

POSTAL SERVICE PAINTS PICTURE OF THE NATION

Postmaster General Work Delves deep into History of Postal System and Points to Benjamin Franklin, Whose Natal Anniversary is Being Celebrated during National Thrift Week, as its Founder

(By POSTMASTER GENERAL WORK)

Benjamin Franklin, that delightful philosopher and astute statesman, laid the foundation of the present postal system of the United States.

All the earlier postal history of the thirteen American colonies radiates about him as the central figure. Franklin served as postmaster of Philadelphia. He ran the office very much like a fourth class office in the smaller community life of this country is managed today. He owned a weekly newspaper and the post office was operated in conjunction with this publication. Franklin was named deputy postmaster general of the British colonies of America in the year 1753. Immediately his troubles began. Dispatching and delivering letters throughout the thickly wooded and sparsely populated areas in these pioneer times was a difficult task and there was little to encourage him. Then the mails were transported by couriers and six weeks were consumed in making the excursion from Philadelphia to Boston. During the winter months the couriers started out only twice in every thirty days. In most instances travelers made much faster time than the mail couriers along the same roads so that the postal system in the middle of the eighteenth century was unreliable as well as precarious.

However, Franklin set to work to reorganize the service. Trips were inaugurated weekly between Philadelphia and Boston throughout the year. The time of travel was shortened by one day and new routes were opened to Savannah and southern points and many improvements were effected. In the year 1763, after the British had driven the French from Canada, a new colony was opened and the first post office there with subordinate offices at Three Rivers and Montreal. A monthly service between Quebec and New York was promptly arranged with the courier making close connections with the boats sailing monthly between New York and Falmouth, England.

The colonial postal system—as is the case with our department today—was a losing business. The expenditures far outstripped the receipts. Franklin, as deputy postmaster general, was allowed to shoulder the burdens of the annual deficits out of his private purse, the debts running as high as \$90,000 by the year 1757. His salary that year was \$1,000. The British government took only the slightest interest in the post office of its American colonies, almost forgetting its very existence during this period.

But Franklin was obdurate. He kept his post riders covering the mails and maintaining his post offices at various villages regardless of the losses incurred. Three years later he saw the silver lining slip out from under the dark clouds. In 1760 the debt was not only entirely cleared up but upon balancing his books Franklin found a surplus of 278 pounds. In 1761 this surplus grew to the amount of 494 pounds and with a feeling of deep pride in the satisfaction displayed by a present-day postmaster general should he be able to report an annual profit to Congress, Deputy Postmaster General Franklin sent the money in a sailing vessel to the British postmaster general in London. After that a regular remittance was forwarded from America to the British crown covering annual earnings of the colonial postal service.

Although it is not generally known, Benjamin Franklin by the British crown as deputy postmaster general of the American colonies. The charge against him was that he made public a number of private letters passing through his hands from Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant Governor Oliver of Massachusetts, written to friends in England. These letters contained descriptions of the rebellious spirit displayed by the people in this colony against the despotism of British rule and urged the use of military force to suppress these growing sentiments. Vitality interested in seeing the struggle for justice and freedom succeed, Franklin permitted the publication of these letters, which resulted in the general assembly of Massachusetts adopting resolutions condemning Hutchinson and Oliver as inciters and breeders of oppression and petitioning the King for their removal from office. A widespread feeling of resentment swept over England against Franklin and no time was lost in summarily discharging him as deputy postmaster general.

After the Boston riots in September, 1774, it became inevitable that the colonies would separate from the mother country. A continental congress was organized at Philadelphia for the purpose of establishing a separate government and one of the first questions was that came up before the delegates was the matter of providing for the carrying and delivery of the mails. Benjamin Franklin, as chairman of a committee of investigation, made a report providing for the appointment of a postmaster general to conduct a postal system and his report was adopted. Franklin, himself, being named to the office. A line of posts was established by him from Massachusetts to Georgia, with many cross posts, and postmasters were selected for the principal communities.

This was the foundation laid for the present Post Office department of the United States, which has survived the vicissitudes of peace, war and political upheaval. Franklin served as colonial postmaster general until the election of George Washington as President of the Republic under the new constitution, when Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts became Postmaster General of the United States.

From this time on the rapid development of the postal system paralleled the amazing advancement of the nation commercially and industrially. The big problem that confronted the postmaster general in the early days of the United States was the transportation of the mails. The roads were poor and impassable during the winter seasons. In many instances only narrow trails through dense forests formed the connecting links between the villages and hamlets where post offices were located. Couriers traveling by foot and riding horseback carried the mail during the early part of the nineteenth century as they did in Franklin's postal regime. Then it was discovered that the stage coaches that made regular trips between Boston, New York, Philadelphia and other points could be utilized for this purpose and the first leather mail pouches sufficient to hold large quantities of letters came into existence.

There is a glaring contrast between the stage coach lumbering heavily over the public highways in those days and the swift airplane darting above the mountains and prairies at the present time. Yet transporting the mails

after dark. They were also very cautious in their negotiations with the government not to promise any service that they were not certain could not be performed. A letter recently found, dated December 29, 1838, written by R. T. Hayne, Esquire, president of the South Carolina and Charleston Railroad company, to Postmaster General Amos Kendall, is a unique example. A verbatim copy of which follows:

Charleston 29th, December 1838.
Dear Sir:
Your favor dated 28th, 9 o'clock P. M. was received this day and has been held before the Committee charged with making a contract for the transportation of the daily mail on our Rail Road between Charleston and Hamburg. I am instructed by the Committee to say that they cannot consent to contract for the departure of their cars at a later hour than half past 7 in the morning for their arrival at an earlier hour than half past 4 in the afternoon. It was stated to you frankly in the beginning, and has been repeated in all our communications, that from the character and condition of our road and the nature of the country it was not deemed safe to undertake to convey passengers upon it in the night and that in the present state of the road it would be impossible to make the run with certainty so as to meet the hours of 8 and 4 as proposed by you. In particular seasons and under favorable circumstances it might be done, but we know that we would frequently fail and we could not contract to do that which we know beforehand could not be performed and having determined that the safety of the passengers forbids our running in the dark we have no alternative but to adhere to the hours stated. Indeed, this proposition postpones the departure hour half an hour beyond the present time, which has been done expressly to accommodate you and the Wilmington Company who certainly will arrive at 6 o'clock as they now certainly do. You are mistaken in supposing that in my conversation with you in the presence of Mr. Huber I proposed any hours different from the above. You are correct in saying that I intimated "a willingness to deliver the mail upon the boats at 5 P. M. and to receive it from the Boat at 7, provided the Postmaster General agreed to the sum of \$200 per mile. This arose out of a suggestion of Mr. Huber and yourself, that possibly arrangements might be made to take the mails directly from the boats to the rail road, which I knew could be done in twenty minutes. We showed you a willingness to make that arrangement, though we should greatly prefer the delivery of the mails to us (as at present) at fixed hours at our depository. In short any arrangement consistent with our certain departure from our depository not later than half past seven and our arrival there at half past 4 would represent no insuperable difficulty to contract to do more would be to bind ourselves to do what we could be effected without frequently running in the night which our duty to the public will not permit. At some future time when the improvements on our road shall be finished we may be able to effect what you desire, but it is impracticable now. To satisfy you of our desire to go as far as possible to meet your wishes, we shall be happy to make an experiment with you of carrying the mail between the hours of half past 7 and half past 4, beginning any day after the first of January you may advise, so that you may satisfy yourself of the practicability of effecting your object through proper arrangements with the Post Offices and the Wilmington Company. I forbear to enter into any further details and still hope that seeing our anxious desire to meet the views of the department and the public convenience, you may be enabled to make the necessary arrangements for carrying our objects in effect."

In 1838, the very time that this letter was written, there were only 200 miles of railroads in the nation carrying the mails. Since then year after year the railroads for carrying the mails with the advancement in railroad construction until the present time, when the mails are being transported over no less than 231,981 miles of railroad track.

From these small beginnings the service of the United States gradually developed into the greatest postal machine ever known. When Benjamin Franklin was Postmaster of the thirteen colonies fighting the war of independence there were 75 post offices. Now there are 62,000. Then the gross receipts totaled \$30,000 annually and gross expenditures were \$30,840. During the last fiscal year the post office revenues reached the astonishing figures of \$484,853,000 with gross expenses running to \$45,644,000. The annual payroll for postmasters that Benjamin Franklin made out and paid, amounted each year to about \$6,000 to compensate the 75 postmasters handling the mails at that time. The payroll of the Post Office department for postmasters last year necessitated an outlay of money amounting up to \$43,697,000.

The postal service is now the biggest business in the world. It employs around 332,900 workers—a hundred thousand more than any other business institution in this country or any other one—and handles during the course of every twelve months the gigantic sum of \$3,000,000,000.

Between the time of Franklin, the first Postmaster General, and that of the writer who is writing the picture of the United States has been painted.

It is best viewed through the history of the postal service, which has faithfully chronicled the march of events, and as curiously enough, the fundamentals of thrift set up in Poor Richard's Almanac by Franklin, upon which the character of able men has heretofore been founded, and upon which nations must stand, are as apt today as when written.

through the air was not a wild flight of the imagination to the early citizens of the American Republic. As a matter of fact the American public men were intensely interested in the speedy dispatch of the mails between post offices and offered frequent suggestions to the postmasters general serving as heads of the Post Office department.

One of these, astonishingly prophetic of the future, was made in 1822 when the editor of the Freeman's Journal, published at Norristown, Pennsylvania, advised Postmaster General McLean that it might be possible to carry the mails by the use of "flying ships." The editor of this publication wrote, as follows:

"We would advise the Postmaster General to avail himself of the novel and very ingenious flying machine invented by James Bennett of Philadelphia, by which we conceive the mails would be transported with more celerity and their arrival at the places of destination be much more certain than is the case at the present."

While the Post Office department evidently in contemplation of such friendly advice at that time, this does not mean that it was entirely wasted, for in less than one hundred years later the mails were actually being transported by flying machines "with more celerity" and with arrival at their places of destination much more certain," just as was originally predicted by the editor of the Freeman's Journal. In this connection, too, it should be noted that in the haste of the first days of operation of the stage coach loaded with mail one man was killed while the mails last year were carried two million miles without a single fatality.

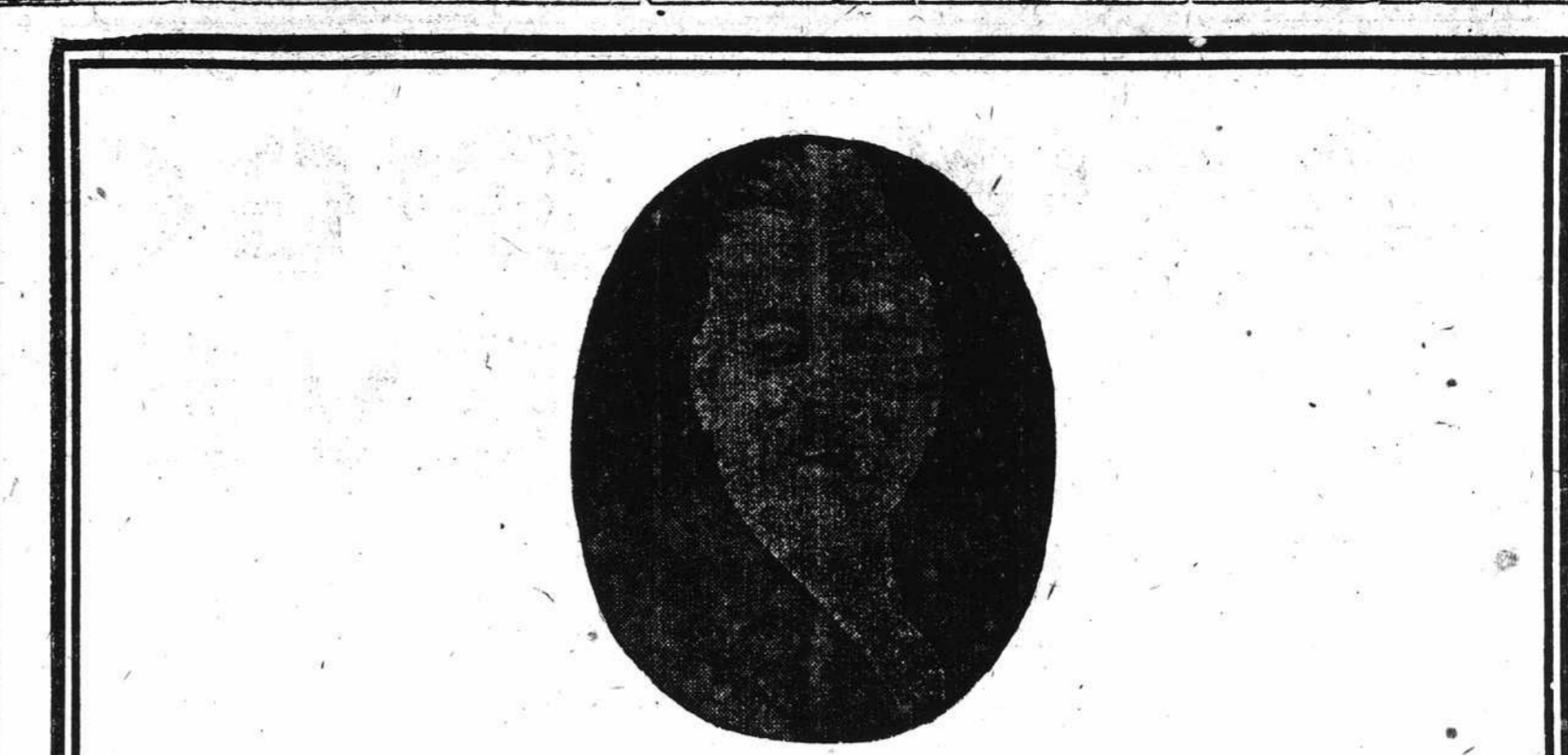
Illustrative of the mode of the selection of the postmasters in these days is an ancient commission issued by Postmaster General McLean to Thomas Lindsey, Esquire, the first postmaster to serve at Cherry Ridge, Pennsylvania, that was recently unearthed. Printed in quaint Gothic on aged paper, this document is dated July 13, 1824, and shows the old seal of the Post Office department long since abandoned, with the design of the God, Mercury, with wings on his feet. The commission reads like this:

"Know ye, that confiding in the integrity, ability and punctuality of Thomas Lindsey, Esquire, I do appoint him as postmaster and authorize him to execute the duties of that office at Cherry Ridge, Wayne County, State of Pennsylvania, according to the laws of the United States and such regulations conformable thereto as he shall receive from me; to hold said office of postmaster in and for the town, village and hamlets to the same belonging during the pleasure of the postmaster general of the United States for the time being."

That the game of politics was played in the early history of the Republic even more than now with regard to the distribution of federal patronage, is indicated by the specific clause in this commission declaring that the tenure of office of the Cherry Ridge postmaster shall be ended at the pleasure of the postmaster general.

The year 1836 saw the beginning of the transition from the stage coach to the railroad car as a means of transporting the mails. It was at this period that the first railroad lines were constructed in the United States and while they were crude and the schedules maintained by their trains extremely uncertain, no time was lost in making use of them for carrying the mails. A rather haphazard method of administration was in vogue in the Post Office department at that time. Contracts were let to private individuals to haul the mails in the stage and in certain instances postmasters were allowed certain sums to handle the transportation of the mails over routes from their own post office to others, so that when new railroad lines were built these postmasters frequently made arrangements personally for hauling the mails with the railroads without even consulting the department at Washington. In other cases the private contractors simply transferred their contracts to the railroad and the compensation received for carrying the mails by the steam carriers being the same as was paid to the owners of the stage coach lines.

Several years later, however, when contracts with railroads passed the experimental stage and a regular network of railroad lines was built up, connecting the larger as well as the smaller communities of the country, the Post Office department abolished these private contracts and took over the entire management of mail transportation. This was necessary to assure connection between trains at terminal points. The postmaster general himself negotiated with railroads, both through personal interviews with the executives of the steam carriers and through correspondence, making direct contracts between the companies and the government. Among the files of the department are quite a number of documents dealing with these negotiations. The great difficulty in those early days was to induce the railroads to operate trains at night for the purpose of making connections with other lines and thus obtaining a speedier dispatch of the mails. The railroad officials were extremely wary. They objected to taking any chances and frequently refused to accede to the requests of the postmaster general to run trains



The Georgia Farmer Who Beat The Boll-Weevil

To a practical Georgia farmer, Mr. L. D. Hill, of Burke County, goes the credit for having developed the most efficient and economical boll weevil poison yet offered the farmer; a poison which attracts the weevil, which a child can apply without machinery, and which can be put on in daytime, not at night!

Touch the Top-- And Off They Drop

Hill's Mixture (the name of this poison) contains three elements—calcium arsenate as a poison, molasses as a binder, and a third (secret) element which attracts the weevil from any part of the plant and kills him. It has been endorsed by every farmer who has used it, by the President of the American Cotton Association, and the Manufacturer's Record. We will be glad to send you booklet of unimpeachable evidence upon request.

Like many other great benefits that have come to mankind, Hill's Mixture is simple and easy to use. Just pour your Hill's Mixture into a bucket; take any piece of wood or stick that is handy; tie a rag on the end of it and make a mop. Walk down between your cotton rows and dip your mop in Hill's Mixture and daub some on the top of each cotton plant as you walk by it. And in a few hours after you "touch the top" why "off they drop." HILL'S MIXTURE GETS 'EM.



HAS NEVER HAD A FAILURE

What more can you say? Success is Success and that's all any man can ask for. Thousands of bales of cotton have been carried to the gin where but as many hundreds were carried before. Hundreds of farmers have used and hundreds more are demanding Hill's Mixture and the record is one unbroken story of success—a full crop of cotton wherever Hill's Mixture is used.

Full Protection for \$3.50 Per Acre

This is the lowest price that has ever been paid for absolute and positive protection against loss by boll weevils. Three dollars and a half an acre!!! Who wouldn't pay \$3.50 an acre to raise a full bale of cotton?? Do you know any farmer in this United States who wouldn't gladly pay this price and then some?

Think this over. Read this advertisement again and you'll begin to realize what Mr. L. D. Hill, of Burke County, Gough, Georgia, has done for the thousands of cotton farmers who have been going down the road to financial ruin on account of the pesky Mexican Boll Weevil.

ORDER HILL'S MIXTURE NOW! Raise a full crop of cotton and make your name worth as much as it used to be with the business men and bankers of your community.

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With capital, livestock, equipment, farm buildings and a complete organization to run many big plantations all dependent upon cotton, Mr. L. D. Hill came to the point where he had to have protection against the boll weevil or face ruin. He tried diversified farming; it failed. His only way of saving himself, was to kill the boll weevil. On his ability to do this, he staked \$23,000.00 in cash and five years of effort. The result of his courage and hard work is Hill's Mixture, which has enabled him to make back his \$23,000.00 in two years on his plantations, and has demonstrated to the world that Hill's Mixture is the most successful SOLUTION OF THE BOLL WEEVIL PROBLEM.

No Night Work or Expensive Machinery

Not only does Hill's Mixture bring death and destruction to the boll weevil, but it lifts two big burdens from the shoulders of the cotton farmer, that he has had to bear in his efforts to combat the boll weevil. Hill's Mixture can be used any hour of the day; early morning, at noon, in the afternoon or the late evening; it makes no difference, Hill's Mixture always does the work. Use Hill's Mixture according to the laws of Nature: work in the day time and sleep at night.

More than this, instead of spending hard earned cash for machinery, the only tools you need to treat 5 acres of cotton a day with Hill's Mixture, is a common ordinary bucket and a stick with a rag tied around one end. Use the bucket and stick and put your machinery money in the bank.

PRICES: The price of Hill's Mixture is 70c a gallon, freight free to any Georgia or S. Carolina point, plus \$3.00 for barrel. It comes in 50-gallon steel hoop hogsheads. This is enough Hill's Mixture to bring a 10-acre crop of cotton through free and protected from boll weevils. When you get through with the hogshead, if you want to return it to us in good condition, we will refund you \$2.50 in cash for it. Buy Hill's Mixture from our agent in your county or order from us direct.

AGENTS WANTED: We want agents in every county. We'll advertise Hill's Mixture in their newspapers over their names. If you know how to make a crop of cotton and want to do something for the good of all the farmers of your county, build up your community and at the same time make something for yourself, WRITE US AND WE WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO DO IT WITH HILL'S MIXTURE. Send your name and address. Responsible men, able to furnish references, only considered.

Hill's Mixture Corporation

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

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I am a licensed practicing physician and personally select the treatment for each individual case, thus enabling me to choose remedies that will produce not only a loss of weight harmlessly, but which will also relieve you of all the troublesome symptoms of over-tousness such as shortness of breath, palpitation, indigestion, rheumatism, gout, asthma, kidney trouble and various other afflictions which often accompany over-tousness.

My treatment will relieve that depressed, tired, sleepy feeling, giving you renewed energy and vigor, a result of the loss of your superfluous fat.

You are not required to change in the slightest from your regular mode of living. There is no dieting or exercising. It is simple, easy and pleasant to take.

If you are over-tous do not postpone but sit down right now and send for my FREE TRIAL TREATMENT and my plan whereby I am to be PAID ONLY AFTER REDUCTION HAS TAKEN PLACE if you so desire.—adv.

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