

TABLE I.—FIRST-CLASS MAIL—Continued

Dots (. . .) = Absence of rate.
Dashes (— — —) = Continuance of rate.

Year	Letters ⁹	Drop letters		Postal cards	Ship and steamboat ¹¹
		Carrier office	Noncarrier office		
¹¹ 1863	3 cents per 1/2 ounce.....	2 cents per 1/2 ounce.....	1 cent each ¹²	Double regular rate.
1865	do.....	(¹¹) . . .	1 cent per 1/2 ounce.....	. . .	Do.
¹² 1872	do.....	(¹¹) . . .	1 cent each.....	1 cent each.....	Do.

Year	Letters ¹⁴ (non-local)	Drop letters ¹³		Postal cards	Post cards (private mailing)	Business reply cards and letters
		Carrier office	Noncarrier office			
¹⁴ 1879	3 cents per 1/2 ounce.....	2 cents per 1/2 ounce.....	1 cent per 1/2 ounce.....	1 cent each.....
1883	2 cents per 1/2 ounce.....	do.....	do.....	do.....
1885	2 cents per ounce.....	2 cents per ounce.....	1 cent per ounce.....	do.....
1898	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	1 cent each.....	. . .
1917	3 cents per ounce.....	do.....	2 cents per ounce.....	2 cents each.....	2 cents each.....	. . .
1919	2 cents per ounce.....	do.....	1 cent per ounce.....	1 cent each.....	1 cent each.....	. . .
1925	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	2 cents each.....	. . .
1928	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	1 cent each.....	2 cents each plus regular postage collected on delivery (reduced to 1 cent plus regular postage Oct. 1, 1928).
1932	3 cents per ounce.....	3 cents per ounce.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	Do.
1933	do.....	2 cents per ounce.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	Do.
¹⁷ 1940	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	Do.
1944	do.....	3 cents per ounce ¹⁵	do.....	do.....	do.....	Do.
1952	do.....	do.....	2 cents per ounce.....	2 cents each.....	2 cents each ¹⁶	Do.
1955	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	do.....	Do.

¹ Actually first-class mail as a mail category was not officially established until 1863. Ship and steamboat letters are excluded between 1782 and 1862—see Table II.

² A "single letter" was a communication of one sheet; a "double letter," two sheets; a "triple letter," three sheets. A packet consisted of four or more sheets weighing an ounce or over. Before 1827 it was somewhat doubtful that a single letter weighing over an ounce or a letter of four or more pieces under an ounce could be charged quadruple rates. In 1827 it was provided "that one or more pieces of paper mailed as a letter, and weighing one ounce avoirdupois, shall be charged with quadruple postage * * * and fixes quadruple rates for packages containing four pieces of paper."

³ Between 1794 and 1863, extra fees, not a part of the postage rate, were charged for city delivery service with the maximum charge of 2 cents (for drop letters—see footnote 4). Patrons could accept the service or not as they saw fit and the proceeds accrued to the carrier. Also in the same period there was a fee for pickup service for delivery to post office, but certain Postmaster General reports indicate that this provision was not enforced.

⁴ A letter for delivery at office where mailed; carrier delivery extra (the fee going to the carrier), until 1860.

⁵ In 1825, rate for single letters, 151 to 400 miles, increased to 18 3/4 cents.

⁶ Letters or parcels not over 1/2 ounce were single letters—each additional 1/2 ounce was charged an additional single postage.

⁷ Various acts between 1847 and 1850 established special rates to and from the western and southwestern United States (Oregon Territory, Territories of Utah and New Mexico, etc.) and to and from Havana, Panama, etc.

⁸ In 1861, letter postage between any point in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains and any State or Territory on the Pacific was fixed at 10 cents per 1/2 ounce.

⁹ From March 1864 to Sept. 1868 certain mail other than first class was subject to letter postage rates. In 1864, all mail conveyed westward beyond western boundary of Kansas, and eastward from the eastern boundary of California (except newspapers and franked matter) was subject to prepaid letter rates. In 1865 "periodicals, magazines, and exchanges" were also excepted. In 1868 this letter rate extension was repealed.

¹⁰ See Table II for rates prior to 1863. These rates applied on letters from one place to another in United States, for delivery in United States, conveyed by ships not regularly employed in carrying mail. Then classification is omitted after 1879 because of its diminishing importance, but the double rate is still in effect even though little or no matter is mailed under these rates.

¹¹ In 1863 a uniform rate regardless of distance, a free city delivery service (abolishing extra postage or carrier fees for letters collected or delivered by carriers), and a letter unit of one-half ounce instead of the former "single letter" were inaugurated. First-class mail embraced letters and matter wholly or partly in writing, except book manuscripts and corrected proof sheets.

¹² Drop letters prior to 1865 were defined as "letters addressed for delivery at office where mailed." In 1865 the designation was divided and separate rates were established for local delivery at letter carrier offices and nonletter carrier offices.

¹³ First class embraced letters and all correspondence, wholly or partly in writing, except book manuscripts and corrected proof sheets passing between authors and publishers.

¹⁴ All letters written in point print or raised characters used by the blind, when unsealed, at third-class rates by Act of March 2, 1899. Extended to letters on sound reproductions in 1934.

¹⁵ Drop letters included letters addressed for delivery at office where mailed, and as indicated, includes local delivery at both letter and non-letter carriers office. In 1900 drop letters for delivery on rural and star routes were eligible for same rates as those applying to letter carrier offices.

¹⁶ First class embraced letters, postal cards, and all matter wholly or partly in writing, except such writing as is authorized to be placed on mail of other classes.

¹⁷ Three-cent letter rate not to apply to first-class matter for local delivery or for delivery within a county with population of over one million if county entirely within a corporate city.

¹⁸ Three-cent local rate was to apply until 6 months after termination of hostilities of World War II, but was made permanent in 1947.

¹⁹ From Jan. 1, 1952, to March 22, 1952, an additional charge of 10 percent on postal cards sold in quantities of 50 or more. This provision was repealed by Public Law 279, effective March 22, 1952.