

Clerk of the Chamber

The office of Clerk of the Chamber in the Lord Chancellor's Department, so designation, dates from 1884 but it has an earlier origin in that of Gentleman of the Chamber to the Lord Chancellor. There were formerly two such officers who, like most of his immediate staff, retained their posts only so long as the Lord Chancellor who appointed them remained in office. The number of Gentlemen of the Chamber was reduced to one in 1852 (15 & 16 Vict., c.87, s.23). With the appointment of F.A. Corley in 1873 the office acquired a permanent character, its occupant being unaffected by changes of Lord Chancellor.

In 1874 it was provided that, on the next vacancy, the office of Pursebearer should be abolished and its duties transferred to the Gentleman of the Chamber (37 & 38 Vict., c. 81, s.7). This came about in 1878 on the death of William Goodbody, the last Pursebearer. The principal duties were those of the Chafewax and Sealer which had been vested in the Pursebearer on the abolition of those offices in 1852 (15 & 16 Vict., c. 87, s.23).

On the appointment of Edward Preston in the place of Corley in 1884 the title of the office was changed from Gentleman to Clerk of the Chamber. In 1915 Preston was succeeded by Thomas Hickman who had been messenger of the Great Seal since 1908. The latter office had come into being in 1874 to replace the former post of Messenger and Pursuivant of the Great Seal (37 & 38 Vict., c. 81, s.4). Hickman held both offices until 1937 when he was succeeded by L.C. Ridley, the Staff Clerk in the Crown Office and the post of Clerk of the Chamber has been associated with that office ever since. The office of Messenger of the Great Seal lapsed in 1943 (6 & 7 Geo. VI, c. 48, s.33 and sch. 7, pt II).

Leslie Ridley	1937-c.1942
John Hunt	c.1942-1970
Pat Malley	1970-1984
Jennifer Waine	Aug 1984-Dec 1993
Ian Denyer	Dec 1993- 2016
Ceri King	2016 -