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19th October, 1896.
THE GOVERNOR directs the publication, for general information, of the following Report on the Post Office and Telegraph department for the year ended 31st March, 1896.

By Command,

FRED. EVANS, Colonial Secretary.

General Post Office, Jamaica, 5th October, 1896.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Post Office Department, being that for the financial year ended 31st March 1896.

REVENUE.

2. The total receipts on account of "Postages" and "Telegraphs" amount to £29,726 6s. 3½d. as under:—

	£	s.	d.
Postages	23,569	16	9½
Telegraphs	6,156	9	6
	£29,726	6	3½

3. These figures show that the estimates of the year under review have been exceeded, by the sum of £3,269 16s. 9½d. under the head of "Postages," and by the sum of £156 9s. 6d. under the head of "Telegraphs."

4. If a similar comparison be made with the collections during the preceding year 1894-95, it will be seen that those of the year under review, are in excess, by the sum of £1,515 19s. 4d. under "Postages," and by the sum £247 13s. under "Telegraphs," the total increase under both heads being £1,763 12s. 2d.

5. I subjoin an abstract of the collections under each head as compared with the collections of the year ended 31st March, 1894, and 1895, respectively.

PERIOD.	Postages.	Commission		Telegraph.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
		on Money Orders.	on Postal Orders.			
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-94	19,429 3 1	354 6 6	431 14 4½	6,253 6 0	219 1 0	26,687 10 11½
1894-95	20,974 2 9	400 10 5	450 7 6½	5,908 16 6	228 16 9	27,962 18 11½
1895-96	22,488 17 7	388 6 7	519 12 1½	6,156 9 6	173 0 6	29,726 6 2½

6. The following is the usual approximate analysis of the collections on account of "Postages," as compared with similar collections for the year preceding.

Year.	Packet Postages.			Inland Postages.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1894-95	4,630	18	9½	16,343	3	11½	20,974	2	9
1895-96	4,946	15	11½	17,542	1	7½	22,488	17	7

7. The above analysis tends to show that the increase has not been limited to "Inland Postages" but that it has occurred also under the head of "Sea Postages."

8. In the 8th paragraph of my last annual report, I pointed out, with a great deal of satisfaction, that the collections of the year 1894-95, exhibited, for the first time, an increase of 7.23 per cent. over those of the year preceding that in which the Inland and Foreign Postal rates had been reduced. It is, therefore, with a continuance of such satisfaction that I find myself in a position to announce, as shewn above, a further increase in the Receipts of the Post Office.

9. The increase which has taken place during this and the past year, has, without any doubt, been due to the reductions in the Inland and Foreign Postages referred to above and in my previous Annual Reports; but it has also, I am of the opinion, been due to the opening of new Post Offices during the year under review, and during the preceding year; as well as to the increased postal facilities which have become possible from the extension of the Railway to Montego Bay. Many places on the line being, in consequence, placed in Daily Mail communication with Kingston and intermediate Offices.

10. Another very, to me, pleasing feature in connection with the financial transactions of this department for the year under report is that, while in my report for the last year, at the 48th paragraph, under the head of expenditure, I was able to say that the receipts had almost quadrated with the expenditure for the year, after deducting the amount payable to the United Kingdom for the Mail Service between the United Kingdom and this Colony and the British and Foreign West Indies, I am now in the still more gratifying position of being able to record that there has been a net excess amounting to £656 12s. 9d. of Revenue over Expenditure, after adopting the same method of deducting the subsidy in connection with the Royal Mail contract, which subsidy, I would here remark, has been reduced from £5,780 to £5,300, as a result of the reduced payment, under the new contract between the Imperial Government and the Royal Mail Steam Packet, which took effect on the 1st July, 1895. Under the former contract the total subsidy was £85,000 it is now £80,000.

11. The responsiveness of the Postal Revenue of this Colony to reduced rates of postage and increased Postal facilities, shews that, in this respect, Jamaica is not very far behind in the march of progress with the rest of the civilized World whose Post Offices bear record to a similar experience, while it also bears evidence to the fact that the public are ready to avail themselves of advantages and increased facilities given by the Post Office.

12. On my part I fully recognise that the Post Office is a great factor for good in Districts and Communities, and I am fully alive to its educating and civilising results; and it will be, as it always has been, my earnest desire to recommend the inauguration of any postal improvement, which may benefit correspondents in Districts where Post Offices already exist, or, to bring into the Postal circuit places in the interior not having Post Offices or Telegraph Stations.

13. From the collections on account of Sea Postages the Imperial Post Office has been credited, in addition to the proportion of the Subsidy above referred to, in the Account between this Office and the General Post Office London, with the sum of £1,315 3s. 4d. on account of Sea transit rates on correspondence conveyed to and from the Colony, by vessels subsidized by the Imperial Government, as well as for territorial and sea transit on mail matter sent via the United Kingdom. A similar payment of £131 7s. 10d. was made to the Post Office of the United States of America.

14. Referring to the foregoing Abstract of Revenue it will be seen that the receipts from Commissions on Money Orders are less by the sum of £12 3s. 10d. than those of the preceding year while Postal Order Commissions exceed by the sum of £69 4s. 7d.

15. The collections under the head of miscellaneous are accounted for thus:—

Rent of Private Letter Boxes ...	...	73	19	0
Rent of Private Letter Bags ...	...	29	7	0
Fines ...	...	12	0	0
Mail Coach Commissions ...	...	57	14	6
		£173 0 6		

16. The total amount of Postage Stamps, Post Cards and Newspaper Wrappers which were sold during the year under review is £22,137 2s. 10d. of which the Stamp Commissioner sold £5,796 1s. 7d. to authorised Vendors at 5 per cent discount, such discount amounting to £291 7s. 8d.

17. The sum of £157 10s. 3d. was claimed and paid as Poundage, at the rate of 1 per cent. on stamps sold at the several District Post Offices and at the G. P. O. Kingston.

18. In addition to the amount of Postage Stamps sold by the Stamp Commissioner on behalf of the

Post Office Department, that Officer sold and retained the sum of £1,170 being the agreed on annual payment to cover the revenue represented by adhesive Postage Stamps used in payment of Stamp Duties under Law 18 of 1887.

19. The amount of Stamps purchased from the Public subject to a discount of 15s. 10½d. is £30 6s. 8d.

CIRCULATION OF CORRESPONDENCE.

20. The following is the usual comparative statement of the estimated number of letters and Post Cards which have been transmitted through the General Post Office Kingston as well as through the District Post Offices during the year under report:—

	Outwards.			Inwards.		
	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
<i>Inland Mails—</i>						
Ordinary Letters—						
Public ...	662,500	695,800	722,400	799,600	980,600	1,057,700
Official ...	38,000	85,600	87,900	65,800	93,600	98,400
Post Cards ...	12,200	41,000	42,800	18,400	65,200	69,250
Registered Letters—						
Public ...	12,155	6,868	8,850	39,922	41,791	50,604
Official ...	17,985	18,735	22,842	10,497	14,350	15,997
<i>Ocean Mails.—By Vessels under Contract—</i>						
United Kingdom—						
Ordinary Letters ...	166,000	173,721	187,238	210,900	217,241	224,768
Post Cards ...	2,000	2,310	3,083	1,400	1,400	1,400
Inter-Colonial, B.W.I., &c.—						
Ordinary Letters ...	58,100	38,500	43,100	42,500	51,200	73,650
Post Cards ...	253	393	259	182	715	989
<i>By Vessels not Contract—</i>						
United States of America—						
Ordinary Letters ...	73,900	79,256	95,729	75,300	95,419	97,417
Post Cards ...	1,837	894	908	1,178	1,915	2,024
Other Countries—						
Ordinary Letters ...	39,700	43,800	56,613	10,000	12,280	16,268
Post Cards ...	774	957	1,247	68	48	169
Registered Letters, Packet ...	9,369	10,954	13,309	7,952	9,348	9,949
	1,094,773	1,198,688	1,286,278	1,284,299	1,585,107	1,720,585

At District Post Offices.

	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96
Ordinary Letters ...	877,552	902,564	1,059,539
Post Cards ...	20,475	21,164	34,736
Registered Letters ...	14,930	18,297	20,506
	912,957	942,025	1,114,781

21. The above statement discloses that not only at the Head Office Kingston, but at the several District Post Offices, there has been an increase in the total circulation, as well as under each class of Mail matter Inland and Foreign. My remarks relative to the increase in the Revenue from "Postages," which is a corollary of the numerical increase, apply equally in this case. I, therefore, do not feel called upon to remark any further as to the cause of the increase: but I cannot refrain here from recording my

great satisfaction to find that there has been an increase in the number of registered articles sent through the post, which, I submit, must be accepted as a continuance of the appreciation by the public of the reduction of the registration fee. I earnestly hope that this increase will continue. I again take this opportunity to ask the public to be so good as to avail themselves of the system of registration, and would also again point out, that while it practically safeguards their property, in the course of its transmission through the post, it will certainly have the effect of lessening the number of cases in which enquiry has to be made by this Department, with the result occasionally of finding that the Department is not responsible for the miscarriage: it must not be lost sight of that the Post Office has very often to bear the sins of others. There are also many cases in which the Post Office is never advised of the recovery of a missing packet. A pleasing contrast to this habit occurred recently when a gentleman informed me, that a missing letter containing value to a friend in Kingston, which he had alleged had been posted, was found lying on the desk in his study. I must also remark that registration not only guards against dishonesty, but protects the article against the numerous chances of miscarriage otherwise; for, as an old Post Office employé, I can tell the public that there are many such chances of miscarriage, in saying which I desire to be free from the charge of my being supposed to consider the Post Office infallible, on the contrary, like all the Post Offices in the world, we are liable to mistakes; but I can honestly say, that every effort has been, and is being made, by myself and assistants to minimise the number of mistakes and miscarriages. Did time and space permit, I could recount many interesting cases of miscarriages and recovery of correspondence.

OCEAN MAILS.

22. I subjoin a comparative statement of the number of Vessels which conveyed Mails between Jamaica and other places.

	Outwards.						Inwards.					
	1893-94.		1894-95.		1895-96.		1893-94.		1894-95.		1895-96.	
	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.	Vessels.	Mails.
<i>Kingston—</i>												
Contract ...	69	814	63	783	58	747	88	994	53	728	52	735
Non-Contract	231	434	244	526	277	402	300	489	301	588	427	608
<i>Outports—</i>												
Non-Contract	59	81	64	112	69	127	37	44	30	52	39	61

23. The number of mails which were exchanged by other places abroad via Jamaica is 110.

24. The direct mail service between the Mother Country, as well as between the British and Foreign West Indies, has been maintained by means of the Steamers of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company which, as they have done for years past, continue to arrive and to be despatched with almost unerring punctuality on the date and at the time fixed by the Itinerary. As already pointed out at the 10th paragraph of this report, this company has again secured the Mail Contract for another period of five years, from 1st July, 1895.

25. Opportunity has also been taken of the many opportunities presented by the other lines of Steamers plying between this Colony and ports in the United States of America, to Exchange Mails with the United States of America, as well as with the Imperial Post Office via New York, &c. The most regular and efficient of such services have been those rendered by the Steamers of the Atlas S. S. Company, the Boston Fruit Company and of Messrs. J. E. Kerr, & Co. The Steamers of the Atlas Company have also afforded opportunity for the exchange of Mails between the Republic of Colombia and Central America.

26. During the Winter months the Plant Line of Steamers ran between Montego Bay and Tampa, Florida, and conveyed Mails to and from the United States of America and Jamaica, the duration of service, *i.e.*, from date of despatch to date of delivery of the Mails, occupying as a rule not more than 4 days, 22 hours.

27. Messrs. "Pickford and Black" continued to run their Steamers between Halifax and New York via Bermuda and Turks Islands, and thereby to afford monthly opportunity for the exchange of Mails with those places.

28. The "Pickford and Black" Service between Halifax and Cuba via Jamaica has ceased, however, during the year under review.

29. It will be seen from the above, that the Public of this Colony are fortunate in having so very many and regular opportunities, for communicating with the other parts of the world.

INLAND MAIL CONVEYANCE.

30. There has not I am glad to say been any interruption from floods, or any other cause, of the Inland Mail Service. Indeed since the extension of the Railway and the erection of Bridges over the rivers which formerly obstructed the passage of Mail Carts and Mail Couriers, the non arrival of a Mail on the day that it is due seldom or ever occurs.

31. The following new Mail Services came into operation during the year in connection with the establishment of new District Post Offices.

On the 6th September, 1895, between Walderston and Spaldings in the Parish of Clarendon.

On the 5th February, 1896, between Bull Bay and Llandewey in the Parish of St. Thomas.

On the 7th February, 1896, between Belvedere and Halfway-Tree in the Parish of St. Andrew.

On the 11th March, 1896, between Bethel Town and Lambs River in the Parish of Westmoreland.

32. On the 16th September, 1895, the District Post Office at Siloah, in the Parish of St. Elizabeth, was brought into the Daily Mail Service by Train, between Kingston and Montego Bay and intermediate Stations.

33. The Mail Coach Service between Williamsfield and Sav.-la-Mar was discontinued on the 23rd November, 1895, the Mail Contractor, Mr. G. A. Douet, having brought under my notice, that the service, in consequence of the extension of the Railway to Montego Bay had ceased to be remunerative in the matter of Passengers and Parcels. In lieu of this Service the Government authorised the establishment of Mail Coach Services between the following Railway Stations and Post Offices.

1. Williamsfield and Mandeville.

2. Balaclava and Santa Cruz.

3. Black River and Ipswich via Middle Quarters.

4. Montpelier and Sav.-la-Mar via Petersfield, Ramble and Chester Castle, which Mail Coach

Services are now in operation having come into force on 1st April, 1896.

34. The Contract in each case is for the conveyance of Mails and Parcels; but the Contractor is granted permission to convey the Mails in a vehicle approved by this Department and suitable for the conveyance of Passengers, and this is being done by each of the Contractors for the services above referred to, the Contractor retaining the Passengers fares, after a deduction of 10 per cent. to the Post Office for the service of booking Passengers.

35. It may not be out of place if I here state, in connection with Mail Coach Services, that this Department will not entertain, nor will the Government approve in future of any application for a Passenger Mail Coach Service between any Post Office or place, but if such a service were started by private enterprise, any reasonable offer to convey Mails and Parcels by such Coach would be carefully considered.

36. On the 8th February, 1896, a Daily Mail Service between Kingston and Chapelton, in connection with the Daily Train Service via May Pen, came into operation—the Foreign Parcels Post Service was at the same time extended to Chapelton.

DISTRICT POST OFFICES.

37. At the end of the year under review the number of District Post Offices in existence is 130 as against 123 at the end of the year 1894-95, Post Offices having been opened in the undermentioned Districts.

"Montpelier"—In the Parish of St. James on 13th August, 1895.

"Cambridge"—In the Parish of St. James on 15th August, 1895.

"Spaldings"—In the Parish of Clarendon on 6th September, 1895.

"Llandewey"—In the Parish of St. Thomas on 5th February, 1896.

"Belvedere"—In the Parish of St. Andrew on the 7th February, 1896.

"Lambs River"—In the Parish of Westmoreland on the 11th March, 1896.

"Ipswich"—In the Parish of St. Elizabeth on the 13th March, 1896 thus 21 Post Offices have been opened within two years ended 31st March, 1896.

MONEY ORDERS

38. The following is a Comparative Statement of the transactions of the Money Order Branch:—

United Kingdom.

Year.	Jamaica Issue.		Payable in Jamaica.		Proportion of Commission accruing to Jamaica.
	No.	Amount.	No.	Amount.	
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-94	8,783	34,292 6 4	1,077	2,998 7 4	508 11 9
1894-95	9,223	34,845 0 2	1,064	2,648 11 3	536 2 4
1895-96	9,309	34,545 15 7	1,241	2,817 8 0	501 15 3

United States of America.

1893-94	2,377	7,570 1 9	535	880 16 4	133 9 7
1894-95	2,726	9,043 6 10	495	1,248 2 2	161 18 11
1895-96	3,007	10,771 15 3	536	1,672 16 4	168 15 0

Dominion of Canada.

			£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1893-94	...	301	1,278	4	9	75	258	8	11	19	10	1
1894-95	...	244	1,145	9	8	60	247	3	3	15	4	3
1895-96	...	291	1,239	0	11	80	296	12	3	14	2	6

British Guiana.

			£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1893-94	...	63	92	4	8	61	205	5	2	2	7	5
1894-95	...	80	129	8	0	76	280	12	8	4	7	9
1895-96	...	68	106	0	9	63	137	15	1	2	6	0

Barbados.

			£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1893-94	...	144	207	6	7	94	228	16	8	5	7	9
1894-95	...	159	270	18	6	97	253	1	9	6	5	4
1895-96	...	391	524	18	8	158	383	14	10	9	1	3

Windward and Leeward Islands.

			£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1893-94	...	35	79	15	9	122	219	2	7	1	19	9
1894-95	...	40	55	14	4	120	278	1	9	1	18	10
1895-96	...	50	55	1	10	116	142	14	7	2	3	6

39. A Summary of the above details compares with the transactions of the preceding year as under :

Jamaica Issue.	No.	Amount.
1894-95	12,472	£45,489 17 6
1895-96	13,116	47,242 13 0
Issue of other Countries payable in Jamaica :—		
1894-95	1,822	4,955 12 10
1895-96	2,194	5,441 1 1

40. It will be noticed that there has been an increase in the total number as well as in the amount of Orders drawn by Jamaica on other Countries, and in the drafts of other Countries on Jamaica ; and that such increase has been principally in the transactions with the Mother Country, the United States of America and Barbados.

41. The Money Order Commissions which accrued to Jamaica during the year is shown by the following statement :—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
United Kingdom	...	501	15	3		
United States of America	...	168	15	0		
Dominion of Canada	...	16	2	6		
British Guiana	...	2	6	0		
Barbados	...	9	1	3		
Windward and Leeward Islands	...	2	3	6		
					£700	3 6
Less premium on remittances—						
United Kingdom	...	209	5	3		
United States	...	92	0	5		
Canada	...	9	17	9		
Barbados	...	0	13	6	311	16 11
					£388	6 7

POSTAL ORDERS.

42. I also subjoin a statement giving the total number and face value of each denomination of Postal Orders issued for sale and the total number and face value of those sold, as compared with the similar transactions for the two years preceding.

POSTAL ORDERS ISSUED.

DENOMINATION.	1893-94.			1894-95.			1895-96.		
	No.	Face Value.	Commis- sion.	No.	Face Value.	Commis- sion.	No.	Face Value.	Commis- sion.
	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
6	11,475	286 17 6	23 18 1½	32,500	812 10 0	67 14 2	12,650	316 5 0	26 7 1
1 0	24,500	1,225 0 0	51 0 10	15,025	751 5 0	31 6 0½	27,800	1,390 0 0	57 18 4
1 6	26,0 0	1,950 0 0	54 3 4	12,925	969 7 6	26 18 6½	28,850	2,163 15 0	60 2 1
2 6	24,175	7,021 17 6	50 7 3½	25,750	3,218 15 0	53 12 11	29,775	3,721 17 6	62 0 7½
5 0	22,295	5,573 15 0	92 17 11	25,110	6,277 10 0	104 12 6	28,870	7,217 10 0	120 5 10
10 0	19,020	9,510 0 0	158 10 0	20,515	10,257 10 0	170 19 2	23,825	11,912 10 0	198 10 10
	127,465	21,567 10 0	430 17 6	131,825	22,286 17 6	455 3 4	151,770	26,721 17 6	525 4 9½

POSTAL ORDERS SOLD.

	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
April	1,695 15 6	2,059 10 6	2,057 4 0
May	1,910 7 6	1,884 5 0	2,219 10 0
June	1,711 11 0	1,914 11 0	2,127 9 6
July	1,784 6 6	1,842 1 6	2,222 3 6
August	1,721 6 0	1,757 4 0	2,012 9 6
September	1,756 5 0	1,517 12 6	2,206 3 6
October	1,821 3 0	1,338 5 0	2,176 8 0
November	1,835 6 0	1,786 3 0	2,389 13 0
December	1,921 4 0	2,023 18 6	2,374 1 0
January	1,847 15 0	1,988 4 6	2,081 3 0
February	1,790 17 6	1,876 10 6	2,094 2 6
March	1,827 15 0	2,108 18 0	2,422 15 6
	21,623 12 0	22,097 4 0	26,383 3 0

43. It will be noticed that there has been an increase of £4,285 19s. in the amount of Postal Order^s sold during the year under review, over the Sales of the preceding year, and if a comparison be made of the amount sold during the year under review with the amount issued for sale, it results that the difference is only £338 14s. 6d. and as this difference may fairly be accepted as the amount in the hands of the District Post Masters and in circulation at the end of the financial year, it follows as I have shewn in my previous reports, that the Postal Orders are not used as a circulating medium, but as a medium of remittance; and that they do not therefore supply the place of a paper currency as they might, to some extent, could the public, particularly those in the humbler walks of life, be made to understand, that a Postal Order need not be presented at once for payment, and that it can be passed on from hand to hand, and thus be availed of as a means of exchange, in like manner to coin of the realm.

EXPENDITURE.

44. The expenditure on account of the Post Service for the year under review amounts to £22,913 4s. 0½d. being a net increase of £715 0s. 10½d. over the expenditure of the year preceding. I subjoin the usual abstract of the expenditure under each head of service, as compared with that for the two preceding years.

Year.	Salaries.		Mail Conveyance.		Services.	Total.
	Head Office.	District Offices.	Inland.	Ocean.		
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-94	4,446 5 0	2,301 4 6	8,354 1 3	1,869 12 11	3,533 0 9	20,504 4 5
1894-95	4,715 6 8	2,422 6 6	8,419 6 9	2,028 10 8	4,612 12 6½	22,198 3 1¾
1895-96	4,923 16 4	2,535 9 0	9,020 2 2	1,962 1 1	4,471 15 5½	22,913 4 0½

45. The net increase as above stated is accounted for thus:—

<i>Increase—</i>			
Salaries, Head Office	...	£208 9 8	
Salaries, District Offices	...	113 2 6	
Inland Mail Conveyance	...	600 15 5	£922 7 7
<i>Decrease—</i>			
Ocean Mail Conveyance	...	£ 66 9 7	
Services	...	140 17 1½	207 6 8½
Net Increase	...		£715 0 10½

46. The increase under salaries at the Head Office is due to the annual increments of the Staff. In this connection I record the fact that the salaries of the First Class Clerks in this Department, in common with the salaries of other clerks of the same class in other departments, have been increased to £300 per annum by an annual increment of £10 per annum, the maximum salary prior to the 1st April, 1895, when the increase took effect, being £250 per annum.

47. The increase under the head of Salaries at District Post Offices is the result of the establishment of new District Post Offices, as detailed at paragraph 37.

48. The increase under the head of Inland Mail Conveyance is the result principally of the larger payment to the Jamaica Railway Company for the extension of the Daily Mail Service by Train to Montego Bay—which service commenced on the 4th February, 1895. The increase has also been due to the establishment of Mail Services in connection with the opening of District Post Offices.

49. The decrease under 'Ocean Mail Conveyance' will be found in the item of "Sea transit rates", while that under "Services" occurs, principally under the head of Manufacture of Postage Stamps.

50. In addition to the above expenditure the sum of £5,300 was as already pointed out under the head of Revenue, at paragraph 10, paid through the Crown Agents for the Colonies, to the Imperial Post Office being the Colony's proportion of the annual loss to the Mother-country, in maintaining the Mail Service between the United Kingdom and the British and Foreign West Indies, and if this sum be added to the expenditure stated above i.e. £22,913 4s. 0½d. and the result £28,213 4s. 0½d. be compared with the gross collections, a net deficit of £4,643 7s. 3d. against a similar deficit of £5,924 5s. 8½d. in respect of the transactions of the year 1894-95 will be disclosed; but if such addition be not made, the comparison between Revenue and Expenditure for the year under review, exhibits a balance of £656 12s. 9d. in favour of the former.

51. The Atlas Steamship Company was paid through this Department, the sum of £1,800 for Steam Communication round the Island; but, as stated in previous reports, the vote is only administered by, and is not charged against this Department, the amount is not included in the above statement of Post Office expenditure. I am pleased to be able to remark again that the punctual performance of the approved itineraries rendered it unnecessary to impose on the Company any fines for delays or other breaches of the contracts.

52. The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company have also continued to run their Coastal Steamer "Spey" weekly.

MAIL COACHES.

53. The earnings of the respective lines of Mail Coaches during the year under review are as under as compared with similar earnings for the two years preceding:—

I.—Kingston and Savanna-la-Mar.

YEAR.		Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-94	...	158 14 0	270 3 9	428 17 9
1894-95	...	127 5 9	268 19 0	396 4 9
1895-96	...	33 15 0	235 6 0	269 1 0

II.—Kingston and Montego Bay.

YEAR.		Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-94	...	813 4 9	447 3 9	1,260 8 6
1894-95	...	718 9 9	425 10 9	1,144 0 6
1895-96	...	540 2 6	391 19 6	932 2 0

III.—*Montego Bay and Luces.*

YEAR.	Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
1893-94	£ s. d. 76 10 0	£ s. d. 15 4 0	£ s. d. 91 14 0
1894-95	108 12 0	14 1 9	122 13 9
1895-96	100 2 0	11 0 3	111 2 3

IV.—*Kingston and Port Antonio.*

YEAR.	Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
1893-94	£ s. d. 386 10 6	£ s. d. 267 12 3	£ s. d. 654 2 9
1894-95	409 14 0	259 10 3	669 4 3
1895-96	371 18 0	270 10 0	642 8 0

V.—*Kingston and Annotto Bay.*

YEAR.	Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
1893-94	£ s. d. 208 0 0	£ s. d. 74 11 9	£ s. d. 282 11 9
1894-95	204 14 6	79 9 3	284 3 9
1895-96	217 4 9	84 19 9	302 4 6

VI.—*Kingston and Gordon Town.*

YEAR.	Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
October '95 to March, '96	£ s. d. 32 16 6	£ s. d. 1 9 9	£ s. d. 34 6 3

VII.—*Kingston and Chapelton.*

YEAR.	Passengers' Fares.	Parcels.	Total.
From February to March, '96	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 1 13 9	£ s. d. 0 13 9

54. The total amount earned is £2,291 17s. 9d., as under:—

Passengers	...	£1,295 18 9
Parcels	...	995 19 0

being a decrease of £324 9s. 3d. on the similar transactions during 1894-95, thus:—

Passengers	...	£272 17 3
Parcels	...	51 12 0

55. Looking at the details in the above statement, it will be seen that decrease has taken place in the earnings of the Coach Service between Kingston and Montego Bay, and Kingston and Sav.-la-Mar, which have been affected adversely in consequence of the extension of the Railway, as pointed out in the 33rd paragraph of this Report—the latter service ceasing to be remunerative to the contractor has been discontinued.

56. The earnings of the daily Mail Coach Service between Kingston and Gordon Town appear, for the first time, in the Accounts of this Department, the Mail Contractor on again securing the Contract for the Mail Service having elected to avail himself of the Post Office as a Booking Agency.

57. The earnings of the daily Mail Coach Service between Kingston and Chapelton via May Pen are only relative to the period, 8th February to March, 1896, the service having been commenced on the former date. The receipts on account of parcels have been carried to the credit of Postal Revenue, instead of to the credit of the Mail Contractor, as in the case of the other Mail Coach lines. This will be the case with all future similar contracts, the profit to the contractor outside of his Mail subsidy, being limited to the passenger fares. The Mail Contractor for the service between May Pen and Chapelton has not availed himself of the privilege to run a Passenger Coach, but there is such a Coach running by private enterprise.

RETURNED LETTER BRANCH.

58. The correspondence dealt with in the Returned Letter Branch is as follows:—

	Paid.	Unpaid.
Letters returned to the United Kingdom	1,671	196
“ “ to other Countries	2,709	854
“ “ to Writers in the Island	19,932	1,876
“ Destroyed, being illegible or anonymous	2,728	351
“ Destroyed, Writers not having been found	2,165	445
Newspapers returned to the Publishers	3,559	—

59. Letters to the number of 972 were found to contain value to the amount of £328 5s. 10d., and were returned to the writers in due course under registered cover. The amount of postage which could not be recovered on unclaimed, &c. Mail Matter, and which has been written off is £33 4s. 5½d.

TELEGRAPHS

60. As shewn under the head of Revenue the receipts on account of Telegraphs amount to £6,156 9s. 6d. I subjoin a detailed statement of such receipts as compared with similar receipts for the two years preceding.

	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Stamps sold	6,243 2 3	5,899 3 9	6,140 18 6
Additional charge on Books containing Message Forms	7 6 9	6 12 9	6 11 0
Fees for opening Stations out of the Office Hours	6 0 0	3 0 0	9 0 0
	5,256 9 0	5,908 16 6	6,156 9 6

61. The number of messages which were sent and received during the year, is 110,715, as against 105,719 during 1894-95. Of the total number 1,371 were sent over the Railway lines.

62. A Detailed Statement of the number of Messages sent from and received at each Telegraph Station is appended to this report.

63. The sum collected by this Department, on behalf of the West India and Panama Telegraph Company, for Foreign Telegrams handed in at the several District Telegraph Stations, is £2,342 15s. 1d. which has been lodged to the credit of the Company.

64. The Telegraph expenditure for “Working Expenses” during the year under review amounts to £7,618 16s. 8d. as shewn by the following Detailed Comparative Statement:—

Year.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Salaries	3,932 0 7	4,052 6 0	4,285 14 4
Wages	806 2 1	829 1 8½	847 10 11
Services	2,166 13 1	2,194 4 3½	2,485 11 5
	6,904 15 9	7,075 12 0	7,618 16 8

65. Comparing the expenditure with the receipts, it will be observed that the former is in excess of the latter, by the sum of £1,462 7s. 2d. and if the amount of the maintenance of the line by the Public Works Department be added, *i. e.* £2,176 8s. 0d. such deficit of £1,462 7s. 2d. will be increased to £3,632 13s. 10d.

66. In any consideration of the question of a reduction in the rate charged for telegrams this deficit has to be taken into account.

67. From the above detailed statement it will be ascertained also that the Telegraph Expenditure for the year under review exceeds that of the year 1894-95 by the sum of £543 4s. 8d. and that such increase appears under the following heads of service:—

Salaries	...	£233 8 4	
Wages	...	18 9 2½	
Services	...	291 7 1½	£543 4s. 8d.

68. The increase under salaries has been the result of the employment of additional Assistant Telegraph Operators at St. Ann Bay, Montego Bay, Santa Cruz, Chapelton and Spanish Town and to the employment of auxiliary Operators in cases of illness of the permanent staff. The increase under wages has occurred at the District Stations

69. The increase under services will be found in the items "services out of office hours" as a result of the operation of the Public Holidays Law No. 11 of 1895, as well as in the item for Printing and Stationery.

70. A Telegraph Station was opened on the Race Course beneath the Grand Stand, during the race days, on the 10th, 11th and 12th December last.

71. The School of Telegraphy at the Head Station Kingston and the system of teaching young women telegraphy at District Stations has been continued during the year. It may be interesting to the public to know that 26 learners were educated during the year under review of whom 19 passed as competent, and, that on 31st March last, the auxiliary staff of competent learners numbered 39, all of whom are available for filling vacancies temporarily at Post Offices and Telegraph Stations, when the Postmistresses and Telegraph Clerks are absent from illness—such an auxiliary staff is, therefore, most useful, and I bear testimony to the satisfactory manner on the whole, in which the learners on the auxiliary staff have discharged the temporary duties entrusted to them. In like manner do I record my appreciation of the services rendered by the permanent staff.

72. The greatest care is exercised in the selection of candidates to learn telegraphy, who as stated in my last Annual Report, not only have to pass a qualifying examination, but to produce satisfactory testimonials, &c., as to character. I regret, however, again to state, that persons who are *quite* unqualified educationally continue to be sent to me by those who certainly ought to have been in a position to know that their nominees could not correctly speak, write, or spell English.

PARCEL POST.

73. The transactions of the Parcels Post Branch are, and compare with the similar transactions of the two years preceding, as under:—

From	Consignments.			Parcels.			Import Duty Collected.		
	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
United Kingdom ...	26	26	26	8,334	8,649	9,024	£ 1,175 10 4	£ 1,228 13 9	£ 1,416 4 7
British West Indies	104	94	110	202	222	254	5 19 9	9 9 6	8 0 0
United States of America	68	69	73	1,316	1,574	2,043	69 14 1	85 9 2	120 13 7
Dominion of Canada	12	12	12	71	103	125	4 1 1	3 1 0	5 5 3
	210	200	221	9,923	10,548	11,446	1,255 5 3	1,326 13 5	1,550 3 5

	Postage Accrued to Jamaica.			Declared Value of Parcels.		
	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
United Kingdom ...	424 6 4	460 7 7½	485 5 2½	12,962 17 3	13,316 16 7	14,478 5 1
British West Indies ...	..	..	..	111 18 8	114 18 3	127 2 6
United States of America	..	..	..	973 8 0	1,417 19 3	1,986 12 11
Dominion of Canada ...	7 3 6½	1 15 7½	2 1 10½	46 5 3	41 3 8	62 17 3
	425 9 10½	462 3 3	487 7 1	14,094 9 2	14,890 17 9	16,654 17 9

PARCELS DESPATCHED.

	Consignments.			Parcels.			Postage Accrued to Jamaica.		
	1893-94.	1894-95.	1896-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
United Kingdom ...	26	26	27	1,957	2,031	2,294	£ s. d. 55 7 5½	£ s. d. 61 1 10½	£ s. d. 74 10 5
British West Indies	110	121	139	272	271	390	8 4 4	7 13 0	13 3 4
United States of America	42	73	79	335	406	451	8 7 6	18 1 6	21 4 0
Dominion of Canada	12	12	12	87	56	71	1 9 9½	1 5 5	1 9 2
	190	232	257	2,651	2,964	3,206	73 9 1	91 1 9½	110 6 11

	Declared Value of Parcels.		
	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.
United Kingdom	£ s. d. 1,838 8 1	£ s. d. 2,334 18 1	£ s. d. 2,384 4 0½
British West Indies	164 10 3	163 10 3	262 2 5
United States of America	162 3 8	230 17 10	327 3 0½
Dominion of Canada	24 15 2	19 9 7	28 12 2
	2,189 17 2	2,752 15 9	3,002 1 8

74. The above details shew, on summary, that the amount of revenue which accrued to the Colony, as a result of the Parcels Post Exchange with other countries, is £2,147 17s. 5d., of which the sum of £597 14s. 0d. is for Postage, while £1,550 3s. 5d. represents the Customs Import Duty, collected by the Post Office.

75. It is with much pleasure I again record another year of immunity from loss of any parcel, notwithstanding the large number handled and dealt with, an immunity which, I would point out, is due in a great measure to the fact that the address of each parcel is taken and recorded as often as it may be dealt with, from the time of leaving the post, until it reaches the addressee.

76. The above details also shew a continuance of the increase of the Parcels Post business, which has occurred since the system was established.

MISCELLANEOUS.

77. During the year under review, the state of my health rendered it necessary, after 17 years of service, for me to take leave of absence and to go to the United States of America; my leave commenced on the 23rd October, 1895, and I resumed my duties on the 23rd March, 1896.

78. I embraced the opportunity during my stay in the United States to visit the Post Offices of New York, Washington and Boston, as well as those of Hamilton and Montreal, in the Dominion of Canada. In every case, I received the greatest courtesy at the hands of the officials with whom I came into contact. At Washington, I was, through the good offices of Sir Julian Pauncefote, particularly courteously treated by Mr. Wilson, the Postmaster General of the United States of America, who personally conducted me over the Administrative Branches of the Washington Post Office, and I beg leave here to be allowed in this way to admit and to acknowledge such courtesies. Mr. Adam Brown, who represented Canada at the Jamaica Exhibition, and who is now Postmaster at Hamilton, was also very kind and attentive to me.

79. I would also here record the fact that the Atlas S.S. "Ailsa" in which I was returning to Jamaica on 29th February, was run down and sunk by the S.S. "Burgoyne," while at anchor in the harbour of New York. A portion of the contents of the mail bags was recovered a month after, in a wonderful state of preservation, and was delivered to the addressees in due course, a label explaining the cause of delay in delivery being affixed to each article of mail matter.

80. During my absence the duties of Acting Postmaster for Jamaica were discharged by Mr. McBayne, the Chief Clerk to whom, and the rest of the Staff, I am indebted for the arrangements which enabled me to take my vacation leave.

81. There have been during the year, as during past years, several changes in the staff of Third Class Clerks in this Department. These continued changes have militated very seriously against the efficiency of this Department; for it will be readily understood, that the constant removal of several Clerks with some, if not an intimate, knowledge of the routine duties of a Post Office Clerk, and the filling of their places by temporary clerks, who, in turn, have to retire after the result of the Civil Service Examination in favour of successful candidates, is not calculated to conduce to the efficiency of the Depart-

ment. As an instance of this, I may record that there are *now* as I write, five vacancies in the Staff of Third Class Clerks, four of which are being filled by young women from the Telegraph school, who are giving satisfaction, and confirms the opinion that I have long entertained, and only awaited the opportunity to put into practice, that respectable and intelligent young women are quite capable of discharging efficiently, some of the duties of the Post Office; and I take this opportunity to record my appreciation of the recent approval by the Officer Administering the Government, of my recommendation, that the vacancies in the third class should not be filled by young men but that the available money shall be applied to the formation of an Auxiliary Female Sorting Staff, by this means an increase of 21 per cent. will result numerically to the Staff, with the result, that I shall not only be better able to supply the needs of the public in the Circulation Branch, but obviate the hitherto too frequent necessity, of drafting the Clerks from the Branches in the "Control Office" to the detriment and delay of the clerical work. By this better and more satisfactory organisation I shall be able to compass the work and be able amongst other matter, to submit my Annual Report at an earlier date than it has hitherto been sent in.

82. I submit the usual returns.

I have, &c.,

GEO. H. PEARCE, Postmaster for Jamaica.

Return shewing the Gross Revenue and Expenditure of the Post Office

POST OFFICE—		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Postages on Unpaid Correspondence received at District Post Offices		409	19	7			
Postages on Unpaid Correspondence received at the General Post Office		357	0	4½			
Postages on Unpaid Correspondence received from the United Kingdom		100	17	7			
Postages on Unpaid Correspondence received from British Possessions and Foreign Countries	... ..	198	5	11			
Stamps sold by the Department	... ..	16,341	1	3			
Stamps sold by Stamp Commissioner	... ..	5,796	1	7			
Rent of Private Letter Boxes	... ..	73	19	0			
Fees for Conveyance of Private Letter Bags	... ..	29	7	0			
Commission on Money Orders	... ..	£700	3	6			
Less premium on Remittances :							
United Kingdom	£209 5 3						
United States	92 0 5						
Canada	9 17 9						
Barbados	0 13 6	311	16	11	388	6	7
Fees for Detention of Country Letters per Packet for Delivery in Kingston		16	8	0			
Fine Account	... ..	12	0	0			
Commission on Mail Coach Collections	... ..	57	14	6			
Discount on Stamps purchased from the Public	... ..	0	15	10½			
Registered Letter Envelopes sold	... ..	0	3	10½			
Commission on Postal Orders sold	... ..	519	12	1½	24,301	13	3
TELEGRAPHS—							
Stamps sold	... ..	6,140	18	6			
Additional Charge on A I and B Books	... ..	6	11	0			
Fees for keeping Telegraph Offices open out of Office hours	... ..	9	0	0	6,156	9	6

£30,458 2 9

Department during the Financial Year ended 31st March, 1896.

SALARIES—		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Salary of Postmaster for Jamaica	...	651	11	6			
Salaries of Clerks	...	2,968	5	2			
Clerical Assistance	...	42	0	1			
Wages of Sorters, Letter Carriers, &c.	...	1,028	15	7			
Packet Newspaper Sorters	...	181	4	0			
Salaries of District Postmistresses, &c.	...	2,535	9	0			
Messengers conveying Mail between General Post Office and Railway Station	...	52	0	0	7,459	5	4
COMMISSION ON STAMPS SOLD—							
Poundage on Stamps sold by Department	...	157	10	3			
Discount on Stamps sold by Stamp Commissioner	...	291	7	8	448	17	11
CONVEYANCE OF MAILS—							
Contractors	...	8,804	3	5			
Special Mail Service	...	...			
Packet Mail Service	...	14	2	0			
Proportion of Postage placed to credit of United Kingdom	...	1,300	0	0			
Ship Letter Gratuities	...	510	14	3			
Conveyance of Mails between Post Offices and Railway Stations	...	163	17	4			
Conveyance of Mails between General Post Office and Up-Park Camp	...	52	1	5			
Transit Rates payable to Union Countries other than United Kingdom	...	137	4	10	10,982	3	3
SERVICES—							
Contingencies	...	584	0	2½			
Letter Carriers Uniforms	...	138	19	0			
Water Supply	...	19	1	3			
Lighting Account	...	45	1	5			
Advertising	...	120	1	0			
Mail Bags and Wrappers	...	114	8	5½			
Travelling Charges	...	235	14	6			
Allowance for Services out of Office hours	...	463	8	6			
Rent of Post Offices	...	657	10	8			
Twine and Wax	...	76	4	2			
Manufacture of Stamps	...	816	0	3			
Date Stamps and Type	...	25	7	2			
Furniture	...	62	16	1½			
Stationery	...	640	4	10			
Conveyance by Tram for Letter Carriers, &c.	...	26	0	0	4,022	17	6½
					22,913	4	0½
POSTAL UNION CONTRIBUTION							
Contribution to the United Kingdom to meet additional loss consequence on joining Postal Union	...	...			3,000	0	0
DRAWBACK ENTRIES—							
Re-directed Letters	...	197	12	0½			
Letters sent through Returned Letter Branch	...	81	16	8¾			
Stamps supplied to Foreign Countries	...	3	4	0	282	12	9
TELEGRAPH BRANCH SALARIES							
Salary of Superintendent	...	400	0	0			
Salaries of Assistants to Superintendent	...	400	0	0			
Salaries of Operators	...	3,485	14	4			
Wages of Messengers—Head Office	...	157	6	2			
Wages of Messengers—Out Stations	...	690	4	9	5,133	5	3
SERVICES—							
Porterage	...	204	4	11			
Travelling Charges	...	218	19	7½			
Water Supply	...	28	0	10			
Contingencies	...	196	16	4½			
Rent of District Offices	...	710	12	0			
Messengers Uniform	...	29	2	6			
Manufacture of Stamps, &c.	...	196	7	0			
Services out of Office hours	...	374	1	6			
Furniture	...	77	17	5			
Stationery	...	444	10	6			
Lighting	...	4	18	9	2,485	11	5
					£7,618	16	8
VOTE ADMINISTERED BY POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT—							
Steam Communication round the Island	...	...			£1,800	0	0

Return shewing the Number of Telegraphic Messages sent from and received at each Telegraph Station from 1st April, 1895, to 31st March, 1896, as compared with Return from 1st April, 1894, to 31st March, 1895.

STATION.	1st April, 1894, 31st March, 1895.		1895 96.		Remarks.
	Messages Sent.	Messages Received.	Messages Sent.	Messages Received.	
Kingston	24,560	27,304	25,418	29,848	Transmitting Station.
Spanish Town	1,935	2,264	2,371	2,284	
Bog Walk	750	639	865	863	
Linstead	783	715	796	742	" "
Ewarton	534	497	585	493	
Monogue	899	1,109	860	1,202	
Claremont	397	448	494	482	
St. Ann's Bay	4,305	4,193	4,555	4,455	" "
Dry Harbour	610	648	631	711	" "
Brown's Town	2,022	2,009	2,217	2,193	" "
Cave Valley	223	242	347	367	
Stewart Town	225	250	318	272	
Ulster Spring	578	455	450	387	
Rio Bueno	287	289	266	244	
Duncans	442	469	456	498	
Falmouth	3,230	3,445	2,824	2,999	
Montego Bay	7,729	6,912	7,681	6,790	" "
Ramble	595	619	533	543	
Luca	2,994	2,987	2,811	2,584	
Green Island	677	642	703	709	
Grange Hill	257	213	291	268	
Sav. la-Mar	3,719	3,496	3,695	3,458	" "
White House	307	237	220	209	
Black River	3,576	3,520	3,833	3,527	
Middle Quarters	406	403	414	503	
Santa Cruz	893	970	722	809	" "
Malvern	638	679	590	649	
Mandeville	2,756	2,939	2,967	3,012	" "
New Port	426	517	491	541	
Shooters Hill	799	791	783	816	" "
Mile Gully	419	363	597	368	
Balacava	624	777	654	787	
Christiana	378	453	439	536	
Porus	1,454	947	1,427	1,086	
May Pen	1,301	1,074	1,213	952	" "
Chapelton	1,286	1,176	1,229	1,122	
Alley	1,071	911	883	706	" "
Salt River	320	296	191	195	
Milk River	757	838	656	730	
Old Harbour	1,315	1,288	1,167	1,166	
Yallahs	473	426	395	365	
Morant Bay	1,875	1,843	1,980	1,813	" "
B. M. Valley	236	238	151	188	
Trinity Ville	285	248	272	267	
Pt. Morant	789	681	615	585	
Bowden	669	533	525	419	
Bath	371	377	425	415	
P. G. River	574	569	467	525	
Manchioneal	1,279	1,260	1,253	1,077	
Priestman's River	329	298	294	295	
Port Antonio	6,018	5,315	8,021	7,027	" "
St. Margaret's Bay	350	386	568	579	
Hope Bay	837	749	1,160	925	
Buff Bay	1,391	1,334	1,385	1,298	
Annotto Bay	2,592	2,422	3,825	3,530	" "
Port Maria	4,495	4,345	5,113	4,549	
Orcabessa	705	655	479	504	" "
Retreat	260	336	176	241	
Gayle	287	368	368	399	
Ocho Rios	732	703	691	703	
Port Royal	1,048	872	1,153	997	
Up-Park Camp	736	710	610	750	
Halfway-Tree	524	613	707	673	
Gordon Town	269	336	236	304	
Cold Spring	671	588	701	591	
Stony Hill	201	174	198	236	
Race Course	46	11	53	10	
Railway	1,200	1,305	1,371	1,344	Opened 3 days, 10th to 12th Dec., '95.
Total	105,719	105,719	110,715	110,715	