

There were 6,205 inquiries made during 1919 for postal packets alleged to have been posted and not delivered. In 3,409 of the inquiries—more than one-half of the total number—the investigations made by the Department resulted in the missing articles being traced or accounted for. These may be summarized as follows:—

Number of Traced Cases.	Result.
668	Sender responsible for delay.
950	Addressee responsible for delay.
407	Post Office responsible for delay.
1,384	No delay, or responsibility not fixed.
Total .. 3,409	

PROHIBITED CORRESPONDENCE.

During the year 186 letters addressed to persons or firms for whom the transmission of correspondence is prohibited under section 28 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908, were withheld from transmission.

REGISTER OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

Twelve newspapers were registered for transmission by post, and eight were removed from the register. Seven magazines were registered.

STAMP RECORDING-MACHINES.

The agreement with the Automatic Stamping-machine Company (Limited), for the issue of the recording-machines, authorized by section 16 of the Post and Telegraph Act, 1908, to be used for postage and other purposes, has been extended for a further term of three years from the 1st January, 1919.

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

A special "Victory" series of stamps was brought into use at the end of January, 1920. The denominations and colours of the stamps are as follow: $\frac{1}{2}$ d., green; 1d., carmine; $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., cadmium brown; 3d., dark brown; 6d., violet; 1s., orange.

The $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamps of the King Edward series overprinted for use in Aitutaki, Niue, and Penrhyn Island have been superseded by stamps of the King George series similarly overprinted.

A pictorial issue of stamps for Raiotonga, Aitutaki, Niue, and Penrhyn Island has been arranged for. These will be of the same denominations as those of the New Zealand "Victory" issue.

A new die of the universal penny postage-stamp has been brought into use for embossing post-cards. The design is more open than that of the previous die.

OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES.

Where a better despatch can be made than by the San Francisco or Vancouver routes, mails to and from the United Kingdom have been despatched by the direct route via Panama.

With the exception of one trip by the "Paloona," the San Francisco service has been performed during the year by the "Moana" and "Tofua," and a fairly satisfactory time-table has been maintained.

The Vancouver service has been carried on by the "Niagara" and "Makura." A shipping strike in Australia caused the "Niagara" to be detained in Sydney for a considerable time during the year. Otherwise a satisfactory time-table has been maintained. The contract for the service was extended for one year from July, 1919.

A shipping strike in Australia during the year caused a disorganization of the intercolonial mail-services.

INLAND MAIL-SERVICES.

Aerial Services.

The conveyance of mails by air marked an important development in mail transit in the Dominion. On the 16th December, 1919, a seaplane carried a quantity of mail-matter from Auckland to Dargaville. The route was via Whangaparaoa, Mullet Point, Pakiri, thence overland above Rauapo to Dargaville. The distance covered was approximately 112 miles, and the time occupied 1 hour 35 minutes. The return journey was via Pouto, Te Kopuru, Helensville, and Riverhead. The distance covered was approximately eighty-six miles, and the time occupied 1 hour 23 minutes. The flight was made primarily to demonstrate the practicability of the seaplane for mail-carrying purposes. It was carried out by the firm of Walsh Bros. and Dexter, proprietors of the New Zealand Flying School at Auckland. In January, 1920, an arrangement was made with Messrs. Walsh Bros. and Dexter for a series of experimental flights for the carriage of mails between Auckland and Dargaville, Auckland and Whangarei, and Auckland and Thames. Subsequently it was arranged for mails to be forwarded by seaplane from Auckland to Opotiki, Tauranga, and Whakatane. The services were successfully performed, and enabled the Department to obtain valuable information for use in connection with consideration of the question of establishing permanent services for the conveyance of mails by air.

Land and Sea Services.

Tenders were invited for inland mail-services the contracts for which expired on the 31st December, 1919. Competition was satisfactory, but the greatly increased cost of running resulted in the Department having to pay greatly increased subsidies. With a few unimportant exceptions, contractors were found for all services in operation during 1919.