



COLONY OF NATAL.

REPORT

OF THE

POSTMASTER - GENERAL

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1903.

PIETERMARITZBURG :

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Report of the Postmaster-General for the Year ended 31st December, 1903.

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,—

I have the honour to submit my report on the Post Office Department for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

I reached Natal from the Imperial Service on the 12th May last, and took up my appointment on the following day.

The total revenue of the Department (Postal and Telegraph Branches) for the financial year ended 30th June, 1903, amounted to £238,778 11s. 11d., as compared with £193,521 6s. 8d.—the previous year's revenue—and the expenditure to £168,099 10s. 1d. as compared with £126,162 10s. 3d. for the preceding financial year.

The revenue thus exceeded the expenditure by £70,679 1s. 10d.

The estimated value of work done for other Government Departments, for which no payment is made, was £38,632 3s. 11d., and the postage value of newspapers conveyed free about £7,000.

Adding these items to the surplus revenue brings the value of the Post Office surplus up to £116,311 5s. 9d.

There are, however, charges paid out of other Departments' Votes, such as interest on loans, Office expenses, erection of and repairs to Post Office buildings—amounting approximately to £17,107 13s. 9d., which should be charged against my Department, and these charges reduce the surplus to £99,203 12s.—which may be taken as the actual profit to the Government on the year's working.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

The rates of postage to Southern Rhodesia and the Bechuanaland Protectorate have been reduced, and are now the same as to other places in the South African Postal Union.

A direct exchange of parcel mails has been arranged between Natal and Australasia at a reduced rate of postage, and the time occupied is considerably less than when such parcels were forwarded *via* the United Kingdom.

Private post cards are now accepted for transmission to all countries, under certain conditions, at the rates applicable to official post cards.

Money Orders may now be sent to Uganda and to certain Portuguese Colonies, through the intermediary of the British Post Office, and Telegraph Money Orders may be exchanged with Southern Rhodesia.

An exchange of Postal Orders has been arranged with Rhodesia and the British Central Africa Protectorate.

Arrangements have been made with the Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, Transvaal, Rhodesia, and the British Central Africa Protectorate whereby unused postage stamps of the country of origin, not exceeding 5d. in value on any one Order, may be affixed to Postal Orders to make up broken amounts, and will be included in the sum payable on presentation.

The proposal made to the Imperial Post Office in the year 1900, for an exchange of Postal Orders with Natal, has been considered by the Home Postal Authorities, and arrangements that will admit of the sending of small sums from the Colony to the United Kingdom, at a reduced fee, will probably be concluded at an early date.

In April, the train from Cape Town that conveyed the Inward European mail which had been arriving at Pietermaritzburg at 4.45 and Durban at 8.50 p.m. on Saturdays, was accelerated. It was possible to arrange for a further acceleration in December, and the mails are now due to reach the former town at 9.0 a.m., and the latter at 1.0 p.m. on Fridays.

Advantage was taken in April of the 9.10 a.m. train from Durban on Sundays (which was found to connect at Germiston with a fast train due to reach Cape Town on Wednesday, two hours before the Ocean Mail Packet sailed) to despatch supplementary mails to the United Kingdom, and, owing to the much later posting afforded the public, the arrangement made with Messrs. Rennie & Sons and King & Sons for the conveyance of the Durban portion of the mail to Cape Town by sea was terminated.

New Post Office Buildings have, during the year, been erected at Dundee, Charlestown, Lower Umkomas, Verulam, Weenen, Richmond, Port Shepstone, Stanger and Melmoth, and the Greytown and Howick Offices have been enlarged.

At Durban, where the work had outgrown the premises occupied, the old Market House has been altered and fitted up as a Sorting Office. The work in connection with this alteration having been completed on the 28th November, the sorting of letters and parcels was transferred to the new building on the following day. The additional accommodation which this has given has enabled the Department to increase the number of private boxes from 500 to 1,000, and more working space has been provided for both Sorting Clerks and Postmen.

The space vacated in the Town Hall will be utilised to extend the public counters—a work which, I regret, could not be done in time for the Christmas pressure—and for improving the accommodation for the Postmaster and Telegraph Messengers.

Owing to the limited space provided for the Accounts Branch of the Chief Office, it was essential that additional accommodation should be obtained, and a large room in the Town Hall has been rented, with the result that the work is now being done by the Staff under more satisfactory conditions.

Money Order Offices have been opened at Paulpietersburg, and the West End, Durban.

The following changes have been made in the Designations of existing Post Offices :—

- ✓ Himeville (Bulwer), altered to Underberg.
- ✓ Hlabisa Rail,, Somkele.
- ✓ Umhlali River,, Chaka's Kraal.
- ✓ Underberg (Van Reenen), altered to Wyford.

During the year 34 Post Offices and Postal Agencies were opened and 12 closed, making the total number 339, as compared with 37 in 1902.

The Post Office at Alcock's Spruit has been transferred to the Railway Station.

A post cart service was established between Rosetta and Kamberg, but this has since been replaced by a mounted carrier service.

The post cart service between Nqutu Road and Vryheid was discontinued on the opening of the Railway.

From June 1st, the Post Office took over the entire work in connection with the sale to the public of the new issue of stamps (King's E. 3.) which are available for postage, telegraphic, and all other revenue purposes.

The Conference of the Representatives of the South African Postal Union, which it was expected would be held in August, was, at the request of the Cape Post Office, further postponed. It is believed however, that it will be possible for the Conference to take place at Bloemfontein next August.

DEAD AND RETURN CORRESPONDENCE.

The following particulars of the Articles received and dealt with in the Returned Letter Branch are given hereunder :—

Ordinary letters returned to writers in the Colony	..	...	87,652
Registered letters returned to writers in the Colony	...	...	2,368
Returned unopened to Foreign countries	...	...	88,329
Destroyed owing to illegible addresses, and senders being unknown	...	...	97,559

More than half the letters destroyed were written by natives whose names and addresses were illegible. Many letters from Europeans were not returnable owing to the Christian names of writers only being given.

Articles of value in the form of Cheques, Money Orders, Postal Orders, Drafts, and Postage Stamps which were found in ordinary letters returned within the Colony, amounted to £5,526 9s. 4d.

A large number of Articles without wrappers—principally Newspapers—reach the Colony by the European Mail. The reason for this is owing to the insecure wrapping and the flimsy covers in which they are enclosed.

TELEGRAPH BRANCH.

The following comparative statement shows the traffic dealt with during the last two years :—

Year.	Forwarded.	Received.	Transmitted.	Total.	Increase.	Decrease.
1902.	960,126	972,696	1,146,914	3,079,736	402,706	...
1903.	723,648	784,420	1,041,964	2,550,032	...	529,704

The decrease is due to a falling off in the military traffic.

For the financial year ended 30th June, 1903, the receipts for telegraphic business amounted to £70,061 16s. 10d. £11,499 4s. 3d. represented the value of work done for Government Departments, and £7,433 18s. 8d. the 50 per cent. reduction authorised by the Government on telegrams transmitted on behalf of the Military Authorities, making a total of £88,994 19s. 9d., a decrease on the previous year of £35,086 10s. 4d.

The privilege granted to the Imperial Military Authorities the previous year of free telegraphic traffic up to a value of £1,500 per annum calculated at full rates—subsequent telegrams to be charged for at half ordinary rates—has been modified, and under the new arrangement all military messages are paid for at half the ordinary rates.

The amount received from the Military Authorities for the transmission of Military telegrams was £10,151 5s. 6d., a decrease of £21,142 14s. 7d. on the previous year's collections.

The following Telegraph and Telephone Offices were opened during the year :—

✓ Alcock Spruit	✓ Hlabisa	✓ St. Faith's
✓ Blood River	✓ Kwambonambi	✓ Somkele
✓ Boshoff's Road	✓ Marine Colliery	✓ Tweedie
✓ Buffalo River	✓ Mount Moreland	✓ Umfolosi
✓ Cedara	✓ Paulpietersburg	✓ Underberg
✓ Empangeni	✓ Reichenau	
✓ Highhurst	✓ Riet Vlei	

The following Offices were closed during the year :—Bryn'hella, Fountain Hall, Marine Colliery, and Umbulwana.

On the 31st December there were 200 Telegraph Offices in the Colony, as compared with 186 the previous year.

In the engineering branch a large number of works were carried out during the year, the most important of these being :—

NEW LINES ERECTED.

Umhlatuzi to Somkele (Zululand Railway).
 Buffalo River to Vryheid (skirting railway).
 Greytown to Riet Vlei.
 Highflats to St. Faith's.
 Bulwer to Underberg Laager.
 Somkele to Hlabisa Magistracy.
 Vryheid to Paulpietersburg.
 Chaka's Kraal to Umhlali Village.
 Illovo River to Illovo Village.

Good progress was also made with the new telegraph line along the railway between South Coast Junction and Maritzburg, the construction party having reached a point close to Maritzburg on the 31st December. One of the additional wires on this line is being connected between Durban and Maritzburg and the intermediate railway stations up to Inchanga on either side for public telegrams. This will not only relieve the congestion on the Railway Department's wire, but will greatly facilitate the despatch of public telegrams.

NEW WIRES ERECTED ON EXISTING LINES OF POLES.

One wire Durban to Lower Tugela, for Railway Department.

One wire, Avoca to Verulam (connecting intermediate stations for public telegrams).

One wire, North Shepstone to Port Shepstone (for public telegrams).

One wire between Dundee and Vryheid (on railway poles) to replace temporary military wire.

One wire, Port Shepstone to Batstones, to form a loop for direct telegraph working with Durban.

Two wires between Durban and Maritzburg (portion of scheme for providing improved facilities with Transvaal. The continuation of this work, viz., the erection of three additional wires between Greytown and Dundee, is now in progress).

The following lines were overhauled during the year :—

Melmoth to Ubombo. (The wooden poles originally erected on this line were replaced with iron poles).

South Coast Junction to Port Shepstone (along railway).

Durban to Lower Tugela. (Carried out concurrently with the erection of additional wires for Railway Department).

Electric Train Staff instruments have been fitted up at the following stations :—

Alverstone.	Grenford.	St. Ives.
Boshoff's Road.	Inkwelo.	Tweedie.
Cedara.	Padleys.	Wallsend.

The installing of Telephone exchanges at the up-country towns was commenced at Ladysmith, where the exchange was opened on the 1st November, 1903, the number of connections established on the 31st December being 67.

At Dundee the work was commenced in November, and the system opened on the 1st February, 1904, with 50 connections.

The number of connections to these systems was so far in excess of the number promised and provided for that the vote was unfortunately exhausted before the Newcastle system could be taken in hand. An item is, however, being inserted in next year's Estimates for the establishment of this system, and the work will be proceeded with immediately the necessary funds are available.

The conversion of the Maritzburg Telephone system from a single wire to a metallic circuit system, and the transfer of the system to new (temporary) premises at the back of the new Post Office, has made satisfactory progress, and it is hoped the work will be completed and the new system in working order by the end of the present financial year.

New switchboards are being erected, and these will enable accommodation to be provided for 800 subscribers—the present accommodation is for 400 subscribers only.

This work was delayed at the outset owing to a scarcity of skilled labour, in consequence of which the Department had to send to the Imperial service for twelve skilled construction workmen.

In carrying out the work many changes of wires have had to be made, and these have unavoidably caused contacts and interruptions to subscribers' wires. To the credit, however, of those who have been employed on the work these interruptions have not been excessive, and it is confidently anticipated that with the bringing into use of the new system, with its independent "ring off" and other advantages, the annoyances and drawbacks of the present system will entirely disappear.

Several private telephone lines have been erected in different parts of the Colony, and a number of new connections have been established with the Durban Railway Telephone Exchange.

Other works of a minor character have been undertaken for the Railway Department, including the installation of Syke's Block Signalling system for trains in the signal cabins between Durban and South Coast Junction and Durban and Greyville, and the taking over of the electric treadles and alarm systems at road crossings on the Point, North Coast, and Greytown Railway lines.

The construction of a line for telephonic communication between Pietermaritzburg and Durban was postponed, but it is hoped that it will be possible to commence the work early in the next financial year.

Nothing has yet been done with respect to establishing a Fire Alarm system in Pietermaritzburg to connect the more important Government Offices with the Fire Brigade office. Action was suspended last year at the request of the municipal authorities.

Natal PM 6 1903.

The charges collected during the year by the Eastern and South African Telegraph Company on cable messages sent to and from South Africa exceeded £300,000, and, in terms of the Agreement with the Company, the annual subsidy payable by Natal was refunded.

The special inducement offered to telegraph messengers—which was referred to in the last annual report on the Department—for regular attendance at the Government Night Schools, and general advancement in school work, has more than realised expectations. Having satisfied the Educational Department in regard to work and attendances at the Night School during 1903, 20 messengers at Durban and 16 at Pietermaritzburg were each awarded a bonus of £5.

STAFF.

The number of persons employed by the Department on the 31st December, 1903, was 1,489, of whom 299 were on the permanent establishment. In consequence of a dearth in the number of Learners obtainable in the Colony, it has been necessary to obtain 16 Telegraphists from the Home Service to fill vacancies. I hope, however, that as the European population of the Colony increases, the number of youths offering themselves for Learnerships will be such that it will not again be necessary to apply to the Imperial Service for recruits.

Three officers of the Department were prosecuted and convicted, under the provisions of the Post Office Law, 22, 1884, and dismissed the Service.

The class of Sorters introduced in the year 1902, was, automatically, abolished, in consequence of the alteration in the classification of Clerks recommended by the Civil Service Commissioner.

HEALTH OF STAFF.

The general health of the Staff has been good, and shows an improvement compared with previous years. Of the permanent Staff 45 per cent. were absent on one or more occasions during the year. The average sick absence of the whole Staff was six days. There were, I am glad to say, no deaths during the year.

The sick absence compares most favourably with the amount of sickness in the Imperial Post Office, where, in 1902 (the last return available), 53 per cent. of the Established Officers were absent through sickness and the average absence per man was 7.9 days.

The figures in the following statement relate to the whole of the permanent European Staff (299 Established and 289 Unestablished Officers):

Total number of days absence through sickness.	Percentage of sick Absentees.	Average amount of Sick Absence per sick Officer (in days).	Average absence per Officer employed (in days).
2,050	42	16.1	6.8
1,512	48	10.6	5.2

IMPROVEMENT OF CONTROL OF COUNTRY DISTRICTS.

For the better control, and also for decentralising much of the work done at the Chief Office, the English system of Head Post Towns—or Head Offices, as they are called in England—was introduced on the 1st August last. These Head Offices are the following:—

✓ Bulwer	✓ Melmoth
✓ Charlestown	✓ Mooi River
✓ Dundee	✓ Newcastle
✓ Durban	✓ Pietermaritzburg
✓ Eshowe	✓ Port Shepstone
✓ Estcourt	✓ Richmond
✓ Greytown	✓ Stanger
✓ Harding	✓ Umzinto
✓ Howick	✓ Utrecht
✓ Ixopo	✓ Verulam
✓ Ladysmith	✓ Vryheid

It will be seen from this that the Colony has been divided into 22 Postal districts. Each district is under the immediate control of a Postmaster who has been trained in the Post Office, and is an established Officer. It is the duty of these Postmasters to watch the needs of their respective districts, and to call the attention of the Postmaster-General to any irregularity or defect in the services immediately under their control, and to report on cases where they observe that the Postal and Telegraph facilities could be improved. Much of the correspondence which formerly passed between a small country Post Office and the Chief Office (Maritzburg) could very well be dealt with by Postmasters at the larger Offices, and, therefore, time is saved by sending this correspondence to an officer in the district who, knowing the local conditions and circumstances, is more favourably placed to complete all enquiries before forwarding the papers to Maritzburg. Many other details also can be better left to Postmasters, who are in a position to know all that is going on in their own districts, and I trust when these Officers appreciate more fully what is required of them much good will result from the alteration which made them Head Postmasters.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER'S REPORT.

It is perhaps right that I should here refer to the Report on the Post Office by the Civil Service Commissioner, dated the 3rd March, 1903. In that Report several matters are referred to which I will deal with in the order in which they appear.

(1) The Civil Service Commissioner first calls attention to the fact that it is not shown whether the different branches of the work, such as the Telegraph and Money Order business, are conducted at a profit or a loss. I have not so far found it practicable to introduce a system of book-keeping which by apportioning the cost and revenue of each branch would show the profit or loss, and, indeed, if such were introduced it could, after all, be nothing more than an approximate estimate, as so much of the various kinds of business of this Department is performed by officers who give their attention to every sort of work, and, further, the expense and labour involved in apportioning the cost of each class of work would be so great that I do not think the result would warrant the introduction of so much book-keeping.

(2) Fault is found with this Department that it has hitherto taken full credit for the free work which it has done for other Departments, but has not debited itself in respect of the value of the work done for it by those Departments. This has, as far as possible, been rectified in the balance sheet which is attached to this Report, and it may now be taken that the net profit as shown is the actual net profit of last year's working. It must not, however, be overlooked that the cost of the post carts in the Colony are wholly charged to the Post Office vote, although they are in many instances running as much for the convenience of people living in the outlying districts, who use them as passenger conveyances, as for the Post Office. Certainly in many cases they run at a considerable loss to this Department.

(4) The Commissioner, in the fourth paragraph of his report, refers to the "Unit" system which is in operation in England as a check on extravagant proposals for increases of force. As an Assistant Surveyor in the Imperial Service, whose duties consisted largely of Staff questions, I had much experience in the working of the Unit system—a system of quite recent introduction,—and although useful as a standard of comparison, I set little value on the close personal inspection, by a specially trained officer, of the whole duties of an office where an increase of force is said to be needed. These inspections ensure that work being done on economical and efficient lines, and, when completed, enable the officer by whom they are made to say what staff is required for the proper performance of the various duties.

The Natal Service is small compared with the Home Service, and can, therefore, be kept more closely under control by the Head of the Department, but I have arranged for the introduction of a Unit system on the Home lines, which will be useful as showing the cost of one office as compared with another.

With reference to the extra payment of 3s. a week made to Postmen for the delivery of the English mail, I have looked carefully into this matter, but I do not see my way to recommend its abolition. As the town Postmen's duties are revised at the different towns care will be taken to give each man a full day's work, without taking into consideration the English mail, so that the delivery of the latter will be in addition to the men's ordinary work, and they will, therefore, be justly entitled to the extra payment of 3s. a week.

(5) The London Office of Works has been good enough to supply me with the standard drawings of the fittings used in the Imperial Service, and these, with a slight modification to meet local conditions, are now being used in connection with the fitting up of new Post Offices.

Exception was taken by the Commissioner to the leather bags used by Postmen in this Colony; these bags are certainly somewhat heavy, but they are durable, and in the end probably more economical in this climate than the canvas bags used in England. I have, however, obtained a few of the latter from England, and they are now being tried.

(6) Newly-appointed Postmasters at Offices where private quarters are provided are now required to pay rent. The charge is 6 per cent. on the cost of the building, but this is not quite a satisfactory arrangement, as the amount of rent charged is so high in some cases that it is more than a clerk with a small salary can afford to pay, and I have, therefore, found it necessary in such cases to appoint an officer with a higher salary than I should otherwise have done. The recommendation made by the Commissioner to charge 10 per cent. of a Postmaster's salary as rent would, I think, be a more satisfactory one.

(7) An examination of the Postmaster's Accounts twice a year has now been arranged.

(8) The position of Telegraph Accountant, which is now vacant, will be abolished. The present Chief Accountant is about to retire, and on the appointment of his successor it is proposed to revise the whole of the work in the Accounts Branch.

Paragraphs 9 to 13 relate to matters to which I need not refer.

(14) The house-to-house delivery of letters in towns is being gradually introduced, but until a further addition is made to the amount voted for the purpose, much cannot be done. Provision will, however, be made in next year's Estimates for a larger number of Postmen.

The system of private boxes which, unknown in England, is in operation in this Colony, is, I find, preferred by many people to a house-to-house delivery, so that the non-existence of a delivery by Postmen in very small towns is not so much felt as it would be in England. In England, the demand on the part of the public for additional deliveries is very great, but since my arrival in the Colony I do not remember receiving one application for a delivery of letters by Postmen.

I have not yet been able to introduce an express delivery for local letters, as at present other matters of more urgent nature require attention. In Natal the Native enables the householder to keep more servants than are employed by householders in England, and this being so the need of an Express Delivery System is not so much in evidence, as Natives can be used for conveying messages from one person to another.

(15) With regard to the employment of female clerks I have seen much work performed by women in many of the English Post Offices, and the result of my experience is such that I am bound to say I do not agree with the Commissioner that "their employment represents a waste of money as compared with the employment of men." Certainly had this been the experience of the Imperial Post Office, the female staff would have been reduced years ago, instead of which it is the instruction of the Imperial Postmaster-General that whenever a revision of force takes place at any Office, as many duties as possible are to be arranged for women.

I see no reason why in Natal women should not give good service, and it would certainly be to the advantage of the Department to employ them, and this would be especially so when, in consequence of briskness of trade, men are difficult to obtain. At present, however, the want of proper accommodation prevents the Department from employing more than a very small number of women.

GENERAL REMARKS.

It has been the practice in this Colony to obtain receipts from the public for the delivery of ordinary parcels. This in many instances not only caused delay in delivery, but irritated the addressees, as it frequently happened that a private Native messenger had to convey the notification of a parcel's arrival many miles to his master's house, in order to get it signed, before the Postmaster would deliver the parcel to him. In the United Kingdom, where over 90,300,000 parcels are dealt with annually, no record is kept of ordinary uninsured parcels, except at the office of delivery, but in this Colony ordinary parcels have gone through the tedious and cumbrous routine of registered articles. All this work is perfectly unnecessary, and will be abolished. Henceforth all parcels which have not been registered will be delivered without a receipt.

I am of opinion that the charge (8d. a lb.) for the conveyance of parcels within the Colony is too high, and that the limit of weight (half an ounce) for the 1d. letter is too low.

The result in regard to the former is that the Parcel Post within this Colony is not made so much use of as it otherwise would be.

With regard to increasing the weight of the 1d. letter and reducing the parcel post charges, I anticipate there will be no difficulty in bringing about the former, but in reducing the parcel rate there are various difficulties to overcome, such as the conveyance of mails over long distances by Native carriers on foot. I hope, however, as this Colony is in agreement with the rest of South Africa, in regard to its rates, to bring both subjects up for discussion at the next Conference of the South African Postal Union.

On the 1st July last the use of the Morse Recorder on this Colony's telegraph lines ceased, and telegrams are now received by sound. This has saved the cost of tape and reduced the work of maintenance, as fewer clock-work instruments are now in use.

The hours for the transaction of money order business at all offices have been extended to 5 o'clock p.m., while postal orders can now be purchased during the whole time the offices are open for the sale of stamps.

Since I took over the control of this Department my attention has been called to several complaints relating to delays in the delivery of letters. It is of course, impossible, even in the best postal system that man can devise, to prevent an occasional letter being forwarded to the wrong office, but the delays which these mis-sendings cause are not as a rule long, certainly not so long as some of those I have seen reported. I have given much consideration to this matter, and I have come to the conclusion that the system of private boxes is responsible for most of the long delays which have been reported. It is practically impossible when a clerk is standing before hundreds of these boxes not to occasionally sort a letter into the wrong box. The errors could be rectified by deputing a clerk to check the letters sorted if no one cleared their boxes until some little time after the mail had been sorted, but box renters or their servants frequently call for their letters before the sorting is finished, and there can be little doubt that in this way many mis-sorted letters are carried away by Native servants to their masters' houses or offices. Little inconvenience would arise if the wrongly-sorted letters were returned to the Post Office at once, but one can easily understand that there are conditions under which a letter would not be returned immediately, and if such letter got mislaid it might probably be several days before it would find its way to a Post Office letter-box. Every care is taken to prevent the sorting of letters into wrong boxes, but it would save much inconvenience to the public themselves if, whenever a wrongly-sorted letter is discovered, it were promptly returned to the local Postmaster.

The practice of closing many of the provincial offices on Saturday afternoons has been almost abolished. Formerly, when the Colony was doing less business than now, there was some excuse for suspending work during a part of the day on Saturdays, as the offices were in many cases worked by the Postmaster alone. Conditions have, however, completely changed since those days, and as most Postmasters have one or more assistants there is no longer any need to inconvenience the public by the suspension of all postal and telegraph work on Saturday afternoons.

In September last, during an examination of old records and papers at the Magistrate's Court at Dundee, a mail bag was discovered, which, shortly before the evacuation of that Town by the British in October, 1899, had been despatched to Pietermaritzburg by the Postmaster of Dundee. The train by which this bag was being conveyed was held up by the Boers, with the result that the mail fell into their hands. The Bag from Dundee to Pietermaritzburg appears to have been taken back to Dundee by the Boers and by them placed in the Court House for examination at a more convenient time, but, having been overlooked, it remained there untouched until discovered as described. This bag contained 47 Registered Letters, which, in the majority of cases, have since been delivered. Those which could not be delivered have been returned to the senders.

The contents of the Registered Letters consisted of about £70 in cash, a number of Postal Orders, a draft for £200, and documents involving a sum of £5,000, several cheques and official papers, and the Wills of two persons which had been made by the Testators on their enlistment in Irregular Corps.

The buildings in which the Post Office at Pieters and the Postal Agency at Umvunyana was conducted, were destroyed by fire on the 14th May and 6th August respectively, and all Post Office stores were lost.

The Post and Telegraph Office at Chaka's Kraal Railway Station was broken into on the 14th May, 1903, and a sum of money and some Postal Orders and postage stamps stolen.

During the last year several improvements have been made in the Mail Service of this Colony. The circulation of letters between the smaller towns and villages along the main line was, undoubtedly, a very slow one, and it was, therefore, absolutely necessary to do something to put matters on a more satisfactory footing.

A Travelling Post Office attached to the Night Mail trains was at first suggested as a means of improving the service, but it was found that, apart from the cost of such an arrangement, which would be considerable, the Night Mail trains were already loaded to their utmost capacity; so that no additional coaches could be attached to them.

After careful consideration it was found that the train service at Mooi River was peculiarly suitable for the establishment at that place of a central Sorting Office for the North Midland district of the Colony, and I, therefore, caused the Mooi River Office to be kept open all night after the 23rd November last, for the receipt and despatch of mails. The result has been highly satisfactory; some 2,000 letters and papers are dealt with nightly at the Mooi River Office, the majority of which are delivered many hours earlier than they would have been under the old arrangement. To improve the Mail Service at places between Maritzburg and Durban, and on the North Coast Line, arrangements were made to keep the Durban Sorting Office open all night after the 4th January 1904.

Since taking up my appointment I have paid a visit of inspection to all the principal offices in the Colony—including Eshowe and Melmoth—with the exception of Bulwer, Ixopo, and Umzinto; these latter offices I purpose visiting at an early date.

C. MAXWELL HIBBERD,

Postmaster-General.

Pietermaritzburg, 28th April, 1904.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF POSTAL

EXPENDITURE.	Financial Year 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902.	Financial Year 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Salaries	83,659 16 11	166,403 16 6	22,743 19 7	...
<i>Mails.</i>				
Travelling Post Office	360 17 0	2,056 4 5	1,695 7 5	...
Private Ship	257 7 4	645 2 5	387 15 1	...
Landing and Shipping Mails	620 13 0	602 9 1	...	18 3 11
Inland Contracts	11,446 0 0	16,240 15 4	4,794 15 4	...
Supply and Repair of Mail Bags, &c....	235 17 5	538 13 7	302 16 2	...
	12,920 14 9	20,083 4 10	7,180 14 0	18 3 11
<i>Contingent and other Expenses.</i>				
Petty Expenses	717 6 11	542 0 0	...	175 6 11
Travelling Expenses	650 7 9	834 5 10	183 18 1	...
Battery and Instrument Materials ...	1,545 5 3	...	...	1,545 5 3
Clothing for Europeans and Natives...	1,351 8 6	1,514 11 7	163 3 1	...
Bicycles for European Postmen and Messengers	445 15 10	676 5 1	230 9 3	...
Refund on Rhodesian Messages	661 18 5	117 17 6	...	544 0 11
Porterage and Disbursements	31 11 2	...	...	31 11 2
Refund on Cable Charges ... ..	...	7,417 7 5	7,417 7 5	...
Refund Customs Charges collected by Postmasters ... ..	...	12,086 10 1	12,086 10 1	...
	5,403 13 10	23,188 17 6	20,081 7 11	2,296 4 3
<i>Miscellaneous.</i>				
Maintenance of Telegraph and Tele- phone Systems	2,845 8 6	4,311 16 10	1,466 8 4	...
Transit of Correspondence outside the Colony	7,238 4 0	981 15 5	...	6,256 8 7
Commission on Money Orders	1,699 6 1	2,202 1 9	502 15 8	...
Compensation for Theft of Postal Note ...	1 0 0	...	...	1 0 0
Postage of Official Letters	104 19 1	161 16 10	56 17 9	...
Purchase of Adding Machine	75 0 0	...	...	75 0 0
Supply of Stamps	1,350 12 8	5,329 17 1	3,979 4 5	...
Contribution to International Bureau, Postal	13 18 0	13 18 0	...	...
Subsidy, Ocean Telegraphs	206 5 0	...	...	206 5 0
Contribution to International Telegraph Convention, Berne	15 0 5	15 15 7	0 15 2	...
Improvements to Telephone System ...	£,380 13 3	51 12 8	...	6,329 0 7
Improvements to Telegraph System ...	1,159 6 11	1,112 1 11	...	47 5 0
Carried forward	£101,984 5 6	£149,675 18 10	£50,006 1 6	£2,314 8 2

For the months of July and August 1902, only. After that

AND TELEGRAPH EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE.

REVENUE.	Financial Year 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902.	Financial Year 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Sale of Postage Stamps, etc. ...	93,702 16 1	190,454 16 6	96,752 0 5	...
Transit of Correspondence ...	8,224 5 1	6,762 4 2	...	1,462 0 11
Poundage on Postal Orders ...	580 12 1	562 9 11	...	18 2 2
Private Box Rents ...	1,175 6 0	1,428 1 6	252 15 6	...
Commission on Stamps purchased ...	1 11 9	1 14 3	0 2 6	...
Private Bag Rents ...	359 2 9	439 16 4	80 13 7	...
Fees on Money Orders issued ...	5,220 1 9	6,339 0 7	1,118 18 10	...
Commission on Money Order Accounts ...	474 9 3	738 4 5	263 15 2	...
Sale of Government Property ...	2 19 0	911 0 7	908 1 7	...
Forfeited Money Orders ...	514 17 4	314 15 5	...	200 1 11
Sums Refunded ...	...	129 13 9	129 13 9	...
Special Receipts, Postal ...	20 6 9	2 15 3	...	17 11 6
General Deposits, Postal ...	0 19 10	6 17 5	5 17 7	...
Sale of Telegraph Stamps ...	40,712 0 2	*8,298 0 11	...	32,413 19 3
Registration Fees, Telegraph ...	533 8 0	696 10 0	163 2 0	...
Telephone Subscriptions ...	2,455 11 2	3,451 8 8	995 17 6	...
Amounts received from Eastern Company ...	2,922 7 11	3,296 9 5	374 1 6	...
Amounts received for transmission of Military and Official Telegrams for which payment was made ...	31,294 0 1	10,151 5 6	...	21,142 14 7
Sale of Government Property, Telegraph ...	459 19 7	...	...	459 19 7
Sums Refunded, Telegraph ...	838 11 3	...	...	838 11 3
Special Receipts „ ...	...	0 17 0	0 17 0	...
General Deposits „ ...	136 1 11	0 17 0	...	135 4 11
Carried forward ...	£189,629 7 9	£233,986 18 7	£101,045 16 11	£56,688 6 1

date this item is included in "Sale of Postage Stamps.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF POSTAL

EXPENDITURE.	Financial Year 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902.	Financial Year 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brought forward ...	101,984 5 6	149,675 18 10	50,006 1 6	2,314 8 2
<i>Miscellaneous—continued.</i>				
Electric Bells, Government Offices ...	266 1 4	15 12 10	...	250 8 6
Compensation for Loss of Registered Articles ...	4 10 7	17 3 0	12 12 5	...
General Stores—Telegraph Material ...	1,356 17 5	2,441 0 1	1,084 2 8	...
	22,717 3 3	16,654 12 0	7,102 16 5	13,165 7 8
<i>Rent.</i>				
Rent, Post and Telegraph Offices ...	1,461 1 6	768 19 3	307 17 9	...
Actual Expenditure ...	126,162 10 3	168,099 10 1	57,416 15 8	15,479 15 10
Net Increase of Actual Expenditure :— £41,936 19s. 10d.				
<i>*Other Charges proper to be made against the Post Office Revenue :—</i>				
Interest on Loans for Telegraph Works ...	...	3,855 2 6	3,855 2 6	...
Interest on money spent in providing Post Office Buildings, less £92 paid by Postmasters as Rent for Official Residences (approximately) ...	...	1,413 0 0	1,413 0 0	...
Deterioration and use of Fittings sup- plied to Post Office ...	...	430 0 0	430 0 0	...
Cost of Repairs, &c., to Post Office Buildings ...	...	459 0 0	459 0 0	...
Lighting and Incidental Expenses ...	...	1,299 0 0	1,299 0 0	...
Value of Printing, Stationery, &c. (ap- proximate) ...	...	3,618 0 0	3,618 0 0	...
Post Office Pensions ...	...	1,033 11 3	1,033 11 3	...
Amount due to the Inland Revenue Department for Postage Stamps sold to the Public for Inland Re- venue purposes (estimated) ...	...	5,000 0 0	5,000 0 0	...
Other Charges, &c., Total ...	...	17,107 13 9	17,107 13 9	...
Total Expenditure ...	126,162 10 3	185,207 3 10	74,524 9 5	15,479 15 10
Balance in favour of the Department	131,496 6 2	93 12	...	...
	£257,658 16 5	£281,410 15 10	...	...

* The items under this heading have not hitherto
1st to 30th June only. Prior to this Postage

AND TELEGRAPH EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE.

REVENUE.	Financial Year 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902.	Financial Year 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brought forward	189,629 7 9	233,986 18 7	101,045 16 11	56,688 6 1
Reimbursements, Telegraph ...	3,891 18 11	4,791 13 4	899 14 5	...
Total—Actual Revenue	193,521 6 8	238,778 11 11	101,945 11 4	56,688 6 1
Net Increase of Actual Receipts :— £45,257 5s. 3d.				
Value of Government Work, Postal ...	17,365 16 0	18,981 8 2	1,615 12 2	...
„ „ „ Telegraph	9,543 11 0	11,499 4 3	1,955 13 3	...
Reduction of 50 per cent. on Transmitted Military Messages	31,294 0 1	7,433 18 8	...	23,860 1 5
Value of Newspaper Work for which Postage is not paid—Estimated ...	5,000 0 0	7,000 0 0	2,000 0 0	...
Official Telephone Connections, calcu- lated at Ordinary Rates ...	640 0 0	690 0 0	50 0 0	...
Electric Bells, Government Offices ...	282 2 8	15 12 10	..	266 9 10
Maintenance of Line between Durban and Observatory	12 0 0	12 0 0	...	...
	257,658 16 5	284,410 15 10	107,566 16 9	80,814 17 4
Net Increase, £26,751 19s. 5d.				
	£257,658 16 5	£284,410 15 10	...	...

been charged against this Department.
Stamps were not sold for Inland Revenue purposes.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF MONEY ORDERS ISSUED.

Payable in--	1902.		* 1903.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.
Natal ...	21,914	£ 84,555 6 7	21,654	£ 82,042 15 1	...	...	260	£ 2,512 11 6
United Kingdom ...	65 291	238,484 12 6	75,907	49,011 5 7	10,616	10,526 13 1	...	...
Cape Colony ...	6,169	21,249 0 9	5,879	19,911 11 9	...	...	290	1,337 9 0
Transvaal ...	3,519	14,009 18 6	5,101	20,993 2 8	1,582	6,983 4 2	...	...
Orange River Colony ...	531	1,688 16 2	868	3,883 19 4	337	2,195 3 2	...	...
Rhodesia ...	101	256 7 11	100	388 6 7	...	131 18 8	1	...
St. Helena ...	117	339 7 0	74	145 4 0	...	...	43	194 3 0
Mauritius ...	1,129	6,004 6 0	1,192	4,168 18 8	63	...	...	1,835 7 4
India ...	15,557	100,133 2 5	15,935	102,684 6 3	378	2,551 3 10	...	...
Australia ...	4,720	25,339 10 3	6,696	31,918 7 6	1,976	6,578 17 3	...	...
Ceylon ...	106	432 3 1	50	181 16 6	...	...	56	250 6 7
British Central Africa ...	3	1 0 0	7	11 2 5	4	10 2 5	...	...
Totals ...	119,157	492,493 11 2	133,463	515,340 16 4	14,956	28,977 2 7	650	6,129 17 5

NET INCREASE :—No. of Orders, 14,306 ; Value, £22,847 5s. 2d.

* Including Telegraph Money Orders.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF MONEY ORDERS PAID.

Issued in—	1902.		*1903.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Natal	21,979	85,085 16 10	21,550	81,983 5 0	...	...	429	3,102 11 10
United Kingdom	4,561	17,723 8 7	5,445	20,720 4 1	884	2,996 15 6	...	...
Cape Colony	11,338	31,051 7 7	6,941	25,509 6 6	...	...	4,397	5,542 1 1
Transvaal	17,404	60,939 1 11	20,971	84,413 3 9	3,567	23,474 1 10	...	...
Orange River Colony	2,808	7,501 10 9	4,528	12,329 6 10	1,720	4,827 16 1	...	...
Rhodesia	596	2,395 13 7	545	2,399 10 5	...	3 16 10	51	...
St. Helena	18	43 2 6	10	50 2 0	...	6 19 6	8	...
Mauritius	32	100 17 11	53	205 15 10	21	104 17 11	...	...
India	134	614 12 4	109	420 14 10	...	...	25	193 17 6
Australia	377	1,932 8 5	514	2,318 7 3	137	385 18 10	...	...
Ceylon	15	15 17 11	6	21 12 2	...	5 14 3	9	...
British Central Africa	48	101 17 10	37	65 14 11	...	...	11	36 2 11
Total	59,310	207,505 16 2	60,709	230,437 3 7	6,329	31,806 0 9	4,930	8,874 13 4

NET INCREASE :—No. of Orders, 1,399 ; Value, £22,931 7s. 5d.

* Including Telegraph Money Orders.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF POSTAL ORDERS ISSUED BY THE ADJOINING ADMINISTRATIONS AND PAID IN NATAL.

Issued in—	Denomination.																	Totals.		
	1/-	1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6	4/-	4/6	5/-	7/6	10/-	10/6	12/6	15/-	17/6	20/-	No.	Amount.		
Cape Colony ...	315	225	...	385	...	...	...	...	367	7	316	...	2	34	5	479	2,135	£	s.	d.
Transvaal ...	356	156	328	401	306	162	298	142	743	174	993	113	...	271	...	2,208	6,651	3,496	6	0
Orange River Colony...	34	26	53	138	31	16	13	9	19	3	46	...	...	2	...	57	447	125	13	0
Rhodesia ...	4	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	3	1	2	...	2	...	...	5	21	8	19	6
B.C.A. ...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	7	3	5	0
Totals, 1903 ...	711	411	381	926	337	178	311	151	1,132	185	1,357	113	4	307	5	2,752	9,261	4,477	8	6
„ 1902 ..	307	229	...	494	...	...	...	...	844	8	533	...	36	81	21	706	*35,812	23,282	2	9
Increase 1902 ...	04	182	381	432	337	178	311	151	268	177	824	113	...	226	...	2,046	6,002	3,095	0	6
Decrease 1902 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	32	...	16	...	*32,553	*21,899	14	9

NET DECREASE:—No., 26,551; Amount, £18,804 14s. 3d.

*Including British Postal Orders issued by the Army Post Office.

Decrease is accounted for by the non-issuing of British Postal Orders after 1902.

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF POSTAL ORDERS ISSUED IN NATAL AND PRESENTED FOR PAYMENT
IN THE RESPECTIVE COLONIES DURING THE YEAR.**

Where Paid.	Denomination.																Totals.	
	1/-	1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6	4/-	4/6	5/-	7/6	10/-	10/6	12/6	15/-	17/6	20/-	No.	Amount.
Natal	5,152	3,276	1,141	6,326	1,011	471	919	531	9,427	2,432	10,655	423	741	2,672	502	19,203	64,882	£ 32,873 4 0
Cape Colony ...	525	252	132	265	128	42	72	26	411	194	369	23	33	102	22	768	3,294	1,368 9 6
Orange River Colony	29	12	5	82	12	4	8	5	41	12	48	1	8	9	2	113	391	184 2 0
Rhodesia ... ..	...	...	...	3	...	2	...	...	3	...	1	...	1	...	...	2	12	4 12 0
Transvaal	234	144	51	388	44	31	39	26	362	66	315	15	20	94	11	648	2,488	1,123 0 6
Totals, 1903 ...	5,940	3,684	1,329	7,064	1,195	550	1,038	588	10,244	2,634	11,388	462	803	2,877	537	20,734	71,067	35,553 8 0
Totals, 1902 ...	6,684	4,368	...	6,215	...	...	...	...	9,912	2,550	10,588	...	1,127	2,454	886	18,891	63,675	32,378 1 0
Increase ... ..	...	...	1,329	849	1,195	550	1,038	588	332	84	800	462	...	423	...	1,843	9,493	3,771 14 6
Decrease	744	684	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	324	...	349	..	2,101	596 7 6

NET INCREASE :—No., 7,392 ; Amount, £3,175 7s. 0d.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF POSTAL DRAFTS ISSUED AND COLLECTED IN THE COLONY.

	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
Number of drafts issued in Natal	41	53	12	...
„ „ „ Cape for collection in Natal	45	54	9	...
„ „ „ Natal, honoured	10	10	...	...
„ „ „ Cape for collection in Natal, honoured	10	13	3	...
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Amount of drafts issued in Natal	177 7 9	153 11 4	...	23 16 5
„ „ „ „ Cape for collection in Natal	116 19 5	139 14 8	22 15 3	...
„ „ Natal drafts honoured	46 14 11	11 4 11	...	35 10 0
„ „ drafts issued in Cape Colony on Natal, honoured	31 12 7	47 16 1	16 3 6	...

STATEMENT OF THE POST OFFICES AND AGENCIES OPEN ON DECEMBER 31st,
1903, AS COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER OPEN ON DECEMBER 31st, 1902.

Class of Office.	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
Post Offices	256	277	21	...
Post Office Agencies	61	62	1	...
	317	339	22	...

STATEMENT OF POST OFFICES AND AGENCIES OPENED DURING 1903.

Name of Office.	Service Established.	Name of Office.	Service Established.
✓ Blood River	Six days a week.	✓ Marine Colliery	Now closed.
✓ Bo-hoff Road	Six " "	✓ Mayor's Walk	Six days a week.
✓ Buffalo River	Six " "	✓ Mount Elias	Six " "
✓ Cedara	Six " "	✓ Mount Moreland	Six " "
✓ Uora Linn	Three " "	✓ Ndumo	Two " "
✓ Denny Dalton	Three " "	✓ Nellie Valley	Three " "
✓ Empangeni	Six " "	✓ Penvaan	Two " "
✓ Glastoubury	Three " "	✓ Prestbury	Six " "
✓ Gommamaan	One day " "	✓ Singletree	Six " "
✓ Groenvlei	Two days " "	✓ Spion Kop	Three " "
✓ Hella Hella	Three " "	✓ Tweedie	Six " "
✓ Hillarys	Six " "	✓ Umfolozi Rail	Six " "
✓ Holmesdale	Three " "	✓ Umvunyana	Three " "
✓ Horton Radford	Three " "	✓ Viljoen's Post	Two " "
✓ Inhlazatje	Two " "	✓ Welkom	One day " "
✓ Isilungu	Two " "	✓ West End, Durban	Town Sub-Office.
✓ Kwambonambi	Six " "	✓ Zwaartfolosi	Two days a week.

The following Offices and Agencies were closed :—

✓ Brynbella	✓ Heatherdon	✓ O'Banjeni
✓ Equeefa	✓ Heronvale	✓ Rockmount
✓ Fayles	✓ Lower Umfolosi	✓ Umbulwana
✓ Fountain Hall	✓ Marine Colliery	✓ Wondelboom

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR DELIVERY
WITHIN THE COLONY; OF CORRESPONDENCE POSTED WITHIN THE
COLONY; AND OF NUMBER OF ARTICLES REGISTERED AT OFFICES
WITHIN THE COLONY.**

Correspondence Received.	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
Letters, Ordinary	17,270,656	19,335,628	2,064,972	...
Letters, Official	1,310,816	1,594,736	283,920	...
Postcards	374,764	763,880	389,116	...
Parcels	213,512	220,740	7,228	...
Books and Sample Packets	4,783,844	3,316,300	..	1,467,544
Papers	4,040,556	5,035,472	994,916	...
Total... ..	27,994,148	30,266,756	3,740,152	1,467,544
Net Increase, 2,272,608				
Correspondence Posted	27,632,284	27,227,668	...	404,616
Articles Registered... ..	271,390	247,467	...	23,923

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF ARTICLES DEALT WITH IN THE
RETURNED LETTER BRANCH.**

Correspondence.	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
Returned to senders within the Colony	104,089	91,620	...	12,469
Returned to other Countries	80,774	88,329	7,555	...
Destroyed	48,897	97,559	48,662	...
Total... ..	233,760	277,508	56,217	12,469
Net Increase, 43,748				

COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF THE NUMBER OF BAGS AND CASES OF PARCELS DEALT WITH.

	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
Exchanged between Offices in the Colony	401,356	419,328	17,972	...
Despatched to adjoining Territories	27,587	38,825	11,238	...
Received from adjoining Territories	26,109	40,942	14,833	...
Bags despatched to the United Kingdom	3,728	4,234	506	...
Bags received from the United Kingdom	9,997	10,914	917	...
Bags despatched to Foreign Countries*	3,576	1,920	...	1,656
Bags received from Foreign Countries	4,984	5,490	506	...
Bags received in Transit	6,182	11,562	5,380	...
Boxes of Parcels despatched to the United Kingdom	488	419	...	69
Boxes of Parcels received from the United Kingdom	4,940	5,436	496	...
Totals	488,947	539,070	51,848	1,725

NET INCREASE :—50,123.

* During 1902 a great part of the correspondence from South Africa for the East Coast and India was dealt with at Durban ; transports were frequent, and consequently more bags were made up.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FOREIGN AND OVERBERG PARCELS TRAFFIC.

	1902.	1903.	Increase.	Decrease.
* Number of Parcels despatched to the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries	19,163	16,061	...	3,102
* Number of Parcels received from the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries	67,722	68,625	903	...
Total	86,885	84,686	900	3,102
Net Decrease	2,199			
Value of Articles Exported to the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries... ..	£ s. d. 15,380 18 2	£ s. d. 12,274 13 3	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 3,106 4 11
Value of Articles Imported from the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries	158,171 15 6	143,453 8 1	...	14,718 7 5
Amount of Customs Dues collected on Parcels and Letters from the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries	11,869 14 7	11,144 18 8	...	724 15 11
† Amount of Customs Dues collected on Parcels and Letters from Countries Overberg	1,214 2 6	1,021 9 3	...	192 13 3

NOTES.—* During 1902 large numbers of Parcels to and from the Military were dealt with. These have now practically ceased.

† No Customs Collections were made on Overberg Parcels during the latter portion of the year 1903.

TELEGRAPHS]

RETURN OF CABLE TRAFFIC FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1903.

MONTH.	Number of Messages received from Eastern Company for transmission to South African Stations.	Number of Messages collected in South Africa and handed to Eastern Company for transmission abroad.	Total.	Payments to Eastern and Western Telegraph Companies.	Amount received on behalf of B.S.A. Company	Amount received from Eastern Company on account of Prepaid Reply Messages.	Payments made by Eastern Telegraph Company for Messages handed to Department for re-transmission.	Value of Government Messages received from Eastern Telegraph Company for re-transmission.	Total amount received by Department on Messages received from Eastern Company for re-transmission.
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
January ...	2,356	2,179	4,535	*72 6 0 2,535 2 5	41 14 0½	21 13 3	112 10 10	17 8 5	193 6 6½
February ...	2,717	805	3,522	*492 14 5 736 5 10½	33 7 2	15 0 4	130 1 4½	9 15 1	188 3 11½
March ...	2,392	1,109	3,501	*363 15 0 1,165 8 8	42 19 5½	19 14 8	102 1 8	10 14 5	175 10 2½
April ...	2,197	1,175	3,372	*202 10 0 1,200 5 10½	29 5 5	14 2 6½	95 1 10½	9 18 2	148 8 0
May ...	2,239	1,042	3,281	*211 1 5 1,046 0 6½	34 9 10½	18 7 1½	99 10 3½	8 9 5	158 16 8½
June ...	1,322	1,346	3,168	*46 17 10 1,428 19 6½	31 19 9	14 19 9	75 10 10½	6 11 8	129 2 0½
July ...	2,063	1,398	3,461	*137 1 9 1,106 1 4	31 18 3½	15 10 6½	87 18 11½	7 14 1	143 1 10½
August ...	1,297	1,173	2,470	*0 14 6 1,491 5 10	30 17 2½	9 5 4	48 18 5	5 12 6	94 13 5½
September ...	1,249	1,047	2,296	*82 13 2 1,311 0 7½	29 7 9½	8 19 2	44 18 7	6 10 6	89 16 0½
October ...	1,351	1,205	2,556	*59 3 0 1,632 2 1½	27 4 6	13 15 5	52 0 9	4 12 9	97 13 5
November ...	1,287	1,532	2,819	*2 18 5 2,111 7 1	32 14 9	14 16 2	47 16 6	3 18 1	99 5 6
December ...	1,054	1,012	2,066	*165 7 6 1,261 6 7	31 11 5	10 8 7	38 6 11	5 6 2	85 13 1
Total ...	22,024	15,023	37,047	18,862 3 10	337 9 8	174 12 10½	934 17 0½	96 11 3	1,603 10 10

* Western.

RETURN OF REVENUE AND TRAFFIC. YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1903.

Stations.	No. of Messages forwarded.	No. of Messages received.	Number of Messages Transmitted.	Total	Value of Government Work.	Revenue.	Total Earnings including Government Work.	Remarks.
1. Acton Homes ...	181	211	...	422				
2. Albert Falls ...	669	633	...	1,302				
3. Albertina ...	354	256	...	610				
4. Alcock Spruit ...	148	120	...	268				Opened in May.
5. Alexandra Junction ...	455	324	...	779				
6. Amantzimote ...	1,172	963	...	2,141				
7. -voca ...	638	817	...	1,455				
8. Balgovan ...	984	851	...	1,835				
9. Batstones ...	2,215	2,358	...	4,573				
10. Beaconshill ...	1	...	...	1				
11. Beaumont ...	368	285	...	653				
12. Belfort ...	47	44	...	91				
13. Bellair ...	2,187	2,084	...	4,271				
14. Berea Road ...	362	...	...	362				
15. Bergville ...	806	757	...	1,563				Formerly known as Upper Tugela.
16. Besters ...	279	278	...	557				Temporary Office opened for 7 days in May.
17. Bislei Camp ...	36	14	...	50				Opened in November.
18. Blood River ...	67	39	...	106				
19. Boscobelle ...	216	178	...	394				
20. Boshoff's Road ...	114	63	...	177				Opened in March.
21. Boston Police Camp ...	180	199	...	379				
22. Botha's Hill ...	156	175	...	331				
23. Brakwal ...	197	77	...	274				
24. Byrnabella ...	56	39	...	95				Closed in May.
25. Buffalo River ...	169	137	...	306				Opened in January.
26. Bulwer ...	2,428	1,917	9,110	6,794				
27. Camperdown ...	...	...	...	2,535				
28. Cato Hill ...	...	...	...	943				
29. Cedar ...	...	...	...	265				
30. Chaka's Kraal ...	5,735	4,724	1	10,459				Opened under the name of 'Chaka's Kraal' in February and changed to its present name in October.
31. Charlton ...	240	172	...	412				
32. Chieveley ...	359	455	3	817				
33. Clairmont ...	1,554	998	...	2,552				
34. ...	281	400	...	680				
35. ...	1,882	1,561	755	4,198				
36. ...	2,178	1,946	...	4,124				
37. ...	570	575	...	1,145				
38. ...	683	645	395	1,724				
39. ...	261	294	...	555				
40. ...	68	49	...	117				
41. ...	171	146	...	317				
42. ...	230	208	...	438				
43. Duff's Road ...	16,547	15,713	31,654	63,914				
44. Dundee ...	280,607	304,967	171,883	757,457				
45. Durban ...	3,482	94	17	3,593				
46. Durban Rail ...	502	108	...	700				
47. Durban Grand Stand ...	1,135	953	...	2,088				
48. Elandslaagte ...	773	748	...	1,521				Opened in February.
49. Empangeni ...	618	515	1	1,134				
50. Eumersdale ...	280	241	...	521				
51. Engabeni ...	8,046	7,285	24	15,355				
52. Eshwe ...	570	502	...	1,072				
53. Esperanza ...	7,521	7,341	5,920	20,782				
54. Estcourt ...	55	66	2	123				
55. Estcourt Rail ...	228	234	...	472				
56. Fawn Leas ...	14	17	...	31				Closed in April.
57. Fountain Hall ...	159	208	...	367				
58. Fox Hill ...	698	563	2	1,263				
59. Frere ...	260	309	...	569				
60. Gillets ...	1,831	1,962	...	3,793				
61. Ginginhlova ...	2,184	918	11	3,113				
62. Glencoe Junction ...	207	173	...	380				
63. Glen Isla ...	235	277	...	512				
64. Gourton ...	2,308	8,686	3,327	21,321				
65. Greytown ...	930	4,172	31	5,134				
66. Greyville ...	3,818	2,739	4,046	10,603				
67. Harding ...	127	113	...	240				
68. Harrison ...	3,714	2,219	...	5,933				
69. Hating Spruit ...	766	847	...	1,613				
70. Hel...aksar ...	176	129	3	318				
71. Hermsburg ...	426	198	...	624				Opened as a temporary Office during Volunteer Encampment in April.
72. Hermansberg Road ...	52	31	...	86				Opened in July.
73. Highbury ...	344	289	...	728				
74. Highflats ...	75	23	...	155				
75. Highgate Police Station ...	759	850	...	1,609				
76. Highlands ...	1,892	1,826	1	3,719				
77. Hillcrest ...	1,497	1,609	...	3,106				
78. Hilton Road ...	73	67	...	140				Opened in October.
79. Ilabisa ...	4,324	4,285	6,074	14,683				
80. Isipingo ...	1,061	921	...	1,982				
81. Isipingo Rail ...	174	140	...	314				
82. Isipingo ...	841	861	409	2,111				
83. Ilovo River ...	731	620	...	1,351				
84. Inpendhle ...	3,305	2,300	101	5,796				
85. Inchanga ...	491	517	...	1,008				
86. Ingagane ...	791	656	...	1,447				
87. Ingogo Rail ...	678	523	...	1,201				
88. Ingwavuma ...	230	125	...	355				
89. Inyoni Rail ...	980	982	...	1,962				
90. Isipingo ...	3,791	3,016	1,116	7,923				
91. Ixopo ...	20	371	...	670				
92. Jacobs ...	612	772	...	1,384				
93. Kearsney ...	221	174	...	395				
94. Keat's Drift ...	307	333	...	640				
95. Krantzklouf ...	1,382	1,099	...	2,484				
96. Krantzklouf ...	243	168	...	411				Opened in May.
97. Kwambonambi ...	18,128	20,006	21,166	59,370				
98. Ladysmith ...	3,084	73	44	3,201				
99. Ladysmith Rail ...	381	423	...	804				
100. Lidgotton ...	80	94	...	174				
101. Loskop ...	470	391	...	861				
102. Lower Illovo ...	1,966	1,468	4,388	7,822				
103. Lower Tugela ...	...	...	591	7,593				

[Lait spruit]

Opened under the name of 'Lait Spruit' in February and changed to its present name in October.

Opened in February.

Closed in April.

Opened as a temporary Office during Volunteer Encampment in April. Opened in July.

Opened in October.

Opened in May.

Value of Military Messages. Unpaid.

£2,173 15 0 £49,989 16 6 £62,915 8 11

Total Earnings including Government Work.

100. Mungeton	381	423	...	804	Military				
101. Loskop	80	94	...	174	Messages,				
102. Lower Illovo	470	391	...	861	Unpaid,				
103. Lower Tugela	1,966	1,468	4,388	7,322	*£2,173 15 0	£49,989 16 6	£62,915 8 11	* This amount includes	
104. Lower Umkomas	3,763	3,239	591	7,593				£1,500 of messages	
105. Mafababini	955	723	...	1,678	Government			transmitted free at full	
106. Malvern	1,367	1,716	...	3,083	Official			rates, the balance at	
107. Manderston	281	335	...	616	Messages,			half rates,	
108. Mapummo	692	605	...	1,297	£10,751 17 5				
109. Marburg	252	399	...	651					
110. Marine Colliery	234	77	...	311					
111. Melmoth	2,525	2,039	7,866	12,430				Opened in March. Closed	
112. Merebank	662	735	...	1,397				in August.	
113. Mid-Illovo	196	167	...	363					
114. Mid-Illovo Central	445	445	...	900					
115. Mimosa	...	...	...	...	
116. Modder Spruit	207	218	...	455					
117. Moguntha	508	470	...	978					
118. Mooi River	10,629	9,791	8,912	29,322					
119. Mount Edgecombe	1,321	1,195	...	2,514					
120. Mount Prospect	35	123	...	218				Opened in July.	
121. Mount Prospect	168	39	...	267					
122. Musgrave Road	5,194	15,960	...	24,154					
123. Naledwe	362	302	...	664					
124. Newcastle	16,972	17,927	29,665	64,564					
125. Newcastle Rail	931	24	1	956					
126. New Germany	238	407	...	645					
127. New Guelderland	322	480	...	802					
128. New Hanover	1,318	1,437	...	2,755					
129. New Scotland	277	929	...	1,206					
130. Nkundhla	1,915	1,527	...	3,442					
131. Nondwini	655	622	...	1,277					
132. Nongoma	1,213	1,079	828	3,120					
133. Noodsberg	230	251	...	471					
134. Noodsberg Road	347	394	...	741					
135. Normanhurst	433	295	...	728					
136. Northdene	312	393	...	705					
137. North Shepstone	1,510	1,165	...	2,675					
138. Nottingham Road	2,778	2,502	...	5,280					
139. Nqutu	807	817	...	1,624					
140. Nqutu Road	3,024	2,865	59	5,948					
141. O.R.C. Junction	4	1	...	5				Temporary Office opened	
142. Ottawa	183	301	...	484					
143. Otto's Bluff	133	179	...	...			
144. Park Kyme	451	386	...	837				Opened in December.	
145. Panpietersburg	114	100	...	214					
146. Phoenix	269	271	...	540					
147. Pietermaritzburg	121,585	170,905	175,053	467,543					
148. Pietermaritzburg Rail	5,723	68	3	5,794					
149. Pieters	42	42	...	84					
150. Pinetown	2,173	2,050	8,653	13,476					
151. Pinetown Bridge	476	513	1	990					
152. Point	26,996	27,017	...	54,013					
153. Port Shepstone	5,029	4,360	7,109	16,498					
154. Reichenau	35	17	...	52				Opened in June.	
155. Reit Vlei	325	343	...	668				Opened in February.	
156. Reinton	202	300	...	502					
157. Richmond	6,016	6,984	4,768	17,768					
158. Richmond Rail	1,635	4	...	1,639					
159. Rosebank	120	148	...	268					
160. Stanger	963	1,079	...	2,042				Opened in February.	
161. Stanger	113	104	...	217					
162. Stanger	113	104	...	217					
163. Seven Oaks	1,135	835	...	1,970					
164. Smith's Crossing	180	126	...	306				Temporary Office opened	
165. Somkele	572	492	131	1,195				in August during	
166. South Coast Junction	1,052	1,271	...	2,323				Military Manoeuvres.	
167. Springfield	715	...	...	1,451				Opened in September as	
168. Stamford Hill	818	1,586	...	2,404				Hiabias Rail and	
169. Stanger	3,945	2,658	14,320	21,923				altered to present name	
170. Stanger Rail	241	9	...	250				in December.	
171. Talaan	959	634	...	1,593					
172. Thoraville Junction	1,178	1,016	1	2,195					
173. Tongaat	2,378	2,472	1	4,851					
174. Tugela Ferry	275	246	...	521				Opened in June.	
175. Tweedie	187	167	...	354					
176. Ubombo	416	352	...	768					
177. Umbilo	279	497	...	776					
178. Umbulwana	8	8	...	16				Closed in November.	
179. Umfolozi	362	238	6	606				Opened in July.	
180. Umfolozi	986	1,561	...	2,547					
181. Umhlali	394	547	2	941					
182. Umhlangeni	179	187	...	366					
183. Umhlalazi	165	109	...	274					
184. Umhlalazi	275	348	...	623					
185. Umsingisi	1,025	858	8	1,881					
186. Umsingisi	193	236	...	429					
187. Umsingisi	1,218	837	...	2,055					
188. Umsingisi	840	667	...	1,507					
189. Umzimvubu	451	497	...	948					
190. Umzimvubu Rail	3,953	4,277	4,230	12,466					
191. Umzimvubu	563	52	...	615					
192. Umzimvubu Rail	256	247	...	503					
193. Underberg	203	258	...	461					
194. Union Bridge	318	373	1	692				Opened in June as Hime-	
195. Utrecht	5,241	4,293	2	9,536				ville, and altered to	
196. Van Reenen's	1,225	756	...	1,981				present name in July.	
197. Vant's Drift	597	558	...	1,155					
198. Verulam	5,291	5,405	4,367	15,064					
199. Victoria Road	156	20	...	176					
200. Vrijheid	16,617	14,270	149	31,036					
201. Waschbank	1,879	1,541	...	3,420					
202. Weenen	1,690	1,476	...	3,166					
203. Wessels Nek	1,373	1,285	...	2,658					
204. West's	356	320	...	676					
205. Willow Grange	350	279	...	629					
206. Woodcote	140	129	...	269					
207. York	127	215	...	342					
208. Zwartkopp	547	772	...	1,319					
Totals	723,648	781,120	*1,041,964	†2,550,932					

* As each Message involves two transmissions the total has been doubled.

† Includes 529,982 re-transmitted Messages.