	No.177. <i>Figure 150</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	19.5 x 14	November 1961	1

Table 73. Period VI-GW: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow envelopes for registered letters.

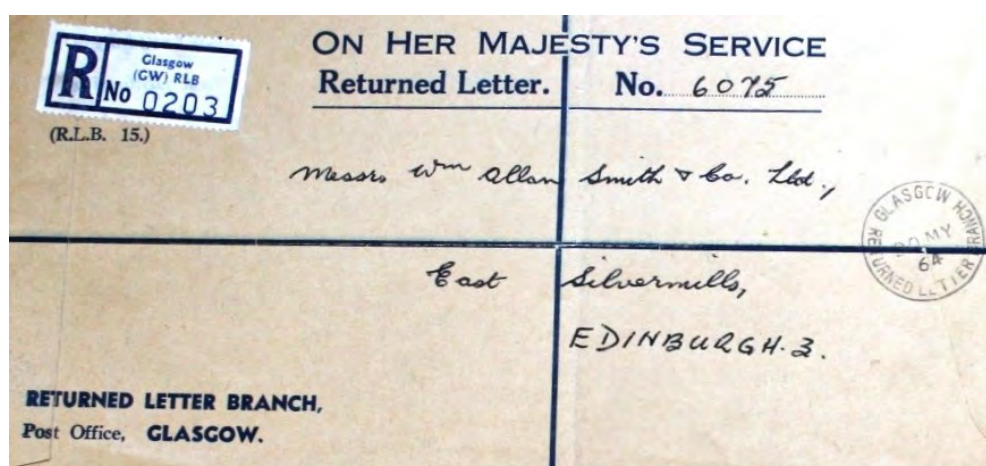


Figure 148. Type VI-GW-15 envelope (50%).



Figure 149. Type VI-GW-175 envelope (80%).

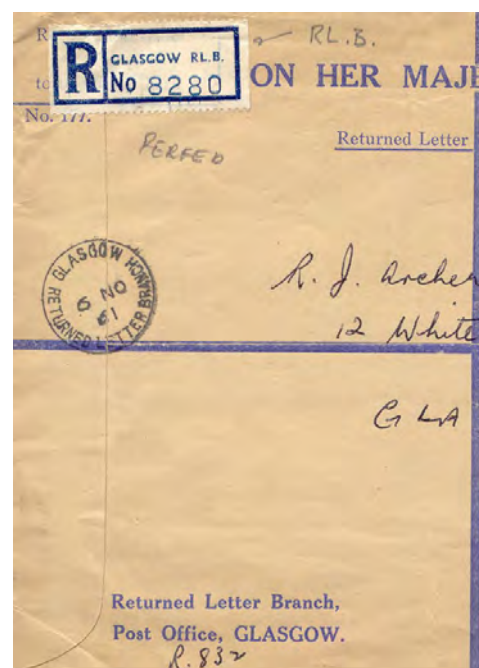


Figure 150. Left side of Type VI-GW-177 envelope (70%).

Rebuts

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
37	RLB 37 Figure 151	High	Returned Postal Packet REBUTS	Buff	17.5 x 12.5	October 1959	1

Table 74. Period VI-GW: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office, Glasgow envelopes for Rebuts.



Figure 151. Type VI-GW-37 envelope (70%).

Period VI-PR(2): Post Office, Returned Letter Branch

All types preceded by VI-PR(2)-. No. is not present after RLB, similar to V-PR(2)- and in contrast to V-PR- where No. is present.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
5	RLB 5 <i>Figure 151</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	August 1960	2
Unused example in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084).							
7	RLB 7	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30.5 x 15	March 1953	1
7	RLB 7 <i>Figure 153</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	30.5 x 12.5	April 1960	3
Three unused examples are in The Postal Museum; attached to 1956 memos (POST 122/6081 and POST 122/6084 and to 1961 requisition for a reprint (POST 122/6087).							

Table 75. Period VI-PR(2): Post Office, Returned Letter Branch envelopes.

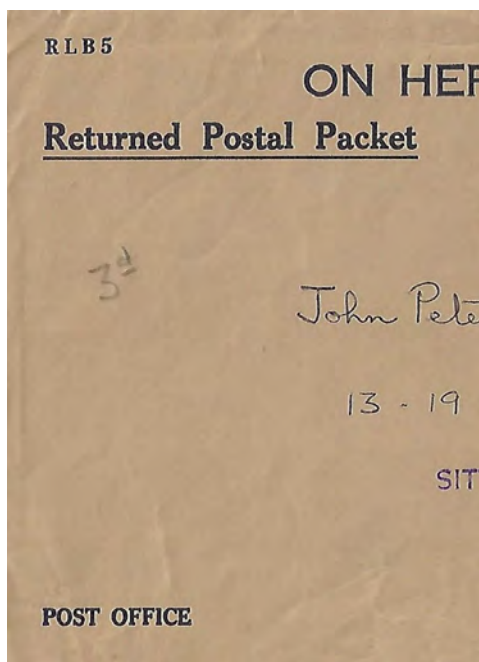


Figure 152. Left side of Type VI-PR(2)-5 envelope (75%).



Figure 153. Left side of Type VI-PR(2)-7 envelope (60%).

For registered Letters

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
15	RLB 15 <i>Figure 154</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	November 1958-May 1970	
Unused example in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084) attached to 1956 memo. Blue cross and blue printing apart from January 1966 example which has very pale printing, almost grey in colour. Some examples have the vertical blue line continuous through OHMS and in some the line is broken.							

Table 76. Period VI-PR(2): Post Office, Returned Letter Branch envelopes for registered letters.

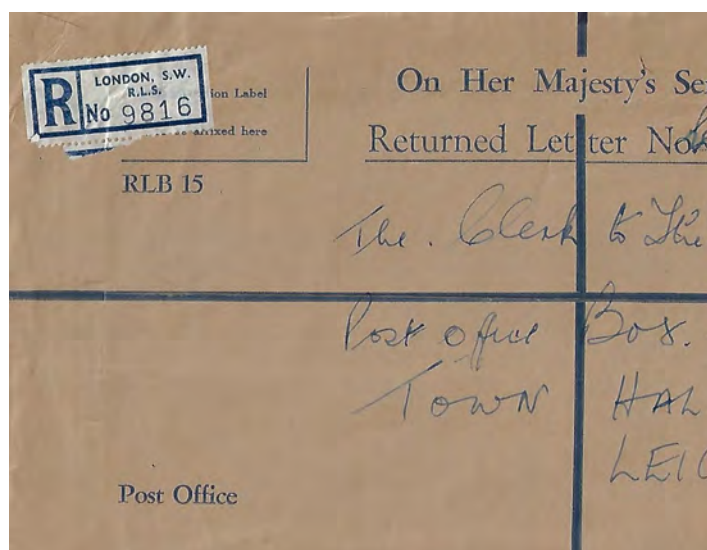


Figure 154. Left side of Type VI-PR(2)-15 envelope (60%).

Period VI-P: Post Office

All types preceded by VI-P-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
162	No.162	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	15.9 x 12.7	January 1953-July 1962	
No stops. Length of OHMS approximately 8.1 cm; an example dated September 1957 has OHMS at 9.1 cm. Variations in size of PO and 162 for this and 162 (i). Two unused copies in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084). Seen used in Gibraltar in 1955.							
162 (i)	No.162 <i>Figure 155</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.5 x 11.5	December 1960-April 1968	
Smaller size. No stops, minor typeface variations, upper case OHMS. Seen used in Barbados in 1964.							
162 (ii)	No.162	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.5 x 11.5	December 1966-November 1967	
No stops, lower case OHMS.							
170	No.170 <i>Figure 156</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	14.5 x 9	July 1959-March 1961	4
No stops.							
174	No.174	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 17.5	September 1958	1

176	No.176	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	35 x 15		1
Unused copy in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084) attached to a 1956 memo.							
178	178 <i>Figure 157</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25 x 12.5	October 1963- October 1969	
Early examples have OHMS in upper case and RPP is 6.9 cm long.							
178 (i)	178 <i>Figure 158</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.2 x 12.5	June 1966- December 1968	2
From June 1966 examples are seen with lower case OHMS and RPP 5.9 cm long.							
447	No.447. <i>Figure 159</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16.5 x 11.5	December 1967- November 1969	
RPP: 4.2 cm long. Seen used in Gibraltar in 1969.							
447 (i)	No.447.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	May 1969- February 1973	
Shorter envelope. RPP: 3.7 cm long. In both types of envelopes 447 minor differences in alignment are seen with OHMS and RPP.							
449	No.449	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	October 1968- November 1971	
Variation in boldness of typeface. Differences seen in alignment of PO <i>Figures 160 and 161.</i>							
452	No. 452	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 18	November 1970- September 1972	2

Table 77. Period VI-P: Post Office envelopes.

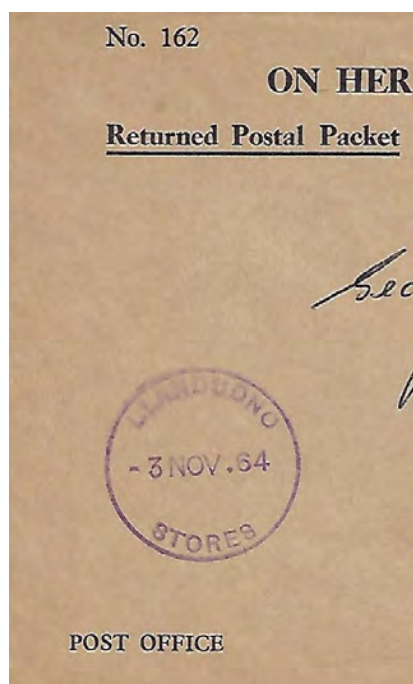


Figure 155. Left side of Type VI-P-162 (i) envelope (60%).

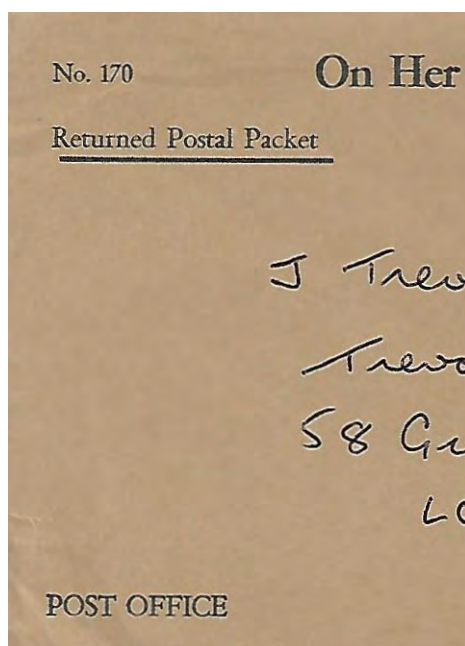


Figure 156. Left side of Type VI-P-170 envelope (70%).

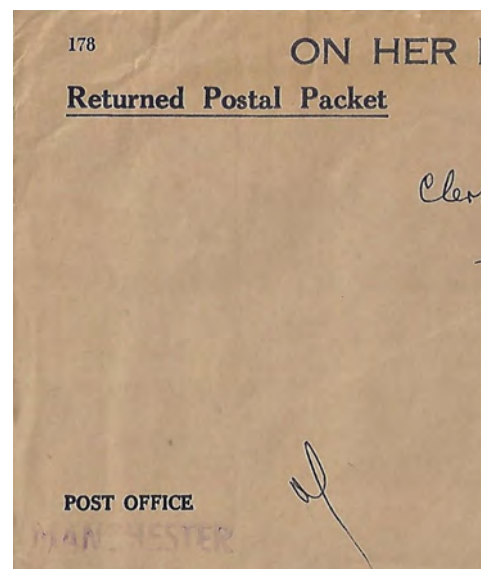


Figure 157. Left side of Type VI-P-178 envelope (60%).

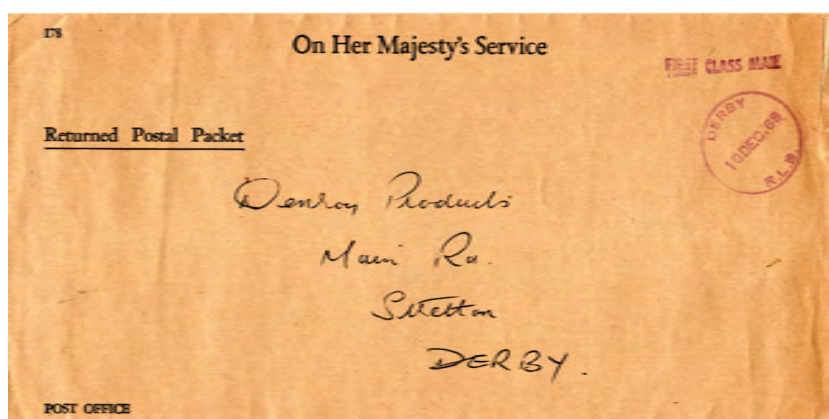


Figure 158. Type VI-P-178 (i) envelope (45%).

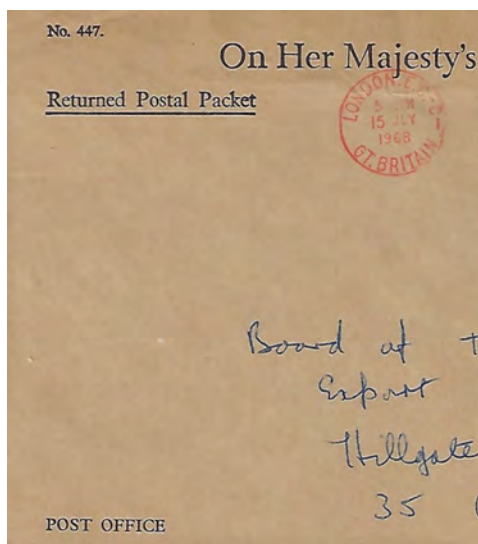


Figure 159. Left side of Type VI-P-447 envelope (60%).

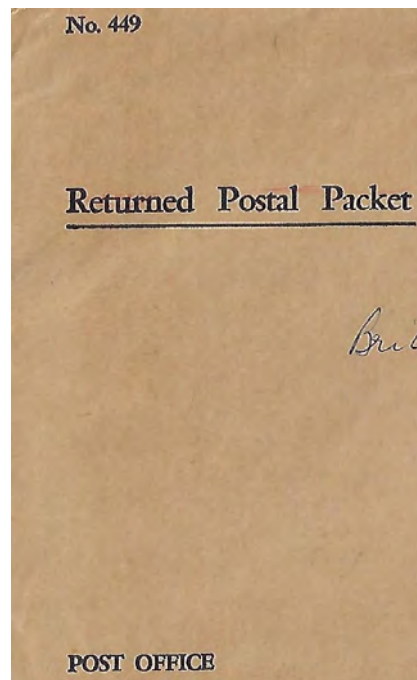


Figure 161. Left side of Type VI-P-449 (60%) envelope. POST OFFICE and RPP aligned.

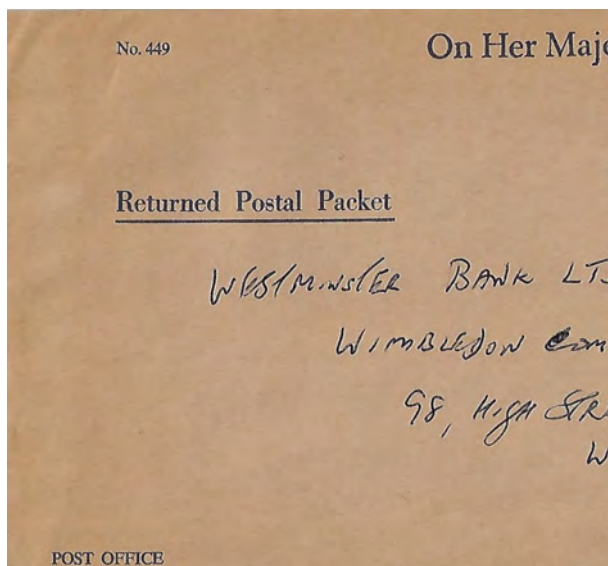


Figure 160. Left side of Type VI-P-449 envelope (60%). POST OFFICE to the left of RPP.

For registered Letters

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
175	No.175	High	Returned Letter	Buff	15.5 x 11	April 1958-February 1973	
Different typefaces known (<i>Figures 162 and 163</i>), Blue cross and blue printing. Two unused copies in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084, 122/6085).							

177	No.177. <i>Figure 164</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	19 x 13	May 1959- June 1963	5
Two unused copies in The Postal Museum (POST 122/6084 and 122/6085) attached to 1956 and 1958 memos respectively. Dark blue cross and black printing.							
177 (i)	No.177.	High	Returned Letter	Buff	17.5 x 12.5	August 1964-July 1969	
Smaller size. Blue cross and blue printing.							
448	448	High	Returned Letter	Buff	16 x 11.5	December 1975	1
Blue cross and blue printing.							
453	453 <i>Figure 165</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	25.5 x 17.5	1969-June 1977	2
Blue cross and blue printing. No registration box.							
453 (i)	453 <i>Figure 166</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	25.5 x 17.5	June 1977	1
No registration box but with instructions at top left as to where to place label.							

Table 78. Period VI-P: Post Office envelopes for registered letters.

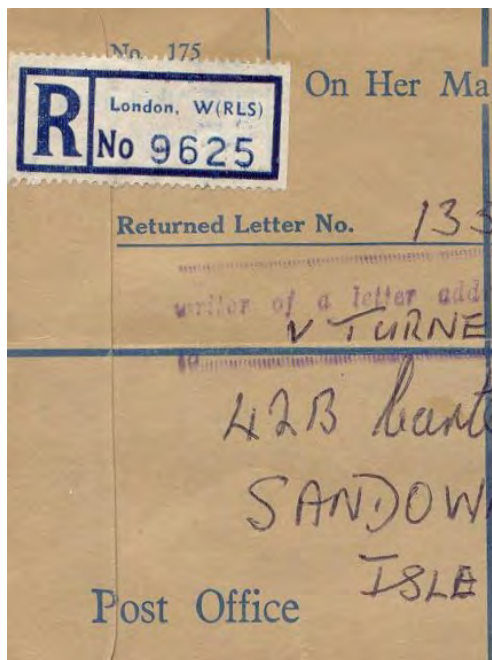


Figure 162. Left side of Type VI-P-175 envelope (70%). Larger typeface.

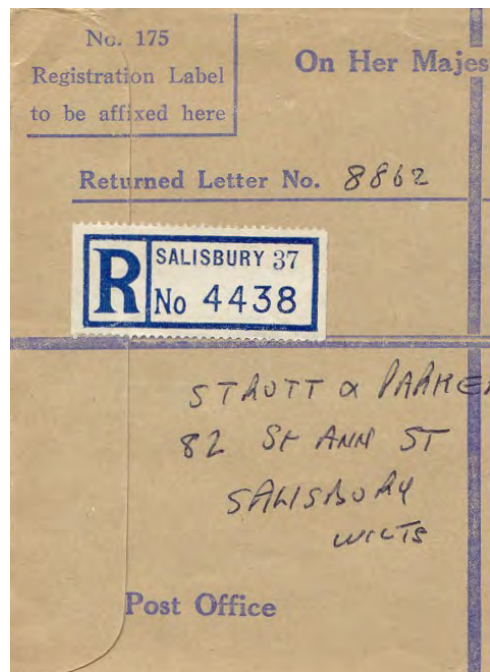


Figure 163. Left side of Type VI-P-175 envelope (70%). Smaller typeface.



Figure 164. Left side of Type VI-P-177 envelope (60%).

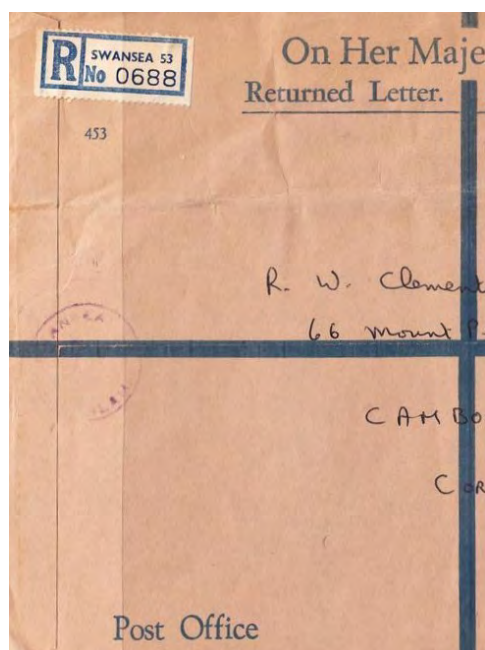


Figure 165. Left side of Type VI-P-453 envelope (50%). Without instructions as to where to place label.

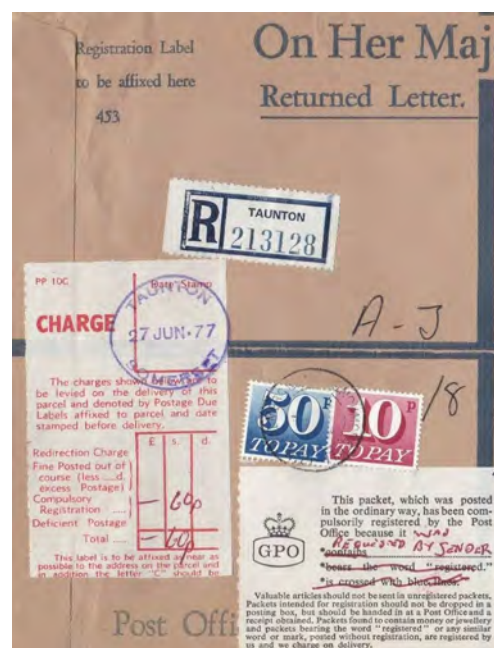


Figure 166. Left side of Type VI-P-453 (i) envelope (50%). With instructions as to where to place label.

Period VII

Table 36 summarises all designated groups of envelopes in Period VII. As with many of the envelopes described previously, minor differences in type setting and type face are seen throughout. Shades of colour seen which may be due to over or underinking. Later envelopes rarely have datestamps on them, can only be dated if contents are present.

Period VII-P: Post Office

All types preceded by VII-P-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No. 447. <i>Figure 167</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	May 1970-December 1977	
FIRST CLASS not printed on envelopes. Stop after 477. There are two different sizes for this type: No. 477: 1.2 cm long, RPP: 3.9 cm long, PO: 2.4 cm long and No. 477: 1.5 cm long, RPP: 4.2 cm long, PO: 3 cm long.							
447 (i)	No. 447. <i>Figure 168</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	White	16.5 x 11.5	Ca. 1975	1
FIRST CLASS printed in one line. No. 477: 1.5 cm long, RPP 4.2 cm long, PO: 2.4 cm long.							
447 (ii)	No. 447.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 11.5	1976-March 1982	5
Longer envelopes, 447 (ii)-(v). FIRST CLASS not printed on envelopes. No. 477: 1.0 cm long, RPP 4.3 cm long, PO: 2.4 cm long.							
447 (iii)	No. 447 <i>Figure 169</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 11.5	April 1976-October 1982	
FIRST CLASS printed on envelope in two lines. No. 477: 1.0 cm long, RPP 4.1 cm long, PO 2.4 cm long A December 1977 example is known used in Guernsey.							
447 (iv)	No. 447.	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	17.5 x 11.5	November 1976 - April 1980	5
FIRST CLASS printed in one line. Smaller typeface No. 477 1 cm long, RPP 4.0, PO 2.5 cm long. Variable use of stops throughout this series.							
447 (v)	No. 447. (130106) <i>Figure 170</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	18 x 11.5	November 1976-October 1983	
FIRST CLASS printed on them in one line. PO is sometimes slightly moved to the left, markedly so in the example from November 1976.							
449	No. 449 <i>Figure 171</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	March 1969-February 1978	

No stops. In addition, several unused examples are known.							
449 (i)	No. 449 (130108) <i>Figure 172</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	June 1978- June 1982, with an outlier dated December 2000	
Variations are seen in lengths and boldness of text: No. 499 (130108) 2.5 cm (RPP 4.9 cm, PO 2.5 cm) and 3.1 cm (RPP 6.5 cm, PO 2.7 cm) until late 1979, then 3.3 cm (RPP 6.4 cm, PO 2.9 cm). A September 1978 example has No 449 (130108) printed in red/brown. However, the one seen dated December 2000 has smaller text and was used in Stanley, Falkland Islands.							
449 (ii)	No. 449 (130108)	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	Undated	1
Returned Letter Branch, / Head Post Office, / Newton Street, / MANCHESTER / M1 1AA printed on flap on reverse (<i>Figure 173</i>).							
449 (iii)	No. 449 (130108) <i>Figure 174</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	23.5 x 12	December 1981-July 1982	3
PO is in a higher position.							
451	No. 451. <i>Figure 175</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	32.5 x 13	August 1976	1
452	No. 452	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 18	October 1972 - December 1976	
FIRST CLASS not printed.							
452	No. 452 <i>Figure 176</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 18	December 1976-June 1978	2
FIRST CLASS printed.							
452 (i)	No. 452 (130111)	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	25.5 x 18	August 1981- October 1981	2
FIRST CLASS printed.							

Table 79. Period VII-P: Post Office envelopes.

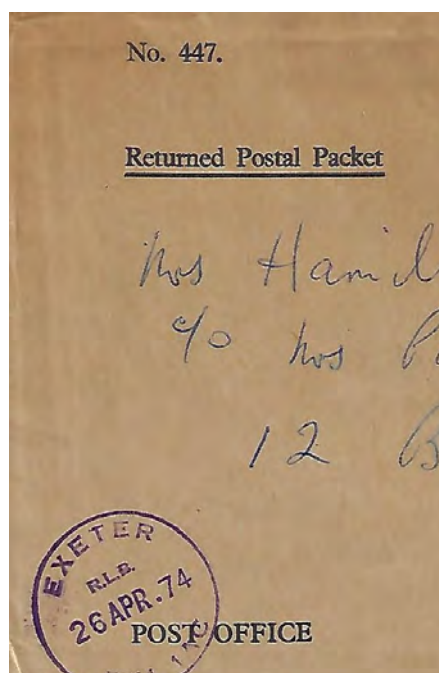


Figure 167. Left side of Type VII-P-447 envelope (60%).

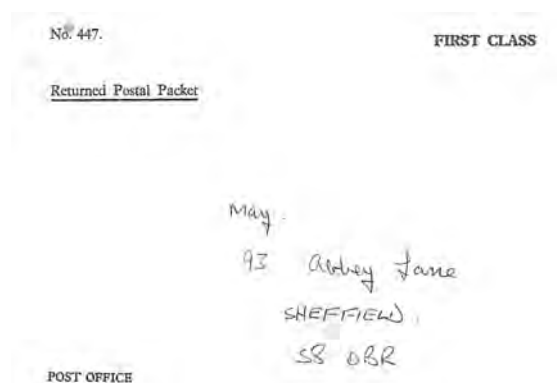


Figure 168. Type VII-P-447 (i) envelope (50%).



Figure 169. Top of Type VII-P-447 (iii) envelope (50%).



Figure 170. Top of Type VII-P-447 (v) envelope (50%).

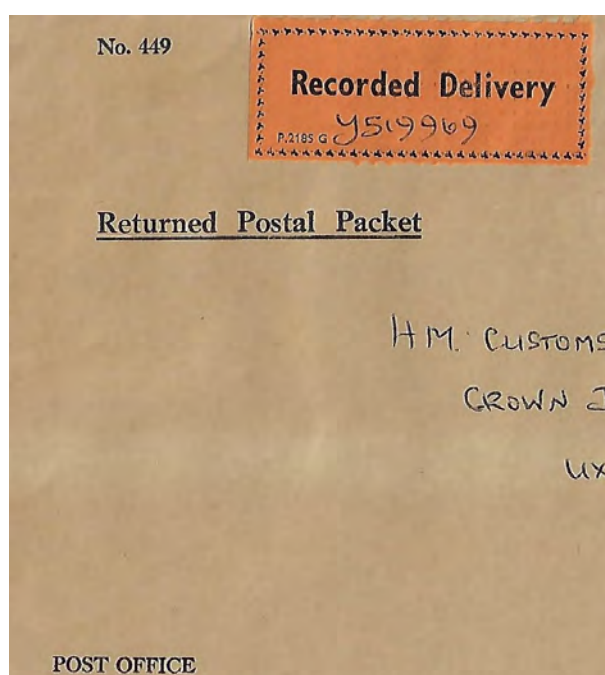


Figure 171. Left side of Type VII-P-449 envelope (60%).

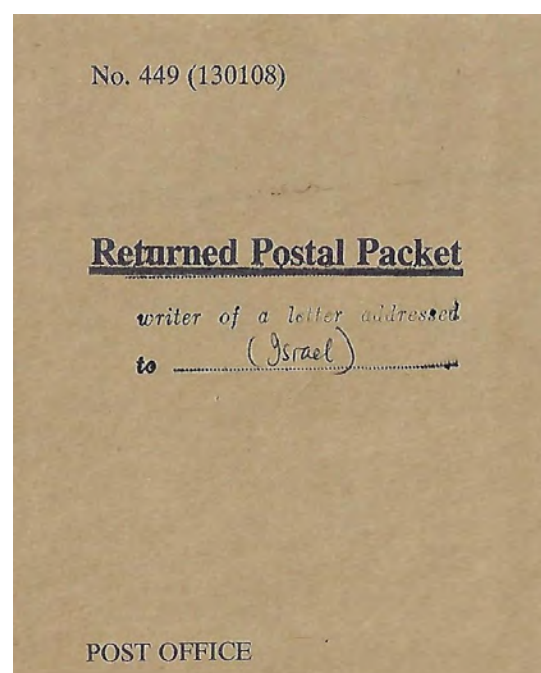


Figure 172. Left side of Type VII-P-449 (i) envelope (60%).



Figure 173. Type VII-P-449 (ii) showing Manchester address printed on back flap.

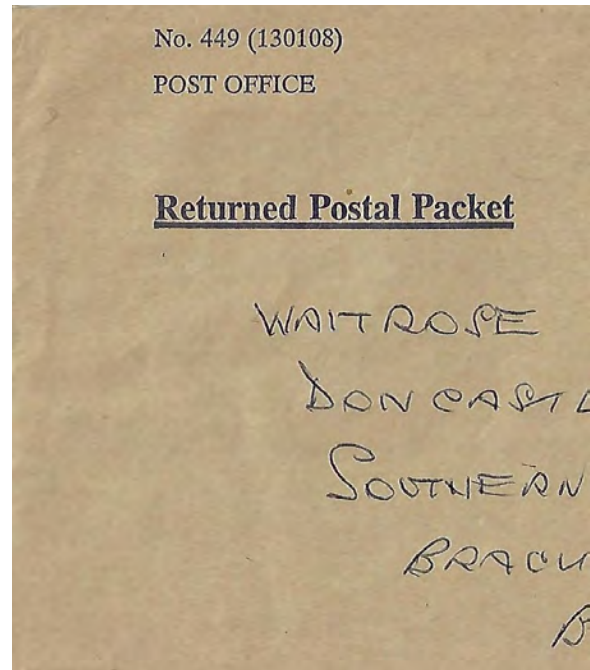


Figure 174. Left side of Type VII-P-449 (iii) envelope (60%).

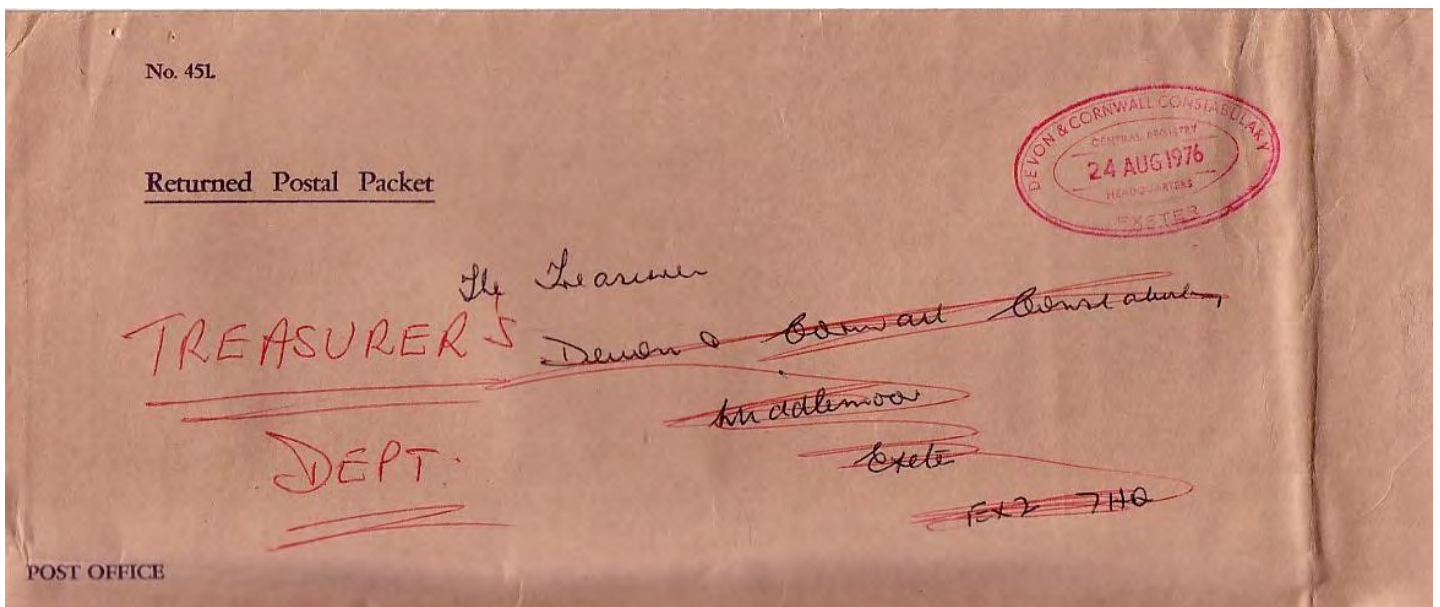


Figure 175. Type VII-P-451 envelope (75%).

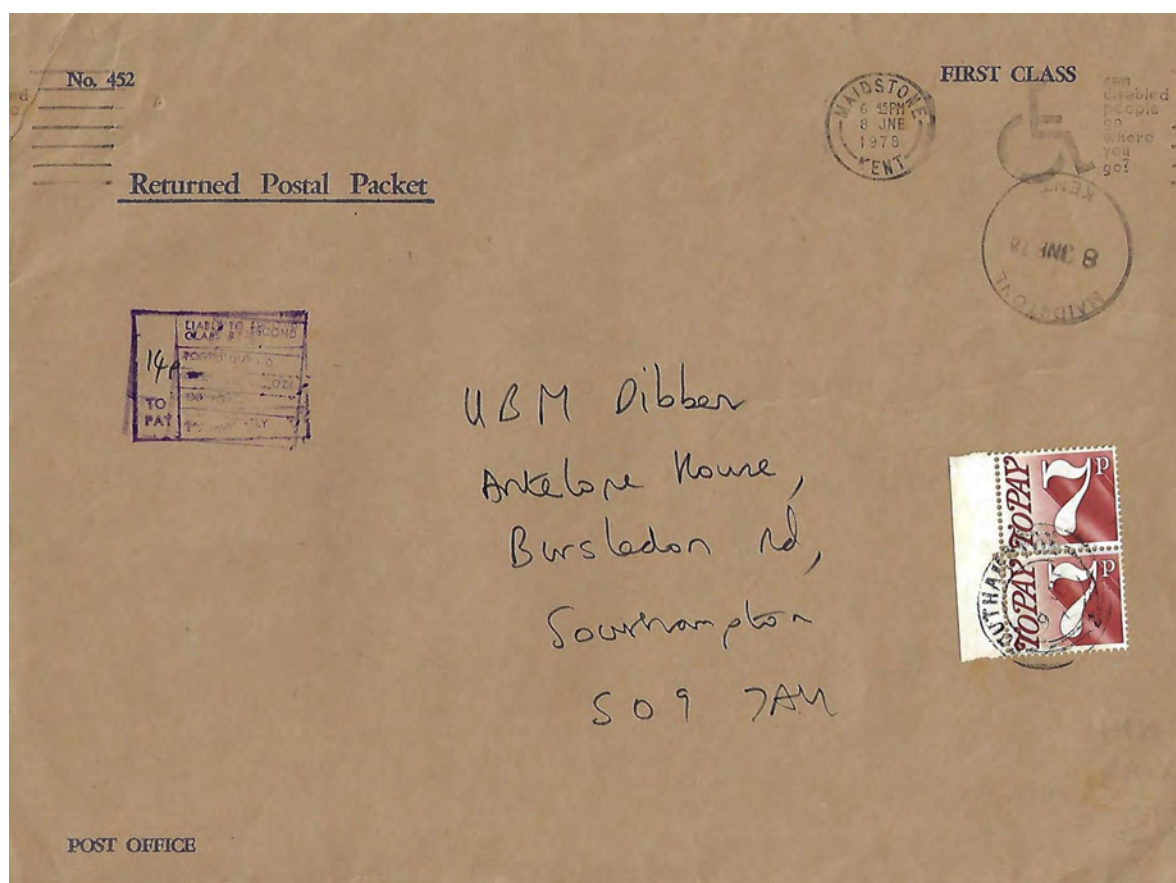


Figure 176. Type VII-P-452 envelope (60%).

For registered letters

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
448	No. 448 <i>Figure 177</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	16.3 x 11.5	August 1974-June 1981	
Blue cross and blue printing.							
453	No. 453 <i>Figure 178</i>	High	Returned Letter	Buff	25.4 x 17.8	September 1976-March 1977	2
Blue cross and blue printing. FIRST CLASS not printed.							
453 (i)	No. 453	High	Returned Letter	Buff	25.4 x 17.8	Ca 1978	1
Blue cross and blue printing. FIRST CLASS printed.							

Table 80. Period VII-P: Post Office envelopes for registered letters.

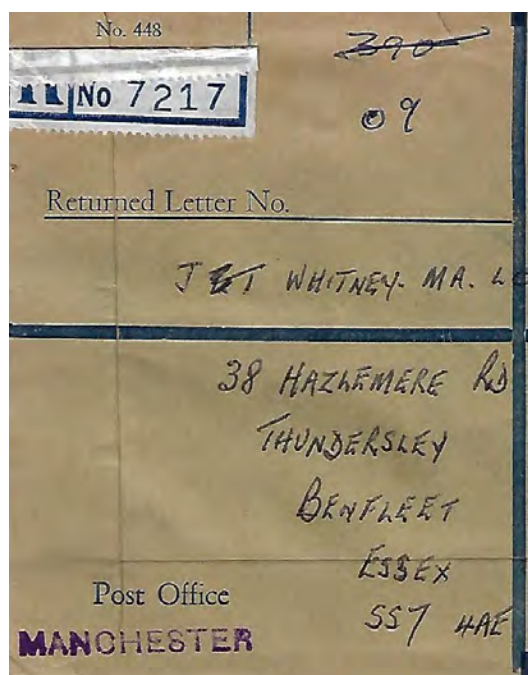


Figure 177. Left side of Type VII-RP-448 envelope (60%).

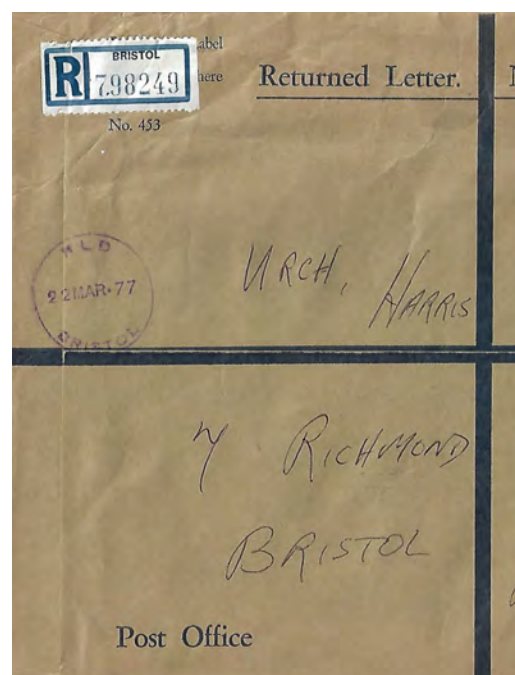


Figure 178. Left side of Type VII-RP-453 envelope (60%).

Period VII-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office

All types preceded by VII-RP-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
450	450 (130109) <i>Figure 179</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	35.5 x 23	March 1979- April 1981	3

Table 81. Period VII-RP: Returned Letter Branch, Post Office envelopes.

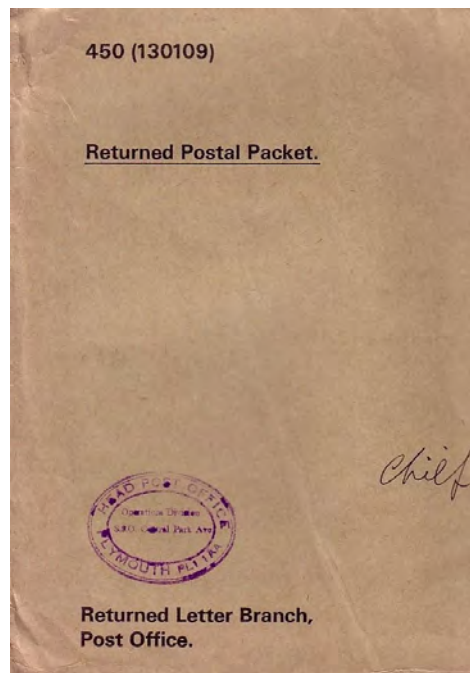


Figure 179. Left side of Type VII-RP-450 envelope (60%).

Period VII-SW: Returned Letter Branch, Swindon

All types preceded by VII-SW-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No. 447. (SPL) <i>Figure 180</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	February 1972	1

Table 82. Period VII-SW: Returned Letter Branch, Swindon envelopes.

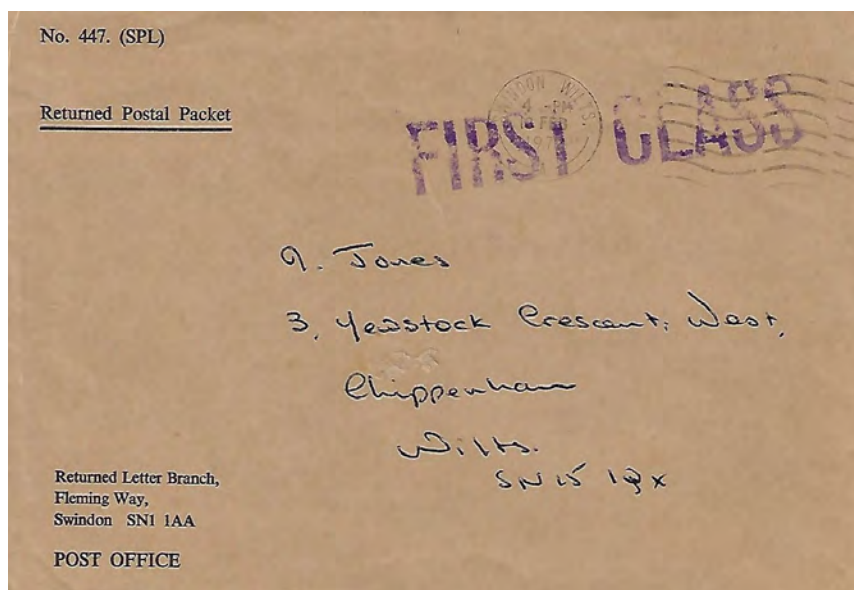


Figure 180. Type VII-SW-447 envelope (70%).

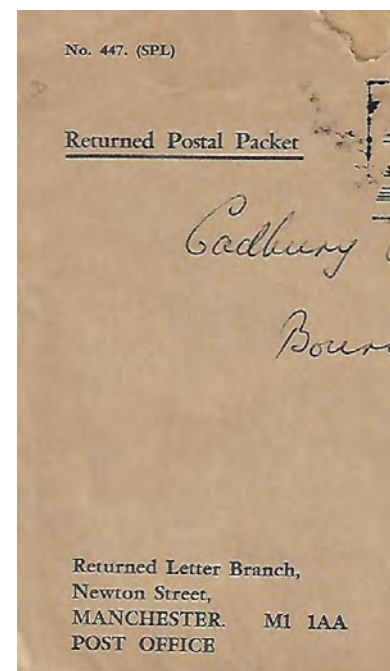


Figure 181. Left side of Type VII-MR-447 envelope (70%).

Period VII-MR: Returned Letter Branch, Manchester

All types preceded by VII-MR-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No. 447. (SPL) <i>Figure 181</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	October 1970- October 1974	4

Table 83. Period VII-MR: Returned Letter Branch, Manchester envelopes.

Period VII-BA: Returned Letter Section, Bath

All types preceded by VII-BA-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No. 447. <i>Figure 182</i>	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	August 1976	1

Table 84. Period VII-BA: Returned Letter Section, Bath envelopes.

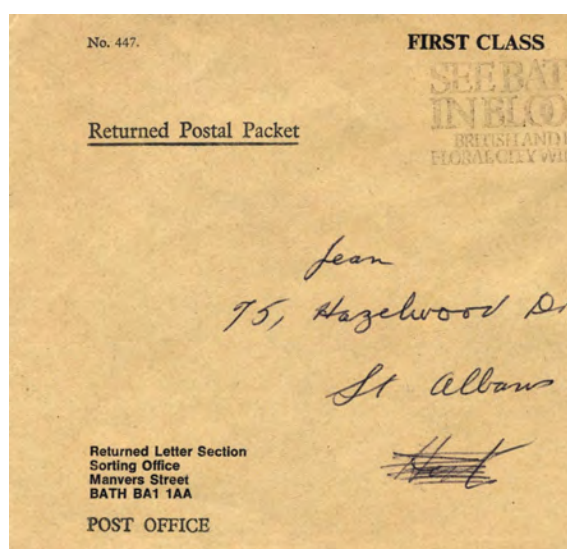


Figure 182. Left side of Type VII-BA-447 envelope (70%).

Period VII-BA: Returned Letter Branch, Birmingham

All types preceded by VII-BM-.

Type	Number	Position	Purpose	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
447	No. 447. (SPL)	High	Returned Postal Packet	Buff	16 x 11.5	Oct 1975	1

Table 85. Period VII-BA: Returned Letter Branch, Birmingham envelopes.

Period VII-R: Pre-printed envelopes to be Returned to the Post Office

All types preceded by VII-R-.

For registered letters

Type	Number	Position	Colour of Paper	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
453	453 (Spl) <i>Figure 183</i>	High	Buff	25.5 x 18	March 1991	1

Table 86. Period VII-R: Pre-printed envelopes to be Returned to the Post Office.

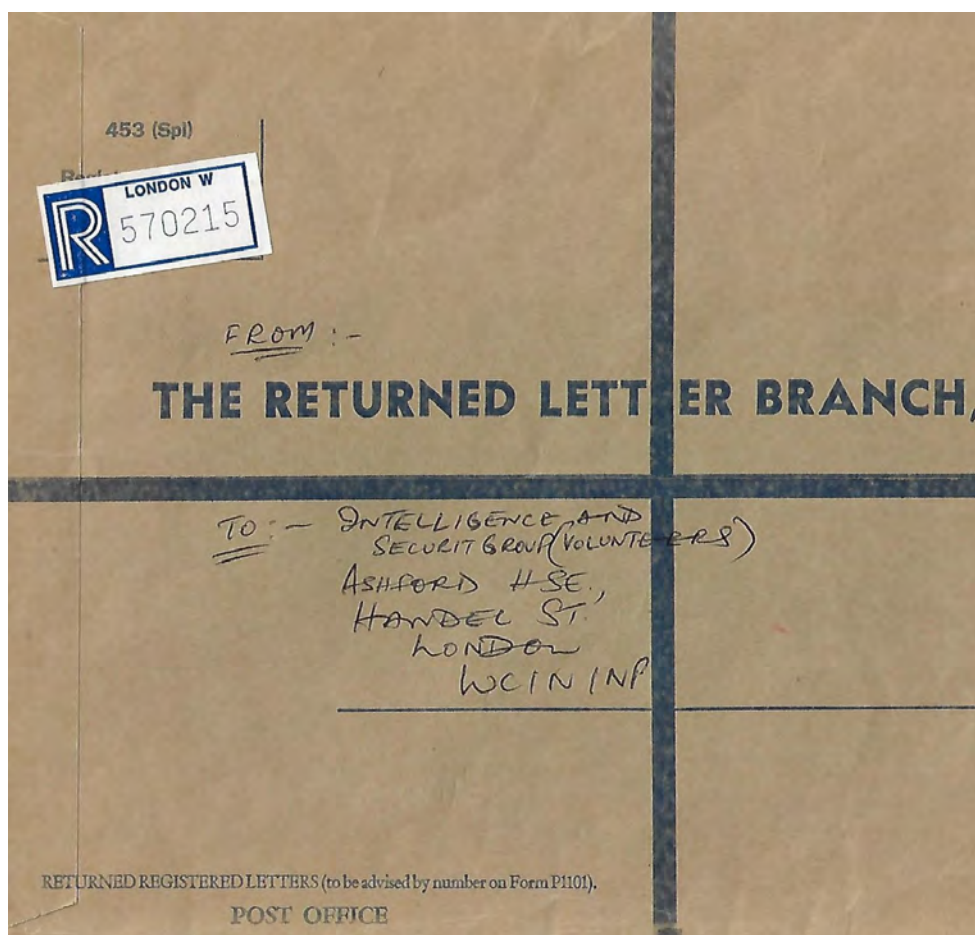


Figure 183. Left side of Type VII-R-453 envelope (75%).

From now on envelopes have a specific heading and these are used as their designations in succeeding sections. Numbers are no longer on the front. However, the first groups of envelopes have numbers printed on the flap. These relate to the size: small envelopes 2024, medium 2001, large 2026 and extra large 2025. The only purpose shown is Returned Postal Packet.

Period VII-ThePO: The Post Office

All types preceded by VII-ThePO-.

These envelopes have The Post Office (TPO) printed top left in outline letters. Returned Postal Packet (RPP) is also printed on the left in a high or low position. Postal service (small letter s) below the figure 1. Bars to the right of figure 1 are broken. On the reverse the flap has a number printed on it together with the expression ...If undelivered please return to... and a space. The latter often has a handstamp with the address of the relevant post office or returned letter office (*Figures 184-186*). Postal service is printed on envelopes for the first time.

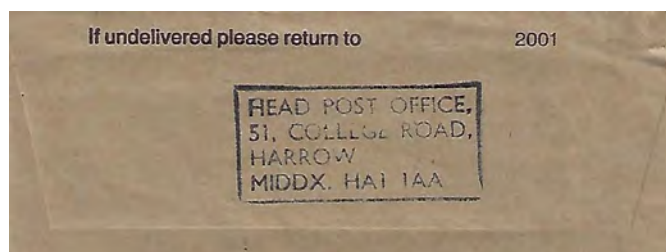


Figure 184. Reverse of part of Type VII-ThePO-2001 envelope with HPO, Harrow stamp.



Figure 185. Reverse of part of Type VII-ThePO-2001 envelope with RLB, Brighton stamp.

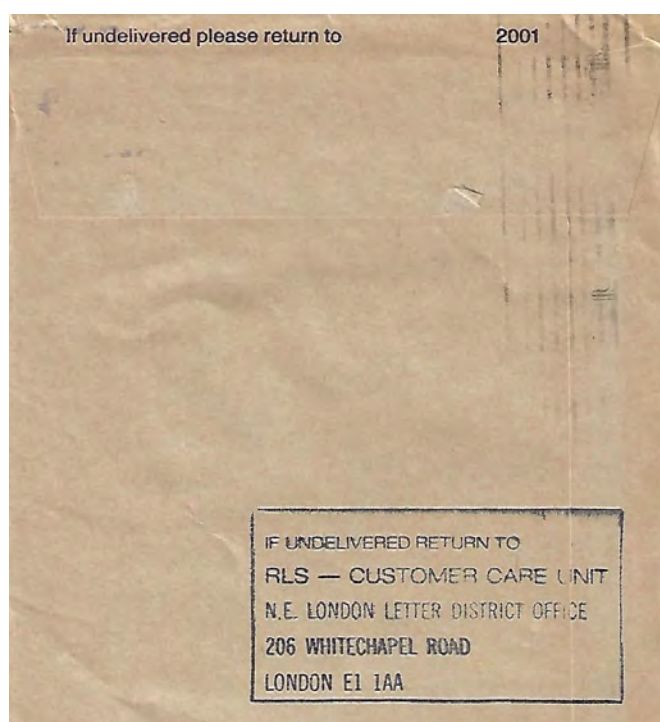


Figure 186. Reverse of part of Type VII-ThePO-2001 envelope with RLS-CUSTOMER CARE UNIT, London stamp.

Type	Number	Colour		Position of Returned Postal Packet	Length of The Post Office (cm)	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
		Paper	Printing					
2000	2000	Buff	Red	Absent	5.7	22 x 11	November 1988	1
RPP is not printed on this envelope, it is identical to 2001 except for the 2000 No and the smaller size. It may not have been used wholly or in part for undeliverable mail. 2000 has not been seen on envelopes with RPP.								
2024	2024	Buff	Brown	Low	5.7	18 x 11.5	December 1982- November 1986	
If undelivered please return to is 4.1 cm long until mid-1984, subsequently it is 4.5 cm long in bold print.								
2024 (i)	2024 <i>Figure 187</i>	Buff	Brown	Low	5	18 x 11.5	September 1985-March 1994	
If undelivered please return to is 4.1 cm long, not bold.								
2024 (ii)	2024 <i>Figure 188</i>	Buff	Red	Low	5.7	18 x 11.5	November 1986- December 1988	5
If undelivered please return to is 4.5 cm long, bold print. An unused example is known which is handstamped on the flap RETURNED LETTER SECTION / ROMFORD LETTERS DISTRICT / 17 ANGEL WAY / ROMFORD RM1 1AA.								
2024 (iii)	2024	Buff	Red	Low	5	18 x 11.5	May 1987- June 1990	5

2024 (iv)	2024	Buff	Black	Low	5.7	18 x 11.5	August 1983 - June 1988	4
2024 (v)	2024	Buff	Black	Low	5	18 x 11.5	February 1986	1
If undelivered please return to is 4.4 cm long, not bold. For envelopes printed in red the number follows the instruction Figure, this is reversed for examples printed in brown and black (<i>Figures 189 and 190</i>).								
Length of RPP and width of bars are similar in each type at 3.7 cm and 3 cm respectively.								
2001	2001	Buff	Red	Absent	5	23.5 x 12	May 1983-July 1984	2
RPP is not printed on this envelope (<i>Figure 191</i>) which is otherwise identical to the others in this group. (cf VII-ThePO-2022, <i>Table 88</i>).								
2001 (i)	2001	Buff	Brown	Low	5	23.5 x 12	November 1983-July 1984	3
If undelivered please return to is 4.6-4.9 cm long, not bold.								
2001 (ii)	2001 <i>Figure 192</i>	Buff	Black	Low	5	23.5 x 12	April 1984-December 1984	
If undelivered please return to is 4.6-4.9 cm long, not bold.								
2001 (iii)	2001	Buff	Black	High	5.8	23.5 x 12	July 1985-July 1989	
If undelivered please return to is 4.4 cm long, not bold								
2001 (iv)	2001 <i>Figure 193</i>	Buff	Brown	High	5.8	23.5 x 12	July 1985-September 1990	
If undelivered please return to is 4.4 cm long, not bold.								
Length of RPP is 3.5 cm and 4 cm in low and high positions, respectively. Width of bars is 2.9 cm on all envelopes seen,								
2026	2026 <i>Figure 194</i>	Buff	Black	Low	5.6	23 x 16	September 1984-March 1985	2
If undelivered please return to is 4.1 cm long. Length of RPP: 3.2 cm. No lines on flap <i>Figure 195</i> .								
2026 (i)	2026 <i>Figure 196</i>	Buff	Black	High	5.7	23 x 16	July 1886	1
If undelivered please return to is 4.5 cm long. Length of RPP: 4 cm. Lines on flap.								
2026 (ii)	2026	Buff	Brown	High	5.7	23 x 16	June 1986-February 1991	
An unused copy is known. If undelivered please return to is 4.5 cm long. Length of RPP: 4 cm. Lines on flap <i>Figure 197</i> .								
Width of bars is 3 cm in all of these envelopes.								

Table 87. Period VII-ThePO: The Post Office envelopes.

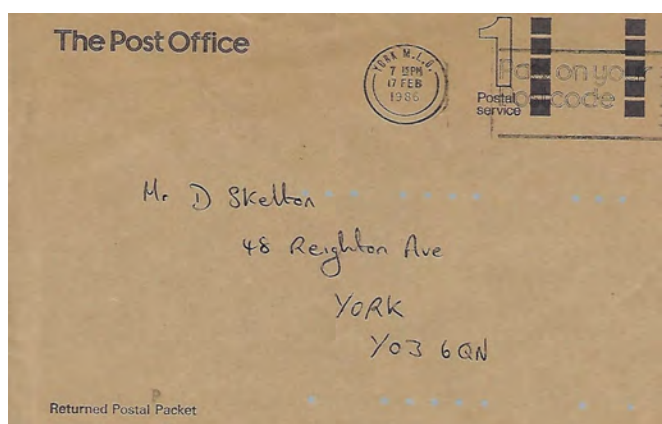


Figure 187. Type VII-ThePO-2024 (i) envelope (50%).

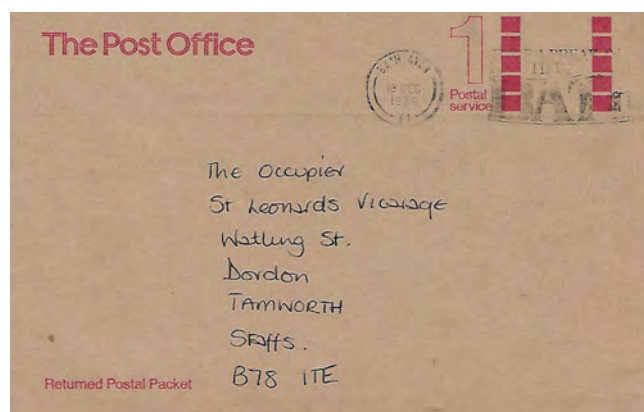


Figure 188. Type VII-ThePO-2024 (ii) envelope (50%).

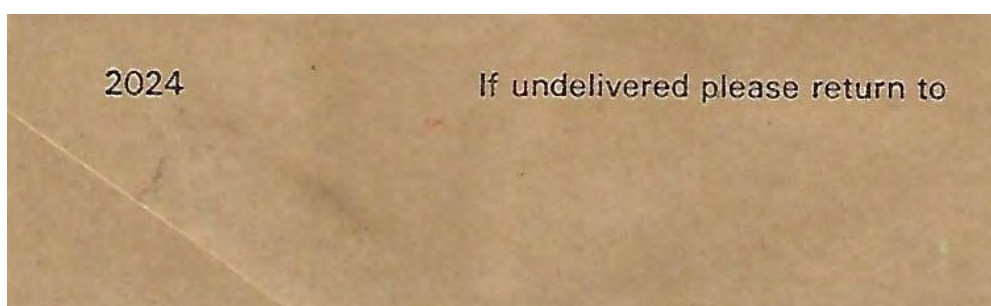


Figure 189. Part of reverse of Type VII-ThePO-2024 (ii) envelope.

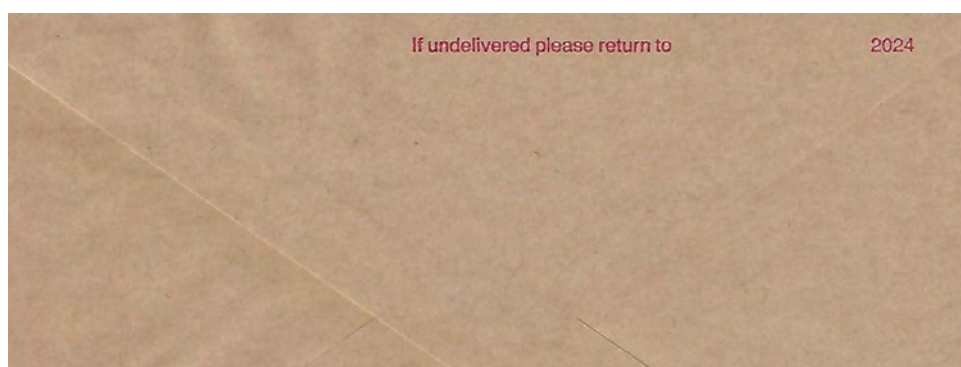


Figure 190. Part of reverse of Type VII-ThePO-2024 (ii) envelope.

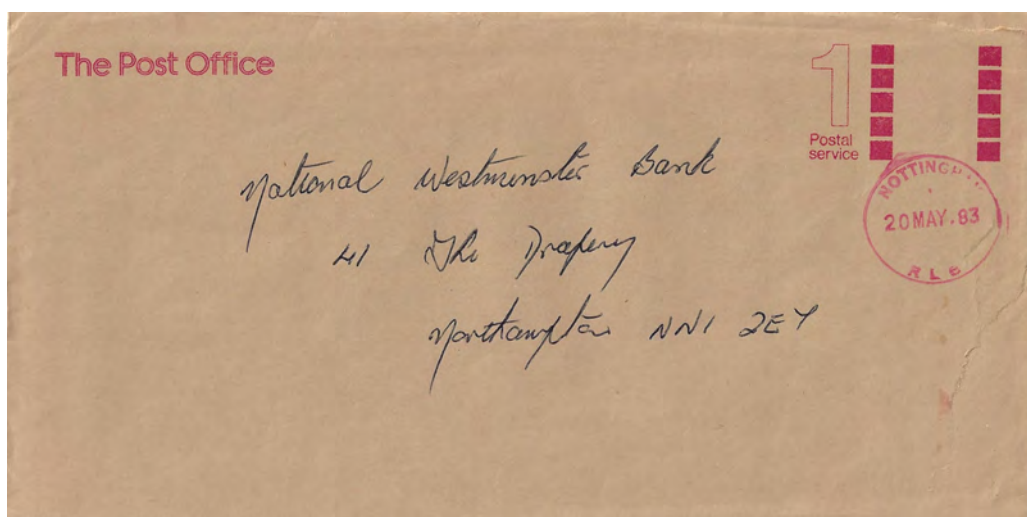


Figure 191. Type VII-ThePO-2001 envelope (60%). RPP is not printed on it.

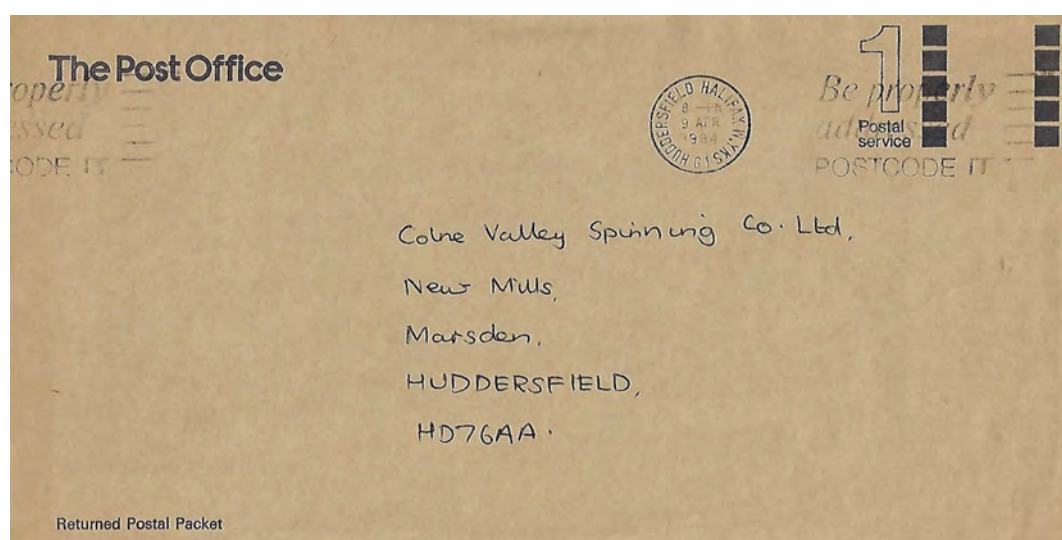


Figure 192. Type VII-ThePO-2001 (ii) envelope, black printing (60%).

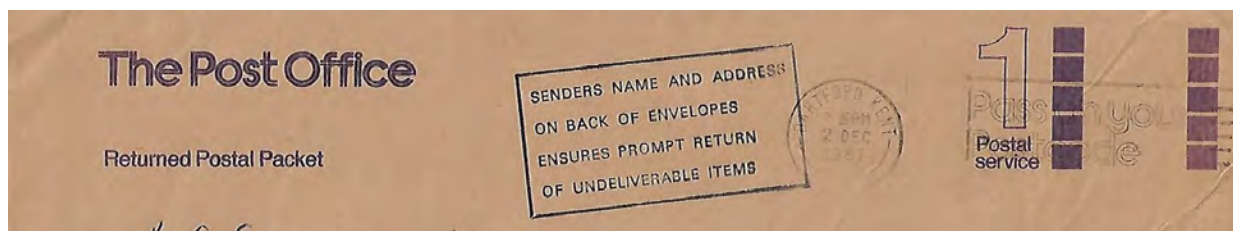


Figure 193. Top of Type VII-ThePO-2001 (iv) envelope, brown printing.

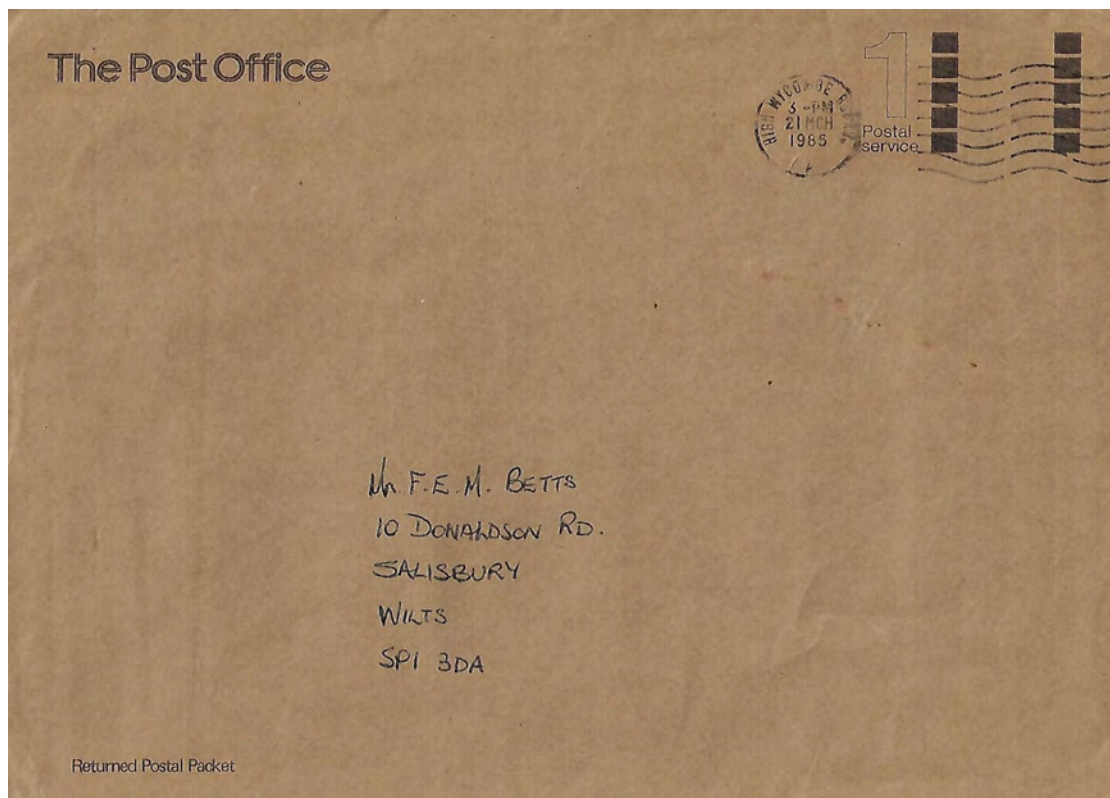


Figure 194. Type VII-ThePO-2026 envelope (75%).

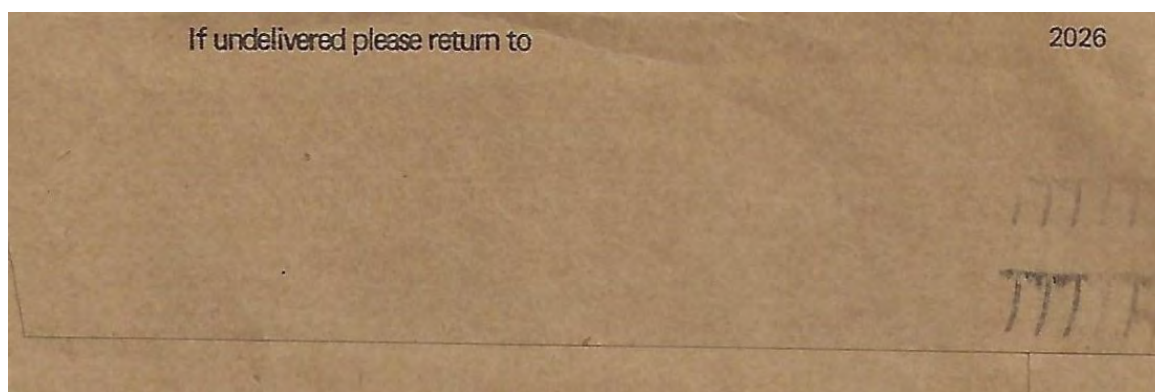


Figure 195. Part of reverse of Type VII-ThePO-2026 envelope.

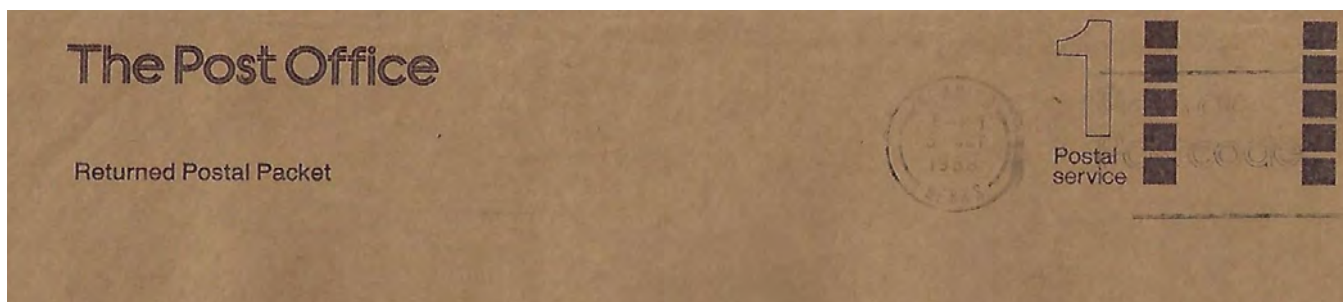


Figure 196. Top of Type VII-ThePO-2026 (i) envelope.

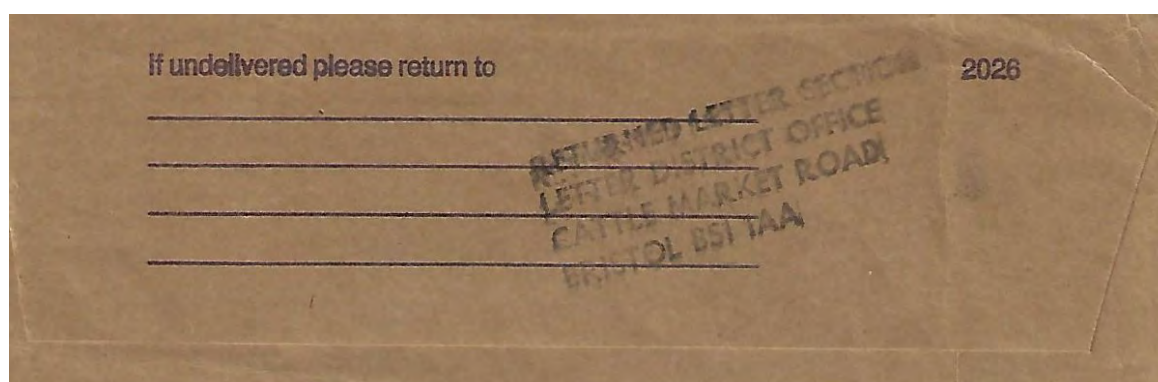


Figure 197. Part of reverse of Type VII-ThePO-2026 (ii) envelope.

For registered letters

This was the last envelope specifically designated for returned registered letters. Later ones, when necessary, have Recorded or Special Delivery labels attached.

On reverse, not the flap: If undelivered please return to _____ and 2022, the latter at right angles to the former. Lines for address *Figure 198*.

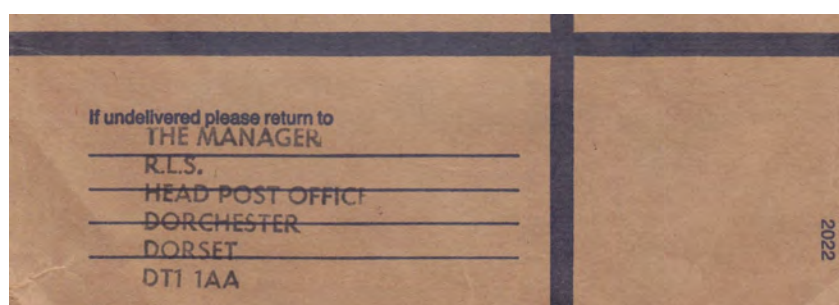


Figure 198. Part of reverse of Type Period VII-ThePO-2022 envelope. The reference number 2022 is printed at right angles to the instruction.

Type	Number	Colour		Length of The Post Office (cm)	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
		Paper	Printing				
2022	2022 <i>Figure 199</i>	Buff	Blue	7.5	23 x 16	February- December 1989	2
The Post Office occupies a central position to allow for inclusion of registration label top left. Returned Letter is not printed on the envelope (cf VII-ThePO-2001, <i>Table 87</i>). 2022 has not been seen on envelopes with RPP.							

Table 88. Period VII-ThePO: The Post Office envelopes for registered letters.

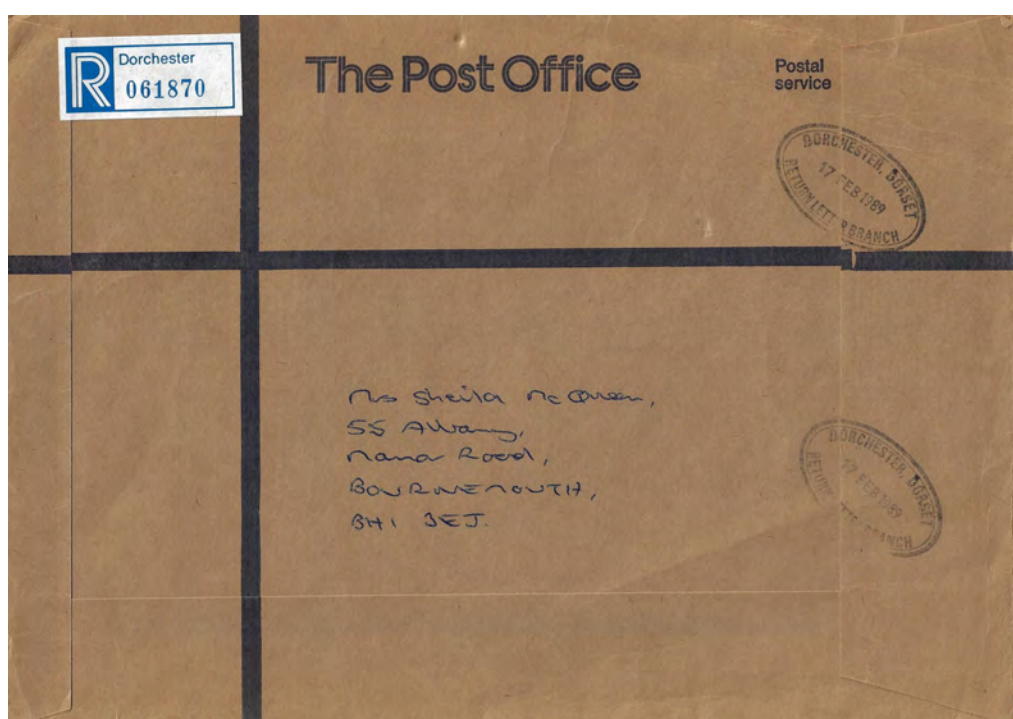


Figure 199. Type VII-ThePO-2022 envelope (60%).

Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Left

All types preceded by VII-RM(L)-.

These have a white crown and Royal Mail in white, outline letters in separate rectangles in either brown or black ink. The crown is on the left side. Returned Postal Packet (RPP) is printed on the left either in a high or low position. Postal service (small letter s) below the figure 1. Bars to the right of figure 1 are broken. On the reverse the flap has a number printed on it together with the expression ...If undelivered please return to... and a space.

Type	Number	Colour of Paper	Colour of Printing*	Position of Returned Postal Packet	Size of rectangle with RM (cm)	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
2024	2024 <i>Figures 200 and 201</i>	Buff	Brown	Low	4.4 x 1.1	18 x 11.5	July 1989	1
			Black				August 1990-April 1992	5
Length of If undelivered please return to is 4.5 cm. Length of RPP is 3.9 cm and width of bars 3 cm.								
2001	2001	Buff	Brown	High	4.4 x 1.1	23.5 x 12	May 1989-October 1991	
Length of If undelivered please return to 4.5 cm. Length of RPP is 3.9 cm and width of bars 3 cm.								

Table 89. Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Left envelopes.

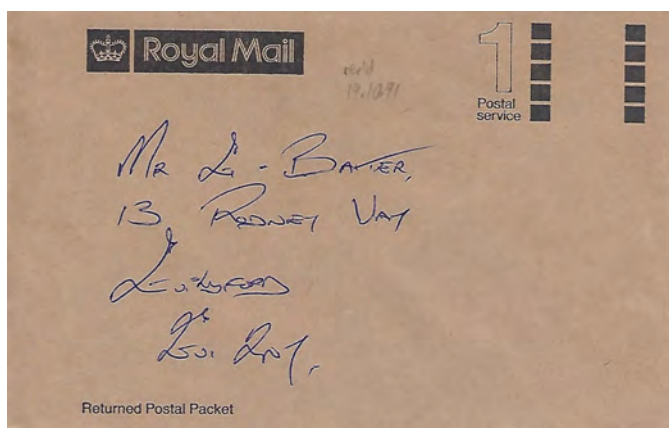


Figure 200. Type VII-RM(L)-2024 envelope (50%).

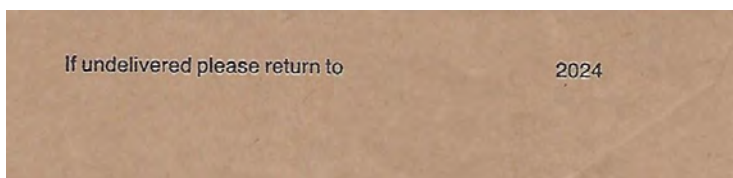


Figure 201. Part of reverse of Type VII-RM(L)-2024 envelope.

Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Centre

All types preceded by VII-RM(C)-.

The logo is now cross-shaped, with the crown in the centre at the top. The logo comprises a coloured crown in a vertical rectangle crossed by a horizontal rectangle with Royal Mail in white letters on a coloured background. On the reverse the flap has a number printed on it together with the expression ...If undelivered please return to ... and a space. It is convenient to consider these envelopes in two groups based on whether the bars to the right of figure 1 are broken or solid.

Broken bars

Returned Postal Packet (RPP) is printed on the left in a high position. Postal service (small letter s) below the figure 1.

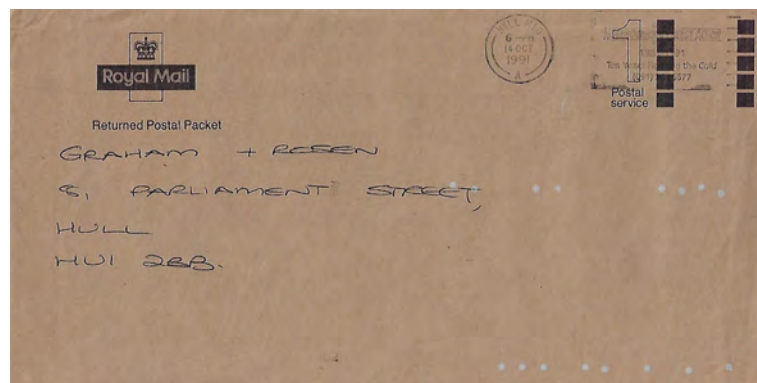


Figure 202. Type VII-RM(C)-2001 envelope, brown printing (60%).

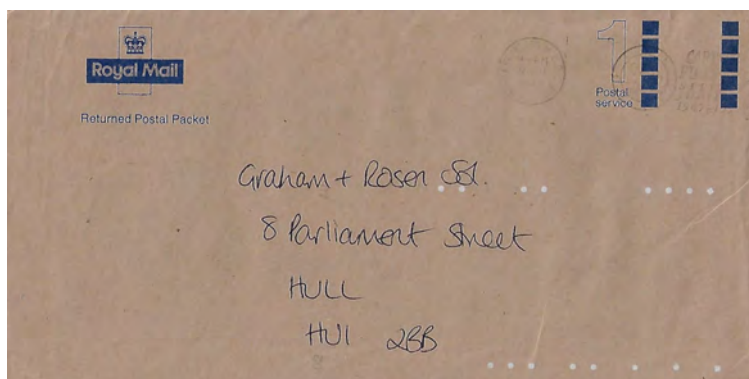


Figure 203. Type VII-RM(C)-2001 envelope, blue printing (60%).



Figure 204. Enlargement from Figure 203 showing small s.

Type	Number	Colour		Position of Returned Postal Packet	Length of RPP (cm)	Width of bars (cm)	Reverse printing	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
		Paper	Printing							
No small envelopes seen after April 1992, VII-RM(L)-2024.										
2001	2001	Buff	Brown <i>Figure 202</i>	High	3.9	2.9	4.7	23.5 x 12	August 1990-February 1992	
			Black		3.7		4.9		May 1991-November 1991	2
			Blue <i>Figures 203 and 204</i>		3.9		4.7		February 1992-March 1994	
The logo is small: size of rectangles with RM is 3 x 0.8 cm and with crown 2 x 1 cm. No address lines on reverse.										
2026	2026	Buff	Black <i>Figures 205 and 206</i>	High	3.9	2.9	4.7	23 x 16	September 1990-February 1992	2
			Brown						September 1990	1
2026 (i)	2026	Buff	Black	High	3.5		4.3		August 1992	1
The logo was changed from small to large during production of this type. For early examples size of rectangles with RM is 3 x 0.8 cm and with crown 1 x 2.1 cm. However, 2026 (i) has measurements of 3.5 x 0.8 and 1.2 x 2.2, respectively. The gap between If undelivered please return to and 2026 is 5.9 cm (2026) and 6.3 cm (2026 (i)). All have address lines on reverse.										
2025	2025	Buff	Brown	High	3.9	2.9	4.7	33 x 23	Ca. 1991	1
Address lines on reverse.										
2069	2069	Buff	Brown	-	-	2.9	4.5	22 x 11	October 1990	1
RPP is not printed on this envelope it is otherwise similar to VII-RM(C) 2001. It is used from the Birmingham Returned Letter Section with an appropriate handstamp on the reverse. It was used to return a letter sent to Kuwait which was undeliverable and a RETURN TO SENDER / NO TRANSFER LINK AVAILABLE / BECAUSE OF MIDDLE EAST SITUATION handstamp applied. 2069 has not been seen on envelopes with RPP.										

Table 90. Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Centre (broken bars) envelopes.

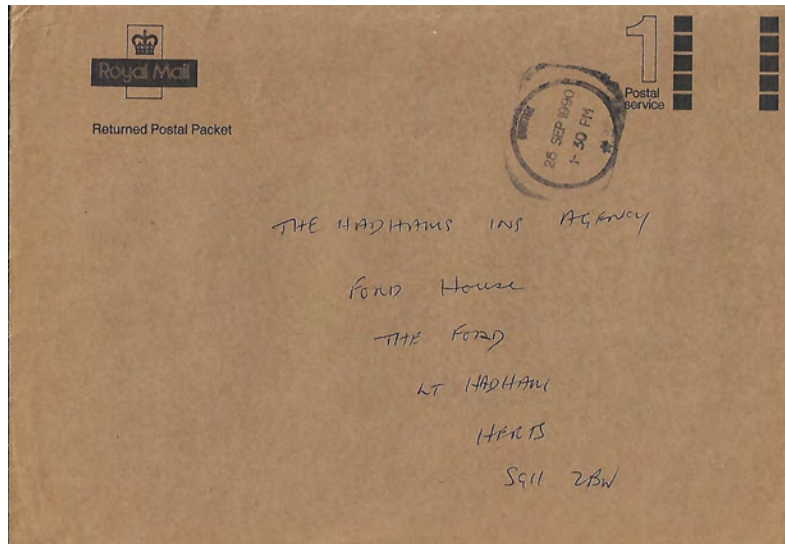


Figure 205. Type VII-RM(C)-2026 envelope, black printing (60%).

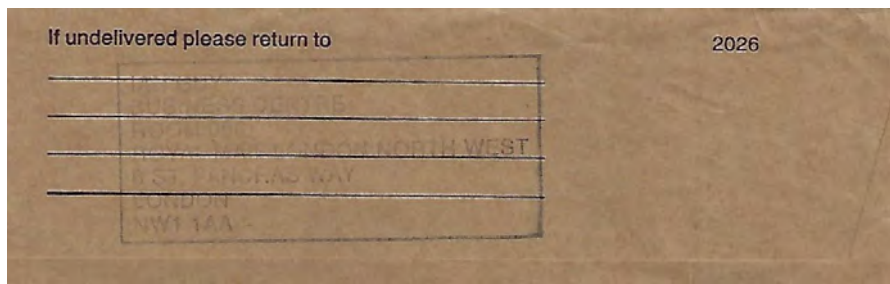


Figure 206. Part of reverse of Type VII-RM(C)-2026 envelope.

Solid bars

The logo is similar to that in the previous group of envelopes. Returned Postal Packet (RPP) is printed on the left in an intermediate position. On the reverse the flap has a number printed together with the expression *If undelivered please send to:-*. A printed address is included for the first time.



Figure 207. Enlargement of charge mark, black printing and large S.



Figure 208. Enlargement of charge mark, green printing and small s.

Postal Service (large letter S) below the figure 1 (Figure 207)

Type	Number	Colour	Colour	Position of Returned Postal Packet	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
		Paper	Printing				
2001 (i)	2001 <i>Figure 209</i>	Buff	Black	Intermediate	23.5 x 12	?	1
			Green			January 1995-December 1995	
			Blue			1993-1997	
Return address: <i>Returned Letter Centre / Belfast (Figure 210)</i> . In 1992 return of all letters (not parcels) was concentrated at Belfast. Length of <i>If undelivered please return to:-</i> 4.5 cm. Length of RPP is 3.5 cm in the one black example seen, 3.3 cm for the rest. Width of bars 3 cm. Large logo. Size of rectangles with RM is 3.5 x 0.9 cm and with crown 1.2 x 2.3 cm.							
2001 (ii)	Buff		Black	Intermediate	23.5 x 12	March 1993	3
			Blue			January 1993	5
Return address: <i>Returned Packet Centre / Portsmouth (Figure 211)</i> . Length of <i>If undelivered please return to:-</i> 4.5 cm. Length of RPP is 3.5 cm and width of bars 3.1 cm.							
2026 (ii)	2026	Buff	Black	Intermediate	23 x 16	January 1994-April 1998	3
2026 (iii)	2026	Buff	Black	Intermediate	23 x 16	March 1998	1
Opening on long side at top and <i>If Undelivered</i> etc centred on flap on long side on back.							
2026 (iv)	2026	Buff	Black	Intermediate	23 x 16	Undated	1
Opening on short side at right and <i>If Undelivered</i> etc centered on flap on short side on back.							
Return address: <i>Returned Letter Centre / Belfast</i> . 2026 (ii) has a small logo: size of rectangles with RM is 3.4 x 0.9 cm, and with crown 1.1 x 2.4 cm. <i>If undelivered please return to:-</i> 4.8 cm long. Length of RPP is 3.3 cm and width of bars 2.9 cm. 2026 (iii) has a large logo: size of rectangles with RM 4.3 x 1.1 cm, with crown 1.4 x 2.9 cm. <i>If undelivered please return to:-</i> 4.8 cm long. Length of RPP is 3.6 cm and width of bars 3 cm.							

Table 91. Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Centre (solid bars) envelopes with large letter S below figure 1.

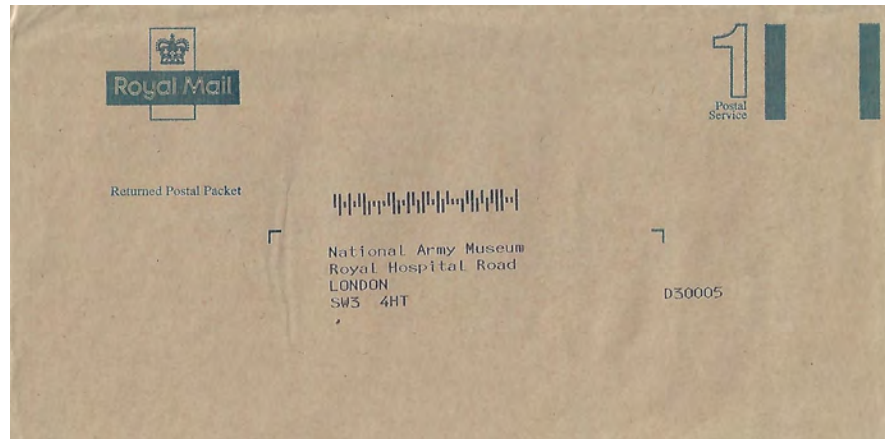


Figure 209. Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (i) envelope (60%).



Figure 210. Part of reverse of Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (i) envelope.

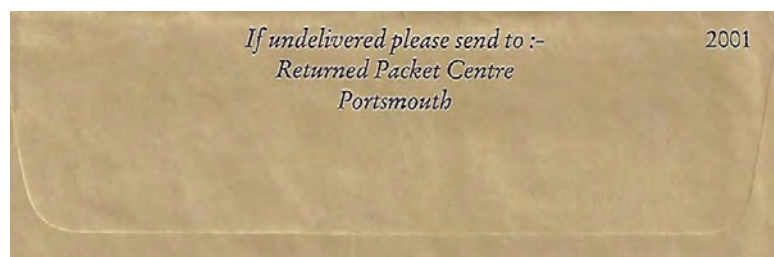


Figure 211. Part of reverse of Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (ii) envelope.

Postal service (small letter s) below the figure 1 (Figure 208)

Type	Number	Colour		Position of Returned Postal Packet	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
		Paper	Printing				
2001 (iii)	2001 <i>Figure 212</i>	Buff	Green	Intermediate	23.5 x 12	None are dated. Contents in one dated 10 March 1998	
Return address: National Return Letter Centre / 20 Donegall Quay / BELFAST / BT1 1AR (<i>Figure 213</i>). <i>If undelivered please return to:-</i> 4.6 cm long. Length of RPP is 3.8 cm and width of bars 3.2 cm. Small logo. Size of rectangles with RM is 3.2 x 0.8 cm and with crown 1.1 x 2.1 cm.							

Table 92. Period VII-Royal Mail, Crown Centre (solid bars) envelopes with small letter s below figure 1.

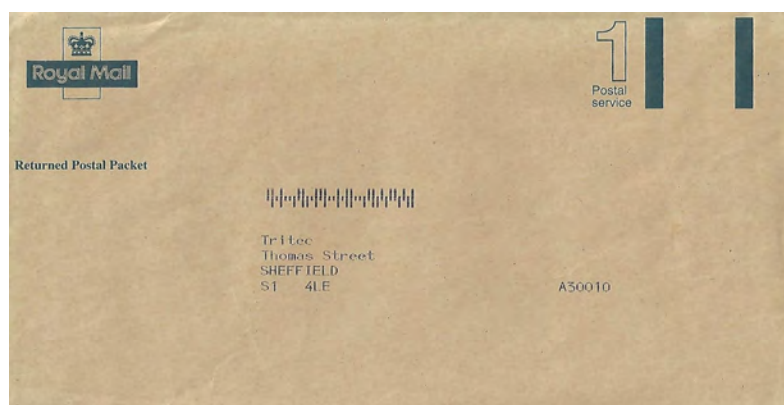


Figure 212. Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (iii) envelope (60%).

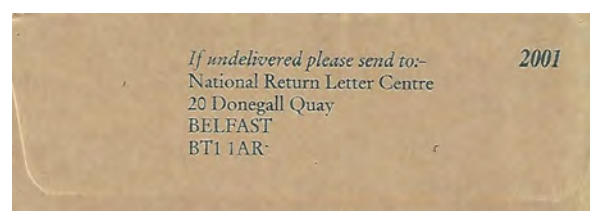


Figure 213. Part of reverse of Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (iii) envelope.

Change to White Envelopes

A change to white envelopes occurred in the late 1990s. Neither designated numbers nor Returned Postal Packet were included. An explanation was printed on the back.

Retention of Solid bars in top right corner

All types preceded by VII-RM(C)-.

Although these envelopes do not have numbers on them, they are the same size as the previous 2001 and 2026 envelopes. These numbers are therefore continued.

Postal Service (large letter S) below the figure 1

...*If undelivered please return to...* and the return address are still printed on the flap. The explanation is inverted compared with the printed details on the front.

Explanation: *RETURN TO SENDER SERVICE / Delivered to you by Royal Mail.*

Type	Colour		Size of rectangles		Width of bars (cm)	Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Paper	Printing	With RM (cm)	With crown (cm)				
2001 (iv) <i>Figure 214</i>	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.8	2.4 x 1.2	2.9	23.5 x 12	None with dates. Contents: March 1999- February 2003	
Return address: NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR (<i>Figures 215 and 216</i>). Length of <i>If undelivered please return to</i> 4.6 cm. RETURN TO SENDER SERVICE is 7.5 cm long.								
2026 (iv) <i>Figure 217</i>	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.9	2.4 x 1.2	2.9	24 x 16.5	None dated	3
Return address: NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of <i>If undelivered please return to</i> 4.6 cm. RETURN TO SENDER SERVICE is 7.5 cm long.								

Table 93. White envelopes with solid bar top right.



Figure 214. Type VII-RM(C)-2001(iv) envelope (60%).



Figure 216. Enlargement of address on VII-RM(C)-2001 (iv) envelope.

Figure 215. Reverse of Type VII-RM(C)-2001 (iv) envelope (60%).



Figure 217. VII-RM(C)-2026 (iv) envelope (60%).

Charge mark revised

The bars in the top right corner have been replaced. The revised charge mark is a block comprising a blue rectangle with rounded corners which contains an eccentrically placed white circle and the word *first*. Within the circle is Royal Mail / HQRM in blue lettering.

All types are preceded by VII-RM(B). The B relates to the block at the top right. The types are defined by their size: small, medium and large.

Instruction and explanation are now combined and printed on the main part of the reverse, not the flap. They are not inverted compared with printing on front.

On reverse: If undelivered please return to:

Explanation: Returned to sender by Royal Mail followed by details.

Type	Colour		Size of rectangles		Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Paper	Printing	With RM (cm)	With crown (cm)			
Small <i>Figure 218</i>	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.9	2.3 x 1.2	23.5 x 12.2	No dates other than contents: 9 February 2004-August 2005	
Return address: NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR <i>Figure 219</i> . Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.2 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 6.7 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 7.7 cm; maximum width is 8.8 cm.							
Small (i) <i>Figure 220</i>	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.9	2.3 x 1.2	23.5 x 12.2	No date	1
The Real Network R printed below Royal Mail logo, <i>Figure 221</i> . This represented a marketing venture with a social network company. Apart from the addition to the front, the printing on the reverse is bigger than in the usual envelopes of this size. Return address: NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.9 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 7.9 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 9.3 cm; maximum width is 10.4 cm.							
Medium <i>Figure 222</i>	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.9	2.3 x 1.2	24 x 16.5	No dates other than contents: 5 September 2012	
Return address: NATIONAL RETURNS CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.1 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 6.8 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 7.5 cm; maximum width is 8.7 cm.							
Medium (i)	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.8	2.3 x 1.2	24 x 16.6	April 2004	1
Return address: NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.7 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 7.6 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 9.5 cm; maximum width is 10.1 cm.							
Medium (ii)	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.8	2.3 x 1.2	24 x 16.5	None with dates	
Return address: NATIONAL RETURNS CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.7 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 7.8 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 9.5 cm; maximum width is 10 cm. There are variations in size of gap between left side of Royal Mail block and the right side of the charge mark, 21.9 cm (the least common), 21.4 cm and 21.2 cm have been seen.							
Medium (iii)	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.8	2.3 x 1.2	24 x 16.5	No dates other than Contents: November 2021	5
Return address: NATIONAL RETURNS CENTRE / ENTERPRISE WAY / NEWTOWN ABBEY / BT36 4HQ (<i>Figure 223</i>). Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.7 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 7.7 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 9.5 cm; maximum width is 9.9 cm.							

Large	White	Blue	3.6 x 0.9	2.3 x 1.2	32.5 x 22.7	No date	1
Return address: NATIONAL RETURNS CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 4.8 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 8 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is 12.4 cm; maximum width is 10.2 cm.							

Table 94. Envelopes with revised charge mark.



Figure 218. Type VII-RM(B) Small envelope (60%).

If undelivered please return to:

NATIONAL RETURN LETTER CENTRE
20 DONEGALL QUAY
BELFAST
BT1 1AR

Returned to sender by Royal Mail

When posting, always remember to:

- Write a full return address on the reverse of the envelope
- Put on the full postcode
- Send it with correct postage paid

Royal Mail has returned the enclosed item to you. The reason it has not been delivered should be indicated on the item. If you require further information please contact our customer services team on 08457 740 740

Figure 219. Address and instructions on reverse of Type VII-RM(B) Small envelope.



Figure 220. Type VII-RM(B) Small (i) envelope (60%).



Figure 221. Enlargement of logo on Type VII-RM(B) Small (i) envelope, from Figure 220.



Figure 222. Type VII-RM(B) Medium envelope (60%).



Figure 223. Address and instructions on reverse of Type VII-RM(B) Medium (iii) envelope.

Until now envelopes have been made of paper of variable thickness. In this group envelopes are made from opaque, white, recyclable polythene. Closure is achieved on the reverse by a tape which has the return address on it (*Figure 224*).

All types are preceded by VII-RM(B)-P. Only one example has been seen, it has been designated: Large.

Type	Colour		Size of rectangles		Size (cm)	Known Dates of Usage	Scarcity
	Paper	Printing	With RM (cm)	With crown (cm)			
Large	White	Blue	3.5 x 0.8	2.3 x 1.2	47.5 x 34. Only one has been seen. It has been opened by cutting away the lower end, so true height is uncertain	No date	1
Return address: NATIONAL RETURNS CENTRE / 20 DONEGALL QUAY / BELFAST / BT1 1AR. The explanation is separate from the return address. Length of If undelivered please return to: is 6.6 cm. Returned to sender by Royal Mail is 7.5 cm long. Explanation: maximum height of text is unclear; maximum width is 10 cm.							

Table 95. Envelopes made from polythene.



Figure 224. Address and instructions on reverse of Type VII-RM(B)-P envelope. Returned to sender by Royal Mail has been partly covered in sealing the envelope.

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