

## PART IX.—THE POST OFFICE

The Canada Post Office Department was created at the time of Confederation in 1867 by the Canada Post Office Act to superintend and manage the postal service of Canada under the direction of a Postmaster General. For almost a century prior to Confederation, postal services in the Canadian provinces had been controlled by the British Postmaster General and administered by his deputies. Under the French régime a courier service had been organized as early as 1703 between Quebec, Three Rivers and Montreal, while in 1734 a post road was constructed over the same route and post houses, complete with post horses and vehicles, were established for the use of travellers. In 1851, the control of their post offices was assumed by the different provinces of British North America and at Confederation, these systems merged to form the Canada Post Office.

**Functions.**—The basic task of the Canadian Postal Service is the handling and transmission of postal matter—letters, parcels, newspapers, magazines, etc.—and in discharging this duty it maintains a wide variety of services—post offices and air, railway, land and water transportation facilities.

This basic task involves many associated functions which include the sale of postage stamps and other articles of postage; the furnishing of information to the public respecting postage rates and other postal matters; the registration of letters and other articles of mail; the insuring of parcels; the acceptance of C.O.D. articles for mail and dispatch; the sorting, making up and dispatching of ordinary and registered mail to other offices; the sorting and delivery of incoming mail of all kinds; and the transaction of money-order and Post Office Savings Bank business.

All functions of the Postal Service, as far as the public is concerned, are centred in the post offices, of which 12,254 were in operation at Mar. 31, 1953, as against 12,305 at the same date in 1952. Postage paid in 1952-53 by means of postage stamps amounted to \$67,182,548 (\$65,093,099 in 1952). Post office money orders are issued for any amount up to and including \$100 at more than 7,000 post offices, for payment in Canada or in almost every country in the world. Orders payable in Canada only for amounts under \$16 are issued at more than 4,000 additional post offices. Post Office Savings Banks are in operation in all parts of the country and, on Mar. 31, 1953, had total deposits of \$39,322,229, an increase of \$1,290,997 over the \$38,031,232 deposited in 1952.

Post offices are established for the transaction of all kinds of postal business wherever the population warrants. The post office is a complete entity in rural districts and smaller urban centres. In the larger towns and cities there is a main post office and, if size of population calls for extra services, postal stations and sub-post offices are operated. Letter-carrier delivery is given in 127 cities and towns by over 5,100 uniformed letter carriers.

Postal stations are maintained on the same lines as the main post offices and perform full postal business, including general-delivery service and a post-office lock-box delivery as well as letter-carrier delivery service, accommodating the surrounding district.

Because of its widespread facilities, it has been found expedient for the Post Office to assist other Government Departments in the performance of certain tasks that include the sale of unemployment insurance stamps, the collection of Government annuity payments, the distribution of income-tax forms, Civil Service application forms and the display of Government posters.