

A4212

FIRST- , SECOND- , AND THIRD-CLASS
POST OFFICE RECEIPTS AND
POSTMASTERS' SALARIES, 1895–1905

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INTRODUCTION

On the two rolls of this microfilm publication, A4212, are reproduced eight volumes of records of the amount of receipts (sales) of first-, second-, and third-class post offices, along with the annual salary of the postmasters of those offices, 1895–1905, from Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group (RG) 28.

BACKGROUND

The position of Postmaster General was created by the Second Continental Congress, July 26, 1775, and continued by the Confederation Congress, following ratification of the Articles of Confederation, March 1, 1781. A temporary Office of Postmaster General was established in the Federal Government by the Post Office Act (1 Stat. 70), September 22, 1789, and the permanent Post Office Department was established by the Post Office Act (1 Stat. 232), February 20, 1792. The Postmaster General was made a Cabinet member in 1829, and the Post Office Department was elevated to Cabinet status by the Post Office Act (17 Stat. 283) of June 8, 1872. The Post Office Department was abolished, effective July 1, 1971, by the Postal Reorganization Act (84 Stat. 719) of August 12, 1970, and its functions were transferred to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

From 1775 to 1836, all postmasters were appointed by the Postmaster General. Beginning in 1836, postmasters whose annual compensation exceeded \$1,000 were appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, while all other postmasters continued to be appointed by the Postmaster General (6 Stat. 80). Post offices were divided into five classes by an act of July 1, 1864 (13 Stat. 335), with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes appointed by the President and the 4th and 5th classes appointed by the Postmaster General. The Pendleton Act of March 3, 1883 (22 Stat. 600) divided post offices into four classes based on their gross receipts:

| CLASS | GROSS RECEIPTS | POSTMASTER SALARY |
|--------|--------------------|-------------------|
| First | \$40,000 or more | \$3,000 – \$6,000 |
| Second | \$8,000 – \$40,000 | \$2,000 – \$2,900 |
| Third | \$1,900 – \$8,000 | \$1,000 – \$1,900 |
| Fourth | under \$1,900 | under \$1,000 |

Compensation for fourth-class postmasters consisted of “the whole of box rents” plus commissions on postage-due stamps, postage stamps, official stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and newspaper and periodical stamps, and waste paper sales,¹ according to the following formula: 100 percent of the first \$50; 60 percent of the next \$100; 50 percent of the next \$200; and 40 percent of the remainder. Postmasters also received a commission on money orders. Each post office’s class rank and postmaster’s compensation was readjusted annually based on the gross receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

¹ “Waste paper, dead newspapers, printed matter, and twine sold.”

RECORDS DESCRIPTION

This microfilm publication reproduces eight bound volumes in which the Post Office Department recorded the amount of receipts (sales) of first-, second-, and third-class post offices, along with the annual salary of the postmasters of those offices. This information is arranged by year, then alphabetically by state or territory, then alphabetically by post office name. More specifically, it provides the amount of the postmaster's annual salary on June 30 and July 1, and the office's receipts (sales) for the four quarters ending March 31. A notation was made when the post office was relegated to the 4th class of post offices, after which no further information was recorded.

During the period 1895–1905, the Federal fiscal year began on July 1 and ended June 30. For example, the 1900 fiscal year began on July 1, 1899, and ended on June 30, 1900. The postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1 represent, respectively, the rate of his annual salary in two consecutive fiscal years.

Most volumes also include a nine-page recapitulation (tally) by state of the number of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-class post offices on June 30 of the preceding fiscal year, and July 1, and Oct. 1, Jan. 1, and Apr. 1 of the current fiscal year. There are lists of post offices discontinued in fiscal years 1901–7, and a list of new post offices dedicated in fiscal year 1900.

More specific details about the arrangement and contents of each volume are given in the table of contents. The volumes include post offices in the continental United States and the territories of Arizona, Indian (later Oklahoma), New Mexico, Utah, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

GENERAL REMARKS

These records were filmed in December 1958 for the Post Office Department by the Microfilm Section of the Defense Printing Service of the Department of Defense. This film was accessioned into the National Archives (Accession NC3-28-80-1) and was assigned the number A4212 in 2013 in order to issue it as a National Archives Microfilm Publication. The current (2014) location of the original bound volumes has not been researched.

RELATED RECORDS

Postmaster salaries and, sometimes, net post office receipts, were published in the 1816–1911 issues of the biennial *Official Register of the United States*. For more information, see John P. Deeben, "The Official Register of the United States, 1816–1959," *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* 36: 4 (Winter 2004): 50–56. In addition, other record series in RG 28 in the National Archives may provide salary and receipt information before 1895 or after 1905.

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ROLL CONTENTS²

- 1 **Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1895–1899** (paginated)
Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

| PAGES | YEAR |
|---------|------|
| 22–120 | 1895 |
| 121–240 | 1896 |
| 241–361 | 1897 |
| 362–487 | 1898 |
| 488–621 | 1899 |
| 622–763 | 1900 |

- Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1899** (paginated)
Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

| PAGES | YEAR |
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| 1–155 | 1899 |

- Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1900** (paginated;
 previous volume continues)³

| PAGES | CONTENT |
|---------|---|
| 190–198 | Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-class post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1899, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1900 |
| 199 | List of new post offices dedicated, June 30, 1899–Apr. 1, 1900 [Fiscal Year 1900] |
| 200 | National recapitulation of the total number of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-class post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1899, and Jan. 1, Apr. 1, and June 30, 1900 |

² Words in boldface are those on the target (information) sheets preceding each volume (or part of a volume).

³ Pages 156–189 were not filmed because they were blank.

Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1900 (unpaginated; different volume)

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1900, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1901 (9 pages).

Post offices deactivated, July 2, 1900–Mar. 1, 1901 (1 page). [Fiscal Year 1901].

National recapitulation of the total number of 1st- , 2nd- , and 3rd-class post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1900, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1901

Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1901 (unpaginated)

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1901, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1902 (9 pages).

Post offices deactivated, July 1, 1901–June 1, 1902 (1 page). [Fiscal Year 1902].

Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1902 (unpaginated)

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1902, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1903 (9 pages).

Post offices deactivated, July 2, 1902–May 1, 1903 (1 page) [Fiscal Year 1903].

2 **Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1903** (unpaginated).

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1903, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1904 (9 pages).

Post offices discontinued, July 2, 1903–June 1, 1904 (1 page) [Fiscal Year 1904].

Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1904 (unpaginated).

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31. This is preceded by a newspaper clipping—"Cities of 25,000"—about the increase in cities' population from 1900 to 1903, as estimated by the Bureau of the Census.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1904, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1905 (9 pages).

Post offices discontinued, Sept. 1, 1904–June 1, 1905 (1 page) [Fiscal Year 1905].

Receipts of Post Offices and Postmasters' Salaries, 1905 (unpaginated).

Alphabetically by state or territory, then by post office name. Includes postmaster's salary on June 30 and July 1, and receipts for the four quarters ending March 31.

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1905, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1906 (9 pages).

Post offices discontinued, July 1, 1905–September 1, 1907 (2 page) [Fiscal Years 1906–7].

Recapitulation by state of the number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and total post offices on June 30, July 1, and Oct. 1, 1906, and Jan. 1 and Apr. 1, 1907 (9 pages).