

1946
NEW ZEALAND

POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1945-46

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency

To His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Cyril Freyberg,
V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the Post and Telegraph Department for the year ended on the 31st March, 1946.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
P. C. WEBB.

General Post Office, Wellington C. 1,
28th June, 1946

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1946

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

The receipts and payments of the Department for the financial year 1945-46 are shown in the following account:—

	<i>Receipts.</i>	<i>Payments.</i>
	£	£
Balance forward	44,321	
Postages	1,780,052	2,623,184
Money-order and postal-note commission	54,620	168,704
Private box and bag rents and rural-delivery fees	70,390	191,182
Miscellaneous receipts	1,038,518	134,157
Paid telegrams	637,442	504,031
Paid tolls	1,425,020	60,000
Telephone-exchange receipts	2,062,355	216,828
	7,068,397	109,937
		1,749,386
		712,973
		8,574
		6,478,956
		604,000
		29,762
	£7,112,718	£7,112,718
Balance brought down	£ 29,762	

The total cash value of the transactions of the Department, including the above, amounted to approximately £655,000,000.

PERSONAL

Mr. C. L. Mayo, Deputy Director-General, retired on superannuation on the 6th March, 1946, after completing forty-two years' service. He was succeeded by Mr. P. N. Cryer, Second Deputy Director-General, who was replaced in turn by Mr. C. O. Coad, Divisional Director, General Post Office.

Mr. E. H. R. Green, Deputy Chief Engineer, was appointed Chief Engineer on the 6th March, in succession to Mr. M. A. Pike, who retired on the 5th March after completing almost forty-two years' service. Mr. Green was replaced by Mr. A. D. Baggs, Superintending Engineer, General Post Office.

The Director-General, Mr. H. M. Patrick, M.V.O., returned on the 16th March from a short visit to Australia which was made with the object of obtaining information concerning the salaries and conditions of employment of officers of the Commonwealth Post Office. The last official visit to Australia by an administrative officer was made in 1928.

Mr. P. N. Cryer, then Second Deputy Director-General, and Mr. H. W. Curtis, Divisional Director, General Post Office, were members of the New Zealand delegation which attended telecommunication conferences held in London and Bermuda in July and November. The New Zealand delegation was headed in London by Mr. J. G. Young, C.B.E., a former Director-General of the Department, and in Bermuda by Mr. Cryer.

COMPARATIVE RETURN OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN DEPARTMENT

	31st March, 1945.	31st March, 1946.
Permanent Staff—		
Administrative	17	19
First Division	4,370	4,189
Second Division	7,305	7,314
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	11,692	11,522
Temporary and Casual Staff	5,188	4,225
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	*16,880	†15,747
Non-classified and Non-permanent Staff—		
Country Postmasters and Telephonists, including Railway officers	1,577	1,548
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	18,457	17,295

* Includes 4,198 serving with Armed Forces.

† Includes 1,901 serving with Armed Forces.

OFFICERS ON WAR SERVICE

The total number of officers who have resumed duty following service with the Armed Forces is 3,803 (2,222 from overseas service and 1,581 from service in New Zealand). There are 1,901 employees still serving, of whom 919 have returned from overseas service and are expected to resume duty in the near future. Of the number still with the Forces overseas, 97 are serving with the 2nd N.Z.E.F. Brigade attached to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan, and 14 are serving with the R.N.Z.A.F. unit in Japan.

WAR CASUALTIES

It is with deep regret that record is made of the following casualties sustained by departmental employees while serving with the Forces: killed in action, 62; killed on active service (includes death officially presumed), 139; accidentally killed, 39; died of sickness, 12; died while prisoner of war, 8; died of wounds, 21; missing, 6; wounded, 251; prisoners of war, 173: total, 711.

POST OFFICE HONOURS LIST

It is recorded with pleasure that, during the course of the war, 79 employees received decorations and awards, while 96 were mentioned in despatches.

STAFFING POSITION

The general staffing position improved over the latter part of the year, due to the return to the Department's employ of many officers who have been serving with the Armed Forces. This resulted in many of the female temporary employees, who were recruited during the war years, becoming surplus to requirements in some sections, permitting of a number being diverted to permanent positions in telephone exchanges, while others have left the Service.

The inability to recruit boys for permanent appointment to junior positions is creating a problem which will affect the Department's normal staffing procedure for some time. In order to maintain a steady flow of junior officers for more advanced positions, an annual intake of approximately four hundred lads is necessary. The number of lads offering to-day is extremely limited and, in consequence, the Department's staffing foundation is seriously affected. This shortage of juvenile labour is general, and is attributable to various causes.

Although some two thousand officers returned to the Department from the Armed Forces during the year, little difficulty has been experienced in rehabilitating the men, either in their former positions or in new positions. The Department's Rehabilitation Officers are maintaining close contact with our ex-servicemen, and it can be said that the men have responded well to the sympathetic treatment accorded them. Schools for mechanics, mechanicians, linemen, and cable-jointers have been established, and ex-servicemen are being given the opportunity of attending refresher courses. Tuition in Morse and machine-printing telegraphy is also provided at the Telegraph Training School in Wellington.

Although the majority of returned servicemen have been content to resume their former occupation in the Department, some have expressed a desire to take up private employment or enter business on their own account. Altogether 272 officers have been granted extended leave without pay to enable them to test the suitability of other employment, and, so far, 46 of this number have resigned and 30 have returned to the Department.

APPEAL BOARD

There were 180 appeals lodged by 119 officers during the year. These were dealt with by the Post and Telegraph Appeal Board, with the following results: allowed, 10; withdrawn, 40; did not lie, 14; disallowed, 112; and in four cases the appellants were accorded the same grading as that of the appointees—in three of the cases on the recommendation of the Appeal Board, and in the other case by consent of the Department.

RECLASSIFICATION OF SERVICE

The quinquennial reclassification of the Service, which was to have been undertaken in 1942, was deferred owing to wartime difficulties, on the understanding that it would be carried out within two years of the cessation of hostilities. The reclassification is now to be undertaken as from the 1st April, 1946.

POST OFFICE WELFARE SCHEME

During the year the special interest shown by the Administration in the general well-being of departmental employees was evidenced by the launching of a comprehensive welfare scheme as an expansion of the original Post Office Welfare Fund established in 1944.

As a result, the "Post Office Welfare Trust Board" was incorporated on the 12th December, 1945, under the Religious, Charitable, and Educational Trusts Act, 1908.

This deed provided for the setting-up of a Board of Administration and for a voluntary contribution by each employee of 9d. each fortnightly pay-day, the subscription to be deducted from salary or wages. That the extended scheme was welcomed by the Service is indicated by the fact that by the 31st March, 1946, there were 10,000 contributing members providing an annual income of over £9,000.

The Board of Administration comprises:—

- (1) The Director-General of the Department (Chairman):
- (2) Two departmental members appointed by the Director-General:
- (3) Two members appointed by the Post and Telegraph Employees' Association and Officers' Guild (Inc.).

For the purposes of administration, twenty-four local or district committees have been formed throughout the Dominion.

The objects of the Post Office Welfare Trust are outlined in the deed as follows:—

- (a) The provision of comforts for sick and wounded servicemen who are employees of the Post and Telegraph Department and for all other employees of the Department who are laid aside by illness:
- (b) The affording of change of air and environment to any contributor who has been seriously ill:
- (c) The provision of domestic help in homes where there are children of a contributor whose wife has been laid aside by illness, childbirth, or for convalescence, or where an invalid child requires care:
- (d) The provision of assistance for the support of the children of a deceased contributor:
- (e) The acquisition, establishing, subsidizing, support, maintenance, and management of guesthouses where contributors may convalesce after illness or with their families spend a period of leave at reasonable cost.

The Board of Administration proceeded as quickly as possible with the provision of completely furnished welfare cottages and flats at various holiday resorts throughout New Zealand, and with the letting of them to welfare-fund contributors at low rentals. At the 31st March there were in use ten cottages and flats extending from Russell (North Auckland) to Karitane (Dunedin), and sixty-one families had been accommodated, each for a period of two weeks. It is expected that the holiday accommodation will be increased to eighteen units in the near future with others to follow as circumstances permit.

CREATION OF ADDITIONAL POSTAL DISTRICT

The number of postal districts in New Zealand was increased to twenty on the 1st September when Whangarei was constituted a chief post-office to control all that portion of the Auckland Postal District lying to the north of the Oruawharo River and of a line running from just north of Te Hana direct to the east coast. One hundred and seventy-four offices, all of which were previously under the control of the Chief Postmaster, Auckland, are now being administered by the Chief Postmaster, Whangarei.

WORKSHOPS

During the year, work to the value of £357,996 was performed in the various workshops. Of this amount, £46,768 represents the value of services rendered to other Government Departments.

REGISTRATION OF MOTOR-VEHICLES AND ASSOCIATED WORK

The number of motor-vehicles licensed in New Zealand at the 31st March, 1946, was 314,510. During the year, new registrations totalled 18,647. Motor-registration fees collected amounted to £529,535. The premiums collected on behalf of the thirty-seven insurance companies authorized to underwrite business in terms of the Motor-vehicles Insurance (Third-party Risks) Act, 1928, totalled £328,976. Mileage-tax amounting to £34,853 was collected in respect of 1,016 vehicles.

STORES

The value of stores and equipment ordered during the year was as follows, the figures for the previous year being shown for comparative purposes:—

	1944-45.	1945-46.
	£	£
For Post and Telegraph Department —		
From suppliers in New Zealand	270,953	483,744
Ordered for supply from overseas	294,987	936,294
For other Departments —		
From suppliers in New Zealand	95,992	164,883
Ordered for supply from overseas	89,221	42,583

The foregoing amounts are comprised of actual or estimated costs, plus freight, Customs duty, and sales tax, where applicable.

The value of the stocks, including stores on-cost, held in the Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington storekeeping districts at the end of the year, as compared with that of the stocks held on the 31st March, 1945, was as follows:—

District	31st March, 1945.	31st March, 1946.
	£	£
Auckland	561,847	525,890
Christchurch	217,444	196,152
Dunedin	147,863	142,786
Wellington	1,855,837	2,027,502
	<u>£2,782,991</u>	<u>£2,892,330</u>

BUILDINGS AND LAND

During the year the following departmental buildings were completed: residences at Avondale, Henderson, Levin, and Stratford; a large and a small garage at Newmarket and Murchison respectively; an emergency radio-station building at New Plymouth; and temporary housing for carrier-telephone equipment at Te Kuiti.

Additions were made to the post-office buildings at Clive, Kaitangata, Lumsden, Te Aroaro, and Whangarei; and alterations were made to the post-office buildings at Fitzroy, Kaponga, Karamea, Hamilton, and Piopio.

Army buildings were purchased and converted to provide temporary premises for the Telegraph Engineer and his staff at Whangarei, to provide temporary post-office accommodation at Milford, Mission Bay, Naenae, Paremata, Ramarama, Spring Creek, Taita, Waikuku Beach, Waitati, and temporary money-order and savings-bank premises at Otahuhu.

Residences were purchased during the year at Lower Hutt, Dunedin, Nelson, and Leeston.

Land was acquired at Auckland West (for residence), Balclutha (extension of line-yard), Belmont (Auckland) (for post-office), Carterton (for residence), Cheviot (for store-garage), Christchurch (extension of chief-post-office site), Christchurch (for garage and workshops), Darfield (for post-office), Dunedin (with residence), Dunsandel (for post-office and residence), Glen Eden (for residence), Henderson (for residence and extension of post-office site), Heriot (for post-office), Hikutaia (for residence), Leeston (with residence), Lower Hutt (with residence), Masterton (for residence), Matamata (for store-garage), Matamata (for residence), Milford (for post-office), Morrinsville (extension of line-depot), Nelson (with residence), New Lynn (for residence), North-east Valley (for automatic exchange), Northland (for post-office), Paraparaumu (for residence), Putaruru (for store-garage), Sheffield (for post-office), South Christchurch (for automatic exchange), Taumarunui (for pole-stacking), Thames (for residence), Waikouaiti (for residence), Wanganui East (for post-office), Wellington East (for automatic-exchange), Whangarei (extension of store-garage site), Whitianga (extension of post-office site).

As a precaution against earthquake damage, the post-office clock-towers at Ashburton, Bluff, Greymouth, Kaiapoi, and Lyttelton were demolished.

The old post-office building at Cronadun and the post-office building and site at Te Pahu were disposed of during the year.

Sites no longer required at the following places were also disposed of: Caplestone, Elsthorpe, Horopito, Karioi, Linton, Lower Hutt, Lyell, Makirikiri, Manawaru, Marshalvale, Stratford, Thames, Tolaga Bay, Top Valley, Waikino.

At the end of the year the following buildings were in course of erection: residences at Balclutha, Eketahuna, Hataitai, Martinborough, Ohaeawai, Outram; store-garages at Darfield and Papakura; automatic-exchange building at Island Bay; post-office and store-garage at Kaikohe (also conversion of old post-office quarters to residence); carrier building at Ohakune; cable-hut at Oreti Beach; post-office at Te Kuiti; power and battery room at Tikitiki. In addition, Air Force buildings were in the course of being adapted for use as transit flats and line-depot accommodation at Hamilton, and alterations to the post-office building at Tauranga were in hand.

NATIONAL SAVINGS

For the year ended 31st March, 1946, investments in national savings amounted to £9,369,696. Of this sum, investments received through post-offices were £8,173,881, while those received through the trustee savings-banks at Auckland, Dunedin, Invercargill, and New Plymouth amounted to £1,195,815. Deposits to accounts totalled £8,079,859, and bond sales amounted to £1,289,837. National savings gift coupons to the value of £1,589 were sold during the year. Sales of national savings stamps amounted to £8,989.

Since the introduction of national savings in October, 1940, and up to the 31st March, 1946, investments in national savings (including interest credited to investors) amounted to £40,154,990. Of this sum, £28,550,191 was derived by way of deposits to investment accounts and £11,604,799 from the sale of bonds.

At the close of the financial year the total number of accounts opened to date throughout the Dominion was 480,890, an increase for the year of 26,257.

Of the new accounts, 23,396 were opened with the Post Office and 2,861 were obtained by the trustee savings-banks.

The group system of saving continues to function satisfactorily. During the year, 150 new groups comprising 9,255 depositors were established.

The position regarding group and individual accounts as at the 31st March, 1946, is as follows:—

	Groups.	Depositors.
Opened with the Post Office	7,333	151,572
Opened with trustee savings-banks	1,147	27,848
Individual accounts—		179,420
Through Post Office		278,867
Through trustee savings-banks		22,603
Total		480,890

FAMINE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE: "FOOD FOR BRITAIN" CAMPAIGN

In accordance with the arrangement whereby the national savings organization is assisting in the "Food for Britain" campaign inaugurated by the Famine Emergency Committee, the Post Office also is co-operating in the appeal. In addition to cancelling meat and butter coupons voluntarily surrendered by people supporting the scheme, a record of the number and value of the surrendered coupons is kept at Post Offices and the figures made available from time to time for the information of the Famine Emergency Committee.

PATRIOTIC FUND: CONTRIBUTIONS BY POST OFFICE STAFFS

The Post Office Patriotic Fund was wound up on the 30th September, 1945, up to which date a total of £22,321 had been contributed by the staff. The National Fund benefited to the extent of £14,884 and the Provincial Fund by £7,437.

OVERSEAS POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH CENSORSHIP

The circulation of all overseas telegrams and the diverting of mails through the censorship authorities ceased on the 3rd and 6th September, 1945, respectively.

ANNUAL HOLIDAYS ACT, 1944

The Post Office undertook the work associated with the operation of the Annual Holidays Act, 1944, and up to the 31st March, 1946, 24,230 holiday pay-cards, valued at £44,055, had been redeemed.

POSTAL SERVICES

INLAND MAIL-SERVICES

The contracts covering the performance of inland mail-services in the Gisborne, Masterton, Napier, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Wanganui, and Wellington Postal Districts expired on the 31st December, 1945, and were relet for a further term of two years nine months commencing 1st January, 1946. The change from the usual three-yearly contract period was made to obviate the work involved in re-letting contracts coinciding with the busy Christmas period.

At the end of December, 1945, there were 38,408 rural boxes, which represents an increase of 1,425 compared with the figures on the 31st December, 1944.

AIR MAILS

INLAND

The weight of letters carried by air within New Zealand during the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1946, was 199,223 lb. In addition, 32,204 parcels were conveyed by the inland air services.

In order to improve the air-mail connections between New Plymouth and Auckland and New Plymouth and Wellington, arrangements were made as from the 14th May, 1945, for mails to be conveyed by R.N.Z.A.F. aircraft operating a daily service between the places mentioned.

TRANS-TASMAN AIR SERVICE

The weight of mail-matter despatched from New Zealand by the trans-Tasman service during the year was 90,170 lb. In the reverse direction the weight of mail-matter carried totalled 99,405 lb. The average weight of mail carried on each trip was 519 lb.

From the 2nd July, 1945, to the 21st August, 1945, and from the 24th September, 1945, to the 22nd January, 1946, the frequency of the service was four times weekly. During the remainder of the year the service operated on a thrice-weekly basis.

EMPIRE AIR SERVICE

The Empire air service has continued to operate regularly throughout the year. Until June, 1945, the service terminated at Perth, Western Australia, the connecting links between that point and New Zealand being provided by Australian National Airways operating between Perth and Sydney, and by Tasman Empire Airways

operating between Sydney and Auckland. However, in June, 1945, "Lancastrian" planes were brought into use on the Empire service which was then extended to Sydney.

A thrice-weekly service has been maintained both ways between London and Sydney, close connection being made at the latter place with Tasman Empire Airways' flying-boats. The scheduled transit time from Sydney to London is sixty-three hours and from Auckland to London five days, although the actual transit time normally averages six days. On four occasions throughout the year, letters posted in both Islands of New Zealand were delivered in London four days later.

Special flights from England to New Zealand were made by two "Lancastrian" planes in March, 1946. One plane carried mails posted in London on the 5th March, and these were received at Palmerston North early on the morning of the 9th March. Special arrangements were made at Palmerston North for sorting the mail on arrival, with the result that letters were received in all main centres by plane or train the same day. On the return flight mails were carried by both planes. The aircraft left Palmerston North on the 10th and 11th March and the mails were received in London on the 12th and 14th March respectively.

TRANS-PACIFIC AIR SERVICE

For the forwarding of troop and official mails to North America use was continued of the air service provided by the Royal Air Force Transport Command operating from Sydney through Auckland to Montreal. Arrangements were later made for this service to be used also for the conveyance of civilian mails for North America, the first such despatch being made on the 20th September, 1945. Unfortunately, the service was discontinued on the 18th December. Since that date, air-mail correspondence from New Zealand for North, Central, and South America and the West Indies has been forwarded by the Empire service via Australia to the United Kingdom, and thence by the North Atlantic air service to Canada. The transit time from New Zealand to the United States of America and Canada by this route averages eleven days.

AIR SERVICES TO PACIFIC ISLANDS

During the past few years, air services have been operated by the R.N.Z.A.F. to many of the Pacific islands. Advantage was taken of these services to forward mail to the New Zealand and other Forces then stationed in the islands, and an excellent service resulted. Civilian mails for the islands were also carried whenever space permitted. With the withdrawal of the New Zealand Forces from the Pacific theatre, additional space became available for the carriage of civilian mails, and it was decided to establish a regular air-mail service, a surcharge being imposed to cover transmission costs of the mail. Accordingly, as from the 1st January, civilian air-mail correspondence for Fiji, Tonga, Cook Islands, Western Samoa, American Samoa, and Norfolk Island has been accepted for despatch on payment of an air-mail postage-rate of 5d. each half-ounce—a rate in keeping with that payable on air-mail correspondence from New Zealand to Australia. The service to Fiji is twice weekly, to Norfolk Island, Tonga, and Samoa weekly, and to Aitutaki and Rarotonga (Cook Islands), fortnightly. The establishment of this service has resulted in a greatly improved exchange of mails with the islands named.

AIR LETTER-CARD SERVICE

The light-weight air letter-card is still a popular form of communication with the countries to which the service is available. During the year the service was extended to provide for the acceptance of cards addressed to civilians in Canada (postage-rate, 1s. each card), in the British West Indies (Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Trinidad, and Windward Islands), British Honduras, and British

Guiana (postage-rate, 1s. 3d. each card), and in the Island Territories of New Zealand, Tonga, and American Samoa (postage-rate, 3d. each card).

For the purpose of conveying seasonal greetings for Christmas and the New Year, a special greetings air letter-card was placed on sale in November, 1945.

AIRGRAPH SERVICE

The airgraph service was closed on the 31st July, 1945, following an improvement in the available mail-load capacity on aircraft operating on overseas air services which permitted the development of the more popular air letter-card service. During the two and a half years that the airgraph service was in operation, 3,633,991 airgraphs were despatched and 4,325,781 airgraphs were received. The majority of both inward and outward airgraphs were Forces messages.

OVERSEAS SURFACE MAILS

During the year fairly frequent despatches of surface mails were maintained to the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, and the East. The shipping position to the United Kingdom improved considerably following the termination of hostilities, and notwithstanding the fact that many vessels used the Cape Horn or Suez Canal routes instead of the Panama Canal route, taking approximately a week longer on the journey, the service provided for mails was very satisfactory. The absence of fast passenger-vessels plying to North America and Australia, however, resulted in mails for those countries being forwarded by cargo-vessels, and transit times suffered accordingly.

Due to irregular steamer sailings between Australia and South Africa, surface-mail communication between New Zealand and South Africa continued to be poor. No improvement in the position can be expected until steamer services between Australia and South Africa are again normal.

In the Pacific, regular services to Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, and the Cook Islands have been maintained by the steamers "Matua" and "Maui Pomare."

OVERSEAS FORCES' CORRESPONDENCE: REDUCED POSTAGE-RATES

In March, 1946, the rates of postage payable on correspondence posted in New Zealand addressed to personnel of the New Zealand and British Armed Forces overseas (including members of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan) were reduced considerably. The main reductions were: 3d. for an air letter-card instead of 6d.; 5d. for an air-mail letter instead of 1s. 6d.; and 3s. for an 11 lb. parcel instead of 4s. Simultaneously, the rates of postage payable on correspondence posted by personnel of the New Zealand section of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan were fixed to conform as near as possible to those payable by other Empire personnel of the Force.

GIFT PARCELS FOR UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE

In November last, following representations made by Government, the British authorities agreed to permit civilians in Great Britain to receive from abroad gift parcels weighing up to 11 lb., subject to the provisos that not more than 7 lb. of food is included in any one parcel, that the weight of any one particular foodstuff (with the exception of cake) does not exceed 2 lb., and that not more than one gift parcel a month is received by any one addressee. The British authorities have stressed that infringements of these conditions may result in parcels being confiscated on arrival. Formerly, the weight limit of gift parcels for civilians in the United Kingdom was 5 lb. and the contents could consist wholly of food.

Gift parcels for persons in the European countries to which the parcel-post service has been restored are accepted up to 11 lb. in weight on the same conditions as parcels for persons in Great Britain, except that the total weight of food included in any one parcel must not exceed 5 lb.

RESTORATION OF POSTAL SERVICE TO LIBERATED COUNTRIES

During the past few months, postal services to the liberated countries of Europe and Asia have been gradually restored, and letter-post services are now available to all countries with the exception of Japan. Other services, including parcel-post facilities, are also available to most of the liberated countries, the principal exceptions—apart from Germany and Japan—being Yugoslavia, the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Roumania, the Netherlands East Indies, and Siam.

Close liaison is maintained with the United Kingdom and Australian Commonwealth postal administrations with a view to the speedy restoration of parcel-post facilities to all liberated countries, and, in particular, with Yugoslavia. The obstacle in the way of the restoration of the service to the majority of the countries mentioned is that New Zealand has no direct parcel exchanges with them, and therefore the services of an intermediate country that has a direct exchange have to be utilized. So far, those intermediate countries which New Zealand utilizes for the exchange of parcels have not themselves restored the parcel-post service to the liberated countries concerned.

POSTAGE-STAMPS

The 1½d. and 2½d. stamps of the Centennial issue overprinted "Official" were withdrawn from sale on the 31st May, 1945.

Health stamps of two denominations (3d. and 1½d.) were again placed on sale on the 1st October, 1945. The stamps were printed in England by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., New Malden, Surrey, and the design, which was the work of Mr. J. Berry, of Wellington, featured the well-known Peter Pan statue in Kensington Gardens, London. For the first time in the history of New Zealand's Health stamps, two-colour printings were employed. The stamps elicited world-wide approval, and the demand for them was so great that the stocks were completely disposed of by the 5th February. The sales amounted to £87,197, and one-third of that amount, representing the health value, together with donations amounting to £2,004 collected by the Post Office, was paid to the New Zealand Federation of Health Camps (Inc.).

A new issue of stamps—the Peace issue—commemorating the restoration of peace after six years of war, was arranged during the year and placed on sale on the 1st April, 1946. There are eleven stamps in the series, the denominations and the subjects portrayed being:—

- ½d. : Peace and tranquility.
- 1d. : Faith in constitutional government.
- 1½d. : A tribute to the people of Britain.
- 2d. : The Royal Family—"In peace long may they reign."
- 3d. : A tribute to the Air Force.
- 4d. : A tribute to the Army.
- 5d. : A tribute to the Navy and the Mercantile Marine.
- 6d. : A tribute to workers on the home front.
- 8d. : The service and devotion of youth in the nation's cause.
- 9d. : A spirit of thankfulness.
- 1s. : Remembrance.

The Peace stamps were designed by Mr. J. Berry, Wellington, who had previously designed a considerable number of New Zealand stamps. The printing was undertaken in England by three firms—the 1d. and 2d. values by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd.; the 1½d. and 1s. denominations by Harrison and Sons, Ltd.; and the remainder by Waterlow and Sons, Ltd. All the stamps were printed by the intaglio process except the 1½d. and 1s., which were produced by collogravure. Four of the denominations (1d., 2d., 6d., and 8d.) are being overprinted in New Zealand for use in the island territories—Cook Islands, Niue, and Western Samoa. None of the stamps will be overprinted for official use.

MONEY-ORDER AND SAVINGS-BANK SERVICES

MONEY-ORDERS, POSTAL NOTES, AND BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS

The following table shows the number and value of money-orders issued, postal notes sold, and British postal orders sold and paid during the year:—

					Number.	Value.
						£
Money-orders	..	..	..	..	769,857	7,202,200
Postal notes	..	..	..	..	2,266,285	982,597
British postal orders sold	..	..	..	..	30,950	10,939
British postal orders paid	..	..	..	..	159,396	151,982

SAVINGS-BANK

Deposits lodged in the Post Office Savings-bank during the year amounted to £67,861,042, and withdrawals to £55,626,419, an excess of deposits over withdrawals of £12,234,623. The amount at the credit of depositors at the close of the year was £128,514,326, the interest accruing to depositors being £2,787,413. (See also Tables Nos. 7 and 8 in Appendix.)

MILITARY ALLOTMENT WARRANTS

A total of 1,421,371 military allotment and dependants' allowance warrants was paid by the Department during the year.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS

During the year the Post Office handled on behalf of other Departments a total of approximately £194,000,000.

WARTIME COMMUNICATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND

To meet the wartime requirements of the New Zealand fighting Services, as well as those of the United States of America Administrative and fighting Forces located in New Zealand, the Department provided extensive telephone communication facilities, either by the construction of new circuits or by the lease of circuits normally used for civil communication. This involved considerable construction of new pole-lines and the erection on either new or existing pole-lines of many miles of wire, particularly in the North Auckland and Auckland districts and in the Cook Strait area. A large number of additional long-distance telephone channels were arranged by means of carrier telephone equipment.

Local telephone installations of considerable magnitude were installed in military camps, in aerodromes, and in other defence areas. Other telecommunication services provided on a large scale included radio channels, long-distance machine-printing telegraph channels, and telephone communication networks.

In addition, circuits were provided to a large number of coast-watching stations in various parts of the country. In many of these cases, where more expensive construction was not warranted, the connections were provided by extensions of subscribers' or other permanent lines on a temporary basis.

Telegraph, telephone, and radio facilities were also installed by the Department in Fiji and other Pacific Islands.

The cost of providing these facilities amounted to approximately £1,000,000.

TELEGRAPH SERVICES

TELEGRAPH TRAFFIC

Telegraph traffic has continued to increase. Compared with the previous year, the number of messages increased by 763,152 (10·33 per cent.) and the revenue by £82,237 (14·81 per cent.). (See also Tables Nos. 3 and 4 in Appendix.)

MACHINE-PRINTING TELEGRAPHS

Consequent upon the increased volume of telegraph traffic handled at Tauranga, machine-printing telegraph equipment was installed at that office on the 15th December. Similar equipment was provided also at the post-office, Mount Eden, which has been made a delivery depot for telegrams addressed to the surrounding area.

INSTALLATION OF MACHINE-PRINTING SERVICES FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND IN NEWSPAPER OFFICES

A new departure in the development of machine-printing telecommunication facilities in New Zealand was the installation during the year of direct page-teleprinter circuits linking a number of the main police-stations, and the provision in Wellington of a page-teleprinter network linking the Central Telegraph Office with the offices of the three daily newspapers.

RESTORATION OF PUBLIC TELEGRAPH SERVICES WITH OVERSEAS COUNTRIES

Public telegraph service has now been restored to all enemy and enemy occupied countries except Germany and Japan.

TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE SERVICES

TELEPHONE DEVELOPMENT

During the year the number of telephone subscribers increased from 191,189 to 197,513, an increase of 3·3 per cent. compared with the previous year's increase of 5·2 per cent. (See also Table No. 5 in Appendix.) Every endeavour was made during the year to provide service for the maximum number of new subscribers possible with the equipment available. Generally, no restriction was placed upon the use of new equipment for the provision of connections required for business purposes, including telephones required by farmers, at exchanges at which there was no lack of switching accommodation. At such exchanges, residential telephone connections were provided to the extent that equipment was recovered following upon existing subscribers relinquishing service.

The supply position has now eased to the extent that all wartime restrictions on the provision of telephone-exchange services have been lifted. Owing, however, to the lack of switching equipment and to congestion in the telephone cables, little can be done meantime to provide service for waiting applicants at many of the larger exchanges. This applies particularly to the four main centres.

Approximately 70 per cent. of the 27,000 applications on hand for telephone connections are in respect of service at exchanges at which switching equipment is congested. Every possible step is being taken to relieve the congestion at these exchanges.

TOLL TRAFFIC

The number of toll calls handled continues to increase. During the year 20,970,161 calls were handled, compared with 19,545,441 for the previous year, an increase of 7·3 per cent. (See also Table No. 6 in Appendix.)

While delays on toll calls during the peak calling periods are still fairly heavy on some circuits, a considerable improvement has been effected in the toll service generally following the provision of a number of additional toll outlets during the year under review.

PUBLIC CALL OFFICES

At the 31st March there were 1,413 public call office (coin-in-the-slot) telephones installed in New Zealand. The total collections amounted to £104,974. (See also Table No. 5 in Appendix.)

CARRIER TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT

A commencement has been made with the installation of twelve-channel carrier telephone systems (similar to that recently installed between Auckland and Wellington) for operation between Wellington-Christchurch, Auckland-Hamilton, and Wellington-Palmerston North. When these systems are cut into operation the waiting-time at present experienced by users of the toll service between the places mentioned will be considerably reduced.

SUBMARINE CABLES

In the report for last year, mention was made of the lifting from Cook Strait of a four-core submarine telephone cable and its projected use elsewhere. The recovered cable has since been reconditioned and laid across Foveaux Strait between Oreti Beach, Invercargill, and Lee Bay, Stewart Island. The new cable has provided the Department with one additional telegraph and three additional telephone channels. These facilities will fill a long-felt want.

THE CANTERBURY SNOWBREAK

On the 14th July, 1945, following an extremely heavy gale the previous afternoon, one of the heaviest snowstorms ever experienced in the Canterbury District caused the most extensive disruption to toll, telegraph, and telephone services in the Department's history. The area affected was roughly that situated between the foothills of the Southern Alps and the east coast and bounded on the north by Cheviot and on the south by the Waitaki River.

On the Christchurch-Dunedin main toll and telegraph route some fifty-six miles of pole-line carrying a large number of circuits were levelled to the ground, while in approximately another fifty miles of toll and telegraph line many spans of wire were broken, although generally the poles were standing. Notwithstanding that the area north of Christchurch escaped more lightly than the southern and western portions of the province, there was, nevertheless, extensive wire damage in the north. As a result of the damage to toll and telegraph services, many post-offices and telephone exchanges were isolated. Within the course of a day or two, however, temporary lines were provided, enabling the restoration of communication between a number of the more important offices and other parts of the Dominion. On account of the magnitude of the disruption and the widespread area involved, several days elapsed before reliable and full information was available, but immediate steps were taken to despatch technical officers, linesmen, materials, and plant to Christchurch. Altogether some one hundred workmen from all parts of New Zealand, some of whom were rushed to the scene by air, were made available.

Immediately the disruption occurred, departmental emergency radio services were brought into operation, and by this means urgent messages, including a large amount of press traffic, were disposed of without serious delay. All telegraph and toll services, on a slightly limited basis, were available within three weeks after the storm, while full services were restored on more or less temporary lines some six weeks later.

In addition to the damage to toll and telegraph plant, very serious disruption and damage was caused to telephone exchange subscribers' equipment in the numerous exchanges in the district. Altogether some ten thousand telephones were rendered inoperative and hundreds of miles of subscribers' lines were damaged to varying degrees. It is of interest to record that sixteen days after the storm approximately four thousand subscribers had been reconnected, while on the thirtieth day following the storm the number of subscribers reconnected totalled approximately eight thousand.

Notwithstanding further disruptions as the result of heavy gales on the 31st August, service to all subscribers was restored in a temporary measure by mid-September—approximately two months after the major occurrence.

It is estimated that the cost of effecting temporary repairs to the Department's plant will be £100,000, while an additional amount estimated at £350,000 will be required to carry out pre-storm proposals for the reconstruction of the Sockburn—Rangitata River section of the Christchurch—Dunedin main toll line and the laying of some one hundred and forty miles of telephone exchange subscribers' underground telephone cable to replace aerial lines which were damaged beyond repair.

It is fitting that record should be made of the magnificent assistance and co-operation the Post Office received from the Army authorities in connection with the restoration work. Many requests made of them for the supply of accommodation, catering, transport, &c., were readily met. Grateful acknowledgment is also made of the assistance rendered by the Air Department, the Public Works Department, and electric-power authorities and other local bodies situated in the area affected. Mention is also made of the long hours of duty, much of it under difficult and trying conditions, which were cheerfully performed by all ranks of the Department's staff concerned.

RADIO SERVICES

PEACETIME SHIPPING SERVICES

With a view to improving facilities for peacetime shipping services, a two-channel 2½ kilowatt transmitter has been installed at Awarua Radio for operation in the 24- and 36-metre bands.

LONG-DISTANCE COMMUNICATION WITH SHIPS

The wartime restriction on the exchange of radio-telegrams with ships was lifted on the 1st January, 1946, from which date a new method of handling such traffic to and from vessels on long-distance routes was introduced at British-controlled radio-stations.

Under the new organization the world is divided into eight areas, each of which has a central radio-station for communication with shipping. All ships are normally in touch with at least one area station, and to facilitate the disposal of radio-telegrams to ships at great distances, messages are passed by radio channels without additional charge to the appropriate area transmitting-stations.

EXPERIMENTAL AMATEUR TRANSMITTERS

The ban placed on the use of experimental amateur transmitting equipment during the war was lifted on the 8th December, 1945. To date 823 amateur operators' licenses have been issued.

RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICES

The radio-telephone services to Australia and the United Kingdom, which were closed in 1939 following the outbreak of war, were reopened on the 8th September, 1945, and on the 26th October, a radio-telephone service was established between New Zealand and the United States of America. This service was extended on the 16th January, 1946, to include calls to Canada, Cuba, and Mexico.

PROJECTED IMPROVEMENT TO NEW ZEALAND—UNITED KINGDOM RADIO-TELEPHONE SERVICE

During the year, radio propagation tests have been conducted between the British Post Office and the New Zealand Post Office with a view to determining the practicability of direct radio communication between the two countries. This work followed on from previous tests conducted during 1944—45. The information gained as a result of the tests will make a substantial contribution towards the development of radio-telephone and radio-telegraph services between New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

INTER-ISLAND VERY-HIGH-FREQUENCY RADIO-TELEPHONE LINK

Developmental work has been continued on the very-high-frequency radio-telephone link between Wellington and Seddon and has indicated the possibility of transmitting up to twelve carrier-current channels over the link. In the near future three such channels will be brought into use experimentally as part of the normal inter-Island telephone facilities. The extra channels thus available represent a valuable addition to communication resources across Cook Strait.

RADIO-RECEPTION INTERFERENCE

Owing to staffing difficulties during the war it was necessary to reduce the number of officers employed on the detection and elimination of radio interference, with a consequent deterioration in some localities of radio broadcast reception.

As conditions return to normal, it is the Department's intention to strengthen its staff again to enable this work to be undertaken.

RADIO-RECEIVING LICENSES

The total number of radio-receiving licenses current at the 31st March, 1946, was 393,054, as against 379,242 in 1945. The percentage of households with a licensed radio set is 93·2.

APPENDIX

Table No. 1.—RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEARS 1944-45 AND 1945-46

	1944-45.		1945-46.	
	£		£	
Balance forward	39,664	44,321
Receipts	6,694,901	7,068,397
Payments for working-expenses	5,205,969	5,697,409
Balance of receipts over working-expenses payments	1,488,932	1,370,988
Other disbursements—				
Depreciation Fund investment, including expenditure on renewals and replacement of assets	770,000	664,000
Contributions to Post and Telegraph Officers' Sick-benefit Fund	5,475	8,574
Interest on capital liability	708,800	712,973
Balance	44,321	29,762

POSTAL SERVICES

Table No. 2.—POSTINGS

Year ended 31st December,	Number posted.				Postage Receipts.
	Letters, Letter-cards, Post-cards.	Accounts, Packets, Newspapers.	Parcels.	Total Articles posted.	
1939.. .. .	158,587,000	124,307,000	4,663,000	287,557,000	£ 1,420,545
1941.. .. .	142,996,000	113,090,000	5,784,000	261,870,000	1,430,071
1945.. .. .	140,355,000	89,852,000	6,637,000	236,844,000	1,769,275

TELEGRAPH SERVICES

Table No. 3.—TELEGRAMS AND CABLEGRAMS

Year ended 31st March,	Inland Telegrams.				Cablegrams.			
	Ordinary.		Press.		Forwarded.		Received.	
	Number.	Revenue.	Number.	Revenue.	Number.	Revenue (New Zealand Portion).	Number.	Revenue (New Zealand Portion.)
1945 ..	6,481,970	£ 422,415	327,232	£ 73,432	539,080	£ 16,704	480,989	£ 19,593
1946 ..	7,296,916	480,885	351,425	79,708	476,087	17,148	454,751	19,059

Table No. 4.—RADIO TELEGRAMS

Year ended 31st March,	Forwarded.		Received.	
	Number.	Revenue (New Zealand Portion).	Number.	Revenue (New Zealand Portion).
1945	£ 40,749	27,662	£ 14,592
1946	25,585	46,931	22,470

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Table No. 5.—TELEPHONES CONNECTED, ETC.

Year ended 31st March,	Subscribers' Main Stations (a).	Service Phones (b).	Extension Stations, all Classes (c).	Number of Public Call Offices (d).	Revenue from (a), (c), and (d).	Privately Owned Phones connected with Public Telephone- offices.	Number of Toll Stations.	Total Telephone- stations.	Telephones per 1,000 of Population.
1945 ..	188,175	3,014	58,120	1,406	£ 1,860,196	4,100	1,911	256,726	153.1
1946 ..	194,508	3,005	60,783	1,413	2,062,355	4,200	1,854	265,763	151.2

Table No. 6.—TOLL CALLS

Year ended 31st March,	Inland Toll Service.		Overseas Radio-telephone Service.	
	Number of Calls.	Revenue from Paid Tolls.	Number of Calls.	Revenue.
1945	£ 19,545,441	—	£ —
1946	20,970,161	4,041	6,269

SAVINGS-BANK SERVICES

Table No. 7.—DEPOSITS AND WITHDRAWALS

Year ended 31st March,	Number of Deposits received.	Total Amount of Deposits.	Average Amount of each Deposit.	Number of Withdrawals	Total Amount of Withdrawals.	Average Amount of each Withdrawal.	Excess of Deposits over Withdrawals.	Interest credited.
		£	£		£	£	£	£
1945 ..	2,811,569	54,585,121	19	1,634,100	42,158,657	26	12,426,464	2,451,628
1946 ..	2,825,523	67,861,042	24	1,885,514	55,626,419	29	12,234,623	2,787,413

Table No. 8.—ACCOUNTS OPENED AND CLOSED, ETC.

Year ended 31st March,	Number of Branches of the Post Office Savings-bank open at the Close of the Year.	Number of Accounts opened.	Number of Accounts closed.	Number of Open Accounts as at 31st March.	Total Amount of all Accounts, inclusive of Interest, as at 31st March.	Average Amount of each Account as at 31st March.
					£	£
1945 ..	928	131,541	98,591	1,161,886	113,492,290	98
1946 ..	923	161,272	119,977	1,203,181	128,514,326	107

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (658 copies), £45

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1946.