

Air Mail.—With the emphasis to-day placed on the need for speed, the air-mail service of Canada is a mighty asset. Stretching from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Victoria, B.C., it covers a route of 3,900 miles and connects with feeder lines running north and south, and makes connections with air lines reaching foreign countries. Its advantages are used by Government Departments, commercial firms, and private citizens alike. The use of air mail has increased enormously over the main Trans-Canada lines alone—excluding those which serve the vast hinterland. During May, 1945, 327,979 lb. of air mail were carried as compared with 316,752 lb. in May, 1944, 315,452 lb. in May, 1943, and 164,655 lb. in May, 1942.

Transatlantic air-mail service over the northern route from Canada to the United Kingdom proved a great boon to citizens of both countries during the war years and its permanent establishment as a regular postal service has followed the end of hostilities. In the early summer of 1944, Transatlantic air-mail service from Canada to the United Kingdom was greatly improved, with several trips in operation weekly.

Airgraph.—One of the adaptations of the air mail to war conditions was the airgraph. Inaugurated in Canada in 1941, airgraph messages were written on special forms obtainable at any post office without cost. The forms, when mailed, were flown to Toronto and photographed on rolls of microfilm which were carried by air to England; there photographic enlargements were made, placed in envelopes and forwarded. Airgraph saved not only time, but vital cargo space; one mail bag which holds 2,400 ordinary letters will carry 408,000 airgraph messages on microfilm.

The airgraph postage fee was reduced several times to benefit the Armed Forces and their correspondents and airgraph was placed on a two-way basis between the United Kingdom and Canada. Later the service was extended for civilian correspondence in the United Kingdom and many overseas lands. Having fulfilled its purpose, airgraph service was discontinued in July, 1945.

The Canada Air Letter.—Eight months after the adoption of the airgraph, the blue Canada lightweight air letter was introduced in July, 1942, to provide a fast and economical method for communicating by air with members of the Armed Forces on duty in any part of the world. The facility consists of a combined letter-and-envelope form obtainable free at all Post Offices. The postage rate is 10 cents and the air letter may now be used for civilian correspondence to the United Kingdom. From the time the service was instituted in 1942 to the end of 1945, some 57,000,000 air letters were mailed.

The Organization of the Military Mails, 1939-45.—It was in the handling of military mails that the Post Office displayed the greatest ingenuity and ability. While this was a key wartime function because the receipt of letters and parcels from home, smoothly and regularly, was indispensable in maintaining the morale of the Armed Forces, it was one of extreme difficulty owing to the constant movement and transfer of troops.

The postal needs of those in uniform were ably handled by the Canadian Postal Corps, recruited largely from executives and postal personnel serving overseas or in Canada. The centre of operations in Canada was the Base Post Office, which