

MOTOR MAIL EXPRESS ROUTES PLANNED HERE

First Will Be From City Through West Chester to Newtown Square

TO START WITHIN 30 DAYS

Others to Be Established Shortly by Assistant Postmaster General Blakelee

By a Staff Correspondent WASHINGTON, Nov. 21.—The Postoffice Department will within the next thirty days establish a motor mail express route between Philadelphia and West Chester and Newtown Square, which will be the forerunner of a number of routes that will introduce a rapid system of parcel posts radiating from Philadelphia to points within a radius of sixty or seventy miles or more.

These motor mail express routes will be of great benefit to the entire community, as they will establish a quick and cheap system of delivery of merchandise from the city merchants to the people in the outlying districts and furnish the producers of vegetables, fruits, poultry, eggs, butter and other country products with a medium of getting them to the city buyers in a few hours at low transportation expense.

Under direction of Assistant Postmaster General James L. Blakelee, an inspector is now investigating the roads, postoffices and farms in Chester county with a view to laying out a route to run from Philadelphia, through West Chester to Newtown Square and several smaller towns where country produce can be picked up for the city buyers.

Mr. Blakelee is most enthusiastic over the motor mail express system and hopes within the next three months to have established between Philadelphia and Reading, Atlantic City, Lancaster, Vineland, Norrisstown, Allentown and numerous other points on highways that can be reached on a one-day's motor run from Philadelphia.

Nine of these routes have been put in operation within the past few months and have already proved of great benefit to the communities between which they ply because of the great saving effected in time and expense of delivery and their demonstrated ability to reduce the high cost of living.

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stations are being made now over other routes to determine the amount of produce obtainable for shipment, the most convenient hours for the schedule and other particulars."

Assistant Postmaster General Blakelee proposed to Congress last session that \$100,000 be appropriated to experiment with such a system as is now being organized. Congress failed to pass the bill. It was proposed, had that bill passed, to put the system in effect on a parcel post rate basis of one-half cent a pound.

The rate for carrying merchandise over the routes now amounts to one cent a pound under the parcel post rates, but the department hopes to reduce it to one-half cent a pound if Congress will appropriate the funds directly to operate the proposed system and give authority for the reduction of the carrying rate.

"Are these motor mail routes now being operated costing the Government much money or are they proving profitable?" Mr. Blakelee was asked by the EVENING LEADER correspondent.

"They have proved very profitable right from the outset," replied Mr. Blakelee. "Now take the route from Washington to Leonardtown, Md., the first route established, as an example. We offered that route for contract and the lowest bid we could get was \$7500 a year. We decided to buy a motortruck and operate it ourselves. Counting the total cost of equipment, depreciation, salaries and all expense under a cost-accounting system, that route costs \$3600 a year to operate. It carries out from the Washington merchants to the rural communities an average of 4000 pounds a day, which at the parcel-post rate costs \$400 a year to operate. It carries return trip it is carrying about 800 pounds of farm produce back to Washington, a total earning of \$48 a day, which is an immense profit compared to other rural mail routes. We expect to build up the shipments from the country into Washington so as to give the motortruck a full load each way and make the route even more profitable. So you see it can be run on a half-cent-a-pound rate if Congress will give authority.

"This is just the beginning of a system that I expect to see develop into one of the most important functions of the Postoffice Department," Mr. Blakelee went on. "We now have routes from Washington to Leonardtown, two between Washington and

Baltimore, one from Annapolis to Solomons Point, Md.; one from Waldorf to Rock Point, Md.; one from Baltimore to Westminster, and one from Savannah to Statesboro, Ga., and all are developing rapidly and operating with great benefit to the communities and with profit to the Government."

BENEFIT OF FARMERS

"The farmers of Lehigh County, Pa., produced this year 4,000,000 bushels of potatoes more than they normally consume," he continued. "Potatoes on the farm in Lehigh County were bringing \$1.75 a bushel and in New York city they were worth \$2.75 to \$3.25 a bushel. A bushel of potatoes weighs sixty-two pounds and could be carried to New York on a one-day run over the motor-mail route at sixty-two cents a bushel, leaving the farmer a profit of over \$1 a bushel on his potatoes and a transaction completed all in one day.

"The parcel-post laws confine shipments to fifty pounds in each parcel. A bushel of potatoes weighs sixty-two pounds and to revise the weights so that the standard measures can be shipped by parcel post and prevent the necessity of splitting measures up into fifty-pound lots as must now be done."

Mr. Blakelee was questioned in regard to the claim that when farm products are sent to the city by parcel post, city prices and not country prices are demanded.

"This system will undoubtedly introduce lively competition in prices for farm products," said Mr. Blakelee. "Suppose the price of eggs in Philadelphia today is sixty cents a dozen and at a little place on the proposed route to West Chester it is forty-five cents. The farmer will not send his eggs into the city at forty-five cents a dozen, but perhaps at fifty-five or fifty-six cents. It is not expected to tear down in a day a system of competitive prices that has been in existence for years, but the city merchant must meet the country price little by little and greater competition and steady reduction in the cost of living is bound to result.

"The motor route we expect to establish out of Philadelphia within thirty days will be the first direct avenue of communication between the citizens of Philadelphia and the farmers in the outlying communities. For today there is not a single rural mail route running out of Philadelphia."

DREAMS FORECAST JOY FOR FIRM BELIEVERS

Happiness Coming, With Your Help, for Sunshine Home Folks—Farm Is Objective

Do you believe in dreams? Don't snuff, please! It's a serious question. Because even if you personally happen to say "Pooh, pooh!" or "Fush, fush!" and wave the Dream Proposition away because it never pans out and doesn't yield 6 per cent, there's a group of Firm Believers in our midst.

It's an easy matter to pass the house of dreams which is concealed under the practical exterior of two red brick buildings at 2609-11 North Sixth street and is known by day as the "Sunshine Home." A terse signboard sums up the home's purpose: It is "Christian and undenominational" and "offers shelter for working girls, mothers and children."

But what the sign neglects to say is that the biggest group of dream boosters in Philadelphia and vicinity is working with dynamic force behind the walls. The greatest vision of all is cherished by the superintendent, Mrs. William H. Keeler and concerns a certain farm at Davittville, near Willow Grove, which will become a joyous fact in the lives of the "mothers and children and working girls" if \$50,000 can be raised somewhere.

When "Mother" Keeler looks over the white faces of her charges and notes how life has swept the joyousness from lip and eye and bowed shoulders that should be erect and triumphant; when she sees how poverty has made cheeks sag inward where they should bloom, she gets that determined look in her eyes which has made the Sunshine Home the success that it is today.

"Mother" Keeler has a way of sending up hasty little prayers when her dreams seem so far away that she gets lonesome, and nowadays she is holding fast to a certain line about being "led into green pastures." "And, Lord," says "Mother" Keeler, "give us the farm somehow—the poor dears need it so bad."

While "Mother" Keeler's gray eyes are

seeing visions of sun-dappled fields where tired mothers can rest and broods where wading and kindred delights make summer days one long song, the group of minor dreamers in the Sunshine Home are busy also. The leading members are ten, twelve and fifteen years old. It is regrettable that their faces are smudged usually with sugar/molasses and they have the American faults of exaggeration and optimism which the great war has revealed so ruthlessly. But you should hear them at the bed hour, when every one is near the brink of dreams, and it is easier to believe than to know.

"When spring comes—" says the slim girl who keeps crowding back a persistent cough that never gets better.

"When we are out on the farm—" says the freckled youngster whose personal knowledge of vegetables is limited to the bucket's cart.

"When the war is over—" sighs Betty, who is the baby of the "home."

"What'll happen then?" three or four voices demand to know.

"My daddy'll come back," says Betty confidently, for "reasonably lists" mean nothing when you are eight.

It's not the least of the home's merits that it has shouldered heroically the added burdens of the war. Women and children who were left homeless or in want when the call to arms took breadwinners have come to the Sunshine Home. "Mother" Keeler takes them all in. These hapless ones are taking their places in the ordered, busy life of the home beside unfortunate women whose marriages proved failures; beside working girls who have found the place a haven in a strange country; beside

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children who have been rescued from unbelievable degradation.

"Mother" Keeler ministers to them all. It is characteristic of the home that once you become an inmate there your troubles are cut in two. "Mother" Keeler shoulders the other half of the load, and it was characteristic when she assumed the care of three children whose father was recently called to service.

"You go and do what you should for your country," said "Mother" Keeler, "and I'll do what I can for your children."

Such generosity makes "Mother" Keeler's arithmetic very complicated at times, and there is a deficit amounting to something less than \$500 on the books for 1916. It is noted that this was paid by "W. H. Keeler and wife," but "Mother" Keeler asserts that, like sentimental Tommy, "she'll find a way."

But the farm? That's another question. "Do I believe in dreams?" echoes Mother Keeler. "Sure, if we only had \$50,000— Can you help her make it come true?"

GETS \$60,000 CONTRACT

Standard Car Company of Indiana to Employ 10,000 Men

CHICAGO, Nov. 21.—Extensive enlargement of the plant of the Standard Car Company, at Hammond, Ind., is to be made at once.

The company has been awarded a \$60,000,000 Government contract for gun parts and general war munitions. It now employs 2000 men. It is contemplated that several new buildings will be erected and 10,000 additional men employed.

New Red Cross Seal Out
 The new Red Cross seal has been issued. Thousands of the stickers are to be sold at Christmas time and the proceeds used in the fight against tuberculosis. It is expected that the proceeds will total \$3,000,000.

ROYAL CORD

Automobiles Keep Men and Merchandise Moving

Railroads are strained to their limit today to supply transportation for man and merchandise.

The automobile has stepped into the breach, and is the second greatest factor in meeting the national need for more—more—more transportation.

You must keep your car fulfilling its part of the need,

- keep it ready day or night to do its part in your transportation service,
- keep its "feet" well shod,
- give it the tires that have stood, and are continuing to stand, the test of mileage,
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SAMUEL P. COLT
 Nov. 12, 1917

