

1st CONGRESS.]

No. 2.

[2d SESSION.

SURVEY AND PUBLICATION OF THE POST ROADS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 27, 1790.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, NEW YORK, *April 26th, 1790.*

The Postmaster General, to whom was referred the memorial of Christopher Colles, with orders to examine and report his opinion on the same, begs leave to submit the following observations: The General Post Office is subject to many inconveniences for the want of a survey and map of the roads of the United States. The obtaining the same will be of great public as well as private utility. The objections that may be made against the plan of the memorialist will naturally arise from a supposed inaccuracy in the execution—the measurement of the roads by a perambulator not being so much to be relied on as by a chain; and that the extensiveness of the work will exceed the ability of the memorialist.

From the experiments that have been made by the memorialist, the measurement appears to be sufficiently accurate for the establishing of distances on the post roads: as, in a distance of ten miles, there was only a variation of ten feet, and in ninety miles an exact agreement with the measurement made by a chain. When the roads are very uneven and broken, the perambulator will make the distance greater, in proportion to the unevenness of the surface, than it would be by measuring with a chain. The experiments, however, that have been made, were upon roads that were as uneven as the roads are, in a general view, in the United States. The ability of the memorialist to execute the work within a reasonable time is evident from what he has already executed; and as it is the principal, if not the only dependence he has for the support of himself and his family, there is no doubt but he will be as industrious as his slender means will admit.

The assistance requested of the public, at the rate of one eighth of a dollar per mile, will amount to about three hundred and seventy-five dollars: for the extent to be surveyed cannot vary much from three thousand miles. The Postmaster General, upon a due consideration of the benefits that will result from the execution of the work undertaken by the memorialist, is of the opinion that the public interest will be promoted by granting him the aid prayed for, in proportion to the distance surveyed, and the publication, after being qualified to its having been done with proper attention.

All which is respectfully submitted.

SAMUEL OSGOOD.

The Honorable the SPEAKER of the House of Representatives.

1st CONGRESS.]

No. 3.

[2d SESSION.

LIST OF POST OFFICES, AND THE RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES TO JANUARY 5, 1790.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 27, 1790.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, *New York, April 26, 1790.*

SIR:

I do myself the honor to enclose, agreeably to the order of the honorable House of Representatives, of the 15th instant, a return which shows the route by which the mail is carried within the United States; the emoluments to each of the Postmasters; the incidental expenses and the nett revenue of each office; also the nett revenue of the Department, and expense of transporting the mail, for one quarter ending the 1st of January; and an estimate of the expense of supporting posts on the several cross roads. There are several ports of entry with which there is no communication by posts. The Secretary of the Treasury has mentioned Bermuda Hundred and Tappahannock as the most important. It appears by the statement that the revenue arising on the cross roads is considerably short of the expense of transporting the mail. Should others be established, it is not probable that the revenue will bear a greater proportion to the expense than it does on those already established.

SAMUEL OSGOOD.

The Hon. the SPEAKER of the House of Representatives.