

REPORT

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THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
December 2, 1848.

SIR: The post routes in operation within the United States, on the 30th day of June last, were 163,208 miles in extent, and the annual transportation of the mails over them was 41,012,579 miles, costing \$2,448,766, as follows, to wit:

On railroads, 4,327,400 miles, costing.....	\$584,192
In steamboats, 4,385,800 miles, costing.....	262,019
Agencies connected therewith.....	54,063
In coaches, 14,555,188 miles, costing.....	796,992
In other modes, not specified, 17,744,191 miles, costing..	751,500
And in addition thereto, for foreign mail service.....	100,500

The table of mail service for the year ending the 30th of June, 1848, made up from the state of the service as it stood at the close of the year, exhibits, as compared with the table of 1847, an increase in the length of the routes in the United States of 9,390 miles, and an increase in the amount of annual transportation of 2,124,680 miles, but a decrease in the cost of transportation of..... \$12,145

There is, however, an increase in the cost of agencies to be deducted of..... 7,910

Leaving a balance of saving in the cost of our inland mails for 1848, as compared with 1847, of..... 4,225

But the cost of foreign mails, which appears for the first time in the tables of this year, is \$100,500; and deducting from this the saving above stated of \$4,235, leaves an excess of cost for 1848 over 1847, of \$96,265.

For this we have 2,124,680 miles more of annual transportation of our inland mails, and the conveyance of our foreign mails every other month, a distance of 3,800 miles and back.

The new contracts made at the last annual lettings for the middle section, embracing New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio, went into operation on the 1st of July, 1848, and exhibit a saving for the current year, to end 30th June next, upon the cost of the same section for the past year, of \$61,674.

This is a saving of nearly 12 per cent. Notwithstanding the

reduction of cost, the service has been increased under the new contracts. The routes have been extended in distance 293 miles further; and in this way, and by greater frequency of trips, this section of service has become greater than last year by 658,897 miles of annual transportation.

On the 1st July, 1845, the annual transportation of the mails in the United States amounted to.....	35,634,269 miles.
On the 30th June, 1846.....	37,398,414 "
Increase in service over the preceding year.....	1,764,145 "
On the 30th June, 1847, amounted to.....	38,887,899 "
Increase over preceding year.....	1,489,485 "
On 30th June, 1848, amounted to.....	41,012,579 "
Increase over preceding year.....	2,124,680 "
Total increase for the three years.....	5,378,310 "

But the cost of the service was lessened as follows:

On 1st July, 1845, it stood at.....	\$2,905,504
On 30th June, 1846, it stood at.....	2,716,673
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Reduction from the preceding year.....	188,831
On 30th June, 1847, it stood at.....	\$2,453,001
Reduction from the preceding year.....	263,672
On 30th June, 1848, it stood at.....	\$2,448,766
Reduction from the preceding year.....	4,235
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Total reduction of cost in the three years.....	<u>\$456,738</u>

This is exclusive of the foreign mail service performed in the last year.

The operations of the three years show that the mail service has been augmented 15 per cent., and its cost at the same time diminished $15\frac{7}{10}$ per cent.

The results of the mail letting last spring in the middle section will add to the service of the current year 658,897 miles more of annual transportation, while it makes a reduction from the cost of the year ending 30th June, 1848, of \$61,674.

The number of mail contractors in the service during the last year was 4,017, and the number of local and mail agents and mail messengers 248, connected with the service on railroads and steamboats.

The service during the year has been performed by the contractors with commendable zeal and activity; yet no energy can prevent occasional failures to deliver the mails in due time. In sections of the country where no turnpikes or macadamized roads, or bridges over the streams, exist, at certain seasons of the year failures are unavoidable; even on the most improved and best conducted routes, unfavorable weather, ice or snow on the railroads, storms or fogs on the rivers, or slight accidents to the machinery, must delay the mails. The speed now given them renders it seldom possible to regain the time lost. This has been and always must be the case.

There is at this time more service performed, with more speed and with as much regularity, as at any former period; nor is it believed that more expedition can be given on the principal mail routes until further improvements are made on the roads, without endangering the connexions necessary to be made to insure the prompt and punctual delivery of the mails.

The foreign service during the past year has been increased by an additional steamer—the “Hermann” being placed on the line between New York and Bremen—and monthly trips are now performed between those two cities with regularity.

On the 17th of October last, the “Isabel” was placed on the line between Charleston and Havana, in compliance with the contract with Messrs. Mordecai & Gourdin, and will hereafter perform semi-monthly trips.

The ocean steamers “California,” “Panama,” and “Oregon,” constructed under a contract with the Secretary of the Navy for service on the Pacific, have sailed from New York for Panama; and the “California” is expected to commence service for this department on the 1st of January next, from Panama to Oregon.

The Secretary of the Navy has likewise employed the “Falcon” on the line between Havana and Chagres; and she is expected to sail from Havana to Chagres in time for the mails to reach Panama and be forwarded by the “California” to the Territories on the Pacific coast. This department has made a contract for the transportation of the mails across the isthmus, from Chagres to Panama; so that in future there will be a regular monthly mail from Charleston, by Havana, Chagres and Panama, to Oregon.

It is to be regretted that the “Ocean Steam Navigation Company” has not as yet been able to comply fully with their contract for service between New York and Bremen. But two vessels, the “Washington” and “Hermann,” have as yet been completed. The third, the “Franklin,” has been launched, and great exertions are making to have her finished and take her place on the line. The fourth vessel, it is believed, has not yet been commenced. Notwithstanding the failure of the company to have their vessels ready for the service within the time specified in the contract, it is not believed that the true policy or the interests of the country would require any forfeiture of the contract, or any other steps taken unfriendly to their interests. The great exertions of the company to comply with the contract, and to secure the best class of vessels, suited to the purposes of the government, and such as would do credit to the country; the great expense of such an undertaking; the want of experience in this country in the construction of that class of vessels; the embarrassments they have had to encounter from the unsettled state of Europe, and from conflicting interests at home; the importance of the service in connecting our country more intimately and directly with the enterprising and enlightened States of the German confederation, would entitle them to the indulgence of Congress and the forbearance of the department.

Since the contract was made with this company, others have been given, from New York to Liverpool, and from New York to

New Orleans, upon much more favorable terms than were allowed them. The last contracts made by the Navy Department, under the direction of Congress, are for the term of ten years, and certain sums of money advanced to aid in the completion of the vessels. The contract made with the Ocean Steam Navigation Company will last but five years, and no money paid them until after the performance of service.

Similar liberality, it was hoped, would have been extended to them, having done so much towards the completion of their contract without the aid of government. They were the pioneers in building that class of vessels in this country, and no doubt sustained serious injury in constructing them, from the want of experience in such undertakings. The importance of the service to be performed, in a commercial and political point of view, give them grounds to hope for the favorable consideration of Congress. Similar advantages extended to them would, it is believed, enable them speedily to comply with their contract, and give a direct and important connexion with the central nations of Europe.

The line of vessels directed to be established, under a contract with the Secretary of the Navy, between New York and New Orleans, will, it is believed, be useless as a means of transporting the mails between those points.

The land and steamboat routes over which the mail service is at present performed are, and will be, so much more expeditious and certain than by that line, that the principal mails must be continued on them. But if the contract could be so modified as to run daily between New York and Charleston, the great southern mail, even from Philadelphia, might be sent by them to Charleston or Savannah, and forwarded with more expedition to New Orleans than by the present routes. The tables of the First Assistant Postmaster General accompany this report, (A,) and are referred to for the details of the service.

The number of post offices on the 1st of July last was 16,159, being an increase during the year of 1,013. The number of offices established was 1,309; the number discontinued 296. The number of postmasters appointed during the year was 4,121. Of this number—

2,169	were appointed	in consequence	of	resignations.
184	“	“	“	“ deaths.
240	“	“	“	“ changing site of offices.
197	“	“	“	“ removals.
3	“	“	“	“ expiration of commissions which were not renewed.
14	“	“	“	“ commissions renewed.
5	“	“	“	“ becoming presidential appointments.
1,309	“	“	“	“ new offices.

The number of appointments made between the 4th of March, 1845, and the 1st of July, 1848, was 13,507. Of this number, the removals were 1,598; the balance were made in consequence of re-

signations, deaths, changes of the sites of the offices, or the establishment of new ones.

The act of the 17th of May, 1848, directing the accounts of postmasters from the 1st of January, 1847, to be readjusted, and that they be allowed their commissions by the quarter, instead of the year, has been executed; and the sum of \$112,213 44 has been paid to 5,136 postmasters.

The gross revenue of the year ending on 30th June last, including \$200,000 appropriated by the 12th section of the act of 3d March, 1847, for the postages of the government, and the further sum of \$48,739, collected from and belonging to the accounts of preceding years, amounted to \$4,371,077. This sum exceeds that of the preceding year \$425,184—being an increase of 10.77 per cent.; and exceeds the annual average of the nine years preceding the 1st of July, 1845, \$6,453.

The letter postage, including the \$200,000 appropriated as above stated, amounted to \$3,550,304; exceeding that of the preceding year \$295,791—being an increase at the rate of 9.09 per cent.

The newspaper postage for the year amounted to \$767,334, making an increase of \$124,174, which is equal to 19.30 per cent.

The following table exhibits the revenues, including the \$200,000 appropriated for the postages of the government, as well as the expenditures, from the 1st of July, 1845, to the 30th of June, 1848.

	Revenue.	Expenditure.
For the year ending 30th of June, 1846..	\$3,487,199	\$4,084,296
For the year ending 30th of June, 1847..	3,945,893	3,971,310
For the year ending 30th of June, 1848..	4,371,077	4,326,850

The expenditures for the year have been increased by the following items, which do not properly belong to it, viz:

The sum allowed J. L. Graham, for fitting up the New York post office, by the act of the 14th of August, 1848	\$49,787
The amount paid the Bremen line of steamers since the 1st of July last, and charged in the accounts of last year	33,333
The amount paid to postmasters as extra commissions since the 1st of January, 1847, by the act of the 17th of May, 1848, was \$112,213 44, two-fifths of which should be deducted from the expenses of the present year.....	● 44,885
	<u>\$128,005</u>

Which makes the expenses properly chargeable to the past year \$4,193,845. This includes also the sum of \$100,000 paid the Bremen steamers during the year; while the income arising therefrom is reported to be \$29,682 83. It is, however, perceived, but too late for correction for this report, that the postages on mails to and from England and France are in part or wholly omitted.

This exceeds the expenditure of the preceding year \$227,535, and

falls short of the annual average expenditure for nine years preceding the 1st of July, 1845, \$300,748.

The gross revenue arising from postages and fines, excluding those arising from miscellaneous sources, as well as the \$200,000 appropriated for the postages of the executive departments for the year ending the 30th of June, 1848, amounted to \$4,117,761
 From the same sources the year preceding 3,832,689

Increase \$285,072

Making 7.43 per cent. increase.

If the revenue from the same sources shall increase during the present year at the rate of 6 per cent., the proceeds will be \$4,364,306

To this may be added the amount due from the treasury for mail services from the 4th of March, 1847, to the 30th of June, 1849, appropriated by 12th section of the act of 1847 465,555

Means applicable to the present year \$4,830,381

Leaving a surplus over the estimated expenditures for the current year of \$428,336.

If the revenue for the year ending 30th June, 1850, shall increase at the rate of five per cent. upon the estimated revenue of 1849, the amount will be \$4,583,068

Add surplus of 1849 428,336
 Annual appropriation for postages of government 200,000

Estimated means for 1850 \$5,211,404

Expenditures properly chargeable on the year 1848 . . . \$4,198,843

These will be increased during the present year by the following items:

Steamer from Charleston to Havana, three quarters . . . 37,500
 California and Oregon agents 3,200
 Additional railroad service and agents 37,500
 Ship Hermann, belonging to the Bremen line 100,000
 Miscellaneous 25,000

Expenditure for the year 1849 \$4,402,045

Estimated means of 1849 4,830,381

Surplus \$428,336

The estimated expenditures for 1849 \$4,402,045

This sum will be increased for the year 1850 by the following items:

Service on new post routes and railroads 100,000
 Two additional steamers on the Bremen line 200,000
 Charleston and Havana service, one quarter not included in 1849 12,500
 Additional appropriation for Florida 5,000

California and Oregon, agency for five months not included in 1949.....	\$2,300
Miscellaneous.....	25,000
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Estimated expenditures of 1850.....	\$4,746,845
Estimated means of 1850.....	5,211,407
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Surplus for 1850.....	\$464,562

There has accrued to the post office revenue under the 12th section of the act of 3d March, 1847, the following sums, to wit:

From the 4th of March to 30th June, 1817.....	\$65,555
" " " " 1848.....	200,000
" " " " 1849.....	200,000
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	465,555
Estimated surplus 30th June, 1849.....	428,336
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	37,219
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It will be seen that, notwithstanding the very large sums estimated for foreign service, as well as the additional service required in the United States, the revenue of the department, unaided by the appropriations of that act, will be equal to the expenditure, except the sum of \$37,219 at the close of the present year.

This statement of the operations of the act of 1845 upon the service and finances of the department, confirms the opinion expressed in my last annual report, "that the present low rates of postage will not only produce revenue enough to meet the expenditure, but leave a considerable surplus annually to be applied to the extension of the mail service, or would justify a still further reduction of the rates of postage."

Notwithstanding the great increase of the service during the last year, inland as well as foreign, there was found at the close of the year a surplus of \$172,232, beyond the expenses properly chargeable upon it.

Accompanying this report (marked B) will be found that of the Auditor for the Post Office Department, made at my request.

The energy and zeal of the officers engaged in the collection and disbursement of the funds of the department, as well as the punctuality and promptitude of postmasters in making payments and settling their accounts, deserve the highest commendation.

It appears that from the 1st day of July, 1845, until the 30th of June, 1848, the revenue, exclusive of the annual appropriation of \$200,600 for services rendered the government, amounted to \$11,538,614.

The whole has been collected, except the following sums:

Of the amount due June 30, 1846, the sum of	\$6,162
“ “ 1847, “	5,056
“ “ 1848, “	26,714
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	37,932
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More than half the sum reported for the last year will be probably collected within the next three months. The balance yet due is less than one-third of one per cent. on the whole amount.

The last year's accounts have been generally collected without a resort to the courts of justice. Suits have been ordered in 91 cases, involving only the sum of \$3,271, whilst during the same period 108 cases formerly pending have been settled, and the money paid, amounting to \$10,655. This large sum collected within the three years, has been disbursed without the loss of a dollar in payment of the public creditors, in due and proper time, it is believed, without an exception.

Prior to the 1st of July, 1845, there were debts due the department, many of long standing, amounting to \$319,880. Of this sum, there has been collected within the past year \$10,809, and credits allowed upon the settlement of accounts of \$51,710, leaving yet a balance due the department of \$257,361. A very large proportion of this sum will be probably lost.

The present rates of postage will afford ample means to meet the expenditure and probable increase of the service, and leave a surplus that will in a few years enable the department to repay the treasury the amount received from it since the passage of the act of 1845.

Under these circumstances, shall a further reduction of the postages be made? The means which a well digested cheap mail system affords of a rapid interchange of ideas between different and distant sections of the country, and the consequent increase of knowledge; its influence upon society, but little, if any, less than that of printing; its importance to every interest, social, commercial, and political, would justify the answer that a lower rate of postage should be adopted, if it can be done without a departure from that principle heretofore maintained in the country, that this department should be sustained from its own resources.

A system so intimately connected with all other interests, and the happiness and prosperity of the people—so diversified in its operations, so minute in its details—requires a careful examination of any suggestions for its improvement, and the adoption of such only as experience proves will be useful to the citizens and render it more perfect.

The importance as well as a general desire for a cheap postage system has attracted much of public attention to the subject, not only in this, but other countries, within the last few years. To secure this object, in most countries it is placed under the control of the government, though perhaps not strictly one of its attributes.

Had it been left to private enterprise, the more wealthy and populous portions of the community would no doubt have been amply provided for; but others, less favored, would have been left destitute of the means of diffusing intelligence among the people. Of so much importance was a well regulated system esteemed by those who framed the constitution of the United States, that even the States were not permitted to have any control over it, lest the diversity of legislation should destroy its uniformity and regularity and impair its usefulness. It may, indeed, be questioned whether a free government over such extensive territories as those of the United States could be maintained without it. The perfection of every such system consists in the cheapness, speed, and security with which communications are interchanged between different and distant portions of the community or between different nations.

Whatever may be the system adopted, the means for its support must be paid in some way by a tax on the people, for whose benefit it is established. In the United States, upon this point, there has been little or no diversity of opinion. That it should be collected of those who enjoy the benefits of the system by a charge on the matter conveyed in the mails, is so obviously just as scarcely to have been questioned. It does not seem either just or fair that those whose condition in life does not enable them to participate in its advantages, should be called on by other modes of taxation to contribute to its support. The revenues arising from it have not heretofore been applied to any other purpose, except for a short time during the war of 1812; nor have the revenues derived from other sources been applied to its use, except to aid in the effort recently made for its improvement. It has been made to depend upon itself, and thereby giving to the government the best security for the faithful administration of its finances. Perhaps no other means could be adopted more equitable and just.

A large number of the people have little or no connexion with the mail system. To subject that class to share the burden of its support by a direct tax, or by imposts levied upon the necessaries of life, would meet, it is believed, the approbation of but few disinterested citizens. If this be the correct principle, of which the undersigned has no doubt, every letter or package conveyed in the mails should pay a just and fair proportion of its cost of transportation, and other expenses attending the delivery. There should be no exception. Any departure from it would unnecessarily increase the amount to others who were taxed for its maintenance.— If the government does not seek a revenue from it other than that necessary for the support of the system, no higher charge should be made than the cost of transportation and the expenses attending the delivery of each letter or package.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the actual cost of each letter or package conveyed in the mails. In a country like ours, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the lakes to the gulf, one portion of it covered with cities and villages, demanding daily and double daily mails,

with every facility for speed and cheap transportation; others sparsely populated, without any improvements whatever, scarcely requiring a weekly mail—the cost of transportation must necessarily vary and change as often as new contracts have to be made. In no two sections of the country—probably on no two mail routes—would the cost of transportation be the same. A short time since the mail was transported daily over one route, seventy-four miles, in four-horse post coaches, at the rate of 5 cents per annum. On other routes, similar service will cost from fifty to two thousand dollars. In all such cases the cost of each letter or package must depend in some degree upon the amount paid the contractors. The contract changes every four years, and the price for the service depends upon considerations connected with travel over the route, the chances of competition, the cost of supplies, &c., as well as upon the distance.

The expense of receiving, forwarding, and delivery will slightly increase the cost of each, according to the distance it is conveyed, or the number of persons through whose hands it must pass; but neither of these, nor all of them together, will more affect the cost of each than the number conveyed in the mails, and that depends in a great degree upon the rate of postage.

If, however, the cost of each could be easily and accurately ascertained, its want of uniformity would prevent its adoption as the rate.

In ascertaining a standard by which the rates are to be adjusted, the cost on different routes in the several sections of the Union, the distance to be conveyed, the expense in the offices of receiving, forwarding, and delivery, are too minor and unimportant to deserve much consideration.

The best and only practicable criterion will be the expense of the whole system, compared with the revenue, and the adoption of such a rate as experience shows to be enough to make the one meet the other, approaching as nearly as possible the cost.

Prior to the passage of the act of 1845, the rates of postage on letters were adjusted according to the number of pieces, making each one a single letter, and different sums paid according to the distance they were conveyed, as if that was the principal element in estimating the cost. This principle was not entirely abandoned by the act of 1845, though much simplified and improved; while charging by the piece is entirely surrendered, and the more just and equitable mode by weight substituted. Experience proved that the rates prior to the passage of that act were too high for the purposes of revenue. For a series of years prior to that time, the expenditures regularly exceeded the income, exhibiting an annual average deficiency of about \$125,000 for the eight years preceding the passage of the act.

These deficiencies occurred while the transportation gradually diminished within the last four or five years, about twelve thousand miles in extent; so that if the high rates of postage had been continued, the service must have been greatly diminished, or large sums of money drawn annually from the treasury for its use.

This result may be mainly attributed to two causes: First, the multiplication of railroads and steamboat lines augmented the expense of the mail transportation from \$404,123, in 1838, to \$843,430, on the 30th of June, 1845, more than double the former mail pay; whilst to individuals the expense of transportation was diminished more than half. Second, the high rates of postage and the reduced fare for travel enabled the expresses to enter into competition with the department, by conveying letters out of the mails. This business was extensively carried on, notwithstanding the severe penalties of the law, and the energetic and determined efforts of the department to enforce them.

The act of 1845 reduced the rates of postage more than one-half, and substituted the half ounce for a single letter, in lieu of the single piece of paper.

At the close of the first year, 30th June, 1846, the deficiency proved much less than was expected, only amounting to \$597,098; and at the end of the second year, only to \$25,417; while at the end of the third year, there was found a surplus of \$172,232 beyond the proper expenses of the year, notwithstanding the very great increase in the service in each of the years. This was caused not only by an increase of the revenue, but by a reduction of the expenditures nearly equalling the increase. That, however, exceeded the expectation of the friends of the act.

The increased business in the offices, and the improvement of the revenue under the present rates of postage, lead to the conclusion that the ten cent rate may be dispensed with at the close of the present year, if such other modifications of that act as have been suggested in my former reports should be adopted. In my last annual report an estimate was made of the paying letters which passed through the mails for the year ending the 30th June, 1847. This was founded upon the revenues of the preceding year and the October returns of 1845, which had been made in pursuance of a resolution of Congress. From this it appeared that the number of letters paying postage, including ship and steamboat letters, ship letters forwarded in the mails, dropped letters, and printed circulars, amounted to 52,173,480. An estimate, upon the same principle, for the year ending the 30th of June last, would give as the number of paying letters 52,063,000.

The October returns showed that over one-fourth and less than one-third of the letter postage was derived from the ten cent rate. This, taken as the basis of calculation, would make 14,303,753 letters paying that rate. If, therefore, that rate should be dropped at the close of the present year, there would be a loss of \$715,187, to be supplied from some other source during the next year.

It can scarcely be doubted, that with the surplus expected at the close of the present year, of \$428,336, the \$200,000 for the postages of the government for the next year, the increase of correspondence from the reduction in the rate of postage and the abolition of the franking privilege, as well as the saving on dead letters, if prepayment should be required, and the two cents that are paid for advertising and for the delivery of free letters, would ena-

ble the department to meet its expenditures from its own resources on the 30th of June, 1850. If after that time the business of the offices shall continue to increase as it has done since the act of 1845—which is probable, from the rapid increase of the population and business of the country—the department would not be embarrassed for the want of means to meet any probable increase in the service.

One other consequence expected by the friends of the act of 1845, and which was relied on as a certain means of improving the revenue, has not been realized. It was confidently believed that by such a reduction in the rates of postage, the business of the expresses would be made unprofitable and be abandoned. This has not been the case. The business, it is believed, between the principal cities is continued with much activity, and the revenue seriously impaired by it. In a recent number of the *Pathfinder*, published in Boston, the names of 235 cities and villages are given, which are regularly supplied by express men with packages from that city, and most of them doubtless conveying letters regularly out of the mails. The penalties now imposed by law are sufficient for their suppression, if proper means were placed in the hands of the department for their detection; but it is believed that no rate of postage which would cover the expenses of the system could be adopted sufficiently low to induce them to abandon it.

In settling the rates of postage, it is not unimportant to have them correspond with the current and legal coins of the United States. The fewer the rates, the more convenient to the postmasters in performing their duties in their offices, and less liable to err in keeping their accounts and settling them with the department.

Simplicity in the rates, as well as in the mode of keeping their accounts, will promote cheapness as well as regularity in the transportation and delivery of the mails.

For the purpose of taxation, the matter conveyed in the mails should be classified as follows:

First. Letter-postage should embrace all written communications under seal or not, and each sealed packet or package. This class is composed of private confidential communications, often containing articles of value, partaking more of individual than public interest, requiring more care in their preservation, more labor in stamping, packing, and enveloping, than printed matter, and are always forwarded under lock and key; and should therefore be charged at a higher rate. A uniform rate of five cents for each half ounce or fraction under, and another rate for each additional half ounce or fraction under, would be as low, in the opinion of the undersigned, as they could be made consistently with the principles above stated.

Second. Newspapers. This class has always been esteemed of so much importance to the public, as the best means of disseminating intelligence generally among the people, that the lowest rate has always been applied, for the purpose of encouraging their circulation. Heretofore the charge has been made upon each paper, without regard to weight, which is unjust to the publishers as well

as the public; and there is no satisfactory reason why they should not be charged by weight, as well as letters or other sealed packages. This would lead to a discontinuance of the practice of depositing newspapers in the mails before they are dry, which renders them more liable to injury, and their weight is greatly increased from the dampness of the paper. A uniform rate of one cent upon each ounce or fraction under it would be more just, and probably yield as much revenue as the present rates.

Third All other printed matter, of whatever nature or kind, should be rated with double newspaper postage. Letters containing articles of value, upon the application of the writer, should be registered, and a receipt taken for the delivery, and triple letter-postage charged.

The principles suggested for regulating the inland postages apply with equal force to the foreign, except that the service is much more expensive, and would require an increased rate. Uniformity in the rate is not less important in the one than in the other.

The number and different amount of rates now charged by law, are very inconvenient to the public as well as the officers in the discharge of their duties.

40 cents are now charged to or from California and Oregon;

30 cents to or from Panama;

24 cents to Europe;

20 cents to Chagres;

12½ cents to Havana;

6 cents when delivered at the ports of landing;

2 cents in addition to the regular postage when taken in the mails;

1 cent to the postmaster when sent out of the country.

It is believed that one uniform rate of 15 cents might be advantageously adopted for the foreign postage, and made applicable to our territories on the Pacific, and produce more revenue than the charges now made. The commercial interests of the country, the social and friendly intercourse now existing, and daily increasing, between the citizens of the United States and the people of other countries, would be greatly promoted by the adoption of that or some one rate less than is at present charged. This would probably soon be adopted by other countries having steamers engaged in similar service. Newspapers and other printed matter sent from or received into the United States might be rated with double the inland postage on similar mailable matter.

In addition, the Post Office Department, under the direction of the President, should have power to raise or lower these rates of postage whenever it becomes necessary; on account of the competition from other countries, and to impose restrictions upon the vessels of any foreign nation, equal to those imposed upon vessels of the United States by such nation. When such powers are given to the post offices in other countries, such restrictions may be imposed when Congress is not in session as may deprive the vessels of the United States of any participation in carrying letters. This was done by an order from the Lords of the Treasury in Great Britain on the 9th of June, 1847, preceding the arri-

val of the Washington at Southampton, and which had the effect to deprive that vessel of any reasonable share of the business between this country and England or France. That order remained in force more than a year, against all our remonstrances, before a law could be passed to meet the emergency.

If the proposed reductions are to be made, and the department required to sustain itself, it is indispensable that the franking privilege should be abolished. It is now greater and more extensively used than at any former period; and as the privilege is enlarged the abuses under it increase. The immense mass of free matter sent through the mails necessarily requires a higher and more expensive grade of service to enable the contractors to transport it. It is not unusual for coach service to be demanded on routes yielding comparatively nothing, for the transportation of public documents and other free matter. Over one route a double daily line of four-horse post coaches has become indispensable. Some estimate may be formed of the additional expense of transportation, from the fact reported from the city post office, that in seven days, from the 6th until the 12th day of August last, inclusive, 450 bags of free matter, weighing 35,550 pounds, averaging daily five thousand and seventy-eight pounds, passed through his office. Upon inquiry, it appears that between the first day of December and the first day of October last there were sent from the two houses of Congress, through the mails, about five millions of copies of speeches and other matter weighing under two ounces, and about one hundred and seventy-seven thousand public documents, besides the letters written by the members of the House of Representatives; and there remained to be forwarded more than one-half of the public documents ordered to be printed at the last session.

Such a mass of matter thrown upon the mails must necessarily add to the cost of transportation, retard the progress of the mails, and produce a great proportion of the failures that are made on the unimproved routes in the newer section of the country. But this is of all. The department is compelled to pay the postmasters, whose compensation does not exceed \$2,000 per annum, two cents for the delivery of each free letter, or document. A large proportion of the documents and papers thus sent free are, it is believed, seldom read, and, if read, but of little public interest, and worse than useless, inasmuch as the exercise of the privilege to the extent now practised tends to prevent, if it does not materially interfere with, the circulation of the village newspapers in their respective localities. This subject has been so forcibly presented to the House in the report of the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads at the last session, and several other reports previous to that time, that it is not deemed necessary to enlarge upon it at this time.

Whether the suggestions for the modification of the act of 1845 be adopted or not, all matter sent in the mails should be prepaid. This might indemnify the department for the great loss sustained for the transmission of letters not taken from the offices. Near two millions of dead letters are annually returned to the depart-

ment, upon which it not only loses the postage, but pays two cents each for advertising; and this is in addition to the expense incurred in opening and returning those of value to the writers, and destroying those of no value. Newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, and essays of various kind probably not less in number than the dead letters, are sent to the offices and never called for, or if called for refused, and remain as dead matter in them. From a careful examination it has been ascertained that 52,000 annually are received and remain as dead matter in the office at New York; at Boston and Baltimore about 10,000 annually; and at Philadelphia about 2,600.

If each office averaged but one daily—a low estimate—the whole number in a year would be 5,898,035, which, at the rate of one cent, would be \$58,980. If prepayment be not required, then dead letters, papers, and pamphlets should be returned to the writers or publishers, and the payment of double postages as well as the cost of advertising be required of them. But little inconvenience would be felt by the public since the adoption of adhesive stamps as the evidence of prepayment of letters. Their use would soon become general, if authority was given to sell them at a slight per cent. discount at the department, so as to make it an object to stationers and other traders to keep them on hand for the accommodation of the public.

The pre-payment of official communications from the executive branch of the government is now made by a specific appropriation annually. Similar provision might be made for the legislative branch, or a specific sum allowed each member to cover official communications to and from them.

The pre-payment of mailable matter at the proposed low rates would not, it is believed, materially diminish the number of letters sent in the mails, and, in connexion with the general use of the adhesive stamps, will simplify the transaction of business in the offices, the settlement of their accounts, and concentrate the funds of the department at the centres of business in the different sections of the Union, where the money is needed, and in a great degree avoid the hazards incident to the collection and transmission of funds to the places where they can be made available.

Other suggestions for the improvement of the act of 1845 have been made in my former reports, which I deem it unnecessary to repeat.

It may not be inappropriate to remark, that those connected with administrative duties of this department could not but have observed that there has been for some years past a strong feeling pervading the country, that the system had been conducted by an organized corps, extending throughout the Union, into every neighborhood, under the control of politicians at the seat of government, wielded with the view of promoting party purposes and party organization, rather than the business and social interests it was created to advance; that the offices were bestowed as the reward of partisan services, rather than from the merit and qualifications of those selected; and that each presidential contest is to produce a new

distribution of the offices, and hence embittered political contests are excited in almost every neighborhood, demoralizing in their tendencies, and injuriously affecting the purity of elections.

Whilst such apprehensions are entertained by a respectable portion of the community, a want of confidence in the honesty and correctness of the officers, however pure and upright in their conduct, soon shows itself, seriously injuring the business of the offices and bringing discredit on the system itself. The post-office system was designed for business purposes, for the cultivation of the social and friendly feelings among the citizens of the different sections of the Union, and should be in nowise connected with the party politics of the day. This will give that degree of confidence in its agents necessary to render it the most useful to the people.

There does not seem any reason why this business and social agent of the people should be more connected with them than the officers of the courts of justice, or the accounting officers of the government. If it were believed that the latter officers performed the duties assigned them with a view to the advancement of party purposes, public opinion would soon correct the evil. If the post office were alike exempt from political influence and party contests, public confidence would be maintained, and the best interests of the system promoted.

It may be well worthy of consideration if these objects would not be advanced, should the Postmaster General be nominated by the President to the Senate for a specific term of years; be separate from the cabinet, and only removable by impeachment, and the appointment of the principal subordinate officers for a like term of years be given to him; and to provide that no removal should be made except for good and sufficient cause, to be reported to each session of the Senate.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. JOHNSON.

A 1.

Table of mail service for the year ending June 30, 1848, as exhibited by the state of the arrangements at the close of the year.*

States.	Length of routes.	Annual transportation and rate of cost.								Total annual transportation.	Total annual rate of cost.
		Mode not specified.		In coach.		In steamboat.		By railroad.			
	Miles.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.
Maine.....	4,183	856,693	26,757	24,118	9,075			70,824	6,733	1,211,635	42,565
New Hampshire.....	2,188	229,144	5,745	362,410	9,993			144,768	10,504	736,352	26,242
Vermont.....	2,423	301,018	9,600	456,228	16,628					757,216	26,228
Massachusetts.....	3,963	381,370	12,828	639,402	22,619	62,574	2,888	906,284	170,706	1,989,630	9,198
Rhode Island.....	414	58,760	2,627	77,376	1,721			30,261	4,850	166,400	46,485
Connecticut.....	1,762	364,493	16,196	175,656	8,097			230,444	129,192	770,593	233,148
New York.....	13,331	1,929,176	70,771	1,687,959	57,108	720,306	42,311	735,076	62,998	5,072,517	59,437
New Jersey.....	2,029	117,330	4,029	425,464	17,605	14,560	250	208,728	37,551	766,082	155,778
Pennsylvania.....	10,369	909,922	36,134	1,587,508	76,287			356,729	43,357	2,851,150	17,887
Delaware.....	555	66,144	2,620	81,864	5,267					151,008	131,014
Maryland.....	2,379	213,828	11,461	306,332	26,805			391,768	95,745	441,928	165,472
Virginia.....	11,370	1,410,840	59,954	633,871	41,865	297,872	36,610	118,248	25,043	2,470,884	132,166
North Carolina.....	7,632	800,736	33,606	480,168	32,360	162,821	39,500	179,816	46,700	1,622,514	105,491
South Carolina.....	4,704	547,668	31,714	253,656	19,965	116,180	14,000	190,696	39,812	1,068,500	136,918
Georgia.....	6,421	728,426	40,631	286,208	14,750	71,161	7,500	404,196	94,037	1,493,291	24,937
Florida.....	1,784	166,272	13,907	102,372	6,840	39,089	4,100			297,644	169,877
Ohio.....	11,825	939,037	34,536	1,696,029	114,513	333,862	11,713	96,928	9,115	3,083,856	41,509
Michigan.....	4,188	429,204	13,709	152,600	11,726	50,960	2,700	149,760	13,371	1,345,704	58,664
Indiana.....	7,224	684,290	31,633	399,062	20,302	38,688	3,000	53,664	3,729	2,158,430	103,627
Illinois.....	8,925	800,190	30,730	1,358,240	74,897					511,096	18,786
Wisconsin.....	3,626	333,984	13,783	177,112	5,003					338,036	12,511
Iowa.....	2,178	249,392	9,428	89,544	3,093					1,683,604	35,221
Missouri.....	9,035	739,076	26,172	468,832	21,219	475,606	8,800			2,782,840	92,192
Kentucky.....	8,332	893,280	34,624	351,698	29,298	1,504,872	28,230			1,384,912	61,537
Tennessee.....	7,074	692,896	21,830	602,016	21,707						

A 1—Continued.

1256

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

States.	Length of route.	Annual transportation and cost of route.								Total annual transportation.	Total annual rate of cost.
		Mode not specified.		In coach.		In steamboat.		By railroad.			
	Miles.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.	Miles.	Dollars.
Alabama	6,851	839,020	42,634	527,280	50,330	182,210	36,272	70,512	13,843	1,619,022	143,079
Mississippi	4,707	567,216	32,464	330,304	28,841	23,400	1,975	28,704	3,943	949,624	67,223
Arkansas	5,334	573,480	27,281	107,640	11,248	55,536	6,000			736,636	44,529
Louisiana	3,623	308,880	26,266	58,496	2,930	205,456	15,920			543,232	45,115
Texas	4,779	422,396	28,741	109,720	13,847	16,640	1,250			548,756	43,838
Mail agencies	163,208	17,744,101	751,500	14,555,188	796,992	4,385,800	202,019	4,327,400	584,192	41,012,579	2,394,703
Foreign mails	3,800						100,500				100,500
	167,008	17,744,191	751,500	14,555,188	796,992	4,385,800	302,519	4,327,400	584,192	41,012,579	2,549,266

* The entire service and pay are set down to the State under which it is numbered, though extending into other States, instead of being divided among the States in which each portion of it lies.

† These embraces some express transportation.

‡ The Baltimore, Wilmington, and Philadelphia railroad is under a Maryland number.

§ This embraces the steamboat service from St. Louis to New Orleans.

¶ This embraces the steamboat service from Louisville to Cincinnati, and from Louisville to New Orleans.

‡ This includes the route from Mobile to New Orleans.

S. R. HOBBIE, First Assistant Postmaster General.

A. 2.

CONTRACT OFFICE.

Comparison of mail service between the year ending June 30, 1847, and the year ending June 30, 1848.

	1847.	1848.	Difference, more.	Difference, less.
Length of routes	153,818 miles.	163,208	9,390	
Annual transportation, mode not specified	15,593,972 do.	17,744,191	2,150,219	
Cost of transportation, mode not specified	\$650,166	751,500	101,334	
Annual transportation, coach	15,209,005 miles.	14,555,188		653,817
Cost of transportation, coach	\$912,462	796,992		115,470
Annual transportation, steamboat	8,084,022 miles.	4,385,800	3,698,222	
Annual transportation, railroad		4,327,400	4,327,400	
Cost of transportation, steamboat	\$444,220	202,019	242,201	
Cost of transportation, railroad		584,192	584,192	
Total annual transportation	38,887,889 miles.	41,012,579	2,124,690	
Total annual cost	\$2,406,848	2,394,703	12,145	
Agencies	46,163	51,063	4,900	
Foreign mails		100,500	100,500	

S. R. HOBBIE, First Assistant Postmaster General

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

1257

CONTRACT OFFICE.

Comparison of mail service in southern section, consisting of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, between the year ending June 30, 1847, the last year of last contract term; and the year ending June 30, 1848, the first year of present contract term.

	1847.	1848.	Difference, more.	Difference, less.
Length of routes	31,641 miles..	31,912	271	
Annual transportation, mode not specified.....	2,577,431, do....	3,613,982	1,066,961	
Cost of transportation, mode not specified.....	\$124,084.....	178,902	51,804	
Annual transportation, coach	2,696,192 miles..	1,776,278		919,914
Cost of transportation, coach	\$266,776.....	118,780		137,996
Annual transportation, steamboat.....	545,654 miles..	690,640	134,986	
Cost of transportation, steamboat.....	\$87,836.....	101,710	13,874	
Annual transportation, railroad	932,660 miles..	852,956		80,704
Cost of transportation, railroad	\$212,776.....	185,592		27,184
Total annual transportation.....	6,752,537 miles..	6,953,866	201,329	
Total annual cost	\$681,486.....	581,984		96,502

S. R. HOBBIE, *First Assistant Postmaster General.*

CONTRACT OFFICE.

Comparison of mail service, middle section, consisting of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio, between the year ending 30th June, 1848, and the year to end June 30, 1849, as estimated from the state of the service as it stands on the 30th September, 1848, end of first quarter of the current year.

	1848.	1849.	Difference, more.	Difference, less.
Length of routes.....	27,157 miles..	27,450	293	
Annual transportation, mode not specified.....	2,276,261, do....	2,479,219	202,958	
Cost of transportation, do.....	\$88,780.....	92,288	3,518	
Annual transportation, coach	4,100,197 miles..	4,376,136	875,939	
Cost of transportation, do.....	\$240,480.....	174,438		66,042
Annual transportation, steamboat.....	368,422 miles..	368,320		102
Cost of transportation, do.....	\$11,963.....	12,813	850	
Annual transportation, railroad.....	1,054,144 miles..	1,234,246	180,102	
Cost of transportation, do.....	\$185,768.....	185,668		100
Total annual transportation.....	7,789,024 miles..	8,457,921	630,897	
Total annual cost.....	\$526,991.....	465,317		61,674

S. R. HOBBIE,
First Assistant Postmaster General.

CONTRACT OFFICE.

Number of mail contractors, route agents, local agents, and mail messengers in the several sections.

Sections.	Contractors.	Route agents.	Local agents.	Mail messengers.
New England.....	600	15		42
New York	586	11		53
Middle.....	755	8	1	40
Southern.....	644	13		20
Northwestern	708		4	13
Southwestern.....	724		16	12
Total.....	4,017	47	21	180

S. R. HOBBIE,
First Assistant Postmaster General.

1260

Ex. Doc. No. 1

Railroad service, as in operation on the 1st of October, 1848.

States.	Number of route.	Termini.	Distance.	Total distance in each State.	Number of trips per week.	Annual pay.	Annual pay in each State.	Remarks.
			Miles.	Miles.				
Maine.....	61a	From Bangor to Upper Still-water.....	9	.....	6	\$15 00		
	92	From Portland to Portsmouth, N. H.....	52½	61½	12	6,718 00	\$6,733 00	
New Hampshire...	201	From Concord to Lowell, Mass..	50	.....	18	6,429 00		
	269	From Concord to West Lebanon, with branch to Bristol.....	82	132	6	4,015 00	10,444 00	Embraces side supply.
Massachusetts	401	From Boston to Portsmouth, N. H.....	54½	.....	12	8,324 00		do.
		Branch to Marblehead.....	4	6			
	402	From Boston to South Berwick junction, Me., with 3 miles branch from Dover to Great Falls.....	77½	.....	12	6,921 00		do.
	404	From Boston to Lowell	28	.....	18	3,600 00		
		Branch to Woburn.....	3	6			
	406	From Boston to Fitchburg.....	54½	.....	6	1,994 00		
	407	From Boston to Worcester.....	46	.....	18	7,000 00		
	410	From Boston to Providence, R. I.	43	.....	18	7,006 00		do.
	412, 413	From Boston to Plymouth.....	45	.....	6	2,000 00		Under coach contract.
	436	From Groton Depot to Townsend	11	.....	6	280 00		do.
	481	From Taunton to Massfield.....	12	.....	13	1,114 00		
	482	From Taunton to New Bedford..	21	.....	13	1,950 00		
	484a	From Boston to Fall River.....	53½	.....	12	2,250 00		Embraces side supply.

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

1261

A 6.—Railroad service—Continued.

1262

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

States.	Number of route.	Termini.	Distance.	Total distance in each State.	Number of trips per week.	Annual pay.	Annual pay in each State.	Remarks.
			Miles.	Miles.				
Massachusetts— Continued.	465	From Middleboro' to East War- ham.....	30	.....	6	\$290 00		
	476	From Worcester to Albany, N. Y., with 6 additional trips, 3 months, 38½ miles of the dis- tance.....	157	.....	12	20,186 00 414 00		
	484	From Worcester to Providence, R. I.....	48	.....	12	1,850 00		
	503a	From Springfield to Greenfield..	38	.....	6	3 257 69		
	513	From Pittsfield to North Adams.	21	.....	6	170 00		Under coach contract.
Rhode Island..... Connection.....	523	From Fitchburg to Keene, N. H.	42	790½	6	1,800 00	\$70,406 00	
	602	From Providence to Stonington..	48½	48½	6	4,850 00	4,850 00	
	672	From Norwich to Worcester, Massachusetts.....	59	.....	12	7,586 00		
	685	From New Haven to Springfield, Massachusetts.....	63½	.....	12	8,142 00		
New York.....	688	From New Haven to Plainville..	26	.....	6	780 00		Under coach contract.
	702	From Bridgeport to West Stock- bridge, thence to State line, Massachusetts.....	98	246½	6	5,250 00	21,758 00	
	806	From New York to Greenport...	101	.....	6	4,329 00		Offer of department.
	811 pt.	From White Plains to Pleasant- ville.....	9	.....	6	270 00		
	811a	From Pleasantville to Croton Falls.....	20	.....	6	578 00		
812 pt.	From New York to White Plains.	27½	.....	6	557 00		Pro rata for this part of the route.	
New Jersey.....	815 pt.	From Piermont to Port Jervis...	73½	.....	6	3,189 00		Pro rata for this part of the route. Offer of department.
	920	From Albany to Troy.....	6	.....	14	394 00		
	921	From Albany to Schenectady....	16	.....	14	1,900 00		
	934	From Troy to Schenectady.....	20½	.....	7	490 00		
	938	From Troy to Saratoga Springs.	32	.....	6	490 00		
	964	From Schenectady to Utica.....	78	.....	14	11,700 00		Offer of department.
	967	From Schenectady to Saratoga Springs.....	22	.....	6	943 00		
	1023	From Utica to Syracuse.....	53	.....	14	7,950 00		.....do.
	1070	From Syracuse to Auburn.....	27	.....	14	4,050 00		.....do.
	1078	From Junction to Skaneateles....	5	.....	7	260 00		
	1087	From Auburn to Rochester.....	78	.....	14	11,700 00		
	1096	From Ithaca to Owego.....	30	.....	6	333 00		4 months in coaches
	1145	From Rochester to Attica.....	44	.....	14	6,600 00		
	1180	From Attica to Buffalo.....	31	.....	14	4,800 00		
	1189	From Lockport to Lewiston and Niagara Falls.....	27	.....	7	750 00		
1194 pt.	From Buffalo to Lewiston.....	29	729½	7	1,000 00	62,283 00		
New Jersey.....	1301	From New York to the intersec- tion with Philadelphia railroad. }	36	.....	14	10,800 00 988 00		For third extra trip, when mails fail to connect.
	1302	From New York to Patterson...	18	.....	13	1,500 00		
	1303	From New York to Morristown...	32	.....	12	1,600 00		
	1315	From Elizabethtown to Somer- ville.....	26	.....	12	1,400 00		
	1319 pt.	From Morristown to Dover.....	13	.....	6	325 00		Under coach contract. Pro rata pay for coach service.
	1334	From point of intersection with cars on (1301) to Philadelphia }	54	179	14	16,200 00 *1,000 00	33,813 00	*For third extra trip, when mails fail to connect.
Pennsylvania.....	1401	From Philadelphia to Columbia..	83½	.....	14	12,525 00		
	1405	From Philadelphia to Pottsville..	97	.....	8 mo., 12 4 mo., 6	11,086 00		
	1469	From Lancaster to Harrisburg...	37½	.....	14	5,644 00		
	1488	From Harrisburg to Chambers- burg.....	52	.....	14	7,429 00		
	1504	From Chambersburg to Hagers- town, Md.....	22	.....	6	943 00		
	1607	From Summit to Johnstown.....	29½	.....	6		37,627 00	Covered by horse contract.

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

1263

A. 6.—Railroad service—Continued.

1964

Ex. Doc. No. 1.

States.	Number of routes.	Termini.	Distance.	Total distance in each State.	Number of trips per week.	Annual pay.	Annual pay in each State.	Remarks.
			Miles.	Miles.				
Maryland.....	1901	From Baltimore to Philadelphia..	97		14	\$30,600 00		Distance claimed at 102 miles. Service recognised at this sum. Contract not executed. Service recognised at this sum. Contract not executed. .....do.
	1902	From Baltimore to Washington, D. C.....	40		14	12,000 00		
	1903	From Baltimore to Cumberland Branch to Frederick.....	179		7	42,812 50		
	1905	From Baltimore to Columbia, Pa.	72		7	7,000 00		
	1927	From Annapolis to Junction.....	20	411	6	2,200 00	\$94,612 50	
					3 mo. 6 a w. additional.			
Ohio.....	2165	From Mansfield to Sandusky....	61		6	2,615 00		
	2206	From Springfield to Sandusky....	134		6	5,743 00		
Virginia.....	2234	From Cincinnati to Springfield..	85	280	7	8,500 00	16,858 00	
	2425	From Junction to Cobham Depot.	59		7	8,800 00		
	2444	From Petersburg to Weldon, N. C.....	64		7	15,200 00		
	2448	From Hickaford to Gaston, N. C.	20		7	2,000 00		
							Contract not executed.	
		From Winchester to Harper's Ferry.....	32	174	6	2,743 00	25,743 00	.....do.
North Carolina....	2501	From Raleigh to Gaston.....	87		7	8,700 00		.....do.
South Carolina....	2817 pt.	From Weldon to Wilmington....	182	249	7	38,475 00	47,175 00	.....do.
	3104	From Columbia to Branchville....	69		7	6,800 00		.....do.
	3122	From Charleston to Augusta, Ga.	139		7	33,012 50		
	3196	From Junction to Statesburg....	18	226	7	900 00	40,812 50	
Georgia.....	3250	From Savannah to Macon.....	192		7	19,200 00		
	3287	From Macon to Atlanta.....	101		7	10,100 00		
	3299	From Augusta to Atlanta.....	174		7	36,146 00		
		Branch to Warrenton.....	33		6	2,000 00		
Michigan.....	3308	From Union Point to Athens....	40		6	8,571 00	76,017 00	.....do.
	3344	From Atlanta to Dalton.....	100	611	6	10,441 00		
	3702	From Detroit to Paw Paw.....	165		6	1,072 00		
	3704	From Detroit to Pontiac.....	25		6	2,972 00		
	3712	From Monroe to Hillsdale.....	68		6	1,415 00	15,900 00	
	3715	From Toledo, Ohio to Adrian, Michigan.....	33	291	6			
Indiana.....	3901	From Indianapolis to Madison....	87	87	6	3,729 00	3,729 00	
Alabama.....	5513	From Decatur to Tuscumbia....	43		6	1,843 00		
Mississippi.....	5580	From Montgomery to Auburn....	60	103	7	12,000 00	13,843 00	
	5701	From Jackson to Vicksburg....	46	46	7	4,600 00	4,600 00	
				4,957			587,204 00	

S. R. HOBBIE, First Assistant Postmaster General.

Ex. Doc. No. 1

1965

Steamboat service, as in operation on the 1st October, 1848.

States.	Number of route.	Termin	Distance	Total distance in each State.	Number of trips per week.	Annual pay	Annual pay in each State.	Remarks
Massachusetts.....	154	From New Bedford to Edgartown.....	43	Miles. 43	3 mos., 4 } 4 mos., 3 }	\$150 00		Contractors are to be allowed \$100 a year additional, if the offices of Holmes's Hole and Edgartown shall yield \$580 per annum.
	457	From New Bedford to Nantucket.....	65	108	6	2,438 00	\$2,888 00	From 25th November to 25th March, service is by packet from Wood's Hole.
New York	801	From New York to Stonington, Conn.....	123		6	9,000 00		
	802	From New York to Norwich, Conn.....	142		6	4,239 00		Offer of department.
	803	From New York to New Haven, Conn.....	80		6	6,000 00		
	808	From New York to Tompkinsville.....	8		6	150 00		
	809	From New York to Troy.....	159		14	13,750 00		For season of navigation, and 3 times a day if regular lines run so often.
	814	From New York to North Shore.....	8		6	125 00		
	815 pt.	From New York to Vermont.....	25		6	1,071 00		Offer of department. Pro rata for this part of the route.
	816	From New York to Bridgeport.....	65		6	2,438 00		And at the rate \$2,438 a year additional for greater mail service during the winter.
	947	From White Hall to St. John's, Canada.....	150		6	1,500 00		Offer of department. For season of navigation.
	1109	From Salubria to Geneva.....	39		6	1,468 00		
	1193	From Lewiston to Ogdensburg.....	300		6	1,500 00		do do.
	1219	From Greenport to Sag Harbor.....	12	1,104	6	250 00	41,486 00	
New Jersey	1304	From New York to Middletown Point, N. J.....	28	28	5	300 00	300 00	
Ohio	2954	From Buffalo, N. Y. to Toledo, Ohio.....	325		7 1/4 mos., 7 }	0,613 00		} Mail carried at one cent per letter and half a cent for newspapers.
		From Buffalo, N. Y. to Detroit, Michigan.....	385		7 1/4 mos., 7 }			
	2210	From Cincinnati, O. to Mayville, Ky.....	64		6	2,000 00		
	2181	From Sandusky to Buffalo, N. Y.....	263	1,037	6	1,000 00	12,613 00	Contract not executed. During steamboat navigation.
Virginia	2161	From Norfolk to Hampton.....	18		6	998 00		
	2162	From Richmond and Petersburg to Baltimore, Md.....	361		7	34,000 00		
	2163	From Norfolk to Eastville.....	57		6	955 00		
	2464	From Norfolk to South Quay.....	35	471	3	717 00	36,670 00	
North Carolina.....	2817 pt.	From Wilmington to Charleston, S. C.....	176		7	36,525 00		Contract not executed.
	2850	From Franklin Depot to Plymouth	108	284	3	2,500 00	39,025 00	
South Carolina.....	3123	From Charleston, by Beaufort, to Savannah, Georgia.....	160	160	7	14,000 00	11,000 00	
Georgia	3251	From Savannah to Pilotka, Fla.....	358	358	2	7,500 00	7,500 00	
Florida	3367	From Pilotka to Melbourne.....	125		1	1,500 00		do do.
	3623	From Castiboochee to Appalachicola.....	150	275	2	2,600 00	4,100 00	
Michigan.....	3783	From St. Joseph's to Chicago, Illinois.....	70	70	6	2,700 00	2,700 00	
Indiana.....	4077	From Louisville, Ky. to Cairo, Illinois.....	391	391	3	3,500 00	3,500 00	
Massachusetts.....	4813	From St. Louis to New Orleans, Louisiana.....	1,250		3	6,240 00		This service employed by the trip through agents.
	4814	From St. Louis to Keokuk, Iowa.....	206	1,456	3	1,560 00	7,800 00	do do.

A 7.—Steamboat service.—Continued.

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States.	Number of route.	Termini.	Distance.		Number of trips per week.	Annual pay.	Annual pay in each State.	Remarks.
			Miles.	Total distance in each State.				
Kentucky.....	5001	From Louisville to New Orleans, Louisiana.....	1,448		6	\$21,320 00		
	5005	From Louisville to Shawneetown, Illinois.....	177		3	3,060 00		Pro rata for steamboat part of route.
	5032	From Cincinnati, Ohio, to Louisville, Kentucky.....	132	1,757	7	3,850 00	\$28,230 00	
Alabama.....	5510	From Gunter's Landing to Decatur.....	61		6	4,325 00		
	5581	From Stockton to Mobile.....	34		7	7,947 00		Under a coach contract.
	5612	From Mobile to New Orleans, La.....	164	259	7	24,000 00	36,272 00	Distance embracing intermediate offices, which are but seldom supplied, is 185 miles.
Mississippi.....	5716	From Vicksburg to Yazoo city.....	75	75	3	1,975 00	1,975 00	
Arkansas.....	5904	From Regan's Bluff to Napoleon.....	178	173	3	6,000 00	6,000 00	Pro rata for steamboat part of route.
Louisiana.....	6002	From New Orleans to Covington.....	54		3	1,800 00		
	6004	From New Orleans to Galveston, Texas.....	450		1	5,000 00		Service performed once in five days, from Nov. 1, to July 1. Pay 75 per cent. of postages at Galveston, both of its distribution and delivery.

Texas.....	6006	From New Orleans to Shreveport.....	500		2 a week to Natchitoches, 174 miles; 1 a week the residue.	2,120 00		Service employed by the trip through agent.
	6019	From St. Francisville to New Orleans.....	147			2	7,000 00	
	6062	From New Orleans to St. Francisville.....	147	1,298	1	1,200 00	17,120 00	Service employed at \$200 per month till January 1, 1849.
	6101	From Galveston to Houston.....	80	80	2	1,250 00	1,250 00	
			8,280			263,429 00		

S. R. HOBBIE, First Assistant Postmaster General.

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B.

Report of the Auditor of the Post Office Department.

AUDITOR'S OFFICE, P. O. D.,
November 24, 1848.

SIR: In submitting to you, as I have now the honor to do, and in compliance with your request, my second annual report of the operations of this office for the past fiscal year—my former report having comprised the operations for the two preceding years—I am happy to be able to state that whilst there has been no diminution of the business, but rather an increase, corresponding with the continual increase of preceding years, there has been no abatement of application and exertion on the part of the clerks to the business in its various branches, or failure to despatch it in the due and regular time.

In the year ending 30th of June, 1848, sixty-two thousand and forty-eight quarterly accounts of postmasters have been examined, and the amounts of revenue arising therefrom ascertained. Nine thousand six hundred and eighty-eight quarterly accounts of contractors have been adjusted, and the balances due thereon reported to you for payment. In the former accounts, eight thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven errors have been discovered and corrected. The corrections have been known to the postmasters, and such other explanations have been given as they have thereupon required. In the latter, the adjustments have been preceded by obtaining evidence from the offices which were the termini of the routes, of the due performance of the service, and have involved the collection, as applicable in part to the payment of the contractors, of the balances of postages in more than twelve thousand of the offices situated upon their mail routes.

The minor branches of accounts, for the supply of blanks, mail bags, locks, keys, and stamps, for advertising, for messenger service, and for special agents, as well as the incidental duties arising out of the transactions of the department with individuals and agents of every kind; the registering of the accounts, and posting of the entries into the books; the preparation, exhibition, and correction of the balances due by direct demand, or the agency of postmasters, and the prosecution of suits; and the correspondence growing out of the whole—these settlements and these duties in their several spheres and varieties have all kept pace with the two leading branches of business first mentioned; have expanded in due proportion with them; and have been performed and despatched with equal promptitude and punctuality.

Under the act of 17th May last, which authorized the existing scale of commissions allowed to postmasters to be cast upon the postages collected in a quarter, instead of the amount collected in a year, as directed by the act of 3d March, 1847, the accounts of five thousand three hundred and thirty-six persons have been readjusted for the respective periods they were severally in office, between the 3d March, 1847, and the 31st March, 1848—say five

quarters. The amount which has thus accrued, \$112,213 41, has been credited to them, and charged to the appropriation for compensation of postmasters for the last quarter of the year. But two of the clerks employed on this readjustment will be retained for a time to make the necessary corrections growing out of these credits in the general accounts of those postmasters who remained in office only for a part of the time, and will leave a portion of the appropriation of \$2,000 for this employment unexpended.

The correspondence of the office for the year has included the receipt of eighty-four thousand eight hundred and twenty-five letters, and packets covering certificates, receipts, returns, and acknowledgments, and the transmission hence of sixty-eight thousand and eleven communications of all kinds, whether written or printed.

The vital business of collection continues to be prosecuted in the manner stated in my last report, and the policy of making immediate demand, before there is time for the sense of responsibility to abate, or for temptation to misapply the public funds to intervene, has since been more abundantly vindicated. Three thousand one hundred and fifty-five postmasters went out of office in the year, indebted, as the accounts have been adjusted, in the sum of..... \$67,681 06

Of this sum there has been already collected \$40,904 98

The items too trivial in amount for collection, or otherwise bad, amount to..... 61 42

40,966 40

Leaving in the course of collection..... 26,714 66
 \$978 72 of which has been put in suit.

The like balance for the preceding year, ending 30th June, 1847, remaining due, by my former report, was \$23,282 18. By certain additional charges on the one hand, and credits on the other, growing out of adjustment, this balance may be stated at ... \$23,287 01

Of this sum there has been collected in the year..... \$18,103 20

The items too trivial in amount for collection, or otherwise bad, amount to..... 128 09

18,231 29

Leaving in the course of collection..... 5,055 72
 Of which \$1,638 12 has been put in suit.

The balance of the year again preceding, ending 30th June, 1846, to wit: \$10,009 43, as shown by my report, modified as above by adjustment, may be stated at..... \$12,969 93

Of this sum there has been collected in the year..... \$6,297 14

The items too trivial in amount for collection, or otherwise bad, amount to..... 510 48

6,807 62

Leaving in the course of collection..... 6,162 31
 Of which \$5,079 60 has been put in suit.

The balances arising in the three fiscal years last preceding, remaining uncollected, may therefore be stated as follows:

In the year ending June 30, 1846.....	\$6,162 31
In the year ending June 30, 1847.....	5,055 72
In the year ending June 30, 1848.....	26,714 66
	37,932 69

The balance for the last year of the three is large, relatively to the balances of the two preceding, only because of the brief space which has yet run for the process of collection. More than half of this balance will doubtless be collected within the next three months, and but a very small portion be ultimately lost. The whole amount must strike you as amazingly small, compared with the revenue of the three years, to wit: \$11,538,614 95, being, in fact, less than one-third of one per cent. of that amount.

The balances due from late postmasters prior to 1st July, 1845, as stated in my report, was..... \$323,598 40
 And as due to them 13,196 08

Leaving net..... \$310,402 32

By modifications in adjustment, including the charge of postages not reported, penalties, interest and costs, and including a portion of the latter balances paid, the average balances due from late postmasters may be stated at..... \$319,880 79

Of this sum there has been collected during

the year.....\$10,808 89

There has been credited in account..... 51,709 83

And there has been found clearly not collectable 2,704 28

65,223 00

Leaving an average amount of.....\$254,657 79 due to the department. A great portion of this amount has been due for many years; and although it is not intended to remit the efforts at collection, it is not probable that much of it will now be realized.

The number of suits instituted during the year, by direction of this office, is ninety-one—involving balances due to the amount of \$3,271 11; whilst the number of cases closed by recovery and collection is one hundred and eight, involving the amount of \$10,655 68.

But the business of collection is far more comprehensive in its present application and advantages, than may be inferred from its results, thus detailed in cases of persons who have gone out of office, and in respect to accounts thereby brought to a close. Its systematic extension and rigid enforcement in relation to postmasters in office, and to accounts still running, has, perhaps, had a still more beneficial effect upon the revenues of the department. Of the sixteen thousand one hundred and fifty-nine post-offices in ope-

ration during the year, the following classification indicates the process relied upon by the department for realizing their quarterly postages:

- 1,400 draft offices.
- 800 depositing offices.
- 1,430 special offices.
- 12,529 collection offices.

The first two classes are under the vigilant and exact management of your accomplished 3d Assistant, John Marron, esq. It is only in the cases of these two descriptions of office, when a draft office has failed to honor a draft of the department, or its funds cannot be disbursed at the particular point; or a deposit office has failed to make its periodical deposit, or to make it for the full amount due, that the principle of collection is called into exercise, and this office proceeds to state the account of the postmaster, to ascertain the exact sum in hand and provide for its collection, by deposit, payment, or transfer, as the case may be. In respect to the two latter classes the special and collection offices—both under the direct supervision of this office, it is in constant exercise to derive from special offices any surplusses, from time to time, in them, over and above the expense of supplying their mail; and to compel the collection offices to pay over to the contractors punctually at the end of each quarter, and to the full amount, the quarterly postages due. By this process the first symptoms of default are checked and corrected, or the defaulter is put out of the way of increasing his indebtedness, and the debt placed at once in the course of liquidation, as the most certain means of preventing loss.

The success of the Post Office Department in availing itself of its revenue, may challenge a comparison with any system of fiscal management whatever. Without any fund in reserve, it maintains an expenditure equal to its revenue, by a reliance merely upon the fidelity of more than sixteen thousand agents, who collect it from the people, and upon a machinery adapted to reach it in their hands under all the difficulties arising from the extent of our country, and the diversity of its parts in population, habits, and the course and direction of its business. So remarkable an example of punctuality must arise, in part, from the national character of our people; but it must also, in part, be ascribed to the energetic administration of the department. The punctuality of fiscal agents will be found in general in direct sympathy with the activity of the superintending power. A systematic vigilance on its part once clearly established, will find but few disposed to set it at defiance; whilst instances of the misapplication of public money to arise from remissness and neglect, will spread the contagious example of withholding (in the hope, perhaps, of finally retaining) it from the service of the government.

As the revenue of the last three years has thus been paid over to the use of the department with unsurpassed punctuality, so it is gratifying to me to remark that it has been disbursed with equal promptitude in the payment of its public creditors. I am well

persuaded that no instance has occurred of a demand upon it, adjusted in this office, which has not been promptly discharged by payment where the service may have been performed, or at some other point equally acceptable to the party; and no delay has occurred in adjusting such demands, where the materials for adjustment were at hand; or where they were not, in notifying the party of the obstacle in the way, and acting upon the case when that obstacle was removed. Delays of settlement can never be designed or tolerated by a government which stands in the relation of agents to do that business for the people which they cannot do for themselves. Such delays naturally and inevitably lead to the derogatory necessity or expedient of employing professional agents for the ordinary business in the departments, involving, on the one hand, expense to the principal, and on the other, taking up more time, and requiring more labor on the part of the public office, and, withal, intercepting that direct communication between the parties, which should serve to foster and promote just sentiments of respect and attachment to their government on the part of the people. It has been my aim to obviate any supposed necessity of this kind, in respect to settlements in my office; and at the same time, to enhance, by securing promptitude of payment, the value of the sums allowed, in the estimation of the parties, as a consideration fairly to enter into future stipulations of service by making such settlements promptly and periodically, and, to a great extent, in advance of applications from the parties—an aim which I trust has to some extent been accomplished.

Much pains have been taken to give method and order to the business, and a practicable and comprehensive arrangement to the books and files of the office. In 1840, it was estimated that the time of two clerks, on the average, was taken up in finding the books required for daily reference. In 1841-'42, a great improvement was made, in restricting the books, with qualified exceptions, to their several and proper places. They now number thirteen hundred and eight volumes, constituting a complete series of ledgers from the year 1776, and day books, journals, letter books, &c., &c., from nearly an equal period. An analytical catalogue, now completed, of the whole, together with a similar arrangement of the files, not only greatly facilitates the business, but promotes accuracy, by making the great body of archives at once of easy, not to say instantaneous, access.

The fruits of these arrangements are already manifest. In connexion with a more equal distribution of duties among the clerks, and the incentives to zeal and exertion, arising from promotions where opportunities have occurred, they have enabled the office to maintain the regular current of its business without any augmentation of its clerical force, notwithstanding the great increase of its business (progressing annually) which has taken place since the year 1841, when the present number of clerks was provided. The diversity of the functions of this office, arising from its being the sole office of accounts for the department, and therefore embracing in its organization the several duties which, in respect to the

treasury, are shared by the auditor, register, comptroller, and solicitor, demands a high relative degree of talent, as well as unremitting industry, on the part of its clerks. Their exertions to meet the increased business of the office, and to prevent the derangement and loss consequent upon arrear in any part, deserve, as I respectfully conceive, to be known, to be considered, and appreciated.

I have the honor to remain your most obedient servant,
P. G. WASHINGTON, *Auditor.*

Hon. CAVE JOHNSON,
Postmaster General.