

the letter always/never arrives at its destination
mixed media



why does a letter always arrive at its destination? for the same reason that it never arrives at its destination? is the destiny of a letter always to arrive at its destination?

sometimes stories appear in the media about letters which were lost for many years and which are eventually delivered, but stories about letters which are never received do not often make it into the newspapers.

if there was more than a certain level of doubt about the likelihood of a posted article arriving at its destination, the public would soon lose confidence in the postal system and it would collapse entirely. the system works because people believe it does. yet different levels of confidence about the postal system exist. the distance an article has to travel is inversely proportional to the perceived likelihood of its arrival at the intended destination, as is its weight, and the vehicle by which it is to be transported. surface mail is usually by sea and is also the least 'deep' method for sending something.

unsurprisingly perhaps the english postal system used to be class based. there was first class mail and second

class mail. i would imagine an oafish stupid person who was paid less and worked in poor conditions being in charge of second class mail, whilst the first class mail was handled by highly paid good looking intelligent people who were paying attention. the ultimate pariah is the postman who throws his mail in the ditch.

we do not expect mail to be lost but are we surprised when it does? sometimes we are able to ascertain why. perhaps we got the street number wrong. sometimes wrongly addressed mail is returned to the sender, if one was indicated. sometimes people change their address and forget to inform people who may want to send them something. is there still such a thing as a dead letter office?

when i got home from his funeral there was a cheque from my father waiting for me. he must have sent it a day or two before he died.