

## PART IV.—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 before 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. 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 tasks of the Canadian Postal Service are to receive, convey and deliver postal matter with security and despatch. In discharging these duties it maintains post offices and utilizes air, railway, land and water transportation facilities. Associated functions include the sale of stamps and other articles of postage, the registration of letters and other mail for despatch, the insuring of parcels, the accounting for COD articles, and the transaction of money order and Post Office Savings Bank business. 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 including the sale of unemployment insurance stamps, the collection of government annuity payments, the distribution of income tax forms and Civil Service employment application forms, and the displaying of government posters.

Post offices are established wherever the population warrants. Those in rural areas and small urban centres transact all of the functions of the city office. In larger urban areas postal stations and sub-post offices have full functions similar to the main post office, including a general delivery service, lock-box delivery and letter carrier delivery to the surrounding area.

At Mar. 31, 1957, there were 11,879 post offices in operation compared with 11,996 in 1956. Letter carrier delivery, performed in 140 urban centres, employs over 6,400 uniformed letter carriers. Postage paid in 1956-57 by means of postage stamps amounted to \$77,735,659 as compared with \$75,559,106 in 1956. Post office money orders, issued for any amount not exceeding \$100 and payable in almost any country of the world, are sold at more than 8,000 post offices. Orders payable in Canada only, for amounts not exceeding \$16 are sold at more than 3,000 additional post offices. Post Office Savings Banks operate in all parts of the country and, on Mar. 31, 1957, had total deposits of \$35,918,499.

**Organization.**—The Canada Post Office includes an Operating Service and Headquarters at Ottawa. The Operating Service is organized into five regions each under a Regional Director, who is the field representative of the Deputy Postmaster General. There are five Headquarters Branches: Administration, Operations, Transportation, Financial, and Personnel, each under a Director. Operating and secretarial features in the operating field affecting the post offices and local mail services in urban centres are taken care of by the local postmaster. District office functions relating to services in the district and all inspections and investigations are under District Directors of Postal Services in strategic centres across the country.

Postal service is provided in Canada from Newfoundland to the west coast of Vancouver Island and from Pelee Island, Ont. (the most southerly inhabited point of Canada) to settlements and missions far within the Arctic. Canada's airmail system provides several transcontinental flights daily and constitutes a great air artery from St. John's, Nfld., to Victoria, B.C., intersected by branch lines and connecting lines radiating to every quarter and linking up with the United States airmail system. Since July 1, 1948, all first class domestic mail up to and including one ounce in weight has been carried by air between one Canadian point and another, whenever delivery can thus be expedited.