

F I R S T
R E P O R T
FROM THE
SELECT COMMITTEE
ON
P O S T A G E ;
TOGETHER WITH THE
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,
AND APPENDIX.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
4 April 1838.*

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Mercurii, 21^o die Martii, 1838.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Chalmers.
Mr. Parker.
Mr. Pease.
Mr. Thornely.

Mr. Villiers.
Mr. Wallace.
Mr. Wood.

ROBERT WALLACE, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Henry Desborough, Esq., called in; and Examined.

3986. *Chairman.*] YOU are Secretary to the Atlas Insurance Company?—*Henry Desborough, Esq.*
I am.

3987. The correspondence of your office is very large?—Very considerable; the amount of our postage is about 700*l.* a year; we pay something under 700*l.* a year for our general-post letters.

3988. Do you keep a separate account of your twopenny-post letters?—Yes; that bears a proportion only of about 20*l.* to 700*l.*

3989. Are the letters you allude to as general-post letters those which you receive?—Those that come through my own hands.

3990. They are letters inwards; you do not include any letters you send post-paid?—Inwards and outwards; we pay all postage of letters to our agents; we have 400 agents, and those agents return their accounts quarterly; we have therefore 1,600 accounts every year, and with those remittances the vouchers that ought to accompany those accounts do not come, because of the expense of the postage; they are told not to send them, unless they had an opportunity of sending them free of postage.

3991. Would the insurance companies, and the company especially to which you belong, considerably increase their correspondence through the Post-office, by letters and prospectuses and general circulars, if the present rate of postage were reduced?—Immensely; because there are many cases where we might write where we do not now write; we have, at least, 200 proprietors residing in the country, and every policy-holder we might address, but we never do address them separately, leaving it to the agents in the country to communicate with them in the different country places. I consider that if we had a cheaper mode of communication, we should do it to a very considerable extent.

3992. Have you turned in your mind at all the probable extent of correspondence which you might be inclined to adopt at a lower rate of postage?—My impression is that it would be immense, probably six, seven or eight times as much as it is; six times I think would be a moderate computation, from what I know I could do if I were not deterred by the heavy expense, which prevents our adopting it.

3993. With a view to a better and more profitable management of the insurance company of which you are secretary, you would recommend and adopt an additional expense of perhaps six or eightfold of that which at present takes place?—I would recommend an extension of correspondence through the Post-office sixfold, provided the expense were not increased.

3994. Do you speak to any specific amount of reduction, or to a considerable amount of reduction?—I speak to a considerable amount of reduction, and also to the difficulty I feel in writing to individuals connected with our office, which I do not think it proper to do on account of the expense; we have about 4,000 life and about 30,000 or 40,000 fire insurances; those persons who are on our books are fire insurers; we have never pressed upon the subject of life insurance, and those on our books as life insurers we have never pressed on the subject of fire insurance, leaving it to our agents to follow up the communication.

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3995. Independent

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3995. Independent of carrying your agency, the Committee are to understand that you would find it advantageous to carry on a considerable increase of individual correspondence?—Precisely so.

3996. With regard to joint-stock companies, guardian societies, saving banks, provident institutions, and similar institutions, have you any opinion to state to this Committee what would be the consequence of a considerable reduction of postage on their communications?—I should say, as a company, we have about 400 proprietors; of those 400 proprietors, 150 or 200 live in the country, those we never do address as shareholders to announce any meeting, because we do not wish to put them to the expense of postage; but we should do it if we could do it at a reasonable charge, and send them a statement of the situation of the office and of the nature of the business, and show them the advantage they would receive by recommending the office to their friends; I speak here only as a joint-stock company.

3997. Would that also increase the individual correspondence to the proprietors?—Yes, certainly.

3998. Are you restrained from making such communications by the present rates of postage?—We are. With respect to domestic correspondence I have a strong opinion upon the subject; I think the intercourse, by letter, of families would be considerably increased, and I would advert to different charitable institutions which many gentlemen are always attached to. It would be for the advantage of particular children to be brought into the institution; the Deaf and Dumb Institution, the Blind Institution, and so on. I am obliged to keep a list of governors I am acquainted with, from the constant applications I have to favour one candidate or another; I address only those in London, or within my own immediate vicinity; but if the postage were lower I should be glad to put my hand into my pocket and purchase a set of envelopes, and address applications to persons in the country, which would produce proxy votes in return, and enable persons to carry into effect their plans for those elections.

3999. It is your opinion that the present rates of postage stand very much in the way of benevolent societies being so useful and, perhaps, so extensive as they otherwise would be?—I think so particularly; as it respects the benefit to particular candidates, that more exertions would be made; there might be more trouble to the governors, but there would be more correspondence, and more revenue brought in.

4000. To what societies do you chiefly allude?—The societies for female orphans, of which there are three; the Deaf and Dumb Institution, the Blind Asylum, and the Orphan Asylum at Clapton, receiving objects of rather a higher class in life. There are more endeavours made from respectable persons to procure the introduction of children into that particular asylum at Clapton.

4001. The Committee are to understand, then, even in obtaining sufficient answers for the admission of such persons the present rate of postage is a restraint?—It is a bar to such an extensive canvass as is requisite to serve a particular object when the governors live in the country; for a letter to be written in the country to ask for a vote, at an expense of 1s., where there are a great many subscribers, is a bar. I never wrote but once in my life, and that was to our agent at Manchester, where there are a great many subscribers, requesting him to procure for me the votes of the individuals residing there.

4002. You have stated that persons may purchase a few shillings' worth of envelopes; do you allude to the proposal which has been made of paying postage by means of stamped covers?—I do.

4003. Have you formed any opinion as to the convenience and advantages of such a system?—It would be advantageous; the working of that it is not necessary for me to enter into; as to the envelopes being sent to different places, that is a matter of regulation. I consider, however, that the clergymen and respectable persons in parishes would be always likely to have a good stock of those envelopes by them, and that they would be sure to be applied to for them by their poor neighbours.

4004. Being secretary to a very extensive society, with a very considerable correspondence, would you recommend, as far as your own experience goes, the use of such envelopes which would occasion the payment of postage in advance?—I am inclined to recommend it; but it requires considerable time
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to bring it to perfection. I do not think it could be adopted instantly; but it is a thing which might be done.

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4005. You would recommend the principle?—I think the principle is good.

4006. Mr. Thornely.] You find no difficulty in supplying yourselves from the Stamp-office with the stamps necessary for your insurances?—None at all.

4007. Mr. Parker.] Have you any objection to state what amount of postage you now pay?—It is within a fraction of 700*l.* a year; on general-post letters in and out, about 650*l.* probably, and 20*l.* for the twopenny postage; 650*l.* is within the mark for our general-post letters within the United Kingdom.

4008. What proportion do your country letters bear of that?—I think there were 47 twopenny-post letters in the course of the week; we send out a second notice of fire policies, but in London a great many letters are delivered by our own messengers.

4009. Supposing the general postage of all letters were reduced to 1*d.*, have you made a calculation what annual sum you should pay in postage?—We should be very glad to engage to pay the same amount of postage per annum which we now pay; in my mind, I should contemplate with pleasure having the possibility of sending six times our present number of letters, having a number of persons holding policies on our books whom we have never addressed direct from London, giving them notice of the expiration of their policies; we should be glad to address them, keeping before them our life insurance, which is a favourite scheme with the public.

4010. Would not many of those be circulars?—Certainly, a great number of them are circulars, signed by myself; without signature they are not much attended to; every circular we send of consequence has my signature attached to it.

4011. Have you ever formed any estimate of the average amount of your general-post letters?—I have formed a calculation from what we pay what the number must be as an average; we cannot give it specifically, for we do not keep a register of all the letters we send out; many are formal letters; we probably send out 100 letters to our agents in a quarter.

4012. Can you give the Committee any idea of the average postage per letter of the letters you send?—No, I cannot; I should think it is about 9*d.* a letter; some of them are to Ireland and Scotland, and perhaps double letters and heavy letters.

4012*. Then the multiplication by six on your present payment would not do?—At 6½*d.* the number of letters would be 22,700; we should be very glad to compromise with the Post-office to pay the same amount we pay now, which I take to be about 650*l.*, for our future postage, and have the advantage of a reduced scale for increased circulation.

4013. Would it not answer your purpose, for the circulation of prospectuses, if this low reduction to 1*d.* were confined to them?—No, because our office has been established 28 years, and the agents are in full operation; I think some of the new offices would be glad of that; I have reason to believe that a new insurance company has been deterred from doing all they would wish to do, from the immense expense the present rate of postage would lead them into.

4014. If that was the case, the reduction would not be of so much advantage to them?—Yes, it would, because they would do it with the prospect of an equivalent advantage.

4015. So far as respected them, would it not satisfy your object if it was confined to printed prospectuses?—I do not wish to inundate any set of people with prospectuses of the Atlas Company, unless I had some other object to write on; I should take the advantage of having to write on one subject to introduce another; it would be rather *infra dignitatem* in an office like ours, established so long, to send circulars alone.

4016. Would it not answer the purpose of the insurance offices if they were permitted to send circulars at a small rate of postage?—It would be a great object if we were enabled to send circulars on any particular improvement, benefiting the parties; for instance, the extension of sea risks; we began by allowing parties to cross between Dover and Calais, or the ports in the Channel; in the course of time we extended from Hamburgh to Brest. That is an advantage we should have taken an immediate opportunity of informing

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ing the public of, if we could have done so without a considerable expense, and should have been glad to promulgate that to persons already on our books, and probably we should do that at a reduced rate of postage.

4017. With regard to the compulsory pre-payment, are you not upon the whole of opinion, that, if it be determined to adopt the use of stamped covers, the use of them shall be voluntary on the part of the public?—I feel a difficulty with regard to that question. I cannot conceive a difference of system would work well; I think it must be either compulsory or not; there might be half a dozen sheets of thin paper put into an envelope; there could be no uniformity in the system of the Post-office.

4018. Even supposing the envelope were adopted, must not the letter be weighed?—That would hardly be necessary; a penny for half an ounce I have seen suggested.

4019. How can that be ascertained without weighing?—I should think the clerk of the Post-office could ascertain it by his hand without weighing.

4020. Are you to be understood to recommend that, if this plan is adopted, the use of the stamped covers shall be compulsory?—I think so; they being of uniform size would not want much examination.

4021. Mr. Thornely.] You do not object to the payment being compulsory in advance, provided you have this great reduction in the postage?—No. I should think that the envelopes would be useful, a supply being always readily procured.

4022. Mr. Parker.] In recommending the reduction of postage to a penny, have you gone into calculations in respect of the real expense of the conveyance of letters?—No; I have taken that for granted. I have read the newspapers and the papers generally distributed among the public establishments of the cost of transmitting letters, which was certainly matter of surprise, but I suppose it is well founded, knowing as I do from my own business what correspondence is going on; and having a general connexion, and knowing how much the correspondence is limited in families, and particularly among poor people.

4023. You have not yourself gone into any calculations of the expense of the Post-office communication?—No; I know nothing of the expense of contracting for the mail-coaches, &c. I do not know that I ever saw such an account.

4024. You have taken for granted the statement you have seen?—Yes.

4025. If you were informed, on competent evidence, that that was an erroneous statement, should you persevere in recommending so great a reduction?—Not so very great a reduction; I should be very sorry to put in peril a large item of revenue, being desirous of upholding the revenue, but I think the charge is very badly arranged now, as a comparison of the list of postage will show. If you compare Bristol and Barnstaple, any one will see how unequal it is; one 10 *d.*, the other 11 *d.* for 100 miles further.

4026. Are you disposed to approve of an uniform rate?—Yes, I think that is not objectionable.

4027. Stating what you have now done, as to your not having yourself gone into any calculations as to the cost of transit, you cannot probably give any opinion as to what the expense would be of conveying letters to Ireland?—I do not think the expenses can be much greater than to Edinburgh; anything water-borne of course can be sent cheaper than by land. I presume the Government have confidence in the steam-vessels, or they would not send letters by them.

4028. Does not the carriage to Ireland partake of both characters, land and water?—Yes.

4029. Are you aware whether the steam communication is attended with greater expense?—I am not.

4030. Where letters are sent to places not in a direct line of road, but towns lying at some distance from the great roads, have they not to undergo several stages of adjusting and sorting?—I cannot be supposed to know much about the system of the Post-office letters for the bye-parts or the rural districts, further than as I have seen the bags dropped at particular places; they must be of course taken up and distributed by other means.

4031. Your evidence amounts to this, that you know that yourself and persons

sons engaged in similar undertakings would be exceedingly glad to have the postage reduced to the lowest possible amount?—Exactly so.

4032. But you have not taken such means to ascertain the expense of the transmission of letters, as to be able to say whether that great reduction can be effected without great loss to the revenue?—No, certainly; I cannot test it by any examination I have given or should be disposed to give to it, being otherwise fully occupied.

4033. Mr. *Thornely*.] So far as the company with which you are connected are concerned, you would be willing to guarantee the revenue from loss, by compounding for the revenue you now pay?—Yes, for the business we carry on; and I should be glad to carry on our future business at our present rate of postage; but the increased facilities would enable us to do much more benefit to the office.

4034. Mr. *Wood*.] Do you think all the other fire-offices would be willing to give the same guarantee?—I cannot answer that question.

4035. Do you think they would have the same motives?—I should think they would.

4036. Do you think in that respect the trade of the insurance offices is a fair average of the entire trade of the country?—I am not prepared to say that.

4037. Do the Committee infer that it is your opinion that the whole trade of the country would be likely to increase its quantity of post letters to the same extent?—I am very much inclined to think they would; I allude to the mass of people in private life, and also from the ability to write being greater than ever it was, and the more general plan of persons going and leaving their families, and settling away in other parts of the country, I conceive the postage would be very considerably increased.

4038. Is it not probable that the great companies economize their postage much more than persons engaged in a smaller extent of transactions?—No, I do not think so: where a receipt bearing a premium of 5*s.* and a duty of 3*s.* is to be sent, it would not do to send it by post, because it would eat up the greater part of the profit, and we occasionally instruct our agents to keep them for a convenient opportunity; it is not a letter, and therefore ought not to be sent as a letter, but if it is enclosed it becomes a double letter.

4039. You say you have no objection to an uniform rate of postage; should you see any objection to the same rate, if it were to appear that that uniform rate, if established, must be something like 3*d.* or 2*d.* instead of 1*d.*?—I should prefer 1*d.*; but if there is any doubt about the change occasioning loss to the revenue, the Government, of course, would not put to hazard the loss of the revenue, and they might commence at 2*d.* or 3*d.*

4040. Should you prefer an uniform rate of 6*d.* a letter to a graduated scale?—Certainly I should, it would be less troublesome.

4041. Mr. *Chalmers*.] You have said you have in your correspondence a good many double letters and heavy letters?—We have.

4042. What is the weight of those letters?—They vary very much; where it is under the ounce, they cannot charge more than treble postage.

4043. Are many of them treble?—Yes, a good many of them, but not so many as double or single; the majority of our letters are single post letters.

4044. Do many exceed half an ounce in weight?—Very few. We may have an order by letter for six fire insurances; they all pass as one letter; those orders, probably, for insurances have been sent to the agent and not sent up, because, probably, one insurance is 100*l.*; the only benefit the office gets by that is 5*s.* The agent would not wait a month, perhaps, in sending up the letter lest a fire should happen; but those letters are frequently detained, waiting an opportunity of sending other orders together with them.

4045. If the postage were 1*d.* almost all the letters now sent would pass under that postage?—Certainly.

4046. Your correspondence, you think, would increase sixfold?—Yes, I think so.

4047. The average upon your letters you think is about 10*d.*?—That is according to my present calculation; but I think there must be some mistake in that; if that which I have heard is correct, I do not see why ours should be larger than other persons.

4048. Mr. *Wood*.] Are your impressions with regard to the expense of the transit of letters mainly derived from Mr. Hill's pamphlet, and the labours of that

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Esq. that committee which has been sitting in the city?—I have read nothing, but what I have seen in the papers.

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4049. The evidence which has come before you hitherto must be considered in some measure as *ex parte* evidence?—Certainly.

4050. *Mr. Thoraely.*] Can you give the Committee any information as to the extent to which the postage is evaded under the present high rate of postage?—It is a delicate thing to give evidence on that subject; but I have had parcels from the country in which an agent has improperly put in a letter; we have always interdicted it; it is a thing that must inadvertently have been done by an inattention to the law; but as far as we are concerned we never pursue such a course, and when it has been done have required it should not be done in future.

4051. *Mr. Parker.*] From your small comparative payment to the twopenny-post you cannot have had recourse to that which has been the practice of others, the plan of having letters brought to London by private hand or parcel, and put into the twopenny-post for transmission in London?—No, we have not.

4052. *Mr. Wood.*] If an uniform rate of 1*d.* were established, is it your opinion that your company would henceforward send all their letters and their documents, not exceeding one sheet of paper each, through the penny-post, which are now mostly transmitted through other channels to their respective correspondents?—Certainly.

4053. Documents as well as letters?—Yes; policies that would be within half an ounce weight would go as a letter.

4054. Documents which are now sent by law in such parcels without incurring any risk?—Yes.

4055. Those would go by post?—Yes, decidedly.

4056. *Mr. Parker.*] Would it be worth your while to send circulars if the postage were 3*d.* or 4*d.*?—I do not think we should be inclined to do it: we might at 3*d.*: a reduction to 3*d.* would be a very considerable reduction as regards the transmission of a single letter.

4057. *Mr. Wood.*] What may be the number, on the average, of documents you send at one time, do you apprehend, to any of the large towns, such as Birmingham or Liverpool?—It is more in return from those places; we send down blanks, which it would not do to send in an envelope, they go by dozens; but in life insurances there are the declaration, the two reference letters (very often three), the document in proof of age, then there is the policy in return, making five objects for one transaction; and when a death takes place there are almost the same number of documents: then as to fire, the document sent up, which we ought to have, but which we have not in fact, because it is not worth the expense of postage, is the voucher, and bill of parcels, and so on. A fire insurance would give rise to a greater postage, because there are the receipts sent down to the agent which need not be sent by post now, and the voucher for any charge of the agent, which we do not have up on account of the postage.

4058. *Mr. Pease.*] Is the system of the office a weekly letter from agents where business is limited, or a daily letter of advice?—No; the only weekly letters we have are from our bankers in Ireland, stating the monies paid in there; but as to correspondence from the agent that depends entirely upon what he has to write about, such as an order for an insurance, or a notice of a fire; probably he would keep an order for a small insurance for a few days, or a few weeks, which he would not do if it were not for the postage, lest a fire should take place.

4059. Do your bankers require an immediate acknowledgment of the receipt of their remittance?—Yes, we have no letter from the agents paying the money; we are content to have a letter from the banker in Dublin; it is the advice of the lodgment with him, and there it remains till we order the money to be invested in Ireland, or paid in some other way.

Mr. Michael Brankston, called in; and Examined.

Mr.
Michael Brankston

4060. *Chairman.*] YOU are Superintendent of the business of Messrs. Leaf, Coles & Co.?—I am.

4061. The trade in which they are concerned is very extensive?—It is one of the most extensive in the world.

4062. Is

Mercurii, 28 die Martii, 1838.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Chalmers.	}	Mr. Thornely.
Mr. Currie.		Mr. Wallace.
Viscount Lowther.		Mr. Warburton.
Mr. Parker.		Mr. Wood.
Lord Seymour.		

ROBERT WALLACE, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Henry Desborough, Esq., called in; and further Examined.

Henry Desborough,
1-4.

28 March 1838.

5099. Lord *Seymour.*] DO you wish to correct the answer you gave to question 3993?—I would recommend an extension of correspondence through the Post-office, provided the expense were not increased.

5100. That is, you would not recommend any additional expense, but you would recommend an additional correspondence, if it could be maintained at the same expense as the present?—Exactly so.

5101. It is natural you should wish to obtain for the same price additional convenience from the Post-office?—Precisely so.

5102. That is the amount of your evidence upon that point?—Yes.

5103. In answer to 4025, you have stated that you think “the charge for postage is very badly arranged now, as a comparison of the list will show; if you compare Bristol with Barnstaple, you will see how unequal it is, the one 10*d.* and the other 11*d.* for 100 miles further.” Do you think that the charge should be in proportion to the distance?—According to the present scale; I say the present scale is unequal.

5104. You think according to the present scale, it should be according to the distance?—Yes, certainly; if a scale of distance is adopted, that ought to be graduated. It is supposed to be, but I think it cannot be; as between Bristol and Barnstaple, two towns which occurred to me, one is a great deal further from London than the other, and yet the postage is only 1*d.* more.

5105. In respect of that, Barnstaple has a great advantage over Bristol?—Yes, it certainly has.

5106. Do you mean that you object to giving that advantage to distant places over those which are nearer?—No; I do not object to it, but I speak of the present scale of the Post-office charge, that it appears to me at present it is deficient; there is only 1*d.* difference for a hundred miles distance, they do not appear to me to keep to their principle.

5107. Do you think it objectionable that a letter for 200 miles, should not pay double what it does for 100 miles?—It ought to pay more; the scale of the Post-office is supposed to be graduated on principle; I have always supposed there is a principle adopted, but how it happens that Bristol is 10*d.* and Barnstaple 11*d.*, when 20 miles is 4*d.*, I cannot understand.

5108. Lord *Lowther.*] What distance is Barnstaple from London?—180 or 190 miles.

5109. Lord *Seymour.*] In answer to question 4038 you say that it is not probable that the great companies would economize their postages more than persons in retail trade?—Yes.

5110. Do you not think that persons who have many letters to send to one town, can take advantage of those many letters by sending them all under one cover, in the nature of slips?—I do not know of such a practice.

5111. You are not aware that such a practice exists as writing on one sheet of paper letters to several houses?—No, I never heard of that.

5112. If such a practice existed, do you not think it would give a great advantage to the large houses over the small ones?—To houses of trade, warehousemen, and so on, it might; I can only speak of the practice of a public company.

5113. Mr.

5113. Mr. Thornely.] You were understood in your former examination to say, that it is the custom of your office to pay the postage outwards on the letters you send to your agents?—It is.

Henry Desbois, Esq.

5114. Do you find that letters are less safely delivered on account of the postage being paid than if it was not paid?—No, I never hear any complaints of non-delivery.

25 March 1838.

Mr. G. H. called in; and Examined.

5115. Chairman.] YOU reside in a town in Scotland, do you not?—I do.

Mr. G. H.

5116. You once were in the capacity of a traveller between that town and others?—I was so for many years.

5117. You also conveyed parcels and letters to other towns on the way?—Yes.

5118. In the capacity of a carrier, had you occasion to convey letters for your customers?—Yes.

5119. Have the goodness to state in what way the conveyance of letters was managed?—It was managed in various ways.

5120. State the different ways to which you allude?—It was done frequently, when orders were sent from one merchant to another, by way of memorandum, for him to call at Messrs. So-and-So and get for Mr. M'Gregor, or whatever the name might be, such an article, a piece of muslin, or whatever it might be. Another way was to mark often on the back of a letter, "with a parcel," which was understood to be preventing the Post-office from prosecuting for the conveyance of the letter, although no parcel was conveyed with it. Another way was marking it with a trifling sum of money, though no money was sent with the letter. Another way, which was the most frequent for the generality of the public, especially the poorer classes, was to make a small parcel, probably a little piece of brown paper, or a piece of an old newspaper, wrapped round the letter with a piece of string.

5121. Those were committed to your care?—Yes.

5122. What did you charge for those letters?—We had various rates of charge, principally from 1*d.* to 2*d.*

5123. Did you charge 2*d.* for single letters?—I never made inquiry whether they were single or double; if it was a small packet we took it the same.

5124. If a person gave you one letter, you charged 2*d.* for it?—Yes, 1*d.* or 2*d.*, according to the circumstances; 2*d.* when we could get it.

5125. Have you any recollection of how many letters you carried in that way daily?—I have made some calculation of the thing, but how far it might approximate to the truth I do not know, but I keep within bounds when I say 500 daily, myself and the other carriers on the station.

5126. How many other carriers were there on the station?—There were six of us altogether.

5127. Did you go and return daily, or did you go one day and return the other?—We went one day and returned the other; the half went one day and half the other; we were going and returning alternately, but the carriers were going every day.

5128. How many letters do you think you yourself carried daily?—It would be a difficult thing for me to state, but I have seen occasionally probably 150 and 200, that is including circulats; but there were other days that I had few or none; I compute the number that I carried myself at about 50; that is, every day through the whole year; that is the average.

5129. Six days in the week?—Yes.

5130. Do you think the other carriers had an equal number with you?—I only presume they had because they had an equal chance of doing business with myself, and they were, to me, seemingly employed; we kept our transactions of course quite secret, except when I have seen them with a handful of letters as I have had myself.

5131. Did the carriage of letters afford you a good income?—They furnished a good remuneration; they were easily carried; they caused us little or no trouble and no expense.

5132. What would your 50 letters a day average in money to you weekly?—Probably out of those 50 we might have 10 or 15 at 1*d.* and the rest at 2*d.*; but I am taken unawares with the question; probably there might be more, I would say about half of each.

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