

482. Great care should be taken that a bundle of letters is not put into the wrong bag; and, to avoid so serious a mistake, the despatching officer should carefully examine the outside letter in each bundle, and also check the address on the bag or label, before placing the letters in the bag.

483. A Postmaster is responsible that bags are correctly despatched from his office, that they are properly tied three times round the neck with a good strong string, and, where wax is used for sealing, that the string is sealed to the bag or to a capsule with the office seal. The wax is to be placed on the knot, which must be tied on a smooth surface to admit of a clear impression of the seal. The address of each bag must be carefully examined, and the bags for each line of road (if more than one despatch takes place at the same time) laid out in proper order, and entered on the way-bill before the contractor or other person to whom they are intrusted leaves the office. All mails and private bags for places on branch routes, for delivery at railway-stations to which they are not addressed, should be strapped together, and have attached to them a label distinctly marked "To be delivered at Railway-station." No bag may be sent that is not in complete repair. Each despatch should take place punctually at the appointed time. Mails for conveyance by train or steamer should be at the station, wharf, or ship's side at least five minutes before the time fixed for departure. The time for closing the newspaper and printed-matter portion of mails at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington for despatch to places within the Dominion is fixed at half an hour earlier than the time for closing the letter portion of the mails.

484. Lead sealing is the standard method of sealing mails of all descriptions made up at all offices for places in the Dominion, and also for places in Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States of America. For all other places beyond the Dominion bags should be sealed with wax.

485. It is of the utmost importance that lead seals should be properly used and securely fastened. Particular attention should be given to the following points:—

The bag must first be tied with a clove hitch, followed by a single knot; the seal should then be threaded on the string and another single knot tied, after which the seal should be pressed and the ends of the string cut off short. The following drawings indicate the manner in which a clove hitch is tied

The Clove Hitch.

