

On Apr. 1, 1954, this service was extended to first class items up to and including eight ounces in weight. Air stage service provides the sole means of communication with the outside for many areas in the hinterland. There were approximately 35,700 miles of airmail and air stage routes in Canada in 1957 as compared with 32,447 miles in 1956.

The principal means of mail transportation is the railway mail service that operates along about 30,260 miles of track and, in 1957, covered over 43,500,000 service miles. The railway mail service employed a staff of 1,190 mail clerks to prepare the mails for prompt delivery and dispatch while *en route* in the railway mail cars. Like its airmail service, Canada's railway mail service is one of the most extensive in the world.

The rural mail delivery organization provides direct postal facilities to residents in the rural sections of the country; approximately 5,399 rural mail routes were in operation in 1957, involving over 130,000 route-miles and serving 465,180 rural mail boxes. Rural mail routes are generally circular in pattern and average about 24 miles in length. Considerable progress has been made towards the development of mail service by means of group boxes—a service intended for the more densely populated rural areas and for suburban residents not within the area of letter carrier delivery service. About 3,848 side services were in operation in 1957 to transport mail between post offices, railway stations, steamer wharves and airports, and 2,145 stage services operated to convey mail to and from post offices not located on railway lines. Transportation of mail by motor vehicle on highways is being developed and over 270 such services are in operation. Many of these services have replaced or reduced conveyance by rail. A local exchange of mails between offices on the route is effected by way-mail wallet. In 1957 there were approximately 792 city mail services transporting mail to and from post offices, postal stations and sub-post offices, collecting mail from street letter-boxes and delivering parcel post. In all, about 12,500 land-mail service couriers are employed and travel in the neighbourhood of 50,000,000 miles annually. Land mail services are performed under a contract system, the contracts being awarded to the person submitting the lowest tender and competent to provide all the requisite equipment.

Coastal mail service to the more populous centres as well as to many isolated points is conducted by 17 contractors who operate as far north along the West Coast as Alaska and on the East Coast to the northern part of Labrador.

The increase in postal business is one of the impressive features of Canada's economic development during the past ten years. Gross revenue for the year ended Mar. 31, 1957, reached an all-time high.

**Post Office Statistics.**—Tables 1, 2 and 3 give the numbers of post offices in operation together with revenue and expenditure for the past few years.

**1.—Post Offices in Operation by Province as at Mar. 31, 1954-57**

Province or Territory	1954	1955	1956	1957
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Newfoundland.....	613	626	636	640
Prince Edward Island.....	106	105	105	105
Nova Scotia.....	1,179	1,148	1,124	1,117
New Brunswick.....	817	789	736	703
Quebec.....	2,507	2,487	2,463	2,435
Ontario.....	2,630	2,654	2,644	2,627
Manitoba.....	824	822	815	817
Saskatchewan.....	1,364	1,347	1,332	1,318
Alberta.....	1,152	1,156	1,141	1,124
British Columbia.....	963	955	947	940
Yukon Territory.....	15	16	16	16
Northwest Territories.....	32	33	37	37
<b>Canada.....</b>	<b>12,202</b>	<b>12,138</b>	<b>11,996</b>	<b>11,879</b>