

A Guide to
REPORTS & MINUTES
in The Royal Mail Archive

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Introduction

The Report and Minute records

The Report (1790-1841) and Minute (1794-1973) series of records comprise cases dealt with at Headquarters level. They usually culminate in a report or minute to the Postmaster General for a policy decision.

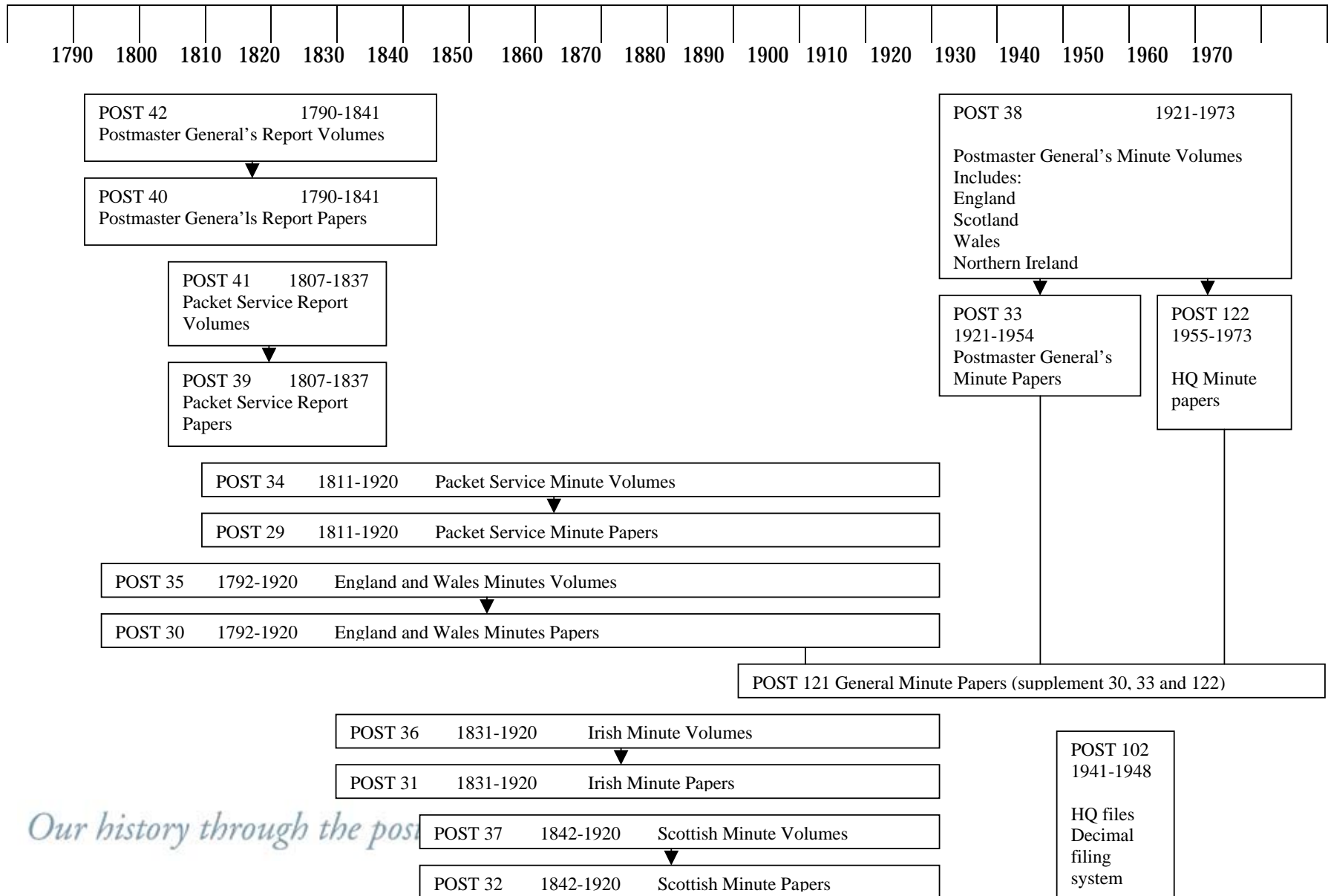
They cover all aspects of Post Office administration as well as personnel matters, both at home and overseas.

Introduced in 1790 by the then Resident Surveyor, Francis Freeling (from 1798, Secretary to the Post Office), they were the first series of their kind to record and process HQ case files.

The reason for the existence of the parallel series is not clear; but, until the death of Freeling in 1836, the Report series appears to have been used to record the most important cases or, at least, to provide the fullest briefing in those instances where a particular case was recorded in both series. However, from 1837, the new secretary used the Report series only for quarterly statements of the gross revenue of the principal local penny posts.

The volumes for the different series usually contain (until 1922) a full copy of the submission to the Postmaster General.

Timeline: The Reports and Minutes Records



Our history through the post

Section 1

Postmaster General's Report Records 1790-1841

Section 1.1: POST 42 POSTMASTER GENERAL'S REPORT VOLUMES, 1790-1841. Reports to the Postmaster General on all aspects of Post Office organisation made by Francis Feeling in his position as Resident Surveyor and later as Secretary.

This POST class includes, for the period 1790-1794, a run of volumes numbered 1-18 (POST 42 pieces 27-52). The index to these particular volumes is not held in POST 42 – but is part of a cumulative index in POST 35, the parallel Minute series of records (i.e. POST 35 piece 28 Microfilm Reel 1).

Also within 42 are duplicate or supplementary runs of volumes (POST42 pieces 1-25 and pieces 53-58).

The main run of volumes (POST 42 pieces 59-139) spans the period 1790-1841. In 1841 the Report series ceased and the Minute series (POST 35) continued alone. It corresponds to the collection of surviving documents in POST 40. Each volume of the main run is individually indexed.

In addition, there is a cumulative General Index covering the whole period of these volumes. For conservation reasons, the original (POST 42 piece 140) is not available for research; but a facsimile copy is available in the Search Room. The volumes that make up this facsimile index can be found on the Search Room shelves.

The Catalogue for POST 42 can be found on the carousel in the Search Room and on The National Archives (TNA) Catalogue.

Section 1.2: POST 40 POSTMASTER GENERAL'S REPORT PAPERS, 1790-1841. Reports to the Postmaster General, on all aspects of Post Office organisation made by Francis Freeling in his position as Resident Surveyor and later as Secretary.

Unlike the surviving documents in the parallel Minute series (POST 30), the documents held for this Report series are virtually complete. It includes records on Scotland and on the Packet Service up to 1807 (after which POST 39 and POST 41 should be consulted).

These documents are listed, in the old blue catalogue, in numerical/date order. Access to them by subject is only possible via the corresponding volumes in POST 42.

Each Piece within POST 40 contains a number of reports. The catalogue shows the report numbers contained within each piece, as well as showing which reports are wanting.

In cases where the catalogue shows a particular Report as 'wanting' this is not necessarily the case. It was the practice of contemporary filing clerks to associate any existing papers on a subject, or an individual case, with any new submission to the Postmaster General. These reports could therefore, be included in a later report.

The Catalogue for POST 42 can be found on the carousel in the Search Room and on TNA Catalogue.

Section 1.3: How to search the reports by subject

1. Consult the facsimile cumulative index (copied from POST 42 piece 140) from the Search Room shelves. Search according to the name of the subject being researched (e.g. 'Mail Coach' or 'Manchester'). When the entry is found this will provide the volume number and the page number. Sometimes a report is carried forward to a later one; this is shown in the index as being 'In' the later report.
2. Refer to that volume and page (in POST 42), which will give the serial number of the report itself (e.g. 23A of 1806).

3. Consult the blue catalogue for POST 40 to check whether the Report in question is 'wanting'. If it is, continue to research further as above – in the hope that it will emerge as part of a later report submitted to the Postmaster General.
4. If the report is not shown as 'wanting', refer to the piece number in which the report appears (available on microfilm in the Search Room).

Section 2

Postmaster General's Minute Records

This series of records consists of volumes containing a précis of, or reference to, every minute submitted to the Postmaster General from the Secretary relating to all aspects of Post Office administration.

There are separate bound indexes to the minutes arranged by different subjects. This section of the guide will help you to locate and use the index volumes that enable you to search the minute records.

Searching for Minutes:

Step 1. The first thing you need to establish is in what years to begin your research.

- If searching for an office, when was the office opened/operational?
- If searching for an individual, when did key events take place?

Appointment or Promotion

Accident on Duty

Dismissal

Reprimand

- If searching for issues relating to the operation of the Post Office, could you search under a department? Or could you search under a key heading?

e.g. Pensions or Packets.

Step 2. Based on the place where an individual worked, or the town where an office was situated, chose the appropriate group of records for your research.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------|
| • England and Wales | 1792-1920 | go to section 2.1 | page 9 |
| • Scotland | 1842-1937 | go to section 2.2 | page 12 |

• Ireland	1831-1937	go to section 2.3	page 14
• England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland	1921-1973	go to section 2.4	page 16
• Subject specific Indexes	1792-1920	go to section 2.5	page 18
• <i>Departments and Major Subjects</i>			
• <i>Departments</i>			
• <i>Index to departments, surveyors, public offices, overseas, and telephone and telegraph companies</i>			
• <i>London Postal Service</i>			
• <i>London region and engineering department</i>			
• <i>Overseas mail services</i>			
• <i>Cases of Dismissal</i>			
• <i>Railway Companies and mail carts</i>			

Section 2.1: 1792–1920 England and Wales Minute Volumes

Step 1. Consult the Minute Book indexes at the relevant section. The volumes are indexed alphabetically by place, name and subject. Major places and subjects have a complete section devoted to them that will be identifiable from the tab on the right hand side of the volume.

Main Post Towns and Major Subjects

All main post towns have their own section. For example, to find Sheffield go to the S section for the relevant years and at the right hand of the volume you will see tabs for each place beginning with S and should be able to locate the pages containing entries for Sheffield quickly.

Names and Lesser Subjects

To search by names or subjects go to the beginning of the relevant letters section, then to the sub section for the next vowel. For example to search for 'Compensation' go to the beginning of the section for 'C' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

Sub-Post Offices

Sub-Post Offices may appear in two places, either in the entries of the nearest Post Town (search as above) or at the end of the relevant letters section. For example to search for 'Armthorpe' go to the beginning of the section for 'A' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

In some periods the vowel sub-sections are not used and you will need to search through all the smaller places or subjects with the same initial.

Step 2. Search through until you find a relevant entry. The entry should be accompanied by a Minute number e.g. 12345/22. This Minute number can be traced to the minute books in POST 35.

The Minute number will be made up of a 1-5 digit number followed by the year.

e.g. 11122/15 identifies minute number 11122 from 1915.

Step 3. Using the POST 35 catalogue, use first the year and then the minute number to identify which volume you need to request for your research.

Indexes to departments, places, names, and subjects:

POST 35/28	1792 – 1838		Reel 1
POST 35/69	1839 – 1845	A – M	Reel 66
POST 35/70	1839 – 1845	N – Z	Reel 66
POST 35/115	1846 – 1852	A – F	Reel 67
POST 35/1702	1846 – 1852	G – M	Reel 67
POST 35/116	1846 – 1852	N – R	Reel 67
POST 35/1703	1846 – 1852	S – Z	Reel 68

Indexes to places, names and subjects

POST 35/198	1852 Jun -1859 Dec	A – G	Reel 74
POST 35/199	1852 Jun - 1859 Dec	H – R	Reel 74
POST 35/200	1852 Jun - 1859 Dec	S – Z	Reel 75
POST 35/247	1860 – 1865	A – C	Reel 75
POST 35/1704	1860 – 1865	D – G	Reel 75
POST 35/248	1860 – 1865	H – R	Reel 76

POST 35/249	1860 – 1865	S – Z	Reel 76
POST 35/295	1866 – 1870	A – F	Reel 77
POST 35/1706	1866 – 1870	G – N	Reel 77
POST 35/296	1866 – 1870	O – W	Reel 78
POST 35/1707	1866 – 1870	X – Y	Reel 69
POST 35/344	1871 – 1874	A – F	Reel 78
POST 35/1708	1871 – 1874	G – N	Reel 79
POST 35/345	1871 – 1874	O – Z	Reel 79
POST 35/400	1875 – 1879	A – E	Reel 80
POST 35/1710	1875 – 1879	F – L	Reel 80
POST 35/401	1875 – 1879	M – S	Reel 81
POST 35/1711	1875 – 1879	T – Z	Reel 81
POST 35/474	1880 – 1883	A – D	Reel 82
POST 35/475	1880 – 1883	E – L	Reel 82
POST 35/476	1880 – 1883	M – R	Reel 83
POST 35/1712	1880 – 1883	S – Z	Reel 83
POST 35/589	1884 – 1888	A – C	Reel 84
POST 35/1713	1884 – 1888	D – G	Reel 84
POST 35/590	1884 – 1888	H – L	Reel 85
POST 35/1714	1884 – 1888	M – Q	Reel 85
POST 35/591	1884 – 1888	R – Z	Reel 86
POST 35/707	1889 – 1892	A – B	Reel 86
POST 35/1715	1889 – 1892	C – F	Reel 87&86
POST 35/708	1889 – 1892	G – K	Reel 87
POST 35/1716	1889 – 1892	L – O	Reel 88
POST 35/709	1889 – 1892	P – S	Reel 88
POST 35/1717	1889 – 1892	T – Z	Reel 89
POST 35/829	1893 – 1896	A – B	Reel 89
POST 35/830	1893 – 1896	C – F	Reel 90
POST 35/831	1893 – 1896	G – L	Reel 90
POST 35/832	1893 – 1896	M – O	Reel 91
POST 35/833	1893 – 1896	P – S	Reel 91
POST 35/834	1893 – 1896	T – Z	Reel 92
POST 35/910	1897 – 1899	A – B	Reel 92
POST 35/911	1897 – 1899	C – F	Reel 93
POST 35/912	1897 – 1899	G – K	Reel 93
POST 35/913	1897 – 1899	L – O	Reel 94
POST 35/914	1897 – 1899	P – S	Reel 94
POST 35/915	1897 – 1899	T – Z	Reel 95
POST 35/997	1900 – 1902	A – B	Reel 95
POST 35/998	1900 – 1902	C – D	Reel 96
POST 35/999	1900 – 1902	E – H	Reel 96
POST 35/1000	1900 – 1902	I – L	Reel 96

POST 35/1001	1900 – 1902	M – O	Reel 97
POST 35/1002	1900 – 1902	P – R	Reel 97
POST 35/1003	1900 – 1902	S – T	Reel 98
POST 35/1004	1900 – 1902	U – Z	Reel 98
POST 35/1108	1903 – 1905	A – B	Reel 98
POST 35/1109	1903 – 1905	C – D	Reel 99
POST 35/1110	1903 – 1905	E – H	Reel 99
POST 35/1111	1903 – 1905	I – L	Reel 100
POST 35/1112	1903 – 1905	M – N	Reel 100
POST 35/1113	1903 – 1905	O – R	Reel 100
POST 35/1114	1903 – 1905	S – T	Reel 101
POST 35/1115	1903 – 1905	U – Z	Reel 101
POST 35/1252	1906 – 1908	A – B	Reel 101
POST 35/1253	1906 – 1908	C – D	Reel 102
POST 35/1254	1906 – 1908	E – H	Reel 102
POST 35/1255	1906 – 1908	I – L	Reel 103
POST 35/1256	1906 – 1908	M – O	Reel 104
POST 35/1257	1906 – 1908	P – R	Reel 104
POST 35/1258	1906 – 1908	S – T	Reel 105
POST 35/1259	1906 – 1908	U – Z	Reel 105
POST 35/1400	1909-1911	A-B	Microfilm
POST 35/1401	1909-1911	C-D	Microfilm
POST 35/1402	1909-1911	E-H	Microfilm
POST 35/1403	1909-1911	I-L	Microfilm
POST 35/1404	1909-1911	M-R	Microfilm
POST 35/1405	1909-1911	S-T	Microfilm
POST 35/1406	1909-1911	U-Z	Microfilm
POST 35/1563	1912-1914	A-B	Microfilm
POST 35/1718	1912-1914	C-D	Microfilm
POST 35/1564	1912-1914	E-H	Microfilm
POST 35/1719	1912-1914	I-L	Microfilm
POST 35/1565	1912-1914	M-O	Microfilm
POST 35/1720	1912-1914	P-R	Microfilm
POST 35/1566	1912-1914	S-T	Microfilm
POST 35/1721	1912-1914	U-Z	Microfilm
POST 35/1673	1915-1919	A-C	Microfilm
POST 35/1674	1915-1919	D-K	Microfilm
POST 35/1675	1915-1919	L-O	Microfilm
POST 35/1676	1915-1919	P-S	Microfilm
POST 35/1677	1915-1919	T-Z	Microfilm

See POST 38 for 1920 onwards.

Section 2.2: 1842-1937 Scotland Minute Volumes

Step 1. Consult the Minute Book indexes at the relevant section. The volumes are indexed alphabetically by place, name and subject. Major places and subjects have a complete section devoted to them that will be identifiable from the tab on the right hand side of the volume.

Main Post Towns and Major Subjects

All main post towns have their own section. For example, to find Airdrie go to the **A** section for the relevant years and at the right hand of the volume you will see tabs for each place beginning with A and should be able to locate the pages containing entries for Airdrie quickly.

Names and Lesser Subjects

To search by names or subjects go to the beginning of the relevant letters section, then to the sub section for the next vowel. For example to search for 'Compensation' go to the beginning of the section for 'C' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

Sub-Post Offices

Sub-Post Offices may appear in two places, either in the entries of the nearest Post Town (search as above) or at the end of the relevant letters section. For example to search for 'Dornock' go to the beginning of the section for 'D' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

In some periods the vowel sub-sections are not used and you will need to search through all the smaller places or subjects with the same initial.

Step 2. Search through until you find a relevant entry. The entry should be accompanied by a Minute number e.g. 12345/22. This Minute number can be traced to the minute books in POST 37

The Minute number will be made up of a 1-5 digit number followed by the year.
e.g. 11122/15 identifies minute number 11122 from 1915.

Step 3. Using the POST 37 catalogue, use first the year and then the minute number to identify which volume you need to request for your research.

Index to place, names and subject

POST 37/182	1846-1847	A-Z	Reel 1
POST 37/28	1847-1859	A-K	Reel 1
POST 37/183	1847-1859	L-Z	Reel 1
POST 37/49	1860-1874	A-L	Reel 2
POST 37/184	1860-1874	M-Z	Reel 2
POST 37/70	1875-1886	A-K	Reel 3
POST 37/71	1875-1886	L-Z	Reel 3
POST 37/93	1887-1894	A-K	Reel 4
POST 37/94	1887-1894	L-Z	Reel 4
POST 37/111	1895-1900	A-K	Reel 5
POST 37/112	1895-1900	L-Z	Reel 5
POST 37/123	1901-1904	A-K	Reel 6
POST 37/124	1901-1904	L-Z	Reel 6
POST 37/141	1905-1908	A-K	Reel 7
POST 37/142	1905-1908	L-Z	Reel 7
POST 37/161	1909-1912	A-L	Reel 8
POST 37/185	1909-1912	M-Z	Reel 8
POST 37/179	1913-1919	A-L	Reel 8
POST 37/186	1913-1919	M-Z	Reel 9
POST 37/181	1920-1937	A-L	Reel 9
POST 37/187	1920-1937	M-Z	Reel 9

Entries for after 1920 can be traced to minute books in POST 38.

Section 2.3: 1831-1937 Ireland Minute Volumes

Step 1. Consult the Minute Book indexes at the relevant section. The volumes are indexed alphabetically by place, name and subject. Major places and subjects have a complete section devoted to them that will be identifiable from the tab on the right hand side of the volume.

Main Post Towns and Major Subjects

All main post towns have their own section. For example, to find **Donegal** go to the **D** section for the relevant years and at the right hand of the volume you will see tabs for each place beginning with D and should be able to locate the pages containing entries for Donegal quickly.

Names and Lesser Subjects

To search by names or subjects go to the beginning of the relevant letters section, then to the sub section for the next vowel. For example to search for '**C**ompensation' go to the beginning of the section for '**C**' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to '**o**'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

Sub-Post Offices

Sub-Post Offices may appear in two places, either in the entries of the nearest Post Town (search as above) or at the end of the relevant letters section. For example to search for '**H**illsborough' go to the beginning of the section for '**H**' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to '**i**'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

In some periods the vowel sub-sections are not used and you will need to search through all the smaller places or subjects with the same initial.

Step 2. Search through until you find a relevant entry. The entry should be accompanied by a Minute number e.g. 12345/22. This Minute number can be traced to the minute books in POST 36.

The Minute number will be made up of a 1-5 digit number followed by the year.
e.g. 11122/15 identifies minute number 11122 from 1915.

Step 3. Using the POST 36 catalogue, use first the year and then the minute number to identify which volume you need to request for your research.

Index by places, names and subjects

POST 36/34	1831-1851	A-K	Reel 3
POST 36/211	1831-1851	L-Z	Reel 13
POST 36/51	1851-1860	A-K	Reel 4
POST 36/212	1851-1860	L-Z	Reel 13
POST 36/76	1860-1874	A-L	Reel 5
POST 36/213	1860-1874	M-Z	Reel 13
POST 36/99	1875-1866	A-L	Reel 6
POST 36/100	1875-1886	M-Z	Reel 6
POST 36/123	1887-1894	A-L	Reel 7
POST 36/124	1887-1894	M-Z	Reel 7
POST 36/143	1895-1900	A-L	Reel 8
POST 36/144	1895-1900	M-Z	Reel 8
POST 36/158	1901-1904	A-L	Reel 9
POST 36/159	1901-1904	M-Z	Reel 9
POST 36/175	1905-1908	A-L	Reel 10
POST 36/176	1905-1908	M-Z	Reel 10
POST 36/192	1909-1912	A-L	Reel 11
POST 36/214	1909-1912	M-Z	Reel 13
POST 36/207	1913-1919	A-K	Reel 12
POST 36/215	1913-1919	L-Z	Reel 13
POST 36/210	1920-1937	A-L	Reel 13
POST 36/216	1920-1937	M-Z	Reel 13

Entries for after 1920 can be traced to minute books in POST 38.

Section 2.4: 1921–1973 England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland Minute Volumes

Step 1. Consult the Minute Book indexes at the relevant section. The volumes are indexed alphabetically by place, name and subject. Major places and subjects have a complete section devoted to them that will be identifiable from the tab on the right hand side of the volume.

Main Post Towns and Major Subjects

All main post towns have their own section. For example, to find Sheffield go to the S section for the relevant years and at the right hand of the volume you will see tabs for each place beginning with S and should be able to locate the pages containing entries for Sheffield quickly.

Names and Lesser Subjects

To search by names or subjects go to the beginning of the relevant letters section, then to the sub section for the next vowel. For example to search for 'Compensation' go to the beginning of the section for 'C' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

Sub-Post Offices

Sub-Post Offices may appear in two places, either in the entries of the nearest Post Town (search as above) or at the end of the relevant letters section. For example to search for 'Armthorpe' go to the beginning of the section for 'A' then work forwards through the vowel subsections to 'o'. Entries then appear by year in the order that they were made.

In some periods the vowel sub-sections are not used and you will need to search through all the smaller places or subjects with the same initial.

Step 2. Search through until you find a relevant entry. The entry should be accompanied by a Minute number e.g. 12345/22. This Minute number can be traced to the minute

books in POST 38.

The Minute number will be made up of a 1-5 digit number followed by the year.

e.g. 11122/15 identifies minute number 11122 from 1915.

Step 3. Using the POST 38 catalogue, use first the year and then the minute number to identify which volume you need to request for your research.

Index to subjects, names and places

POST 38/76	1920 – 1928	A – C	Microfilm
POST 38/77	1920 – 1928	D – K	Microfilm
POST 38/78	1920 – 1928	L – O	Microfilm
POST 38/79	1920 – 1928	P – S	Microfilm
POST 38/80	1920 – 1928	T – Z	Microfilm
POST 38/165	1929 – 1937	A – C	Microfilm
POST 38/166	1929 – 1937	D – K	Microfilm
POST 38/167	1929 – 1937	L – O	Microfilm
POST 38/168	1929 – 1937	P – S	Microfilm
POST 38/169	1929 – 1937	T – Z	Microfilm

Index to names and places

POST 38/198	1938 – 1947	A – B	Reel 7
POST 38/199	1938 – 1947	C – E	Reel 8
POST 38/200	1938 – 1947	F – J	Reel 8
POST 38/201	1938 – 1947	K – M	Reel 8
POST 38/202	1938 – 1947	N – R	Reel 9
POST 38/203	1938 – 1947	S – Z	Reel 9
POST 38/242	1948 – 1955	A – B	Reel 10
POST 38/243	1948 – 1955	C – E	Reel 10
POST 38/244	1948 – 1955	F – J	Reel 10
POST 38/245	1948 – 1955	K – M	Reel 11
POST 38/246	1948 – 1955	N – R	Reel 11
POST 38/247	1948 – 1955	S – Z	Reel 11
POST 38/278	1956 – 1970	A – B	Reel 12
POST 38/279	1956 – 1970	C – E	Reel 12
POST 38/280	1956 – 1969	F – J	Reel 12
POST 38/281	1956 – 1969	K – M	Reel 12
POST 38/282	1956 – 1969	N – R	Reel 13
POST 38/283	1956 – 1970	S – Z	Reel 13

Index to subjects

POST 38/196	1938 - 1947	A - K	Reel 4
POST 38/197	1938 - 1947	L - Z	Reel 5
POST 38/240	1948 - 1955	A - K	Reel 5
POST 38/241	1948 - 1955	L - Z	Reel 6
POST 38/269	1956 - 1963	A - K	Reel 6
POST 38/270	1956 - 1963	L - Z	Reel 6
POST 38/288	1964 - 1973	A - K	Reel 7
POST 38/289	1964 - 1973	L - Z	Reel 7

Section 2.5: Subject specific Indexes

Indexes to departments and major subjects

(Departments, public offices and general index)

POST 35/197	1852 Jun - 1859 Dec	Reel 69
POST 35/1705	1860 - 1865	Reel 69
POST 35/1707	1866 - 1870	Reel 69
POST 35/1709	1871 - 1874	Reel 70
POST 35/402	1875 - 1879	Reel 70
POST 35/452	1880 - 1882	Reel 71
POST 35/538	1883 - 1886	Reel 72
POST 35/645	1887 - 1890	Reel 73

All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 35 catalogue.

Index to Departments

POST 35/799	1891-1895	Microfilm
POST 35/940	1896-1900	Microfilm
POST 35/1071	1901-1904	Microfilm
POST 35/1072	1901-1904	Microfilm
POST 35/1248	1905-1908	Microfilm
POST 35/1249	1905-1908	Microfilm
POST 35/1511	1909-1913	Microfilm
POST 35/1672	1914-1919	Microfilm

All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 35 catalogue.

Index to departments, surveyors, public offices, overseas, and telephone and telegraph companies

POST 38/75	1920 – 1928	Reel 1
POST 38/164	1929 – 1937	Reel 2
POST 38/195	1938 – 1948	Reel 3
POST 38/238	1949 – 1955	Reel 3
POST 38/271	1956 – 1963	Reel 3
POST 38/287	1964 - 1971	Reel 3

All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 38 catalogue.

Index to London Postal Service

POST 35/801	1891-1895	Microfilm
POST 35/942	1896-1900	Microfilm
POST 35/1074	1901-1904	Microfilm
POST 35/1251	1905-1908	Microfilm
POST 35/1653	1909-1918	Microfilm
POST 35/1701	1919-1937	Microfilm

Minute numbers prior to 1921 can be traced using the POST 35 catalogue. To trace entries from 1921 onwards, refer to the POST 38 catalogue.

Index to London region and Engineering Department

POST 38/239	1938 – 1955	Reel 13
POST 38/272	1956 – 1969	Reel 14

All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 38 catalogue.

Index to Overseas mail services

POST 38/284	1952 – 1970	Reel 14
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All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 38 catalogue.

Index to cases of dismissal

POST 38/214	1933 – 1950	Reel 4
POST 38/274	1951 – 1964	Reel 4

All these indexes provide minute numbers that may be traced using the POST 38 catalogue.

Index to Railway Companies and mail carts

POST 35/969	1883-1901	Microfilm
POST 35/1399	1902-1911	Microfilm
POST 35/1699	1912-1969	Microfilm

Minute numbers prior to 1921 can be traced using the POST 35 catalogue. To trace entries from 1921 onwards, refer to the POST 38 catalogue.

Section 3

Packet Service Reports and Minutes records 1807-1837

POST 41 PACKET SERVICE REPORT VOLUMES, 1807-1837.

Reports to the Postmaster General from the Secretary to the Post Office, on the Packet Boat Service and overseas mail arrangements.

This series of volumes covers the period 1807-1837, after which it ceased and the parallel Minute series (POST 34) continued alone. For cases earlier than 1807, researchers should consult POST 40 and POST 42.

Each individual volume is indexed; but no cumulative index was produced. The volumes correspond to the collection of surviving documents in POST 39 (see below).

The catalogue for POST 41 is available in the Search Room.

POST 39 PACKET SERVICE REPORT PAPERS, 1807-1837

Reports to the Postmaster General from the Secretary to the Post Office, on the Packet Boat Service and overseas mail arrangements

Like POST 40, these reports are kept in numerical and date order. Accessing them by subject is only possible using the volumes held in POST 41. The items are listed in the old blue catalogue, available in the Search Room.

Each piece within POST 39 contains a number of reports. The catalogue shows the report numbers contained within each piece, as well as showing which reports are 'wanting'.

In cases where the catalogue shows a particular Report as 'wanting' this is not necessarily the case. It was the practice of contemporary filing clerks to associate any existing papers on a subject, or an individual case, with any new submission to the Postmaster General. These reports could therefore, be included in a later report.

These Reports are available on microfilm in the Search Room

The catalogue for POST 39 is available in the Search Room.

POST 34 PACKET SERVICE MINUTE VOLUMES, 1811-1920
Minutes to the Postmaster General from the Secretary to the Post Office on the packet boat and overseas services.

The packet minute series (POST 34 and POST 29) comprises minutes, to the Postmaster General from the office of the Secretary to the Post Office, on the Packet Boat and overseas mail services. It began in 1811, prior to this, minutes on packet boat and overseas services were recorded in the General Minute series (POST 35 and POST 30).

A parallel series, entitled Packet Reports (POST 39 and POST 41 – see page 19) was in use from 1807 until 1837. Cases for the attention of the Postmaster General were sometimes recorded in both series, but at other times in only one of the two series. Upon the cessation of the report series the minutes series continued alone.

POST 34 consists of volumes containing a copy of, or a reference to, every minute submitted to the Postmaster General, including those for which the papers have since been destroyed. Pieces 34/1 – 34/105 are individually indexed. Separate index volumes were produced for later volumes.

POST 29 PACKET SERVICE MINUTE FILES, 1811-1920 Minutes to the Postmaster General from the Secretary to the Post Office on the packet boat and overseas services.

POST 29 consists of those actual papers that are still in existence (comprising both the original minute to the Postmaster General and the papers leading up to, and following from the Secretary's submission).

In 1921, administration papers were grouped into a single main General Minute series (POST 33 and POST 38 – see section 2.4).

Section 4

Other Reports and Minutes Records

Sub Series in POST 10 (catalogue available in the Search Room and on The National Archives Catalogue)

Mail coach and railway conveyance reports, 1829, 1835-1841

This series of case papers probably originates from the Mail Coach Office. Up until 1854, the Mail Coach Office was also in charge of railway mail services.

Files largely comprise reports, memoranda and correspondence by and between the Postmaster General Lord Lichfield, English Secretaries Francis Freeling and Colonel William Maberley, Scottish Secretary Sir Edward Lees, Irish Secretary Augustus Godby and Surveyors and Superintendents of the Mail Coaches George Louis and George Stow, including their observations, instructions and policy decisions. Also included are communications to and from English, Scottish and Irish GPO solicitors, respectively Mark Peacock, John Bowie and Thomas Thompson, the Inspector of Mail Coaches for Scotland Edward Cloud, Resident Irish Inspector James Cumming, the Treasury, London GPO headquarters departments, Parliament, mail coach contractors, postmasters, mail coach inspectors and railway companies.

Types of record in these files include deeds of contract; accident reports; time bills; mail road route maps; statistical returns; incident, error and bad weather reports; advertisements for contract tenders; and petitions to the Postmaster General from mail coach contractors, towns, widows of mail guards, tradesmen and merchants.

Subjects covered include acceleration, alteration and establishment of coach and railway services, contract terms and tenders, design and use of coaches, mail coach accidents, disciplinary action against mail guards and coachmen, prosecutions, services during snow, equipment for railway and coach mail guards, mail coach connections with railways, delayed railway services, effect of railways on mail coach services, claims for expenses by contractors, and toll payments.

Researchers should note that files often contain papers dated up to three years prior to the date in the catalogue. The catalogue states the date of the final correspondence, i.e. when the matter was last dealt with. File size varies from just one item to over fifteen.

Due to length, the series list in the previously published catalogue has been retained, with some minor amendments. The files may be catalogued in more detail at a future date.

**Sub Series in POST 27 (catalogue available in the Search Room)
Postmaster General's Money Order Office minute books, 1838 - 1854**

This series comprises mainly copies of papers sent to the Secretary by the Postmaster General. It includes changes and decisions made regarding procedures within the Money Order Office, staff matters, forgery of Money Orders, wrong payments, changes to tax regulations.

**Sub Series in POST 23 (catalogue available in the Search Room and
on The National Archives Catalogue)
Missing Letter Case Papers, 1839 - 1859**

Case papers, including correspondence, evidence and reports from Post Office surveyors and solicitors, together with minutes to the Postmaster General, on the results of investigations into cases of losses in the post throughout the United Kingdom. This was the early method of investigating thefts from the post and bringing the culprits to justice. Some case papers quote the sentences passed on offenders, usually transportation, ranging from 7 to 21 years.

Sub Series in POST 14 (catalogue available in the Search Room and on The National Archives Catalogue)

**Revision of rural posts in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland,
Secretary's minutes to the Postmaster General, 1847-1856**

This series of numbered minutes contains the Secretary's recommendations to the Postmaster General for changes to rural post services and some town services. These were based on reports, proposals and applications received from surveying officers, post office employees and local inhabitants.

Each minute includes the date of approval by the Postmaster General. They are also known as the Postmaster General's authorising minutes. The minute number corresponds to that of a case file containing a copy of the minute, reports, letters and other papers. Case files held in The Royal Mail Archive are numbered POST 14/35-222, however, they date from 1853 onwards and the set is incomplete. For the majority of minutes in this series a corresponding case file no longer exists. Although volumes are labelled 'England' they relate to posts in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Contents of volumes are arranged in minute number order and each volume contains an index of places. The minute number can be used to identify corresponding case files, where one exists, and revision schedules. Do not confuse it with the Reg No., which *cannot* be used to cross-refer between series.

If you need any further assistance please ask a member of staff