ANNO TRICESIMO SEPTIMO

Georgii III. Regis.

CAP. XVIII.

An Act for altering certain Rates of Poſtage for Conveyance of Letters in *England* and *Scotland* reſpectively, and of Packets to and from *Great Britain*, from and to *Portugal* and the *Britiſh* Colonies in *America* reſpectively; and for ſetting apart at the Receipt of the Exchequer, for a certain Period, out of the Revenues of the Poſt Office, the Annual Sum of Forty thouſand Pounds, towards defraying the increaſed Charge occaſioned by any Loan raiſed, or Stock created, by any Act or Acts paſſed in the Thirty-fifth Year of the Reign of His preſent Majeſty. [28th *December* 1796.]

Moſt Gracious Sovereign,

Preamble.

WHEREAS it is expedient that certain Rates of Poſtage eſtabliſhed by an Act of the Ninth Year of the Reign of Her late Majeſty Queen *Anne*, and by Two ſeveral Acts of the Fifth and Twenty-fourth Years of Your Majeſty's Reign, ſhould be repealed: We, Your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of *Great Britain* in Parliament aſſembled, as well for the Purpoſes aforeſaid, as towards raiſing the neceſſary Supplies to defray Your Majeſty's publick Expences, and making a permanent Addition to the Publick Revenue, have freely and voluntarily reſolved to give and grant

unto Your Majeſty the Rates and Duties herein-after mentioned; and do therefore moſt humbly beſeech Your Majeſty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's moſt Excellent Majeſty, by and with the Advice and Conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this preſent Parliament aſſembled, and by the Authority of the ſame,

From *Jan.* 5, 1797, ſo much of 9 *Annæ*, Cap. 10;

That ſo much of an Act, made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Her late Majeſty Queen *Anne*, intituled, *An Act for eſtabliſhing a General Poſt Office for all Her Majeſty's Dominions, and for ſettling a Weekly Sum out of the Revenues thereof, for the Service of the War, and other Her Majeſty's Occaſions*; and ſo much of an Act, made in the Fifth Year of Your moſt Gracious Majeſty's Reign, intituled, *An Act to alter certain Rates of Poſtage; and to amend, explain, and enlarge, ſeveral Proviſions in an Act made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Queen* Anne, *and in other Acts relating to the Revenue of the Poſt Office;* and alſo ſo much of another Act, paſſed in the Twenty-fourth Year of Your moſt Gracious Majeſty's Reign, intituled, *An Act for granting to His Majeſty certain additional Rates of Poſtage for Conveyance of Letters and Packets, by the Poſt, within the Kingdom of* Great Britain; *for preventing Frauds in the Revenue, carried on by the Conveyance of certain Goods in Letters and Packets; and for further preventing Frauds and Abuſes in relation to the ſending and receiving of Letters and Packets free from Poſtage*, as eſtabliſhes certain Rates or Sums for the Port and Conveyance of Letters and Packets within that Part of the Kingdom of *Great Britain* called *England*, the Dominion of *Wales*, and the Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, ſhall, from and after the Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, be, and the ſame are hereby repealed.

5 *Geo.* III, Cap. 25, and 24 *Geo.* III, Seſſ. 2, Cap. 37, as eſtabliſhes certain Rates of Poſtage in *England*, *Wales*, and *Berwick upon Tweed*, repealed, and

the following Rates to be taken:

II. And be it further enacted, That, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, it ſhall and may be lawful to and for His Majeſty's Poſtmaſter General, and his Deputy and Deputies by him thereunto ſufficiently authorized, to and for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, to demand, have, receive, and take, for the Port and Conveyance of all Letters and Packets which he ſhall convey, carry, or ſend Poſt, within that Part of *Great Britain* aforeſaid, according to the ſeveral Rates and Sums herein-after mentioned, the ſame being rated by the Letter or by the Ounce; that is to ſay,

Rates.

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter ſo conveyed or carried by the Poſt, not exceeding Fifteen meaſured Miles from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Three-pence; for every Double Letter Sixpence; for every Treble Letter Nine-pence; and for every Ounce in Weight One Shilling; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce:

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter conveyed or carried by the Poſt above Fifteen meaſured Miles, and not exceeding Thirty meaſured Miles from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Four-pence; for every Double Letter Eight-pence; for every Treble Letter One Shilling; and for every Ounce in Weight One Shilling and Four-pence; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce:

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter conveyed or carried

by the Poſt above Thirty meaſured Miles, and not exceeding Sixty meaſured Miles from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Five-pence; for every Double Letter Ten-pence; for every Treble Letter One Shilling and Three-pence; and for every Ounce in Weight One Shilling and Eight-pence; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce:

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter conveyed or carried by the Poſt above Sixty meaſured Miles, and not exceeding One hundred meaſured Miles from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Sixpence; for every Double Letter One Shilling; for every Treble Letter One Shilling and Sixpence; and for every Ounce in Weight Two Shillings; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce:

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter conveyed or carried by the Poſt above One hundred meaſured Miles, and not exceeding One hundred and fifty meaſured Miles from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Seven-pence; for every Double Letter One Shilling and Two-pence; for every Treble Letter One Shilling and Nine-pence; and for every Ounce in Weight Two Shillings and Four-pence; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce:

And for the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter conveyed or carried by the Poſt One hundred and fifty meaſured Miles, or upwards, from the Office where ſuch Letter may be put in, to the Office where ſuch Letter may be delivered, within that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, the Sum of Eight-pence; for every Double Letter One Shilling and Four-pence; for every Treble Letter Two Shillings; and for every Ounce in Weight Two Shillings and Eight-pence; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce.

The following additional Rates to be taken for Poſtage of Letters in *Scotland*:

III. And be it further enacted, That, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, it ſhall and may be lawful to and for His Majeſty's Poſtmaſter General, and his Deputy and Deputies by him thereunto ſufficiently authorized, over and above the Rates of Poſtage now payable, to demand, have, receive, and take, for the Port and Conveyance of all Letters and Packets which he ſhall convey, carry, or ſend Poſt, within *Scotland*, the additional Rate of Poſtage herein-after mentioned; that is to ſay,

Rates.

For the Port and Conveyance of every Single Letter One Penny; for every Double Letter Two-pence; for every Treble Letter Three-pence; and for every Ounce in Weight Four-pence; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce.

Rates eſtabliſhed by firſt recited Act to and from *Portugal*, and by the ſecond to and from *America*, repealed.

IV. And be it further enacted, That ſo much of the ſaid Act, made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Her late Majeſty Queen *Anne*, as eſtabliſhes Rates of Poſtage for Letters from and to *London*, to and from *Portugal*; and ſo much of the ſaid Act, made in the Fifth Year of Your moſt

moſt Gracious Majeſty's Reign, as eſtabliſhes Rates of Poſtage for Letters from and to *London*, to and from the *Britiſh* Dominions in *America*, ſhall, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, be, and the ſame are hereby repealed; and that, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, it ſhall and may be lawful to and for His Majeſty's Poſtmaſter General, and his Deputy and Deputies by him thereunto authorized, to and for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, to demand, have, receive, and take, for the Port and Conveyance of all and every the Letters, Packets, and other Things, which ſhall be carried or conveyed from or to the Kingdom of *Great Britain*, to or from the Kingdom of *Portugal*, a Packet Poſtage according to the ſeveral Rates herein-after mentioned; that is to ſay,

The following Rates to be taken for Letters to and from *Portugal*.

Rates.

For all Letters and Packets, paſſing from any Part of the Kingdom of *Great Britain* to *Liſbon*, or to any other Port in the Kingdom of *Portugal*, and from any ſuch Port into *Great Britain*; for every Single Letter One Shilling; for every Double Letter Two Shillings; for every Treble Letter Three Shillings; and for every Ounce in Weight Four Shillings; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce.

The following Rates to be taken for Letters to and from the *Britiſh* Dominions in *America*.

V. And be it further enacted, That, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, it ſhall and may be lawful to and for His Majeſty's Poſtmaſter General, and his Deputy and Deputies by him thereunto authorized, to and for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, to demand, have, receive, and take, for the Port and Conveyance of all and every Letters, Packets, and other Things, which ſhall be carried or conveyed from or to the Kingdom of *Great Britain*, to or from any Port within the *Britiſh* Dominions in *America*, a Packet Poſtage according to the ſeveral Rates herein-after mentioned; that is to ſay,

Rates.

For all Letters and Packets paſſing from any Part of the Kingdom of *Great Britain*, to any Port within the *Britiſh* Dominions in *America*, and from any ſuch Port into *Great Britain*; for every Single Letter One Shilling; for every Double Letter Two Shillings; for every Treble Letter Three Shillings; and for every Ounce in Weight Four Shillings; and ſo in Proportion for every other Letter or Packet of greater Weight than an Ounce.

Letters to or from *Portugal* or *America* chargeable with the Inland Rates.

VI. And be it further enacted, That over and above the Rates aforeſaid, all Letters and Packets paſſing to or from *Portugal*, from or to that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, or to or from the *Britiſh* Dominions in *America*, from or to that Part of *Great Britain* as aforeſaid, ſhall be charged with the full Inland Rate of Poſtage hereby eſtabliſhed, according to the Diſtance ſuch Letters and Packets ſhall be conveyed within *England*, the Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, and with the full Inland Rate of Poſtage now payable, together with the additional Rate of Poſtage hereby eſtabliſhed, according to the Diſtance ſuch Letters and Packets ſhall be conveyed within *Scotland*.

Mode of charging Letters by Weight.

VII. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That no Letter or Packet, together with the Contents thereof, ſhall be rated at an higher Rate

Rate of Poſtage, according to the Rates and Duties hereby granted, than as a Treble Letter, unleſs the ſame ſhall be One Ounce in Weight; and that all Letters and Packets of the Weight of One Ounce, ſhall be rated as Four Single Letters, and in Proportion for every Quarter of an Ounce above the Weight of an Ounce, reckoning each Quarter of an Ounce as a Single Letter.

Act not to alter the Charge of Poſtage on Single Letters from or to Non commiſſioned Officers, &c eſtabliſhed by 35 *Geo.* III, Cap. 53.

VIII. Provided alſo, and be it further enacted, That nothing herein contained ſhall increaſe or alter, or be conſtrued to increaſe or alter, the Amount or Manner of charging the Rates of Poſtage upon Single Letters to be ſent by the Poſt by or to Non-commiſſioned Officers, Seamen, and Privates, on their own private Concerns, whilſt ſuch Non-commiſſioned Officers, Seamen, and Privates, ſhall be employed in His Majeſty's Navy, Army, Militia, Fencible Regiments, Artillery, and Marines, made payable by an Act paſſed in the Thirty-fifth Year of Your moſt Gracious Majeſty's Reign, intituled, *An Act for further regulating the ſending and receiving Letters free from the Duty of Poſtage; for allowing Non-commiſſioned Officers, Seamen, and Private Men, in the Navy and Army, whilſt on Service, to ſend and receive Letters at a low Rate of Poſtage; and for permitting Patterns and Samples of Goods to be tranſmitted by the Poſt at an eaſier Rate than is now allowed by Law*; any Thing herein-before contained to the contrary thereof in anywiſe notwithſtanding.

Proviſions of Acts relating to the Poſt Office, not hereby repealed or altered, to continue in Force.

IX. And be it further enacted, That, from and after the ſaid Fifth Day of *January* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-ſeven, all and every the Clauſes, Proviſions, Powers, Privileges, Advantages, Diſabilities, Penalties, and Methods, for the Recovery of the ſame, and all other Matters and Things in Force, at the Time of paſſing this Act, and contained in the ſaid Act, made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Her ſaid late Majeſty Queen *Anne*, or in any other Act or Acts of Parliament, ſo far as the ſame relates to the Poſt Office, (and not repealed or altered by this Act), ſhall continue in Force, and ſhall be applied and extended, and ſhall be conſtrued to apply and extend, to this preſent Act, as fully and effectually, to all Intents and Purpoſes, as if the ſame had been particularly repeated and re-enacted in the Body of this preſent Act.

Rates to be paid to the Receiver General of the Poſt Office, and by him into the Exchequer, and carried to the Conſolidated Fund.

X. And be it further enacted, That the ſeveral Rates and Duties herein-before granted ſhall be paid, from Time to Time, into the Hands of the Receiver General for the Time being of the Poſt Office, who ſhall pay the ſame (the neceſſary Charges for collecting, paying, and accounting for the ſame being firſt deducted) into the Receipt of His Majeſty's Exchequer, on ſuch Days and Times and in ſuch Manner as the Rates and Duties hereby repealed were, by any Law in Force at and immediately before the paſſing of this Act, directed to be paid; and the ſaid Money, ſo paid into the ſaid Receipt as aforeſaid, ſhall be carried to and made Part of the Conſolidated Fund.

Average annual Revenue of the Poſt Office for Three Years ending *April* 5, 1795, which by 35 *Geo.* III, Cap. 53, has been increaſed.

XI. And whereas the annual average Produce of the Revenue of the Poſt Office for Three Years, ending on the Fifth Day of *April* One thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-five, amounted to Four hundred and ten thouſand five hundred and fifty-ſix Pounds; And whereas by an Act, paſſed in the Thirty-fifth Year of the Reign of His preſent Majeſty, intituled, *An Act for further regulating the ſending and receiving Letters free from*

from the Duty of Poſtage; *for allowing Non-commiſſioned Officers, Seamen, and Private Men, in the Navy and Army, whilſt on Service, to ſend and receive Letters at a low Rate of Poſtage*; *and for permitting Patterns and Samples of Goods to be tranſmitted by the Poſt at an eaſier Rate than is now allowed by Law*, the ſaid Revenue hath been encreaſed by a Sum computed at the annual Sum of Forty thouſand Pounds, *communibus annis*:

Application of the Poſt Office Revenue.

Be it further enacted, That, out of the Monies to ariſe from the ſaid Revenue of the Poſt Office, the Sum of One hundred and two thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-nine Pounds, being One-fourth Part of the annual average Amount before mentioned, ſhall Quarterly on the Fifth Day of *April*, the Fifth Day of *July*, the Tenth Day of *October*, and the Fifth Day of *January* in every Year, during the Periods herein-after mentioned, be ſet apart from the Remainder of the ſaid Revenue; and that the Sum of Ten thouſand Pounds of the ſaid Remainder of the ſaid Revenue, ſhall Quarterly, for the Period of Eight Years from the paſſing of this Act, be paid into the Receipt of His Majeſty's Exchequer, ſeparate and apart from all other Branches of the Publick Revenue, and that the Amount thereof, or ſo much as ſhall be ſufficient, ſhall be deemed an Addition made to the Publick Revenue, for the Purpoſe of defraying the encreaſed Charge occaſioned by any Loan raiſed, or Stock created, by any Act or Acts paſſed in the ſaid Thirty-fifth Year of the Reign of His preſent Majeſty; and that after ſetting apart the Amount of the annual Averages aforeſaid, and the ſaid further annual Sum of Forty thouſand Pounds, the Remainder of the ſaid Revenue of the Poſt Office ſhall, during the Period of Ten Years after the paſſing of this Act, be paid into the Receipt of His Majeſty's Exchequer, diſtinctly and apart from all other Branches of the Publick Revenue, and that the ſaid Remainder of the ſaid Rates ſo paid into the ſaid Receipt, or ſo much thereof as ſhall be ſufficient, ſhall be deemed an Addition made to the Revenue, for the Purpoſe of defraying the encreaſed Charge occaſioned by any Loan made or to be made, or Stock created or to be created, by virtue of any Act or Acts paſſed or to be paſſed in this Seſſion of Parliament; and that there ſhall be provided and kept in the Office of the Auditor of the ſaid Receipt, during the ſaid reſpective Periods, Books in which the ſaid annual Sum of Forty thouſand Pounds, and the ſaid Remainder of the Monies ariſing from the ſaid Revenue of the Poſt Office, ſhall, together with the Monies ariſing from any other Duties granted in this Seſſion of Parliament, for the Purpoſe of defraying ſuch encreaſed Charge as aforeſaid, be entered ſeparate and apart from all other Monies paid or payable to His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, upon any Account whatever.

Perſons ſued may plead the General Iſſue.

XII. And be it further enacted, That if any Perſon or Perſons ſhall at any Time or Times be ſued, moleſted, or proſecuted, for any Thing by him or them done or executed in purſuance of this Act, or of any Clauſe, Matter, or Thing herein contained, ſuch Perſon and Perſons ſhall and may plead the General Iſſue, and give the ſpecial Matter in Evidence for his or their Defence; and if upon the Trial a Verdict ſhall paſs for the Defendant or Defendants, or the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs ſhall become non-

Treble Coſts.

ſuited, then ſuch Defendant or Defendants ſhall have Treble Coſts awarded to him or them againſt ſuch Plaintiff or Plaintiffs.

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