

Officer in Charge writing his name across them. The original voucher must be sent to the Chief Accountant with the monthly fine return.

283. Particulars of fines inflicted on mail contractors must be entered on a "Statement of Miscellaneous Receipts," the number of the official papers being quoted against the entry.

284. Every case of late attendance must be reported on the quarterly return. (See Rule 206.)

285. The fines to be enforced for errors and irregularities or breaches of duty or discipline are set forth in Appendix A. The imposition of a fine will not necessarily prevent the infliction of further punishment.

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

286. Any communication received from the public on any departmental matter whatever must be recorded and acknowledged at once on the proper form.

287. Any letter from any of the public requiring an answer is to be replied to with the greatest possible despatch. No laxity in this respect is to be permitted or overlooked. As soon as all the points in any letter can be replied to the reply is to be written and sent away; and, if necessary, a reply is to be sent *ad interim*, in order to prevent the unnecessary writing of reminders. This instruction does not qualify the duty of acknowledging a letter immediately on its receipt.

288. If any inquiry or question of a general character arises during the course of the correspondence in the office, it is not to be allowed to delay the despatch of the answer. Notes can be made and left on the file of papers for subsequent treatment.

289. The following directions must be observed in writing replies or making reports on records of the General Post Office:—

- (1.) In corresponding with the General Post Office, unless a special form is provided, use form P.O. 106, and do not mount telegrams or other exhibits on the front of the form, or otherwise cover up what is written to the General Post Office. Any papers to be gummed down should be affixed to a separate sheet, covered by the communication the papers are to explain.

Mount note, quarto, and other small-sized papers which have to be sent to the General Post Office on stout foolscap backing-sheets, not less than 4 in. from the top of the sheet, and fastened at the left-hand upper corner. Service telegrams are to be mounted in order of time and date successively from bottom to top. Papers belonging to chief-office files are not to be sent to the General Post Office unnecessarily. Foolscap paper is to be used in correspondence of departmental officers with the General Post Office.

- (2.) Form P.O. 318 (chief-office record form) may be used, and does not require to be covered with form P.O. 106. Do not retain such a record, but return it to the originating office after extracting any information necessary for your own records.
- (3.) Files of papers are to be read from below upwards. Last-written papers are always to appear on top of a file.
- (4.) Unless it is necessary for their proper understanding that two or more subjects should be kept under review simultaneously, do not treat of them on the same papers: separate subjects submitted together by the public, for instance; and treat of them on different papers.