

the Postmaster making the claim, who, in case of failure to get a return of the stamps, must report the circumstances to the Chief Accountant, General Post Office.

619. When a letter is received for delivery surcharged above the proper amount the Postmaster must not alter the surcharge. He should weigh the letter before delivering it, and mark the weight on the cover, which he should obtain from the addressee, and send to the Chief Postmaster with an application for refund of the overcharge.

620. Deficient postage on undelivered correspondence addressed to the care of Consuls is to be refunded to Consuls on return of the correspondence to the post-office.

621. Commemorative postage-stamps of temporary validity are not recognized in the international service. Letters from places abroad apparently prepaid and treated as unpaid by despatching offices are to be surcharged.

622. A Chief Postmaster may remit the charges on official letters which have been surcharged in consequence of not having been franked or marked "On His Majesty's Service," provided such letters are opened in the presence of the Postmaster and found to be on public service. He may also remit such charges on ordinary letters, if satisfied that the claim for refund is a proper one. The receipt for refund should be taken on the face of the surcharged cover. Postage which is thus authorized to be refunded is to be claimed in the Daily Cash Account, which should be accompanied by the cover, together with an explanatory memorandum. (See Rule 617.)

STAMPING.

623. Letters, &c., must be date-stamped with the date of posting. Posting-boxes in post-offices must be cleared and the articles therein date-stamped at the time of closing the office.

624. The date and the index letter or figure of every date-stamp must be carefully adjusted at the beginning of each day, and the index changed punctually throughout the day at the appointed times. A clear impression of every date-stamp in use must be made in the impression-book, or on slips for machine impressions, each time the date or the index is changed, and both the officer who changes the stamp and a second responsible officer must initial the book or slip. In Chief Post-offices the second officer initialing should be the head of the mail staff or the officer acting in that capacity. Chief Postmasters and permanent Postmasters must overlook the date-stamp impressions of sub-offices, and must promptly challenge any apparent absence of type through loss or otherwise.

625. Special care is required in manipulating wheel date-stamps. When day type up to and including the figure 9 is required, the first wheel of the stamp is to be turned so as to show the small hyphen-bar and not the blank face provided for the purpose of additional engraving. By this means the impression of the blank face is prevented from showing.

626. Chief Postmasters will decide how often the index is to be changed at offices under their control. G and J are not to be used as index letters. As the object of the date-stamp is to indicate the day, so the object of the index is to indicate the hour at which a letter is received or despatched. If, therefore, the index is not changed punctually, a Postmaster may be blamed for a delay for which he is not responsible. Postmasters supplied with date-stamps having type symbols for hour and minute will note that, as far as possible, regular half-hourly changes should be made, and that the time shown should always be later than the