

INSPECTION.

During the year 1,671 visits of inspection to post-offices were made by departmental Inspectors. An audit of the values was undertaken on 1,227 occasions, and in only one instance was a serious discrepancy disclosed.

BURGLARIES.

Losses as a result of burglaries at post-offices during the year were higher than usual, but as the Department ensures that only a minimum amount of money is retained at offices overnight the average amount stolen was small. The majority of the offices concerned were non-permanent ones, and in most instances it was necessary for the intruder to force a safe to gain access to the values.

DEAD-LETTER OFFICE.

	1937.	1936.
Letters returned to senders in New Zealand	451,846*	430,268†
Other articles returned to senders in New Zealand ..	465,271	393,255
Letters returned to other Administrations	47,815‡	52,432§
Other articles returned to other Administrations ..	49,202	66,127
Letters destroyed (senders unknown and contents of no value)	28,828	23,383
Letters intercepted addressed to persons and firms on prohibited list	289	532

* Including 16,463 registered.

† Including 15,153 registered.

‡ Including 492 registered.

§ Including 423 registered.

The proportion of undelivered letters to the total number of letters delivered was 0·34 per cent.

POSTAL PACKETS REPORTED MISSING.

In 1937, 7,297 inquiries were received by the Department concerning the non-delivery of postal packets. In 3,969 cases, or more than half of the total, the articles were traced or accounted for satisfactorily as follows:—

Sender responsible for delay	1,367
Addressee responsible for delay	1,151
Post Office responsible for delay	401
No delay or responsibility not fixed	750

The manner of disposal of 3,328 articles, representing 0·0012 per cent. of the total number of articles posted during the year, could not be determined.

MONEY-ORDERS.

Money-order business, which fell off considerably during the period 1931–35, has increased each year since 1934. Last year 784,195 orders, of a value of £1,312,629, were issued. This represents an increase compared with the previous year of 50,529 in number and £517,981 in value.

POSTAL NOTES.

The value of postal-note business increased during the year, although the number of postal notes sold showed a decrease. The sales were 3,746,560 postal notes of a value of £1,451,793, compared with 3,833,288, of a value of £1,378,387, during the previous year.

The commission totalled £35,257 12s. 10d., an increase of £931 19s. 8d. on the commission earned in 1936–37.

BRITISH POSTAL ORDERS.

British postal-order transactions also increased, 95,391 orders of a value of £41,577 16s. 4d. being sold, as against 86,778, of a value of £40,212 2s. 11d. during the previous year. The number of orders paid was 32,293, of a value of £15,791 12s. 6d., while the previous year's figures were 29,761 orders of a value of £15,091 6s.

SAVINGS-BANK.

Deposits lodged in the Post Office Savings-bank during the year amounted to £33,041,082, and the withdrawals to £29,629,074, an excess of deposits of £3,412,008. The interest credited to depositors was £1,669,384, and the amount at the credit of depositors at the end of the year reached the record total of £63,146,930.

Savings-bank ledger offices were established during the year as follows:—

Dominion Road	1st November.
Dunedin North	8th December.
Epsom	16th October.
Huntly	1st September.
Kingsland	16th October.
Motueka	16th September.
Mount Eden	16th August.
Newton	1st May.
Otahuhu	16th February.
Remuera	1st May.
Waibi	24th August.