

Act 12 Geo. 3. c. 79, repealed. Trustees appointed. Trustees to meet within a month after passing this act. Trustees may borrow ten thousand pounds on annuities to be charged on the rates. Purchase of land to build a workhouse on confirmed. Assessments to be made and rates collected. Houses let out in lodgings or ready furnished, rates to be paid by the landlord. Rates to be recovered as the poor rates by 43 Eliz. and subsequent acts. Committee appointed to regulate the poor. Penalty of forty shillings for buying or receiving into pawn cloaths, &c. belonging to the poor. Appeal. Limitation of actions. General issue. Treble costs.

C A P. LXII.

An act to enable his Majesty's postmaster general to open and return certain letters contained in the mails made up at the general post office in London, for the United Provinces, on the thirteenth, sixteenth, and twentieth days of January one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and now remaining in the said general post office.
—[May 19, 1795.]

Preamble,
reciting that
mails intended
to be sent to
the United
Provinces
have been de-
tained.

Postmaster ge-
neral may open
and return
letters in such
mails.

WHEREAS certain mails of letters, which were made up at the general post office in London, on the thirteenth, sixteenth, and twentieth days of January one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, and were intended to be sent from the said general post office unto the United Provinces, have been detained by virtue of a warrant under the hand and seal of one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, and the said mails of letters are now remaining in the said general post office: and whereas many of the persons by whom the said letters were written, signed, or sent, have applied to his Majesty's postmaster general to have the same returned to them, and doubts being entertained whether his Majesty's postmaster general is authorised by law to return the same: be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That, if any person or persons by or from whom any letter or letters contained in the said mails respectively were written, or signed, or sent to the post office, should be desirous to have the same returned upon application, in writing, being made to his Majesty's postmaster general at any time within three calendar months after the passing of this act, for the return of any such letter or letters, by the person or persons who wrote or signed or sent the said letters respectively to the post office, or any other person or persons duly authorised for that purpose by the person or persons who wrote, signed, or sent, the same respectively, each written application being made at the general post office in London, and being signed by the persons respectively making the same, and containing respectively either duplicates of the respective letters applied for, or copies of the respective directions thereof, such copies of the directions to be in the same hand writing as the respective directions of which they purport to be copies, and each written application also setting forth the names of the persons respectively who have in writing subscribed, or the names of the persons respectively which are printed, set, or affixed, to such letters

letters respectively, it shall and may be lawful, notwithstanding any law, statute, custom, or usage, to the contrary, for the postmaster general, or any officer or officers of the post office to be authorised and empowered by such postmaster general, in writing, to open such letters respectively, for which application shall be so made, in the presence of the person or persons applying for the same respectively; and, in case the names subscribed in writing, or the names of the persons printed, set, or affixed, to such letters respectively, shall be found to be those which had been so declared in such writing as aforesaid, to return the said letters respectively, together with whatever shall appear to be contained therein, to the person or persons applying for the same respectively: provided nevertheless, That, before any such letter or letters shall be so returned as aforesaid, the persons respectively applying for the same shall first make oath, to be administered as herein-after is mentioned, that they did write or sign or send the said letters respectively to the post office, or that the person or persons by whose authority they demand the return of such letters respectively did, to the best of their knowledge and belief, write or sign or send the same respectively to the post office, and that the name or names subscribed in writing, printed, set, or affixed, to such letters respectively, were so subscribed, printed, set, or affixed, by the persons respectively making such application, or by their respective directions, or to the best of their knowledge and belief, by or by the authority of the persons respectively on whose behalf such application is made, and whose names are so subscribed, printed, set, or affixed; and further, that such person or persons as apply under the authority of any other person or persons shall also first make oath, to be so administered as herein-after mentioned, that he or they is or are duly authorised by such other person or persons to apply for the return of such letters respectively.

Persons applying for letters to make oath of certain particulars.

II. *And whereas there may be contained in the said mails several letters from persons residing in parts beyond the seas, which have been transmitted by such persons to their respective correspondents in London, in order to be by such correspondents put into the said general post office, and forwarded by the post unto the said United Provinces, and which may have been accordingly put into the said general post office; and it is apprehended that there are written or indorsed upon all or the greater part of such last mentioned letters so put into the said general post office, the name or names of the person or persons, or the firm of the house or houses to whom such letters respectively have been transmitted, and by whom they have been forwarded: and whereas such persons so residing in parts beyond the seas may not have an opportunity of applying under the provisions herein-before contained for the return of such letters, and it is apprehended that it will be a great convenience to them that their correspondents in London, who forwarded such letters to the said general post office, should be authorised to receive them back: be it therefore further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, if application shall be made to the postmaster general, at any time within the space of three calendar months from and after the passing of this act, by the person or persons who so respectively*

Letters from persons residing in foreign parts may be

returned to their correspondents in London unopened.

Oath to be made to certain particulars by persons applying for such letters.

Letters not applied for in three months after passing this act may be detained till ordered to be forwarded by the secretary of state.

Anno regni tricesimo quinto GEORGII III. c. 62. [1795. tively wrote or indorsed, or authorised to be written or indorsed, the name of the person or persons, or the firm of the house or houses by whom such last mentioned letters respectively were put into the said general post office, such application being made, in writing, at the said general post office, and being signed by the person or persons respectively making the same, and containing respectively copies of what shall be so wrote or indorsed upon such letters respectively, such copies respectively to be in the same hand writing as the hand writing indorsed upon such last mentioned letters respectively; and if upon comparing such copies of what shall be so written or indorsed upon such letters with the letters respectively, it shall appear that the copies are in the same hand writing as are indorsed upon such last mentioned letters respectively, it shall and may be lawful, notwithstanding any law, statute, custom, or usage, to the contrary, for the postmaster general, or any officer or officers of the post office, to be authorised as aforesaid, to deliver such last mentioned letters respectively without opening the same to the person or persons respectively applying for the same; such person or persons first making oath, to be administered as herein-after mentioned, that he or they did receive such last mentioned letter or letters respectively from his or their correspondent or correspondents residing in parts beyond the seas, for the purpose of being forwarded by the post from *London* unto the said *United Provinces*, and that such person or persons so applying as last aforesaid, did write or indorse, or cause to be written or indorsed, upon such letter or letters respectively, the words and figures which shall appear to be written or indorsed thereon respectively, and that such person or persons did put, or cause to be put, such letter or letters into the said general post office in order to be forwarded by the post unto the said *United Provinces*, in the said respective mails, or some or one of them.

III. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said postmaster general shall and may, notwithstanding any law, statute, custom, or usage, to the contrary, detain and keep in his possession all and every such of the said letters, together with the contents thereof respectively, as shall not, within the space of three calendar months from the passing of this act, be required to be returned in manner in this act mentioned, or under the powers herein-after given, until he shall receive directions from one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, by warrant under his hand and seal, to forward the same respectively unto the said *United Provinces* in his Majesty's mails of letters, to the end that such letters, and what may be contained therein respectively, may be sent by post for the persons respectively to whom the said letters respectively are addressed; which directions it is hereby declared it shall and may be lawful for any one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state to give, by warrant under his hand and seal, and which directions the postmaster general is hereby required to obey, or cause to be obeyed.

IV. And, for the better ascertaining the persons respectively by or from whom any letter or letters contained in the said mails respectively

were written or signed or sent, and for preventing frauds in the delivery of the said letters to persons not entitled to receive the same, or to require the same to be returned; be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful to and for his said Majesty's postmaster general, or any person or persons authorised and empowered by him, in writing under his hand, to administer an oath or oaths to the person or persons applying for the return of any such letters as aforesaid, according to one of the forms herein-after mentioned; (that is to say),

For preventing frauds the following oaths to be taken:

[A. B. do swear, [or, being one of the people called Quakers, I A. B. do solemnly affirm], That I did write or sign or send the letter [or letters] now claimed by me to be returned, to the post office; and that the name [or names] subscribed in writing, printed, set, or affixed, to such letter [or letters], was [or were] subscribed, printed, set, or affixed, to such letter [or letters] by me, or by my direction. Oaths.

Or,

[A. B. do swear [or, being one of the people called Quakers, I A. B. do solemnly affirm], That I am duly authorised by [C. D. &c. as the case may be] to receive the letter [or letters] now claimed to be returned to me, on behalf of the said [C. D. &c. as the case may be]; and that the said [C. D. &c. as the case may be] did, to the best of my knowledge and belief, write or sign or send the same to the post office; and that the name [or names] subscribed in writing, printed, set, or affixed, to such letter [or letters] was [or were] according to the best of my knowledge or belief, so subscribed, printed, set, or affixed, by or by the authority of the said [C. D. &c. as the case may be].

Or,

[A. B. do swear, [or, being one of the people called Quakers, I A. B. do solemnly affirm], That I did receive the letter [or letters] now applied for by me to be returned, and now produced and shewn unto me, from my correspondent [or correspondents], who resides [or reside] in parts beyond the seas, for the purpose of being forwarded by me by the post from London unto the United Provinces; and that I did write or indorse, or cause to be written or indorsed, upon such letter [or letters] the words and figures which now appear to be written or indorsed thereon; and that I did put, or cause to be put, such letter [or letters] into the general post office in London, in order to be forwarded by the post unto the said United Provinces.

V. And inasmuch as, in the execution of this present act, it may happen that some of the persons who may apply for the return of letters may not be enabled to comply with the precise forms hereby directed, and probably cannot take the oath or oaths in the exact form or forms of words hereby required to be taken, on which account the postmaster general cannot, under the restrictions herein-before contained, return

Secretary of state may authorise the delivery of letters, though the persons applying cannot comply with the prescribed forms.

Penalty on persons taking false oaths.

Postmaster general, &c. not liable to any penalty for acting under this act.

Persons prosecuted may plead the general issue.

all the letters contained in the said mails which shall be applied for to be returned, notwithstanding that the persons so applying may be well entitled to receive back such letters, and that the true intent and meaning of this act is, that they should be enabled so to receive them: for remedy whereof, be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, in any case where such difficulty shall occur, it shall and may be lawful to and for any one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, by warrant or warrants under his hand and seal, to direct, order, require, and authorise, the postmaster general to open and return any such letter or letters, for which application shall be made to be returned, and which cannot be returned under the forms and restrictions herein-before contained, upon such person or persons identifying the letter or letters, and making oath in such manner and form as in such respective warrant or warrants shall be required and expressed; and the postmaster general is hereby empowered and required to execute, or cause to be executed, all such orders and directions, and to administer, or cause to be administered, such oath and oaths as shall, in such respective warrant or warrants, be expressed or contained; any thing herein-before contained to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

VI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That any person or persons who shall be convicted of wilfully taking a false oath in any of the cases in which oaths are to be taken by virtue of this act, or in any case wherein an oath or oaths shall, by virtue of a warrant or warrants under the hand and seal of such principal secretary of state, be authorised and required to be taken, every such person so taking a false oath shall be liable to the pains and penalties to which persons are liable for wilful and corrupt perjury.

VII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, any law, statute, usage, or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding, That neither the said postmaster general, nor any such officer or servant as aforesaid, shall be liable to any action, suit, indictment, information, or other proceeding, or be liable to or incur any penalty, forfeiture, or incapacitation, for or by reason of any act, matter, or thing, done, or forborne to be done, by virtue and under the authority of and according to this present act, or in the execution of the same, or of the authorities herein contained, or any of them, or in relation thereto, or in pursuance of the direction and authority of such principal secretary of state, to be given in manner herein-before mentioned; but that all such actions, suits, indictments, informations, proceedings, penalties, forfeitures, and incapacitations, shall be, and are hereby absolutely discharged.

VIII. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons shall, at any time or times, be sued, molested, or prosecuted, for any thing by him or them done or executed, in pursuance of this act, or of any clause, matter, or thing herein contained, such person and persons shall and may plead the general issue, and give the special matter in evidence

or his or their defence; and if, upon the trial, a verdict shall be given for the defendant or defendants, or the plaintiff or plaintiffs shall become nonsuited, then such defendant or defendants shall have treble costs awarded to him or them against such plaintiff or plaintiffs.

IX. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons whatsoever shall falsely or fraudulently obtain any letter or letters, hereby authorized to be returned under the authority of a warrant or warrants of such principal secretary of state, by virtue of the powers herein-before contained for that purpose, containing any bank note, bank post bill, bill of exchange, promissory note, letter of credit, or any other security or instrument whatsoever, for the payment of money, every such person offending, and being thereof convicted in due form of law, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and shall be transported for the term seven years.

Persons fraudulently obtaining letters containing bank notes, &c. guilty of felony.

X. And be it also further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful to and for any one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, by warrant or warrants under his hand and seal, to direct, order, require, and authorize, the postmaster general to open and return any letter or letters contained in the said mails respectively, for returning which, application shall be made by or on behalf of any foreign minister or ambassador, upon such proof being made, with or without oath, that such foreign minister or ambassador did write, sign, or send to the post, or cause to be written, signed, or sent to the post, such letter or letters respectively, and upon such other directions respecting the said letter or letters so applied for being complied with, as in such warrant or warrants shall be required to be made and complied with; and the postmaster general is hereby also required to execute or cause to be executed all such orders and directions as shall, in such respective warrant or warrants, be expressed or contained; any thing herein-before contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

Letters may be returned to foreign ministers upon proof, with or without oath, of writing them, &c.

XI. *And inasmuch as, in the execution of this present act, it may appear that some of the persons who may apply for the return of letters may not be enabled to comply with the precise forms hereby required, and probably cannot take the oath or oaths in the exact manner or forms of words hereby required to be taken, on which account the postmaster general cannot, under the restrictions herein-before contained, return all the letters contained in the said mails which shall be applied for to be returned, notwithstanding that the persons so applying may be well entitled to receive back such letters, and that the true intent and meaning of this act is, that they should be enabled so to receive them;* be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, in any case where such difficulty shall occur, it shall and may be lawful to and for any one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, by warrant or warrants under his hand and seal, to direct, order, require, and authorize, the postmaster general to open and return any such letter or letters, for which application shall be made

Secretary of state may authorize the delivery of letters, though the persons applying cannot comply with the prescribed forms.

Anno regni tricesimo quinto GEORGII III. c. 63. [1795.]

made to be returned, and which cannot be returned under the forms and restrictions herein-before contained, upon such person or persons so identifying the letter or letters, and making oath, in such manner and form as in such respective warrant or warrants shall be required and expressed; and the postmaster general is hereby empowered and required to execute, or cause to be executed, all such orders and directions, and to administer, or cause to be administered, such oath or oaths as shall, in such respective warrant or warrants, be expressed or contained; any thing herein-before contained to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

An act may be altered or repealed this session.

XII. Provided also, That it shall and may be lawful to alter or repeal this act in the present session of parliament.

C A P. LXIII.

An act for granting to his Majesty certain stamp duties on sea insurances.—[May 19, 1795.]

Most gracious Sovereign,

Preamble.

WE, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of *Great Britain* in parliament assembled, towards raising the necessary supplies to defray your Majesty's public expences, and making such permanent addition to the public revenue as shall be adequate to the increased charge occasioned by any loan to be raised, or stock to be created, by virtue of any act or acts for that purpose to be passed in this session of parliament, have freely and voluntarily resolved to give and grant unto your Majesty the duties herein-after mentioned; and do humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted; and it enacted by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That, from and after the fifth day of *July* one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid, throughout the kingdom of *Great Britain*, unto and for the use of his Majesty, his heirs and successors, for every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, upon which any insurance upon any ships, goods, or merchandize, or upon any other property or interest whereon insurances may lawfully be made, shall be ingrossed, printed, or written, the stamp duties following upon the sums insured; (that is to say), where the sum to be insured shall amount to one hundred pounds, a stamp duty of two shillings and sixpence, and so progressively for every sum of one hundred pounds insured; and where the sum to be insured shall not amount to one hundred pounds, a like stamp duty of two shillings and sixpence; and where the sum to be insured shall exceed one hundred pounds, or any progressive sums of one hundred pounds each, by any fractional part of one hundred pounds, a like stamp duty of two shillings and sixpence for each fractional part of one hundred

From July 5, 1795, certain stamp duties to be paid on insurances.