

(b.) Every Post officer who knowingly delivers any postal packet to any person not lawfully entitled to receive the same is liable to a fine not exceeding £50. (See section 100 of the Act, as amended by section 16 of the amending Act of 1919.)

474. In acting upon these rules every Postmaster should bear in mind that the object of them is to ensure the delivery of every letter to the rightful owner, and, when that is impossible, to secure its speedy return to the writer, through the Dead Letter Office; but in no case should any of the rules be so applied as to prevent the delivery of a letter to a person for whom it may reasonably be believed to be intended.

#### INQUIRIES FOR MISSING POSTAL PACKETS.

475. The missing-letter record must be attended to at Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington by the Chief Postmaster or by a responsible senior officer under the Chief Postmaster's personal supervision, and at other offices by the Chief Postmaster alone. It is to be kept under lock and key.

476. Missing-letter inquiries should be regarded by every Postmaster as confidential and of grave importance, and as possibly involving the reputation of his office. His staff arrangements should therefore enable him positively to name the officers through whose hands any particular letter may have passed.

477. (a.) When inquiry is made for a letter or any other postal packet said to be missing the Postmaster should have a missing-letter form, P.O. 89, filled up by the sender of the alleged missing article and forward it to the Chief Postmaster with any report he may have to make. Only in special cases should the addressee be allowed to fill up a missing-letter form. In ordinary cases of inquiry made by an addressee the name and address of the sender of the article should be obtained and the Chief Postmaster advised of the inquiry. *As far as possible, missing-letter inquiries should be commenced at the office of posting.* In the case of foreign inquiries, however, some exception to this rule may be made. The inquiry form must always be returned, when inquiry has been completed, to the chief office of the district where it originated.

(b.) No inquiry is to be undertaken unless the complainant is in a position to state definitely that the addressee has denied receipt of the article in question.

(c.) Any inquiry made by a publisher relative to the non-delivery of a newspaper or other periodical is not to be followed up unless the addressee actually denies receipt of the article or the article has been returned as undeliverable.

478. (a.) Every application for missing letters, from whatever source received, must be at once entered in the missing-letter record, which should also contain full notes of any circumstances which may appear likely to throw light upon the case in question or to assist in any future inquiry. Missing money letters and letters containing articles of value should be entered in the missing-letter record separately from ordinary missing-letter inquiries. Both series must be numbered by the Chief Postmaster in consecutive order from the beginning of each quarter. The record-numbers of inquiries for money letters or letters containing articles of value must be entered in red ink, and distinguished by the suffix M in addition to the distinguishing quarterly letters.

(b.) Inquiries for A.R.s relating to registered letters are not to be recorded as missing-letter inquiries. Such inquiries, when relating to letters addressed to places beyond New Zealand, will be recorded in the Secretary's office, and it will not be necessary to show them in the quarterly missing-letter return furnished by chief offices.