


AN ACT
FOR THE
SETTLING
OF THE
POSTAGE
OF
ENGLAND,
SCOTLAND and IRELAND.

At the Parliament begun at *Westminster* the 17th Day
of *September*, *Anno Domini* 1656.



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(1)
AN ACT
FOR THE
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OF
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 Hereas it hath been found by experience, That the Erecting and Setting of one General Post-Office, for the speedy Conveying, Carrying, and Re-car-rying of Letters by Post, to, and from all Places within England, Scotland, and Ireland, and into severall parts beyond the Seas, hath been, and is the best means, not onely to maintain a certain and constant Inter-
course of Trade and Commerce betwixt all the said Places, to the great benefit of the People of these Nations, but also to Convey the Publique Dispatches, and to discover and prevent many dangerous and wicked Designes, which have been, and are daily contrived against the Peace and Welfare of this Commonwealth;

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wealth, the Intelligence whereof cannot well be Communicated, but by Letter of Script.

Be it Enacted by His Highness the Lord Protector and the Parliament, And it is Enacted and Ordained by Authority thereof, That from henceforth there be one General Office, to be called, and known by the name of the Post-Office of England: And one Officer from time to time to be nominated and appointed by His Highness the Lord Protector, and his Successours, and to be constituted by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England, under the Name and Stile of Post-master General of England, and Comptroller of the Post-Office; Which said Officer, and his Deputies by him thereunto sufficiently Authorized, and no other, shall have the Receiving, Taking up, Ordering, Sending forward, and Delivering of all Letters and Pacquets, which shall from time to time come and go to and from all Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, where he shall settle Posts, and from all the said Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, unto any the Parts and Places beyond the Seas, (excepting such Letters as shall be sent by common known Carriers, and by them Conveyed along with their Carts, Waggones, and Pack-horses, and Letters of Advice of Merchants, which shall be sent by Masters of any Ship, Barque, or other Vessel of Merchandize, or any of their Company or Passengers therein, immediately from any Port-town of England, Scotland and Ireland, by them to be Conveyed along with such Ship, Barque, or other Vessel to any other Port-town within any of the same, or into the Parts beyond the Seas,

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Seas, or from the Parts beyond the Seas to any Port-town of England, Scotland and Ireland, or members thereof, and no further.

And excepting a Letter or more sent by a Messenger on purpose for his or their own Affairs, who is, or are the Sender or Senders thereof, or by any Friend to any Place or Places within the said Nations of England, Scotland or Ireland. And also that the said Post-master General of England, and Comptroller of the Post-Office, and his said Deputies onely, and no other shall have the holding of all through-Posts, and persons Riding in Post by Commission or without, to and from all Places, upon any of the Post-Roads within England, Scotland and Ireland.

And be it further Ordained by Authority aforesaid, That the said Officer, by himself, or his Deputy or Deputies, by him thereunto sufficiently Authorized, shall, or may Demand, Have, Receive, and take for the Portage and Conveyance of all or any Letters, which he shall so Convey, Carry, and Recarry as aforesaid, or for the holding of any Thorough-Post, or person Riding in Post as aforesaid, the severall Rates of Portage hereafter mentioned, and no other, viz. For every Letter to or from any Place within fourscore Miles distance from London, if a single Letter, two Pence, and if a double Letter, four Pence, and so proportionably for every Pacquet of Letters, and for every Pacquet of a greater Bulk, Eight pence the Dounce; And for every Letter at a farther distance then fourscore Miles, if a single Letter, Three pence, and if a double Letter, Six pence, and so proportionably; And for every

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Pacquet