

1917.
NEW ZEALAND.

POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR 1916-17.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MY LORD,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd July, 1917.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the business of the Post and Telegraph Department for the financial year 1916-17.

The Hon. Dr. McNab was appointed Acting Postmaster-General during my absence in England, and it was with very deep regret that I learned of his death on the 4th February last. The Hon. W. D. S. MacDonald filled the position until my return.

The noble response of the officers of all ranks to the call of the Empire in its task of overcoming our common foes again stands out as the brightest achievement of the year. No fewer than 1,675 are now with the Expeditionary Forces. Some have won distinction and honours while many, I regret to say, have been killed in action and many wounded. No effort has been spared by the Department to meet in every way possible the needs of both the soldiers and their relatives and friends in all matters coming within the scope of its activities.

In spite of this heavy call upon the staff it has not yet been found necessary to curtail the services in any way, nor has the Department, up to the present, claimed exemption for any officers required for military service.

The War Loan Certificate scheme, which was entrusted by me to the Department, has proved a great success, the sum of £1,410,666 having been so far raised towards the War Loan by the sale of these certificates.

The year is the first during the whole of which the increased charges imposed on account of the war have been in force, and the revenue reached the very large sum of £1,809,317. Of this, £334,000 may be said to represent the increase due to the special war-tax on mail-matter and telegrams.

The Savings-bank business shows a remarkable increase, not alone in deposits, but also in the net savings for the year. £2,618,988 was added to the savings, which, together with £817,856 interest credited, equals £3,436,844, and brings the total balance up to £25,603,209.

Generally, the business in all branches of the Service has been well maintained, the excess of receipts over expenditure being £438,507.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your obedient servant,

J. G. WARD,

Postmaster-General.

His Excellency the Governor-General, Wellington.