

MISSING POSTAL PACKETS

During the year 7,987 complaints regarding the non-delivery of postal packets of all kinds were investigated by the Department. In 4,174 cases, or 52.25 per cent. of the total number, the articles were traced or accounted for satisfactorily. These cases may be summarized as follows:—

Sender responsible for delay	..	..	1,233
Addressee responsible for delay	..	..	1,079
Post Office responsible for delay	..	..	468
No delay, or responsibility not fixed	..	..	1,394

In 3,813 cases, representing 0.00119 per cent. of the total number of articles posted, the manner of disposal of the postal packets could not be determined.

POSTAGE-STAMPS

A separate series of postage-stamps for the Tokelau Islands (a group of Islands about 200 miles north of Samoa and formerly known as the Union Islands) was placed on sale on the 22nd June, 1948. Prior to that date the Tokelau Islands had used the stamps of Western Samoa. The series comprised three denominations, ½d., 1d., and 2d., featuring, respectively, a village scene at Atafu, a hut at Nukunono, and a village scene at Fakaofu. The stamps were designed by Mr. J. Berry, of Wellington, and were printed in two colours by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., New Malden, England.

Remaining stocks of the New Zealand Peace stamps were withdrawn from issue on the 30th June, 1948, as were the Peace stamps of the denominations 1d., 2d., 6d., and 8d. overprinted for use in Niue, Cook Islands, and Western Samoa.

The Otago Centennial stamps were withdrawn from sale on the 31st July, 1948. At many post-offices stocks had been exhausted before that date.

The usual two denominations of Health stamps (2d. plus 1d. and 1d. plus ½d.) were issued on the 1st October, 1948. The design was prepared by an artist employed by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., New Malden, England, and the stamps were printed by that firm. Sales amounted to £111,406, of which amount one-third, together with donations amounting to £128, collected by the Post Office, was paid to the New Zealand Federation of Health Camps.

To commemorate the projected visit to New Zealand of Their Majesties the King and Queen and Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret it was proposed to issue early in 1949 a set of four postage-stamps of the denominations 2d., 3d., 5d., and 6d. The selected designs, which bore the lettering "Royal Visit 1949," were as under:—

- 2d. Treaty House at Waitangi.
- 3d. H.M.S. "Vanguard."
- 5d. A group portrait of Their Majesties the King and Queen and H.R.H. Princess Margaret.
- 6d. The Crown and Royal Sceptre.

The three first-mentioned designs were drawn by Mr. J. Berry, of Wellington, and the fourth by Mr. L. C. Mitchell, also of Wellington. The stamps were printed by Messrs. Waterlow and Sons, London, by the intaglio process. In consequence of the postponement of the Royal tour, the issuance of these stamps was withheld. Their disposal will be a matter for decision at a later stage.

The 6d. "Express Delivery" stamp was withdrawn from sale on the 30th June, 1948. Stocks had become exhausted, and as the Express Delivery service had been abolished in December, 1941 (except for the transmission of urgent pathological specimens addressed to hospitals), further printings were considered unnecessary.