

The following are extracted from an establishment book from 1832 (finding number POST 59/37). They give a flavour of work in the different departments of the Post Office at this time. As far as possible original punctuation and spelling has been maintained.

### England

#### Postmaster General

The office of the Postmaster General is one of extensive control and responsibility. He has the superintendence of a revenue of two millions which is not collected as tax, but is the produce of a trade or business the success of which depends upon the mode in which it is managed:-the Post Office does not receive a single shilling without performing a service to justify the demand.

The P.M.G. has to control an expenditure of half a million engaged in the management of this trade-the salaries and wages of the numerous persons employed in all parts of the country form comparatively a small portion of this expenditure-numerous carriages horses and vessels are engaged in the performance of the service a part of it is carried on under contracts some of considerable magnitude, and then under separate conventions with foreign powers.

No expense whatever is incurred but by the express authority of the P.M.G. nor can any alteration be made in any post throughout the Country nor even a letter carrier be employed or dismissed but under his sanction-all orders for the payment of money must be signed by the Postmaster General

Every suggestion or proposition whether relating to the expenditure of public money or to the public accommodation after being examined by the practical persons in the Department to which the subject may relate, is sifted and considered by the Postmaster General's Principal Officers, who report their opinion with the grounds on which that opinion is formed, whether of assent or dissent to the Postmaster General for his decision upon the view of all circumstances-thus many hundreds of papers are provided to the Postmaster General for his consideration and directions in the course of the year, exclusive of the numerous ordinary returns, accounts and warrants for signature.

The present system is one of decided check and control and such as to ensure the substantial performance of a branch of the Public Service so intimately connected with the convenience and feelings of all classes and which so materially affects the commercial interests of the country.

#### Secretary's Office

The Secretary's office is the regulating and comptrolling office of the whole department and from the nature and constitution of the Post Office is in daily and constant correspondence with all ranks and classes of the public.

All subjects connected with the posts throughout the country in its domestic and foreign relations and in the

colonies are discussed and arranged in the Secretary's office; where the whole of the correspondence is carried on with the Surveyors Agents and Deputy Postmasters

All warrants for defraying the expenditure of the General Post Office are made out in this office, which is also in receipt of the whole of the revenue collected by Deputy Postmasters at home and abroad

The business of the Packets with the exception of the Falmouth Station which is under the Admiralty is transacted here.

One of the Secretary's Junior Clerks is in attendance night and day to receive and forward public and private expresses and to be in readiness for all emergencies

### **Mail Coach Office**

The duty of the Mail Coach Office is to superintend and regulate the conveyance of the mails by coaches throughout Great Britain and Ireland according to the contracts and time bills. To report to the board on all matters connected with this subject, to correspond with the contractors etc., to examine and check all accounts for mileage, allowances, travelling and tradesmens bills, and all other expences relating to the mail coaches.

The Superintendent has frequently to proceed to various parts of the country on business relating to his department.

The Assistant Superintendents are employed about three days a week on the average in travelling with the coaches for the inspection of the conduct of the contractor, guards and coachment to maintain the necessary regularity in the conveyance of the correspondence.

### **Solicitor**

The Solicitor attends daily to give his advice and to peruse and consult on such correspondence as may require legal assistance. His other duties are the prosecution of all offences against the Penal Post Office Statutes or against the revenue, the bringing and defending actions and suits in the several law courts and the conducting such Parliamentary and other miscellaneous business as requires legal interference, also holding himself in readiness to proceed into any part of the country where his attendance may be requisite

The Solicitor proceeds for the recovery of all arrears of revenue due by Deputy Postmasters.

### **Surveyors**

The Surveyors are selected from the most competent officers of the Department, they are required to visit frequently the Post Offices in their respective districts for the purposes of inspecting the mode in which the Deputy Postmasters perform their business-they take charge of offices which become vacant and instruct all Deputy Postmasters in the discharge of their duty, they make contracts for the conveyance of the mail other than by mail coaches and maintain proper discipline in the horse and foot posts

Their duty is also to suggest improvements as from their local knowledge may appear advisable for the public correspondence, to consider and report upon all matters referred to them for information of the board and to superintend the execution of all alterations authorised by the Postmaster General in the route of the posts, or in the establishment of new branches.

# Post Office Job Descriptions

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Their attendance is as occasion requires in town or country and their duty constant.

### **Receiver General's Office**

The duty of the Receiver General's Office is to receive from the general and foreign post windowmen and letter carriers the amount of postage charged against them by their respective comptrollers for letters delivered to them and from the collector of the two penny post the amount of the postage of general post letters delivered to that department and the net revenue of the two penny post, to receive all revenue remitted by all Deputy Postmasters and Agents in bills, bank notes and cash and to pay all bank notes and cash into the bank and to deliver the bills (first procuring the acceptance of such as require it) to the bank for the purpose of obtaining payment of them and to receive all other monies that may be paid on account of the revenue. To pay the salary to each officer quarterly and to make all payments on account of the expenditure of the Post Office by separate drafts on the bank and to pay the net revenue into the Exchequer, to keep proper accounts thereof and to deliver statements of the receipts and payments to the Treasury and to the Accountant General and an annual account supported by the proper vouchers to the commissioners for auditing public accounts.

### **Accountant General's Office**

The duty of the Accountant General's Office is to examine and state all accounts relative to the Post Office revenue. To check the whole of the Receiver General's receipts and payments by entering the charges signed by the respective principals against the inland and foreign windowmen and letter carriers and the collector of the twopenny post and by checking and entering the remittances from Deputy Postmasters and Agents delivered by the Secretary to the Receiver General.

To examine and check the calculation of all bills or accounts prior to being warranted by the Postmaster General and to enter the warrants as a check against the Receiver General comparing likewise all drafts issued to the Receiver General in payment thereof with the entries made from the warrants previously countersigning them pursuant to 46 Geo 3, also to ascertain that the Receiver General pays the net weekly produce into the Exchequer and makes daily payments of all monies into the bank and complies with the regulations of the said Act

To check the cash accounts of the Ship Letter and Two Penny Post Offices.

To enter under the head of each post town the daily amount of the country unpaid letters out and paid letters in and to check and examine the amount of the penny post and 5<sup>th</sup> Clause letters and bye and cross post correspondence by the monthly vouchers.

To surcharge all short charges in the bye letters and to report weekly to the Secretary any errors in the 'Tellings' of the 'Slips' or charges against the Postmasters, in the Inland Office.

To form the whole when cast up and checked by the Postmasters returns into quarterly accounts current with each Postmaster giving him credit for salary, riding work, returned letters, incidental payments, guards wages, ship letters, gratuities etc., and shewing the balances due on the 5<sup>th</sup> January, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 5<sup>th</sup> July, and 10<sup>th</sup> October each year and transmitting the accounts about six weeks after the termination of each quarter, the Postmaster acknowledging the receipt thereof and declaring that the allowances have been justly appropriated.

To make up all annual and other statements of the revenue and charges of management etc. Increase or

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decrease in allowances, pensions etc, and accounts of Postmasters balances and disbursements and arrears.

To make an annual check certificate of the receipts and payments of the Receiver General, and also a general book of account correctly balanced to the 5<sup>th</sup> January in each year for the purpose of being examined and audited by the Commissioners for auditing public accounts.

And to keep such journals, ledgers, registers, and subsidiary books as are requisite to carry into effect the general business of the Accountant General's department.

### **Foreign Post Office**

The duties of the officers of the Foreign Post Office consist in receiving and despatching the foreign mails to all parts of the continent of Europe, the Mediterranean, Brazil, Buenos Ayres, Mexico, Columbia, etc. To collect the postage on such letters, sort and enclose them in the respective bags with the proper lists. Also to receive the mails from foreign parts, tax the letters, sort them, tell them up in charges for the letter carriers, and Alphabet keeper who delivers the letters at the office window.

The business of the office commences at 6 in the morning and most of the clerks are kept till 2 o'clock in the office, to be in readiness to prepare for distribution any mails that may arrive after the first delivery of letters in the morning. Part of the clerks are further kept in attendance till 11 o'clock at night to be ready to look over any mails that may arrive after 2 o'clock and select the despatches for His Majesty and the Secretaries of State, and to prepare the mails for delivery next morning.

The clerks are employed after 2 o'clock in receiving the letters for the mails from London and preparing them for dispatch to foreign parts. This duty on the grand foreign post nights, Tuesdays and Fridays, is not completed until 12.30am on the following morning. On the other days the duty is finished at 8 o'clock at night. Part of the clerks attend on Sundays till 11 o'clock at night to receive and open such mails as may arrive, select the despatches and prepare the letters for delivery on Monday mornings.

### **Ship Letter Office**

Ship Letter Office for the receipt and forwarding of letters to and from parts beyond the sea by ships other than packets.

The duties of this office are to receive ship letters from the outports brought by the mails of the morning and after separating those which are exempt from charge to tax and transfer the remainder to the Inland Office for delivery by the letter carriers. To ascertain that the Postmasters in the country have taken the correct postage upon letters to be sent abroad and to examine the accounts from the outports of the gratuities paid under the Act of Parliament to commanders bringing letters. To receive the postage upon ship letters to foreign parts and the declarations required by the act from every captain of a ship arriving at the port of London to enable him to make entry at the custom house.

The ship letter office has also daily to dispatch letters to the outposts and make up the accounts of the same and must be in constant communication with ship brokers, owners and merchants as to the departure etc. of merchant vessels and with the custom house

### **Dead Letter Office**

The duties of the Dead Letter Office are to examine and check the accounts of the Postmasters in the country for letters which cannot be delivered, or have been misdirected or redirected from one post town to

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another. To see that the reasons assigned for the non delivery of paid letters are sufficient and that no improper claims have been admitted upon letters alleged to have been over charged. The credit to Postmasters for dead, missent redirected and overcharged letters is about £45 000 per annum.

This office corresponds with the Postmasters upon the subject of their accounts under these heads and with the writers of letters which cannot be delivered containing property and is responsible that such property which on an average amounts to £70 000 per annum is properly disposed of.

To return in all practicable cases letters to the writer keeping accounts of the amount of postage of such as are refused, of such as have been delivered and of those which are destroyed. This branch of the office is one in which very great attention and discretion are requisite, as the signatures to many letters are difficult to read and the address within is often abbreviated and can only be assisted by the postmarks. The number each clerk is expected to direct, fold and seal up is 100 in 4 hours (the time the extra clerks work) or 170 in 6 hours (the time the other clerks are employed) to obtain which perhaps 140 or 220 letters must be examined to make up their respective numbers of such as are returnable.

The total number sent to the writers is about 66 000 quarterly averaging £1900 postage of which about 39 500 letters amounting to £900 on the average are taken in and paid for.

The number of dead letters and newspapers brought to the department is about 194 200 a quarter or on an average 2 500 daily, except in the valentine time when the number is about 270 00 a quarter or 70 to 80 000 additional letters in the month of February.

The amount of property discovered in letter annually

In bills and promissory notes about £73 000

In cash and bank notes £3 000

Property which cannot be returned to the owners is accounted for to the Revenue and property other than money is reported to the Postmaster General for his final disposal.

The personal enquiries at this department are numerous and occupy much time.

### Inland Office

Morning Duty-To receive Letters from all parts of the United Kingdom, the East and West Indies, America and from foreign parts brought by ships other than packets. To check and ascertain the due arrival of all bags from the country, that they are properly and securely fastened. To ascertain that the amount of paid letters is sent in each bag corresponds with the sum entered upon the letter bill by the postmaster. To surcharge such as have been undertaxed by the Deputy Postmasters, and reduce those charges on such as have been rated too high. To sort the letters after they have been stamped into grand divisions and subdivide them into the letter carriers districts. To form the charge against the letter carriers, the window clerks and the two penny post of the postage to be collected by each. To change such franks as may be wrong dated, overweight, or number and in all cases when not strictly conformable to Act of Parliament.

Midday Duty-To return overcharges on letters for London or delivered by the Two Penny Post and pay for Ship Letters bought to this office.

Evening Duty-To despatch letters to all parts of the United Kingdom and the mails to the West Indies and America. To check the due arrival of the bags collected by the mail carts from the letter carriers and the receiving houses in London. To stamp, sort and tax with the proper rates of postage the letters for the respective post towns and to make them up in bags with a letter bill.

Sunday duty-certain officers attend on Sundays to open the bags from the outposts and Irish mails for the



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purpose of forwarding the letters for public offices and to prepare any ship letters or mails from the West Indies and America for the letter carriers by way of expediting the delivery of letters to the public on the following morning.

The Inland Office is a department of such complicated detail that it would be in vain to attempt to give more than a mere outline of the principal duties, the real nature and extent of them can only be known by personal inspection. The morning duty commences at 6am and ends when the letter carriers are despatched which is about ½ past 8 or later according to the circumstances. The clerks come upon duty ¼ before 5 in the afternoon and remain until the mails are despatched at 8pm. The Senior clerks attend alternately morning and evening and the Juniors every morning and evening

## **Mail Guards**

The actual pay of a mail guard is 10/6 per week. The emoluments are derived from the gratuities received from passengers and in some cases fees for the conveyance of private pouches for gentlemen residing on the high road. These emoluments must of course vary according to the profits of the coach from the number of passengers. On a coach that is not very prosperous the guard may get 30/ a week including his salary. On some of the most successful coaches the guard may receive 40/ a week in addition to the ½ guinea from the office, making £2 10s 6d a week. The guards succeed to the best coaches with some attention to seniority, chiefly by merit and good conduct

## **Copy of Instructions given to the Marine Mail Guards**

You are to take charge of such mails as are delivered to your care, either at this office or in places abroad, and to deliver the same according to their respective addresses-taking proper receipts for the mails from this country which you are to transmit to the Secretary with your Journal.

You are not to interfere in any respect in the management or direction of the steam vessels employed to convey the mails but you may afford any advice or assistance if requested by the master.

You will keep a journal noticing accurately the time of receipt of the mail on board, the hour of departure and arrival, weather, stops on the passage, casualties, occurrences of every description, in fact the journal must be so correctly kept that it may be attested to on oath if necessary.

You are not on any account to suffer any person to inspect your journal, but you will deliver it on arrival at the General Post Office with the mail, in a sealed cover addressed to the Secretary.

Landing on the coast-if from the state of the weather, or any other circumstances the steam vessels with the mail should be unable to come up the Thames and you by getting on shore at Gravesend, or even at Margate, can expedite the receipt of the mails in London, so that they may reach this office not later than 7 o'clock am, then you will land and endeavour to fall in with the mail coach which leaves Canterbury at 11.30pm and Gravesend at 4am taking a chaise and pair of horses for the purpose.

The Holland mail in all practicable cases is to be landed at Rotterdam-but if the steam vessel cannot, owing to ice, reach that place, the mail is then to be landed at Helvoetsluis [Hellevoetsluis] and if the agent for packets should not be there you will proceed with it to the Brielle and deliver it to the Post Office taking the agents bags onto Rotterdam or the Hague as the case may be.

If the steam vessel cannot approach Helvoetsluis [Hellevoetsluis] the mail must be landed at Schevening or

# Post Office Job Descriptions

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Katwyck and you will proceed with it to the Hague if the agent is not on the coast.

The Hamburg steam vessel will call off Cuxhaven on the outward and homeward passage and you will deliver the mails for Hanover and Bremen to the person authorized to receive them.

If the Elbe should be frozen so that the steam vessel cannot go up, the whole of the mails are to be landed at Cuxhaven and delivered to the accredited officer of the Hamburg Post Office, but when the steam vessel cannot reach Cuxhaven they are to go to Heligoland and the mails are to be delivered and received for the Post Office in that island.

By command etc.

General Post Office August 1832

### Ireland

#### Secretary's Office

The Secretary exercises a general superintendence and control over the whole of the Post Office department in Ireland. He corresponds with the public, with the surveyors and with the Postmaster's on all matters connected therewith.

Applications for altering and extending posts and all propositions for lessening the expenditure are considered and reported on for the decision of the Postmaster General. Remittances are received from the Deputy Postmasters acknowledged by the Secretary and paid to the Receiver General.

#### Receiver General

The whole revenue of the Post Office in Ireland is received here; that collected in the country from the remittance clerk in the Secretary's office and that collected in Dublin from the letter carriers and clerk of the paid letter office, the amount is lodged in the Bank of Ireland daily to the public account of the Postmaster General. All disbursements or warrants of the Postmaster General, payment of salaries, wages, pensions etc. also payments into the exchequer.

#### Mail Coach Office

Exercising under the direction of the Superintendent of the Mail Coaches a general control over the mail coach contractors and guards in the country and in Dublin, corresponding with the superintendent when in England and carrying his orders into effect.

#### Accountant General

All the accounts of the department both charge and discharge are prepared in this office, a weekly check is kept upon the receipts and payments of the Receiver General. The calculation of the tradesmen's bills is examined, the Receiver General's drafts on the bank are countersigned, quarterly accounts current are prepared and furnished to the Deputy Postmasters, and annual accounts are prepared for parliament. The daily letter bills to and from the Deputy Postmaster, and the letter carriers check books are examined in this office, and the charge against each ascertained, also the bye letter account of Postmasters

#### Inspector of Dead Letters

# Post Office Job Descriptions

## (contd.)

The accounts of the Deputy Postmasters for the dead, missent and redirected letters etc. are examined in this office and an account furnished to the Accountant General of the credit to be given and also to letter carriers for all undelivered letters in Dublin. Dead Letters are opened and returned to the writer, the particulars of such as contain enclosures of consequence being first registered in a property letter book.

### Surveyors

The Surveyors are employed in checking and regulating the posts of their respective districts, exercising a general control over the Postmaster, considering and reporting upon all applications referred to them, proposing alterations and improvements, taking charge of the revenue on the death or removal of Postmasters, and in instructing and placing in charge new deputies.

### Inland Office

The Inland clerks are employed in preparing for delivery by the letter carriers all letters for Dublin and its vicinity from Great Britain and from the interior of Ireland between 6 and 9am, also all penny post letters, preparing letters for the several despatches of the mails viz. at midday to Cork, at 3pm to Holyhead, at 4pm to Liverpool and at 7pm to all parts of Ireland.

The clerks of the Paid Letter Office are employed in the receipt of post paid letters and in the delivery of all correspondence called for at the Post Office.

## Scotland

### Secretary's Office

The duties of the Secretary's office may be briefly described as consisting of a general superintendence of the whole establishment in Edinburgh and throughout Scotland in conducting all correspondence connected therewith and in giving effect to all the orders and regulations for the due fulfilment of the various duties as they may from time to time receive the sanction and authority of the Postmaster General. The whole revenue collected by the postmasters in Scotland is remitted by them and received in the Secretary's office, checked, entered and acknowledged and handed daily over to the Cashier. The duty of checking the various tradesmens bills as well as the numerous incidental claims of Deputy Postmasters forms not the least important part of the duty, all warrants for the payment of these and the disimbursement of the whole expenses of the establishment throughout Scotland are made out here, the important duty also of examining into and taking care that the securities of Deputy Postmasters and others are in a sound state. There are many other duties of an incidental nature which attach to this office, such as the numerous personal communications with the public daily arising out of complaints of missing letters or newspapers, delay in the delivery of letters and other irregularities all of which occupy much time and require a good deal of attention and consideration.

### Cashier

The duties of this office cannot be more summarily described than they are in the following copy of the instructions issued for its management when its constitution was lately altered and newly arranged on the discontinuance of the office of Deputy Postmaster General of Scotland.

'You will enter into a bond with two securities in the penalty of five thousand pounds for the due



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performance of your trust. You are to open an account with the Royal Bank of Scotland in your own name as Cashier of the Revenue of the General Post Office in Scotland. You will keep a weekly account of all receipts and payments to be checked by the Accountant, who will be furnished with copies of the charges to be received from the windowmen and letter carriers, certified by the superintending president of the sorting office, and who will enter the Postmasters remittances from the Secretary's remittance book, as well as all warrants for the salaries or other services the computation having been checked by him (the Accountant) prior to the signature of the Postmaster General.

The said account is to be balanced weekly showing the balances in the bank at the termination of each week. Payments for salaries or other services are only to be made under the authority of the Postmaster General's warrant such payments being made by your draft countersigned by the Accountant.

You are not under any circumstances to make any payments or advances on account of salaries prior to the termination of each quarter when they become due save and except the weekly wages. Any petty incidental expenses which you may defray will be allowed on production of the account supported by the proper voucher at the end of the quarter. You are to pay daily into the bank to your account as Cashier of the Revenue of the Post Office in Scotland all monies received by letter carrier charges, windowmen charge or from any other persons on account of the revenue, also all bills, notes, cash or other remittances transmitted to you through the Secretary, whose book you will sign as a voucher to that officer for the due handing over to you of the remittances. The Accountant is to inspect daily your bank pass book that he may report if necessary to the Secretary any irregularity which may occur in the lodgement of monies in due time and order in the bank.

You will pay letter carrier wages by deduction to be made weekly by them from their charges debiting yourself with the gross amount of charges and crediting yourself weekly with the wages under a covering warrant at the end of the quarter from the PMG. In like manner you will deduct from the letter carriers charges the returned letters monthly debiting yourself with the gross charge and crediting yourself with the monthly returned letters under a voucher properly certified by the Superintending officer of the sorting office both to the Accountant and yourself.

You are to draw out weekly from the bank by draft duly countersigned by the Accountant the balance of the weekly account and to remit the same in a bill to the Secretary in London payable to the Receivers General or order at 20 days date with the statement certified by the Accountant of the net weekly receipt.

You are to take a receipt from all parties to whom any payment is made on a legal stamp and to transmit the same with the corresponding warrant to the Accountant General in London with the quarterly accounts, being paid of the vouchers in support of the general account exhibited by him annually to the commissioner for auditing the public accounts.'

## Accountant General

The duties of the Accountant General's office consist in checking and controlling the whole accounts of the department in Edinburgh and throughout Scotland.

Accountant-The daily check and examination of the books made up in the Inland Office containing the charges on letter carriers, posting ledger containing Deputy Postmasters quarterly accounts 240 in number. Transferring daily from the remittance ledger kept in the Secretary's office into the general cash ledger and comparing the same with the cash book kept by the Cashier the amount of remittances returned from Deputy Postmasters-preparing weekly state of receipts and disbursements shewing the balance to be remitted to London, checking tradesmens and other incidental bills, countersigning and entering all drafts on the bank for payments made by Cashier, checking and adjusting daily account of charge and discharge in the Inland Office, reporting weekly to the Secretary such Postmasters as omit to make their regular payments, and in general in directing and superintending the due performance of the duties allotted to the clerks in his office.

First Clerk-Engaged in summing the monthly dispatch books of letters from Edinburgh to the different post towns 240 in number and comparing the same with the Deputy Postmasters returns afterwards entering the

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correct charge against each and summing and keeping the same at the end of each quarter, checking and entering Surveyors quarterly alterations of allowances to Postmasters, making out Deputys quarterly accounts and preparing quarterly abstract of such accounts, the check and examination of Ship Letter accounts, keeping account of letters inwards chargeable against the Edinburgh office and the account of toll duties paid for the mail coaches and also the Edinburgh office salary bill making out and entering weekly statement of remittances to London, keeping arrear ledger and account of comparative view of revenue, assisting in posting the cash received into cash ledger and in checking the general quarterly account and also the account of letters short per examination.

Second Clerk-The arrangement, management and checking of the whole bye letter branch of the business of the office, examining at full the accounts of each Postmaster, checking and comparing the same with the corresponding offices and in particular the 'sent' and received' columns on both sides of the voucher extending monthly to about 2808 columns, entering the amounts of the three months of each quarter into the bye letter ledger as the charge against the deputies, summing and adding the whole columns of the ledger and entering the short charges of the Deputies into the short ledger after the full examination is over and adding the amount and giving occasional assistance in some of the other duties of the office.

Third Clerk-Entering daily into the different dispatch books the amount of letters sent to each post town from Edinburgh, checking on their return the bills sent to each Postmaster comparing monthly the country penny post vouchers with their corresponding bills and checking their amount, writing accounts for the different Deputies of the amount of letters undercharged by them in their monthly vouchers, marking up and despatching quarterly supplies of the stores for each Postmaster and making entries in the various books and other incidental duties when required by the Accountant.

Fourth clerk-Entering daily in the various books of the office the amount of all unpaid letters received at and chargeable against Edinburgh from the various Deputy Postmasters in Scotland and keeping account of paid letters chargeable against them, assisting in writing out the general quarterly accounts sent to London and making entries into such books as may at different times be required by the Accountant and performing any other duties which forwarding the general business may require.

### Surveyor

The duty of a Surveyor consists of the instruction and inspection of all Deputy Postmasters in the district to which he may be appointed, the regulation and superintendence of all post communication in that district (except mail coaches) the general (personal) surveillance control and management of all Post Office arrangements interests and communications in Scotland

### Solicitor's Office

The Solicitors duties

Preparing and getting executed all contracts for the conveying of the mails in Scotland by mail coaches, horse posts and steam boats

Preparing and getting executed all bonds granted by Deputy Postmasters and others in the service of the Post Office in Scotland

Prosecuting for the recovery of all arrears of revenue due by Deputy Postmasters

Prosecuting for penalties incurred on account of the illegal conveyance of letters

Prosecuting generally in relation to all frauds against the department, robberies, etc. and almost daily attendance at the Post Office and in personal communication with the Secretary in every case where legal assistance and advice may be required.

### Inspector of Dead Letters

# Post Office Job Descriptions

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## Duties

Inspector-The examination and checking of the weekly accounts 230 in number received from Postmasters, making weekly account of dead letters sent to London averaging about £80 a week, receiving and checking dead letters from windowmen which also include those of the Edinburgh letter carriers amounting weekly to about £40, opening all Scotch Dead Letters amounting to about 7000 each quarter, entering all such containing property, advising and transmitting them to the writers, inspecting daily letters with imperfect directions, searching for missing letters, corresponding with Postmasters as to errors in their accounts and in general exercising a control over the whole business of the department.

First Clerk-Recording all undelivered franks and returning them to the members, keeping the account of missent and redirected letters daily transmitted to London, answering the numerous personal applications of the public regarding missing letters and attending morning and evening on alternate days the arriving of the various mails for the purpose of retaxing and forwarding the missent and redirected letters.

Second Clerk-Employed daily in returning dead letters to the writers about 7000 a quarter, attending on alternate days morning and evening for the purpose of forwarding missent and redirected letters, and assisting in any of the other general duties of the office where services may be required

## Inland Office

The duties performed in the Inland Office may be shortly described to consist of receiving and despatching the whole correspondence to and from the various post towns in England and Scotland, checking the various accounts and books connected therewith and in bringing to account the revenue of the Edinburgh office, the hours of business continue with little intermission from 6 o'clock in the morning until half past 9 at night, Sundays not excepted, the whole of the clerks are on duty from 6 to 8 in the morning and from 3 to 5 in the evening, at other hours when the less important mails are necessarily despatched the duty is apportioned and divided amongst them, one of the Presidents is on duty at every arrival and despatch that takes place, who besides exercising a vigilant superintendence of the performance of the duty is under the Secretary the controlling officer of the penny post and the letter carriers department. The First President has also the duty of making daily reports to the Secretary upon all subjects referring to these offices, appropriations the duties and attendance of the various officers and a variety of other minor duties necessarily attendant on the supervision and control of 76 persons.

The duties of the Inspector of Letter Carriers are constant and severe, there being six deliveries of letters daily in Edinburgh at all of which he must attend to see that the carriers are exact and regular in their attendance and deliveries and this officer has also the duty of inspecting the state of the various bags and mails and in general in seeing that no improper waste or expenditure of such articles take place.

The Royal Mail Archive Search Room at Freeling House is open Monday to Friday, 10.00am - 5.00pm, and until 7.00pm on Thursdays.

We are open selected Saturdays 10.00am - 5.00pm, please call or see our website for dates.

Please bring proof of identity to get an archive user card. In most cases there is no need to make an appointment, but please contact us in advance if you have any questions.

**The Royal Mail Archive**      **[www.postalheritage.org.uk](http://www.postalheritage.org.uk)**

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