ANNO QUINTO

GEORGII IV. REGIS.

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C A P. XX.

An Act to regulate the Conveyance of Packets containing re-issuable Country Bank Notes by the Post, and to charge Rates of Postage thereon; to prevent Letters and Packets being sent otherwise than by the Post; to punish Persons embezzling printed Proceedings in Parliament, or Newspapers; and to allow the President of the Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry to send and receive Letters and Packets free from the Duty of Postage [12th *April* 1824.]

WHEREAS it is expedient that Power be given to His Majesty's Postmaster General to receive at the General Post Office in *London*, for Conveyance by the Post, under certain Regulations and Restrictions, Packets containing such Promissory Cash Notes as have been issued by Country Bankers under their annual Licences, and paid at the Houses of their respective Agents in *London*, and which have thereby become re-issuable, to the Bank in the Town or Place only from which such Cash Notes were first issued; and that the Postmaster General be authorized to have,

receive, and take certain Rates of Postage for the Conveyance of such Packets: Be it therefore 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, That from and after the passing of this Act, it shall and may be lawful to and for His Majesty's Postmaster General and his Deputy and Deputies, in his Discretion, to receive, at the General Post Office in *London*, Packets containing re-issuable Cash Notes only, issued by Country Bankers under annual Licence, and payable at the Houses of their respective Agents in *London*, which Cash Notes have been paid by such Agents in *London*, for Conveyance by the Post within *Great Britain* at his Discretion, to the Bank in the Town or Place from which such Cash Notes were first issued, and to no other Bank, Town, or Place whatever; and to demand, have, receive, and take for the Conveyance of such Packets, to and for the Use of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, Rates of Postage not exceeding One-fourth Part of the Rates and Duties of Postage by Law established or which may hereafter be established for the Conveyance of Letters and Packets by the Post; any Law, Statute, Custom, or Usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Re-issuable Cash Notes issued by Country Bankers, and paid by their Agents in London, may be conveyed by Post to the Banks whence first issued, at the Rates of Postage herein mentioned.

II. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That no such Packet shall be conveyed under the Provisions in this Act unless the same shall exceed Six Ounces in Weight, and shall be superscribed "Re-issuable Country Bank Notes only," and certified by the Signature of the Agent or Agents of such Country Bank, or One of them, in his or their own Handwriting; and provided that the said Packets shall contain no Writing, Communication, Matter or Thing whatever

The Packets conveyed shall exceed Six Ounces, and be superscribed as herein directed.

III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That such Packets shall be delivered to the Postmaster General, or his Deputy or Deputies, at the General Post Office in *London*, at such Hours in the Day and under such Regulations as the Postmaster General for the Time being shall in his Discretion from Time to Time appoint, and such Packets shall also be delivered by the Deputy or Deputies of the Postmaster General in the Country under such Regulations and Restrictions as the Postmaster General for the Time being shall from Time to Time think fit to appoint.

Time of Delivery at the Post Office to be regulated by the Postmaster General.

IV. And be it further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful to and for His Majesty's Postmaster General, and his Deputy and Deputies, in his or their Discretion, to detain any such Packet, and in the Presence of the Sender or Senders thereof, or in his or their Absence, in case of Non-attendance after Notice in Writing left at his or their Place of Abode requiring his or their Attendance, to open, examine, and search the same, in order to discover whether any Writing, Communication, Matter, or Thing, other than re-issuable Notes only, shall be contained therein; and in case upon Examination thereof it shall be discovered that any such Writing, Communication, Matter, or Thing, other than re-issuable Notes, shall be contained therein,

Packets may be detained and examined.

Penalty on finding any thing other

therein, then the Sender or Senders of such Packets shall forfeit and pay the Sum of Two hundred Pounds, to be recovered, with full Costs of Suit, by Action of Debt, Bill, Plaint, or Information, in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record in *Great Britain*, where no Essoign, Protection, Privilege, or Wager of Law shall be admitted; and it shall and may be lawful to and for His Majesty's Postmaster General, or his Deputy or Deputies, to retain such Packet until such Penalty shall be recovered and paid.

than re-issuable Bank Notes, 200*l.*

V. And be it further enacted, That One Moiety of the pecuniary Penalty hereby imposed shall be payable to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and the other Moiety to any Person who shall inform and sue for the same, to be recovered, with full Costs of Suit, by Action of Debt, Bill, Plaint, or Information, in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record in *Great Britain*, wherein no Essoign, Protection, or Privilege or Wager of Law shall be admitted.

Application of Penalties.

VI. And be it further enacted, That the Monies to arise by the several Rates and Duties as aforesaid (except the Monies which shall be necessary to defray such Expence as shall be incurred in the Management and Collection of the same) shall be paid into the Receipt of the Exchequer at *Westminster*, and carried to and made Part of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*.

Money arising by Rates to be carried to the Consolidated Fund.

VII. And whereas, notwithstanding the Provisions in that Behalf made by an Act passed in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Her late Majesty Queen *Anne*, intituled *An Act for establishing a General Post Office for all His 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 also by an Act passed in the Forty-second Year of the Reign of His late Majesty *George* the Third, intituled *An Act for amending so much of an Act passed in the Seventh Year of the Reign of His present Majesty as relates to the secreting, embezzling, or destroying any Letter or Packet sent by the Post; and for the better Protection of such Letters and Packets; and for more effectually preventing Letters and Packets being sent otherwise than by the Post*, the Practice of sending and conveying by Stage Coaches, Carts, Waggons, Ships, Vessels, Boats, Barges, and other Conveyances, Letters and Packets which by virtue of the Laws relating to the Post Office ought to be sent by the Post, prevails to a considerable Extent, to the great Prejudice and Diminution of His Majesty's Revenue; be it therefore further enacted, That from and after the passing of this Act, no Person or Persons whatsoever, or Body Politic or Corporate, in any Part of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, or other His Majesty's Dominions, where any Post is or shall be established under the Management of His Majesty's Postmaster General, shall receive, take up, order, dispatch, convey, carry, re-carry, or deliver, or shall send, or cause to be sent or conveyed, or tender or deliver in order to be sent or conveyed, otherwise than by the Post, or by and with the Authority and Consent of His Majesty's Postmaster General for the Time being, or the Deputy or Deputies of such

9 Anne, c. 10.

42 G. 3. c. 18.

Letters not to be conveyed in any other Way than by the Post, on Penalty of 5*l.* for each Letter.

such Postmaster General, or to the nearest or most convenient Post Town, to be from thence forwarded by the Post, any Letter or Letters, on Pain of forfeiting for each and every Letter, whether such Letter shall be received, taken up, ordered, dispatched, conveyed, carried, re-carried, or delivered, or sent, or caused to be sent or conveyed, or tendered or delivered in order to be sent or conveyed, separately, or by itself, or together with any other Letter or Letters, or other Matter or Thing whatsoever, the Sum of Five Pounds; one Moiety whereof to the Use of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and the other Moiety to the Use of the Person, who shall inform or sue for the same, to be sued for and recovered with full Costs of Suit, by any Person, who shall and will inform and sue for the same, in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record at *Westminster*, for Offences committed within that Part of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* called *England*, and in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record in *Dublin* for Offences committed in *Ireland*, and before the Sheriff or Stewart Court of the Shire or Stewartry, within which the Party offending shall reside, or the Offence shall be committed, for Offences committed in *Scotland*.

Act not to extend to Letters to be delivered with Goods sent by Common Carriers or by Vessels; nor to Proceedings issuing out of Courts; nor to Letters sent by private Friends, &c.

VIII. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That this Act shall not extend to subject any Person or Body Corporate to any such Penalty or Forfeiture as aforesaid, for receiving, taking up, ordering, dispatching, conveying, carrying, re-carrying, or delivering or sending, or causing to be sent or conveyed, or for tendering or delivering, or sending, or causing to be sent or conveyed, or for tendering or delivering in order to be sent or conveyed, any Letter or Letters which shall respectively concern Goods sent by any common known Carrier of Goods, and shall be sent with and for the Purpose of being delivered with the Goods that such Letter or Letters do concern, without Hire or Reward, Profit or Advantage for the receiving or delivering the same; nor any Letter or Letters of Merchants, Owners of any Ships, Barques, or Vessels of Merchandize, or any the Cargo or Lading therein, sent on board the same Ships, Barques, or Vessels of Merchandize, to be delivered by the Masters of the same Ships, Barques, or Vessels of Merchandize, or by any other Person employed by them for the Carriage of such Letters, according to their respective Directions, without paying or receiving any Hire or Reward, Advantage or Profit for the same in anywise; nor any Commission or Return thereof, Affidavits, Writs, Process, or Proceedings, or Return thereof, issuing out of any Court; nor any Letter sent by any private Friend in his or her Way of Journey or Travel, so as such Letter shall be delivered by such Friend to the Party to whom such Letter shall be directed; nor any Letter or Letters to be sent by any Messenger on Purpose for or concerning the private Affair of any Person.

Limitation of Actions.

IX. And be it further enacted, That if any Action or Suit shall be commenced against any Person or Persons for any Thing done in pursuance of this Act, the same shall be commenced within Twelve Months after the Fact committed, and not afterwards; and the Defendant or Defendants in such Action shall and may plead the General Issue, and give this Act and the Special Matter in Evidence,

General Issue.

and that the same was done in pursuance and by the Authority of this Act; and if it shall appear so to be done, or that such Action or Suit shall be commenced after the Time before limited for bringing the same, that then the Jury shall find for the Defendant or Defendants; and upon a Verdict for the Defendant, or if the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs shall be nonsuited, or discontinue his, her, or their Action or Suit after the Defendant or Defendants shall have appeared, or if upon Demurrer Judgment shall be given against the Plaintiff or Plaintiffs, the Defendant or Defendants shall and may recover Treble Costs, and have the like Remedy for the same as any Defendant or Defendants hath or have in any other Cases by Law. **Treble Costs.**

X. And whereas serious Loss, Inconvenience, and Injury may be sustained by the wilful embezzling or purloining of printed Votes or Proceedings in Parliament and printed Newspapers sent or to be sent by the Post within the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*; be it further enacted, That from and after the passing of this Act, if any Deputy, Clerk, Agent, Letter Carrier, Letter Sorter, Post Boy, or Rider, or any other Officer or Person whatsoever employed or hereafter to be employed in receiving, stamping, sorting, charging, conveying, or delivering Letters or Packets or in any other Business relating to the Post Office in the said United Kingdom, shall wilfully purloin, embezzle, secrete, or destroy, or shall wilfully permit or suffer any other Person or Persons to purloin, embezzle, secrete, or destroy any printed Votes or Proceedings in Parliament, or printed Newspapers, or any other printed Paper whatsoever, sent or to be sent by the Post without Covers, or in Covers open at the Sides, each and every such Person or Persons so offending shall be deemed and taken to be guilty of a Misdemeanor, and be punished by Fine and Imprisonment, and such Offences shall and may be enquired of, tried, and determined, either in the County where the Offence shall be committed, or where the Party shall or may be apprehended. **Penalty on Persons employed in the Post Office embezzling Votes, Parliamentary Proceedings, or Newspapers, &c.**

XI. And whereas by an Act passed in the Forty-sixth Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King *George* the Third, intituled *An Act to authorize certain public Officers to send and receive Letters and Packets by the Post free from the Duty of Postage*, certain Public Officers therein named were authorized to send and receive Letters by the Post free from the Duty of Postage, in the United Kingdom, in the Manner and under the Restrictions therein mentioned: And whereas it is expedient that the President or first-named Commissioner appointed by or in pursuance of an Act passed in the First and Second Year of the Reign of His present Majesty, intituled *An Act to appoint Commissioners for enquiring into the Collection and Management of the Revenue in* Ireland, *and the several Establishments connected therewith*, should in like Manner send and receive Letters and Packets by the Post free from Postage; be it therefore enacted, That from and after the passing of this Act it shall be lawful for the said President or first-named Commissioner, appointed by or in pursuance of the said last-recited Act, to send and receive Letters and Packets by the Post free from the Duty of Postage, within the United Kingdom, in the same Manner and under such Restrictions as the several Public **46 G. 3. c. 61.** **1 & 2 G. 4. c. 90.** **President of the Commissioners appointed by the last-recited Act empowered to send and**

receive Letters and Packages free from Postage.

lic Officers specified in the said recited Act are authorized by the Laws now in force to send and receive Letters and Packets free from Postage.

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