

This may be attributed, principally, to the improvements in mail facilities; and the increase for the current year may be safely estimated at a still greater amount. The contracts for the eastern section of the United States, comprising New York and the New England States, all expire on the 31st of December next, and have just been renewed, together with new contracts for transporting the mails on the routes established by the law of last session of Congress.

The annual amount paid for transporting the mail in that section, under the old contracts, is	-	\$328,945 92
The annual amount which will be required under the new contracts in that section, including all the old routes, with many important improvements; also, for 142 new mail routes established in that section by the law of last session, is	-	421,156 19
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Making an increase of expenditure in that section of	-	92,210 27
The contracts have also been made for the new routes established by the law of last session in the other sections, amounting to 13,111 miles of new post roads, on 298 new routes, for the annual sum of	-	71,945 75
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Requiring, together, an annual increase of expenditure of	-	\$164,156 02
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These contracts will go into operation on the 1st of January next; and within the year which will terminate on the 30th June, 1833, one-half of the above increase will be incurred, amounting to	-	\$82,078 01
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At a reasonable estimate of the progressive increase of revenue from postage, there will be more than a sufficiency to meet this sum.

The increase of postages for the year ending the 30th June, 1832, was, as above stated, \$260,758 63 above those of the preceding year; but, in an increase of postages, there is a corresponding increase of commissions for compensation to postmasters.

After deducting these commissions, the remainder, constituting the *nett* proceeds of postages, is applicable to the payments for transportation of the mails, and for the incidental expenses of the Department. The *nett* proceeds of postages for the year ending June 30, 1832, exceeded those of the preceding year \$180,305 43. If the ratio of increase in the *nett* proceeds of postages for the year which will end on the 30th June, 1833, shall only equal that of the year ending June 30, 1832, it will amount to the sum of \$196,823 06 above that of the last year, which will exceed the additional amount required for transportation by more than a hundred thousand dollars, provided no farther improvements shall be made, without estimating any thing for postages that may arise on the new routes. But a greater ratio of increase of the *nett* amount of revenue may be fairly calculated upon from the very extensive improvements which have been made; and the accounts of postmasters for the quarter ending on the 1st of October last, so far as they have been examined, exhibit an increase of *nett* proceeds of postages at the rate of \$260,000 a year above those of the year ending on the 30th of June, 1832.

There were in the United States on the 1st of July, 1831, 8,686 post offices. The number on the 30th June, 1832, was increased to 9,205. The constant supervision of that number of postmasters, correcting abuses, enforcing the strict observance of the laws and instructions, and, above all, requiring of each to account faithfully and promptly for all the postages received, are essentially necessary to all the other operations of the Department; and while the present system is strictly adhered to in the order of the transactions of the Department, it is confidently believed that its operations will be attended with harmony and success.

I have the honor to be, with high regard, your obedient servant,
WILLIAM T. BARRY,
Postmaster General.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 122.

[2d SESSION.]

ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION TO A DEPUTY POSTMASTER.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 20, 1832.

Mr. CONNOR, from the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred a resolution of the 14th instant, "instructing them to inquire into the expediency of allowing to the postmaster at Jackson, Mississippi, additional compensation," reported:

That the law gives to postmasters a per centage on newspapers and letters, deemed to be an adequate compensation for their services; yet, in the establishment of new routes and increased running of the mails, it must frequently happen that the labors of postmasters are also greatly increased. Applications, similar in character, have often been made to Congress; and in no instance are your committee aware that the prayer has been granted. Postmasters, in accepting the appointment, are aware of their prospect of compensation for the services rendered. In this case, no evidence is introduced to show why the compensation of the postmaster at Jackson should be increased, could your committee, under any circumstances, believe it would be expedient; and they have, therefore,

Resolved, That it is inexpedient to grant any additional allowance to the postmaster at Jackson, Mississippi.

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 123.

[2d SESSION.]

CREDITS CLAIMED BY A DEFAULTING DEPUTY POSTMASTER FOR LOSSES OCCASIONED BY FIRE.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 7, 1833.

Mr. CONNOR, from the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred a resolution, and a petition of William Walker asking to be released from a balance due the Post Office Department, reported:

That the petitioner sets forth that he was postmaster at Hickory, in Pennsylvania; that his house was destroyed by fire, and in it his books and accounts, on which were charged accounts for letters, pamphlets, &c.

The crediting of letters, pamphlets, and newspapers is an act of the postmaster, at his own risk. Neither the Department nor the acts of Congress authorize the crediting of any sum that may be, through its officers, due to it; on the contrary, it requires that its officers shall be prompt when called on by the Department to pay over its collections: the propriety of which must be manifest to all. To release Mr. Walker from the payment due the Department in consideration of his loss, (it is not pretended that any part of that loss was the proceeds of his office collected,) would be, in the opinion of your committee, establishing a dangerous precedent, and opening a door for innumerable applications. Your committee, therefore,

Resolve, That it is inexpedient to grant the relief asked for.

22d CONGRESS.]

No. 124.

[2d Session.

REDUCTION OF THE RATES OF POSTAGE.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, JANUARY 22, 1833.

Mr. GRUNDY made the following report:

The Committee on the Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred the resolution of the Senate of the 2d instant, directing an inquiry "into the expediency of reducing and equalizing the rates of postage, and particularly of abolishing the postage on newspapers," have had the same under consideration, and report:

That a majority of the committee, after the resolution was referred to them, determined, at their first meeting, that the transportation of the mail ought not to be made a charge upon the public treasury, and that the Department should rely exclusively upon its own resources, except the expenditures in the General Post Office. They accordingly directed the chairman to address a letter to the Postmaster General, asking his opinion and views as to what could be done, consistently with the principle laid down by the committee. A copy of that letter, and the answer of the Postmaster General, accompany this report; and, from the facts disclosed in the letter, the committee are of opinion that there is no such sufficient cause of complaint against the rates of postage now imposed by law as would justify any material reduction of them; especially when it is ascertained that such reduction would diminish mail accommodations, and thereby impair the usefulness of the Department. The committee, therefore, recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved, That it is inexpedient, at this time, to pass any act reducing or changing the rates of postage.

DEAR SIR:

SENATE CHAMBER, *January 7, 1833.*

I have been directed by the Committee on the Post Offices and Post Roads to transmit to you the enclosed resolution of the Senate, and to ask your opinion and views in relation to the several subjects embraced in said resolution. The committee have decided that the Post Office Department should rely exclusively upon its own resources for the transportation of the mail; and, of course, any reduction in the rates of postage should be made upon that principle, and not under the expectation that a deficiency would be supplied from the treasury of the United States.

Yours, with respect,

FELIX GRUNDY.

HON. WILLIAM T. BARRY, *Postmaster General.*

SIR:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, *January 19, 1833.*

In answer to your inquiry concerning my opinion and views in relation to the several subjects embraced in the resolution of the Senate passed the 2d instant, I have the honor to state:

From the earliest period of our Government, when the circulating medium of the country was much more limited, and consequently its nominal value much greater than at present, there has been no essential variation in the price of postage, as will appear from the following statements. The law of February, 1792, fixed the rates thus:

Postage on a single letter, for any distance not exceeding 30 miles, 6 cents.

Exceeding 30 miles, and not exceeding 60 miles, 8 cents.			
60	do.	100	" 10 "
100	do.	150	" 12½ "
150	do.	200	" 15 "
200	do.	250	" 17 "
250	do.	350	" 20 "
350	do.	450	" 22 "
450	do.		25 "

Newspaper postage, not exceeding 100 miles, 1 cent.

Exceeding 100 " 1½ "

The law was revised by Congress in May, 1794, and the same rates of postage were again determined upon, as above stated, in 1792.

The law of March 2, 1799, fixed the rates of postage as follows:

Single letter postage, for any distance not exceeding 40 miles, 8 cents.

Exceeding 40 miles, and not exceeding 90 miles, 10 cents.			
90	do.	150	" 12½ "
150	do.	300	" 17 "
300	do.	500	" 20 "
500			25 "

Newspaper postage continued as before.

The law was revised in 1810, but no change made in the rates of postage.

From February 1, 1815, to March 31, 1816, 50 per cent. was added to all postages, for the purpose of raising a revenue in aid of the expenses of the war in which the country was then engaged.

In April, 1816, Congress established the rates as they now stand, to wit:

Single letter postage, for any distance not exceeding 30 miles, 6 cents.

Exceeding 30 miles, and not exceeding 80 miles, 10 cents.			
80	do.	150	" 12½ "
150	do.	400	" 18½ "
400	do.		25 "