

the officer charged with their custody to state positively at any time that the seals have not been used without his authority. Capsules are invariably to be used for sealing all seaborne mails. Unduly thick string is not to be used for tying mail-bags. Beyond a certain thickness, string prevents the wax from adhering and a clear impression from being made, and also allows the fastenings to work loose. When using capsules the bag must first be securely tied in the ordinary way, the ends of the string afterwards threaded through the capsule and tied therein, and the seal placed over the knot in the capsule. The capsule should be close to the bag. Officers handling transit mails must assure themselves, as far as possible, that the bags or contents have not been tampered with. Every case of resealing is to be recorded in a book kept for the purpose, and the fact reported to the Chief Postmaster, and by him, if necessary, to the Inspector of Post-offices. The wax as it is placed on capsules or on the labels of bags must be of a much lower temperature than boiling-point. Every mail-bag leaving a post-office must bear a clear impression of the office seal.

487. As lead-sealers are liable to break unless lubricated at friction-points, officers must see that they are kept oiled.

488. Postmasters at offices where lead seals are received must keep all used seals, and return them by post at the end of each month to the Controller of Stores for disposal. Canvas pouches are provided for keeping used lead seals.

489. All local and other mails which are despatched at regular and fixed intervals must be checked in and out by a standard list. The hour at which seaborne mails are despatched should be entered in the Mail Register. The time-table of the ordinary departure of local mails is to be posted up outside the office for public information.

490. When an extra bag or packet is made up for any office and despatched with the regular mail the words "Supplementary mail" must be written in red ink on the letter-bill. The supplementary mail must bear the next consecutive number to that of the main mail. The bag or packet must be entered on the way-bill in the proper column.

491. Any irregularity in the despatch or arrival of a mail must be immediately reported, through the usual channel, to the Inspector of Post-offices. The Post and Telegraph Act deals with the conveyance of mails by sea, and Postmasters must see that its requirements are complied with.

492. When a Postmaster becomes aware that any irregularity has occurred with respect to a mail in transit, which will cause its non-arrival at its destination in proper course, he should at once telegraph to the Postmaster of the place to which it is addressed, and also to the despatching Postmaster, informing them of the circumstances. He must also report the case to the Chief Postmaster, stating the cause of the irregularity, and how the mail will be disposed of.

493. Postmasters must, unless specially instructed on the subject, use their own discretion as to forwarding by special means, or by the next available opportunity, mails which have been delayed, so as to prevent, as far as possible, public inconvenience from detention of the letters.

494. On a Post Office holiday a mail is not to be sent to a sub-office at which the Postmaster will not be in attendance to receive it. Only one mail is to be exchanged with other offices, and then only if it can reach the sub or chief office on the holiday. If the frequency of a service is less than daily, the mails are to be sent the day before or the day after the holiday. Rural postal