

Detained for Postage Notices of the British Post Office 1790 – c1875

Presentation to PSSC

June 15, 2011

Ken Snelson

Pre GPU Problem for Foreign Mail:

Each Post Office that handled a letter had to be paid for the transmission of each letter.

Many postal agreements did not require the delivering Post Office to collect postage due from the recipients and transmit it to the sending or intermediate Post Offices.

What to do?

The British PO required prepayment of British share of postage.

What to do if the British postage is not prepaid?

Return to sender

1846 India to Madeira

CALCUTTA
G. P. O.
SHIP LETTER
6 DV 6
1846

In London Foreign
Post Office

Returned for
Postage

Sent to Dead Letter
Office to be opened



In Dead Letter Office:

If senders address found
and

In the UK

Letter enclosed in wrapper and returned

GENERAL POST OFFICE.

THE enclosed Letter has been opened here, by the proper Officer appointed by Her Majesty's Postmaster-General for that purpose, and is returned to the Writer for the reason assigned thereon.

To prevent, as far as possible, the necessity of opening Letters in future, it is advisable that *the Writers should satisfy themselves*, by inquiring at the Post-Office, *before they deposit their Letters* for Places beyond sea, whether the *previous* payment of the postage in this Country is required or not, and if the Letters bear Stamps, whether they have a sufficient Amount of Stamps to enable them to be forwarded.

W. L. MABERLY,

Secretary.

On Her Majesty's Service.

Mrs Sarah Nibler

Free.

W. L. Maberly.

Dead Letter Office.

*Leam Hotel
Bristol*



1843 Wrapper for return of underpaid foreign letter to destination where prepayment required.

To prevent, as far as possible, the necessity of opening Letters, in future, it is advisable that *the Writers should satisfy themselves*, by enquiring at the Post Office, *before they deposit their Letters* for Places beyond Sea, whether the *previous* payment of the Postage in this Country is required or not, and if the Letters bear Stamps, whether they have a sufficient amount of Stamps to enable them to be forwarded.

The enclosed Letter has been opened here by the Officer appointed by Her Majesty's Postmaster-General for that purpose, and is now returned to the Writer for the reason assigned thereon.

General Post Office.

W. L. MABERLY.
Secretary.

By 1853 Dead Letter Office had changed from wrapper to envelopes.

Envelope for return of underpaid foreign letter to destination where prepayment required.



Pre GPU Problem for Foreign Mail:

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What to do?

The British PO required prepayment of British share of postage.

What to do if the British postage is not prepaid?

Return to sender

What to do if it is not feasible to return to sender?

Address not given in letter

Sender not in UK

Hold the letter and send a

Detained for Postage Notice

To the addressee asking for payment of postage before forwarding

1846 India to Madeira

CALCUTTA
G. P. O.
SHIP LETTER
6 DV 6
1846

Returned for
Postage

Could not be returned by
Dead Letter Office
because sender in India

No
Detained for Postage

Necessary to quote
register No. in handstamp
when paying postage.



Detained for Postage Notices

Presentation based on London Philatelist article Sept 2010

Authors Bob Galland & Ken Snelson

Data from the authors collections and a number of other collectors including Patrick Frost and Malcolm Hodgson and auctions

Describes and illustrates all known types

Known from 1790 to 1873

In total about 38 recorded.

Classified by: Printed signature

Place to pay

Gives postal history background to many changes

Quotes procedure from PO documents from about 1850

GENERAL POST-OFFICE,

Jan 4 1790

T H E R E is come to this Office from on Board a Ship,
two Letters addressed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of *5 Pence each* is paid, if
therefore you will be pleased to desire any of your Correspondents,
in *London*, to call at the *Foreign Post-Office in Lombard-street*, and
pay the above Postage, *the Letters* will be immediately
sent to you.

First known Detained for Postage Notice – Year 178-- changed to 1790
No Printed Signature – Pay at “Foreign Post Office in Lombard Street”

Letters to firm in Madeira

Jan 4, 1790

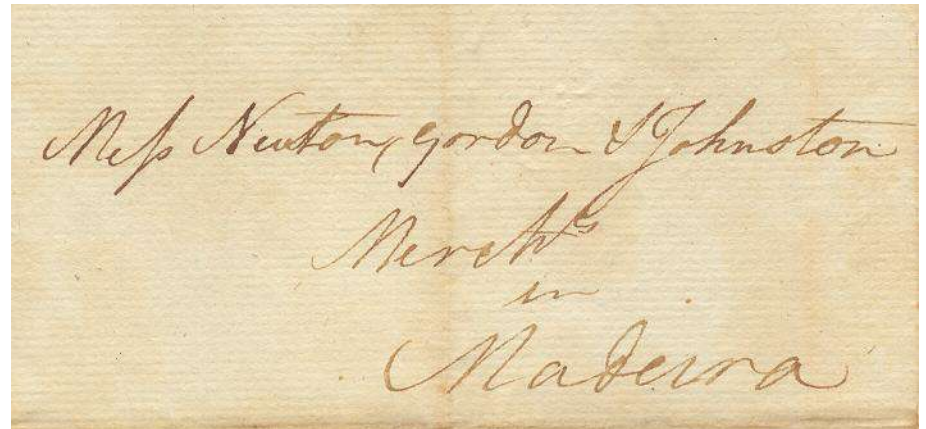
Notice issued

probably by Foreign Post Office

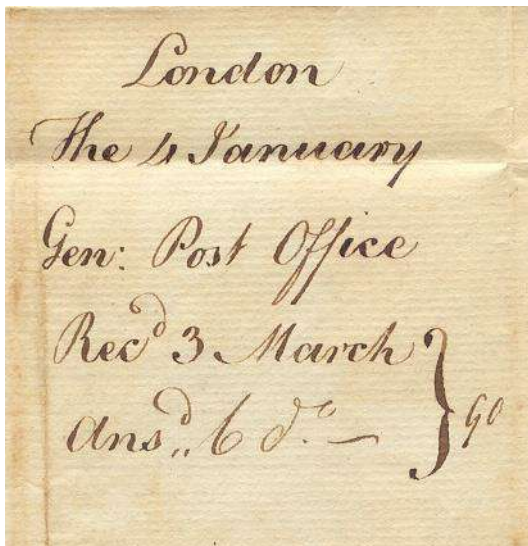
Refers to

"from on Board a Ship"

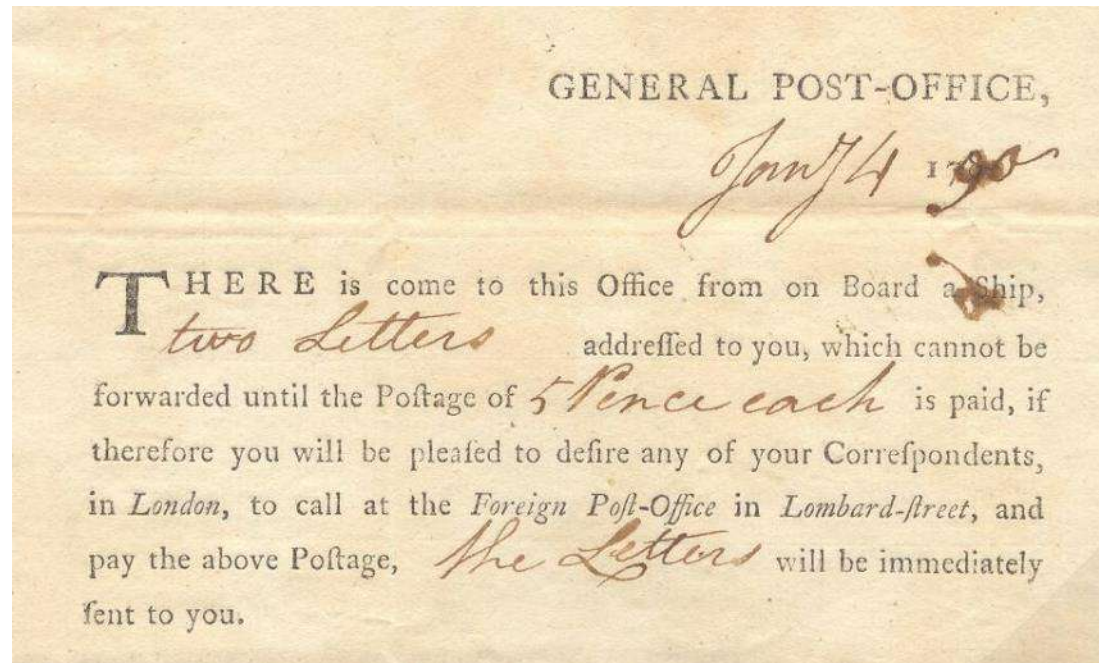
Payment received March 3, 1790



*Mrp Newton Gordon & Johnston
Merch
in
Madeira*



*London
The 1st January
Gen: Post Office
Rec^d 3 March
Ans^d 6 J^o } 90*



GENERAL POST-OFFICE,
Jan^y 4 1790

THERE is come to this Office from on Board a Ship,
two Letters addressed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of *5 Pence each* is paid, if
therefore you will be pleased to desire any of your Correspondents,
in *London*, to call at the *Foreign Post-Office in Lombard-street*, and
pay the above Postage, *the Letters* will be immediately
sent to you.

Second known notice:

No Printed signature

“Call at Foreign Post Office,
Lombard Street”

Letter to Madeira

Sep 14, 1802

Notice probably issued
by Foreign Post Office

Refers to
“*Ship Letter*”

Printed by March and Teape

(Bob Galland)

GENERAL POST-OFFICE, LONDON,

Sep 14 1802

T H E R E is a Ship Letter at this Office addressed to you, which cannot be forwarded until the Postage of *2/9* is paid, if therefore you will desire any of your Correspondents, in *London*, to call at the *Foreign Post-Office, Lombard-street*, and pay the above Postage, it will be immediately sent to you.

Believed that prior to 1807

Notices prepared and issued by the Foreign Post Office

“Early in the year 1807 the duty of opening letters for Countries beyond the sea on which postage, required to be previously paid, has been neglected by the writers, was transferred to the Dead Letter Office, it being thought by the PMGs at that time, a good and safe principle that seals of letters should be broken in one office only.”

Francis Freeling Minute to PMGs – July 24, 1812

From 1807 - 1812

Notices prepared and issued by the Dead Letter Office

“Latterly Mr. Barlow has complained much of its perplexity & has regularly applied for instructions, & by his movements compelled the Foreign and Ship Letter Offices to apply also for instructions relative to various sorts of letters, particularly letters from Foreign Countries to other Foreign Countries; coming in by ships and various channels..”

“Having consulted with the Foreign Office, I am now to propose to your Lordships that the entire duty of opening and returning these particular letters for want of postage shall be transferred to that Department.”

Francis Freeling Minute to PMGs – July 24, 1812

From 1812 - 1814

Notices prepared and issued by the Foreign Post Office

“The duty continued to be performed there (Foreign Post Office) *cheerfully and effectively* till the re-opening of the various Foreign Posts brought again so much business to that Department that the extra service bore very heavily on the clerks.”

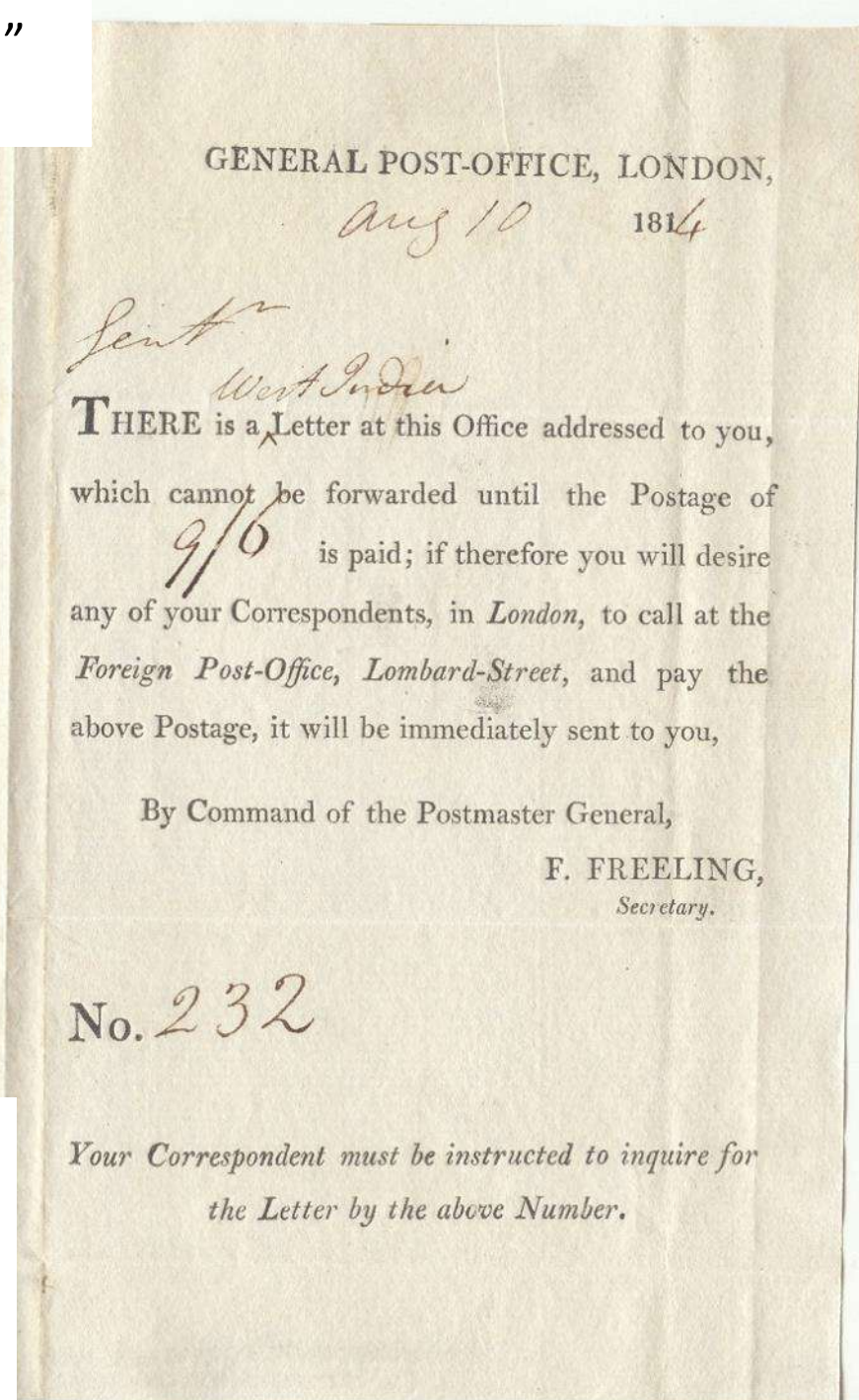
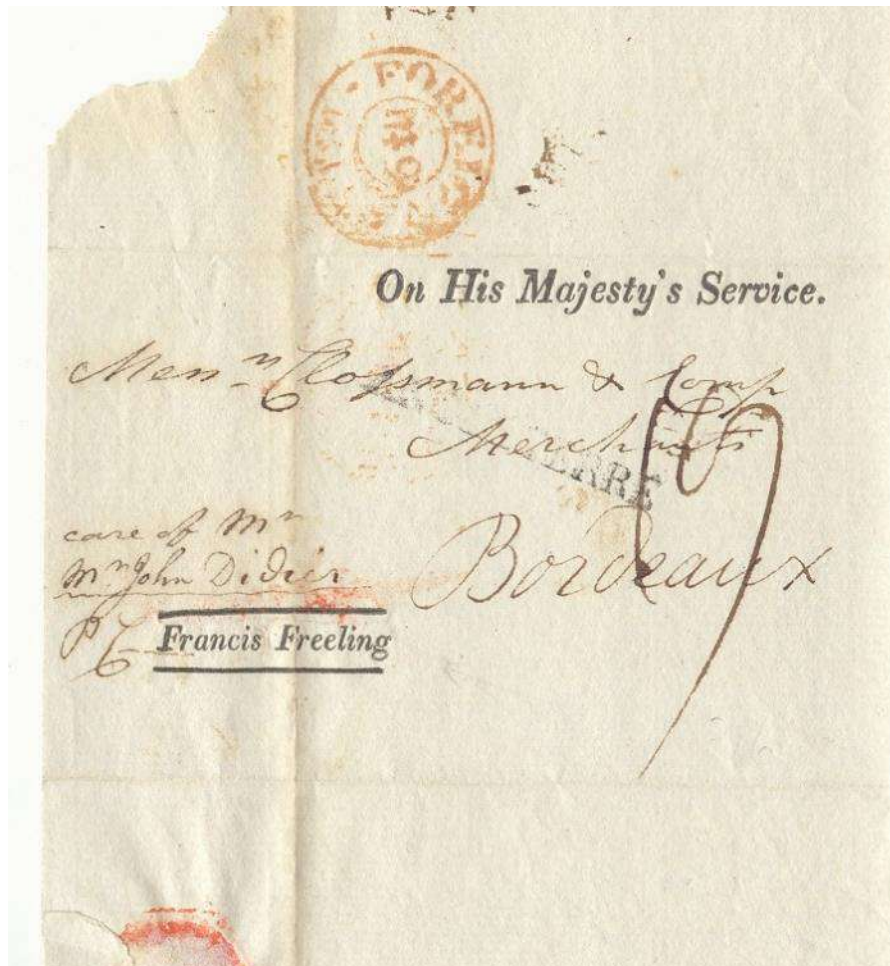
“After due consideration I am of opinion that this duty cannot be so well placed any where permanently as in the Returned Letter Office. All letters that are opened will then be opened in one Department, the variety of cases that occur will come under one view, and I think there will be less chance of neglect or error of judgement.”

Francis Freeling Minute to PMGs – June 16, 1814

From 1814

Notices prepared and issued by the Returned Letter Office

Third known notice - Sep 14, 1802: "F. Freeling"
"Call at Foreign Post Office, Lombard Street"



West Indian Letter to Bordeaux
Notice issued by Returned Letter Office?
Standard format that lasted many years
No longer refers to "Ship Letter".



On His Majesty's Service.

Genl. Mordaunt Scott & Co.

Madiera

Francis Freeling.

907

GENERAL POST-OFFICE, LONDON,

1822.

907

Sent
THERE is a *Ship* Letter (N^o 5962)
at this Office directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the postage of 2/7
is paid; if therefore you will desire one of your
Correspondents in *London*, to call at the *Foreign*
Post-Office, Lombard Street, and pay the above
postage, it will be immediately sent according to
the address.

By Command of the Postmaster-General,

F. FREELING,
Secretary.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed
to enquire for the Letter by its Number.*

Oct 9, 1822:
"F. Freeling"
"Call at Foreign Post Office, Lombard Street"
Letter to Madeira
Notice issued by Returned Letter Office

Monthly Supplement of
THE PENNY MAGAZINE

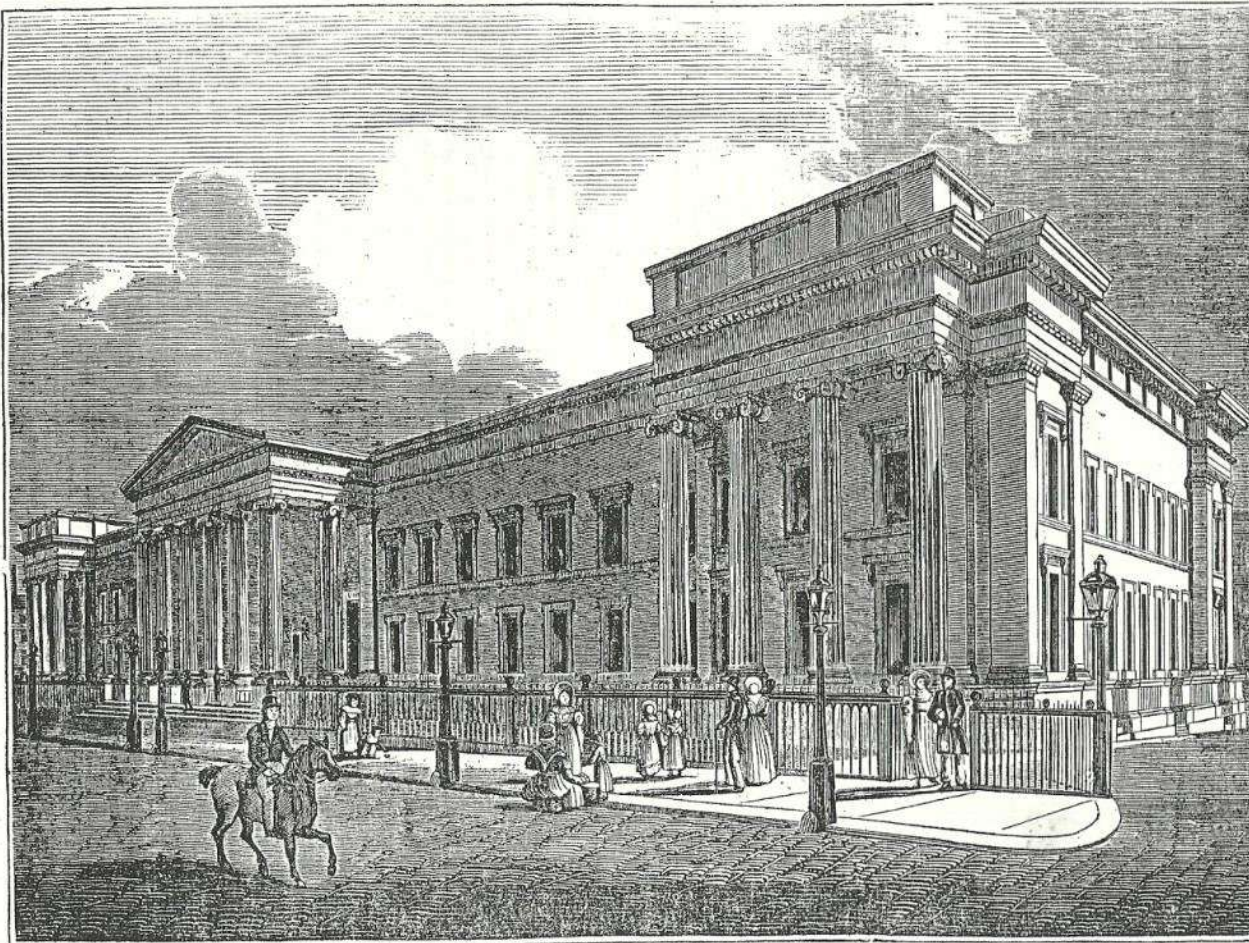
OF THE

Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

117.]

December 31, 1833, to January 31, 1834.

THE HISTORY AND PRESENT STATE OF THE POST-OFFICE.



[West Front of the London Post-Office.]

Sept 1829

Post Office moves to new St Martins le Grand building

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON,

1833.

31 Dec.

THERE is a *Ship* Letter (N^o. 1533)
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of $\frac{3}{4}$
is paid; if therefore you will desire one of you
Correspondents in *London*, to call at the *Foreign*
Post-Office, St. Martin's-le-grand, and pay the
above postage, it will be immediately sent
according to the address.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

F. FREELING
Secretary.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, likely belonging to F. Freeling, the Secretary mentioned in the text. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat slanted style.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed to
enquire for the Letter by its Number.*

Dec 31, 1833:

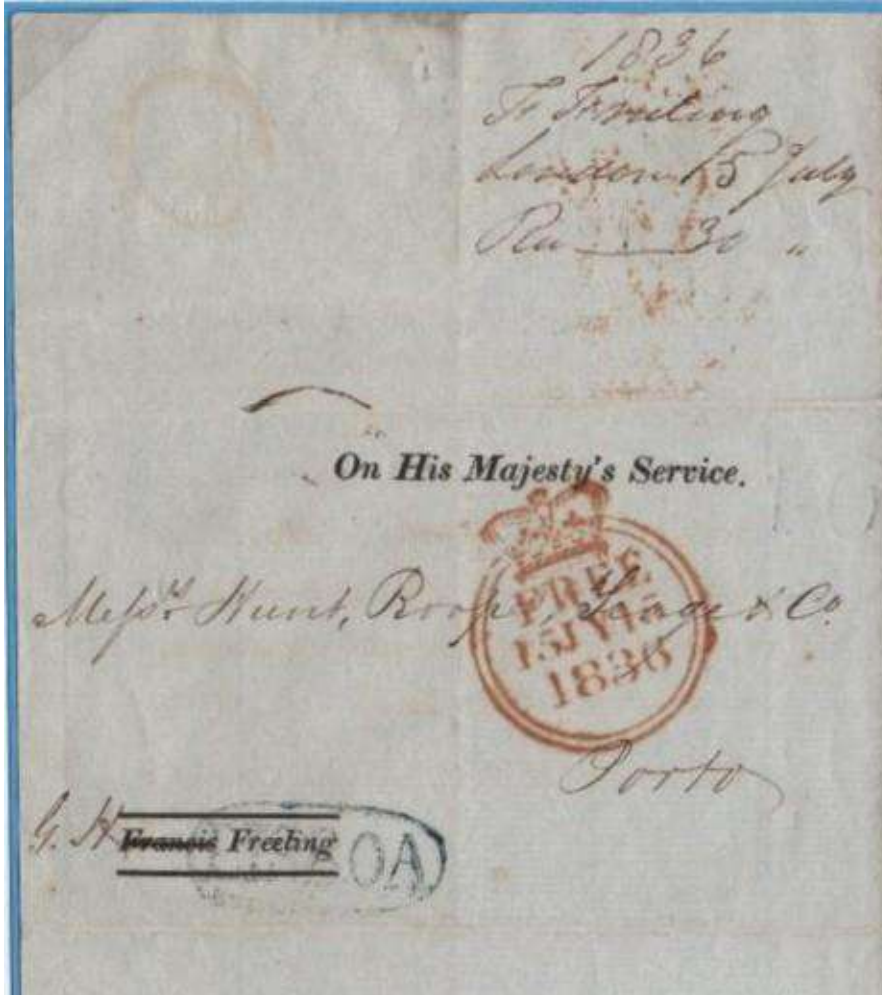
"F. Freeling"

"Call at **Foreign Post Office,**
St. Martin's-le-grand"

1832 Dead Letter & Returned Letter
Offices amalgamated

Notices issued by Dead Letter Office

(Malcolm Hodgson)



GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON,
15 July 1836.

THERE is a *Sup* Letter (N^o 5826) at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be forwarded until the Postage of *4/1* is paid; if therefore you will desire one of your Correspondents in *London*, to call at the *Foreign Post-Office, St. Martin's-le-grand*, and pay the above, postage, it will be immediately sent according to the address.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

G. H. F. FREELING,
Assistant Secretary.

Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed to inquire for the Letter by its Number.

Jul 15, 1836:

"F. Freeling"

"Call at Foreign Post Office,
St. Martin's-le-grand"

Francis Freeling near death

Manuscript change to "G.H. Freeling"

Mar 19, 1839: "W. L. Maberly"
"Call at Foreign Post Office,
St. Martin's-le-grand"

Freeling died in July 1836
Maberly appointed Sep 29, 1836



"On Her Majesty's Service"
There could be wrappers with Maberly's
name and "His" before Jun 20 1837 when
Victoria became Queen.
(Bob Galland)

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON

18

THERE is a Letter N^o. 4637
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of 2. 6 ¹/₂
is paid; if therefore you will desire one of your
Correspondents in London, to call at the Fo-
reign Post-Office, St. Martin's-le-grand, and
pay the above, postage, it will be immediately
sent according to the address.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

W. L. MABERLY,
Secretary.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly in-
structed to inquire for the Letter by its Number.*

1844
Post Office
25 July
26
LONDON
POST OFFICE

On Her Majesty's Service.

W. C. Reynolds
St. Martin's-le-grand
Bonn
W. L. Maberly. *on Rhine*

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON,

25 July 1844

THERE is a Letter N^o. 18,668

at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be forwarded until the Postage of $\frac{1}{8}$ is paid; if therefore you will desire one of your Correspondents in *London*, to call at the *Inland Post Office, St. Martin's-le-grand*, between the hours of Ten and Four o'Clock, and pay the above Postage, it will be immediately sent according to the address.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

W. L. MABERLY,
Secretary.

paid
 $\frac{1}{8}$
 $\frac{14}{8}$
 $\frac{1}{44}$

Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed to inquire for the Letter by its Number.

Jul 25, 1844: "W. L. Maberly"
"Call at **Inland Post Office**,
St. Martin's-le-grand"

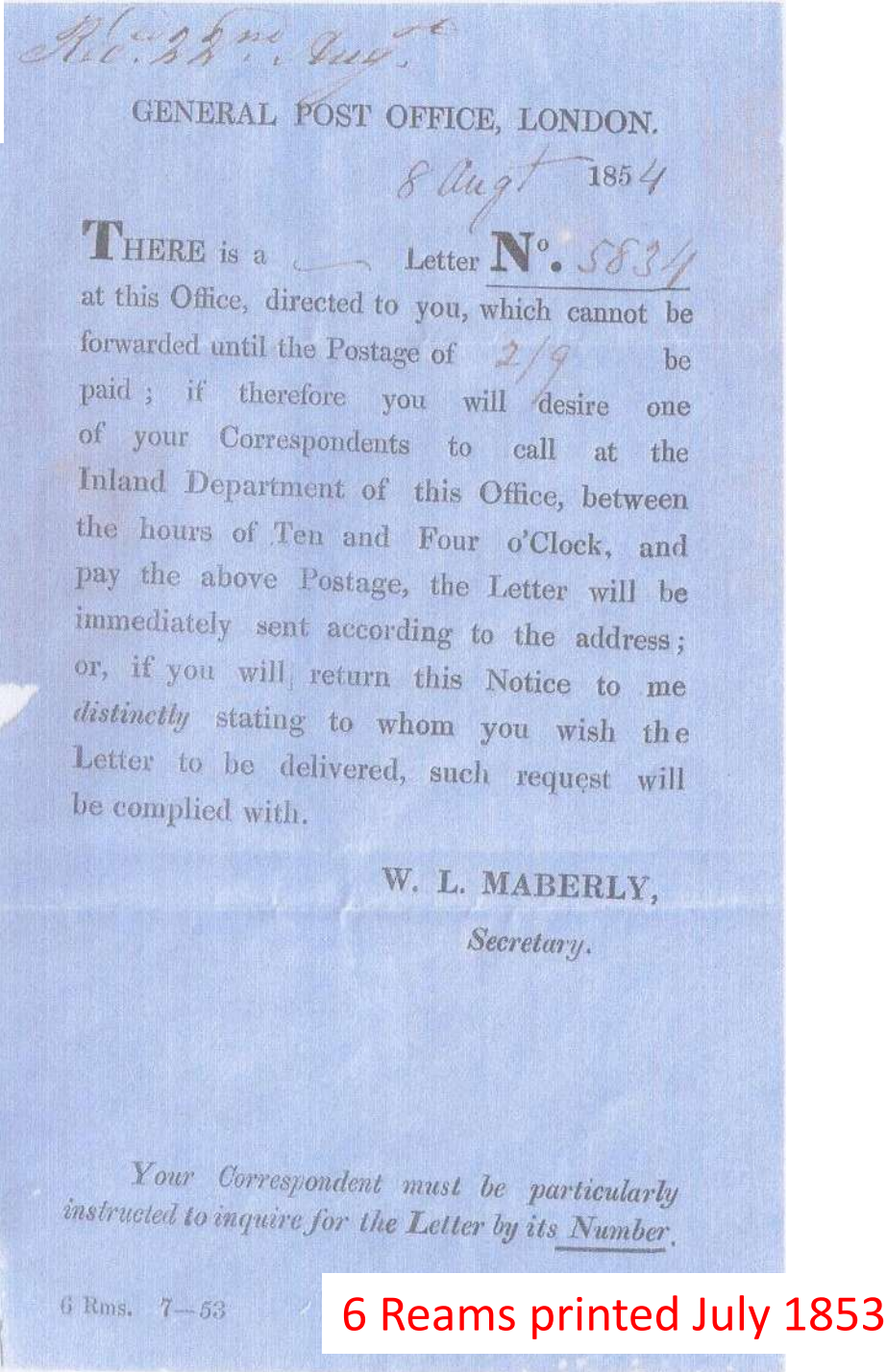
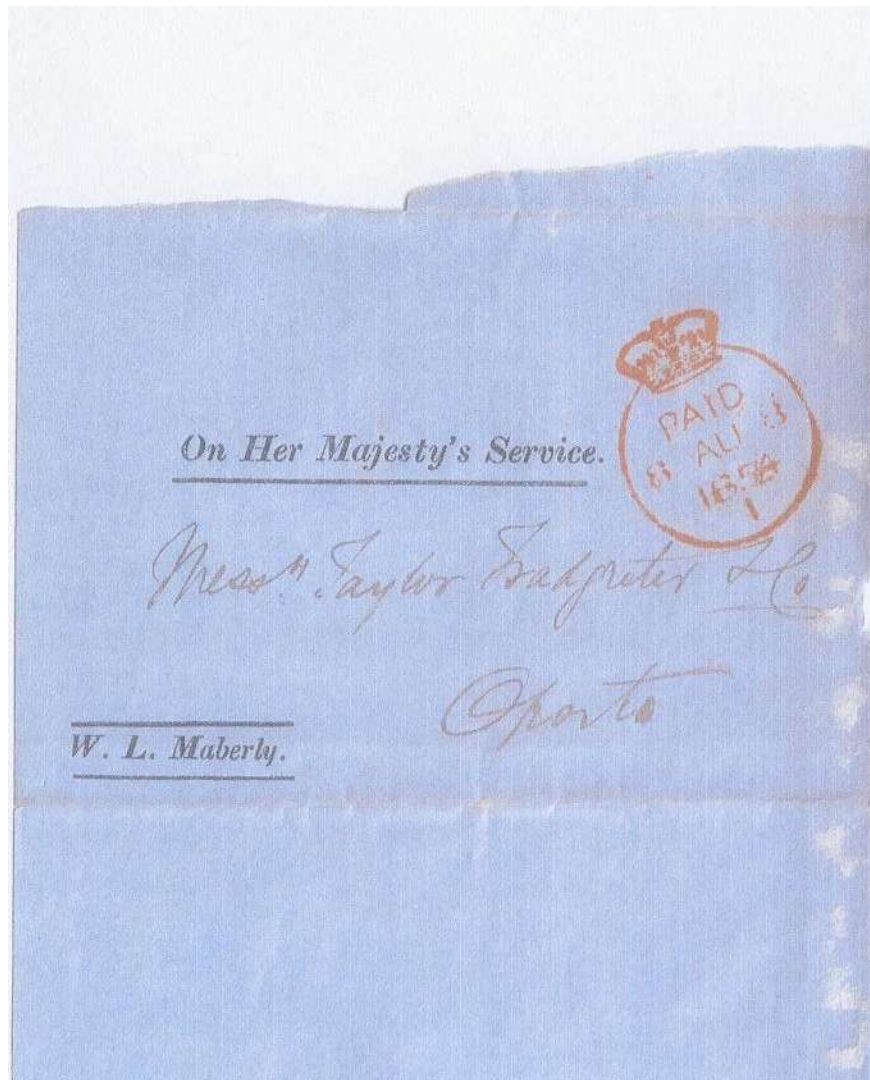
Foreign Post Office became part of the
Inland Post Office on Apr 6, 1840.

Hours specified.

“Postage Letters, if found to have been written within the United Kingdom, are opened and returned to the Writer, but if Ship Letters on their way through London, or Letters that cannot be returned, a notice is sent to the address requiring the party to cause payment of the postage at the Inland Office Window, by applying for the number given in the notice; those that are not forwarded within twelve months are returned to the Department for final disposal; such as are addressed to the Continent are then destroyed, and those to places in the margin are retained in the Department another twelve months at the end of which they are destroyed – if any letters detained for postage are found to contain property, it becomes the duty of the ‘Consequence’ Clerk to restore them to the owners – To prevent detaining the Letters the time required for sending a notice abroad, and obtaining the answer, Foreign Merchants and others are allowed to name an Agent in London who will receive the notice and pay the required postage, a Register is kept for this purpose – Letters are also delivered to the Agents when a written application is made to the satisfaction of the Secretary.”

From “Treatment of Dead Letters in the London DLO”
Frederick Tillyard Inspector of Dead Letters Feb 6, 1850

Aug 8, 1854: "W. L. Maberly"
"Call at Inland Department of this Office"



Allows delivery of letter to an agent
(Patrick Frost)

6 Reams printed July 1853

Apr 22, 1854:
Rowland Hill becomes Secretary

"We are therefore of opinion that the two Departments of the Inland Office and the London District Office should be combined, and that the Dead Letter Office also, which is now on a separate footing, should be consolidated with them."

May 30 1854 Committee of
Inquiry Into Public Offices.

Dead Letter Office becomes
Returned Letter Branch of the
Circulation Department
under W. Bokenham



GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

July 24th 1855

THERE is a Letter N^o. 13373
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of 1/9 be
paid; if therefore you will desire one of your
Correspondents to call at the Inland Branch of
the Circulation Department, between the hours
of Ten and Four o'Clock, and pay the above
Postage, the Letter will be immediately sent
according to the address; or, if you will return
this Notice to me, *distinctly* stating to whom you
wish the Letter to be delivered, such request
will be complied with.

ROWLAND HILL,
Secretary.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed to
enquire for the Letter by its Number.*

F. & T.—6 Rms. 6—55.

Handstamp with
W. Bokenham
Signature

1855.
General Post Office
London 24 July
W. Bokenham
P. B. May
D. S.
W. Bokenham
On Her Majesty's Service.
M^{rs}. "Rant-Nap" Stee



Jul 24, 1855: "Rowland Hill"
"Call at
Inland Branch of Circulation Department"



On Her Majesty's Service.

Front: W. Bokenham
a la Fabrique des Lignes
de l'Imprimerie de l'Etat
Lisbon

Returned Letter Branch,
 Circulation Department.



GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

12 Aug 1857

THERE is a Letter N^o. *6549*
 at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
 forwarded until the postage of *1/9*
 be paid; if, therefore, you will desire one of
 your Correspondents to call at the Inland
 Branch of the Circulation Department, between
 the hours of ten and four o'clock, and pay the
 above postage, the Letter will be immediately
 sent according to the address; or, if you will
 return this Notice to me, *distinctly* stating to
 whom you wish the Letter to be delivered,
 such request will be complied with.

ROWLAND HILL,
Secretary.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed
 to inquire for the Letter by its number.*

H & G 6 Rms. 6 | 57

3226

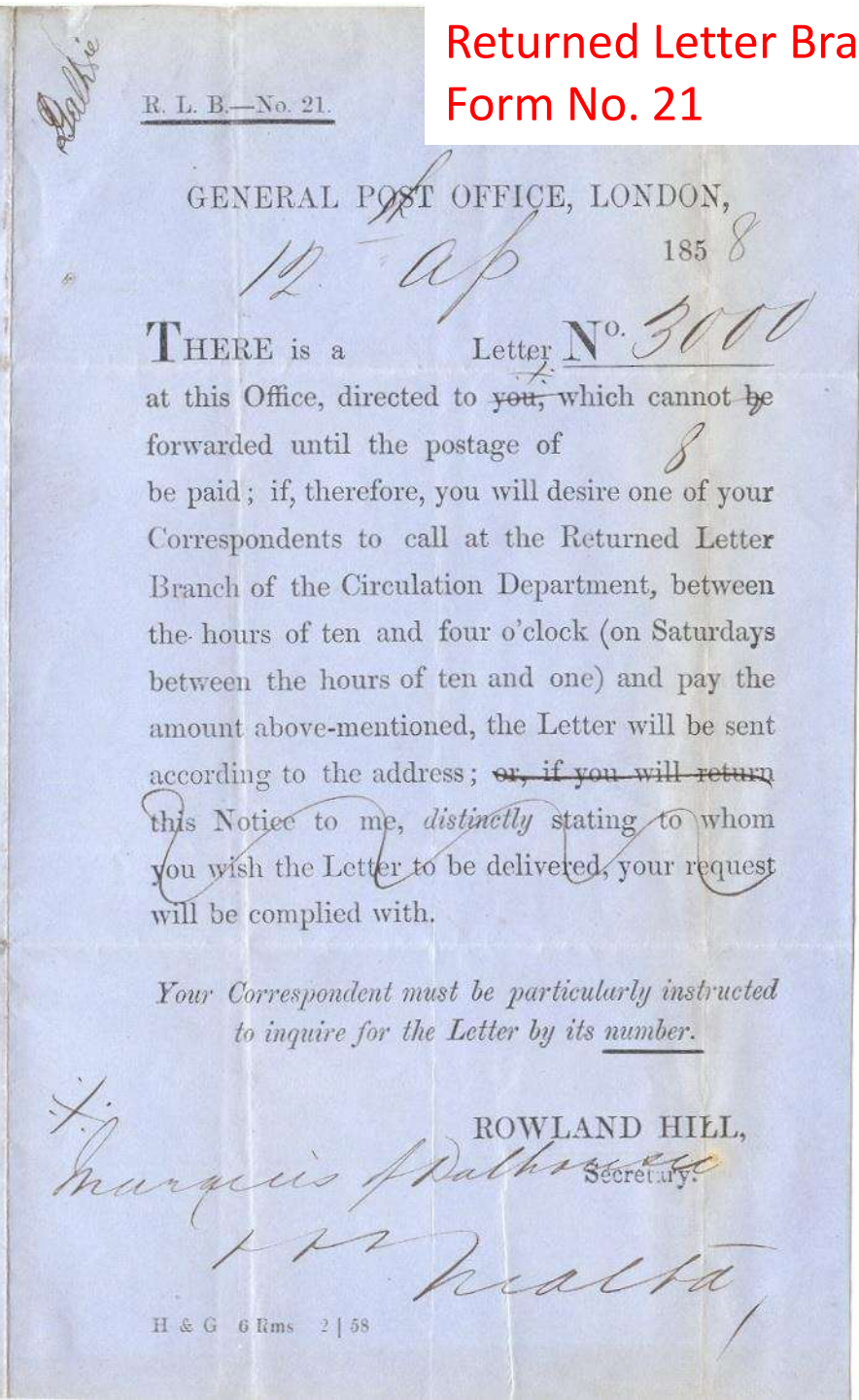
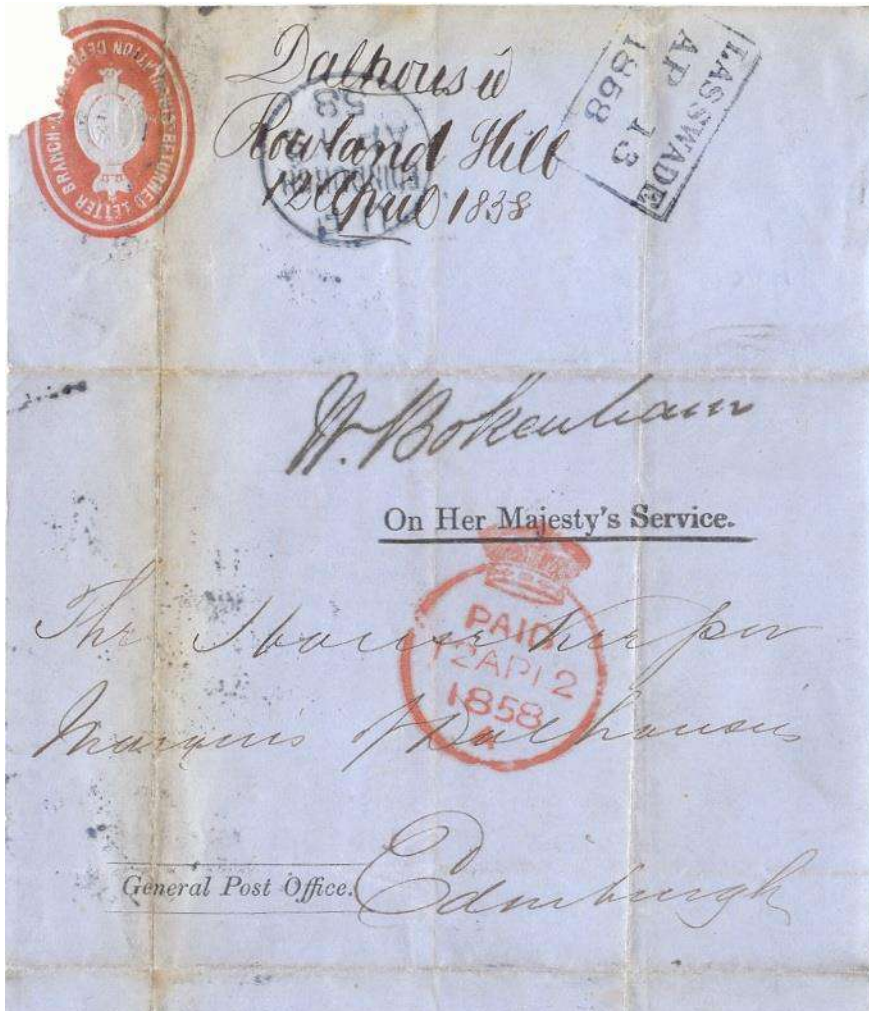
Handstamp with
 W. Bokenham
 Signature

Aug 12, 1857: "Rowland Hill"
 "Call at
 Inland Branch of Circulation Department"

"Returned Letter Branch
 Circulation Department"

Specified on front

Returned Letter Branch
Form No. 21

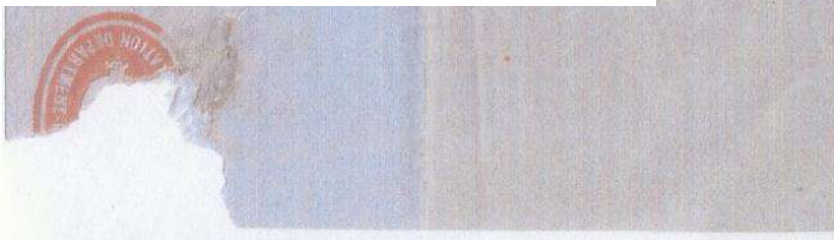


Jul 24, 1855: "Rowland Hill"
"Call at Returned Letter Branch of
Circulation Department"
"General Post Office"
Specified on front

Payment in
"British Postage Stamps or Money"



Jul 24, 1855: "Rowland Hill"
"Call at Returned Letter Branch of
Circulation Department"



R. L. B.—No. 21.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON,

Feb 20th 1860

THERE is a Letter N^o. *6550*
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the postage of *6^d*
(in British Postage Stamps, or Money) be
paid; if, therefore, you will desire one of your
Correspondents to call at the Returned Letter
Branch of the Circulation Department, between
the hours of ten and four o'clock, (on Saturdays
between the hours of ten and one,) and pay the
amount above-mentioned, the Letter will be sent
according to the address; or, if you will return
this Notice to me, *distinctly* stating to whom
you wish the Letter to be delivered, your request
will be complied with.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed
to inquire for the Letter by its number.*

ROWLAND HILL,

Secretary.

Mar 15, 1864:
John Tilley becomes Secretary

1864-67 Notices with Tilley name and RLB
Circulation Department probably exist .

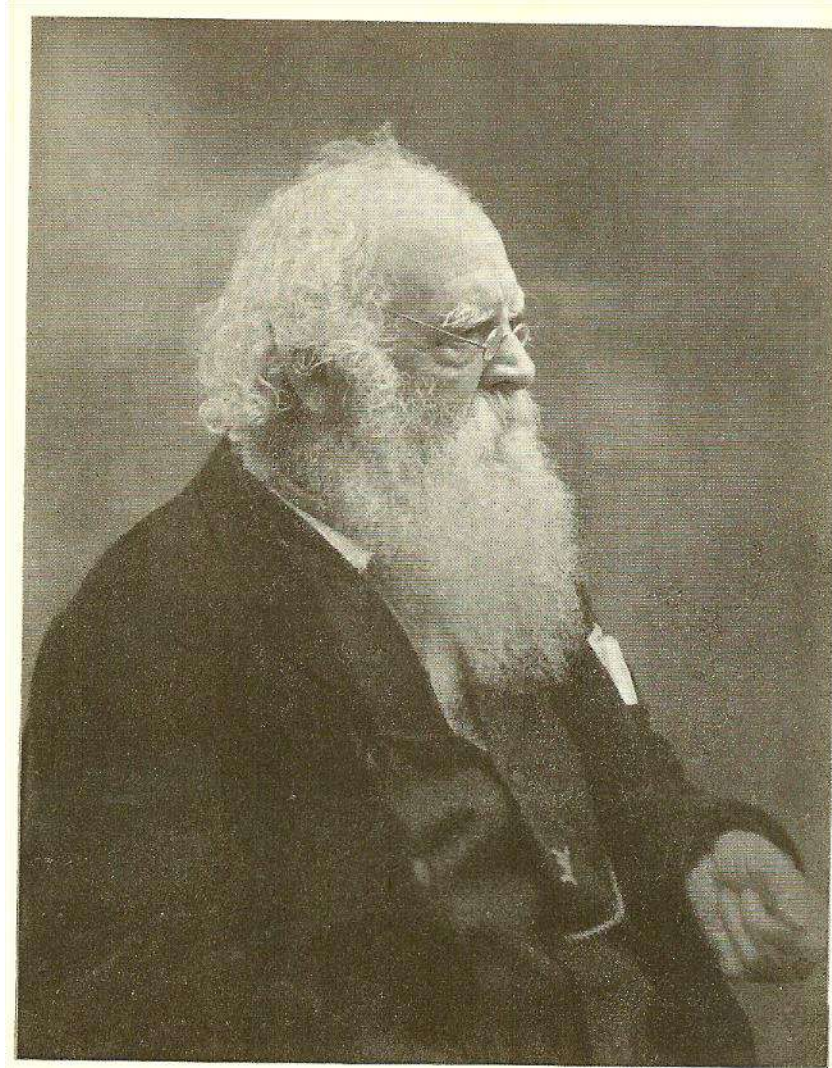
George Smith campaigned to have the DLO
become an independent Office

“The staff considered that returned and dead
letter duties required a higher degree of skill
than other sorting work.”

“It became a habit to ‘dump’ into it drones from
the Inland branch, men who knew nothing of the
nature of the duty, and from this cause the
machinery could not escape undue friction.”

From Smith’s autobiography (edited)

Jun 18, 1867
becomes the Returned Letter Office
with Smith as Controller



George R. Smith (at age 90)
Head of Dead Letter Office 1859-1891

Returned Letter Office
Form No. 21

Handstamp with
G. R. Smith
Signature



R. L. O. --No. 21.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,

LONDON,

18 July 1868

Gentlemen

I HAVE to inform you that there is a Letter, No. 1066,
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be forwarded until
the postage of *3/11^d*.....(in British Postage Stamps or Money)
be paid; if, therefore, you will desire one of your correspondents
to call at the Returned Letter Office between the hours of ten
and four o'clock, (on Saturdays between ten and one), and pay
the amount above-mentioned, the letter will be sent according to
the address; or if you will return this notice, distinctly stating
thereon to whom you wish the letter to be delivered, such
request will be complied with.

In any application for the letter, it is necessary that it
should be inquired for by its *number*.

I am,

Your obedient, humble Servant,

JOHN TILLEY,

Secretary.

Jul 18, 1868: "John Tilley"
"Call at Returned Letter Office"
(Patrick Frost)



ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

G. R. Smith
W. Barne
Steward
Ship Antonio
Calder
South America

Returned Letter Office,
General Post Office, London.

RETURNED LETTER OFFICE,
GENERAL POST OFFICE,

LONDON,

11 Sept 1873

I HAVE to inform you that there is a letter, *20 lb*

at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be forwarded until the postage of *1/6* (British Postage Stamps or Money) be paid: if, therefore, you will desire one of your correspondents to call at this Office between the hours of ten and four o'clock (on Saturdays between ten and one), and pay the amount above-mentioned, the letter will be sent according to the address; or if you will return this notice, distinctly stating thereon to whom you wish the letter to be delivered, such request will be complied with.

I am,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. R. SMITH,

Controller.

N.B.—In any further correspondence on this subject, it is requested that the number of the letter may be quoted, and that such correspondence be addressed—"The Controller, Returned Letter Office, G.P.O., London."

R. L. O.—No. 21.

Jul 11, 1873: "G. R. Smith"
"Call at this Office"
(Recently sold on Ebay)

Need for Detained for Postage Notices for letter mail rapidly declined after 1875

GPU -1875 & UPU 1879 allowed unpaid & underpaid mail between members

Notices to non-members may have still been required

By early 1890s most countries had joined the UPU.

Detained for Postage Notices still required for other types of mail

Newspapers

Samples

Parcels

Outside scope of London Philatelist article.