


ANNO PRIMO

# VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

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## CAP. XXXV.

## An Act for regulating the sending and receiving of Letters and Packets by the Post free from the Duty of Postage. [12th *July* 1837.]

WHEREAS an Act was passed in this present Session of Parliament, intituled *An Act to repeal the several Laws relating to the Post Office;* be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That on the Day on which the recited Act shall come into operation this Act shall come into operation for granting and regulating the Privilege of receiving and sending Letters by the Post free from the Duty of Postage. 1 Vict. c. 32. Commencement of Act.

II. And be it enacted, That the Letters of Her most Excellent Majesty transmitted by Post, either to or from Her Majesty, shall be exempt from Postage. Her Majesty's Letters free.

III. And be it enacted, That the Letters of the under-mentioned Classes of Persons transmitted by Post, either to or from them, shall, subject to the Conditions herein-after stated, be exempt from Postage :— Letters of certain Officers free.

CLASS I.

Members of each House of Parliament.

CLASS II.

Clerk of the Parliament.
The Clerk Assistant of the House of Lords.
The Reading Clerk of the House of Lords.
The Clerk of the House of Commons.
The Two Clerks Assistant of the House of Commons.
The Chief Clerk without Doors of the House of Commons (who receives the Fees and pays the Officers of the House).

CLASS III.

The Secretaries and Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.
The Postmaster General, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Postmaster General, in *England*.

CLASS IV.

The Lord High Chancellor of *Great Britain*.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.
The Lord High Treasurer or First Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.
The Commissioners of the Treasury.
Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, and their Under Secretaries.
The Chancellor of Her Majesty's Exchequer.
The President and Vice President of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of Matters relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations.
The Clerks of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.
The First Commissioner of Woods and Forests.
The President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of *India*.
The Secretaries to the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of *India*.
The Judge Advocate General.
The Secretary of the Postmaster General in *Ireland*.
The Surveyors of the Post Office in *England*.
The Secretary of the Postmaster General in *Scotland*.
The Surveyors of the Post Office in *Scotland*.
The Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Forces in *Great Britain*.
The Secretary to the Commander in Chief of Her Majesty's Forces in *Great Britain*.
The Master General of the Board of Ordnance.
One of the Secretaries of the said Master General of the Board of Ordnance.
The Secretary to the Board of Ordnance.
The Inspector General of Fortifications.
The Quartermaster General of Her Majesty's Forces in *Great Britain*.
The Adjutant General of Her Majesty's Forces in *Great Britain*.
The Secretary at War.
The Deputy Secretary at War.

Her

Her Majesty's Paymaster General.
The Lord High Admiral or First Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty.
The Commissioners of the Admiralty.
The Secretaries of the Admiralty.
Her Majesty's Lieutenant General or other Chief Governor or Governors of *Ireland*;
And his or their Chief Secretary, Under Secretary, and Private Secretary respectively.

CLASS V.

The Lord Chancellor of *Ireland*.
The Surveyors of the Post Office in *Ireland*.

CLASS VI.

The respective Departments and Offices mentioned in the First Column of Schedule (A.), in respect of the Official Correspondence of such Departments and Offices.

CLASS VII.

Persons being at the Head of the several Departments and Offices mentioned in the First Column of Schedule (B.), in respect of their Official Correspondence.

CLASS VIII.

The Persons mentioned in the Third Column of Schedule (C.), in respect of their Official Correspondence.

CLASS IX.

The several Officers herein-after specified belonging to the Offices mentioned in the First Column of Schedule (D.), in respect of the Official Correspondence of such Offices.

CLASS X.

Commissioners, whether for permanent or temporary Purposes, appointed by Act of Parliament or appointed by Her Majesty's Letters Patent, to which Commissioners the Privilege is granted by this or by any subsequent Act, in respect of their Correspondence relating to the Business of their Commission.

Extent and Conditions of Privilege of 1st Class.

IV. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of the Persons of the First Class shall last no longer than during the Session of Parliament, and Forty Days before a Summons, or Forty Days after a Prorogation; and the Privilege shall extend to the sending of Ten Letters every Day, each not exceeding an Ounce in Weight, to Places within the United Kingdom; and to the Receipt from Places within the United Kingdom of Fifteen Letters every Day, each not exceeding the same Weight; and to the Power of receiving and sending printed Votes and Proceedings in Parliament from and to Places within the United Kingdom; and to receiving Petitions addressed to either House of Parliament, not exceeding Six Ounces in Weight each; but in order to exempt

exempt the above-mentioned Letters and Papers from Postage the following Conditions shall be observed:—Every Letter sent shall be subject to the same Conditions as are herein-after expressed with regard to the Letters of all Persons of the first Five Classes having the Privilege of Franking; and every Letter received shall be directed either to the Place where the privileged Person shall actually be at the Time of the Delivery thereof, or at his usual Place of Residence in *London*, or at the House of Parliament or at the Lobby of the House of Parliament of which he shall be a Member; and all printed Votes and Proceedings in Parliament and printed Parliamentary Papers shall be sent without Covers, or in Covers open at the Sides, and shall be signed by the privileged Person sending them, in the Manner heretofore practised; and all Petitions shall be sent without Covers, or in Covers open at the Sides; and the Power of receiving Votes and Proceedings shall be restricted to the Places within the United Kingdom of which the privileged Person shall have previously given Notice to the Postmaster General, either at *London* or *Dublin*.

Extent and Conditions of Privilege of 2d Class.

V. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of the Persons of the Second Class shall extend both to Letters and Parliamentary Proceedings and Papers, and shall be subject to the Regulations and Restrictions to which that of the First Class is subject, except as to the Number of such Letters, which shall be without Limit, and except as to the Weight of such Letters, which shall not exceed Two Ounces each.

Extent and Conditions of Privilege of 3d Class.

VI. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of the Members of the Third Class shall extend to the sending and receiving all Letters, without Limit as to either Number or Weight; and with respect to Letters sent by them it shall be unnecessary to insert in the Superscription the Name of the Post Town, or the Date of the Day, Month, or Year when sent, but nevertheless the whole Superscription shall be of the Handwriting of the Person sending the same.

Extent of Privilege of 4th Class.

VII. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of the Members of the Fourth Class shall extend to the sending and receiving all Letters, without Limit as to either Number or Weight.

Extent of Privilege of 5th Class.

VIII. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of the Members of the Fifth Class shall extend to the sending and receiving of all Letters to and from Places within *Ireland*, without Limit as to either Number or Weight.

Conditions to be observed by the first Five Classes in regard to Letters sent by them.

IX. And be it enacted, That all Letters sent by privileged Persons of the foregoing Five Classes shall, except so far as has been excepted in reference to the Members of the Third Class, be subject to the following Conditions:—The whole Superscription shall be of the Handwriting of the privileged Person sending the same, and shall contain the Name of such Person, together with the Name of the Post Town from which the same is intended to be sent, and the Day, Month, and Year when the same shall be put into the Post Office, the Day of the Month to be in Words at Length, and the whole Direction and Superscription to be of the Handwriting of the privi-

leged Person; and every such Letter shall be put into the General Post Office or other Post Office, or into a Receiving House or Place appointed by Her Majesty's Postmaster General for the Receipt of Letters and Packets to be forwarded by the Post, on the Day of the Date written upon such Letter; and the privileged Person whose Name shall be written thereon shall, for the Purpose of exempting the Letter from Postage, actually be in the Post Town where such Letter shall be put into the Post Office, or within Twenty Miles of such Post Town, on the Day or on the Day next before the Day on which such Letter shall be put into the Post Office.

Extent and Conditions of Privilege of 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Classes.

X. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of sending and receiving Letters (free of Postage) of the Officers of the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Classes shall be subject to the following Conditions:—Every Letter shall be on the public Business of the Office or Department from which the same shall be forwarded, or to which the same shall be addressed, and shall be superscribed in the Manner set forth in the Third Column of Schedules hereto annexed; and the Indorsement on each Letter sent from any such Office or Department shall be superscribed with the Signature of the Person authorized to make the same, and the Letter shall be sealed with the Seal of the Office or the Seal of the principal Officer in that Department; and the Persons being at the Head of any Office or Department mentioned in the First Column of the Schedules (A.), (B.), and (D.) hereto annexed may direct certain Persons in each of their Departments to make the foregoing Superscription upon each Letter which shall concern the public Business of their respective Offices; and the Names of such authorized Persons shall be transmitted by the principal Officer authorizing them to the General Post Office in *London*, where the Offices or Departments shall be in *London*, and to the General Post Office in *Dublin* where the Offices or Departments shall be in *Dublin*; but the Number of Persons so appointed shall not exceed Two in any Department in Schedule (A.), except in the Admiralty Office, the War Office, and the Paymaster General's Office; and in the Admiralty Office the Number shall not exceed Thirteen in Time of Peace and Seventeen in Time of War; and the Number in the War Office shall not exceed Six in Time of Peace and Ten in Time of War; and the Number in the Paymaster General's Office shall not exceed Three; and in all other Cases shall not exceed One in any Department or Office, except the Lord Lieutenant's Chief Secretary's Office in *Ireland*, where the Number shall not exceed Two.

As to Offices named in the Schedules.

XI. And be it enacted, That the Privilege of Franking of Offices mentioned in the Schedules hereto shall be subject to the Limitations expressed in the Fifth Column thereof.

Regulation of Official Privilege of Franking in certain Cases.

XII. And for the general Regulation of the Official Privilege of Franking hereby or by any subsequent Act granted to the Officers or Commissioners respectively belonging to the Offices and Commissions specially mentioned in the Schedules hereto annexed, and respectively included in the Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth Classes, or to any other Office or Commission of a like Nature, be it enacted, That the Persons being respectively at the Head of such Offices or

Commissions may from Time to Time authorize and direct such One Person in their Office as they shall think proper to nominate in that Behalf, or such other Number as shall be named in any Act conferring this Privilege on such Office or Commission, to send free from Postage all or any of the Letters relating solely to the Business of their Office, and they shall from Time to Time transmit the Name of such Person to the Secretary of the General Post Office in *London* or *Dublin*, and every Person so appointed shall sign and subscribe his Name under such Words as may be directed to be printed upon the Covers enclosing such Letters; and every Person so nominated is hereby strictly forbidden to superscribe any Letter in the Manner directed by this Act, except only such Letters as he shall respectively know to relate solely to the Business of his Office, or such only concerning which he shall receive the special Direction of his superior Officer; nevertheless the Appointment of such Officer, and the Place from which Letters sent by such Officer shall be dated, and the Mode of superscribing, and the Style of Address, shall respectively be subject to such Limitations, Conditions, and Regulations as the Lords of the Treasury shall from Time to Time appoint in regard to the respective Offices or Commissions to which the Privilege of sending and receiving Letters free shall be granted.

Franking Officers required to transmit to the Post Office unprivileged Letters sent to them.

XIII. And be it enacted, That if any Letter, Paper, or Thing shall be sent under Cover to a Franking Officer, the same not being actually and *bonâ fide* on Her Majesty's Service, and relating exclusively to the Business of his Department, the Officer to whom the same shall be so sent shall transmit it forthwith to the Secretary of the Post Office in *London* or *Dublin*, with the Covers under which the same were sent, in order that the Contents thereof may be charged with the full Rates of Postage.

Rule for computing Postage on Letters beyond the Extent of Privilege.

XIV. And be it enacted, That in case the Number of Letters allowed to a privileged Person shall on any Occasion be exceeded, so that the ordinary Rates of Postage shall become payable on the surplus Number, the Letters chargeable with the higher Rate shall be included in the Number exempted, in preference to those chargeable with a lower Rate.

Postmaster empowered to examine Packets without a Cover, or in a Cover open at the Sides.

XV. And be it enacted, That the Postmaster General may examine any Packet sent without a Cover, or in a Cover open at the Sides, in order to discover whether any other Paper or Thing be enclosed with the printed Paper so permitted to be sent free of Postage without a Cover, or in a Cover open at the Sides; and in case any other Paper or Thing whatsoever shall be found enclosed with any such printed Paper, or in case there shall be any Writing other than the Superscription upon the printed Paper or upon the Cover, the whole of the Packet shall be charged with Treble the Duty of Postage.

Privileged Persons empowered in certain Cases to depute a

XVI. And be it enacted, That in case any privileged Person of the first Five Classes, being by bodily Infirmity disabled from writing the whole Superscription of such Letters, shall choose to appoint some one Person on his Behalf and in his Stead to sign his Name upon and write the

the Superscription of such Letters, and shall cause Notice thereof in Writing under his Hand and Seal to be transmitted to the Postmaster General, all Letters so signed and superscribed by the Person appointed shall be free of Postage, and shall in all respects be proceeded with as if the Superscription had been of the Handwriting of the privileged Person; and until he shall, by Order under his Hand and Seal, revoke the Notice of the Appointment of his Substitute, no Letters under the Handwriting of the Person privileged shall pass free of Postage. Person to exercise their Privilege in their Behalf.

XVII. And be it enacted, That no Privilege of Franking shall extend to Letters transmitted by a Penny or Twopenny Post, so far as respects the Penny or Twopenny Post Rates, nor to any Letters which are or may be liable to any Foreign Rates of Postage, (the Public Despatches to and from Her Majesty's Secretaries of State, and the *British* Embassies and Legations at Foreign Courts, being *bonâ fide* on the Public Service, only excepted). Privilege of Franking limited to General Post Letters.

XVIII. And be it enacted, That the Court of Directors of the *East India* Company, or the Secret Committee appointed by the same Court (in pursuance of an Act passed in the Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of His late Majesty King *William* the Fourth), shall, so long as the Possession and Government of Her Majesty's Territories in the *East Indies* shall belong to the Company, have the Privilege of receiving and sending free of Postage, to and from the Governor General and Council and several Presidencies in the *East Indies*, or any Agent or other Officer of the Company in the *East Indies*, any Letter relating entirely to the Affairs of the Company; and the said Court of Directors, Secret Committee, and Secretary or Assistant Secretary of the Company, may receive any such Letter free from Postage from any Officer or Agent of the Company, by Ships in the Service of the Company; provided that with respect to Letters sent to the *East Indies* they be superscribed by the Chairman or Deputy Chairman or Secretary or Assistant Secretary of the Company; and the Commissioners for the Affairs of *India*, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the *East India* Company, may send and receive Letters to and from *Ceylon*, the *Mauritius*, or any Port or Place in the *East Indies*, or to and from the *Cape of Good Hope*, free from Postage, provided that no such Letter exceed Three Ounces in Weight; and the Directors of the Company may receive Letters free from Sea Postage from *Ceylon*, the *Mauritius*, or any Port or Place in the *East Indies*, by Ships in the Service of the said Company, provided that the Letters brought by any One Ship for any One Director do not collectively exceed the Weight of Six Ounces; and every Person who shall have been Director shall continue to have the Privilege for One Year after he shall have ceased to be a Director. Franking Privilege of Letters to and from the East Indies.

XIX. And be it enacted, That all the Provisions of this Act shall be construed according to the respective Interpretations of the Terms and Expressions contained in an Act passed in the present Session, intituled *An Act for consolidating the Laws relative to Offences against the Post Office of the United Kingdom, and for regulating the judicial Adminis-* Interpretation of Act. 1 Vict. c. 36

*Administration of the Post Office Laws, and for explaining certain Terms and Expressions employed in those Laws,* so far as those Interpretations are not repugnant to the Subject or inconsistent with the Context of such Provisions.

Act may be altered this Session.

XX. And be it enacted, That this Act may be repealed or altered during the present Session of Parliament.

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## SCHEDULES referred to in the foregoing Act.

### SCHEDULE (A.)

| | Name of Office. | Number of Franking Officers. | Covers of Letters sent, how to be superscribed. | Letters received, to whom to be addressed to entitle them to pass free, when a particular Address is required. | Limitations of Official Franking Privilege. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class 6. | The Treasury - | 2 | Treasury - - | No particular Direction is required for Official Letters of this Class. | Unlimited. |
| | The Admiralty Office: | | | | |
| | In Time of War. | 17 | Admiralty - - | | |
| | In Time of Peace. | 13 | | | |
| | The Offices of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State (in each of such Offices). | 2 | Secretary of State's Office. | | |
| | The War Office: | | | | |
| | In Time of War. | 10 | War Office - | | |
| | In Time of Peace. | 6 | | | |
| | The General Post Office in London. | 2 | General Post Office - | | |
| | The General Post Office in Edinburgh. | 2 | General Post Office, Edinburgh. | | |
| | The Commander in Chief's Office. | 2 | Commander-in Chief's Office. | | |
| | The Board of Ordnance. | 2 | Ordnance Office - | | |
| | The Adjutant General's Office. | 2 | Adjutant General's Office. | | |
| | The Quarter Master General's Office. | 2 | Quarter Master General's Office. | | |
| | The Paymaster General's Office. | 3 | Office of Her Majesty's Paymaster General. | | |
| | Chief Secretary's Office in London of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. | 1 | The Lord Lieutenant's Chief Secretary's Office, London. | | |

The Words "On Her Majesty's Service," to be on all the Covers.

## SCHEDULE (B.)

| | Name of Office. | Number of Franking Officers. | Covers of Letters sent, how to be superscribed. | Letters received, to whom to be addressed to entitle them to pass free, when a particular Address is required. | Limitations of Official Franking Privilege. |
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| Class 7. | ALL WITHIN IRELAND. | | | | |
| | Commander of the Forces. | 1 | The Words "On Her Majesty's Service," to be on all the Covers. Commander of the Forces Office. | Commander of the Forces. | Limited to Correspondence between Places in Ireland. |
| | Civil Paymaster | 1 | Civil Paymaster's Office | Civil Paymaster of Ireland. | |
| | Deputy Adjutant General. | 1 | Adjutant General's Office. | Adjutant General of the Forces. | |
| | Deputy Quarter Master General. | 1 | Quarter Master General's Office. | Quarter Master General of the Forces. | |
| | Chief Officer of Her Majesty's Ordnance Survey. | 1 | Ordnance Survey Office. | The Superintendent of the Ordnance Survey. | |
| | The Postmaster General. | 1 | General Post Office, Dublin. | - - - | |
| | The Lord Lieutenant's Chief Secretary. | 2 | Chief Secretary's Office, Civil Department, or Chief Secretary's Office, Military Department. | - - - | |

## SCHEDULE (C.)

| | | | | | |
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| Class 8. | Greenwich Pension Office. | — | The Words "Pursuant to General Franking Act," to be on all the Covers. Greenwich Out-Pensions; and the Cashier of Greenwich Out-Pensions is to write his Name under such Words. | Cashier of Greenwich Out-Pensions. | Unlimited. |
| | Greenwich Hospital. | — | Greenwich Hospital; and the Clerk of the Cheque is to write his Name under the same. | Clerk of the Cheque | |
| | Chelsea Hospital. | — | Chelsea Hospital; and the Secretary of the Hospital is to write his Name under the same. | Secretary of Chelsea Hospital, at his Office. | |
| | Office of Comptroller of Corn Returns. | — | On Her Majesty's Service, Corn Department; and the Comptroller of Corn Returns is to subscribe his Name to the same. | Comptroller of Corn Returns. | May send to any Part of the United Kingdom, but may receive from any Place whatever. |

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## SCHEDULE (D.)

| | Name of Office. | Number of Franking Officers. | Covers of Letters sent, how to be superscribed. | Letters received, to whom to be addressed to entitle them to pass free, when a particular Address is required. | Limitations of Official Franking Privilege. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class 9. | Audit Office - | — | On Her Majesty's Service, Audit Office; and the Secretary of the Commissioners, or some Chief Clerk in the Audit Office, is to subscribe his Name to the same. | Commissioners for auditing the Public Accounts. | Unlimited. |
| | Office for building additional Churches. | 1 | On the Business of the Commissioners appointed under the Act for building and promoting the building of additional Churches; dated from their Office. | Her Majesty's Commissioners, appointed under the Act for building and promoting the building of additional Churches. | |
| | Incorporated Society for promoting the Enlargement, building, and repairing of Churches and Chapels. | 1 | The Incorporated Society for promoting the Enlargement, building, and repairing of Churches and Chapels, dated from the Society's Office. | The Incorporated Society for promoting the Enlargement, building, and repairing of Churches and Chapels. | |
| | Exchequer Bill Office, 57G.3. c. 34. | 1 | Exchequer Bill Office - | The Commissioners for the Issue of Exchequer Bills, at their Office in London. | |
| | | | | Letters addressed to the Secretary to the Commissioners at their Office to be also free of Postage. | May only receive Official Letters free. |
| | Exchequer Bill Office, (2 & 3 W. 4. c. 125. 5 & 6 W. 4. c. 51.) | 1 | Exchequer Bill Office - | To the Commissioners for the Issue of Exchequer Bills, at their Office in London. | The United Kingdom and the Colonies. |
| | Tithes Commutation Commission. | 1 | Tithe Commissioners for England and Wales. | Tithe Commissioners for England and Wales, at their Office in London. | Between Places in England and Wales. |
| | Compensation Office. | 1 | Compensation Office - | Commissioners of Compensation, at their Office in London. | Within the United Kingdom. |

The Words "Pursuant to General Franking Act," to be on all the Covers.

| Name of Office. | Number of Franking Officers. | Covers of Letters sent, how to be superscribed. | Letters received, to whom to be addressed to entitle them to pass free, when a particular Address is required. | Limitations of Official Franking Privilege. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friendly Societies. | — | The Words "Pursuant to General Franking Act," to be on all the Covers. Barrister or Advocate appointed to certify Rules of Friendly Societies, pursuant to Act of Parliament passed in the Tenth Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King George the Fourth, and to be signed under such Words with the Name of such Barrister or Advocate in his own Handwriting. | Barrister or Advocate appointed to certify the Rules of Friendly Societies, directed to him at his Office in London, Edinburgh, or Dublin, as the Case may be. | Within the United Kingdom, Guernsey, Jersey, and Isle of Man. |
| Poor Law Commission. | 1 | Office of Poor Law Commissioners. | Poor Law Commissioners, directed to them at their Office in London. | Within the United Kingdom. |
| General Register Office of Merchant Seamen. | — | Merchant Seamen's General Register Office. | The Registrar of Merchant Seamen. | Unlimited. |
| Office of Commissioners of Charities. | 1 | Office of Commissioners of Charities. | Commissioners of Charities, at their Office in Westminster. | Within the United Kingdom. |
| Office of Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. | 1 | Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. | Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, at his Office. | Within England. |

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