

HISTORY OF LAWS
RELATING TO THE POSTAL MONOPOLY
OF THE UNITED STATES

UNIVERSAL POSTAL CONVENTION, 1878

Universal Postal Union Convention (Paris, 1878), 20 Stat. 734 (excerpts)

. . . . [20 Stat. 737]

Article 5. The rates of postage for the conveyance of postal articles throughout the entire extent of the Union, including their delivery at the residence of the addressees in the countries of the Union where a delivery service is or shall be organized, are fixed as follows:

1st. For letters, 25 centimes in case of prepayment, and double that amount in the contrary case, for each letter and for every weight of 15 grammes or fraction of 15 grammes;

2d. For post-cards, 10 centimes per card;

3d. For printed matter of every kind, commercial papers, and samples of merchandise, 5 centimes for each article or packet bearing a particular address; and for every weight of 50 grammes or fraction of 50 grammes, provided that such article or packet does not contain any letter or manuscript note having the character of an actual and personal correspondence, and that it be made up in such a manner as to admit of its being easily examined.

The charge on commercial papers cannot be less than 25 centimes per packet, and the charge on samples [20 Stat. 738] cannot be less than 10 centimes per packet.

. . . . [20 Stat. 759]

DETAILED REGULATIONS

XVI. Commercial Papers.

1. The following are considered as commercial papers and admitted [20 Stat. 760] as such to the reduced postage sanctioned by Article 5 of the Convention, viz: All instruments or documents written or drawn wholly or partly by hand, which have not the character of current and personal correspondence, such as papers of legal procedures, deeds of all kinds drawn up by public functionaries, waybills or bills of lading, invoices, the various documents of insurance companies, copies or extracts of deeds under private seal written on stamped or unstamped paper,

scores or sheets of manuscript music, manuscripts of works forwarded separately, etc.

. . . .

XVII. *Printed matter of all kinds.*

1. The following are considered as printed matter and admitted as such to the reduced postage sanctioned by Article 5 of the Convention, viz: Newspapers and periodical works, books stitched or bound, pamphlets, sheets of music, visiting cards, address cards, proofs of printing, with or without manuscripts relating thereto, engravings, photographs, drawings, plans, geographical maps, catalogues, prospectuses, announcements and notices of various kinds, whether printed, engraved, or lithographed, and, in general, all impressions or copies obtained upon paper, parchment, or cardboard, by means of printing, lithographing, or any other mechanical process easy to recognize, except the copying-press.

2. The following are excluded from the reduced postage, viz: Stamps or forms of prepayment, whether obliterated or not, as well as all printed articles constituting the representative sign of a monetary value.

3. The character of *actual and personal correspondence* cannot be ascribed to the following, viz:

1st. To the signature of the sender or to the designation of his name, of his profession, of his rank, of the [20 Stat. 761] place of origin, and of the date of dispatch.

2d. To a dedication or mark of respect offered by the author.

3d. To the figures or signs merely intended to mark the passages of a text, in order to call attention to them.

4th. To the prices added upon the quotations or prices current of exchange or markets.

5th. Lastly, to annotations or corrections made upon proofs of printing or musical compositions, and relating to the text or to the execution of the work.

[4.] Printed matter must be either placed under band, upon a roller, between boards, in a case open at one side or at both ends, or in an unclosed envelope, or simply folded in such a manner as not to conceal the nature of the packet, or, lastly, tied by a string easy to unfasten.

5. Address cards, and all printed matter presenting the form and consistency of an unfolded card, may be forwarded without band, envelope, fastening, or fold.