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**REGULATIONS**

**RESPECTING**

**THE REGISTRATION OF LETTERS.**

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Contributed By  
Russ Ryles  
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# REGULATIONS

RESPECTING

## THE REGISTRATION OF LETTERS.

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

The following regulations concerning the registration of letters are issued for the guidance of postmasters and all other officers connected with the service, who must understand that they will be required to faithfully observe them in every particular, and that they will be held to a strict accountability for every departure from the rules therein contained:

The system set forth in these regulations is not complicated, and the instructions are full, explicit, and simple, so that it is within the power of every postmaster or other officer in the service to inform himself thoroughly as to his duty in regard to this important matter. Ignorance, therefore, will never be considered a good excuse for any violation or neglect of these instructions.

All agents of the department and postmasters are particularly enjoined to report promptly any such neglect or violation which may come to their knowledge; and upon satisfactory proof thereof being presented to the department, the postmaster, route agent, or other officer in fault, will be liable to immediate removal from office. Each postmaster will be careful to impress upon his subordinates the necessity and importance of following strictly the regulations concerning the registration of letters. A study of these regulations will show that any disregard of them can easily be discovered and the delinquent officer brought to account for his misconduct: but it is expected that all connected with the service will feel such an interest in its efficiency and improvement as to induce them, from that motive alone, to give careful attention to every duty prescribed in the regulations which follow. Attention is called to certain important changes which these regulations are intended to introduce in the method of registering letters. These changes are as follows:

1. Registered letters are never to be sent "direct" when a distributing post office is located on the route between the mailing office and the office of destination, except when sent under brass lock from one first-class office to another. This rule is to be strictly adhered to, whether the letters are intended for offices within the State where mailed or not; and no attention is to be paid to any written or verbal request on the part of writers of registered letters to "mail direct," when such a compliance would involve a violation of this regulation.

The following is a list of distributing post offices:

### DISTRIBUTING POST OFFICES.

Boston, Massachusetts.  
Portland, Maine.  
Hartford, Connecticut.  
New York, N. Y.  
Buffalo, New York.  
Albany, New York.  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.  
Baltimore, Maryland.  
Washington, Dist. of Columbia.  
Wheeler, Virginia.  
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Cleveland, Ohio.  
Detroit, Michigan.  
Indianapolis, Indiana.  
Cairo, Illinois.  
Chicago, Illinois.  
St. Joseph, Missouri.  
St. Louis, Missouri.  
Louisville, Kentucky.  
San Francisco, California.  
Sacramento, California.  
Nashville, Virginia.  
Richmond, Virginia.

Rancho C. H., West Va.  
Raleigh, North Carolina.  
Montgomery, Alabama.  
New Orleans, Louisiana.  
Charleston, South Carolina.  
Savannah, Georgia.  
Columbus, Georgia.  
Nashville, Tennessee.  
Memphis, Tennessee.  
Little Rock, Arkansas.  
Nashville, Arkansas.  
Galveston, Texas.

2. Registered letters are never to be sent (from offices not distributing post offices) except enclosed in one of the "registered package envelopes" furnished by the department for that purpose to all post offices.

3. The "registered package envelopes," when mailed containing registered letters, are never to be wrapped, and are never to be tied in a bundle with ordinary letters or other matter, but to be placed separate in the pouch, so that their presence may be noted at once by the proper person on the opening of the pouch.

4. The post bills heretofore in use with the printed heading "unpaid letters" on one side, and "registered letters" on the other, are no longer to be used as registered letter bills. The "registered letter bill" and "return registered letter bill," which will be furnished to all post offices on application to the different blank agents, (or to the Appointment Office, Post Office Department, Washington, D. C.,) are the only bills to be used in the registration of letters.

5. The "registered letter bill" and "return registered letter bill," (which are printed side by side on one sheet,) are *not to be separated* at the mailing office; but, after being properly filled up, are to be sent *together* enclosed in an ordinary franked envelope bearing the same direction as the "registered package envelope," and *sent by the same mail*, but among the ordinary letters. The postmaster at the office to which the bills are sent will separate them, and if the letters to which they refer have been duly received, he will mark the "return registered letter bill" "*correct*," and return it immediately to the mailing office.

6. Every postmaster, route agent, railway post office clerk, or other person connected with the service, through whose hands a "registered package envelope" shall pass in transmission through the mail, is required to make a record of the number, postmark, and direction of the same, in the book or blank sheet provided for that purpose, and also to take a receipt for it from the person to whom he delivers it in all cases where it is practicable to obtain such receipt.

The registration fee is in all cases to be paid in postage stamps, the same to be attached to the letter and canceled at the mailing office.

Instructions in detail concerning the above and all other matters pertaining to the registration of letters will be found included in the annexed regulations. Postmasters who may at any time be in doubt concerning any portion of their duties as herein set forth, can obtain full explanation by addressing the Third Assistant Postmaster General, Washington, D. C., or consulting a special agent of the department personally or by letter.

## REGULATIONS.

[Some variations from these regulations will be required at distributing post offices, which will be found under "Instructions to Postmasters at Distributing, and other large offices," page 7.]

### BLANKS.

All blanks required for use in the registration of letters can be

obtained by addressing the blank agents of the department, a list of whom will be found below. The blanks required are:

1. Registered Letter Bill and Return Registered Letter Bill.
2. Receipt for a Registered Letter, (with corresponding marginal entry.)
3. Return Registered Letter Receipt.
4. Account of Registered Letters Received.
5. Account of Registered Letters Sent.
6. Receipts for Registered Letters Delivered.
7. Record of Registered Matter in Transit.

[The old post bill headed "registered letters" on one side and "unpaid letters" on the other, will not be used for transmission with registered letters in future. Postmasters who may have a supply of those bills remaining on hand will make use of the "unpaid letter" side only, and send them with packages containing unpaid ordinary letters.]

#### LIST OF BLANK AGENTS.

DISTRICT No. 1.—Supplies blanks for the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. Postmasters in either of these States wanting blanks of any kind should address "*First Assistant Postmaster General, Washington, District of Columbia.*"

DISTRICT No. 2.—Supplies blanks for the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, California, Nevada, and Oregon, and Washington Territory. Postmasters in either of these States or Territories wanting blanks of any kind should address "*Post Office Blank Agent, New York, N. Y.*"

DISTRICT No. 3.—Supplies blanks for the States of Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, and Nebraska. Postmasters in either of these States wanting blanks of any kind should address "*Post Office Blank Agent, Buffalo, N. Y.*"

#### REGISTERED PACKAGE ENVELOPES.

2. The registered package envelopes, in which all registered letters are to be enclosed before mailing, can be obtained by addressing the "*Third Assistant Postmaster General, Washington, D. C.*" Postmasters will be careful to keep a sufficient number of these on hand, never allowing their supply to become exhausted before ordering others. In case the supply of these envelopes at any post office shall become exhausted before the new supply ordered has been received, the postmaster will obtain from the nearest post office such number as can be conveniently spared, being careful to return an equal number when the new supply arrives. This practice of borrowing, however, must not become habitual, and a postmaster will not be considered excusable for allowing his supply of "registered package envelopes" to become exhausted a second time.

#### REGISTERED LETTERS TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

3. Letters can be sent registered to Canada, the Island of Jamaica, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and all countries and places

to which letters are sent in the Prussian closed mail or via Bremen and Hamburg. The following is a list:

Alexandretta.	Galatz.	Oldenburg.	Scutari.
Alexandria.	Gallipoli.	Papal States.	Servia.
Altona.	Hamburg.	Parma.	Sicilia.
Austria.	Hanover.	Placentia.	Sinope.
Baden.	Holstein.	Poland.	Smirna.
Bavaria.	Italy.	Prevesa.	Sweden.
Beirut.	Jaffa.	Prussia.	Switzerland.
Bremen.	Latakia.	Rhodes.	Tchesme.
Brunswick.	Lauenburg.	Romagna.	Tenedos.
Caffa.	Lombardy.	Rome.	Trebizond.
Candia.	Lubeck.	Russia.	Tulcha.
Canea.	Luxemburg.	Salonica.	Tuscany.
Constantinople.	Mecklenburg.	Samsoni.	Velona.
Cuxhaven.	Messina.	Sardinian States.	Varna.
Dardanelles.	Modena.	Saxe-Altenburg.	Venitian States.
Denmark.	Moldavia.	Saxe-Coburg.	Volo.
Durazo.	Naples.	Saxony.	Wallachia.
Egypt.	Norway.	Schleswig.	Wurtemberg.
Frankfort-on-the-Main.			

Letters cannot be sent registered to any country or place not enumerated above.

#### PAYMENT OF POSTAGE AND FEES.

4. The full postage upon all registered letters, whether foreign or domestic, must be prepaid by stamps. The registration fees upon registered letters or packets are as follows: On domestic letters to any part of the UNITED STATES OR TERRITORIES, TWENTY CENTS each.

On letters addressed to ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, WALES, AND THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA, TWENTY CENTS each.

On letters addressed to CANADA, FIVE CENTS each.

On letters addressed to GERMANY, or any part of the *German-Austrian Postal Union*, (the same to be forwarded by "Bremen or Hamburg" line, or by the "Prussian Closed Mail.") *five cents* each.

THESE REGISTRATION FEES ARE ALWAYS TO BE PREPAID BY POSTAGE STAMPS, to be attached to the letters and canceled at the mailing office.

#### RECEIVING LETTERS FOR REGISTRATION.

5. When a letter is presented at a post office for registration, the postmaster, after seeing that the full postage, as well as the registration fee, is fully prepaid by stamps, will fill up the blank "receipt for a registered letter," (entering therein the registered number of the letter; the date, name of his post office, name and address of the sender of the letter, and name and address of the person to whom the letter is directed,) sign it, and deliver it to the person presenting the letter, after also filling up the corresponding marginal entry (printed on the left hand of the same sheet) in the same manner.

This marginal entry is to be retained by the postmaster. The letter must then be plainly marked "registered" and numbered.

#### PREPARING AND MAILING REGISTERED LETTERS.

6. After the above directions have been followed, the postmaster will fill up a "return registered letter receipt," (unless the letter is addressed to a foreign country, in which case no return receipt is required,) entering therein the same items which he has already entered in the marginal entry. This return receipt he will then

attach to the letter in such manner that it can be readily removed at the office of destination. He will then take a "registered letter bill" and "return registered letter bill," (being careful not to separate them,) entering in the *heading* of each bill the name of the office to which the letter is to be sent, being careful, if the letter is directed to an office beyond the first distributing post office on the route, to enter the name of such distributing post office, adding the initials D. P. O. He will then enter the name of the person or persons to whom the letter is addressed, and also that of the office of *final* destination, each in its proper column in the *body* of each bill. If no distributing post office intervenes on the route, he will enter the name of the office of final destination both in the heading and body of each bill. He will also enter in the proper column in the body of each bill the number of the "registered package envelope" in which the letter is to be forwarded. The postmaster will then enter the letter on the account of registered letters sent, copying from the registered letter bill the date, number, name of office to which the letter is sent, and name of party addressed. As the registration fee is to be prepaid by stamps in all cases hereafter, no entry need be made in the column headed registry fee. When the time approaches for the closing of the mail he will place the letter in the "registered package envelope" \* which he will securely seal, and which must be plainly postmarked and numbered, and addressed to the postmaster of the distributing post office to which the letter is to be sent, or (in case the letter is to be sent "direct") to the postmaster at the office of its final destination. The "registered letter bill" and "return registered letter bill" are then to be placed in an ordinary envelope addressed to the same postmaster to which the "registered package envelope" is addressed, and placed in the same mail, *but among the ordinary letters*. The "registered package envelope" is then to be placed in the proper pouch, and must never be wrapped in paper nor tied in a package with letters or other matter. The postmaster, his deputy or a duly qualified clerk, must perform this duty in person, so that at least one of them shall at any time be able to make affidavit that any particular "registered package envelope" left the mailing office enclosed in a pouch properly locked and labeled, and was forwarded by the proper route. † (The above instructions mention only one letter, but it is *not* intended that postmasters shall use a separate bill and a separate "registered package envelope" for each letter. *All the registered letters to be sent by one mail to the same office are to be entered on the same registered letter bill and return bill, and all enclosed in the same "registered package envelope."*) All the duties above assigned to "the postmaster" may be performed in his absence by his deputy or a sworn clerk.

\* In case a package too large to be enclosed in a "registered package envelope" is presented for registration at any post office, it should be securely wrapped, and a "registered package envelope," properly directed and numbered, secured to the wrapper by paste or otherwise in such a manner that it will not become displaced before reaching its destination.

† In all cases where it is practicable, *two* persons should be present at the mailing of a registered package envelope, and be prepared to testify as above, in case it should be required.

## NUMBERING "REGISTERED PACKAGE ENVELOPES."

7. The first "registered package envelope" sent by a postmaster after the beginning of a quarter must be marked No. 1, the second No. 2, and so on to the end of the quarter. The next quarter will begin again with No. 1. It will be remembered that the number on the "registered package envelope" has nothing to do with the "registered numbers" on the letters which are enclosed therein.

## RECEIVING REGISTERED LETTERS FOR DELIVERY.

8. On the arrival of a mail at any office the pouch shall be opened only by the postmaster, his deputy, or a sworn clerk; and if a "registered package envelope" addressed to the postmaster be found, search shall be made among the ordinary letters received by the same mail for the envelope addressed to the postmaster containing the registered letter bill and return bill, which should have been sent at the same time. The "registered package envelope" will then be opened (by cutting the end thereof) and retained on file, and the registered numbers and addresses of the registered letters contained therein compared with the entries which appear on the registered and return bills. If these are found to correspond, the return bill must be separated from the registered letter bill, the date entered therein, and the word "correct" endorsed thereon, with the signature of the postmaster, and forwarded by next mail to the postmaster of the office from which it was received. The number, name of person addressed, and postmark (with date) on each letter, are then to be entered on the sheet of "receipts for registered letters delivered," each item in its proper column, and the appropriate entries, copied from the registered letter bill, made in the account of "registered letters received." The letters are to be kept in a secure place until they can be delivered to the persons entitled to receive them.

## DELIVERY OF REGISTERED LETTERS.

9. (Before the delivery of a registered letter, if the registry fee has not been prepaid by stamps at the mailing office, the postmaster will collect the amount thereof from the person to whom the letter is addressed, placing on the letter, and canceling, postage stamps to the amount of the fee due.) When a registered letter is to be delivered, the person receiving it will sign his or her name in the last column of the sheet of "receipts for registered letters delivered," and will also sign the "return registered letter receipt." The date of delivery will be entered in the column headed "when received" on the sheet of receipts, and the postmark of the office of delivery must be affixed to the return receipt, which will be detached from the letter and immediately forwarded to the postmaster at the office where the letter was *originally* mailed. (It will be noted that the return *bill* is always to be returned to the postmaster at the office from which the registered letter bill was received, whether it be a distributing office or the office of original mailing, but the return *receipt* is in all cases to be returned to the office from which the letter was *originally* sent.) Registered letters must never be delivered to any person but the one to whom they are addressed, or to a person

whom the postmaster *knows* to be authorized to receive them. A receipt for each registered letter delivered must always appear on the sheet provided for that purpose.

#### NON-RECEIPT OF REGISTERED LETTERS OR BILLS.

10. If, on the opening of a pouch arriving at any post office, a registered letter bill and return bill be found addressed to the postmaster, and no corresponding registered package envelope nor registered letters be found, the postmaster will at once detach the return bill, endorse it "not received," and forward it by first mail to the postmaster at the office from which it was sent, and also report all the facts immediately by letter to the Second Assistant Postmaster General, Contract Office, Inspection Division, Washington, D. C.; also to the nearest resident special agent of the Department, in order that the case may be investigated. In case the missing letters should afterward be received, the postmaster will at once notify the above mentioned officers of the fact. If, on the arrival of a "registered package envelope" at any post office, the registered letter bill and return bill are not received by same mail, the postmaster will, after opening the "registered package envelope," fill up from the numbers, addresses, &c., of the registered letters, a registered letter bill and return bill, and send the return bill to the postmaster at the office from which the "registered package envelope" was sent, endorsing the return bill as follows: "*No bills received*," which will be considered an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letters. If the bills should afterward arrive, the return bill will be endorsed "*correct*" and forwarded according to instructions above. All irregularities and failures in regard to registered package envelopes and letters must be promptly reported to the officers above mentioned.

#### FORWARDING REGISTERED LETTERS.

11. When a registered letter arrives addressed to a person who has removed, or who for any other cause wishes it forwarded to him at another office, it may be done at his *written request*. A memorandum of the order to forward should be entered on the account of registered letters received, opposite the name of the person making the request. The letter should then be sent forward as a *registered* letter in the same manner as if originally mailed as one, but no additional registry fee nor postage is to be charged on it. The order for forwarding must be filed at the office of forwarding as a voucher for the action had in the case.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROUTE AGENTS AND RAILWAY POST OFFICE CLERKS.

12. Route agents and railway post office clerks through whose hands registered package envelopes or registered packages of stamps or stamped envelopes may pass in course of transmission by mail, are required to note in a book furnished by the Department (to be carefully preserved and subject at all times to inspection by a special agent) the number, postmark, date, and address of every such envelope or package, and the disposition made thereof by them. Special attention is expected to be paid to this instruction, and a

violation of it will be considered a serious offense, rendering the delinquent liable to prompt removal from office. Route agents and railway post office clerks will, in all cases where it is practicable, obtain a receipt for each such envelope or package from the person to whom they may deliver it, railway post office clerks obeying such instructions on this subject as they may receive from the superintendent of railway post offices.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS AT SEPARATING OFFICES, AND OTHERS.

13. Postmasters at separating offices, and postmasters at all offices where pouches are opened containing mail matter for other offices on the same route, will make upon the sheets of "record of registered matter in transit" (provided for that purpose by the Department) a note of every registered package of letters, stamps, or envelopes which may pass through their offices, entering the number, date, postmark, and direction of each such package. They will be at all times prepared to make prompt reply to any inquiry from a special agent or postmaster concerning any such package. The "registered package envelopes" are of so conspicuous an appearance that their presence among the contents of any opened mail pouch cannot fail to be observed, and an omission to make the note required will be considered inexcusable. The sheets upon which these entries are made are to be carefully preserved by the postmaster, kept in good order, and be at all times open to the inspection of special agents.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS AT DISTRIBUTING AND OTHER LARGE OFFICES.

14. Postmasters at distributing and other large offices will be guided by the foregoing regulations in regard to the registration of letters, except that postmasters at distributing post offices in sending registered letters to other distributing post offices will enclose them in one of the canvas registered letter bags provided for that purpose, placing the number, direction, and postmark on a parchment or leather tag, to be firmly tied around the neck of the bag, and the fastening of the bag to be securely sealed. This bag will then be placed within a leather pouch (or mail box, if one be used) secured by brass lock and forwarded to destination. The "registered package envelopes" will not be used in such cases. The postmaster at each first and second class office, and at other offices where the clerical force will admit of such an arrangement, will detail at least one trusty clerk, whose duty it shall be to be present at the opening of every mail pouch arriving, and take charge of all registered packages contained therein, (including stamp and envelope packages,) to keep a record of the number, postmark, and date of arrival of each such package, and deliver it to the postmaster or to the clerk in charge of the registered letter department, who shall affix his signature or initials to the record of each package as an acknowledgment of the receipt of the same.

A. W. RANDALL,  
*Postmaster General.*

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, *January, 1867.*