

[13th CONGRESS.]

No. 30.

[3d SESSION.]

SUNDAY MAILS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, JANUARY 27, 1815.

Mr. DAGGETT made the following report:

The Committee of the Senate, to whom were referred the petitions of numerous citizens of the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, North Carolina, and Ohio, praying the Congress to prohibit the transportation and opening of the mail on the Sabbath, having attended to the duty assigned to them, respectfully report:

That the importance of the subject, and the motives which actuate so large a portion of their fellow-citizens, are duly regarded and appreciated. Was the practice of the transportation of the mail on every day of the week now commenced, and that of opening it on the Sabbath under no regulations, the committee would consider it necessary to make some legislative provision on the subject. The General Government, from its establishment, has pursued a system of causing the mail to be transported on the Sabbath, on the great roads leading through and across the country, while the practice has been avoided on routes of less importance. The public convenience has justified these measures in the view of the Government. In 1810, a law was made, directing "that every Postmaster shall keep an office, in which one or more persons shall attend on every day on which a mail, or bag, or other packet or parcel of letters shall arrive, by land or water, as well as on other days, at such hours as the Postmaster General shall direct, for performing the duties thereof; and it shall be the duty of the Postmaster, at all reasonable hours, on every day of the week, to deliver, on demand, any letter, paper, or packet, to the person entitled to or authorized to receive the same." The committee learn, with pleasure, that the Postmaster General, under this law, has prescribed the following regulation: "At Post Offices where the mail arrives on Sunday, the office is to be kept open for the delivery of letters, &c. for one hour after the arrival and assorting of the mail; but in case that would interfere with the hours of public worship, then the office to be kept open for one hour after the usual time of dissolving the meetings for that purpose." Presuming that the Postmaster General will continue this regulation, and that he will, at all times, guard the Post Offices against improper practices, in respect to the opening the mail and the delivering of letters on the Sabbath; and considering the condition of the country, engaged in war, rendering frequent communication through the whole extent of it absolutely necessary, the committee deem it inexpedient, at this time, to interfere and pass any laws on the subject-matter of the petitions referred, and they, therefore, respectfully submit the following resolution:

Resolved, That, at this time, it is inexpedient to interfere and pass any laws on the subject-matter of the several petitions praying the prohibition of the transportation and opening of the mail on the Sabbath.

[13th CONGRESS.]

No. 31.

[3d SESSION.]

NUMBER OF POST OFFICES, AND THE PRODUCE OF POSTAGES FOR SIX MONTHS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 28, 1815.

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit to the Senate a report from the Postmaster General, complying with their resolution of the 15th of December last.

February 28, 1815.

JAMES MADISON.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, February 27, 1815.

The Postmaster General, in compliance with your directions, communicating a resolution of the Senate of the United States, relative to the Post Office establishment, respectfully reports—

That the subsequent pages contain an account of the number of miles of post road in each State; the number of Post Offices; the amount of postages, after paying the expenses of collection for six months, ending June 30, 1814; the expense of transporting the mail for six months, by the contracts now in operation, with the difference or balance of or against each State.

Also a detailed statement of the accounts of the several Post Offices, arranged under the heads of the several States, territories, and districts, for six months, ending June 30, 1814, showing the names of all Post Offices then in operation, from which accounts have been received; the names of the several Postmasters; the amount of postage collected on letters and packets; on newspapers; the compensation for delivering free letters; the commission on letter postage; on newspaper postage; the expenditure for ship letters; for way letters; for contingent articles; and the balance in favor of or against each office.

All which is respectfully submitted.

The PRESIDENT of the United States.

R. J. MEIGS.

Statement of the number of Post Offices in each State, produce of postages, &c. for six months.

STATES, &c.	Number of Post Offices.	Mile Post Road.	Nett amount of postages.	Transportation of the mail.	Balance in favor of United States.	Balance against the U. States.
Columbia, District,	3	44	\$3,673 55	\$902 00	\$2,771 55	
Connecticut,	116	1,091	9,526 73	3,170 50	6,356 23	
Delaware,	23	254	2,171 06	1,984 00	187 06	
Georgia,	66	1,784	7,875 28	6,523 50	1,351 78	
Indiana territory,	16	609	542 63	987 50	-	\$444 87
Illinois territory,	9	388	142 91	1,002 50	-	859 59
Kentucky,	85	2,158	7,626 75	8,642 00	-	1,615 25
Louisiana,	20	1,206	4,480 12	6,268 00	-	1,787 88
Maine,	127	1,080	4,768 72	4,900 00	-	131 28
Maryland,	103	1,422	21,024 43	10,922 00	10,102 43	
Massachusetts,	189	1,934	23,752 57	9,291 00	14,461 57	
Michigan territory,	1	66	436 92	525 00	-	88 08
Mississippi territory,	26	1,571	2,012 39	9,241 00	-	7,228 61
Missouri territory,	8	219	515 28	282 50	232 78	
New Hampshire,	100	1,187	3,397 55	2,684 50	713 05	
New Jersey,	101	919	5,689 15	5,412 00	277 15	
New York,	405	3,873	53,182 84	18,674 00	34,508 84	
North Carolina,	165	3,883	6,387 25	16,582 00	-	10,194 75
Ohio,	134	2,778	7,950 63	12,476 00	-	4,525 37
Pennsylvania,	265	4,012	38,736 74	24,185 50	14,551 24	
Rhode Island,	21	269	4,722 57	1,476 50	3,246 07	
South Carolina,	124	2,521	11,497 18	16,558 00	-	5,060 82
Tennessee,	66	2,255	3,212 82	8,736 50	-	5,523 68
Vermont,	118	1,200	3,702 06	3,436 00	266 00	
Virginia,	379	6,002	28,754 40	38,372 50	-	9,618 10

14th CONGRESS.]

No. 32.

[1st SESSION.]

REDUCTION OF POSTAGE.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS, JANUARY 2, 1816.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, December 21, 1815.

SIR:

I have the honor to state, in reply to your letter of the 18th instant, that the amount of postages vary materially from one quarter to another, when no change has been made in the rate.

The effect which the late addition of fifty per centum on the former rate has had cannot, therefore, be stated with precision. It appears by the statement No. 1, which is annexed, that there is an average increase of postage of 6 15-100 per cent. a year; and, by the statement No. 2, that, for six months, ending June 30, 1814, the gross produce of postages was \$365,443 79, and, therefore, that the gross produce for six months, ending June 30, 1815, without addition to the rate, should be \$387,919, and, by the same statement, that it actually produced \$513,003; then, taking \$331,995 as the principal of five months, it will have produced 37 6-100 nearly per cent. since the addition of fifty per cent. has been in operation. It is believed, however, that the return of peace, which has taken place during the period, the discharge of the army, and the extra impulse which has been given to commerce, would have produced a materially greater postage under the old rates than is estimated; and that the real increase, in consequence of the fifty per centum advance, cannot be more than thirty per cent.

The rates are considered too high, generally; and, from the information which I have received, much pains are taken to avoid postage, by seeking private conveyances.

It appears to me that a new table of rates might be devised, making, on the average, an increase of twenty per cent. on the former rates, which would not appear too high for the object, and would be as productive as the present rates.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. J. MEIGS, JUN.

Hon. Mr. LOWNDES, Chairman Committee of Way and Means.

Statement.—No. 1.

		Increase.
Amount of postages collected in 1805,	- - - \$421,373 23	\$31,923 59
Amount of postages collected in 1806,	- - - 446,105 79	24,732 56
Amount of postages collected in 1807,	- - - 478,762 71	32,656 92
Amount of postages collected in 1808,	- - - 460,564 18	18,198 53 diminution.
Amount of postages collected in 1809,	- - - 506,633 85	46,069 67
Amount of postages collected in 1810,	- - - 552,366 86	45,733 01
Amount of postages collected in 1811,	- - - 587,246 85	34,879 99
Amount of postages collected in 1812,	- - - 649,551 99	62,305 14
Amount of postages collected in 1813,	- - - 703,154 52	53,602 63
Amount of postages collected in 1814,	- - - 730,370 13	27,217 61
	<u>\$5,536,130 11</u>	<u>\$359,121 12</u>
		<u>18,198 53</u>
		<u>\$340,922 59</u>

As 553,613 : 340,923 :: 100 : 6 15-100.