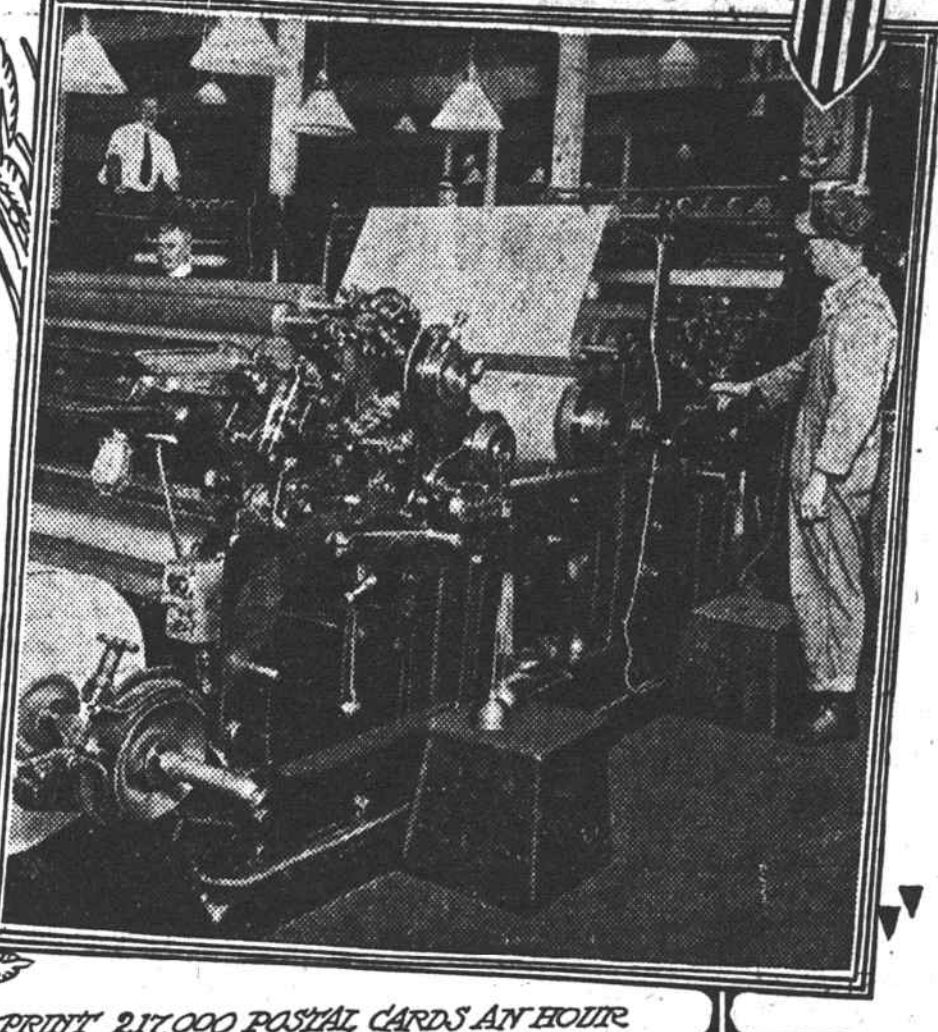


"New-Work" in the Postoffice



PRINTING 217,000 POSTAL CARDS AN HOUR

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

EVERYONE is interested in the workings of the Post Office department. Uncle Sam as mail carrier probably comes closer to the ordinary citizen in everyday life than in any other capacity. There are 340,000 workers in the department and it handles \$3,000,000,000 annually. Moreover, the ordinary public interest has been stimulated by the recent changes in the position of postmaster general. First was Will H. Hays, an Indiana lawyer, who resigned to become regulator of the moving pictures. Then came Hubert Work of Colorado, a practicing physician of national reputation. Now comes former United States Senator Harry S. New, an Indiana newspaper man. Dr. Work goes to the Interior department as secretary, succeeding Albert B. Fall of New Mexico, resigned.

Postmaster General Work, upon leaving the Post Office department, submitted a biennial report, March 4, 1921, to March 4, 1923, to the President. It is an exceedingly interesting document, so much so that the senate ordered it printed in the Congressional Record in body type. The purpose of this article is simply to set forth some of the items in this report which are of general public interest. Incidentally, two of the pictures are given as samples of progress. The postal card printing machine is really up to date and the solution of the problem of the most comfortable carrier for mail matter means a lot to the letter-carriers. A third shows former Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock sending the first package by parcel post December 31, 1913. It contained a silver loving cup addressed to Postmaster Morgan of New York which is now in the National museum at Washington.

The report bears the title, "Regeneration of the American Postal System," and begins with these statements: In 1920-21 the postal deficit was \$81,387,387.08; in 1921-22 the postal deficit was \$80,815,400.36; in 1922-23 the postal deficit will be \$30,000,000; in 1923-24 there will be no deficit.

The methods employed to reduce the deficits by nearly \$20,000,000 in the first period above were varied and ingenious. Examples are these:

Through the purchase of foreign exchange in anticipation of settlements of balances on money-order business, the Post Office department made a profit of \$130,000, with only a single loss of \$5,000. Through the cancellation of an existing four-year contract and successful negotiation of a new agreement, an economy of \$6,276,000 was effected. Sweeping changes in the method of purchasing supplies have earned approximately \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000 during the past two years. These changes consisted of canceling many contracts at war-time prices and in the elimination of long-term contracts covering every variety of supplies necessary for the Post Office department.

It appears that elimination of "tortuous" red tape, causing endless waste and delay in administration, was effected through the adoption of a policy of decentralization, the result of which has been the establishment of a miniature Post Office department in each state, known as a central accounting post office. Fifty-two of them have been organized and are in full operation throughout the country. These central accounting offices conduct the postal affairs of their respective territories, serving their post offices with promptness and dispatch almost incredible in comparison with the old method of handling all postal business in the department at Washington. The new system also changed accounting in post offices, permitting postmasters to finance themselves from their receipts instead of sending the money to the department and then having it returned to them through vouchers to cover their expenses. Rendition and auditing of half a million money-order accounts was abolished and these activities were transferred to the central accounting offices. Instituted with absolutely no extra cost, decentralization resulted in the release of 740 employees at the department at Washington, thereby saving \$1,200,000 annually. A summary of the functions of the central accounting post offices includes: auditing of quarterly accounts of postmasters; adjusting and payment of parcel-post claims; distribution of supplies, including stamps, within 24 hours instead of a week or ten days.

By way of contrast it is discovered in the report that rural route carriers of the postal service made a complete enumeration of the pig and sow production of the United States. This census, conducted after other administrations had refused to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture, was conducted in every state of the union, rural route carriers filling and distributing over 500,000 questionnaires to farmers. The result was the first accurate statistics upon the number of swine ever

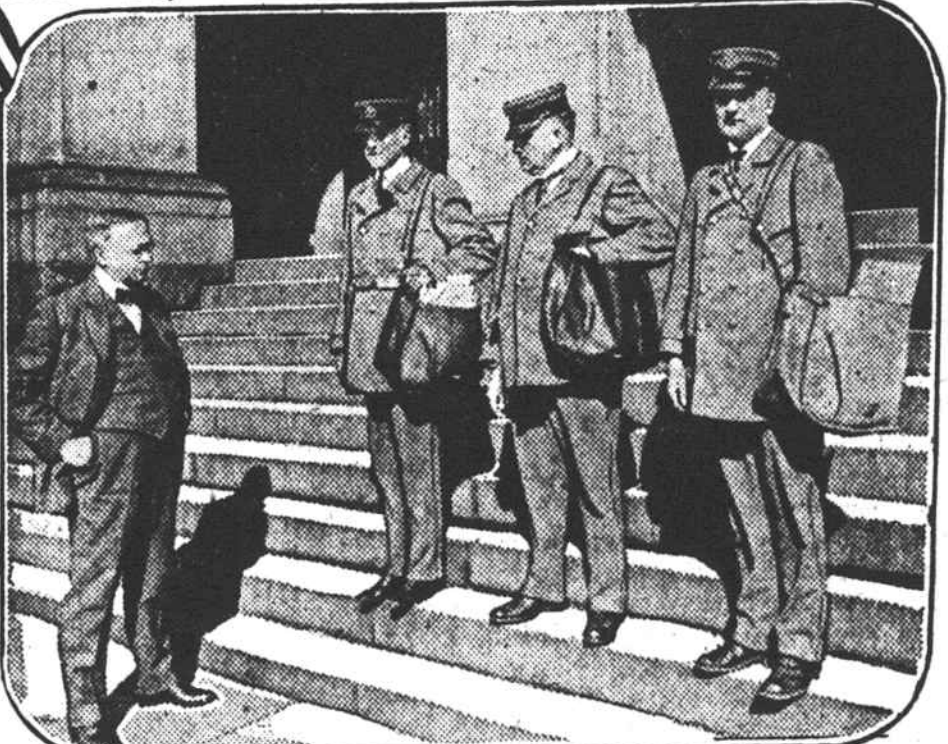
collected. Rural route carriers were also given permission to assist state authorities in distributing food to starving birds.

More than \$400,000,000 out of \$550,000,000 worth of war savings stamps maturing January 1, 1923, which have been redeemed thus far have been handled by the Post Office department. Of this amount about \$65,000,000 worth were exchanged for new treasury certificates. More than 50,000 cases of redemption requiring special procedure, such as claims on account of lost registered certificates, payment of certificates belonging to deceased owners, and so forth, have been adjusted to date. During the calendar year \$336,232,470 worth of treasury saving certificates has been so large as to nearly overwhelm the postal service, causing both postmasters and employees in the field and the department to work many hours overtime.

The world's greatest mail terminal—two blocks long, six stories high, and 80 feet wide—was opened in Chicago at the beginning of 1923 to consolidate the mail activities of this important transportation center of the nation. This new terminal has equipment capable of handling the postal business for the present and for years to come. Four miles of belt conveyor, the longest system ever installed, rapidly carry incoming mail to distributors and deliver sacked mail to spiral chutes leading to the mail cars. It is conservatively estimated that 600 per cent increase in efficiency, chiefly through the use of machinery adapted for parcel post, is effected in Chicago postal operations in the new building. The new, specially designed distribution system constitutes a revolution in the methods of handling parcel post, and when in full operation has a capacity of 100,000 sacks an hour. On the track over which the terminal is built 42 cars receive mail at one time.

No steps have been left untaken in extending the beneficence of rural mail delivery to the farming populations of the country. A total of 741 new rural routes were added during the past two years, giving daily mail facilities to 381,000 people. In addition by the lengthening and readjusting of over 4,000 existing rural routes, some 263,000 inhabitants of farms were provided with increased service. These changes had the direct effect of giving every modern postal convenience to more than 700,000 persons, bringing the number of rural routes in full operation to 44,186, supplying mail to approximately 6,425,000 families or 29,742,000 individuals living in rural districts. Particular efforts were also made to supply mail to farming sections lacking in transportation and railroad advantages by horse-drawn and motor vehicles, with the result that the number of star mail routes was increased to 10,715, involving an annual travel aggregating 83,208,656 miles.

A successful movement to facilitate the delivery of mails was the campaign for the installation by householders of mail receptacles at their front doors. Started in the summer of 1922, this crusade was pushed energetically by the Post Office department through postmasters. Hundreds of letter carriers also succeeded in inducing the patrons on their routes to provide these conveniences. Estimates compiled and submitted to the public during the course of the campaign showed that the sum of \$5,350,000 would be saved in the time of the 35,000 carriers formerly wasted in stopping at front doors, ringing door bells, and waiting for responses from householders. Another advantageous feature of particular appeal was the elimination of the necessity of patrons going to the door every time the mail man called. Practically every home throughout the United States is now equipped with a mail box or a door slot.



TRYING OUT SAM BROWN BELTS

In order to eliminate errors in the sale of stamps because of their similarity and to assist postal clerks throughout the service in detecting short-paid matter an entire new series of stamps, 21 in number, has been issued. Previously the various denominations were almost identical in appearance with portraits of either George Washington or Benjamin Franklin upon them, and with only a slight variation in color. The new series, regarded as a masterpiece in the art of engraving, were so designed that every one of the stamps had upon its face a different portrait or subject, with a distinctive contrast in the colors. The only change in denomination was the abandonment of the 13-cent stamp. A complete list of the revised designs follows:

- Franklin, 1c.
- Washington, 2c.
- Lincoln, 3c.
- Martha Washington, 4c.
- Roosevelt, 5c.
- Garfield, 6c.
- McKinley, 7c.
- Grant, 8c.
- Jefferson, 9c.
- Monroe, 10c.
- Hayes, 11c.
- Cleveland, 12c.
- Indian Head, 14c.
- Statue of Liberty, 15c.
- Yosemite Valley, 20c.
- Niagara Falls, 25c.
- Buffalo, 30c.
- Arlington Amphitheater, 50c.
- Lincoln, \$1.
- United States Capitol, \$2.
- American Head, \$5.

Already nine of these new stamps have been issued and will be in general use as soon as the old supply of stamps is exhausted at the various post offices of the country. The other 12 designs of the series are expected to be placed upon sale within the next few months.

Evidently a great deal has been done to revive the morale of the 340,000 workers and to improve working conditions. State "personal-contact" conventions with an "open forum"; a service relations organization with 1,049 chapters from coast to coast; free medical examination and vaccination; rest rooms and cafeterias; reduction of night work. Saturday half-holidays and "holiday holidays" are among the items set forth.

There have been appointed 9,891 postmasters since March 4, 1921. Of this number 1,320 were ex-service men, 1,611 were women, and 122 were employees who were promoted from the ranks without examination, the latter being an innovation which enabled the department to reward meritorious service. There have been 11,000 fourth-class postmasters appointed also, making a total of 20,960.

Haphazard handling of hotel mail addressed to traveling public has been supplanted by new system.

Stamps have been ordered sold at registered windows of post offices to end inconvenience to the public.

Postmasters have been instructed to participate in civic affairs of their respective communities as part of their duties.

Extra-quality envelopes with superior grade of paper have been placed on sale to supply public demand.

Box and refrigerator cars were clustered into service to handle immense volume of Christmas mails.

Cost of 2,080,000 pounds of paper purchased in 1922 reduced more than 15 per cent.

Chief engineer of Post Office department appointed to supervise mechanical equipment and labor-saving devices.

Finger printing of all postal savings depositors has been introduced as precaution against fraudulent post office clerks.

Early mail campaign has resulted in transferring many postal workers from night to day work.

BOY SCOUTS

(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

INDIAN BOY SCOUTS

"In the three troops at the Chemawa Indian school, Chemawa, Oregon, some remarkably fine scouts are being developed," says Scout Executive Zinser of Salem, Oregon.

"Remember, these boys come from all the different tribes of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Some of them have known no other environment than a snow igloo and no other clothing than garments of fur. Some have had wide experience in the hunting and fishing and with dog sledges of the North. Others were born and reared in the tepees of the Pacific Northwest tribes, but after all they are making scouts whom any troop would be proud to call their own.

"This school has as its athletic director and disciplinarian, George W. Bent, who is a descendant of a family of chieftains of the Cheyenne Indians. He is a graduate of the Carlisle Indian school. It was his intention to organize scouting in the school after he had spent a summer as camp director for the Salem (Oregon) local council. He first had to obtain the consent of the Department of Indian Affairs at Washington. This was obtained, and he went about organizing his troops.

"The school's superintendent who has had a lifetime experience with Indians is full of praise for the effect of the scout oath and law on the lives of these lads. The inspector for the Department of Indian Affairs expressed a high appreciation of the work scouts are doing. In his report to headquarters. These men are convinced that scouting is playing a big part in the lives of these boys, and that it is producing a lasting effect on the morals and discipline of the school.

"At the last commencement week exercises the scouts were given the responsibility of parking and guarding the large number of visiting automobiles. All the visitors were shown through the institution by scout guides. The lads took prominent part in the events of the week, including an afternoon of games, drills and scoutcraft.

"A recent contest between the Salem and the Chemawa members proved the efficiency of the Indian scouts. In the majority of the events they had the white boys bested. Their thorough training was evident. As a group they sing many of the scout songs, and their yelling is a good thing to listen to. They also have their own band.

"Two of the troops are led by white scoutmasters and one by an Indian."

CACTUS CENTER'S BOY SCOUT

Down here in Cactus Center, boys is a too seldom seen; We're mostly cattle outfits, and our schools is far between; But a kid who spent the winter down at Pecos Johnson's place Makes us proud that we have met him—durn his freckled, smilin' face!

It was when an Eastern party tried to auto through this way And they got lost in a sandstorm. They was gone for many a day 'Fore our outfit heard about it, but we scattered when we knew. And this kid from Pecos Johnson's—well, he sort of come on, too.

We didn't take no notice when the kid just eased away And poked off on the desert. We was busy day by day And we thought the search was hopeless, when this little, dusty scamp Dragged the party, all but perished, to the safety of our camp.

When we asked him how he done it, he refused to answer much. But we learned that this boy scouting made him wise to beat the Dutch; And, when it came to trailin', where the ground was rough and wild, He just followed boy scout teachin', which is good for man or child.

When we learned how he had tracked 'em—how he cheered 'em night and day—

How he dug and turned up water—how he found the shortest way— these things about him, when we learned these things about him, you could gather from our shouts That "O K," was what we brandied this here outfit of boy scouts. —Arthur Chapman in Boy's Life.

HISTORIC COLORS PRESENTED

When the U. S. S. Albany, a cruiser which did service in the Spanish-American war and the most recent war was dismantled, the official colors of the ship were put in the hands of the mayor of Albany, N. Y. Mayor Hackett, in his turn, in order that the colors might be kept in a place where the historical significance would be of benefit to the community, conferred their custody into the hands of the seascout ship *Hendrick Hudson I*, which is the official seascout division of the Albany boy scouts.

TEXAS SCOUTS MAKE RECORD

At the recent South Texas State fair the scouts stood ready at all times to help or render information. Among other "good turns," the boys found 72 lost children, handled six parades as traffic officers, acted as runners for officers of the association, furnished escort for children during the baby parade, parked automobiles in the fair grounds, met all incoming trains, and maintained an information bureau on the post office corner.

CONDENSED NEWS OF THE OLD NORTH STATE

SHORT NOTES OF INTEREST TO CAROLINIANS.

Wadesboro—County comm. exercises were held here. Exercises were of unusual interest and portance and were largely attended. The speech of the day was made by Dr. E. W. Sikes, of Hartsylvania, president of Coker College.

Winston-Salem.—Three coach passenger train Number 10, North Carolina Midland road, Charlotte and bound for Winston-Salem, jumped the track near Dryden. The only injuries sustained, bruises inflicted upon two members of the train crew.

Jackson Springs.—Commencement exercises of the local high school begin here on Sunday, May 20, at 10 a. m. with the sermon preached by Dr. C. G. Vardell, president of Macdonald College, at Red Springs. The speaker for the occasion has been announced yet.

Elon College.—Election of the student council, the self-governing body for the women students of the college, occurred at a mass meeting of the young ladies, Miss Allen, of Morganton, N. C. was elected president, the highest office with a gift of the student body.

Raleigh.—A New York architect been ordered to design buildings expected to cost approximately \$2,000 for North Carolina State College. It was learned from O. Max Gardner, member of the board of trustees, that contracts for construction will be soon after the plans are submitted to the board, it was stated.

Wadesboro.—The colored annex to the Anson Sanatorium was blown by the explosion of a boiler in the basement used in heating the building and windows and doors blown out. Although there were several people in the building none of them were injured.

Wilmington.—The 1923 strawberry crop of the Rocky Point section is a very short one because of considerable damage done to the plants and young berries by the winter freeze of a few days ago, according to J. M. Turner, of this city, who operates a large truck farm at Castle Harbo.

Jackson Springs.—Heavy rains have brought a halt to cotton planting. Much larger acreage will be planted this year due to the almost complete failure of the peach crop. The peach acreage will be increased a little, a large per cent of the fruit was killed. Large per cent of the fruit was killed.

Goldboro.—Charged by a conspiracy with the murder of his father John E. Smith, 75, Dewey Smith held here in jail without bail. According to the young man's testimony, he killed his father because he had quarreled with his mother and refused to her as an "old fool."

Charlotte.—Molloy Friday and Earl Hall, arrested in Durham for the murder of W. B. Peach, automobile mechanic, here, confessed to the crime when brought back to Charlotte by Officers W. W. McGraw and D. B. Bradley, according to a statement by Chief W. B. Orr, of the police department. Friday, Chief Orr said, admitted firing the shot that killed Peach.

Wilmington.—An attempt to rob the Bank of Council, at Council Bluffs county, was frustrated by Mrs. G. Holmes, who, attracted by a note in the rear of the bank building, kashed a light in her home across the street, frightening the robbers. The intruders broke open the door of the building with axes stolen from a shanty, and battered the outer door of the heavy safe from hinges before they were frightened away. A time lock on the inner door protected the contents of the vault.

Greensboro.—John Dunn, who was aged about 55 years, was instantly killed here near White Oaks when he was struck by southbound passenger train number 45. He was walking along the track when hit.

Davidson.—Having subscribed over 5,000 to the Davidson College Campaign Fund the senior class of Davidson has decided to dedicate their classroom in the new Chambers building to Dr. J. M. McCouncil, its most popular professor in the senior class.

Washington, N. C.—Hancock and Davis, of Beaufort, were awarded the contract by the city board of school trustees for the construction of the white and colored school buildings at a cost of \$155,768.50, being the lowest of all the bidders.

Whiteville.—Strawberries on the local market brought \$10.50 the crate. The market is very strong and the movement is growing heavier. Cane lots are expected to begin moving north the coming week.

Mount Olive.—Mack Brock, a well-known Duplin farmer, living six miles southeast of Mount Olive, died at his home following an illness of several days with pneumonia. Deceased was 68 years old and is survived by his wife and four children.

Durham.—Announcement has been made here by Mrs. Sallis F. Morgan of Richmond, Va., of plans to erect a memorial to cost \$10,000 or more at the Bennett place within the near future. Draftsmen are now at work drawing plans for the proposed memorial which will be one of the most handsome in the state.