

US Postal Laws & Regulations

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Mail matter

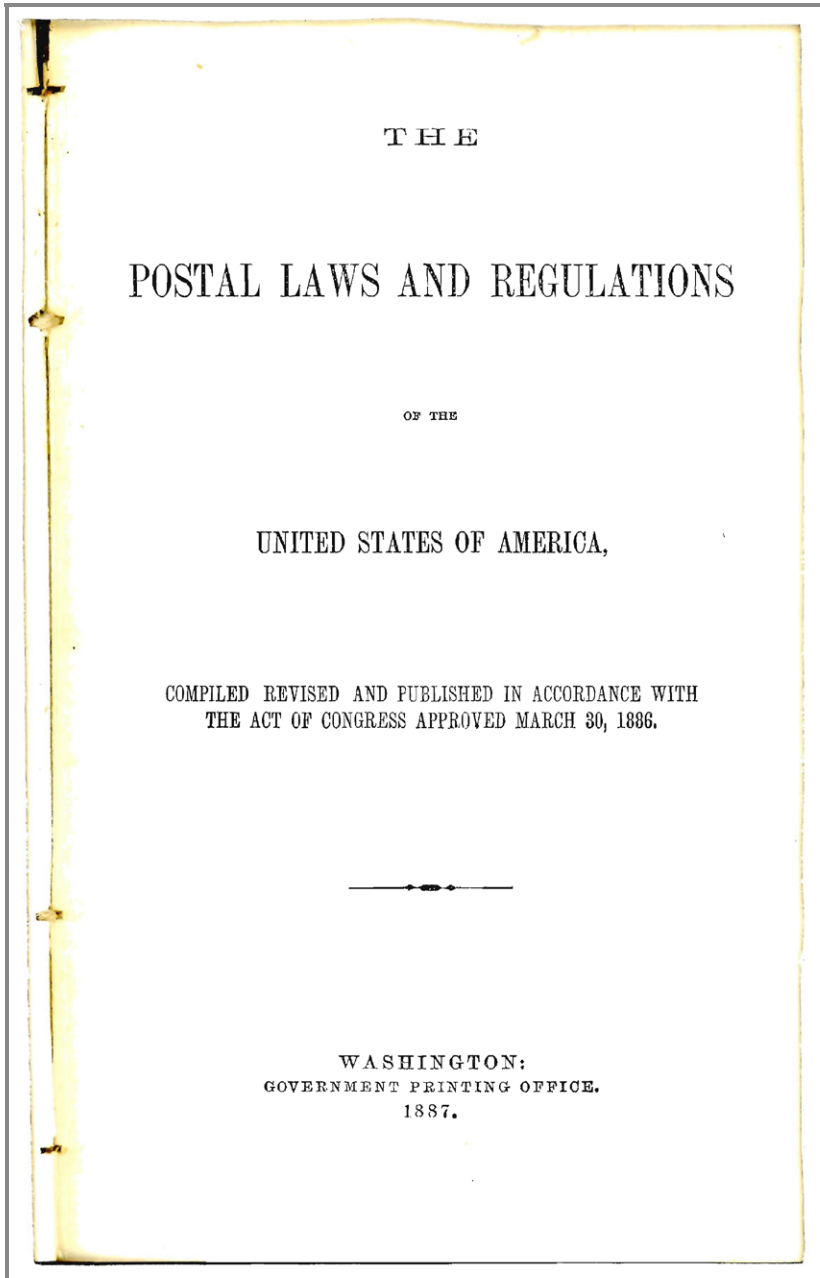


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ties, from soliciting or receiving, directly or indirectly, or being concerned in soliciting or receiving any assessments, subscriptions, or contributions for political purposes from any officer, clerk, or employé in the service of the United States; and it is forbidden to any person to solicit or receive money or other thing of value for political purposes in any post-office or other room or building occupied by any officer of the United States for the discharge of official duties; and postmasters will be held responsible for its prevention. Postmasters and their assistants or employés are forbidden to discharge, promote, or degrade, or change the rank or compensation of any officer or employé, or to threaten so to do, for giving or refusing to give any contribution of money or other valuable thing for any political purpose. It is also forbidden to any officer, clerk, or employé of the United States to give or hand over such contribution to any other officer, clerk, or person in the service of the United States. (Sections 78 to 81.)

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

OF THE TREATMENT OF MAIL MATTER IN POST-OFFICES.

GENERAL PROVISIONS.

Sec. 506. Privacy of First-Class Mail Matter.—The statutes defining crimes against the Post-Office establishment admonish every person in the postal service of the absolute sanctity of a seal. Under no circumstances will any person in the postal service, except those employed for that purpose in the Dead-Letter Office, break or permit to be broken the seal of any letter or packet, while it is in custody of the postal service. Neither postmasters, inspectors, employés of the Department, nor officers of the law, without legal warrant therefor, have authority to open a sealed letter while in the mails, under any pretext; that it may contain improper or criminal matter, or furnish evidence for the conviction of offenders, is no excuse. (See sections 1447 and 1448.)

NOTE.—The inviolability of the seal is very clearly declared in a decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, in *ex parte Jackson*, 96 U. S., 733, thus: "A distinction is to be made between different kinds of mail matter—between what is intended to be kept free from inspection, such as letters and sealed packages subject to letter postage, and what is open to inspection, such as newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and other printed matter, purposely left in condition to be examined. Letters and sealed packages of this kind in the mail are as fully guarded from examination and inspection, except as to their outward form and weight, as if they were retained by the parties forwarding them in their own domiciles. The constitutional guaranty of the right of the people to be secure in their papers against unreasonable searches

and seizures extends to their papers thus closed against inspection, wherever they may be. Whilst in the mail they can only be opened and examined under like warrant, issued upon similar oath or affirmation, particularly describing the thing to be seized, as is required when papers are subjected to search in one's own household. No law of Congress can place in the hands of officials connected with the postal service any authority to invade the secrecy of letters and such sealed packages in the mail; and all regulations adopted as to mail matter of this kind must be in subordination to the great principles embodied in the fourth amendment of the Constitution."

Sec. 507. Postmasters not to give Information Respecting Mail Matter.—Postmasters and all others in the service are forbidden to furnish information concerning mail matter received or delivered, except to the persons to whom it is addressed or to their authorized agents or post-office inspectors. A disregard of this regulation will render the offender liable to removal. Postmasters may, however, when the same can be done without interference with the regular business of the post-office, furnish to officers of the law, to aid them in discovering a fugitive from justice, information concerning the postmarks and addresses of letters, but must not delay or refuse their delivery to the persons addressed.

Sec. 508. Penalty for Unlawfully Detaining Mail Matter.—Any postmaster who shall unlawfully detain in his office any letter or other mail matter, the posting of which is not prohibited by law, with intent to prevent the arrival and delivery of the same to the person to whom it is addressed, shall be punishable by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars, and by imprisonment for not more than six months, and he shall be forever thereafter incapable of holding the office of postmaster. (R. S., § 3890.) (See section 1447.)

Sec. 509. Time of Closing the Mails.—All letters brought to any post-office half an hour before the time for the departure of the mail shall be forwarded therein; but at offices where, in the opinion of the Postmaster-General, more time for making up the mail is required, he may prescribe accordingly, not exceeding one hour. (R. S., § 3840.)

Mails at first-class post-offices are to be closed not more than one hour and at all other offices not more than half an hour before the schedule time of departure of trains, unless such departure is between the hours of 9 P. M. and 5 A. M., when they can be closed at 9 P. M.

This regulation does not apply to the post-office at New York City, and any office may be exempted therefrom by special order. At fourth-class offices the mails should not be closed until it becomes necessary, allowing a reasonable time for delivery at the train or to the carrier on star routes.

Sec. 510. Opening and Closing at Intermediate Offices on Star Routes.—Seven minutes are allowed for opening and closing the mails at all intermediate offices on star routes, where no time is specified. Should this time

be too short at any post-office, the postmaster should apply to the Second Assistant Postmaster-General for an enlargement. On railroad and steamboat routes there is to be no more delay than is necessary to receive and deliver the mails.

Sec. 511. Who to Have Access to Mails.—Postmasters will permit no person, except his duly sworn assistant, clerks, letter carriers, and post-office inspectors to have access to any mail matter in his office, or to the mail locks or keys. This prohibition extends especially to mail contractors and their drivers. Mails should not be made up or handled within reach of persons not authorized to handle them; and such persons should be excluded from the room appropriated to the use of a post-office while the mails are being opened or made up.

Sec. 512. Postmasters Cannot Remit Overcharges on Mail Matter.—A postmaster has no authority to remit penalties or overcharges on mail matter. In cases where the observance of this rule would seem to work injustice, he will advise the party aggrieved to appeal to the Third Assistant Postmaster-General, keeping, if possible, such memorandum of the facts that he may make report thereon if required. Pending appeal the mail matter involved should remain in the post-office awaiting instructions of the Department. (See section 561.)

Sec. 513. Postmasters must Collect and Examine Waste Paper.—The postmaster, or one of his assistants, before the post-office is swept or cleared, should collect and examine the waste paper which has accumulated therein, in order to guard against the possibility of loss of letters or other mail matter which may have fallen on the floor or have been intermingled with such waste paper during the transaction of business. (See section 484.)

Sec. 514. Signal Service Weather Reports.—Signal Service weather reports are to be treated in all respects like letter mail, whether sent by officers of the Service under penalty envelopes, or sent by private persons and prepaid by stamps. Postmasters and railway postal clerks will use the utmost care to forward them promptly. Postmasters receiving them for posting should immediately post them up in a conspicuous place.

Sec. 515. No Mail Matter to be Solicited.—Every postmaster at a fourth-class office is forbidden, on pain of removal, to solicit from any person residing or doing business within the delivery of any other post-office, or from any agent of such person, the deposit for mailing at his office of any mail matter, or to enter into any agreement, or to have any understanding, with any person whatever, whereby, either for or without consideration, matter to be sent through the mails is procured to be mailed at the office of such postmaster.

AT MAILING OFFICES—CANCELING AND POSTMARKING.

Sec. 516. Stamps to be Defaced.—Postage stamps affixed to all mail matter or the stamped envelopes in which the same is inclosed, shall, when deposited for mailing or delivery, be defaced by the postmaster at the mailing office, in such manner as the Postmaster-General may direct; and if any mail matter shall be forwarded without the stamps or envelopes being so defaced, the postmaster at the office of delivery shall deface them, and report the delinquent postmaster to the Postmaster-General. (R. S., § 3921.)

Sec. 517. How to be Canceled.—Postmasters are required—

1. To cancel stamps immediately and effectually by the use of black ink, a standard of which has been adopted and a suitable supply of which will be sent to any post-office that may need it. The use of other kinds of ink for the canceling of stamps is not permitted, except in cases where postmasters may be temporarily out of the standard kind, in which case they may use a good quality of black printing ink until a supply can be obtained from the Department. Such temporary supply must be procured by the postmaster at his own expense, which will not be reimbursed by the Department. (See section 467.)

2. In applying the ink to the face of the stamps the defacement must be thorough and complete, so as to prevent the cleaning and re-use of the canceled stamps.

3. The use of the office rating or postmarking stamp as a canceling instrument is prohibited, except for the cancellation of stamps at the delivery office which were not stamped at the mailing office.

Sec. 518. Mail Matter Other than Second Class to be Postmarked.—All mail matter, except that of the second class, deposited in any post-office for mailing, must bear a postmark giving name of post-office, name or abbreviation of the State, or name of railway post-office, and, on first-class matter, the date of the deposit. All classes of correspondence addressed to foreign countries must be impressed at the mailing office with a stamp indicating the office of origin and date of posting. No offices are exempt from the requirements of this section.

The Department furnishes metal postmarking stamps. The use of rubber stamps is not authorized, as the ink furnished by the Department cannot be used with them.

Sec. 519. Impressions to be Taken of the Postmarking Stamp.—The figures of the stamp must be carefully adjusted at the beginning of each day; and then a clear impression must be made in a book specially provided for the purpose, so as to afford evidence of the discharge of this duty. Special care must be taken not to omit the Sunday impression of the

stamp. If the stamp is fitted with letters and figures indicating the hour at which any letter arrives or is dispatched, care must be taken to change them punctually at the appointed periods. If this duty is neglected the postmaster is liable to be charged with a delay which has not occurred at his post-office. An impression must be made in the book provided of every change made throughout the day, and each impression should be taken immediately after change is made either in the date or hour. This book or record must be kept two years, after which period it may be sold as waste paper.

Sec. 520. How to Secure Legible Stamping.—The impression of every official stamp should be perfect; so made that each letter and figure of the stamp may be distinct. To effect this, the stamp must be kept perfectly clean, which may be done by brushing it with a brush slightly wetted and dipped in powdered potash or soda. The type, after use, must be cleaned before being replaced in the box. The stamp should be held firmly in the hand and struck upon the letter with a light, sharp blow, care being taken not to let the stamp fall upon the impression made at another post-office, or upon any portion of the address. The postmarking ink furnished to postmasters must be used in postmarking. (See section 467).

Sec. 521. Matter with Canceled or Improper Stamps.—When matter bearing previously-used stamps is deposited for mailing (except in authorized cases for forwarding as prescribed in section five hundred and sixty-two) and the postmasters can identify the person so attempting to use them without violating the seal of the matter, he should bring the case to the notice of the Chief Post-Office Inspector. If the person mailing it cannot be identified the matter should be treated as "held for postage." (See section 525.) Mail matter bearing stamps other than postage stamps, or stamps cut from stamped envelopes, newspaper wrappers, or from postal cards, should be treated as "held for postage." Mutilated stamps, fractional parts of postage stamps, postage-due stamps, special-delivery stamps, or newspaper and periodical stamps (except as to second-class matter as authorized in section 379) cannot be recognized or counted in prepayment of postage. When stamps are so affixed that one overlies another, concealing part of its surface, the stamp thus covered will not be taken into account in prepayment.

Sec. 522. Matter in Bad Order.—Mail matter of the first class deposited in or received at any post-office unsealed or in a mutilated or otherwise bad condition, must be stamped or marked with the words "RECEIVED UNSEALED" or "RECEIVED IN BAD ORDER," as the case may be, and be resealed before being forwarded or delivered.

AT MAILING OFFICES—UNMAILABLE MATTER.

Sec. 523. Unpaid Letters.—All domestic letters deposited in any post-office for mailing, on which the postage is wholly unpaid or paid less than one full rate as required by law, except letters lawfully free, and duly certified letters of soldiers, sailors, and marines in the service of the United States, shall be sent by the postmaster to the Dead-Letter Office in Washington. (R. S., first part of § 3937.) (See section 326.)

Sec. 524. Weight of Matter.—When matter is received for mailing, its weight should be ascertained and postage thereon rated up. The weight at time of mailing determines the postage, as mail matter, from various causes, frequently diminishes in weight during transit. If it be insufficiently paid first-class matter and one full rate shall have been paid, the postmaster will stamp the amount of postage due on it and dispatch the same. For treatment of other deficient matter, see next section.

Sec. 525. Treatment of Unpaid Matter Deposited for Mailing.—When a letter wholly unpaid or prepaid at less than one full rate (two cents), or any second or third class matter of obvious value, such as magazines, pictorials, music, pictures, photographs, books, or pamphlets likely to be of use or value to the addressee, or any parcel of fourth-class matter, not fully prepaid but otherwise mailable, shall be deposited in any post-office, it will be treated as herein directed, namely:

1. It must be postmarked with date of receipt, rated up, and amount of deficient postage noted thereon.

2. If it bear the card or address of the sender, or he be known to, or conveniently ascertainable by, the postmaster, the letter or package will at once be returned to him for proper postage, if he be within the delivery of the office.

3. If the sender thereupon pays the postage the stamps will be affixed, if not done by him, and the matter dispatched.

4. If the sender be not known or conveniently ascertainable, the matter on receipt will be indorsed "HELD FOR POSTAGE," the addressee notified by next mail, by an official postal card (Form 1543) or otherwise, of the detention and amount of postage required, and requested to remit the same.

5. It should then be held awaiting reply, not longer than two weeks. If within that time the required postage is received from the addressee the required amount of stamps will be affixed to the matter so as to cover a portion of the words, "HELD FOR POSTAGE," and the matter dispatched.

6. If the sender shall pay the postage, after dispatch of notice to ad-

dressee, the matter will be indorsed, "POSTAGE SUBSEQUENTLY PAID BY WRITER," stamps affixed, and the matter dispatched.

7. If no reply remitting the proper postage shall have been received from the addressee at the expiration of two weeks from the date of mailing of the notice, and prepayment shall not have been made, the matter will be marked "UNCLAIMED" and sent to the Dead-Letter Office, in the manner directed by section six hundred and seven.

As to the treatment of FOREIGN MAIL MATTER UNPAID, see sections 617 and 619.
As to matter WITHOUT VALUE, see section 598.

Sec. 526. Misdirected Matter—Addresses not to be Changed.—Postmasters and others in the postal service must not change the address upon mail matter in the mails or post-offices, except as may be necessary to forward it from one office to another, or upon proper authorization to correct an address. (See section 562.)

Misdirected matter (see section 529) should be returned to the sender, if he be known, with the words stamped or written thereon, "RETURNED FOR BETTER DIRECTION." (See section 546.) And the sender should be informed of the proper post-office address to be given, if it be known at the mailing office; if not, the sender should be advised to apply to the division superintendent.

Sec. 527. Postmasters Responsible for Admission of Matter.—Postmasters are required to exclude from the mails all unmailable matter; but they are specially warned that they have no right to detain first-class matter upon the mere suspicion that it contains anything forbidden to be sent in the mails.

When matter manifestly obscene, or circulars concerning lotteries, are deposited for mailing, the postmaster should withdraw them, and send them with a full statement of the facts within his knowledge to the Dead-Letter Office. He will make like disposition and statement when he believes any article, publication, print, or writing to be mailed contrary to the statutes contained in sections three hundred and seventy-nine and three hundred and eighty, and await instructions.

Great care must be exercised respecting the admission of articles of the fourth class. When offered for mailing under the provisions of sections three hundred and sixty-nine and three hundred and seventy, postmasters will carefully examine them, and not admit them unless the conditions of admission have been fully complied with. In case of doubt the matter should be referred to the General Superintendent of Railway Mail Service. (See section 896.)

Sec. 528. Disposition of Destructive Unmailable Matter.—Postmasters receiving any article of destructive mail matter from any railway post-office or finding it deposited in their own post-offices, must not send the

same to the Dead-Letter Office, but will notify the person mailing such package, whether he live within the delivery of the post-office or not, that some other means than the mail must be provided for its transportation. If the sender is not known, then the postmaster should notify the party addressed of the detention of the package, that it cannot be transmitted in the mails, and that he must provide some other means for its being forwarded at his own expense, outside the mails. Then, if such packages are not taken from his office by or for either the sender or addressee within thirty days, the postmaster should report the facts to the Superintendent of the Dead-Letter Office, and await instructions from him.

Sec. 529. What Matter to be Sent to the Dead-Letter Office.—The following unmailable matter will be sent from the office where it is deposited for mailing to the Dead-Letter Office, namely :

1. "*Held for postage*" matter which cannot be returned to sender and has not been prepaid by addressee, as required by section five hundred and twenty-five.

2. *Misdirected matter* which cannot be dispatched to the addressee nor returned to sender, as directed in section five hundred and twenty-six.

3. *Excess of weight and size of matter*, or those packages of domestic matter which exceed the weight limited by law.

4. *Obscene matter* declared non-mailable by section three hundred and eighty.

5. *Lottery circulars* forbidden to be sent in the mails by section three hundred and seventy-nine.

6. *Mutilated or damaged matter*, or that which when deposited in the post-office is, or before dispatch may become, so damaged that it cannot be forwarded to destination, and cannot be returned to the sender.

As to FOREIGN MATTER, see sections 434 and 619.

Sec. 530. How to be Sent to Dead-Letter Office.—Unmailable matter will be sent to the Dead-Letter Office from the office where offered for mailing, in connection with other unmailable and dead matter, at the periods prescribed in section six hundred and five.

AT MAILING OFFICES—WITHDRAWAL OF MAIL MATTER.

Sec. 531. Before Dispatch.—After mailable matter has been deposited in the post-office it cannot be withdrawn except by the writer thereof or sender, or, in case of a minor child, the parent or guardian duly authorized to control the correspondence of the writer. The utmost care must be taken to ascertain that the person desiring to withdraw the matter is the person entitled to do so. If necessary the postmaster should require the applicant to exhibit a written address in the same

hand as that upon the letter and such description of the letter or article mailed, or other evidence, as will identify the same and satisfy the postmaster that the applicant is entitled to withdraw it.

The postmaster acts at his peril in permitting such withdrawal, and would be liable, however honest his intentions, were he to deliver it to an impostor or one not entitled to it. He should in no case delay a mail or retard the business of his office in order to search for a letter desired to be withdrawn.

Sec. 532. Letters with Stamps Canceled not to be Withdrawn.—After canceling the stamps upon a letter the postmaster must not return it to the person mailing it for him to take it to a railway post-office. If received too late to put in the locked pouch, the postmaster or his assistant or sworn clerk may, after cancellation and postmarking, take it to the postal car. The railway postal clerk may receive it from such postmaster, assistant, or clerk, but is forbidden to receive such canceled letter from any other person out of the pouch. (See section 979.)

Sec. 533. Withdrawal by Sender after Dispatch.—After a letter has passed from the mailing post-office the delivery of the same may be prevented, and its return to the writer secured, by an application by the writer to the postmaster at the office of mailing, stating reasons therefor, identifying the letter, and supporting such application with sufficient proof in writing. Upon such application and evidence, and upon a deposit being made by the writer of a sum sufficient to cover all expenses incurred, the postmaster shall telegraph a request for the return of such letter to his office, if it has been forwarded, to the postmaster at the office of address, carefully describing the same, so as to identify it and prevent the return of any other matter. On receipt of such request the postmaster at the office of address shall return such letter to the mailing postmaster in a penalty envelope, who will deliver it to the writer upon payment of all expenses and of letter rate of postage on the matter returned, on the envelope of which postage-due stamps of the proper value must be placed and canceled, and upon the prepayment also of a registered parcel, addressed to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, Division of Correspondence, in which the postmaster shall inclose and transmit the application of the writer and all proofs submitted by him, together with the writer's receipt for it, and the envelope of the returned letter. The following form may be used in making application for withdrawal of mail matter after dispatch:

— — — —, 188—.

Postmaster, — — — —,

Please recall and deliver to myself or bearer a letter deposited in — — — — on or about — — — —, 188—, addressed to — — — —, and described as follows: — — — —, and in the same handwriting as this application, and which was written by

me or by my authority, and which I do not desire delivered to the addressee for the following reasons: _____.

It is hereby agreed that if the letter is returned to me, I will protect you from any and all claims made against you for such return, and will fully indemnify you for any loss you may sustain by reason of such action, and I herewith deposit \$— to cover all expenses incurred, and will deliver you the envelope of the letter returned.

[Name.] _____.

[Address.] _____.

[Receipt.] Received _____, 188—, of the postmaster, the above described piece of mail matter for account of the sender.

[Name.] _____.

Witness [Name.] _____, [Address.] _____.

AT MAILING OFFICES—DISTRIBUTION AND DISPATCH OF MAILS.

Sec. 534. General Directions.—At offices where a superintendent of mails is not employed, postmasters will be governed in the distribution and dispatch of mails—except foreign mails outward from exchange offices, which are under the control of the Superintendent of Foreign Mails—by the orders received from the General Superintendent of Railway Mail Service, or from the division superintendent acting under him in whose jurisdiction the post-office may be. In the absence of other instructions, every postmaster whose post-office is situated upon a railroad, will mail all matter direct to the cars, unless it be addressed to post-offices directly connected with his own by star or steamboat routes. Postmasters at other post-offices will mail to the nearest post-office upon a railroad all matter which cannot be sent direct to its destination by star or steamboat route.

Sec. 535. Distribution of Mails by Schemes.—Postmasters will carefully distribute and make up mails by the official schemes which may be furnished them, and will conform to any changes that may be made in the same by the superintendent of the division, and will make up and exchange only such pouches as he may order. But the division superintendent may except any post-office from this requirement.

No change in distribution or dispatch must be made without first obtaining authority from the proper division superintendent of Railway Mail Service, except in cases of emergency; and in all such cases an immediate report, giving the reasons for such change, must be made to the division superintendent.

Sec. 536. Distribution of Mail by States, &c.—A distribution or separation should be made only of such mail for States or portions of States as can be advanced thereby. All mail for States of which no distribution is made must be made up “by States,” and facing slips used in accordance with section five hundred and forty-three; that is, letter and circular mail for each State must be made up in packages, and

newspaper mail in canvas sacks, by itself, and the name of the State marked on the slip covering the package or tag attached to the sack.

All other mail, not local, sent to or by way of railroad or steamboat lines, should be made up by States, if sufficient to do so; and if not, then it may be put all in one package, addressed with the name of the railway (or steamboat) office in whose pouch it is dispatched, adding "State of ——," to indicate that it contains other than local mail.

Sec. 537. Local Mail for Railroad and Steamboat Lines.—Mail to be dispatched to local post-offices on railroad or steamboat lines should be made up in packages addressed to the proper railway or steamboat offices, and containing only the local mail supplied by that line, as given in the official schemes. Post-offices on railroad lines in making up local mail for such lines, will make for each line two packages, one for the train going each way, and address the packages thus: "—— R. P. O. EAST" (WEST, NORTH, or SOUTH, as the case may be).

Sec. 538. Letters for Delivery and Distribution in Separate Packages.—Letter and circular mail for delivery and mail for distribution at a post-office must always be made up in separate packages.

Sec. 539. Direct Packages.—Making a direct package is placing all letters for one post-office in a package by themselves, all faced one way, with a plainly-addressed letter on the outside, and a facing slip, bearing the postmark of the office and the name or number of the person making up the package, on the back of the same, faced out. This applies as well to offices using printed slips as to those that do not.

Sec. 540. Direct Packages for Horse Routes.—In making up mail to be dispatched by a horse or stage route, a direct package should be tied out for each post-office, including the last one, on such route, so as to facilitate the handling at intermediate offices. Mail to be dispatched from an office on such route on and beyond the last post-office thereon should, as far as possible, be made up "by States," or, if not sufficient to do so, then in one package, marking the name of the last post-office on the slip covering the same, and adding the abbreviation, "Dis.," to indicate that the package is for distribution.

Sec. 541. No Mail to be Put in Pouch Loose or Under Straps.—Letter and circular mail must always be properly "faced up" and tied in packages, and never placed in the pouch loose.

After pouches are closed and dispatched from a post-office, letters must not be placed under the strap or attached to the outside of the pouch. If this is done at the station, the postmaster should inform the mail-messenger and have the practice discontinued. (See section 545.)

Sec. 542. No Through Pouches by Mail Trains.—Postmasters will make

no through pouches to be dispatched by mail trains unless specially instructed to do so.

Sec. 543. Facing Slips to be Used.—Facing slips, bearing postmark with date and time of close or dispatch, and name of person making up the same, must be placed upon each package of letters or circulars, and in each pouch or canvas sack of newspapers, or on the label holder, if any, attached thereto. For form of facing slip, see section 994.

Sec. 544. No Hooks on Mail Bags.—The use of hooks in handling mail bags is forbidden.

Sec. 545. Delivery of Mail Matter on Mail Cars by Postmasters.—Postmasters are required to dispatch mail to railway post-offices in the lock pouches provided for that purpose, except in the case of a few late letters or postal cards, which they may deliver in person or by a sworn assistant after the postmark of the mailing office has been impressed thereon and the stamps canceled. Such postmarked and canceled letters and postal cards must not be received by the postal clerk from a mail-messenger nor from the public, as after the mail is once deposited in a post-office it cannot again come into the hands of the public until its final delivery. (See sections 532 and 979.)

AT OFFICES IN TRANSIT.

Sec. 546. Missent or Unmailable Matter Inadvertently Sent and Misdirected Matter.—Misdirected, destructive, or manifestly obscene matter, which should not have been, but through inadvertence may have been, dispatched from the post-office of mailing, should be detained and withdrawn from the mails by any postmaster into whose hands the same may come in transit. But other matter which should have been detained at the office of mailing as "held for postage," "excess of weight or size," "coin," or "lottery" (see section 379), must not be stopped in transit.

Misdirected matter of the first class, if it bear the card or request of the sender, should be withdrawn and returned to him with the words written or stamped thereon, "RETURNED FOR BETTER DIRECTION." (See section 526.)

Missent matter, or that which is plainly addressed, but sent in the wrong direction, should, when discovered, be placed in the first mail going in the proper direction.

Sec. 547. Mail Stopping Over Night.—When the mail stops over night where there is a post-office, it must be kept in the post-office, except at points where transfer clerks are on duty during the night in charge of such mail, or where otherwise ordered by the Department.

For time allowed in opening mail, see section 510.

Sec. 548. Postage-due Matter not to be Stopped, &c.—Postage-due matter must not be stopped or rated up at intermediate offices in transit. The duties in respect to it omitted by the mailing postmaster are to be performed by the postmaster at the office of address.

Sec. 549. Uncanceled Stamps not to be Canceled.—Matter dispatched from a post-office, on which the stamps were not properly canceled, is not to be stopped in transit nor the stamps thereon canceled at any office but that of destination. The statute makes it the duty of the postmaster at the office of delivery to deface them and report the delinquent postmaster. (See section 516.)

AT RECEIVING OFFICES—OPENING OF MAILS.

Sec. 550. Opening Pouches.—Upon the arrival of the mail at any post-office, the mail sacks and pouches addressed to that office, and none other, should be opened, first being examined to ascertain if they were properly locked, and are not cut or torn so that mail matter could have been lost or abstracted therefrom. Upon being emptied the pouch or sack should be carefully examined to see that no mail matter is left therein. Printed wooden labels for sacks of newspaper mail and printed slide labels for pouches must be taken off when the sacks or pouches are opened, and returned by first mail to the post-office or line from which they were received, the wooden labels to be classed with newspaper mail, and the slide labels as letter mail. Under no circumstances are any such labels to be defaced or destroyed.

As to procedure when lock or key is defective and pouch cannot be opened, see sections 838 and 839.

As to registered matter, see chapter thirty-five.

Sec. 551. Errors in Distribution or Making up; Receipt or Dispatch of Mail, how Noted and Reported.—On opening and ascertaining the mail the postmaster or clerk will examine it for errors in distribution and making up, which will be noted and reported to the division superintendent as follows:

1. All errors found in the distribution of any package of letters or in any sack of newspapers must be noted on the reverse side of the slip covering or inside of the same, giving the name of post-office, county, or State, if included in the superscription, adding thereto the name of the person noting the error, and postmarking with date.
2. If any package or sack arrive without slips, the division superintendent must be promptly notified of the fact, and the mailing office, if known, and the label must be sent to him with report.
3. Any irregularities in the receipt or dispatch or forwarding of any mail will also be promptly reported.
4. Any mail received at his post-office which has not been properly

distributed or made up by railway postal clerks, should be promptly reported, and the slips covering or received with the same should be sent with the report.

Sec. 552. Disposition of Slips Received.—All slips received upon packages of letter or circular mail, or in sacks of newspaper mail, upon which errors have been noted, must be preserved and sent to the division superintendent daily from first and second class offices, weekly from all others. All other slips may be treated as waste paper. A supply of facing slips can be obtained from the division superintendent at any time, or from the Department. (See sections 469 and 472.)

Sec. 553. Back Stamping.—Every postmaster, upon receipt of the mail, will immediately place the postmark of his office upon the back of every letter therein received, showing the date and hour of the day when the letter was received. The value and importance of this practice are so great that failure to observe this rule, if continuous or repeated after notice, will be ground for removal from office.

AT RECEIVING OFFICES—DEFICIENT POSTAGE.

Sec. 554. Postmasters to Search for and Rate up.—Postmasters at the office of delivery may remove the wrappers and envelopes from mail matter not charged with letter postage, when it can be done without destroying them, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is upon or connected with any such matter anything which would authorize or require the charge of a higher rate of postage thereon. (R. S., § 3882.)

On opening the mail the postmaster will look over the letters and packages to ascertain whether the postage thereon has been sufficiently prepaid, and will rate up the amount found to be due on all matter, not free, dispatched inadvertently without any prepayment, at double its proper rate (sections 320, 558); and on all first-class matter prepaid at one full rate, but not fully prepaid, and on all other partially but insufficiently prepaid matter, at full rates, according to its class and weight, and note in writing or stamp the amount due on each letter or parcel.

Sec. 555. Official Matter Deliverable at Washington.—Any part-paid letter or packet addressed to either of said Departments or Bureaus [the Executive Departments or Bureaus thereof, the Agricultural Department and Public Printer] may be delivered free; but where there is good reason to believe the omission to prepay the full postage thereon was intentional, such letter or packet shall be returned to the sender. (Act of July 5, 1884, § 3, 23 Stats., 158; fully quoted in section 415.)

NOTE.—This exemption from the payment of deficient postage on matter addressed to the Executive Departments or Bureaus thereof before delivery applies only at the Washington City post-office.

Sec. 556. Mail to the Postmaster Himself.—When insufficiently prepaid matter addressed to a postmaster reaches its destination, he may refuse to pay the additional necessary postage and take the matter out of the office, which must then be treated as “refused” matter; but if he takes the matter he must pay the deficient postage.

Sec. 557. Postage Due must be Collected and Stamps Affixed.—No mail matter shall be delivered until the postage due thereon has been paid. (R. S., § 3900). That all mail matter of the first class upon which one full rate of postage has been prepaid shall be forwarded to its destination, charged with the unpaid rate, to be collected on delivery; but postmasters, before delivering the same, or any article of mail matter upon which prepayment in full has not been made, shall affix, or cause to be affixed, and canceled, as ordinary stamps are canceled, one or more stamps equivalent in value to the amount of postage due on such article of mail matter, which stamp shall be of such special design and denomination as the Postmaster-General may prescribe, and which shall in no case be sold by any postmaster nor received by him in prepayment of postage. That, in lieu of the commission now allowed to postmasters at offices of the fourth class upon the amount of unpaid letter postage collected, such postmaster shall receive a commission upon the amount of such special stamps so canceled, the same as now allowed upon postage stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and newspaper and periodical stamps canceled as postages on matter actually mailed at their offices: *Provided*, That the Postmaster-General may, in his discretion, prescribe instead such regulation therefor at the offices where free delivery is established as, in his judgment, the good of the service may require. (Act of March 3, 1879, § 26, 20 Stats., 361.)

That any postmaster or other person engaged in the postal service who shall collect, and fail to account for, the postage due upon any article of mail matter which he may deliver, without having previously affixed and canceled such special stamps, as hereinbefore provided, or who shall fail to affix such stamp, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of fifty dollars. (Act of March 3, 1879, § 27, 20 Stats., 362.)

NOTE.—The requirement of the statute is that postage-due stamps shall be affixed on all matter of whatever character on which postage is due, including ship letters, foreign letters, advertised letters, all over-weight matter, and all matter rated below its proper class, notwithstanding the mailing postmaster has failed to charge it.

Sec. 558. Collection of Double Postage.—Double rate should, under the statute (section 320), be charged only on matter reaching its destination with no evidence of any prepayment whatever. A drop letter deposited in an office without prepayment of postage is not subject to

double rates. When it is apparent from the envelope or wrapper that a stamp has been on it and has been wholly or partially lost off, the postmaster may assume the matter to have been prepaid. But the evidence that the stamp has been affixed must be from the blank in the impression of the canceling stamp. In such case, first-class matter will be presumed to have been prepaid one full rate only, as that would entitle it to be forwarded. Letters on which postage-due stamps, but no other, are affixed, arriving at the office of destination, must be charged double rate on delivery, as the postage upon mailing cannot be paid in postage-due stamps. The mailing postmaster should in such cases be reported to the Third Assistant Postmaster-General, who will charge his account with such stamps.

Sec. 559. Time of Affixing Postage-due Stamps.—At all other than free-delivery post-offices postmasters will affix the postage-due stamps when, and not until, the delivery of the matter has been requested; and hence not to matter forwarded by request of the addressees, returned to writer, or sent to the Dead-Letter Office. But at free-delivery post-offices they will be affixed on all deficient matter as soon as received; unless an order is on file for the letter to be forwarded, in which case, if practicable, it will be forwarded without affixing such stamps.

When matter arrives at a post-office with postage due thereon, and the postmaster has no postage-due stamps on hand, he will collect the amount due, and so soon as he shall obtain postage-due stamps affix the amount in such stamps to a sheet of paper, cancel, and forward the same to the Third Assistant Postmaster-General with statement of the facts.

If the postage stamps upon a registered letter or parcel do not cover the proper postage and registration fee, the receiving postmaster must proceed according to section one thousand one hundred and fourteen.

Sec. 560. Credit for Postage Stamps Affixed to Undelivered Matter.—When at free-delivery offices postage-due stamps have been affixed to refused, unclaimed, or other undelivered matter, credit must be claimed therefor, when sent to the Dead-Letter Office, on the dead-letter bill for "postage-due stamps canceled on undelivered mail matter." When returned to writer, or forwarded to another post-office within the United States, a numbered postage-due bill, stating amount due and name of person from whom it is to be collected, must be attached to and sent with the letter. The postmaster receiving the same must detach the bill and return it by next mail with amount of uncanceled postage-due stamps inclosed to the postmaster issuing the bill, who, in case of failure to get a return of bill and stamps within a reasonable time, may obtain proper credit and expose the delinquent postmaster by making a

duplicate bill, from the stub of the original, attaching it to and incorporating it with his regular dead-letter bill, indorsing in the blank space at the end, "DUPLICATE, ORIGINAL NOT RETURNED," or "ORIGINAL RETURNED WITHOUT STAMPS."

When a postmaster at an office other than a free-delivery office, receives matter from a free-delivery office to which postage-due stamps have been affixed, and which proves undeliverable, he should send the same to the Dead-Letter Office with special claim for credit for postage-due stamps refunded by him, attached thereto.

In forwarding to foreign countries mail matter on which postage-due stamps have been canceled, the original bill, indorsed "FOREIGN LETTER FORWARDED," should be attached to and sent with the dead-letter bill. (See section 607.)

Sec. 561. *First-class Rate on Matter Closed Against Inspection Cannot be Remitted*, as the statute forbids its delivery at less rate than for matter of the first class. (See section 376.) If the addressee feels aggrieved at such charge, he may deposit the deficient postage and require the package to be sent unopened to the Third Assistant Postmaster-General for his decision whether it be so wrapped as to require it to be rated as first-class matter; and the postmaster shall promptly transmit it accordingly, under penalty envelope, with proper letter of advice. The postmaster must give the claimant a receipt for his deposit; the receipt to be returned to him on delivery of the article, if his decision be confirmed.

FORWARDING MAIL MATTER.

Sec. 562. *Prepaid Matter to be Forwarded*.—Prepaid letters shall be forwarded from one post-office to another, at the request of the party addressed, without additional charge for postage. (R. S., § 3940.)

1. The matter to be forwarded at request of addressee without additional charge for postage, includes letters prepaid at one full rate (two cents), parcels prepaid at first-class rates, postal cards, official matter, and free county publications (within the county of publication).

2. Other mail matter, whenever forwarded, must be charged with additional postage at the same rate as if originally mailed at the forwarding office, with the rate noted thereon thus: "POSTAGE DUE FOR FORWARDING, ——— CENTS," unless the addressee or some one for him prepay the postage required for forwarding; in which case the necessary stamps will be affixed and canceled. At the office of destination, the matter will be treated as deficient matter unless the postage for forwarding has been prepaid.

3. Requests to forward given by any other person than the addressee, or his lawful agent, or the person in whose care the matter is addressed,

will be disregarded; the husband of an addressee will be presumed her agent when she has not directed her mail to be withheld from his control.

4. A general request to forward matter should be observed until revoked.

5. The direction may be changed and matter reforwarded upon request as many times as may be necessary to reach the addressee.

6. Matter entitled thereto should be promptly forwarded in the next mail. (As to special-delivery matter, see section 694.)

7. Penalty envelopes must not be used to forward letters; but if there be insufficient space to write correction of address, a piece of paper should be attached for the purpose.

As to forwarding registered matter, see sections 1111 and 1113.

Sec. 563. Erroneously Addressed or Delivered Matter, &c.; when to be Forwarded.—When any article of mail matter has been erroneously delivered, it may, on being returned to the post-office, be forwarded upon due request, as if it had not passed from the post-office. Any matter proper to be forwarded free, addressed to the care of another, and returned by him redirected, may be forwarded in like manner. Matter which has been opened inadvertently upon misdelivery may be forwarded. As postal cars, mail apartments in cars and steamboats, are designated as post-offices, a deposit in such car or apartment, at the post-office originally addressed, of unopened letters properly readdressed for forwarding, is permissible; and the deposit in a letter box established by the Department, is equivalent to a deposit in the post-office.

The postmaster will correct and forward to its known destination any matter of the first and second classes which comes to his office through obvious mistake of the sender in addressing it, but should not guess at the destination, nor forward it on trial. If sure that it can be delivered from the office to which he sends it, he will postmark it and indorse: "DEFICIENCY IN ADDRESS SUPPLIED BY" (name of forwarding office).

Sec. 564. Letters under Cover to Postmasters.—Postmasters will forward all first-class matter on which one full rate of postage is prepaid which may reach them under cover from any other post-office with or without request to mail the same. Before forwarding, they should cancel the stamps and indorse in writing or stamp on such matter the following: "RECEIVED AT _____, UNDER COVER FROM THE POST-OFFICE AT _____."

DELIVERY OF ORDINARY MAIL MATTER.

Sec. 565. Must be from Post-Offices.—Mail matter must be delivered from post-offices. Railway postal clerks will not, in any case, deliver matter

to the persons addressed. It must be sent to and delivered at the office of address. The exceptions to this rule are the following:

1. Matter addressed to a discontinued office may be delivered from the nearest office thereto.

2. When a letter from a foreign country arrives, not in a closed mail, directed to a post-office other than that at the port of arrival, and the person addressed so specially desires, the postmaster at the port of arrival may deliver him the letter upon being satisfied of his identity.

3. Any ambassador or other diplomatic representative of a foreign government may, on his request, personally receive his mail matter from any post-office through which it may be passing, the postmaster being sure of his identity.

4. A postmaster at whose office mail matter in transit is lying, delayed by floods or other casualties which have made the mail route impassable, may deliver matter to the parties addressed, upon their personal or written application, and sure identification.

5. Railway postal clerks may deliver to any post-office inspector, who may enter their postal cars, any mail matter addressed to such inspector, when sure of his identity by seeing his commission.

Sec. 566. General Directions for Delivery.—The following general directions are given for the delivery of mail matter:

1. The delivery in each case should be to the person addressed, or according to his order. Such order may be implied in some cases, as where the addressee is in the habit of sending for or receiving his mail through his clerk, servant, agent, or some member of his family, and recognizing or acquiescing in such delivery.

2. When a person requests delivery to him of the mail of another, claiming that the addressee has verbally given him authority to receive it, the postmaster, if he doubts the authority, may require it to be in writing, signed and filed in his office.

3. When in doubt as to the identity of the addressee the postmaster may require proof, and should exercise great care, especially where the matter appears to be of value, to make proper delivery, as he is in peril of liability for damages to the proper party if he misdelivers.

4. Where two or more persons of the same name receive mail at the same office the postmaster should advise them to adopt some address or means by which their mail may be distinguished. He will deliver according to his best judgment; and will not return it to the mailing office for better description of the addressee, until, after inquiry, he is unable to determine to whom it should be delivered.

5. Mail matter addressed to a person in care of another should be delivered to the addressee, if he so direct, rather than to the person to

whose care it is addressed. In the absence of such direction, it should be delivered to the first of the two persons who may call for it.

6. Mail matter addressed to several persons may be delivered to any one of them.

7. Mail matter addressed to a public official, or to an officer of a corporation, by his official title, should be delivered to the person actually holding the office designated in the address, the presumption being that the matter was intended for the officer as such, rather than the individual named. This regulation also applies to the delivery of letters addressed to persons as "agent" or "agents," when the agency is of some public matter or of the business of some corporation, but not when the agency is merely of an individual or firm.

8. Neither husband nor wife can control the delivery of correspondence addressed to the other. When so instructed, a postmaster must refuse to deliver letters to the husband which are addressed to the wife, or those to the wife which are addressed to the husband. In the absence of instructions to the contrary, the wife's letters should be placed in the husband's box, and delivered to him with his own letters unless known to live separately.

9. A person engaged in a legitimate business may adopt a business name, and when duly identified, may receive his mail, registered or ordinary, by that name, as well as by his proper name.

For SPECIAL RULES GOVERNING DELIVERY OF REGISTERED MATTER, see sections 1116 to 1128.

Sec. 567. Official Letters to Pensioners.—A letter from the Pension Office, in Washington, D. C., may be delivered to the person in whose care it may be addressed, as well as to the pensioner or a member of his family; but a letter addressed to a pensioner from the office of an agent for paying pensions must be delivered to the pensioner or some member of his family, even though addressed in the care of a third person; because such address is prohibited. A pensioner's order, verbal or written, instructing the postmaster to deliver letters to him from a pension agent, or from the Pension Office, to an attorney, claim agent, or broker, must be disregarded. If a communication from the Commissioner of Pensions, or a pension agent, addressed to a pensioner, reaches a post-office after the pensioner has died, leaving no surviving widow or children under sixteen years of age, the postmaster should return the communication to the office from which it came, or to the Commissioner of Pensions, Washington, D. C., with a statement of the fact. If there be a surviving widow, the letter should be delivered to her. If no widow, then to the guardian, if any, of the children surviving under sixteen years of age.

Sec. 568. Mail Matter Addressed to Minors.—Where minor children reside with their parents, the father, or if he be dead, the mother generally is entitled to direct the disposition of mail matter addressed to such minors, and unless the minors be under guardianship, may authorize another to receive mail matter addressed to them, although they be not residing with the parent, and the postmaster should deliver accordingly, requiring directions in writing if he deem it necessary. In the absence of directions from a parent or guardian, or one authorized to control his correspondence, mail matter addressed to a minor may be delivered to him; and, especially if living independently, he is entitled to control his correspondence. Mail matter addressed to a deceased minor, who up to the time of decease resided with parents or guardian, may be delivered to the parent or guardian; but if the minor left a husband or widow, delivery may be made to him or her.

Sec. 569. Mail Matter Addressed to Deceased Persons.—Mail matter addressed to a deceased person must be delivered to his legal representative; if there be none, delivery may be made to a surviving husband or widow, unless there be other claimants, in which event the postmaster should report the facts of the case to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, and await instructions. If there be no legal representative, surviving husband, or widow, and others claim such mail matter, it should be sent to the Dead-Letter Office with the return of unclaimed matter, with a statement of the facts. (See section 607.)

Sec. 570. Partnerships and Corporations.—

1. Mail matter addressed to a firm may be delivered to any member of it.

2. The postmaster is not required to decide disputes between members of an existing firm as to delivery of its matter. If it has previously been through box or general delivery, he will continue to place the mail therein; if through carrier, he will instruct the carrier to hand the mail matter to any of the members of the firm.

3. If the firm be dissolved and contention arise, the postmaster's action will be governed by section five hundred and seventy-one.

4. Mail matter addressed to a corporation should be delivered to the agent or officer conducting its correspondence, or to such person as is authorized by the corporation to receive it.

5. Caution should be exercised to resist all attempts to secure the mail of an established house, firm, or corporation through the adoption by others of a similar name. Where disputes arise between individuals, firms, or corporations as to the use of a name or designation, the postmaster should deliver any matter addressed to a street, number, or building according to such address. When not so addressed, he will deliver

matter to the firm or corporation which first adopted the name of the address at that place. When in doubt as to the firm or corporation for which any mail matter is intended, and claim therefor is disputed, the postmaster may withhold delivery and report the facts and any statements made by either claimant to the First Assistant Postmaster-General for advice.

Sec. 571. Postmaster to Require Appointment of Receiver.—When a firm or company dissolves partnership, and contention arises as to whom the mail matter addressed to the former business firm or company, or its officials, shall be delivered, a postmaster, being forbidden by one party to deliver to another, should require the appointment of a receiver, retaining all mail matter until said receiver is appointed; and if no such receiver is appointed, or no agreement between the contending parties is reached, before the expiration of thirty days from the date when delivery ceased, the letters in dispute, and all that may arrive thereafter (until an agreement is made or receiver appointed), shall be sent to the Dead-Letter Office marked **IN DISPUTE**.

Sec. 572. Delivery to Assignee or Receiver.—Upon the dissolution of a corporation its mail matter should be delivered to the receiver or legal representative charged with the duty of winding up its affairs. When the business of a firm, corporation, or individual has passed into the hands of an assignee or receiver, the mail matter addressed to such firm, corporation, or individual should be delivered to the assignee or receiver in the following cases:

1. When the instrument of assignment authorizes the assignee to receive it and a copy thereof is filed with the postmaster; or
2. When the order of the court by which such receiver was appointed directs him to receive it; or
3. When the members of the firm, officers of the corporation, or person to whom the mail is addressed consent that he shall receive it; or
4. When the firm or corporation has not resumed business under the same name, so as to have correspondence in regard to business or property which did not pass to the assignee or receiver; or
5. When the receiver has been appointed to take charge of, continue, or wind up the business of an existing corporation.

The mail matter should be delivered to the firm or person instead of the assignee or receiver—

1. When the person making the assignment has not consented or agreed that the assignee shall receive mail matter addressed to him, the assignor, and arriving after the assignment, or when it reasonably appears that the matter does not relate to the business assigned.
2. When the firm whose business has been placed in the receiver's

hands is engaged in conducting a new or other business under the former name, or has subsequently acquired or has other property that does not pass into the receiver's hands. In such cases it will be presumed that the mail matter relates to the new or other business.

3. When the order of the court by which the receiver is appointed directs that the mail matter shall be delivered to the person, firm, or some officer of the corporation, instead of the receiver.

Sec. 573. Delivery according to Agreement of Parties.—When parties interested in mail matter enter into an agreement as to its delivery, and instruct the postmaster as to whom he shall deliver it, he will deliver accordingly until his instructions are changed by mutual consent of the parties, or until the judgment or order otherwise of a court of competent jurisdiction. He may require the instructions to be in writing.

This rule governs the case of the sale of a business. The postmaster is not required to construe the contract or determine rights, but only to comply with such plain directions as may be given by the seller, in their absence delivering to the addressee. The authority to the vendee is not revocable by the seller if there be a right to the mail in the vendee.

574. To Fictitious Addresses.—Letters and packages addressed to fictitious persons and firms, to initials, or to no particular person or firm, unless directed to be delivered at a designated place, as a post-office box, street, and number, or to the care of a certain person or firm, within the delivery of the post-office, are undeliverable, and must be sent to the Dead-Letter Office, as prescribed by section six hundred and two, unless the envelope contain the card of the sender, or a request to return, in which case the letters or packages should be returned accordingly.

Whenever a postmaster has reason to believe that a street or number, designated place, box, or address in care of another is being used by any one for conducting, under a fictitious address, correspondence forbidden circulation in the mails, he should promptly report the fact and the reason for his belief to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, and await his instructions, giving notice at the same time at the place where such letters and packages have been received that, pending instructions from the Department, the claimant of such matter must call at the general delivery to receive it, where it is the duty of the postmaster to have it placed, and to deliver it to the person calling for it, upon establishing his identity.

Sec. 575. To Agent of Club.—Any number of citizens may employ an agent, and give him a written order on the postmaster for their mail; and when such order is presented to the postmaster, it is his duty to deliver the mail of such parties, and also mail addressed to a person

in care of any such parties, to the named agent. When the mail is so delivered the responsibility of the postmaster ceases.

Sec. 576. To Mail Carriers, to be Carried out of Mails.—Mail matter of patrons of an office may, at their request, be delivered to the mail carrier, to be carried out of the mail and handed to them on his route before he passes another post-office.

Sec. 577. Injunctions of Courts to be Obeyed.—Where mail matter is claimed by different parties, and suit is instituted between them to determine their rights to it, and injunction is granted restraining either or all parties from receiving or the postmaster from making delivery to either or any party, he will obey the injunction and abide the decree of the court as to the disposal of the matter.

Sec. 578. Letters "Opened through Mistake."—Where a letter intended for one person is delivered to another of the same name and returned by him, the postmaster will reseal the letter in the presence of the person who opened it, and request him to write upon it the words "OPENED BY ME THROUGH MISTAKE," and sign his name; he will then replace the letter in the post-office. If the person who opens the letter is unable to sign his name, the postmaster will make the indorsement and have the person sign by "mark," in presence of a witness.

Sec. 579. Of Second-Class Matter.—A publisher may send a package of second-class matter to one address, and the addressee may call at the post-office, write addresses on single copies, and the postmaster may then deliver them; but the packages cannot be taken away from the post-office and returned again for delivery of the single copies or transmission in the mails, unless postage is prepaid anew. It is not the duty of the postmaster to open a package of papers intended for a club and write the several names of the subscribers thereon; but he may do so.

The liability of persons who take newspapers and periodicals coming to their address, out of a post-office, for the amount of the subscription thereto, is not determined by any postal law or regulation. The postmaster's duty is to deliver the matter on request, or, if unclaimed or refused, to dispose of it as required in sections five hundred and ninety-eight and five hundred and ninety-nine.

Sec. 580. Of Valuable Letters from Dead-Letter Office, &c.—When dead letters containing money or other valuable matter are sent from the Dead-Letter Office to a postmaster for delivery to the owners, he will make diligent effort to deliver them to the proper party. They are inclosed to him open to enable him to identify the owner or claimant. He and his clerks must maintain the strictest secrecy as to their contents; and under no circumstances can the postmaster, or any one through

whose hands such letters pass, be allowed to make any exchange for other funds of the money or matter therein contained.

If such letters containing money cannot be delivered, after holding them thirty days from date of receipt, the postmaster will indorse the reason for non-delivery on the circular which accompanies each, and return them to the Dead-Letter Office duly entered on one list, giving the Department letter, number, and book. This list must be sent in duplicate, and when verified one copy will be returned to the post-office. The package should be indorsed "DEAD REGISTERED MATTER FROM _____ [here add name of post-office], and be addressed "Dead-Letter Office, Washington, D. C."

Registered dead letters received containing money must be registered when returned to the Dead-Letter Office. Letters containing articles of value, not money, are not to be so registered on return unless they were received registered. No other kind of letters must be sent in the same package. The postmaster neglecting to register packages containing returned dead letters requiring registration will be held responsible for the contents if lost.

Dead letters containing money or other inclosures, sent from the Dead-Letter Office to a post-office for delivery, must never be forwarded to another post-office, but must be returned to the Dead-Letter Office with all information obtainable as to the whereabouts of the writer or owner; nor must they be retained longer than one month, unless the Superintendent of the Dead-Letter Office specially so direct.

Dead letters without valuable inclosures, when returned from the Dead-Letter Office direct to writers, not under cover to postmasters, may be forwarded to another post-office, when necessary, for delivery.

Sec. 581. Unmailable Matter; when to be Delivered.—If any matter excluded from the mails by the preceding section [section 368] of this act except that declared non-mailable by section thirty-eight hundred and ninety-three of the Revised Statutes as amended [380], shall, by inadvertence, reach the office of destination, the same shall be delivered in accordance with its address: *Provided*, That the party addressed shall furnish the name and address of the sender to the postmaster at the office of delivery, who shall immediately report the facts to the Postmaster-General. If the person addressed refuse to give the required information, the postmaster shall hold the package subject to the order of the Postmaster-General. All matter declared non-mailable by section thirty-eight hundred and ninety-three of the Revised Statutes as amended, which shall reach the office of delivery, shall be held by the postmaster at said office subject to the order of the Postmaster-General. (Act of March 3, 1879, § 21, 20 Stats., 360.)

The matter so required to be delivered is the following :

1. Matter in its form and nature liable to destroy, deface, or otherwise damage the contents of the mail bag, or harm the person of any one engaged in the postal service.

2. Matter in excess of lawful weight, postage being paid for its full weight.

But the postmaster should report the facts, date and office of mailing, in both cases, to the First Assistant Postmaster-General.

The matter declared non-mailable by Revised Statutes, sections 3893, as amended, and 3894, and not deliverable, is :

1. Every obscene, lewd, or lascivious book, pamphlet, picture, paper, writing, print, or other publication of an indecent character.

2. Every article or thing designed or intended for the prevention of conception or procuring an abortion.

3. Every article or thing intended or adapted for any indecent or immoral use.

4. Every written or printed card, circular, book, pamphlet, advertisement, or notice of any kind giving information, directly or indirectly, where, or how, or of whom, or by what means, any of the hereinbefore mentioned matters, articles, or things may be obtained or made.

5. Every letter upon the envelope of which or postal card upon which indecent, lewd, obscene, or lascivious delineations, epithets, terms, or language may be written or printed. (See section 380.)

6. Matter appertaining to lotteries, gift concerts, or fraudulent schemes or devices.

The regulation for the disposal of undeliverable unmailable matter is given in sections 433, 523, 529, 530, 546, and 609.

FOR INSTRUCTIONS AS TO DELIVERY BY CARRIERS, see sections 647-661.

ADVERTISEMENT OF NON-DELIVERED LETTERS, ETC.

Sec. 582. How to be Advertised.—The Postmaster-General may direct the publication of the list of non-delivered letters at any post-office by a written list posted in some public place, or, when he shall deem it for the public interest, he may direct the publication of such list in the daily or weekly newspaper regularly published within the post-office delivery which has the largest circulation within such delivery; and where no daily paper is published within the post-office delivery, such list may be published in the daily newspaper of any adjoining delivery having the largest circulation within the delivery of the post-office publishing the list; and in case of dispute as to the circulation of competing newspapers, the postmaster shall receive evidence and decide upon the fact. Such list shall be published as frequently as the Post-

master-General may deem proper, but not oftener than once a week. (R. S., § 3930.)

A postmaster is not liable to suit by the publisher of a newspaper for refusing to give to him the publication of the list of letters uncalled for, even though he acted maliciously. A public duty is not enforceable by a private action, except when it has been specifically given by statute. (*Foster v. McKibben*, 14 Pa. St. R., 168; also *Strong v. Campbell*, 11 Barb., 135.)

In *United States ex rel. v. Smallwood*, Judge Durriel held that under the acts of 1845 and 1863 (containing substantially these provisions) the publication was in the discretion of the Postmaster-General, but when the discretion is once exercised and publication ordered, it must be through the columns of the paper having the largest circulation within the delivery of the post-office. (2 Am. Law Times Reports, 109.)

Sec. 583. Advertising Foreign Letters.—The list of non-delivered letters addressed to foreign-born persons may be published in a newspaper printed in the language most used by them, which shall be selected in the manner prescribed in the preceding section. (R. S., § 3931.)

Sec. 584. Pay for Advertising.—The compensation for publishing the list of non-delivered letters shall in no case exceed one cent for each letter so published. (R. S., § 3934.)

No expense must be incurred for such advertising, unless first specially authorized by the Department.

Sec. 585. Gratuitous Advertisements.—If the publisher of any newspaper offer to publish such advertised list gratuitously, the postmaster must furnish a copy for the purpose on the days when lists are given out for advertising; and if more than one publisher offer, a copy must be furnished to each simultaneously.

Sec. 586. Posting List of Advertised Letters.—Every postmaster shall post, in a conspicuous place in his office, a copy of each list of non-delivered letters immediately after its publication. (R. S., § 3933.)

Sec. 587. Manner of Posting Lists.—The posting of the advertisement must be by placing one or more printed or manuscript lists of the names of the persons to whom such matter is addressed, the names to be arranged alphabetically, and, when in considerable number, the names of ladies and gentlemen to be in separate lists. Third and fourth class matter should be in a separate list from the letters, with appropriate headings. Care should be taken that the names as given in the lists correspond precisely with the addresses.

Sec. 588. When to Advertise.—At post-offices of the fourth class matter should be advertised monthly and as near the first day of the month as practicable; at all other post-offices, weekly, and when practicable on the first day of the week.

Sec. 589. What to be Advertised.—All unclaimed matter of the first class, including letters and other matter returned from the Dead-Letter

Office direct to the sender, and valuable matter of the third and fourth class, in hand at the time of advertising, should be included in the advertisement, except registered matter, refused matter, fictitious matter, card and request matter, matter addressed to persons who call regularly at the post-office or which the postmaster has special reason to believe will be called for, matter indorsed "To be held until called for," "*Poste restante*," or similar directions, and matter which the addressee has requested to be retained. Such matter held on request should be marked, "Specially held for delivery."

Sec. 590. Charge on Advertised Letters.—All letters published as non-delivered shall be charged with one cent in addition to the regular postage, to be accounted for as part of the postal revenue. (R. S., §3935.)

Sec. 591. Advertised Matter to be so Marked.—Every letter or parcel advertised must have plainly written or stamped upon the address side the word "ADVERTISED," together with the date of advertising.

RETURN OF UNCLAIMED MATTER.

Sec. 592. Request Matter.—When the writer of any letter on which the postage is prepaid shall indorse upon the outside thereof his name and address, such letter shall not be advertised, but after remaining uncalled for at the office to which it is directed thirty days, or the time the writer may direct, shall be returned to him without additional charge for postage, and if not then delivered shall be treated as a dead letter. (R. S., § 3939.)

Sec. 593. The Time for Return of Request Matter.—The sender has the right by a subsequent written direction to the postmaster at the office of destination to lengthen or shorten the time originally named on the envelope, after which the letter, if not delivered, shall be returned to him, but it must remain for delivery at least three days; and postmasters must obey such written authority, and return as directed, without additional charge for postage. When the addressee has given general direction to hold his letters until called for, and they are not called for within the time limited in the return request, they should be returned to the sender in accordance with the request.

Sec. 594. Card and Official Matter.—Whenever any unclaimed matter of the first class bears the name and address of the sender, as post-office box, number and street, &c., without a request that the same be returned if not delivered, such matter is called "Card matter," and must not be advertised, but must be returned to sender at the expiration of thirty days from the date of its arrival at the post-office of destination. All such matter originating in Canada or Mexico will be treated as herein directed.

All official matter sent under penalty envelopes or labels, or the frank of Senators or Members of Congress, will be treated as card matter, and, if unclaimed, returned to the office of mailing, if known.

A request upon a drop letter for its return to the writer at some other post-office, if unclaimed, cannot be respected unless it has been prepaid with one full rate (two cents) of postage.

Unclaimed letters bearing the card of a hotel, a school, college, or other public institution, which has evidently been printed upon the envelopes to serve as a mere advertisement, should not be returned to the place designated in the cards, unless there is also a request therefor, indicating the writer to whom they should be returned.

A letter which has been opened inadvertently, or upon a wrong delivery, may be returned to the writer without additional charge, when it contains a card or return request. The postmaster must not open letters to ascertain the writer.

Unclaimed card and request letters, prepaid one full rate, but not wholly prepaid, are to be returned to mailing office for delivery to the writer, who will be required to pay the amount originally due. If payment be refused the matter will be indorsed REFUSED, and treated as such. (See section 602.)

Sec. 595. Postal Cards.—When the message upon an unclaimed postal card is wholly or partly written, and the name and address of the writer is disclosed, the same shall be returned to writer after thirty days from date of its receipt, with the words "RETURNED TO WRITER," stamped thereon, and his name and address written underneath across the face of the card. If the message be wholly printed, it will be treated as printed matter. (See section 593.)

Sec. 596. Return of Other than First Class and Request Matter.—All matter, other than first class, may be returned, but is subject to an additional charge for postage for returning the same. When the sender of matter which would be subject to return postage shall, by indorsement upon the wrapper or otherwise, request its return, postmasters should comply with such request within the time fixed by the sender—if no time is fixed, then at the end of thirty days—first charging such matter, however, with the necessary return postage, and indorse the same "RETURN POSTAGE DUE — CENTS;" and the postmaster at the office to which such matter is returned must affix thereto postage-due stamps sufficient to cover the return postage, and collect the same from the sender before delivering such returned matter. If the sender should refuse to pay return postage, the matter must be disposed of as "REFUSED." If the matter be unclaimed, it will be treated as other unclaimed matter. If postage stamps or money sufficient to pay the return

postage be furnished by the sender, the postmaster at the returning office must affix to the matter returned the necessary stamps and cancel them, the same as if the matter had been originally mailed at his office.

UNCLAIMED SECOND-CLASS AND PRINTED MATTER.

Sec. 597. Disposal of, Authorized.—The Postmaster-General may provide, by regulations for disposing of printed and mailable matter which may remain in any post-office, or in the Department, not called for by the party addressed; but if the publisher of any refused or uncalled-for newspaper or other periodical shall pay the postage due thereon, such newspaper or other periodical shall be excepted from the operation of such regulations. (R. S., § 4061.)

Sec. 598. Regulation as to Disposal.—Domestic printed matter obviously without value, including printed postal cards, must not be sent to the Dead-Letter Office when unclaimed, except that upon which postage is due, but must be disposed of as waste paper, and the proceeds taken up and accounted for as other postal revenue. (See section 484.)

REFUSED SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

Sec. 599. Publisher to be Notified.—Postmasters shall notify the publisher of any newspaper, or other periodical, when any subscriber shall refuse to take the same from the office, or neglect to call for it for the period of one month. (R. S., § 3885.)

Sec. 600. Notice; when and how Given.—Notice will be given when a newspaper or periodical is uncalled for, or refused, or when the subscriber changes his address without notifying the publisher or ordering his matter forwarded, upon the blank form furnished for that purpose, which can be procured by application to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, Division of Post-Office Supplies. If the first notification be disregarded, a second may be sent, calling attention also to the fact of previous notice. The notice is to be given to publishers in Canada and Mexico as well as this country.

Sec. 601. Disposal of Refused Second-Class Matter.—After notification has been given, as required in the previous section, the postmaster will hold the refused matter for thirty days, after which the same and all copies subsequently arriving should be placed with the waste paper.

AT RECEIVING OFFICES—MATTER TO BE SENT TO THE DEAD-LETTER OFFICE.

Sec. 602. Dead Matter.—Dead matter, or such as is to be sent to the Dead-Letter Office from the office of address, may, for convenience, be classified as follows:

1. *Unclaimed.*—That which is not called for and cannot be delivered nor returned as provided in sections five hundred and ninety-two and

the three following, other than second-class matter, to be treated as waste paper, as directed in section five hundred and ninety-eight.

2. *Refused*.—That which for any reason the parties addressed decline to receive, other than second-class matter and printed matter, treated as waste paper, as directed in section six hundred and one.

3. *Fictitious*.—That which is addressed to fictitious or assumed names or to initials, or in any manner so that the person or persons for whom it is intended cannot be identified.

4. *Illegible*.—That which having reached the office of destination is so illegibly or imperfectly addressed that it cannot be ascertained for whom it was intended.

5. *Hotel*.—That which has been delivered at a hotel or public institution, or to a consul, agent, or other public officer, or individual who is in the habit of receiving mail for transient persons, and which has been returned to the post-office from such hotel, &c., as unclaimed.

6. *Obscene*.—That which has reached the office of delivery, but of which delivery is forbidden by section five hundred and eighty-one.

7. *Lottery*.—Circulars concerning lotteries, gift-concerts, or similar enterprises offering prizes, which are unmailable by section three hundred and seventy-nine.

Sec. 603. Reason for Non-Delivery to be Shown on Matter.—Upon every undelivered article of mail matter must appear the reason for non-delivery, such as UNKNOWN, REFUSED, REMOVED, FIRM DISSOLVED, DECEASED, IN DISPUTE, &c., as such indication is often of value to the writer. When no other reason can be ascertained, the matter will be indorsed UNCLAIMED, care being taken in indorsing or stamping not to deface or to obscure the original address or postmark.

Sec. 604. Authority of Postmaster-General as to Dead Matter.—The Postmaster-General may regulate the period during which undelivered letters shall remain in any post-office, and when they shall be returned to the Dead-Letter Office; and he may make regulations for their return from the Dead-Letter Office to the writers, when they cannot be delivered to the parties addressed. (R. S., § 3936.)

MANNER, ETC., OF MAKING RETURN TO THE DEAD-LETTER OFFICE.

Sec. 605. Time of Return of Unclaimed Matter.—Advertised matter will be held at fourth-class offices for one month and at all other offices for two weeks after date of advertisement, and then, if undelivered, will be sent to the Dead-Letter Office in regular periodical returns, to be made as follows, viz:

At fourth-class post-offices, once a month.

At other post-offices, once a week.

Sec. 306. Notice, when no Dead Matter to be Sent.—When it happens that there is no matter of any kind to be sent to the Dead-Letter Office at the proper time for making the return of such matter, a statement (Form 1523) properly headed and dated, and the words **NO MATTER TO SEND** noted thereon, should be sent to the Dead-Letter Office.

Sec. 307. Returns of Unclaimed Matter; how Made up and Transmitted.—In making up returns to be sent to the Dead-Letter Office the following directions will be observed, namely:

1. Every piece of mail-matter should be postmarked by stamp or hand with the name of the post-office and the date of sending to the Dead-Letter Office.

2. Each class of matter should be arranged separately and duly entered on the dead-letter bill (Form 1523) under its proper heading.

3. The bill and the copy of the advertised list must be sent with every return, not tied outside or inclosed in a separate envelope.

4. The advertised list so sent should give the name of the post-office, State, and date of advertising.

5. All matter delivered or otherwise disposed of since advertising should be indicated by a mark drawn through the name on the list.

6. A manuscript list of each piece of third-class matter of obvious value, and of all fourth-class matter, whether advertised or not, should be sent with such matter. For convenience this list may be made on a blank (Form 1522) for unmailable, changing the word **UNMAILABLE** to **UNCLAIMED**.

7. The whole return should be wrapped and securely tied in one parcel and plainly addressed, **DEAD-LETTER OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C.** It should also be indorsed, "**RETURN OF UNCLAIMED MATTER FROM**" (here add name of post-office). A penalty envelope may be used for the address label, but must be fastened securely to the parcel. If there be third or fourth class matter to accompany the return in too great quantity to tie the whole in one parcel, a pouch must be used so that all the matter will be received together.

8. Hotel and fictitious matter must be entered on a list (Form 1522½) and sent separately from other unclaimed matter.

9. Post-offices of the fourth class will use dead-letter bills (Form 1523) printed on white paper. Free-delivery offices will use the special form printed for them on blue paper and will register their returns. All other offices will use forms provided for them printed on yellow paper.

Sec. 308. Returns of Unmailable Matter; when Made.—Unmailable matter must not be held over to be advertised. Post-offices of the first class must make daily, and all other post-offices weekly, returns to the Dead-Letter Office of all unmailable matter deposited therein for mail-

ing (see section 530), or received through the mails, for which other treatment is not specially provided, on hand at the time of return.

Sec. 609. Returns of Unmailable Matter; how Made up and Transmitted.—

1. Each return of unmailable matter must be accompanied by a list made on the proper form (No. 1522) for such matter, stating as nearly as possible the full name and address of each article sent.

2. First-class matter should be entered on a list separate from third and fourth class matter.

3. Should be further separated into the classes named in section three hundred and seventy-eight, and the "Held for postage" matter subdivided into "Drop" and "Mail" letters.

4. Each class and subdivision must be arranged and entered on the list alphabetically, and every piece and its entry must be numbered to correspond. Where third and fourth class matter is without address, the pieces should be numbered and a description of each article given. But postal cards and miscellaneous printed matter of no obvious value need be entered only by a memorandum giving the number of the pieces,

5. Every piece of matter so sent must have plainly written or stamped upon it the specific reason of its being sent, as unmailable, stating whether "held for postage," "coin," "jewelry," "excess of weight or size," "misdirected," &c., and must also bear the name of the post-office, and the date on which it was sent to the Dead-Letter Office, care being taken in indorsing or stamping not to deface the original postmark or address.

6. Postmasters receiving matter postmarked and indorsed "DEFICIENCY IN ADDRESS SUPPLIED," &c., and forwarded in accordance with section five hundred and sixty-three, which cannot be delivered, must, after the expiration of seven days from receipt, send the same to the Dead-Letter Office as unmailable.

7. The returns of unmailable matter must be securely fastened in one package, with the list inclosed, addressed "DEAD-LETTER OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C.," and plainly indorsed, "RETURN OF UNMAILABLE MATTER FROM" (here add the name of the post-office). All matter should be included in the same return, unless the quantity of third and fourth class matter be too large to be conveniently made into one package, in which case the first-class matter should be sent in one parcel and the third and fourth in another, each with its proper list.

8. Duplicates of all lists and statements must be retained by postmasters for reference in making searches for missing matter.

9. Unmailable matter and the returns thereof must not be sent with returns of ordinary unclaimed matter.

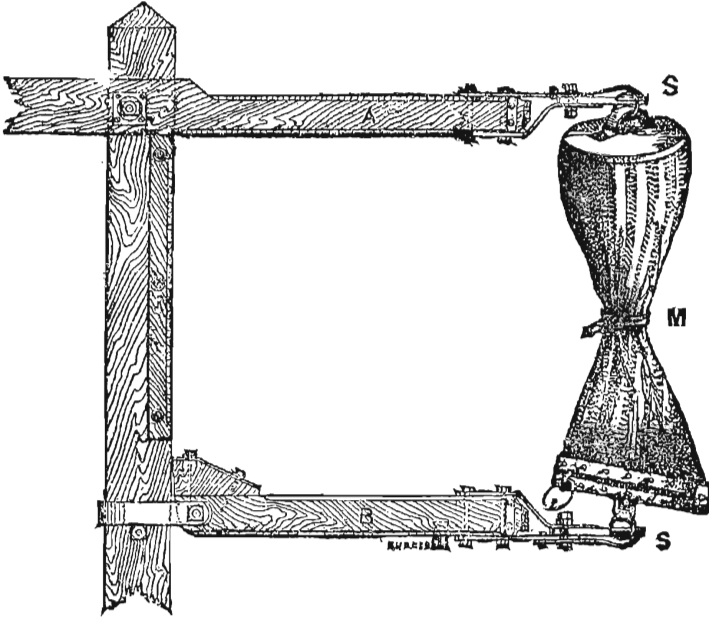
FOR RETURN OF LETTERS RECEIVED FROM DEAD-LETTER OFFICE, see section 580.

SPECIAL RULES FOR HANDLING MAILS AT CATCHER POST-OFFICES.

Sec. 610. **Cranes and Catcher Pouches.**—For the purpose of exchanging mails between post-offices at certain way and flag stations and railway offices without stopping or slackening the speed of the train, the “mail catcher” is used. A “crane” is erected at each such station, on which the pouch to be exchanged is hung; and canvas pouches with rings attached to each end and a strap with buckle attached to the center are supplied, to be used only for such exchanges. (See sections 893 and 1017.)

Sec. 611. **How to Prepare Pouches and Hang them on the Crane.**—

1. The pouch or mail bag should be prepared in the following manner: If only a small mail is to be sent, let it remain in the bottom of the pouch, but if a large mail is to be sent divide it, put part in the top,



but most of it in the bottom. Buckle the strap around the center of pouch M. In case the strap is gone, tie the middle of the pouch, as seen in the diagram. It is worse than useless to hang up a bag crammed full like a bag of grain.

2. Hang the bottom of the pouch on the upper iron S of the crane A, turn all directly to the track, then lift lower arm B and place the iron S in the ring of the pouch, slip the socket down the stem until

there is sufficient strain on the pouch to hold it from blowing down. If a strong wind is blowing, tie the pouch to the two irons S, by the rings, with one strand of ordinary post-office twine. Hang the pouch lock end down.

3. When the service occurs in the night, or between sunset and sunrise, hang a light on or near the crane.

Sec. 612. Catcher Pouches to be Used for no other Purpose.—These canvas pouches are manufactured expressly and only for such exchanges, and must be used for no other purpose. A prompt and regular exchange of the same pouches must be always kept up, and postal clerks are instructed to report to their division superintendent every case where a postmaster fails to return to the railway post-office the pouch last given him.

Sec. 613. Only Fifty Pounds of Mail Allowed in Catcher Pouches.—The catchers are designed to take on the trains for distribution and despatch only letter mail, but paper and other mail may be inclosed to a maximum weight of fifty pounds. If more than this weight is to be sent, as at post-offices where papers are published, the paper mail should be sacked and sent by local train to the nearest station at which the train stops, thence placed in the mail cars.

Sec. 614. Special Instructions to Postmasters Served by Catchers.—Postmasters at post-offices at which mail trains do not stop, and which are supplied by "catcher service," will comply with the following instructions :

1. None but "catcher" pouches are to be used.
2. After the mail is placed in the pouch and locked, see that the pouch is securely strapped or tied around the middle. (See section 610.)
3. The pouch must be securely suspended on the crane, with the lock downward, not exceeding ten minutes before the schedule time of arrival of the train.
4. If from any cause the pouch should not be caught by the train and a pouch is put off, return the extra pouch to the next mail train by securing it to the pouch in which the mail is sent, and strapping or tying the two pouches together at the middle as one pouch.
5. "Catcher" pouches must not under any circumstances be sent out upon any stage or horseback routes, or used for any other purpose than to exchange mails where trains do not stop.
6. "Catcher" pouches are not to be allowed to accumulate at post-offices, but must be returned to the mail trains at once.
7. If the crane at a station should get out of position or repair so as to interfere with the exchange of mails, the fact must be reported at once to the division superintendent, so that the attention of the railroad company can be called to the matter.

MATTER ADDRESSED TO POST-OFFICES IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Sec. 615. When Mailed at Other than Exchange Offices.—When mail matter addressed to foreign countries is mailed at post-offices not designated as exchange offices, it is the duty of the postmaster:

1. To examine the same, to ascertain that it belongs to one of the classes of matter admissible to the foreign mails, viz: Letters, postal cards, postal cards with paid reply, printed matter, patterns or samples of merchandise, and commercial papers (see sections 392-408), and that it is not prohibited matter. (See section 401.)

2. To ascertain that it is so wrapped or inclosed as to conform to the conditions prescribed in chapter twelve, and is within the size, weight, and dimensions permissible in foreign mails, as prescribed therein.

3. To ascertain that sufficient postage has been prepaid upon it to authorize its dispatch in foreign mails (see sections 398, 402, 403, 407, 408); if not, it should, if possible, be returned to the sender.

4. Being satisfied of its mailability, to dispatch it to the proper exchange office as designated in the next sections; unless a special request be indorsed by the sender that it be sent to a particular office, which should be followed.

Sec. 616. Exchange Offices.—Mails are exchanged with foreign countries through certain post-offices in each country, authorized thereto, and designated as EXCHANGE POST-OFFICES. The following are the United States exchange post-offices, with the names of the countries with which each exchanges mails, namely:

NEW YORK, with NORTH, SOUTH, and CENTRAL AMERICA, the WEST INDIES, EUROPE, AFRICA, BRITISH INDIA, STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, SIAM, and the DUTCH EAST INDIES.

BOSTON, with GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY, and BELGIUM.

PHILADELPHIA, with GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY, BELGIUM, and CUBA.

BALTIMORE, with GERMANY, BRAZIL, THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, PARAGUAY and URUGUAY, THE ISLAND of ST. THOMAS, and BARBADOES.

WASHINGTON, with CUBA.

NEWPORT NEWS, VA., with BRAZIL, THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, PARAGUAY, URUGUAY, the ISLAND of ST. THOMAS, and BARBADOES.

TAMPA, FLA., with CUBA.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., with CUBA.

KEY WEST, FLA., with CUBA, and occasionally the BAHAMA ISLANDS.

NEW ORLEANS, with CUBA, NICARAGUA, COSTA RICA, GUATEMALA, BRITISH HONDURAS, REPUBLIC of HONDURAS, the BAY ISLANDS, and occasionally with the UNITED STATES of COLOMBIA.

CHICAGO, ILL., with GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY, DENMARK, SWEDEN, and NORWAY.

ST. LOUIS, MO., with GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY, SWEDEN, and MEXICO.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., with the HAWAIIAN KINGDOM, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA,

TASMANIA, the FIJI and SAMOAN ISLANDS, NEW CALEDONIA, JAPAN, SHANGHAI, HONG-KONG, and dependent CHINESE ports, and the EAST INDIES, except BRITISH INDIA, STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, SIAM, and the DUTCH SETTLEMENTS.

Mails for Mexico are dispatched by sea from New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco, and the principal mails are dispatched overland from New York, Saint Louis, Laredo, and El Paso, Texas. Other United States post-offices along the Mexican border are authorized to make local exchanges with the Mexican post-offices opposite them.

Mails for Canada are dispatched principally from Boston, New York, Suspension Bridge, Chicago, San Francisco, and by the following railway post-offices, namely: Albany and Rochester, Boundary Line and Saint Paul, Detroit and Chicago, Detroit and Peru, Fort Gratiot and Chicago, Fort Gratiot and Detroit, Neche and Barnesville, New York and Chicago, Norwood and Rome, Ogdensburg and Utica, Port Huron and Detroit, Port Townsend and Tacoma, Richfield and Springfield, Rouse's Point and Albany, Saint Alban's and Boston, Saint Alban's and North Bennington, and Vanceboro' and Bangor. Other United States post-offices are authorized to make local exchanges of mails with the Canadian post-office opposite them.

Sec. 617. Treatment in Exchange Offices.—Only exchange post-offices make up mail for foreign countries. When mail matter is received at an exchange office for dispatch to a foreign country, the duty of the postmaster is—

1. To examine each article and see whether it conforms to the conditions prescribed for such articles in the mails for the country to which it is addressed.

2. If it fail to conform to the conditions, to return to the sender direct, when mailed at the exchange office and the sender be known; if received from another post-office the postmark of which is legible, to return it thereto with reason for return marked on the cover.

3. To separate such articles as conform to the prescribed conditions and are fully prepaid from those which are wholly or partly unpaid; to stamp "T" and mark the short-paid articles with the number of rates of postage to which each is liable and the amount of deficient postage.

4. To then tie up the paid letters and postal cards in one package, the unpaid and short-paid letters in another; affix to each a printed label bearing the words "PAID LETTERS" or "SHORT-PAID LETTERS," as the case may be.

5. To weigh the letters and postal cards and note the weights, and then place the packages in a canvas sack, and attach thereto a printed white linen label bearing the words "FROM _____, LETTER MAIL, FOR _____" (giving the name of the foreign exchange office).

6. To separate articles other than letters, which are fully prepaid from those but partly prepaid, stamp each article of the latter "T," and mark with the deficient postage; to tie printed matter, commercial papers, and samples of merchandise, as far as practicable, in bundles, the fully prepaid articles labeled "PAID" separate from the partly prepaid, which are labeled "SHORT-PAID;" to weigh each package and note the weight; then place them in a canvas sack, to which is attached a buff linen label bearing the words "FROM _____, PRINTED MATTER, &c., FOR _____."

7. To then make out a "letter bill" on the blank form furnished for such use, addressed to the foreign exchange office to which the mail is dispatched, showing the dispatching office, the receiving exchange office, the steamer or other vessel which conveys it, the exact time of its departure, the number of sacks of mail matter, a description of each registered article in the mail, and a list of the "closed mails" which have been received from foreign offices and forwarded to their destination by the same dispatch. The letter bill is to be placed around the package of registered articles, or in the small sack provided for registered articles. The letter bills for each foreign exchange office are required to be numbered in an annual series, beginning with No. 1 for the first mail dispatched in the year.

8. To close the sacks by means of twine tied tightly in a hard knot about the necks of the sacks, the ends of the twine being passed through two holes in a small tin seal cup exclusively used for this purpose, when they are tied again and the knot covered with sealing-wax, on which is impressed the seal of this Department.

9. To make out also in duplicate a "way bill" of the mails, showing the number of sacks of letters and of other articles and of the empty sacks dispatched by each steamer or vessel, where the mails were made up, the destination of each, and the exact time of departure. The exchange office which receives the mails from the steamer enters upon the way bill the exact time of their receipt, and returns one copy to the dispatching office.

10. To make out in triplicate, upon the blank form furnished therefor, a "Statement of weights" of the mails conveyed by each steamer or vessel, which is to give the net weights of the letters and other articles, as ascertained before placing them in the sacks, stated in grams of the French metric system, metric balances being furnished for the purpose (see section 471); to transmit one copy of such statement to the Sixth Auditor, one to the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, and retain one in the dispatching office.

AS TO REGISTERED MATTER FOR FOREIGN COUNTRIES, see section 1151 *et seq.*

MAILS RECEIVED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Sec. 618. Treatment at Exchange Offices.—When mails are received at an exchange post-office, the duty of the postmaster is—

1. To count the sacks, and if found to agree with the way bills thereof, to enter the exact time of receipt, and sign the same as a receipt of the mails, noting any errors on the way bill before signing.

2. To then cause the sacks or packages to be opened and examined by two officials to ascertain whether they correspond with the entries in the accompanying letter bills.

3. If errors or omissions are detected, to immediately make corrections in the letter bill, care being taken to strike out erroneous entries in such manner that the original entry may be read; to then enter the errors and corrections in a blank form designated a "bulletin of verification" which is then signed by the two officials who opened the mail; to impress the postmark of the post-office thereon and send the bulletin registered by first opportunity to the dispatching exchange office, which, after examination, returns it with any observations deemed necessary.

4. To separate from the sealed packages such as are supposed to contain articles liable to custom duties, which are disposed of as prescribed in section six hundred and twenty-one.

5. To distribute all fully prepaid matter not detained for customs duties and forward the same to destination by the most direct route.

6. To rate up the unpaid and short-paid articles, stamp thereon "DUE ——— CENTS," or "U. S. CHARGE TO COLLECT ——— CENTS," and forward to destination with as little delay as possible.

As to registered matter see chapter thirty-six.

Sec. 619. Receipt at Office of Destination and Delivery.—On receipt of foreign letters fully prepaid the postmaster at the office of address delivers, forwards, advertises as unclaimed, as in the case of domestic matter, and sends to the Dead-Letter Office when dead, as directed in sections six hundred and five and following. Upon unpaid or short-paid matter postage-due stamps are to be affixed and postage due collected, as in other cases. (See sections 557 to 559.)

But when received from Canada request and card matter will, under a recent arrangement with that country, be returned to the senders like domestic matter, as prescribed in sections five hundred and ninety-two to five hundred and ninety-four.

Dead Foreign Printed Matter, when unclaimed, the usual time, must be sent to the Dead-Letter Office as part of the regular return, but no

entry thereof need be made on the bill, except of that on which postage may be due. (See section 607.)

Sec. 620. Foreign Closed Mails.—Mails made up in one foreign country addressed to another and sent to the United States to be forwarded on to destinations, are not to be opened. The United States exchange office which receives them will first examine them, and if they are found unsealed, or the seals damaged, sacks or covers torn or damaged, the imperfections must be corrected as far as practicable, so that the same may leave the United States in good condition. The facts in respect to condition must then be reported to the foreign dispatching exchange office in the bulletin of verification. Such mails must then be entered on the letter bill in the proper place therefor, and forwarded intact by first opportunity to destination.

Sec. 621. Treatment of Foreign Matter Supposed to be Liable to Customs Duties.—When the postmaster at the exchange office has reason to believe that letters or packages received in foreign mails contain articles liable to customs duties, it is his duty—

1. *As to letters or packages sealed or closed against inspection*, to immediately notify the customs officer of the district in which his office is embraced, or the officer designated by the Secretary of the Treasury to examine mails arriving at his office from foreign countries, of the receipt of such letters or packages and of the addresses thereon.

2. If the address be to a person within the delivery of his office, to notify him, by mail, at the time of arrival, that such matter has been received, is believed to be liable to customs duties, and that he must appear at the post-office at a time designated, not exceeding twenty-four hours from date of notice, and receive and open the letter or package in the presence of an officer of the customs.

3. Upon the appearance of the addressee and customs officer, to deliver the matter to the former, subjecting him to no longer delay than is necessary to secure the presence of the officer.

4. In no case to deliver to the officer or permit him to seize any such sealed letter or package while the same is in his custody as postmaster.

5. If such sealed or inclosed matter be addressed beyond the delivery of his office, to mark or stamp upon the same "SUPPOSED LIABLE TO CUSTOMS DUTIES," and forward the same, without longer detention than twenty-four hours, to the office of destination.

6. To extend to customs officers designated therefor all necessary facilities in examining incoming foreign mail matter, in order to protect the customs revenue.

7. *As to unsealed packages*, which are found on examination by the customs officer to contain dutiable matter, to deliver the same to the

proper officer of the customs, and immediately notify the addressee by mail of such delivery.

8. To return to the dispatching exchange office all such unsealed packages of samples of merchandise, including grains and seeds, received in mails from Canada, which are found to exceed eight ounces in weight, and are declared by the customs officer to be dutiable.

9. *As to dutiable books* received from Postal Union countries, addressed to other than the exchange office, to forward them promptly by mail to the office of destination charged with the amount of duties levied thereon respectively.

(See section 359; also, as to duty on printed matter, 22 Stats., 510, 518.)

Sec. 622. Dutiable Matter at Office of Destination.—Upon the receipt of sealed matter at the office of destination from an exchange office, marked "SUPPOSED LIABLE TO CUSTOMS DUTIES," the postmaster will at once notify the nearest customs officer of the receipt thereof and the addresses thereon. He will also notify the addressee to appear at a time designated and open the package in the presence of the customs officer; and upon their appearance together will deliver the matter to the addressee in the officer's presence. When books are so received with an amount of customs duties charged and marked thereon, the postmaster will collect the same upon delivery, and promptly remit the amount in penalty envelope, under free registration, to the collector of customs of the port or district in which the exchange office of receipt is situated.

If the books or other unsealed matter remain unclaimed for thirty days from receipt, or the addressee refuse to pay the customs duties and any postage charges thereon, the postmaster will return the matter to such collector of customs in the manner above prescribed. Moneys collected as customs are not to be credited or charged in postal account.

Letters and sealed packages supposed to contain articles liable to customs duty, which remain unclaimed for thirty days, or on which the addressees refuse to pay the customs duties and any postage charges, will be treated as other unclaimed and refused matter.

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

FREE-DELIVERY SERVICE.

Sec. 623. Letter-Carrier Post-Offices.—That letter carriers shall be employed for the free delivery of mail matter, as frequently as the public business may require, at every incorporated city, village, or borough

containing a population of fifty thousand within its corporate limits, and may be so employed at every place containing a population of not less than ten thousand within its corporate limits, according to the last general census, taken by authority of State or United States law, or at any post-office which produced a gross revenue for the preceding fiscal year of not less than ten thousand dollars: *Provided*, This act shall not affect the existence of the free delivery in places where it is now established: *And provided further*, That in offices where the free delivery shall be established under the provisions of this act such free delivery shall not be abolished by reason of decrease below ten thousand in population or ten thousand dollars in gross postal revenue, except in the discretion of the Postmaster-General. (Act of January 3, 1887, § 1, 24 Stats., 355.)

Sec. 624. Applications for Service and Additional Carriers.—Application for the establishment of the carrier system must be made to the Postmaster-General, through the Superintendent of Free Delivery, and must state the name of the post-office, the population of the city, village, or borough, according to the last general census, taken by authority of State or United States law, the gross revenue of the post-office for the preceding fiscal year, the condition of the sidewalks, whether the names of the streets and numbers of the houses are posted up, and the city properly lighted. The application may be made by the postmaster, by petition of citizens, or by the municipal authorities. Application for additional carriers must be made by the postmaster to the Superintendent of Free Delivery.

Sec. 625. Districting of Cities.—Cities must be so districted as to secure the full, equal, and most advantageous employment of the carriers, and the earliest practicable delivery and collection of the mails. The outside boundary of the carrier delivery and the number of delivery and collection trips will be fixed at the time of establishing the service, and must not be changed except by authority of the Department.

Sec. 626. Prompt and Frequent Deliveries Required.—The number of daily delivery and collection trips by carriers must not be reduced without the authorization of the Department. Letters must be frequently and promptly delivered by the carriers, so that citizens may have no inducement to call at the post-office; and the local addresses of those receiving mail through the general delivery should be secured, and their mail delivered by carriers to the greatest practicable extent. When a carrier cannot take his entire mail out on one trip he must give preference to matter of the first class. Citizens supplied by carriers should be requested to provide receiving boxes at their houses and places of business.

Sec. 627. Limited Sale of Stamps by Carriers.—Postmasters may permit

carriers to sell postage stamps or stamped envelopes in limited quantities; but their deliveries or collections must not be delayed in making change.

Sec. 628. Postmasters to Supervise Carrier Service.—Postmasters will supervise their carrier service, and are specially enjoined—

1. To see that superintendents, carriers, and clerks connected with this service are fully informed as to their responsibilities and duties.

2. In cities where postal stations are established, to require the mails from the post-office to the stations and return to be conveyed with the greatest practicable dispatch, and by the most expeditious routes.

3. To frequently visit the stations and see that the regulations are there observed and proper order and discipline maintained.

4. To issue all necessary orders and instructions necessary to carry out the regulations and promote the efficiency of the service.

5. To reprimand the carriers for irregularities or report them for removal to the Superintendent of Free Delivery, as the nature of the offense may require. (See section 642.)

PRIVATE CARRIERS FORBIDDEN, see section 707.

MAILING OR RECEIVING BOXES.

Sec. 629. Establishment of Street-Mailing Boxes.—The Postmaster-General may establish, in places where letter carriers are employed, and in other places where, in his judgment, the public convenience requires it, receiving boxes for the deposit of mail matter, and shall cause the matter deposited therein to be collected as often as public convenience may require. (R. S., § 3868.)

Provided further, That no boxes for the collection of mail matter by carriers shall be placed inside of any building except a public building or railroad station. (Act of February 21, 1879, § 4, 20 Stats., 317; and act of August 2, 1882, 22 Stats., 185.)

Provided, That no boxes for the collection of mail matter by carriers shall be placed inside of any building except a public building, or a building which is freely open to the public during business hours, or a railroad station. (Act of March 3, 1887, 24 Stats., 569.)

Sec. 630. Regulations respecting Mailing Boxes.—

1. A list of them, giving number and location, must be kept in the post-office.

2. They must be kept in repair and in neat condition.

3. Application for repainting and repair, when necessary, should state the lowest terms per box and number of boxes, and be addressed to the Superintendent of Free Delivery.

4. Carriers must inform the postmaster of the condition of the boxes

and their locks, chains, and keys, and promptly report any injuries thereto.

5. When a box opens with difficulty, the key should be tested on a good lock to ascertain whether the defect is in the key or lock.

6. Defective locks and keys should be promptly returned to the Second Assistant Postmaster-General, with an application for new ones to replace them.

7. Report of the loss of a key, giving number, name of carrier, and full statement of the facts attending the loss, should be made to the Superintendent of Free Delivery, and application should be made at the same time to the Second Assistant Postmaster-General for another key.

8. Carriers are held to strict accountability for the keys intrusted to them, and for loss thereof are liable to removal.

9. Broken street letter boxes and worn-out carrier satchels should, as far as practicable, be utilized by using the good parts of some to repair others, the remaining portions to be sold and the proceeds debited in the quarterly postal account; report to be also made to the Superintendent of Free Delivery.

10. Postmasters must arrange with the police authorities of their several cities for the arrest of all unauthorized persons found tampering with or collecting from the street mailing boxes; also, of all persons wearing the carriers' uniform (including the carriers) found tampering with or collecting from the boxes at other than the usual and regular collection rounds, of the hours of which the police authorities must be kept informed.

As to punishment for malicious injury to letter boxes or matter therein, see sections 1440 and 1441.

CARRIERS, THEIR APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, LEAVES, ETC.

Sec. 631. Classification and Salaries of Carriers.--That there may be in all cities which contain a population of seventy-five thousand or more three classes of letter carriers, as follows: Carriers of the first class, whose salaries shall be one thousand dollars per annum; of the second class, whose salaries shall be eight hundred dollars per annum; and of the third class, whose salaries shall be six hundred dollars per annum. (Act of January 3, 1887, § 2, 24 Stats., 355.)

That in places containing a population of less than seventy-five thousand there may be two classes of letter carriers, as follows: Carriers of the second class, whose salaries shall be eight hundred and fifty dollars per annum, and of the third class, whose salaries shall be six hundred dollars per annum. (Id., § 3.)

Sec. 632. Number to be Limited.—It shall be the duty of the Postmaster-General to carefully inquire into the number of carriers employed in the several cities where the free delivery of mail matter is established, and to reduce the number of carriers and the number of deliveries of the mails by such carriers for each day to the reasonable requirements of the public service. (Act of March 3, 1877, 19 Stats., 384.)

Sec. 633. Appointments and Promotions.—Appointments of letter carriers in cities having two or more classes shall be made to the class having the minimum rate of pay, and promotions from the lower grades in said cities shall be made to the next higher grade at the expiration of one year's service, on certificate of the postmaster to the efficiency and faithfulness of the candidate during the preceding year. (Act of August 2, 1882, 22 Stats., 185.)

Sec. 634. Application for Appointment, &c.—Letter carriers are appointed by the Postmaster-General on the nomination and recommendation of the postmaster. The following regulations will be observed as to character, qualifications, application, &c.:

1. Only citizens of the United States will be appointed.
2. Carriers must be intelligent, able to read and write, physically fitted for the service, and temperate. No person habitually using intoxicating liquors to excess can be appointed.
3. Persons nominated must be at least eighteen years of age, and not over thirty-five years of age, but this limitation does not apply to persons honorably discharged from the military or naval service of the country who are otherwise duly qualified.
4. At post-offices within the Classified Postal Service (see section 497) carriers can be appointed only after they have satisfactorily passed a competitive examination under the Civil Service rules, and otherwise complied with their requirements.
5. The application for appointment at offices not within the Classified Postal Service should be written and signed by the applicant himself, giving his name in full, his age, previous residence for the last five years, and his occupation during that time.
6. Postmasters at such offices, before recommending the applicant, must inquire into his habits and antecedents. The physical fitness of the applicant must be certified by a reputable physician.
7. Applications for appointment at post-offices in the Classified Postal Service must be made upon a blank form prescribed by the Civil Service Commission, and furnished upon request by the examining board therefor, and when properly filled out must be returned to them. It is needless to seek the aid of a member of Congress or other influential person to secure an application paper or an examination. Notice in

writing of the next examination, specifying the place, day, and hour, will then be given. (See Civil Service Rules, 3d ed., Regulation 9.)

8. Postmasters will not recommend carriers who have been removed from the service, without calling attention to the fact and stating fully the reasons.

Sec. 635. Bonds and Oaths.—Every letter carrier shall give bonds with sureties, to be approved by the Postmaster-General, for the safe custody and delivery of all mail matter, and the faithful account and payment of all money received by him. (R. S., § 3870.) He must also take the oath prescribed in section forty-four. Blank bonds and oaths for carriers and substitutes will be furnished by the Department, with notice of their appointment, to the postmaster, who will take care that they are correctly and promptly executed and returned. He will also require carriers and substitutes to furnish new bonds whenever, from any cause, the sureties have become insufficient, and will forward all bonds and oaths to the Superintendent of Free Delivery. And every carrier must promptly inform the postmaster, on pain of dismissal, of the occurrence of any event or change of condition affecting unfavorably the responsibility of his sureties.

Sec. 636. Substitute Carriers.—That the Postmaster-General be, and he hereby is, authorized to appoint one or more substitute letter carriers, whose compensation shall be one dollar per annum and the pro rata compensation of the carriers whose routes they may be required to serve. (Act of August 2, 1882, 22 Stats., 185.)

That all letter carriers at free-delivery offices shall be entitled to leave of absence, not to exceed fifteen days in each year, without loss of pay; and the Postmaster-General is hereby authorized to employ, when necessary, during the time such leave of absence is granted, such number of substitute letter carriers as may be deemed advisable, who shall be paid for services rendered at the rate of six hundred dollars per annum. (Act of June 27, 1884, 23 Stat., 60.)

Sec. 637. Vacancies.—Vacancies occurring by death, illness, or other unavoidable causes, may be filled temporarily by postmasters, when the exigencies of the service demand it; but a full statement of the facts must be immediately forwarded to the Superintendent of Free Delivery. Carriers so employed must in every instance take the oath before entering on duty, and give the bond prescribed, at the same time or as soon thereafter as practicable. Postmasters must advise the Superintendent of Free Delivery of any vacancy occurring in the force of carriers, whether in the regular or substitute class, and whether they desire to fill the vacancy or not. Nominations to fill vacancies in any grade should be promptly made, to guard as far as possible against the em-

ployment of temporary carriers, which tends to cause irregular delivery and confusion in the settlement of carriers' pay-rolls.

Sec. 638. Promotions.—Promotions from the lower grade in a city to the next higher may be made at the expiration of one year's service, on the certificate of the postmaster to the efficiency and faithfulness of the candidate during the preceding year. (See section 633.)

Sec. 639. Leaves of Absence.—That all letter carriers at free-delivery offices shall be entitled to leave of absence, not to exceed fifteen days in each year, without loss of pay. (Act of June 27, 1884, 23 Stats., 60.)

The words "each year" in the preceding paragraph mean each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30, inclusive), and carriers in the service on the first day of July are entitled to receive their fifteen days' vacation at any time during the year when the postmaster can best spare them. Carriers entering the service after the first day of July are entitled to a pro rata leave of absence during the fiscal year, equal to one and a quarter days for each month of service.

Postmasters may grant leave of absence without pay to carriers (in excess of the fifteen days to which they are entitled without loss of pay) in cases of illness, disability received in the service, or other urgent necessity, to continue only during the urgency of the case, provided it shall in no instance exceed thirty days. For a longer time, application, setting forth all the circumstances, must be made to the Superintendent of Free Delivery.

Sec. 640. Absence Without Leave.—A carrier absenting himself without leave will forfeit his pay during the time of such absence, and will be reprimanded by the postmaster, or reported to the Superintendent of Free Delivery for removal, as the circumstances may require.

Sec. 641. Behavior of Carriers.—Carriers are enjoined, while on duty—

1. To be civil, prompt, and obliging to all with whom they have intercourse.

2. To attend quietly and diligently to duty, and, under no circumstances, to loiter on their routes.

3. To refrain from stopping to converse, loud talking, controversy, profane language, singing, whistling, and smoking in the office or on their routes.

4. To refrain from drinking intoxicating liquors; and any carrier intoxicated on duty will at once be suspended, his route supplied by a substitute, the case reported for removal, and his successor nominated. No carrier will be retained in the service who is addicted to intemperance.

They are also forbidden to solicit, in person or through others, contributions of money, gifts, or presents; to issue addresses, complimentary

cards, prints, publications, or any substitute therefor, intended or calculated to induce the public to make them gifts or presents; to sell tickets on their routes to theaters, concerts, balls, fairs, picnics, excursions, or places of amusement or entertainments of any kind; to borrow money on their routes, or to contract debts which they have no reasonable prospect of being able to pay.

Sec. 642. Reprimand, Suspension, and Removal.—The due performance of their duty by carriers, and the observance of law, regulations, and orders prescribed for their conduct, will be enforced by reprimand for slight offenses; by suspension with loss of pay for more serious ones, not, however, to exceed thirty days; and by suspension and recommendations for removal for grave offenses, or persistent disregard of the rules herein prescribed or of the orders of the postmaster not inconsistent herewith. In all other cases of recommendation for removal, carriers should not be suspended, but postmasters should await the action of the Department.

CARRIERS' UNIFORMS.

Sec. 643. Carrier's Uniform, and Penalty for Wearing it Unlawfully.—The Postmaster-General may prescribe a uniform dress to be worn by letter carriers, and any person not connected with the letter-carrier branch of the postal service who shall wear the uniform which may be prescribed shall, for every such offense, be punishable by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. (R. S., § 3867.)

The uniform dress prescribed is to be invariably worn while on duty, viz:

FOR WINTER WEAR.

First. A single-breasted sack coat of "cadet gray," or, technically, "blue-mixed cadet cloth," terminating two-thirds the distance from the top of the hip bone to the knee, with a pocket at each side, and one on left breast—all outside—with flaps two and three-fourths to three inches wide, with length to suit, say six and a half to seven inches; coat to be bound entirely around with good plain black alpaca binding one inch wide, to be put over half edges, with five brass buttons, with the design of the seal of this Department (post rider, with mail bag across the saddle, with the letters P. O. D. beneath), down the front, to button up to the neck, and one-half inch black braid round the sleeves two and a half inches from the bottom.

Second. Pants of same material and color, with fine black broadcloth stripe one inch wide down the outside seam.

Third. A single-breasted vest of the same material and color, with seven oval brass buttons (vest size), with the letters P. O. upon the face.

Fourth. Cap of the same material and color (Navy pattern), bound round with a fine black-cloth band one and one-half inches wide, with small size buttons at the sides, of the same material and design as those on the vest, and glazed cover for wet

weather. A helmet of the same material and color, and of uniform pattern, may be worn, provided both cap and helmet are not used in the same place.

Fifth. A reversible cape (detached from the coat) reaching to the cuff of the coat-sleeve when the arm is extended, of the same material and color on one side, and gutta-percha cloth on the other side, with five buttons, the same as on the coat, down the front, and bound entirely round with plain black alpaca binding one inch wide, put half over edges; or an overcoat of the same material and color, trimmed to correspond with the coat, with five brass buttons, of the same size and design as the coat button, down the front. It shall not be obligatory on the carriers to wear either, but whenever additional covering is needed, the postmaster of each city will decide, in accordance with the wishes of a majority of the carriers, which they shall wear, as both must not be worn in the same city.

FOR SUMMER WEAR.

First. Coat, single-breasted, skeleton sack, of gray flannel, terminating two-thirds the distance from the top of the hip bone to the knee; with lapels (medium roll) made to button over the breast; three pockets outside, without flaps, one on each side, and one on left breast. Coat to be bound entirely round with plain black alpaca binding one inch wide, put half over edges, and three buttons of present regulation style down front.

Second. Pants, same material and color, with stripe of black alpaca binding one inch wide down the outside seam.

Third. Vest, same material and color, bound same as coat, with collar cut to roll same height as coat, and five regulation buttons down front. This may be omitted in summer.

Fourth. Panama hat or helmet.

Sec. 644. Carriers to be Numbered.—Carriers must be designated by number, and nickel-plated figures nine-sixteenths of an inch in length, surmounted by a metallic wreath, to be worn on the hat, cap, or helmet, the material, design, and pattern to be uniform at all offices, must be regarded as a part of the carriers' uniform, and worn accordingly, both winter and summer.

Sec. 645. Carriers to Provide their Uniforms.—Letter carriers and substitutes must procure uniforms at their own expense; but the postmaster is expected to advise and assist them in obtaining well-fitting suits of the best material and at the best terms practicable in conformity with the specifications in section six hundred and forty-three.

Sec. 646. Inspection of Uniforms, &c.—Postmasters at free-delivery offices will cause a careful inspection of carriers' uniforms to be made as often as twice a year, before ordering new ones, and will not require a new suit or any article of it to be procured when that in use may be found to be in reasonably good condition or capable of repair for longer service. When proper he may require new uniforms or parts thereof to be procured by any carrier, and that carriers shall appear at all times as neat and tidy as their service will permit.

GENERAL DUTIES OF CARRIERS.

Sec. 647. Duties Generally.—Carriers shall be employed in the delivery and collection of mail matter, and during the intervals between their trips may be employed in the post-office in such manner as the postmaster may direct, but not as clerks.

The delivery and collection by them must be frequently tested at irregular intervals, to determine their efficiency.

Sec. 648. Delivery of Matter.—The mails must be assorted and the carriers started on their first daily trip as early as practicable. They must proceed to their routes with expedition and by the most direct way. A schedule of the order of delivery of each route should be made in a legible hand by names of streets and numbers of houses, and the mail delivered according to such schedule. Mail matter directed to box-numbers must be delivered through the boxes. Mail matter addressed to street and number must be delivered by carriers, unless otherwise directed. Mail matter addressed neither to a box-holder nor to a street and number, must be delivered by carrier if its address is known or can be ascertained from the city directory; otherwise, at the general delivery.

Sec. 649. Care in Delivery of Mail.—Carriers will exercise great care in the delivery of mail to the persons for whom it is intended, or to some one known to them to be authorized to receive it. They will, in case of doubt, make respectful inquiry with the view to ascertain the owner. Failing in this they will return the mail to the office, to be disposed of as the postmaster may direct.

Sec. 650. To Collect Postage Due.—Carriers are required to collect and promptly return to the postmaster all postage due on any matter entrusted to them for delivery as indicated by the postage-due stamps thereon. Under no circumstances will they deliver such mail matter until the postage due is paid.

AS TO PENALTY FOR FAILING TO ACCOUNT FOR AND PAY SUCH POSTAGE DUE, see section 557.

Sec. 651. Directory to be Used to Ascertain Addresses.—Where a directory is published, it must be used when necessary to ascertain the address of persons to whom letters are directed, and it should also be used in the case of transient newspapers and other matter of the third and fourth classes, where the error in or omission of street address is evidently the result of ignorance or inadvertence; but when circulars, printed postal cards, or other matter, except letters, shall arrive at any post-office in large quantities, apparently all sent by the same person or firm, and from which the street addresses have been purposely omitted, the directory need not be used to supply such omission, and all of such

circulars, &c., which cannot readily be delivered through boxes or by carriers, shall be sent to the general delivery to await call.

Sec. 652. Rules Respecting Delivery.—Carriers are forbidden—

1. To deliver mail matter in the street, even to the owner, unless he be personally known, and the delivery can be made without unreasonable delay.

2. To deliver mail matter in boxes or other receptacles at premises not occupied in whole or in part by the addressees, except by the special order of the postmaster.

3. To throw mail matter into windows or halls, unless specially instructed to do so; but they must ring the bell and wait a reasonable time for an answer, and deliver to some one of the household in the habit of receiving it.

4. To enter any house while on their trips, except in the discharge of their official duties.

5. To stop for their meals while on their trips.

6. To deliver any mailable matter which has not passed through the post-office or station with which they are connected.

7. To exhibit any mail matter intrusted to them (except on the order of the postmaster or some one authorized to act for him) to persons other than those addressed.

8. To deviate from their respective routes.

9. To carry letters for delivery in their pockets.

10. To engage in any business not connected with this service during their hours of business.

11. To throw away or improperly dispose of mail matter, however trifling or unimportant it may appear to them.

12. To remove stamps from mail matter of any class whatever, intrusted to them for delivery or collected by them for mailing.

Sec. 653. Mounted Carriers; their Duties.—Mounted carriers are permitted to make arrangements with the patrons on their routes to respond to their call and receive their mail at the sidewalk, but if the patrons insist on having it delivered at their doors the carriers are required to dismount and so deliver it.

FOR RULES AS TO DELIVERY OF REGISTERED MATTER by Carriers, see sections 1119, 1120, and 1124.

Sec. 654. To Return Undelivered Mail, Satchels, and Keys to the Office at Night.—After the last daily delivery the carriers must return their satchels, keys, and all mail matter they cannot deliver to the post-office or station with which they are connected. Postmasters may permit carriers to take keys and satchels home with them at night in cases where it is necessary to expedite an early morning collection.

Sec. 655. Improperly Addressed Mail Matter Not to be Delivered.—Letters and packages addressed to fictitious persons or firms, to initials, or to no particular person or firm, should not be delivered by carriers unless directed to a designated place, street, and number, or to the care of a certain person or firm, or other certain place of delivery. (See section 574.)

Sec. 656. Packages too Large for Delivery; how Disposed of.—Packages too large for delivery by carriers, when unregistered, will be retained by the postmaster in the post-office, and addressees notified, by a printed notice by mail, to call at the post-office for them. The exact dimensions or weight of a package too large or heavy for delivery by carriers are not fixed, but it is left to the discretion of the postmaster to determine, by the mail of the carrier, the distance of his route, &c., whether a package is too large or too heavy for delivery.

Sec. 657. Delivery at Houses where Vicious Dogs are Kept.—Carriers are not required to run the risk of being bitten by vicious dogs in delivering mail matter. Persons keeping such dogs must call at the post-office for their mail, or, if they wish it delivered at their houses, must render it safe for the carrier to approach their premises.

Sec. 658. Transient or "To-be-Called-for" Letters; how Treated.—Letters having as a part of their address the words "Transient," "To be called for," or other words indicating that they are intended for transient persons, must be sent to the general delivery, to be delivered on application after proper identification. Letters so directed must not be delivered by letter carriers, unless on an order from the party addressed. Other letters without street and number, or box number, shall be considered as transient, and sent to the general delivery, unless addressed to some person, or to the care of some person, whose address is known to the distributing clerks or to the carriers. While trial search by directory or otherwise is being made, the letter must be subject to inquiry and delivery through the general delivery, and should not be delayed by the carrier taking it from the post-office.

Sec. 659. Collection of Mail Matter from Receiving Boxes.—Letter carriers collecting mail matter from receiving boxes are required to give the preference to first-class matter when they are not able to carry to the post-office all the contents of the boxes upon their routes. Papers found upon the outside of boxes should be taken to the post-office for mailing, if after emptying the box the carriers are able to do so and the papers are properly wrapped, addressed, and postage prepaid.

Sec. 660. To Receive Letters for Mailing.—Carriers are required, while on their rounds, to receive all letters prepaid by postage stamps that may be handed to them for mailing, but are forbidden to delay their deliveries by waiting for such letters, or to receive money to pay post-

age on letters handed them for mailing. They should also receive other small articles ofailable matter properly prepaid, but are not required to receive packages cumbersome on account of size, shape, or weight, especially when it would interfere with their regular box collections or delivery.

For DUTY OF CARRIERS AS TO SPECIAL-DELIVERY LETTERS, received for mailing, see section 680.

Sec. 661. Not to Return Deposited Letters.—Carriers are forbidden, under any circumstances, to return to any person whatever letters deposited in the street mailing boxes, but must take them to the post-office, where the person desiring the return of a letter claimed by him may make application for it to the postmaster. (See section 531 *et seq.*)

Sec. 662. No Fee or Extra Postage to be Charged.—No extra postage or carriers' fee shall be charged or collected upon any mail matter collected or delivered by carriers. (R. S., § 3873.)

As to EXEMPTION OF LETTER CARRIERS from militia duty, see section 697.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Sec. 663. Postmasters to Report Operations.—Postmasters must forward a report of the operations of the carrier system, as early after the close of each month as practicable, to the Superintendent of Free Delivery. The blanks furnished for this purpose must be used.

Sec. 664. Supplies for Letter-Carrier Post-Offices.—Street mailing boxes, carriers' satchels, blank bonds, oaths, and nomination blanks for carriers and substitutes, collection time cards, and carriers' furniture, when not otherwise provided, will be furnished on application to the First Assistant Postmaster-General (Division of Free Delivery); blank books and forms, on application to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, Division of Post-Office Supplies; locks and keys for street mailing boxes, on application to the Second Assistant Postmaster-General.

As to PAYMENT OF LETTER CARRIERS, AND ACCOUNTS AT LETTER-CARRIER OFFICES, see sections 229, 254, 255.

CHAPTER TWENTY.

THE SPECIAL-DELIVERY SERVICE.

Sec. 665. First Act of Authorization.—A special stamp of the face valuation of ten cents may be provided and issued, whenever deemed advisable or expedient, in such form and bearing such device as may meet the approval of the Postmaster-General, which, when attached to a letter

in addition to the lawful postage thereon, the delivery of which is to be at a free-delivery office, or at any city, town, or village containing a population of four thousand or over, according to the Federal census, shall be regarded as entitling such letter to immediate delivery within the carrier limit of any free-delivery office which may be designated by the Postmaster-General as a special-delivery office, or within one mile of the post-office at any other office coming within the provisions of this section which may in like manner be designated as a special-delivery office. (Act of March 3, 1885, § 3, 23 Stats., 387.)

That such specially stamped letters shall be delivered from seven o'clock ante meridian up to twelve o'clock midnight at offices designated by the Postmaster-General under section three of this act. (Id., § 4.)

That to provide for the immediate delivery of letters bearing the special stamp, the postmaster at any office which may come within the provisions of this act may, with the approval of the Postmaster-General, employ such person or persons as may actually be required for such service, who, upon the delivery of such letter, will procure a receipt from the party addressed, or some one authorized to receive it, in a book to be furnished for the purpose, which shall, when not in use, be kept in the post-office, and at all times subject to examination by an inspector of the Department. (Id., § 5.)

That to provide for the payment of such persons as may be employed for this service, the postmaster at any office designated by section three of this act shall keep a record of the number of letters received at such office bearing such special stamp, which number shall correspond with the number entered in the receipt books heretofore specified; and at the end of each month he may pay to such person or persons employed a sum not exceeding eighty per centum of the face value of all such stamps received and recorded during that month: *Provided*, That in no case shall the compensation so paid to any one person exceed thirty dollars per month: *And provided further*, That nothing in this act shall in any way interfere with the prompt delivery of letters as now provided by law or regulation of the Post-Office Department. (Id., § 6.)

Sec. 666. Act Extending to All Mail Matter at All Offices.—That every article of mailable matter upon which the special stamp provided for by section three of the act of Congress approved March third, eighteen hundred and eighty-five, entitled “An act making appropriations for the service of the Post-Office Department for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and eighty-six, and for other purposes,” shall be duly affixed, shall be entitled to immediate delivery, according to said act, within the carrier-delivery limit of any free-delivery office, and within one mile of any other post-office which the Postmaster-Gen-

eral shall at any time designate as a special-delivery post-office. The postmaster shall be responsible for such immediate delivery of every such article, and shall cause delivery to be made of all such articles received at his office bearing such stamp and entitled to delivery thereat, and may employ any persons, including clerks and assistants, at third and fourth class offices, as messengers, on such terms as he shall fix as compensation for such delivery; and to defray the expense thereof, such postmaster shall be entitled, upon the adjustment of his quarterly account, to eighty per centum of the face value of all such special-delivery stamps received at his office and recorded, according to said act and regulations of the Post-Office Department, during the quarter; and such allowance shall be in full of all the expenses of such delivery: *Provided*, That the Postmaster-General may, in his discretion, direct any free-delivery office to be excepted from the foregoing provisions, and require the delivery to be made entirely by special messengers, according to the provisions of the act to which this is amendatory: *And provided further*, That he may contract for the immediate delivery of all articles from any post-office, at any price less than eight cents per piece, when he shall deem it expedient. (Act of August 4, 1886, § 1, 24 Stats., 220.)

That the Postmaster-General shall prescribe suitable regulations, not inconsistent with the law, for the performance of the immediate-delivery service, the keeping of the records and rendering of accounts thereof, and all matters connected therewith, and may prescribe the hours within which such immediate delivery shall be made at any post-office. (Id., § 2.)

That any postmaster, or any assistant postmaster, clerk, or employé of a postmaster, who shall make any false return or record of the receipt or delivery of any article of mailable matter as being stamped with a special-delivery stamp, or shall make any false return of the number of articles specially delivered from his office, for the purpose of increasing his compensation under the provisions of this act, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and, on conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, or imprisoned for a term of not less than thirty days nor more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court; and whenever, upon evidence deemed satisfactory to him, the Postmaster-General shall determine that any such false return has been made, he may, by order, fix absolutely the compensation of the postmaster for such special delivery during any quarter or quarters which he shall deem affected by such false return, and the Auditor shall adjust the postmaster's account accordingly. (Id., § 3.)

That any person employed to make immediate delivery of letters or

other mail matter under the provisions of this act, or the act of which the same is amendatory, shall be deemed an employé of the postal service, whether he may have been sworn or not, or temporarily or permanently employed, and as such employé shall be liable to any penalties or punishments provided by law for the improper detention, delay, sequestration, rifling, embezzlement, purloining, or destruction of any letter or other article of mail matter, or the contents thereof, intrusted to him for delivery or placed in his custody. (Id., § 4.)

Sec. 667. All Post-Offices Designated as Special-Delivery Offices.—Every post-office in the United States and Territories and the District of Columbia now established, and which shall be established while the acts providing for special-delivery service remain, is designated as a special-delivery office, and will be governed by said acts and the orders and regulations thereunder.

SPECIAL-DELIVERY STAMPS.

Sec. 668. Description of the Special-Delivery Stamps.—The following is a description of the special-delivery stamp now in use:

A line engraving on steel, oblong in form; dimensions, $\frac{1}{8}$ by $1\frac{7}{16}$ inches; color, dark blue. Design: On the left an arched panel bearing the figure of a mail-messenger boy running, and surmounted by the words "United States;" on the right an oblong tablet, ornamented with a wreath of oak and laurel surrounding the words "Secures immediate delivery at any post-office." Across the top of the tablet is the legend "Special Postal Delivery," and at the bottom the words "Ten cents," separated by a small shield bearing the numeral "10."

The issue of these stamps prior to 1886 bears the words "Secures immediate delivery at a special-delivery office," and this issue now entitles the letter or package bearing it to immediate delivery at any post-office.

Sec. 669. How Supplied.—Suitable supplies of the special-delivery stamps will be sent to any post-office in the country which may make requisition for them, and when received they are to be taken up by the postmaster in his postal account and accounted for quarterly in the same manner as postage stamps are accounted for. All offices should be supplied with these stamps. Requisitions must be made upon the office of the Third Assistant Postmaster-General (Stamp Division). The usual form of stamp requisition, which now contains an item covering special-delivery stamps, should be used for this purpose.

Sec. 670. How Sold and Used.—Special-delivery stamps are to be sold by postmasters in any required amount, and to any person who may apply for them, but they can be used only for the purpose of securing the im-

mediate delivery of matter. Under no circumstances are they to be used in the payment of postages of any description or of the registry fee, nor can any other stamps than the special-delivery stamp be employed to secure special delivery.

The special-delivery stamp must be in addition to the lawful postage, and any article of first-class matter not prepaid with at least one full rate of postage, and any parcel of any other class of matter, the postage on which has not been fully prepaid, in accordance with the law and the regulations, must be treated as held for postage, even though bearing a special-delivery stamp.

Sec. 671. How Canceled.—The special-delivery stamps must be effectually canceled at the office of mailing in the same way as ordinary postage stamps are canceled.

REGULATIONS FOR FREE-DELIVERY OFFICES.

Sec. 672. Employment of Special-Delivery Messengers at Free-Delivery Offices.—At free-delivery offices, where no contract shall have been made by the Postmaster-General, as authorized in section six hundred and sixty, for the immediate delivery of articles, the postmasters will from time to time employ as many messenger boys, at their respective offices, as in their judgment will be necessary to secure the prompt delivery of special-delivery letters and packages, observing that, aside from drop letters, their services will be necessary only for a brief time after the arrival of any mail, which in many offices will be but for a portion of the day, and that a proper force must be ready for all mails arriving between 7 A. M. and 11 P. M., and for all drop letters requiring special delivery. The number of messengers necessary, and arrangements for their attendance and service, may vary at different offices to such an extent that minute instructions cannot be laid down; but it must be by experience and careful observation only that they can correctly adjust the force and methods at their offices. It will probably be best to arrange the messengers in tours of duty, assigning appropriate hours to each, so that a suitable force may be on hand to secure immediate delivery at all times within the prescribed hours of the day.

Each messenger, before he enters into service, must take the oath prescribed by law (section 44), on the blank furnished. None but reputable, active, and intelligent boys should be employed, and they should in no case be under thirteen years of age. Substitute letter carriers, when not on duty in place of regular carriers, may be employed as messengers in the special delivery, and receive the same compensation as other messengers; provided that such employment will not interfere with the work of the free-delivery or the special-delivery service.

Sec. 673. Messengers need not be Uniformed.—Messengers need not be uniformed, except in such special cases as may be ordered, but should all be decently and comfortably clad. Substitute letter carriers, when employed as messengers for special delivery, may wear their carrier uniforms.

Sec. 674. Behavior of Messengers.—A special place will be provided in the post-office for the accommodation of the messengers, and, if practicable, it should be so arranged as to prevent their access to other parts of the office, and to mail matter other than that in which they are immediately concerned. Orderly conduct of the messengers while on their trips should be strictly enforced. The necessity of good behavior in the streets when making deliveries or returning should be enjoined, and postmasters should give strict attention to their conduct generally; and no one should be retained who is not diligent, faithful, courteous, and well-behaved.

Sec. 675. Postmasters to Require Efficient Service.—Postmasters should take pains to secure the greatest service from each messenger fairly to be required; to employ no more than shall be actually necessary; and to prevent any combinations or arrangements between the messengers with a view to securing division of the total permissible compensation of the month. They should, by distribution of work and allotment of hours of duty, equalize as far as practicable the compensation of the messengers. To this end, a messenger should not always be assigned to duty during the same periods of each day; but alternations should be made daily, or less frequently, whereby a messenger employed during the busy hours of one day may be assigned to the duller hours of another day. So, too, changes should be made in assignments to night duty, it being the aim to distribute the burdens as well as the compensations impartially among the messengers, so far as the same can be done without detriment to the service. No car fare or other incidental expenses can in any case be allowed to any messenger.

Sec. 676. Delivery Books; how Kept.—Each messenger will be provided with a delivery book (a supply of which will be furnished by the Department) in which will be entered the number and address of each letter, and the date and hour of its receipt by the messenger, and any balance of postage due, stamps for which must be affixed to the letter, and the messenger will collect the amount of such postage due before delivery. Blank spaces will also be provided for the signature of the person to whom the letter is delivered. The books will be retained in the post-office when not in use by the messengers, and after the use has been discontinued for any reason they must be carefully preserved in the post-office, subject to call by the Department. The

messengers should be required to promptly return the book to the office after every tour.

Sec. 677. Payment of Messengers to be made at end of Each Calendar Month.—Compensation of messengers employed can be made only after the end of each calendar month. When the month has expired, the postmaster will compare the total amount of special-delivery stamps on all letters specially delivered from his office as herein directed during such month; and eighty per centum thereof may be applied, if necessary, to the payment of the messengers who made such deliveries. This is the utmost limit of the appropriation for messengers' compensation.

Messengers should be employed with the understanding that they shall receive the full eight cents per letter actually delivered, not exceeding thirty dollars during any one month. But where the business may be reasonably expected, or shall prove, sufficient at any office to warrant it, the postmaster may employ his messengers at a less rate per letter, or by the hour (at not exceeding twelve and one-half cents per hour, calculating eight hours' service per day), or by the month, being certain not exceed the total permissible allowance.

Sec. 678. Payments to Special-Delivery Messengers; how Received For, &c.—In settling with the messengers at the close of each month, postmasters will take receipts from each one, on a regular pay roll, showing the name of the messenger, the number of letters delivered by him as ascertained by the messenger's book and postmaster's record, and the amount paid; and the aggregate of the pay roll must not exceed eighty per cent. of the total value of the special-delivery stamps on letters actually delivered during the month. The pay roll will be in duplicate, one copy to be retained by the postmaster, and one to be sent to the Auditor with the quarterly postal account. (See section 228.)

Sec. 679. Special-Delivery Letters may be Delivered by Carriers; when.—If a letter for special delivery can be expeditiously delivered by a carrier in his regular trip, it may be turned over to such carrier for such purpose—a delivery book to be provided for him and a receipt to be taken by him the same as in case of delivery by messenger. Such carrier will not be entitled to any compensation for such delivery.

Sec. 680. Duty of Letter Carriers Receiving Special Delivery Letters, &c., for Mailing.—Letter carriers, whether assigned to delivery or collection duty and special delivery messengers shall receive all prepaid letters, bearing also special-delivery stamp, which may be handed them on their trips; shall keep such letters separate from other mail matter, and hand them over to the proper officer immediately upon their arrival at the post office. In no case is a letter carrier to turn over directly to a mes-

senger a local letter for special delivery, even though he may be satisfied that such letter will be more speedily delivered. He must turn over to the main office or station where he is employed all special-delivery letters which he may collect.

Sec. 681. Reports of Special-Delivery Business at Free-Delivery Offices to be Made Quarterly.—Reports of the special-delivery business transacted at free-delivery offices will be made quarterly to the Third Assistant Postmaster-General.

Sec. 682. Propositions to Perform Special-Delivery Service to be Reported to Department.—Postmasters at free-delivery offices will forward to the Department any propositions which they receive from corporations or other reliable parties for performing the immediate delivery of mail matter at their respective offices, with a statement of all the facts in each case, and such recommendations as they may see proper to make in the matter.

REGULATIONS FOR OTHER THAN FREE-DELIVERY OFFICES.

Sec. 683. Means of Special Delivery; how Provided at Third and Fourth Class Post-Offices.—Such immediate delivery may, at third and fourth class offices, be made by the postmaster himself, by any assistant or clerk, or by any other competent person whom he may employ as messenger. The postmaster must provide the means and pay the expenses of such delivery, and will be allowed, by whatever suitable person the delivery be made, the full compensation of eighty per centum of the face value of all special-delivery stamps on matter properly delivered from his office and recorded. At second-class offices no compensation can be allowed for delivery made by any salaried clerk or assistant; otherwise the same direction applies.

Sec. 684. Accounts of Special-Delivery Service and Fees.—In rendering his quarterly postal account, the postmaster, at an office other than free delivery, will take credit for the amount of fees to which he is entitled on all letters or parcels specially delivered during the quarter at the rate of eight cents for each letter or parcel specially delivered. The form of the account provides a special item of credit for such fees. (See sections 241, 243.)

REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL POST-OFFICES.

Sec. 685. Mailing and Dispatch of Special-Delivery Matter.—No effort will be spared by postmasters or other postal officers to expedite the mailing of matter bearing special-delivery stamps. In putting up and dispatching special-delivery matter, postmasters will be governed by the following rules :

First-Class Matter.—1. When dispatched in direct or express pouch

from one post-office to another post-office, or from a railway post-office to a post-office, a separate package should be made when there are five or more letters. When there are less than five letters, they should be placed together on the outside of the letter package, so as to be readily discovered by the person opening the pouch.

2. When dispatched from the post-office to a railway post-office, or from one railway post-office to another, a separate package should be made when there are five or more of these letters addressed to the same post-office; when there are less than five letters, they should be placed upon the outside of a direct package, or immediately under the label slip of a route or State package.

Second, Third, and Fourth Class Matter.—Postmasters and railway postal clerks will in all cases treat matter of the second, third, and fourth classes, bearing special-delivery stamps, the same as first-class matter; that is, it must be placed in pouches and not in sacks. Where possible, it should be tied up in a bundle in such a manner as to disclose its nature immediately on the pouch being opened.

Postmasters and railway postal clerks will report to their division superintendents all failures to comply with the above rules.

Sec. 686. Duty of Postmasters on Arrival of Special-Delivery Matter.—The service contemplated by the law requires that all special-delivery matter shall reach the addressee with the greatest possible expedition after it arrives at the post-office. Postmasters should, therefore, open all mails at once on their arrival, as is required by the regulations, and immediately separate the matter bearing special-delivery stamps, and stamp with the receiving stamp of the office, or write on the envelope or wrapper the name of the office and the date and hour when the matter arrives. Next, the matter must be numbered, and entered according to number in a record as provided in section six hundred and ninety-three, after which it must be delivered without loss of time. Like diligent attention must be given to drop or local matter bearing special-delivery stamps from the time it is deposited in the post-office.

Sec. 687. Postmasters Responsible for Immediate Delivery of all Mailable Matter Bearing Special-Delivery Stamps.—Every postmaster will be held responsible for the immediate delivery, according to the laws and regulations, of every article of mailable matter which may be received addressed to his office, properly stamped with a special-delivery stamp.

Sec. 688. Hours within which Delivery is to be Made.—The hours within which special delivery shall be made at free-delivery post-offices are from 7 A. M. to 11 P. M., unless in special cases otherwise ordered by the Postmaster-General. At other post-offices, the hours are at least from 7 A. M. to 7 P. M., and to the arrival of the last mail, provided this be

not later than 9 o'clock P. M. Special orders may be made for later delivery in particular cases. This requirement does not extend to the transaction of any other postal business after the usual office hours.

Postmasters are not required to make delivery of special-delivery matter on Sunday, nor to keep their offices open in any different manner on that day than provided by regulation. Postmasters will be at liberty, however, to deliver special-delivery letters and parcels arriving on Sundays. (See section 481.)

When an article of special-delivery matter arrives on Saturday night too late for delivery, or on Sunday morning, the postmaster should put a notice thereof in the letter-box of the addressee, or in the general delivery, if he have no box, and deliver the matter on call. If not delivered on Sunday, prompt delivery should be made on Monday morning.

Sec. 689. To Whom Special-Delivery Letters, &c., are to be Delivered.—Special-delivery matter must be delivered to the addressee, or to any one specially authorized to receive his mail matter. In his absence and that of any one having such special authority, such matter may be delivered to any responsible member of the addressee's family, or any partner or clerk of his, or responsible person employed in his office; and to the officer or agent of any firm, incorporated company, or public institution to which addressed. If the mail matter be addressed to a person who is a guest at a hotel and the guest be not in, delivery may be made to the landlord.

If incorrectly addressed to street or number it should be promptly delivered, if the correct address is known or can be ascertained. Matter addressed to a party at his place of business should be delivered at his residence if delivery at place of business be impossible, and *vice versa*.

Sec. 690. Within What Limits Special Deliveries to be Made.—At free-delivery offices delivery of special-delivery letters must be made within the carrier limits of the office; but at all other offices they are required to be delivered only within a radius of one mile from the post-office.

If a letter bearing special-delivery stamp is directed to an address beyond the carrier limits in the one case, or beyond one mile from the post-office in the other, such letter need not be specially delivered, unless the delivery can be made to the person addressed within the limits.

Sec. 691. Receipts to be Taken.—For every special-delivery article delivered the postmaster must take a receipt from the party receiving it; and all receipts for matter delivered during any quarter must be sent as vouchers to the Auditor at the end of such quarter, with the postmaster's postal account for that quarter. A supply of the printed form

of receipt to be used will be furnished by the Department, for which postmasters should make requisition as they may be needed.

Sec. 692. Registered Special-Delivery Matter.—In case of registered letters received for special delivery the usual registered receipts in addition to the special delivery receipts must be taken, and all other requirements of the registry system must be observed.

Sec. 693. Record of Special-Delivery Articles; how Kept.—A record must be kept in the post-office, for which an appropriate book or blank will be furnished by the Department, in which will be entered, in consecutive numbers, according to the receipt of the articles, each and every letter, postal card, parcel, or other article of mailable matter bearing a special-delivery stamp; and this record will show in columns under appropriate headings the number, the postmark, the full address of the article, the date and precise time of its receipt at the office, the name of the person who delivers it, and also the precise time when it was delivered, if delivered, and the name of the person signing the receipt therefor; and, under the head of "REMARKS," the reason for its non-delivery, or for any delay in its delivery, if either occurred, and a statement of what subsequent action was taken with regard to such article, in each such case. The time of delivery and name of receptor will be transcribed from the delivery receipt immediately on its return to the post-office in all cases. If an article is also registered, that fact should be noted, and a proper entry also made in the regular record of registered matter. This record book or blank will be carefully preserved in the post-office.

Sec. 694. Special-Delivery Matter; when and how to be Forwarded.—After a special-delivery article has been taken out for delivery, and has been returned with the information that the person addressed has removed to the delivery of another office, and the article is then forwarded, it is not to be regarded as entitled to special delivery at the office of second address. Every special-delivery article forwarded as above, after an attempt to deliver it has been made, will, so far as it concerns the compensation of the forwarding postmaster, be regarded as delivered. Such article should be indorsed by the forwarding postmaster, "Forwarded, delivery fee paid by office of first address." But where request to forward by a general or special authorization has been given by the addressee in advance of the arrival of the matter, so that no attempt to deliver is necessary, the article should be forwarded without such indorsement, and the postmaster, at the office of final destination, will, in such case, make special delivery of the matter as he would of other special-delivery matter arriving at his office.

Matter other than first class, when forwarded from one office to

another, is not exempt from the postage due for forwarding by bearing a special-delivery stamp. (See section 562.)

Sec. 695. Undelivered Special-Delivery Matter; how Disposed of.—In disposing of undelivered matter intended for special delivery, postmasters will be guided by the regulations applying to the return of other undelivered matter. (See sections 592 to 596.)

Sec. 696. General Instructions.—Postmasters are urgently enjoined to give the most diligent attention to the system of immediate delivery. Its success will depend upon the care of postmasters to secure in every case the desired delivery. No failure in any instance where delivery is possible can be considered excusable. The certainty that a letter bearing the delivery stamp will be urgently transmitted through the mails, for which proper special steps are taken, and immediately delivered, will commend the service to the public, and is demanded by the Department. Every complaint of a failure in such delivery will be promptly investigated, and the responsibility fixed with proper consequences. Postmasters will report to the Department every instance which may be brought to their attention where the laws and regulations in respect to special delivery have been violated.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF POSTMASTERS.

Sec. 697. Exemptions and Liabilities.— * * All postmasters and persons employed in the transportation of the mail; all ferrymen employed at any ferry on post-roads * * shall be exempted from militia duty. (R. S., § 1629.)

No law of the United States exempts postmasters from jury duty, from obedience to the subpoenas of courts, nor from liability to pay highway taxes in labor, nor any other duty prescribed by the laws of the State or municipality in which they reside, not in conflict with the postal or other laws of the United States.

Postmasters, like other officers, may be liable to individuals who suffer injury in consequence of their misconduct or neglect in the performance of official duties; and the party injured may recover damages in a civil action.

For unlawful refusal to deliver letters, papers, or parcels to a person entitled to them, the postmaster is liable for a conversion. (12 How., U. S., 284; 1 N. Y. 537.) He is liable for the loss of a package through the carelessness of himself or his *unsworn* clerks or servants (11 Me., 495; 1 Brev., 181; 23 Vt., 663.); but to maintain an action against a postmaster in such case the plaintiff must prove that he was damaged by the neglect. (7 Cranch 242.) A postmaster is not liable for the loss of letters sent in the mails by a private party, and lost through the negligence

of his sworn clerk or assistant (110 Mass., 474), unless he was himself guilty of negligence in appointing or keeping in employment such clerk or assistant, or in superintending the performance of the duties of the post-office. (6 Barb., 632; 1 Johns, 396; 8 Watts, 452; 2 Bay., 551; 13 Ohio, 542.) But he is liable for the acts of one whom he permits to have the care and custody of the mail, without having been sworn according to law. (11 Me., 495.) A post-office clerk received a letter containing money in gold coin, with orders to register it. It was addressed to a country with which there was no registry system, but both the sender and clerk supposed it could be registered. The clerk on discovering that it could not be sent as a registered package, sent it, by direction of the postmaster, as an ordinary unregistered letter. The letter was lost and the postmaster and clerk were both held liable. (*Fitzgerald v. Burrill*, 106 Mass., 446.)

Sec. 698. In Respect to Infectious Diseases, Epidemics, &c.—1. A postmaster should refuse to receive into his office mail matter brought to it by persons who are inmates of, or messengers from houses containing cases of contagious diseases, such as small-pox, yellow fever, &c., when ordered to do so by a board of health, or other local authority having jurisdiction of matters affecting the public health. If there be no such organization or official, the postmaster should be governed by the advice of one or more reputable physicians.

2. Mail matter arriving at an office addressed to the inmates of such houses may be sent to them by the hands of some responsible person known to the postmaster.

3. When a board of health serve upon a postmaster a certified copy of a declaration or order duly made that mail matter from any other post-office is liable to communicate a contagious disease prevailing at the time, he should refuse to receive such mail matter from any carrier or messenger, but will deliver to the carrier or messenger a copy of such order or declaration, and will report the facts at once to the First Assistant Postmaster-General. If there be no board of health, the same action may be taken by the postmaster upon the declaration of a regular county or city medical society, or, if there be none, upon the advice of a physician reputable in his profession. The mail so returned shall be held until the prohibition is removed, and shall, after being properly fumigated under the directions of the medical authorities, be dispatched to its destination.

4. If a case of small-pox, yellow fever, or other contagious disease occurs in the family of a postmaster occupying a building in which the post-office is kept, the postmaster should notify his sureties to take possession of the office, and conduct it temporarily elsewhere until the danger of contagion is passed.

5. When the books, blanks, or supplies of a post-office become infected with small-pox or other dangerous contagious disease, permission to burn them will be given, upon application to the First Assist-

ant Postmaster-General. The postage stamps must be carefully counted in the presence of two disinterested witnesses, and a statement of the amount and classification of the same, and of the other property, and of the destruction thereof, sworn to by the witnesses, must be sent to the Third Assistant Postmaster General.

Sec. 699. To Report Lost Mail Matter.—Postmasters must report without delay to the Chief Post-Office Inspector, and nearest inspector in charge, every complaint which is made to them or comes to their knowledge, of the loss in the mails of letters or articles of value, whether registered or not, stating in the report all known facts and circumstances connected with the loss, the name of the post-office where the letter was mailed, date of mailing, by whose hand mailed, names of writer and person addressed, amount and description of inclosure, to what post-office addressed, and, if registered, the registry number, and any other particulars that may aid in making a thorough investigation.

Sec. 700. Reports of Robberies of Post-Offices.—When a post-office has been robbed the postmaster will immediately report all the facts to the Chief Post-Office Inspector and to the nearest post-office inspector in charge, as indicated in section thirty-six. The report must state as fully as possible all the circumstances connected with the robbery, the date, extent of loss, whether of stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, newspaper wrappers, letters stolen or rifled, postal or money-order funds or other Government property, and the amount of each class of property. If the loss includes the mail key, the number should be given; and if registered or ordinary mail matter, it should be stated whether the same was rifled in the office or carried away. As to registered matter lost or rifled, the report should specify the post-office where mailed, date of mailing, number of letter and registered package envelope, by whom written, to whom addressed, and contents, if known. For the value of registered or ordinary mail matter lost by robbery of post-offices, the postmaster may be held responsible to the losers, if upon investigation it appears that due care was not taken for the protection of the property. Any facts discovered after the report is made, and material to the investigation, should also be reported to the same officers.

Sec. 701. To Report Robbery of Mail.—If a postmaster has reason to believe that a mail has been robbed or stolen, in whole or in part, in the vicinity of his post-office, and that the person committing it can be arrested by speedy action, he will at once report all the facts and evidence to the nearest United States marshal or deputy marshal, as well as to the Chief Post-Office Inspector and nearest inspector in charge.

Sec. 702. Report of Arrest of Criminals.—When a criminal is apprehended by other than a United States marshal or deputy marshal, the

United States attorney for the district in which the offense was committed must be promptly informed of the facts, and his advice, and if may be, his personal attention, be obtained.

Sec. 703. Examination of Persons Arrested.—Persons arrested for mail depredations or other violations of the postal laws should be taken before a United States court commissioner or district or circuit judge, for examination or commitment.

Sec. 704. Moneys Recovered from Mail Robbers; how Disposed of.—All moneys recovered from mail robbers, or other offenders against the postal laws, will be forwarded at once, through the Chief Post-Office Inspector, to the Postmaster-General, who will, upon satisfactory evidence, return the same to the owner. (See section 151.)