

ARTICLES

July 31, 1863. *Additional to the Postal Convention between the Post Department of the United States of America and of Belgium.*
 [Obsolete.
 See post, p. 926.]

John A. Kasson, Esq., invested with full powers to this effect on the part of the Postmaster-General of the United States of America, and C. A. Fassiaux, &c., &c. The Director-General of the Administration of Railroads, Posts, and Telegraphs of Belgium, invested with full powers by the Minister of Public Works, who is charged with the postal administration, in consideration of the existing postal convention, Article XXVII., between the two countries concluded the 21st of December, 1859, have agreed as follows :—

Ante, p. 905.

Exchange of
correspondence
in closed mails;

ARTICLE I. There shall be a regular exchange of correspondence in closed mails between the Post Department of the United States and the Post Department of Belgium upon the conditions set forth in the following articles :—

by what
means.

ARTICLE II. The exchange of mails shall be effected by means of the transatlantic steamers, and of the intermediate routes of transit upon which the two postal administrations shall hereafter agree : or in the absence of such agreement, each postal administration shall designate the steamers and the route of transit by which the mails, which it despatches, shall be conveyed.

Offices for
exchange of
mails.

ARTICLE III. The offices for the exchange of mails on the part of the United States shall be :—

1. New York.
2. Boston.

On the part of Belgium, when the mails are despatched by the way of England :—

1. Ostend (local office.)
2. Ostend (travelling office.)
3. Antwerp.

The Post Departments of the United States and Belgium, whenever they shall find it necessary, may designate other offices of exchange.

Mail matter.

ARTICLE IV. The following articles shall be admitted into the mails exchanged between the two countries, to wit :—

1. Ordinary letters.
2. Registered letters.

3. Documents of business and other written documents which have not the character of a direct personal correspondence corrected proofs ; samples of merchandise, including grains and seeds, and not having a mercantile value in themselves.

4. Newspapers and prints of all kinds, in sheets, in pamphlets, and in books ; sheets of music, engravings, lithographs, photographs, drawings, maps, and plans.

Weight of
packets not to
exceed, &c.

ARTICLE V. The weight of each packet of samples of merchandise shall not exceed 500 grammes, and this limit may be at any time reduced to 300 grammes, if it shall be found necessary. The weight of any other packet of mailable articles, mentioned in the foregoing article (IV.) shall not exceed 2000 grammes, and the form of the packet shall be regulated by the practice of the despatching department. Packages of

Form.

documentary papers, corrected proofs, samples of merchandise, newspapers, and all kinds of prints, shall be limited in each dimension to 50 centimeters. The two departments reserve the right to reduce this dimension if, by their magnitude, such packages shall embarrass the service.

Dimensions may be reduced, if, &c.

ARTICLE VI. All mailable articles except letters shall be sent under band, or so enclosed that the postal agents in both countries may readily verify the contents of the packet.

Articles except letters to be sent under bands.

ARTICLE VII. The standard weight and progression for the single rate of postage upon all articles enumerated in Article IV. of this convention are established as follows:—

Weight and progression of single rates of postage.

1. For letters, 15 grammes.

Letters, &c.

2. For documentary manuscripts not having the character of a direct personal correspondence, for corrected proofs, and for samples of merchandise, 40 grammes.

3. For newspapers and prints of all kinds, embracing all mailable articles, not otherwise assigned, the standard shall not be less than 40 grammes in Belgium, or one ounce and a half in the United States; but each Post Department may establish a higher standard weight of progression, adapted to its interior requirements, for articles of this class which it despatches.

Newspapers, &c.

Higher standard;

The standard which it shall adopt, and any subsequent changes therein shall be communicated to the other department before they take effect.

to be communicated before going into effect.

ARTICLE VIII. The prepayment of postage upon ordinary letters exchanged between the United States and Belgium shall be optional; but letters not prepaid or insufficiently prepaid shall be charged in the country of destination, by way of penalty, with an extra fixed rate of 5 cents in the United States, and of 30 centimes in Belgium, irrespective of weight.

Prepayment of postage on letters optional;

extra for unpaid, &c. letters;

The prepayment of postage upon all other articles, including registered letters, shall be compulsory, and when they shall be in no part prepaid, they shall not be despatched, but in such case they shall be, if practicable, restored to the senders.

on other matter, compulsory.

ARTICLE IX. The articles under band which shall be in part prepaid shall be forwarded to their destination; but they shall be charged there with twice the amount of the difference between the rate due and the sum actually prepaid.

Articles under band part prepaid.

ARTICLE X. The international rate of postage upon the correspondence exchanged between the two countries is based upon the following elements, to wit:—

International rate of postage based upon what;

1. The interior rate of the United States.

2. The interior rate of Belgium, comprising therein the charge of conveyance across the English Channel.

3. The maritime rate.

4. The intermediate transit rate, and any reduction, which either country may obtain from the existing maritime and transit charges, shall enure to the benefit of the people of the two countries by a corresponding reduction of the international rates of postage established in the following article, so soon as the two departments shall have adjusted the amount.

ARTICLE XI. The international rates, combined of the elements above mentioned, (Article X.,) and applicable to each standard of progression for the several classes of mailable articles, are established as follows, to wit:—

established as what.

1. For ordinary letters, 20 cents in the United States and one franc in Belgium.

Letters.

2. For registered letters, in addition to the ordinary prepaid rate, an extra charge of 10 cents in the United States, and of 50 centimes in Belgium.

Registered letters.

Documentary
manuscripts,
proofs, samples,
&c.
Journals and
prints.

3. For documentary manuscripts, corrected proofs, and samples of merchandise, 20 cents in the United States, and one franc in Belgium.

4. For journals and all other prints, embracing articles not otherwise enumerated, the standard single rate shall be fixed by the despatching department, limited nevertheless by the maximum rate of 4 cents in the United States, and of 15 centimes in Belgium. And each department shall communicate to the other, in advance, the rate it shall adopt, and any subsequent change it shall make therein.

Combined
rates, how made
up.

ARTICLE XII. Of the combined rate of international letter postage hereby established, 3 cents represents the interior single rate of the United States, and 15 centimes the interior single rate of Belgium, comprising therein the cost of conveyance across the English Channel. The remainder of the combined rate is assigned to the payment of the cost of sea conveyance, and of intermediate transit, by whatever route the mails may be conveyed.

Articles under
band may be
registered.

ARTICLE XIII. Articles under band described in the third and fourth paragraphs of Article IV. of this convention, may be registered in either country for despatch to the other, upon payment of the registration fee of 10 cents in the United States, and of 50 centimes in Belgium, in addition to the prepayment of the regular postage.

Each depart-
ment to retain
to its own use
all postages, &c.
it collects;

ARTICLE XIV. In order to simplify postal accounts between the departments as much as possible, and to prepare the way for their ultimate abolition, each Post Department shall retain to its own use all the postal rates and charges, which it shall collect, whether by virtue of prepayment or post-payment; and each department shall pay the cost of conveyance of the mails which it despatches as far as the frontier of the country of destination. It is also especially provided that the cost of intermediate ocean and land conveyance of the closed mails shall be first defrayed by that one of the two departments, which shall have obtained from the intermediaries the most favorable pecuniary conditions of such conveyance, and any amount so paid by one department for account of the other shall be reimbursed.

and pay cost
of mails, &c.

Cost of inter-
mediate ocean
and land con-
veyance.

Mailable mat-
ter exempt from
any other
charges.

ARTICLE XV. It is distinctly agreed that all mailable articles addressed from one country to the other shall be exempt in the country of destination from any rate or fee whatever, beyond the charges established by this convention.

Free matter.

ARTICLE XVI. Correspondence exclusively relating to the postal service shall be transmitted on both sides without any postal charge therefor.

Missent and
misdirected
matter.

ARTICLE XVII. Correspondence of all kinds erroneously transmitted, or wrongly addressed, shall be promptly returned to the despatching department. Articles which shall have been addressed to persons who have departed from the place of destination leaving their address, shall be forwarded or returned, as the case may require, charged with the postage which the addressee would have been required to pay on delivery.

Letters and
registered arti-
cles not de-
livered, to be
returned.

ARTICLE XVIII. Letters, all registered articles, and all documentary manuscripts, which shall not be delivered to their address, shall be restored to the despatching department. Any of these articles which may have been forwarded by one department to the other, on account, shall be restored and credit taken for the amount originally charged by the despatching office. But samples of merchandise, newspapers, prints of all kinds, and all mailable articles not excepted, which cannot be delivered to their address, shall remain at the disposal of the receiving department, provided they shall not be reclaimed by the sender or addressee within six months from the date of their despatch.

Other mail
matter not to be
returned, unless
claimed within
six months.

Prohibited
articles not to be
distributed.

ARTICLE XIX. Neither Post Department is required to make distribution, within its jurisdiction, of any articles the circulation of which shall be prohibited by the laws in force in the country of destination.

ARTICLE XX. Each of the two Post Departments concedes to the other the privilege of transit across its territory, by its usual mail conveyances, of the closed mails exchanged by the other department with any foreign country to which it may serve as an intermediary, upon the following terms :—

Transit of closed mails.

The Post Department of Belgium shall receive for such transit (including the service across the English Channel) at the rate of 15 centimes per 30 grammes of letters, net weight, and 50 centimes per kilogramme for articles under band, net weight. The Post Department of the United States shall receive for the transit of Belgian closed mails across its territory at the rate of 5 cents per 30 grammes of letters, net weight; and 15 cents per kilogramme for articles under band, net weight.

Pay therefor.

The Post Department of the United States reserves from these conditions of transit the overland route to the Pacific ocean.

Overland route to the Pacific excepted. Further provisions.

Whenever the Belgian Administration shall receive and deliver the closed mails exchanged between the United States and the countries beyond Belgium on board the transatlantic steamers in the Channel, the British transit charge shall in such case be paid to the Belgian office: provided always, that the same international rate exists between the United States and such other countries, irrespective of the route of intermediate conveyance.

ARTICLE XXI. Correspondence of all kinds which either department shall despatch to the other for the purpose of being thence forwarded in its mails to another country of destination, shall be subject to the rates established by Article XI. of this convention, added to the ulterior rate in force beyond the frontier of the forwarding country; so that only one interior rate shall be received by the forwarding department.

Postage on matter sent to either country to be forwarded.

ARTICLE XXII. Small sums of money may be mutually transmitted between the two countries by means of postal money orders, so soon as the two departments shall have been duly authorized to this effect.

Postal money orders.

ARTICLE XXIII. Until the same scale of weights shall have been adopted by the two departments, it is agreed that, for the purposes of this convention, 15 grammes shall be taken, for letters, as the equivalent of one half ounce; and 40 grammes as the equivalent of one ounce and a half, for articles under band, and so with their respective multiples in progression, as applied by the respective offices. It is also understood that the rates upon correspondence shall be applied according to the weight stated by the despatching department, except in case of manifest error.

Equivalents of ounces and grammes.

ARTICLE XXIV. The provisions of the postal convention between the United States of America and Belgium, concluded at Washington the 21st December, 1859, are continued in force, so far as they are not inconsistent with the present articles, or with the regulations which shall hereafter be made in pursuance thereof, by the two departments.

Consistent provisions of former convention continued in force. *Ante*, p. 899.

ARTICLE XXV. This convention shall take effect from a day to be fixed by the two Post Departments, and shall continue in force until one year from notice given by one of the departments to the other of its intention to rescind it. It is understood that the rates provided by this convention shall not be applicable: First, to letters which shall be exchanged between the two departments by way of the British intermediate service until the British office shall have reduced the amount of its charges for territorial transit, and sea conveyance, to a rate not exceeding 14 cents for a single letter. Second: Nor to documentary papers and manuscripts, corrected proofs, and samples of merchandise, in like manner exchanged between the two countries by the intermediate service of the British Post, until the British office shall have admitted these articles upon the same pecuniary conditions with printed matter.

This convention when to take effect and how long to continue. These rates not applicable to what.

Convention
when to be
ratified.

ARTICLE XXVI. This convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged as soon as possible.

In witness whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present convention, and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate at Brussels, the thirty-first day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three.

[L. S.]

JOHN A. KASSON.

[L. S.]

FASSIAUX.

Approved :

M. BLAIR,
Postmaster-General.

Approved :

The Minister of Public Works,
JULES VANDERSTICHELN.