

REPORT

OF THE

Postmaster General,

ACCOMPANYING

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The Postmaster General to the President of the United States.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,

30th November, 1824.

SIR: I have the honor to submit to you the following report respecting the transactions of this department.

The expenditures of the department from the 1st April, 1822 to the 1st April, 1823 were, as stated in my report of November last	\$ 1,169,885 51
The receipts for postage during the same period were	\$ 1,114,345 12

§ 55,540 39

Leaving an expenditure of fifty five thousand five hundred and forty dollars and thirty nine cents more than the current receipts.

The expenditures from the 1st April, 1823, to the 1st April, 1824, were	\$ 1,170,144 63
Receipts for postage during the same time amounted to	\$ 1,153,845 72

§ 16,298 91

Leaving an expenditure beyond the receipts, of sixteen thousand two hundred and ninety eight dollars and ninety one cents.

A comparison of the receipts for postage for the three quarters preceding the 30th June last, with the corresponding quarters of the previous year, will show a considerable increase of receipts.

Postage received from 1st October, to the 31st of December 1823, amounted to	\$ 277,833 10
In the corresponding quarter of 1822, there was received	\$ 261,741 64

§ 16 091 46

Making an increase for this quarter, of sixteen thousand and ninety one dollars and forty six cents.

Postage received from 1st January, 1824, to the 31st of March ensuing - - - - -	\$309,755 69
In the corresponding quarter of the year 1823 - - - - -	\$286,144 29
	\$23,611 40

Making an increase for this quarter, of twenty three thousand six hundred and eleven dollars and forty cents.

Postage received from the 1st April to the 30th of June, 1824. - - - - -	\$291,275 54
There was received for the corresponding quarter of the year 1823 - - - - -	\$288,211 26
	\$3,064 28

Making an increase for this quarter, of three thousand and sixty-four dollars and twenty eight cents.

The total increase of receipts for the three quarters specified, is - - - - -	\$42,767 14
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The accounts rendered for the quarter ending on the 30th of September last, have not been all examined, but it is calculated, that the receipts will exceed, by fifteen thousand dollars, the receipts of the corresponding quarter of the previous year, which will make an augmentation of receipts, for the four quarters, of about fifty seven thousand seven hundred and sixty seven dollars.

The total amount of receipts for postage for the three quarters above stated, is - - - - -	\$878,804 33
During the same time the expenditures of the depart- ment were - - - - -	\$808,121 50
	\$10,744 83

Leaving the sum of ten thousand seven hundred and forty four dollars, and eighty three cents, more than the expenditures for the three quarters.

Contracts were made in September, 1823, to transport the mail in the present year, two hundred and thirty five thousand three hundred and seventy eight miles, more than it was transported in the year 1823. One hundred and twenty five thousand and thirty four miles of this distance, it will be conveyed in stages. There has also been given, on many routes, within the same time, greater expedition to the conveyance of the mail, for which an adequate compensation is paid.

In making the mail contracts in September last for New England and New York, there was but little reduction of expenditure, but many important accommodations were given, by making provision for an increased transportation of the mail. Under these contracts, the mail will be conveyed two hundred and fifty nine thousand seven hundred and forty miles per annum, more than it has ever before been trans-

parted, by contract, in the same sections of country. It will be conveyed in stages, the whole of this distance, except ten thousand five hundred and four miles.

Since the 1st of July, 1823, the transportation of the mail has been increased four hundred and ninety five thousand one hundred and eighteen miles per annum. Of this distance, it will be conveyed in stages three hundred and seventy four thousand two hundred and seventy miles.

This transportation, computed at the lowest price for which similar service is performed, will amount to the sum of thirty thousand dollars annually. When to this sum is added the deficiency of receipts to meet the expenditures for the year ending on the 1st April, 1823, and the probable excess of receipts, for the present year, above the expenditures, the improvement of the operations of the department will appear.

For the above service - - - - -	\$ 30,000 00
Deficiency of receipts to meet the expenditures for the year ending on the 1st April, 1823 - -	\$ 55,540 39
Probable amount of receipts for postage the present year, above the current expenses - - -	\$ 15,000 00
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	\$ 100,540 39

From this statement, it appears that the condition of the department has been improved, in comparison with the year ending on the 1st of April, 1823, by a reduction of expenditure and increase of receipts, one hundred thousand five hundred and forty dollars and thirty nine cents per annum.

The advantages from the arrangement adopted respecting newspaper postage have not been fully developed, but it has been ascertained, that the receipts from that item have been increased at the rate of about twenty five thousand dollars per annum.

Unremitting exertions have been made to collect the balances due to the department. Within the past year, many suits have been brought and judgments obtained. In many cases, where judgments have been obtained on accounts of long standing, the delinquent Postmasters and their sureties have been found insolvent, and the costs of suit have been consequently paid by the department. To avoid, as far as possible, a useless expenditure of this kind, the Attorney of the United States is now requested, when an account of some years standing is sent to him for collection, not to commence suit, if, on inquiry he shall find that the principal and his surety are insolvent. To issue process in such a case, would subject the department to a bill of costs, without answering any valuable object to the public. In a short time, all demands against delinquent Postmasters will be in suit, where there exists any probability that more than the costs can be collected.

The improvement which has been made in the revenue of this department for the past year, authorizes the opinion, that it will be able to meet an increased expenditure, by affording additional mail ac-

commodations on established routes, or by transporting the mail on new routes, which Congress may think proper to establish.

There are many routes now in operation, which require a greater expenditure than any advantage arising to the public would seem to justify. If these were discontinued, and other routes of more general utility established, the public convenience would be greatly promoted, without adding to the expenditure of the department. A judicious revision of the mail routes, and of the law regulating the Post Office Department, will enable it, in a very short time, not only to send the mail into every populous neighborhood of the Union, but to give every accommodation which may be desirable, to the important commercial points.

The money lately appropriated by Congress to repair so much of the mail route, from Nashville in Tennessee, to New Orleans, as passes through the Indian country, and which was placed by your direction at the disposition of this department, has been applied to the object intended, except five hundred and ninety dollars and six cents.

As a small sum of money was to be expended in repairing a road of great length, and as the public interest required that the repairs should be made the whole extent, so as to remove all obstructions to the transportation of the mail, it was deemed important, before the commencement of the work, to ascertain the nature and extent of those obstructions. This was done, by the person appointed to make the repairs, and in making them, streams of water, which were occasionally rendered impassable to the mail, by high water, were bridged, and swamps, which were also sometimes impassable, were cause-wayed. The work, it is believed has been faithfully executed, and at such places on the route as most required it.

After the work was done, the money was paid, on the valuation of two practical men, who were recommended to the department as well qualified for that purpose. They were instructed to examine minutely the manner in which the work had been performed, with a view to its permanency and the object designed, and to report what sum would be a reasonable compensation for it.

The balance of the appropriation which remains unexpended, will be applied in making some additional repairs during the present winter.

I have the honor to be,
Most respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN McLEAN,

The President of the United States.