

A PROCLAMATION for the settling of the Letter-office of *England and Scotland.*

WHEREAS to this time there hath been no certain or constant intercourse between the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, his Majesty hath been graciously pleased to command his servant, Thomas Witherings Esquire, his Majesties Postmaster of England for foreign parts, to settle a running post or two, to run, night and day, between Edinburgh in Scotland and the City of London, to go thither and come back again in six days, and to take with them all such letters as shall be directed to any post-town, or any place near any post-town in the said road, which letters to be left at the post-house, or some other house as the said Thomas Witherings shall think convenient; and by-posts to be placed at several places out of the said road, to run and bring in and carry out of the said roads the letters from Lincoln, Hull, and other places, as there shall be occasion, and answers to be brought again accordingly, and to pay post for the carrying and re-carrying of the said letters, *2d.* the single letter, if under fourscore miles; and between fourscore and 140 miles, *4d.*; if above 140 miles, then *6d.* and upon the Borders of Scotland and in Scotland *8d.*; if there be two, three, four, or five letters in one packet, or more, then to pay according to the bigness of the said packet after the rate as before; which money for post, as before, is to be paid upon the receiving and delivery of the said letters here in London. The like rule his Majesty is graciously pleased to order the said Thomas Witherings to observe to Westchester, Hollyhead, and from thence to Ireland, according to a provision made by the Lord Deputy and council there, and to take post betwixt the City of London and Hollyhead as before to the northward, and to go thither and bring answers back to the City of London from all the places in that road in six days, which is constantly hereafter to be observed, and to settle by-posts in the said road as there shall be occasion, for the benefit of all his Majesties loving subjects. His Majesty is pleased further to command the said Thomas Witherings to observe the like rule from the City of London to Plymouth, and to provide sufficient messengers to run night and day to Plymouth, and to return within six days to the City of London, and for the carriage of the said letters to Plymouth, Exeter, and other places in that road, his Majesty doth order the said Thomas Witherings to take the like post that now is paid, as near as possibly he can; and further his Majesty doth command and order the said Thomas Witherings, as soon as possibly maybe, to settle the like conveyance for letters from Oxon, Bristol and other places on the road, for the benefit of all his subjects; and the like the said Thomas Witherings is to observe with all convenient speed to Colchester, and so to Norwich and divers other places in that road, the three first conveyances from London to Edinburgh, from London to Westchester and Hollyhead in Wales, and from London to Plymouth and Exeter, are to begin the first week after Michaelmas next.

Now, for the better enabling the said Thomas Witherings to go forward with this service, and for the advancement of all his Majesty's subjects in their trade and correspondence, his Majesty doth hereby command and order all his Postmasters, upon all the roads of England, to have ready in their stables one or two horses, according as the said Thomas Witherings shall have occasion to use them, to carry such messengers, with their postmantles, as shall be employed in the said service, to such stage or place as his present occasions shall direct him to: if the said messenger shall have occasion but for one horse, then to leave him at the place where he shall take fresh horse, paying for him *2½d.* for every mile; if two horses, then to take a guide, and pay *5d.* a mile.

And that the said postmasters may be provided for this service, his Majesty doth hereby order and command, that such horses as shall be proper for the said service, shall not, upon that day the messenger shall be expected, let or send forth the said horses so provided upon any other occasion whatsoever. And his Majestie's further will and pleasure is, that, from the beginning of this service or employment, no other messenger or messengers, footpost or footposts, shall take up, carry, receive, or deliver any letter or letters whatsoever, other than the messengers appointed by the said Thomas Witherings, to any such place or places as the said Thomas Witherings shall settle the conveyances aforesaid, except common known carriers, or a particular messenger to be sent on purpose with a letter by any man for his own occasions, or a letter by a friend; and if any post messenger or letter carrier whatsoever shall offend contrary to this his Majesty's Proclamation, his Majesty, upon complaint thereof made, will cause a severe exemplary

punishment to be inflicted upon such delinquents. And his Majesty doth hereby strictly require and command all his loving subjects whatsoever duly to observe and perform his royal pleasure herein declared, as they will answer the contrary at their perils.

And, lastly, his Majesty doth hereby charge and command all justices of peace, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, headboroughs, and all other his officers and ministers whatsoever to be aiding and assisting to the said Thomas Witherings in the due accomplishment of this his Majestie's will and pleasure.

Given at our Court at Bagshot, the last day of July.

Per ipsum Regem.

Royal Proclamation of Charles I (31st July 1635)