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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1393	Press Mis.
Dated	13-9-	1971.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

13/9/71

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department.
13th September 1871.

Read again the following letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India, dated 3rd June, No. 896, and recorded in Proceedings, 22nd June 1871, No. 906:—

I am directed to forward, for any remarks that the Government of Madras may wish to make, the accompanying copy of a letter* from the Director-General of the Post Office of India, and of its enclosure, containing certain proposals respecting official correspondence transmitted by post, which are generally approved by the Government of India.

2. It is particularly requested that a reply to this reference may be submitted on an early date, not later than the 15th of July 1871.

—

From the Director-General of the Post Office of India, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Financial Department, dated Calcutta, 17th April 1871, No. 206.

Since the submission of my letter, No. 3077, dated 26th September last, relative to the treatment of Local Fund correspondence, I have, in accordance with your demi-official request, brought under consideration the wider question as to whether it might not be advisable to make a radical change in the present treatment of official correspondence generally by bringing the Indian system more into accordance with the English system.

2. I thoroughly concur in the remarks made in your note of the 6th October last, in which you argue for the abolition of the present system of privileged offices (excepting only as respects Government Secretariats) and for the substitution of the English system of each public office meeting its postage charges by actual payment either in stamps or cash.

3. As respects the Government Secretariats which will retain the privilege of franking, I should be inclined to make the privilege absolute, *i.e.*, to recognise the Secretariat frank (or that of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or Member of Council) as freeing the cover from any charge in account of inland postage. Hitherto the privilege has consisted in the substitution of a *pro forma* charge in account for actual payment: my proposition is to do away altogether with the *pro forma* charge in account just as is the case in England, where, under the recent modification of system, the postage charges against the privileged offices in London are not brought into the account of Postal Revenue. This relinquishment of *pro forma* revenue is not inappropriate under a system such as that in force in England and now proposed to be introduced in India, whereby the privilege is restricted to a very limited number of offices. The Government Secretariat will thus be allowed to send and receive, without any charge, actual or *pro forma*, all official correspondence superscribed in the prescribed manner, and supported either by the signature of a principal officer of the Secretariat, or by the signature of a Government official addressing the Secretariat. There being no account to be kept of such correspondence, there will be no necessity for posting in official bags, and no objection to the free use of pillar-boxes or receiving-houses for this purpose.

4. As respects the correspondence of other Government officials, it should, as in England, be subject to the ordinary rules, except in the following particulars, which will, I think, be found convenient modifications. These particulars are—

- (1.) I would allow all service covers to be closed, ignoring altogether the ordinary rules of the Book Post, and I would provide that all covers marked for transmission by "Letter Post," "Book Post," or "Banghy Post," should be sent and charged accordingly, all covers not specially marked being sent by Letter Post if the weight does not exceed 10 tolas, and by Book Post if the cover exceeds 10 tolas in weight.
- (2.) I would retain the present distinction between Service and Ordinary Stamps, Government officials being required to use the former (Service Stamps) for official correspondence, and to support them by the prescribed superscription and signature.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
13th September 1871.*

- (3.) I would retain the present rule, allowing unpaid covers to be charged on delivery at prepaid (i.e., single) rates when superscribed "Service Bearing" under the prescribed attestation.
- (4.) I would retain the existing rule, under which no re-direction charge is made on account of service covers.
5. My reason for suggesting a continuance of the use of Service Stamps (which are not known in England) is, that I believe them to operate materially as a check upon abuse. The check consists in the fact that these stamps can only be used when supported by a superscription "On Her Majesty's Service" under the full signature and official designation of the sender. A person who might be willing to make use, for private purposes, of ordinary stamps purchased with Government money, and who might feel able to conceal such misuse from his official superiors, might, nevertheless, hesitate to use them in a way which would certainly reveal his crime to the addressee, and which, through the action either of the addressee or of the Post Office, might lead to his exposure.
6. The Government may probably be told from many quarters that the present proposal to extend so largely payment of postage by Service Stamps involves great risk to the public money owing to the necessity of entrusting Service Stamps to subordinates. There is no actual necessity for entrusting Service Stamps to subordinates, for the permission to frank "Service Bearing" admits of subordinates using the post without having any Service Stamps at all; but, even when they are so entrusted, the argument above referred to can be shown to be entirely unfounded. When a subordinate is entrusted with Service Stamps, the money paid for them is all the time safe in the Government Treasury, and the only fraud which he or any of his accomplices can perpetrate as regards those stamps is to use them under full superscription and signature in payment of postage due on private correspondence. Now, under any other system of franking without Service Stamps the same door for fraud would be open, the only difference being that in the one case (i.e., when Service Stamps are not used), the person who commits the fraud of improper franking runs risk only as respects action on the part of the Post Office or the addressee, while in the other case he has in addition to satisfy his superior officer of the proper expenditure of the stamps purchased, and to run the risk of detection in case of inquiry resulting from any excessive expenditure of this kind. As already stated, I have frequently found it argued by officers in control of subordinate establishments that it is a great risk to entrust them with Service Stamps in lieu of the previous franking privileges, the real fact, however, being that there is actually less and not more risk, and that the feeling of responsibility resulting from an actual purchase of stamps and consequent charge in account is a safeguard of great importance, and one which was wholly absent under the previous system. So long as the fraud was committed solely against the Post Office (i.e., by the improper franking of private letters), Controlling Officers of other Departments took no heed of the matter and felt no responsibility; but the case is quite otherwise when the responsibility is represented in the cash accounts of their Departments by a specific money charge. The feeling of risk and responsibility proved by the use of the erroneous argument above referred to is the best proof that the Service Stamps introduced in 1866 formed a real improvement on the unfettered system of franking previously existing, and I regard, therefore, the present proposal to extend the use of Service Stamps as all the more beneficial.
7. Should the Government approve of the change of system now advocated, I think it will be necessary to obtain a somewhat larger supply of service labels, and also to order the manufacture of a new one-rupee label. I have for some time felt the desirability of having a one-rupee label for private correspondence, and the same label stamped with the word "Service" will be of great use in the event of the proposed change of rule being carried into effect. This point will be made the subject of a separate reference on receipt of a reply from Government.
8. I forward, herewith, a set of Rules for the treatment of official correspondence, revised in accordance with the suggestions which have been made above.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
13th September 1871.*

No. 54. Read also the following letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India, Financial Department, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Simla, 28th August 1871, No. 2994.

Separate Revenue—Post Office.

On the 3rd June 1871, by No. 896, certain proposals from the Director-General of the Post Office, modifying the existing system of franking official correspondence transmitted by post, were circulated for the remarks of the Local Governments.

2. These proposals have since been sanctioned by the Governor-General in Council.

3. As, however, some of the authorities, whose replies have now been received, deprecate the proposals on the score of the risk that may attend the necessity of placing funds in the hands of officials for the purpose of purchasing stamps as a necessary consequence of the new arrangement—a circumstance which it is alleged will lead to much speculation and fraud—it is necessary to point out that these apprehensions can be removed by a simple rule that no charge for postage stamps shall be admitted unless supported by a receipt from a treasury officer, and insisting upon every charge for "Service Bearing" being supported by the envelopes. By this system service labels can never become marketable commodities.

4. It is also represented that the proposal will involve the necessity of furnishing even the petty officer of a district with weighing-machine and a supply of stamps, and that a proper check over the latter cannot be expected by means of any superior officer.

5. On this point, I am to suggest that a free use of the "Service Bearing" system will obviate all difficulties.

Copy forwarded to the Director-General of Post Offices.

No. 55. ORDER THEREON, 13th September 1871, No. 1393.

Ordered that copies of the foregoing letter, together with copies of the letter, and its enclosure, from the Government of India, dated the 3rd June last, No. 896, be communicated to the several Departments of the Secretariat, and to the Heads of Departments.

(True Extract.)

R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue Department.
" Military do.
" Public Works do.
To

Exd. J. Wright.

No. 2994.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

SEPARATE REVENUE.
Post Office.

To

*The Chief Secretary to Government
Simla*

SIMLA, THE 28 AUGUST 1871.

SIR,

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2. These proposals have since been sanctioned by the Governor General in Council.

3. As however some of the authorities, whose replies have now been received, deprecate the proposals on the score of the risk that may attend the necessity of placing funds in the hands of officials for the purpose of purchasing stamps as a necessary consequence of the new arrangement, a circumstance which it is alleged will lead to much speculation and fraud, it is necessary to point out that these apprehensions can be removed by a simple rule that no charge for postage stamps shall be admitted unless supported by a receipt from a treasury officer, and insisting upon every charge for "Service Bearing" being supported by the envelopes. By this system service labels can never become marketable commodities.

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Govt. of India

PUBLIC.

THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT.
Secy. &c., &c.

Dated September, 1871.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O. No. 1344 September 1871. No. 1302.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 54-55.

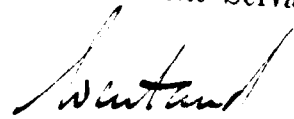
Communicating correspondence from Government of India approving of certain changes in the present system of official postage.

5. On this point I am to suggest that a free use of the "Service Bearing" system will obviate all difficulties.

I have the honor to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient Servant,



Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

Copy forwarded to the Director General of Post Offices.

To

Dated Simla, August 1871.

Received

Confidentially that
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the director sent of the
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Franklin's office and
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10/28
10/28/28

The Government of
 India
 has been informed
 that the Government of
 India

Ms. A. 9. 2. 3. 4.

10/18/93

Advised that copies of the
 former letter, together with copies
 of the letter, and its enclosure,
 have been sent to the
 last, by way of communication
 to the several departments of the
 Government, & to the several
 departments.

Estadounid. 13 Sept. 1871. No 2393

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 100 lbs. American Defunctual
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Poste
Le Revenant de l'été

Sept. 13.

7/22/25

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54-55.

of India showing the
various changes in the
position of the various
states of India, the various