ANNO QUINQUAGESIMO QUINTO

GEORGII III. REGIS.

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CAP. CIII.

An Act to regulate the Postage of Ship Letters to and from *Ireland*. [22d *June* 1815.]

WHEREAS it is expedient to alter so much of the several Acts in force in *Ireland*, as relates to the Rates of Postage of Ship Letters, and to the several Regulations respecting such Letters, and to grant other Rates of Postage in lieu of such former Rates; 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 Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and fifteen, so much of an Act made in the Parliament of *Ireland*, in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Years of His present Majesty's Reign, for establishing a Post Office in *Ireland*; and also so much of an Act of the last Session of Parliament, for repealing certain Duties upon Letters and Packets sent by the Post within *Ireland*, and granting other Duties in lieu thereof, as granted a Rate of Postage of One Penny for every Letter or Packet directed on board, or brought or sent from on board any Ship or Vessel riding or stopping in any Port within *Ireland*, over and above all other Rates chargeable on any such Letters; and also so much of the said recited Act of the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Years of His Majesty's

So much of 23 & 24 G. 3. (Irish) and 54 G. 3. c. 119. as granted a Postage of 1d. for every Ship Letter, and also so much of 23 & 24 G. 3. as directs 1d. per Letter to be paid

to the Maſter of Veſſels, &c. repealed.

Majeſty's Reign, as directs that the Sum of One Penny ſhall be paid to the Maſters of Ships or Veſſels, or other Perſons, for every Letter or Packet delivered to the Deputy Poſt Maſter of the Port or Place in *Ireland* at which ſuch Ships or Veſſels ſhall touch or arrive; and all Penalties, Reſtrictions, and Regulations, in the ſaid laſt recited Act mentioned reſpecting ſuch Letters, ſhall be and the ſame is and are hereby repealed, ſave and except only ſo far as relates to the Recovery of any Rates impoſed by any ſuch Act, which may be remaining unpaid.

Duty to be paid on Ship Letters.

II. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful for His Majeſty's Poſtmaſters General for *Ireland*, and their Deputy and Deputies by them thereunto authorized, to and for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, to demand, have, receive, and take for every Letter and Packet which ſhall be brought by Ships and Veſſels other than Packet Boats, from Places within His Majeſty's Dominions (other than *Great Britain*), and from any Kingdoms and Countries beyond the Seas into *Ireland*, the Sum of Sixpence *Iriſh* Currency, for every Single Letter; and for every Double Letter, and for every other Letter and Packet exceeding a Quarter of an Ounce in weight, the Sum of One Shilling *Iriſh* Currency, in Addition to any Inland or Internal Poſtage which may ariſe upon the Inland Conveyance of ſuch Letters and Packets in *Ireland*.

Perſons bringing ſuch Letters to the Poſt Office, and paying a certain Rate of Poſtage empowered to forward the ſame abroad by any Veſſel not being a Packet Boat.

III. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful for His Majeſty's ſaid Poſtmaſters-General of *Ireland*, and their Deputies, to receive Letters and Packets directed to Places within His Majeſty's Dominions (other than *Great Britain*), or to Kingdoms and Countries beyond the Seas, from any Perſon or Perſons who may bring the ſame to any Poſt Office in *Ireland*, and who may be deſirous to forward ſuch Letters themſelves, and to affix upon each Letter and Packet ſuch Stamp, Mark of Poſtage, or Deſignation, as the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General in their Diſcretion ſhall think proper and order; and thereupon to demand and receive, for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, a Rate of Poſtage of One-third Part of the Rates and Duties payable by Law for ſuch reſpective Letters and Packets, if the ſame were conveyed by Packet-Boats; and in Caſes where no Rate of Poſtage is already eſtabliſhed, then to demand, have, receive and take for ſuch Letters and Packets, Rates, as near as can be aſcertained, equal to One-third Part of what is now paid for Letters ſent beyond the Seas, and upon Payment thereof, to return ſuch Letters and Packets to the Perſon or Perſons bringing the ſame; and that it ſhall and may be lawful for ſuch Perſon and Perſons to forward ſuch Letters and Packets to the Places to which they may be directed, by any Ships or Veſſels that he or they may think proper, not being Packet-Boats, without incurring any Penalty therefore, and without Payment of any other Rate or Duty of Poſtage; any Law, Statute, Cuſtom or Uſage to the contrary notwithſtanding.

Poſtmaſter-General may authorize Perſons to

IV. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful for His Majeſty's ſaid Poſtmaſter-General of *Ireland*, by Writing under their or either of their Hands, and under Seal of the Office of Poſtmaſters General

General of *Ireland*, to licenſe and authorize any Perſon or Perſons whatſoever to collect Letters and Packets in *Ireland*, directed to Places within His Majeſty's Dominions (other than *Great Britain*), and to Kingdoms and Countries beyond the Seas, for the Purpoſe of being forwarded according to their Directions, by any Ships or Veſſels other than Packet Boats; provided that ſuch Perſons ſo to be licenſed, ſhall, previous to forwarding the ſame, bring ſuch Letters and Packets to the Poſt-Office of the Town or Place from whence ſuch Letter or Letters or Packets is or are to be ſent, to have a Stamp, Mark of Poſtage, or Deſignation put thereon reſpectively; which Stamp, Mark of Poſtage, or Deſignation, the Poſtmaſters General and their Deputies, are hereby authorized and required to put thereon; and to demand, receive, and take for the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, the ſame Rates of Poſtage as are hereby made payable for Letters and Packets to be forwarded by Perſons bringing the ſame, in Manner hereinbefore provided; and upon ſuch Payment being made to return ſuch Letters and Packets to the Perſons ſo to be licenſed; and that it ſhall and may be lawful for ſuch authorized Perſons to forward ſuch Letters and Packets by any Ship or Veſſel that he or they may think proper, not being Packet Boats, without incurring any Penalty therefore, and without Payment of any other Rate of Poſtage; any Law, Statute or Uſage to the contrary notwithſtanding.

Collect Letters and to forward the ſame abroad by Veſſels other than Packet Boats, if Letters are brought to the Poſt Office and the Poſtage paid.

V. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall be lawful for any Perſon or Perſons authorized by the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General for *Ireland*, or by the Poſtmaſters-General for *Great Britain*, in Places within His Majeſty's Dominions and Countries beyond the Seas, to receive from the Maſters of Veſſels coming from thence into any Port in *Ireland*, Letters and Packets which may be collected and brought by ſuch Maſters to them for the Purpoſe of being tranſmitted by the Authority of the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General, and alſo to receive from ſuch Maſters with ſuch Letters at the Rate of Three Shillings for every Fifty Letters or Packets, and ſo in Proportion for a greater or leſſer Number; and ſuch Perſon or Perſons ſo authorized by the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General, ſhall make up in a Bag or Parcel all ſuch Letters ſo received, and incloſe therein a Certificate of the Number of Letters contained in the ſame, and an Impreſſion of the Seal which ſhall be uſed to ſeal ſuch Bag or Parcel, and the Date when the ſame ſhall be ſealed; and ſhall ſeal the Bag or Parcel with the Seal of which an Impreſſion ſhall have been ſo incloſed, and deliver the ſame Bag or Parcel to ſuch Maſters, for the Purpoſe of being brought by them to the Port at which they ſhall arrive in *Ireland*.

Maſters of Veſſels in Ports abroad, ſhall deliver Letters collected by them to authorized Perſons, who, on receiving 3s. for every 50 of ſuch Letters, ſhall put them into a ſealed Bag, and return them to the Maſters.

VI. And in order to encourage Maſters of Ships and Veſſels, not being Packet Boats, coming from Places within His Majeſty's Dominions (except from *Great Britain*) and from Places beyond the Seas; be it further enacted, That it ſhall be lawful for the Maſters of Veſſels to collect Letters and Packets in Places within His Majeſty's Dominions (except as aforeſaid), and in Countries beyond the Seas, ſo as ſuch Letters and Packets ſhall be collected for the Purpoſe of being tranſmitted by the Authority of the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General to *Ireland*; and provided that ſuch Maſters ſhall deliver all ſuch Letters to ſome Perſon or Perſons authorized by the ſaid Poſtmaſters-General to receive the ſame, for the Purpoſe aforeſaid; and that

On delivering ſuch Bag at any Poſt-Office in Ireland, the Maſter of the Veſſel ſhall be repaid the 3s. and receive 2d. for every Letter.

that the Maſters ſhall, upon delivering the ſame, pay unto the Perſon or Perſons ſo authorized, the Sum of Three Shillings for every Fifty Letters, and ſo in Proportion for a greater or leſſer Number, and ſhall then receive the ſame Letters back from ſuch Perſon or Perſons ſo authorized as aforeſaid, in a ſealed Bag or Parcel; and ſhall, upon Delivery of ſuch Bag or Parcel ſo made up and ſealed in ſuch Manner as is herein-before mentioned, in a perfect State, at any Poſt Office in *Ireland*, be repaid the Sum of Money which they ſhall have ſo advanced as aforeſaid; and alſo Twopence *per* Letter and Packet for every Letter or Packet which ſhall be contained in ſuch Bag or Parcel.

Penalty on opening the Bag, &c. 500 l.

VII. And be it further enacted, That if any Maſter of ſuch Ship or Veſſel ſhall open any Bag or Bags of Letters or Packets with which he ſhall have been entruſted, or ſhall take out of ſuch Bag any Letter or Letters, Packet or Packets whatſoever, or ſhall not duly deliver ſuch Bag, with the Letters and Packets, at the Place where he ſhall arrive, to the Perſon who may be authorized to receive the ſame, without wilful or unavoidable Delay after his Arrival, every ſuch Maſter ſo offending ſhall forfeit and pay the Sum of Five hundred Pounds, One Moiety to the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, and the other Moiety to any Perſon who ſhall 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 *Dublin*, wherein no Eſſoign, Protection, Privilege, or Wager of Law ſhall be admitted.

Penalty on ſending Letters not having the Poſt-Office Mark, 5 l.

VIII. And be it further enacted, That if any Perſon whatſoever ſhall ſend any Letter or Packet by any Ship or Veſſel of which he ſhall not be Owner, without having the official Mark of the Poſtage having been paid thereon; or if any Maſter ſhall have on board, or carry any Letter or Packet, not being the Letter or Packet of his Owners, without ſuch official Mark thereon, every ſuch Perſon or Perſons ſo offending ſhall forfeit and pay the Sum of Five Pounds for every Letter or Packet ſo ſent or found on board or carried as aforeſaid.

Officers of the Cuſtoms may ſearch Ships for Letters.

IX. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful to and for the Collector, Comptroller, or Principal Officer of His Majeſty's Cuſtoms, at any Port or Place whatſoever, and they are hereby authorized and required to ſearch every Ship or Veſſel, in any Port or Place, for Letters or Packets which may be on Board contrary to the Proviſions of this Act, and to ſeize and take all ſuch Letters and Packets, and to forward the ſame to the Poſtmaſters General or his Deputy at the Port or Place; and that the Officers ſeizing and ſending the ſame ſhall be entitled to ſue for the Penalty for any ſuch Offence, and ſhall be entitled to One Moiety of ſuch Penalty when recovered.

Officers of Cuſtoms may adminiſter Oath to Maſters of Veſſels.

X. And be it further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful for ſuch Collector, Comptroller, or other Officer of the Cuſtoms, and he is hereby authorized and required to adminiſter an Oath to every ſuch Maſter before he departs, that he has not any Letters or Packets which have not paid the Rates of Poſtage hereby impoſed, on board his Ship or Veſſel, not being the Letters or Packets of the Owners of his ſaid Ship or Veſſel.

XI. And

Declaration to be made of the Delivery of Letters before Veſſel breaks Bulk.

XI. And be it further enacted, That on the Arrival of any Ship or Veſſel in Port, the Maſter ſhall ſign a Declaration in Writing, in the Preſence of the Perſon authorized by the Poſtmaſters General at the Port or Place, who ſhall alſo ſign the ſame, that to the beſt of his Knowledge and Belief, he has delivered, according to the Proviſions of this Act, all the Letters and Packets, or Bags or Parcels of Letters and Packets which were on board his Veſſel; and that until ſuch Declaration ſhall be ſigned, the Officer of the Cuſtoms ſhall not permit ſuch Ship or Veſſel to break Bulk; and in caſe ſuch Maſter ſhall wilfully neglect to make ſuch Declaration, he ſhall forfeit and pay the Sum of Fifty Pounds, One Moiety thereof to be paid to the Informer.

Penalty on Officers neglecting Duty, 20l.

XII. And be it further enacted, That if any Collector, Comptroller, or Principal Officer hereby required to prohibit any Ship or Veſſel from breaking Bulk until the Requiſites of this Act ſhall be complied with, ſhall permit ſuch Ship or Veſſel to break Bulk, ſuch Collector, Comptroller or Officer, ſo permitting ſuch Ship or Veſſel to break Bulk, ſhall forfeit and pay the Sum of Twenty Pounds, One Moiety thereof to be paid to the Informer.

Penalties how to be applied and recovered.

XIII. And be it further enacted, That One Moiety of the ſeveral pecuniary Penalties hereby impoſed, ſhall be payable to the Uſe of His Majeſty, His Heirs and Succeſſors, and the other Moiety to any Perſon who ſhall and will inform or ſue for the ſame; and that all and ſingular the ſaid Penalties (except the Penalty of Five hundred Pounds herein-before mentioned) ſhall and may be recovered by Information before any Two Juſtices of the Peace of the County, County of the City, City or Town Corporate where ſuch Offences ſhall be reſpectively committed, upon the Oath of One credible Witneſs, which Oath ſuch Juſtices are hereby empowered to adminiſter; and if any Perſon or Perſons convicted of any ſuch Offence, ſhall not forthwith pay the Penalty which he, ſhe, or they ſhall have incurred, it ſhall be lawful for ſuch Juſtices of the Peace to ſend ſuch Perſon or Perſons to the Workhouſe, or Houſe of Correction, there to remain at hard Labour for ſuch Time as ſuch Juſtices ſhall think proper, not exceeding Three Months.

Puniſhment of Perſons for forging the Poſt Office Mark.

Miſdemeanor.

XIV. And be it further enacted, That if any Perſon ſhall forge or counterfeit or cauſe to be forged or counterfeited, any Stamp, Mark of Poſtage, or Deſignation, upon any Letter or Packet hereby authorized to be ſo ſtamped, marked, or deſignated, with Intent to avoid or prevent the Payment of the Rate of Poſtage hereby impoſed, each and every Perſon and Perſons ſo offending, ſhall be deemed and taken to be guilty of a Miſdemeanor, to be puniſhed by Fine and Impriſonment.

Duty ſhall be Poſt Office Revenue.

XV. And be it further enacted, That the Rates and Duties impoſed by this Act, ſhall form Part of the Revenue of the Poſt Office of *Ireland*, and be applied as ſuch.

Act may be altered this Session.

XVI. And be it further enacted, That this Act may be amended, altered, or repealed, by any Act or Acts to be passed in this Session of Parliament.

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