

553. In order to make the practice uniform in all postal districts, Chief Postmasters are to act without reference to the Secretary in the matter of the delivery of letters the addressee of which has assigned his estate. Attention must be given to the following conditions:—

A Chief Postmaster must not act on any order of assignment which is not issued by the authority of the Supreme Court. A copy of the document must be deposited with the Chief Postmaster.

An order which is only issued for certain specified purposes, not including the delivery of letters, should not be acted upon. It must be quite clear from its terms that absolutely all property of the assignor, or that the delivery of letters in particular, is covered by the order.

In any case of doubt the Secretary may be referred to.

554. Should a letter intended for one person be delivered to another, and should it be opened by the wrong person, the name of this latter person and his address must be written on it, and the reason why it is returned, thus: "Opened by [*Name and address of person*]—not for him"; and the letter must be resealed, care being taken that the seal is not placed upon the original fastening. Letter-carriers and delivery officers are warned that the public must not be permitted to open letters doubtfully addressed, unless the surnames are identical or there are good reasons for supposing that any such letter is intended for the person opening it. A letter cannot be supposed to be addressed to a person whose surname at least is not on the envelope; and the only excuse for delivering to a person whose initials are not also inscribed is when there is reasonable ground for supposing that the initials are wrongly written. All officers must exercise the greatest care to prevent letters being opened by persons for whom they are not intended, and any failure of such care will be severely noticed to the responsible officer.

555. At an office where there is delivery by letter-carrier it is the duty of the Postmaster to see that the letter-carriers understand their instructions and obey them.

556. Letter-carriers must not moisten the thumb at the mouth before using it to detach a letter from a bundle. Thumb-stalls may be obtained from the Controller of Stores.

557. A letter-carrier is required to arrange the letters for his delivery before he leaves the office, to make his delivery as quickly as possible, and, having done so, to come back to the office, returning any letters which he may have been unable to deliver, and paying the postage charged against him. He is not required to give credit for postage, but, if he does, it must be at his own risk.

558. A letter-carrier must observe the following instructions:—

- (1.) He may not, after starting from the office on his delivery, go to his own house or to any other house, except for the purpose of leaving letters, until his delivery is finished.
- (2.) He may not smoke whilst on duty.
- (3.) He may not deviate from his prescribed walk.
- (4.) He may not deliver letters in the streets, even to the owners, but must deliver all letters at the houses to which they are addressed.
- (5.) He may not put letters under doors, or through open windows, even when requested to do so.
- (6.) He may not, on pain of dismissal, carry or deliver, either singly or in parcels, circular letters or ordinary