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Post Office Annual Report for the Year, 1906.

No. 339/1096/1907.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,
LAGOS, SOUTHERN NIGERIA,
1st August, 1907.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the Postal Department of this Colony and Protectorate for the Year ended 31st December, 1906.

REVENUE.

It is satisfactory to note that there has been a considerable increase in revenue, the amount collected during the year being £13,616 2s. 3d. as compared with £10,561 19s. 1d. collected in the preceding year.

Appendix "A" furnishes a detailed statement of the revenue collected at the various stations and the amounts collected under the several heads of revenue during 1905 are also given.

There are increases recorded under all the principal heads of revenue, "Lapsed Money Orders," "Sale of Postal Notices," and "Rent of Letter Boxes" showing small and unimportant decreases. The increase of £2,952 11s. 2d. in sales of postage stamps is undoubtedly due to a great extent to the general increase in Postal business, but the fact that Customs duties on articles imported through Parcels Post were from the 1st May collected by means of postage stamps must be taken into account.

Similarly postage stamps have to some extent been used for Telegraphic and Judicial purposes, but in the absence of accurate and reliable returns of the amount to be so accounted for, I am unable to state the actual revenue derived from sale of stamps for postal purposes only. I am however taking steps to enable me to supply this information in future reports.

EXPENDITURE.

The total expenditure recorded during the year under review was £13,483 14s., but these figures must be taken as approximate.

From the 1st January to 30th April, the Post and Telegraph Departments were under one head, and a portion of Telegraph expenditure under item "Personal Emoluments" appears to have been included and on this account it is not possible to furnish a comparative statement of the expenditure with that of previous years.

POSTAL MATTER DESPATCHED AND RECEIVED.

Appendix "B" furnishes a statement of the estimated number of Letters, Post-cards Newspapers, Book Packets and Parcels dealt with during the year.

Appendix "C" furnishes a comparative statement of Postal Matter received and despatched from and to the United Kingdom, West African Colonies and Internal Offices during the last five years and from which it will be observed that the number of articles of all descriptions passing through the Post Office continues to increase.

ORDINARY CORRESPONDENCE.

It is estimated that the total number of ordinary Letters, Post-cards, Newspapers and Book Packets dealt with during the year was 1,701,466 being 214,711 in excess of the number dealt with in the previous year.

REGISTERED CORRESPONDENCE.

In this branch, there is a large increase recorded, 90,501 registered letters and other articles having passed through the Post Office as compared with 69,642 in 1905. There is an increase thus shown of 20,859.

INSURED LETTERS.

The system of insuring letters has never been used by the public to any great extent and in the year under review the number of letters insured was 21 less than in 1905. The totals for the years 1905 and 1906 are 101 and 80 respectively.

This decrease may be attributed to the confidence reposed by the public in the registration system, the loss of a registered article being of rare occurrence.

RETURNED LETTERS.

The work of this branch is assuming large dimensions and it now claims a considerable portion of a senior clerk's time.

The total number of letters and other articles dealt with by the Returned Letter Office was 6,340. Of these 580 were registered some of which contained cash, money orders and drafts to the extent of £43 and which in each case was returned to the senders. Postage Stamps in many cases were found enclosed in letters and were likewise returned.

RATE OF POSTAGE ON INTERNAL LETTERS.

The following rate of postage on Internal Letters was adopted during the year:—
1d. per ounce or part thereof. This had been the rate previously in force in Southern Nigeria, but the Lagos rate was 1d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

PARCEL POST.

The facilities afforded for importing articles through the parcels post appear to be fully appreciated and the system is largely used by both Europeans and Natives.

Appendix "C" furnishes a comparative statement of parcels received and despatched from and to the United Kingdom, West African Colonies and Internal Offices during the last five years, from which it will be gathered that the business of this branch continues to steadily increase.

The total number of parcels dealt with during the years 1905 and 1906 is as under:—

In 1905	...	...	...	31,048
In 1906	...	...	...	35,636
Increase in 1906	...	...	...	<u>4,588</u>

The system of insurance of valuable parcels was taken advantage of in 2,308 cases during the year.

The following rates of postage on internal parcels were adopted during the year:—

Not exceeding 3lb.	...	...	...	4d.
Exceeding 3lb. and not exceeding 7lb.	...	...	...	8d.
" 7lb. "	"	"	11lb.	1s.

Previously the rates were 3d. per pound or part thereof.

MONEY ORDERS.

Two new Money Order Offices were opened during the year at Ibadan and Jebu Od respectively.

Appendix "D" furnishes a statement of Money Orders issued and received in 1906 and in the preceding year, the transactions of each Province being shewn separately.

The total value of Money Orders issued in 1906 exceeded that of the previous year by £2,586 14s. 10d. and the value of Orders received was £2,395 3s. 2d. in excess of 1905.

Appendix "E" furnishes a comparative statement of Money Order business transacted with the United Kingdom, West African Colonies and Internal Offices during the last five years and a comparative statement of Money Order transactions at each Office during the past five years is shewn in Appendix "F."

The transactions between this Colony and Protectorate and the United Kingdom amounted to £2,735 14s. 1d. less than in the preceding year, but this is more than accounted for by the large increase of £3,623 18s. 0d. in the value of Postal Orders sold, the latter being now more generally used than Money Orders for remitting small amounts.

The decrease of £9,573 4s. 9d. shewn in the value of transactions with West African Colonies is due to all Offices in the Central and Eastern Provinces now being treated as Internal Offices and a corresponding increase is shewn in the value of transactions with Internal Offices.

It is satisfactory however to note that notwithstanding the fact that £3,623 18s. had been diverted from the Money Order to the Postal Order system, there is still a total increase of £4,979 18s. in Money Order transactions.

POSTAL ORDERS.

The Postal Order system which had been introduced in the Western Province in March, 1905, had not been used by the public to the extent anticipated and this was probably due to the fact that the rate of commission on Money Orders was lower than the poundage on Postal Orders. An increased rate of commission on Money Orders was approved and steps were taken to bring the facilities afforded for remitting small sums by means of Postal Orders more prominently to the notice of the public, with the result that the sales during the latter half of the year realized £3,111 7s. 4d. as compared with £1,577 6s. 2d. sold during the first six months.

Appendix "G" shows the number and value of Postal Orders sold and paid during the years 1905 and 1906. The value of those sold in 1906 amounted to £4,688 13s. 6d. as compared with £1,064 15s. 6d. in the preceding year. The value of Postal Orders paid in 1906 amounted to £972 5s. as compared with £382 18s. 4d. in the previous year.

MAIL SERVICES.

The Inland Mail Services continue to work satisfactorily and during the year new services between the following places have been established:—

Itu—Aka	} Weekly services, performed by canoes and runners.
Itu—Ikot-Ekpene	... ..
Ikot-Ekpene—Uyo	... ..
Sapele—Kwale	} Weekly services, performed by runners.
Benin City—Ifon	... ..
Benin City—Agbor	... ..

The following services formerly performed by canoes have during the year been replaced by launch services:—

Bonny to Akassa.
Bonny to Degema, *via* Bakana.

A Weekly Mail Service between the Eastern and Western Provinces is greatly needed and I hope that in the near future it may be possible to provide for such a service, which would I am sure be appreciated by all classes of the community.

The regular Ocean Mail Service performed by the ships of Messrs. Elder Dempster & Co., both outwards and homewards has been well maintained during the year and greater punctuality in the arrival of the outward mail steamers has been observed than in previous years.

STAFF.

On the 1st May, 1906, the Amalgamation of the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was effected and the Administrative Staff of this Department was transferred from Calabar to Lagos, the latter having been made Headquarters of the new Administration.

On the 14th May, I was appointed Postmaster-General of the Colony and Protectorate and assumed my duties on that date.

On the 28th October, I left the Colony on leave and handed over temporarily to Mr. Finch, Deputy Director of Telegraphs. Mr. T. E. Burrowes, Provincial Collector of Customs, assumed control of the Department on 8th November and continued to act as Postmaster-General until the 8th April, 1907, when I returned to the Colony.

Consequent on the transfer *en masse* of all Postal Records and Accounts, the work of the Department was for a time somewhat dislocated and fell into arrear, but by the end of the year order had been restored and the business of the Department was being satisfactorily conducted. I am pleased to add that the members of the Administrative Staff worked willingly and well both during and out of Official hours in order to bring the work up to date.

The Native Staff consisted of 42 Clerks, 4 Learners, 12 Postmen, 5 Messengers, 2 Mail Guards and 5 Labourers. The duties of Postmasters at the various stations were performed by 19 of these Clerks.

The lack of efficiency shown by many members of the Native Staff is to be regretted and tends to impede the progress of the Department. It is difficult to get Officers to realize that Post Offices are established for the convenience of the public and not merely as a means of providing a livelihood for certain individuals. The duties of the Post Office are undoubtedly more arduous than those of other Departments, the staff being frequently required to work during unofficial hours and also on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and for these reasons perhaps, the better and more intelligent class of men do not care to accept appointments in this Department.

In the Central and Eastern Provinces, Officers were paid extra for working overtime and provision has been made for this system to be extended to the Western Province from the commencement of 1907. It is hoped that this may to some extent tend to attract a more desirable class of applicants when vacancies occur.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

P. L. H. ARCHER,

Postmaster-General.

THE HONOURABLE
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,
LAGOS.

TABLE "A."

DETAILED STATEMENT OF POSTAL REVENUE.

OFFICES.	Postage Stamps, &c., Sold.	Taxed Letters, &c., Delivered.	Commission on Money Orders Issued.	$\frac{1}{2}\%$ Commission on Money Orders Received.	Lapsed Money Orders.	Sale of Postal Notices, &c.	Rent of Private Let- ter Boxes & Special Mail Bags.	Poundage on Postal Orders.	TOTAL.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
EASTERN PROVINCE.									
Afikpo	36 17 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36 17 9
Akassa	139 5 2	0 10 0	34 0 9	0 2 9	0 6 3	—	—	—	174 4 11
Aro Chuku	8 8 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8 8 6
Bende	20 17 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20 17 6
Bonny	482 3 2	2 7 2	65 9 8	0 7 0	—	—	—	—	550 7 0
Brass	124 8 5	0 4 0	17 7 9	0 4 10	—	—	—	—	142 5 0
Calabar	2,673 19 8	1 15 6	136 9 8	0 11 3	5 19 6	—	14 3 6	—	2,833 2 1
Degema	160 2 5	0 7 8	20 0 5	0 2 5	—	—	—	—	180 12 11
Egwanga	848 3 6	0 12 2	29 17 4	0 2 2	—	—	—	—	878 15 2
Eket	73 12 7	0 4 8	—	—	—	—	—	—	73 17 3
Eket Ekpeno	9 1 4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9 1 4
Obubra	17 6 11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17 6 11
Okuni	6 13 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6 13 5
CENTRAL PROVINCE.									
Aboh	67 7 7	0 0 5	22 7 3	—	—	—	—	—	89 15 3
Benin City	358 1 3	0 3 7	39 11 8	0 3 4	—	—	—	—	397 19 10
Forcados	586 17 11	1 13 5	52 1 5	0 9 6	—	—	—	—	641 2 3
Idah	42 17 7	0 0 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	42 18 1
Onitsha	538 11 10	1 0 8	85 6 1	0 18 7	0 5 8	—	—	—	626 2 10
Sapele	617 0 5	0 11 2	33 3 0	0 1 1	0 7 6	—	—	—	651 3 2
Warri	640 13 9	0 10 8	54 5 4	0 5 2	—	—	—	—	695 14 11
WESTERN PROVINCE.									
Abeokuta	113 11 7	1 0 2	—	—	—	—	—	—	114 11 9
Badagry	37 19 11	0 3 9	—	—	—	—	—	1 10 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	39 13 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ebute Metta	103 7 3	0 9 0	—	—	—	—	—	5 14 4	109 10 7
Epe	18 16 10	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 16 0	19 12 10
Ibadan	299 3 7	4 4 6	26 18 11	—	—	—	—	5 8 6	335 15 6
Ijebu Ode	23 15 8	0 1 3	1 10 7	—	—	—	—	1 14 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 1 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ikorodu	4 12 4	0 0 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	4 12 9
Lagos	4,514 17 3	13 11 1	186 11 11	68 0 6	0 17 7	8 8 0	46 1 9	33 11 10	4,871 19 11
Shagamu	7 3 2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7 3 2
Shaki	0 18 7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0 18 7
On lists from	United Kingdom.	March quarter	2 9 6	—	—	—	—	—	2 9 6
Do.	do.	June do.	0 19 0	—	—	—	—	—	0 19 0
Do.	do.	Sept. do.	1 15 6	—	—	—	—	—	1 15 6
Do.	do.	Dec. do.	2 11 5	—	—	—	—	—	2 11 5
TOTAL 1906 ...	12,576 16 10	29 11 9	805 1 9	79 7 0	7 16 6	8 8 0	60 5 3	48 15 2	13,616 2 3
„ 1905 ...	9,624 5 8	—	780 16 0	—	48 15 5	12 9 0	82 15 0	12 18 0	10,561 19 1