

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. 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 only means of communication for many areas in the hinterland. There were approximately 38,334 miles of airmail and air stage routes in Canada in 1958 as compared with 35,700 miles in 1957.

The principal means of mail transportation is the railway mail service that operates along about 27,930 miles of track and, in 1958, covered over 41,675,000 service-miles. A staff of 919 mail clerks prepared the mails for prompt delivery and dispatch while en route in the railway mail cars.

The rural mail delivery organization provided direct postal service over approximately 5,476 rural mail routes in 1958, extending over 130,000 route-miles and serving 480,848 rural mail boxes. Rural mail routes are generally circular in pattern and average about 24.5 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 3,352 side services were in operation in 1958 to transport mail between post offices, railway stations, steamer wharves and airports, and 2,143 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 307 such services are in operation, many of them replacing or reducing conveyance by rail. A local exchange of mails between offices on the route is effected by way-mail wallet. In 1958 there were approximately 805 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. The 10,971 land-mail service couriers employed travelled approximately 50,000,000 miles during the year. 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 is conducted by 23 contractors who operate as far north along the West Coast as Alaska and on the East Coast to the northern part of Labrador.

**Post Office Statistics.**—Tables 14, 15 and 16 give the numbers of post offices in operation together with revenue and expenditure for recent years.

**14.—Post Offices in Operation, by Province, as at Mar. 31, 1955-58**

Province or Territory	1955	1956	1957	1958
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Newfoundland.....	626	636	640	641
Prince Edward Island.....	105	105	105	105
Nova Scotia.....	1,148	1,124	1,117	1,096
New Brunswick.....	789	736	703	676
Quebec.....	2,487	2,463	2,435	2,413
Ontario.....	2,654	2,644	2,627	2,616
Manitoba.....	822	815	817	810
Saskatchewan.....	1,347	1,332	1,318	1,310
Alberta.....	1,156	1,141	1,124	1,112
British Columbia.....	955	947	940	937
Yukon Territory.....	16	16	16	16
Northwest Territories.....	33	37	37	36
<b>Canada.....</b>	<b>12,138</b>	<b>11,996</b>	<b>11,879</b>	<b>11,768</b>

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, 1958, reached an all-time high.