

WHAT ARE AUXILIARY MARKINGS?

Auxiliary markings are those that were applied to the mail, indicating that the covers were given special attention or service owing to a special circumstance. These markings may consist of, but are not limited to manuscript markings, rubber-stamped markings, hand/machine cancellations, labels, and addressograph or computer markings. Subjects include damaged mail markings with or without “ambulance” covers (plastic bags enclosing the damaged cover), crash markings, delay markings, military markings, postage due markings, return to sender markings, and spray markings, for example. Auxiliary markings also can require action on the part of the post office, the sender, or the recipient. Auxiliary markings also are known as instructional or supplementary markings.

This introductory exhibit is organized chronologically with respect to when a specific auxiliary marking was used in the mailstream. This period includes the time from which the item was posted to when it was received or returned. Rates, routes, and time in transit are indicated where appropriate. Markings on the reverse are shown where pertinent. Finally, examples of foreign destinations with auxiliary markings are shown.

Exhibit Plan

Sending post office markings	Forwarded by receiving post office
Delays in transit	Unforwardable mail
Receiving post office markings	Address insufficient/incorrect
Delays at receiving post office	Undeliverable at correct address
Short Paid Mail	Sent to foreign addresses
	Returned from abroad undeliverable

Auxiliary markings come in different sizes, shapes, and colors. There were thousands of varieties used from the 19th through the 21st centuries. Here is a censored first day cover that could not be delivered, and was returned to the sender in three weeks.