

- (7.) A moderately soft pad should be used to place under the letters when being stamped. Any soft book, such as an old Post and Telegraph Guide, would answer this purpose in small offices where rubber pads are not provided.

As bad date-stamping exposes the revenue to much risk of fraud, careful supervision must be exercised by Chief Postmasters and Postmasters over the manner in which the duty is performed. A copy of form P.O. 126 should be sent to the Postmaster at any office at which it is observed the date-stamping is defective.

**631.** Rubber-stamp ink is on no account to be used in obliterating stamps on letters or any documents. The preparation of oil and lampblack known as obliterating-ink, used for metal stamps, is to be invariably applied for that purpose. Postmasters supplied with rubber stamps must make requisition for the proper ink and linen pads. The ordinary obliterating-ink destroys the rubber, and must not be used.

**632.** The impression of the date-stamp on letters, books, parcels, and newspapers should be as follows:—

*On the Front.*

All articles when first posted, whether prepaid or not. The impression must be legibly made on the postage-stamps unless the stamps are affixed in contravention of any of these rules.

All articles missent.

All articles surcharged.

Post-cards.

Unclaimed letters, &c. (at sub-offices in black ink, at chief offices in red ink).

Redirected letters, &c. (at office where redirected).

Delivered letters returned to the post-office.

*On the Back.*

Letters received at any office (except the offices mentioned in Rule 630) from another office.

“Forward” letters.

Newspapers posted at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington are not to be date-stamped, the obliterating of the postage-stamps being done with felt stamps. At the same offices felt “Paid” stamps are to be used for “Paid” newspapers only.

Commercial and printed papers, patterns and samples, and parcels need not be date-stamped at office of destination or transit offices.

**633.** A facing-slip (P.O. 378) is to be attached to the outside of every bundle of letters, and should be initialled by the officer who ties the bundle. If any missent letters are found in the bundle at the office of receipt, the addresses should be entered on the back of the slip, which must be sent by first mail *under cover* to the Chief Postmaster of the district of origin. Letters must not be added at intermediate offices to bundles already covered by facing-slips. Letters despatched must be levelled up at the end on which the postage-stamp is usually placed, and on the bottom, not the top, of the bundle. This secures that letters all touch the bed of the stamping-machine as required, and prevents their being bent over at the “stamp” end and retarded in their passage through the machine, where action is very rapid, and to be satisfactory must be continuous. Also letters must be distributed so that, as far as possible, very thick letters are kept in separate bundles. Special instructions are issued to offices using stamping-machines.