

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

President: Alan Marshall

Chairman:
Chris Jackson
(01527 544722)

Treasurer:
Bob Viney
(01572 770077)

Secretary:
Mick Gill
(01636 672868)

Programme Secretary: Mel Matthews (0121 6898147)

Number 181, February 2014

NEW MEMBER

We extend a cordial welcome to Mr Roger Riseborough of Atherstone who collects the postal history of Atherstone. Mr Riseborough is currently the treasurer of the Solihull Philatelic Society.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our meeting at the Black Country Museum, Dudley DY1 4SQ on **15th February** will be devoted to members' one board displays of *'Postal History from WWI'*. The meeting will start at the usual time of **1.30 p.m.**

On **1st March** we meet at the Sharp's Pottery Museum, Swadlincote. At **1.30 p.m.** Brian Atkins will give a Powerpoint presentation on *'Shropshire Postal History'*. There will be a committee meeting starting at 11 a.m.

Our Annual General Meeting and Auction will be held at St Germain's Church Hall on **26th April**. Viewing of lots will take place from 11 a.m., with the AGM starting at 1 p.m. The auction will follow at 1.30 p.m.

Please note that there is a change of venue for Worpex on **10th May**. This will now be held at Tudor Grange Academy, Worcester WR3 8HN, and not at the previous venue as stated on the programme.

THE ANNUAL AUCTION

There are still a few days left for you to submit material for inclusion in the auction.

When the Society was much smaller than it is now, the way in which the auction was conducted served the members well. However, in recent years the Auction has become a much larger affair and the Committee feel that to ensure smooth running of the auction a more formal system should operate, as is the case in most large societies. Consequently, with effect from the April 2014 auction, a number of changes will take place. These were published in the last issue, but in case anyone missed them as they were on an inside page, they are shown below.

1. Sold lots will no longer be distributed during the auction. Successful buyers will be able to collect all their lots at the end of the auction upon production of a receipted invoice.
2. Unsold lots will immediately become the property of the vendor and consequently unsold lots **will not** be available for purchase after the auction has finished, as has previously been the case.
3. Successful postal bidders will be required to settle their invoice within 14 days of the dispatch of an invoice. In situations where postal bidders will not be at home immediately after auction then they should send a limited open cheque by endorsing the cheque "*not over £xxx*" when submitting their bids. If postal bidders would like a quicker dispatch of their items, they should consider adopting this course of action.

THE NOVEMBER MEETING

Those meetings made up of one-board displays by members usually bring out a wide range of material, and this was certainly the case at our meeting on 9th November at Carrs Lane Church, Birmingham, when the topic for the meeting was *'Items carried by Road, River, Canal or Rail'*.

The batting was opened by John Soer who, surprisingly, did not show any Leicestershire material but opted for items associated with the greatest of the pre-grouping railway companies – the Midland. He began with marks of Gloucester station where the Midland had erected a post office at a rent of £10 p.a. and where sorting started in February 1842. We saw examples of the different duplex marks used there with numbers '312' (also used at the Head P.O. in Gloucester) and E94. Next, came examples of the various single circles used in the Midland T.P.O., which in a number of instances were used as mis-sort marks. A single circle of the London & Derby S.C. cancelled the adhesive on a letter sent in 1917 to Biscot Camp near Luton. A postcard of the interior of a hut in the camp showed that conditions were probably little better than in the trenches. The 2d Letter Stamp was seen on an envelope sent from Birmingham to Burton-on-Trent in 1911. John's final item was a cover, sent from Malta to Coleorton near Ashby-de-la-Zouch in 1882, and which showed the diamond shaped 'NW/T.P.O./M' handstamp used in the Inland Office on mail received too late to be included in the direct bags and so sent to the TPO for sorting.

The next person to bat was Roy Summers who began with an entire sent from Wolverhampton to London on which the original charge of 10d had twice been cancelled and a new charge of 1s 8d had been imposed as there were two sheets in the letter. Rather striking was an advertising envelope from J.E. Bates & Sons Ltd., a brass-founding company of Wolverhampton. A twopenny Mulready was cancelled with the '905' handstamp of Wolverhampton, not as the regulations demanded on Britannia, but on the right-hand. Alan ended with a printed reply form of 1843 from a Life Assurance Company which had been struck with the Paid/1d mark of Wolverhampton. This had been overstruck with a Maltese Cross in black along with a 2d handstamp.

Chris Jackson had considered the title for the afternoon 'Mail by Road, River, Canal and Rail' and decided that as he (along with others) had neither River nor Canal Mail that the title should be expanded to include 'Air'. As a result Chris showed three separate sections. The first consisted of mail carried on the Trans Siberian Railway, with covers from Malvern and Worcester to Kobe in Japan and Darien respectively. This was followed by Worcester to Kidderminster by rail and Evesham to Redditch by Express rail. Water borne mail included Worcester to India at the 6d overland rate rather than the 8d rate via Brindisi, and two incoming mails one from Tristan da Cunha to Malvern and the other from Montego Bay to Pebworth, a village near Evesham. Finally, he showed an FDC of the Extended Air Mail service to Australia, Malvern to India with the cachet *'Post by Air and Save Time'* and West Malvern to Malaya with a cachet regretting it could not be delivered and refunding the 1/1½d Air Mail fee.

A letter sent by boat from Shardlow to Middlewich in 1846 was the first item in the eclectic and fascinating display of the type that we expect from Eric Lewis. The next item was sent by steamer from Aberdeen to London. Eric then turned to the railways, beginning with a letter to New York which showed the 4d Late Fee levied at Euston Station from 1865 to 1867 on mail sent by British or Canadian Packets from Galway, Londonderry and Queenstown. The letter also showed a strike of the single circle 'EUSTON STATION/IRISH MAIL'. The conveyance of letters by the railway companies started on 1st February 1891. Eric produced an example sent on 10th February 1891 from Snow Hill Station to Knowle, and bearing two GWR 2d stamps as well as a 1d lilac. Before the introduction of the Railway Letter Service, it was possible to get round the regulation forbidding the railway companies carrying letters by tying string round the letter, and sending it as a parcel. Eric's final item was such a 'String Letter' - a letter sent by rail but tied with string like a parcel to circumvent the regulation which banned the railway companies from carrying letters.

Mick Gill showed recently acquired Worksop covers, the first of which was a two-line mark 'WORK/SOP' used in 1732. A straight-line 'WORKSOP' used in 1762 was the earliest recorded as was a 'WORK/SOP 147' mileage mark on a 'Free Letter' of 1789. An example of the convex mark of Worksop used in 1789 followed along with examples of both types of penny post mark used at Worksop. These were the earliest recorded of the first in November 1813 on a letter to London, and the latest known of the second on a letter to Cambridge in October 1819. Mick pointed out that both showed a manuscript penny post charge of 1^d to which had been added a second digit to give the total postage due – "1^d1" for the overall charge to London and "1^d0" for that to Cambridge. We then saw the earliest (June 1825) and latest (November 1827) of the lined 'WORKSOP/146' mileage mark. In a second display Mick showed a letter of 1795 sent by Sarah Jessop, the wife of the civil engineer William Jessop who lived in Newark, from Newark to Rochdale which referred to plans sent by mail coach from Leicester. A letter of 1797, also to Rochdale, was from William himself. A notice of June 1816 detailed the Packet Boat service which plied the River Trent between Nottingham, Newark and Gainsborough with connections to Lincoln, Boston and the Eastern Counties. 'The Traveller's and Mail Guard's Corrector' in a magazine of 1827 listed the differences in time between London and one hundred provincial towns. Mick's final item was a London Gazette of December 1786 which announced the introduction of mailcoaches on the Great North Road.

An entire of April 1840 with the mileage mark of Kegworth, a Derby cds and a manuscript 'P1' was Alan Marshall's first item. This was followed by a wrapper of 1846, which showed the seal of the 'Ambergate, Nottingham & Boston & Eastern Junction Railway and was sent from the London office to Nottingham. [Clearly, this was a company whose name was longer than the line they ran.] A letter sent from Nottingham to Halifax in 1872 showed the cds of the Halifax Sorting Tender. The first of three covers of 1888 sent from Nottingham to Belfast, Edinburgh and Berwick showed a mark of the Dublin and Belfast TPO, while the other two carried marks of respectively, the Edinburgh & Newcastle Sorting Tender and the Newcastle Sorting Tender. An octagonal 'Empalme Bahna' postmark was to be seen on a letter sent from Badalona, Spain to Nottingham in 1917. A postcard from Denmark to Derbyshire had the small boxed 'L.&D./S.C.' of the London and Dover Sorting Carriage. Alan began a second board with a postcard of 1902 sent locally to Victoria Station, Nottingham and booking tickets for lunch the next day on the train to Bournemouth. [The past certainly is a foreign country!] There were two LMS items of 1939 – an envelope from Stone to Nottingham with a Stone, LMS Parcel Label, and a preprinted LMS postcard sent from Codnor Park to Jacksdale which showed a 2d Postage Due stamp as it had been posted unpaid. Alan ended with three items that had been sent by road. These were: an 1858 OHMS envelope showing the only recorded use of the C4 UDC of Old Radford; the earliest (1842) recorded use of the Bingham UDC; and, from 1795, the earliest Bingham mark sent to Nottingham in the unofficial penny post system.

Items carried in the Shrewsbury and Tamworth TPO formed Guy Bridges' first display. Guy started with an envelope sent to London from Towyn in 1865 with the 1d adhesive cancelled by the framed 'SHREWS^Y. & TAMWORTH/R.P.O.'. This was followed by the scarce framed 'S & T R.P.O. F^D', and the framed 'S & T R.P.O.' used in 1866 and 1867 respectively. Guy then went on to show the various types of the circular handstamps 'SHREWSBURY & TAMWORTH T.P.O.' and 'SHREWSBURY & TAMWORTH S.C.', and ended with the last postmark used in that TPO – 'SHREWSBURY-TAMWORTH/R.S.C.' on a postcard of 1915. Material from the Cambrian railways, starting with a map showing all the stations on the lines, formed Guy's second display. He showed a 'string letter' sent from Llanfyllin to Llangollen with the printed label still on it. A large letter from Oswestry to Montgomery bore 2½d in postage stamps as well as a 2d stamp of Cambrian railways, all of which were called on arrival by the cds of Montgomery. Guy finished with another long envelope to Whitchurch in 1911 with a 'CAMBRIAN RAILWAYS. PAID. PARCEL from WREXHAM' label affixed.

Brian Atkins' first display started with an 1844 canal letter, endorsed *per boat* carried by the steersman, outside the mail system, from Wappenshall, at the junction of the old Shrewsbury Canal and the Birmingham and Liverpool Canal, to James Smith the agent for the Shropshire Union Canal at Shrewsbury; the writer explaining that he had no boat to carry Messrs Botfields 18 tons of iron. He followed with an 1831 letter from Ellesmere to Boulogne, France with the writer wanting the waterwheel on his mill refurbished. An 1840 Dawley Green Penny Post letter addressed to the Oxford Canal at Napton ended the canal section. Two letters to Francis Freeling from the Earl of Bridgwater (1807) concerning the mail arriving at Ellesmere two hours later by coach than it used to when brought from Oswestry by an 'old postwoman' and an 1809 letter from Lord Clive asking for a mail bag on a coach which ran from Hereford to Shrewsbury followed. Brian ended the display with a 1784 letter written by Joshua Blakeway at Shrewsbury to Hinckley sending an invoice for flannel and writing *'The above went hence by Tomlinson's wagon to Birmingham from whence I hope you will receive it safely'*.

Brian's second display was of railways, beginning with a c1900 map showing the Shropshire railways at that time. An 1853 'parcel' letter from Oswestry was followed by two covers showing usage of the GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY 2d green stamp from Craven Arms and Adderley stations respectively. From the GWR he went to the Shropshire & Montgomery Railway with four covers showing the use of their letter stamps. Finally a 1909 postcard with the ½d Edward cancelled SHREWSBURY & ABERYSTWYTH S.C. read *"Will you please get us 2lbs of 6d sausages & send with that train about 10 o'clock tomorrow. We are very sorry to trouble you & wouldn't only Willie Fryer is here & we have nothing for his dinner. Kind regards from all. I shall be in town in the evening & will pay. Yours sincerely, Mrs Williams"*.

We then called at Stafford Station through which, as shown by Richard Farman, a large number of registered letters were routed. Among those that we saw were Stafford to Colchester (1882), Denton to Leek (1905) and Matlock to Nuneaton (1913). The various covers showed, between them, three different oval handstamps 'REGISTERED/STAFFORD STATION. The duplex marks of Stafford station contained the number '730' which was the same as that used in the town office. The fact that it was deliberate policy to circulate mail through Stafford was shown by the handstamp 'LETTER SORTING CENTRE/L.M.S./STAFFORD/CENTRE No 9'.

Stuart Geddes began with a letter sent from Bristol to Usk which was endorsed 'By Timkens/Car Paid/Oct' 1st. He then produced a number of canal items, particularly from the Monmouthshire Canal Office. A cover sent from Newport to Pershore showed a very good example of the boxed mileage mark 'NEWPORT/151'.

Mail sent across and along the Humber, particular to and from Hull, formed Clive Jones' display. Although the mileage marks of Hull always showed the distance to London as 234 miles, the distance via York, Clive explained that the distance of the direct route by way of the ferry to Barton was 170 miles. He illustrated this fact by the charges on a number of covers. We saw examples of the twopenny rate for letters between two posttowns up to eight miles apart on letters from Hull to Barton. The penny post of Hull served some villages in Lincolnshire as seen on a letter to Barrow. Clive ended with a number of Ship Letters sent through Hull, including one sent from Hull to Christiana in Sweden, and one from Newcastle to Sweden endorsed 'via Hull'.

Alan Godfrey began with items carried by bus, beginning with wrappers of the Evesham Journal carried as parcels by the Stratford-on-Avon Bus Company. On the same theme, alan also showed the parcel stamps of Birmingham Transport. A letter to the clerk of the Stratford and Moreton Railway Company (actually a tramway) was franked with four 1d reds. A GWR letter stamp was to be seen on a cover sent from Daunzey Station to Birmingham via London. Alan finished with a photograph of Alcester station taken on the last day of service in 1962.

Material concerning the Grand Junction Canal in Northamptonshire formed Derek Smeathers' first display. A letter of 26th June 1800 was written by the owner of land wanted by the canal company for building a temporary 'railway' over Blisworth Hill during the construction of the tunnel there. The canal was later used to transport the paper for the first postage stamps from Rush Mills to Blisworth and the next three sheets showed letters from the paper-makers, Stacey Wise & Co, mentioning carriage by Worster's boats. We then saw a photograph of the change-over point from boat to railway at Blisworth and photographs of the Rush Mills factory with its canal wharf alongside. The next two sheets showed Mulready entires used for invoicing fruit sent from London by Worester & Co boats with a little help from the London & Birmingham Railway!

In a further display Derek showed material relating to the railways. This included: a letter from the Northampton & Banbury Junction Railway setting out an agreement with the LNWR for buying an engine and two carriages in October 1871, the year in which the N&BJR opened; a postcard sent to Germany in 1898 from Castle Ashby & Earl's Barton station (later just Castle Ashby); an official postcard sent in 1917 by the stationmaster at Roade about train movements; a piece of a wooden trunk showing parcel stamps of the LMSR. Derek ended with a number of Railex items among which was a card of 1944 marked 'RAIL EX' addressed to H.T. Jackson, the author of a catalogue of railway letter stamps, who lived at Staverton.

We remained in Northamptonshire with Paul Bradshaw who showed the early marks of Daventry, including the earliest known Daventry mark in private hands – 'DAVEN/TRY' of 1732.

As can be gathered from this report, the range of material shown was enormous, making a most enjoyable afternoon of postal history. I would like to thank all those members who submitted reports of their displays; it helps to make life so much easier.



Bill Pipe

THE MAGPIE



*Buying and Selling Postal History
and Postcards of the World*

7 Richard Close · Upton · Poole · Dorset · BH16 5PY

Tel: 01202 623300 · Fax: 01202 631149

email: magpiebillpipe@freeuk.com

web: www.magpiebillpipe.com



Cavendish House
Derby



The Cavendish Gallery
London

FINE MIDLANDS POSTAL HISTORY IN OUR FORTHCOMING AUCTIONS

*Consignments welcome for our June 2014 auction -
please contact Bob Unwin, Joseph Iredale or James Grimwood-Taylor.*

WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

Protection of Agriculture.

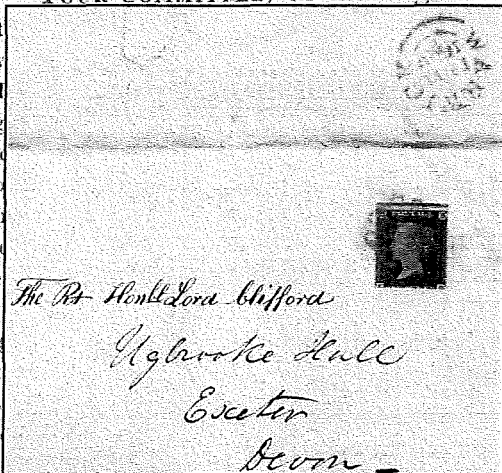
This Association is quite distinct in the collection and application of its funds. The Warwickshire Agricultural Society for the Distribution of Premiums and Prizes, have established in the year 1834 for the purpose of protecting the Agricultural Interest in Parliament.

At the GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING of the above Association, held at the Warwick Hotel, in Warwick, on Wednesday the 28th. of October, 1840, Sir JOHN MORLEY Bart. M. P. in the chair—The following Report of the Committee was presented and read, and it was Resolved that the same should be printed with the Rules and Regulations, and circulated amongst the Members.

REPORT.

YOUR COMMITTEE, in making their Sixth Annual Report, beg most earnestly to draw

attention
and w
Law I
of Ag
Petitio
and p
nume
turned
shape
during
result
Comm
for R



association, but of every friend of the Agricultural Interest, to the
and Commercial Interests, especially of a body calling itself the
in Laws. To counteract the unprecedented measures which the
COMMITTEE, early in the last Session of Parliament, drafted
is sent to every Parish and Hamlet in the County, and owing to
and Individual Members in their respective Parishes, 408 Pet
pers and Occupiers, Tradesmen, and Labourers of the Count
presented to the Two Houses of Parliament before the threatened
of Commons.

success of these exertions, and on the accession of several ne
seriously to impress upon each Member the great advantage
lual exertion to extend the means of the Association, so as to
s may become necessary for defeating the future attempts of th

been given to the state of the Central Agricultural Society, and t
which were necessary to be adopted for a more cordial union among the Agriculturists of the Country. In pursu

Ph: (44) 01332 250970

Email: stamps@cavendish-auctions.com

Fax: (44) 01332 294440

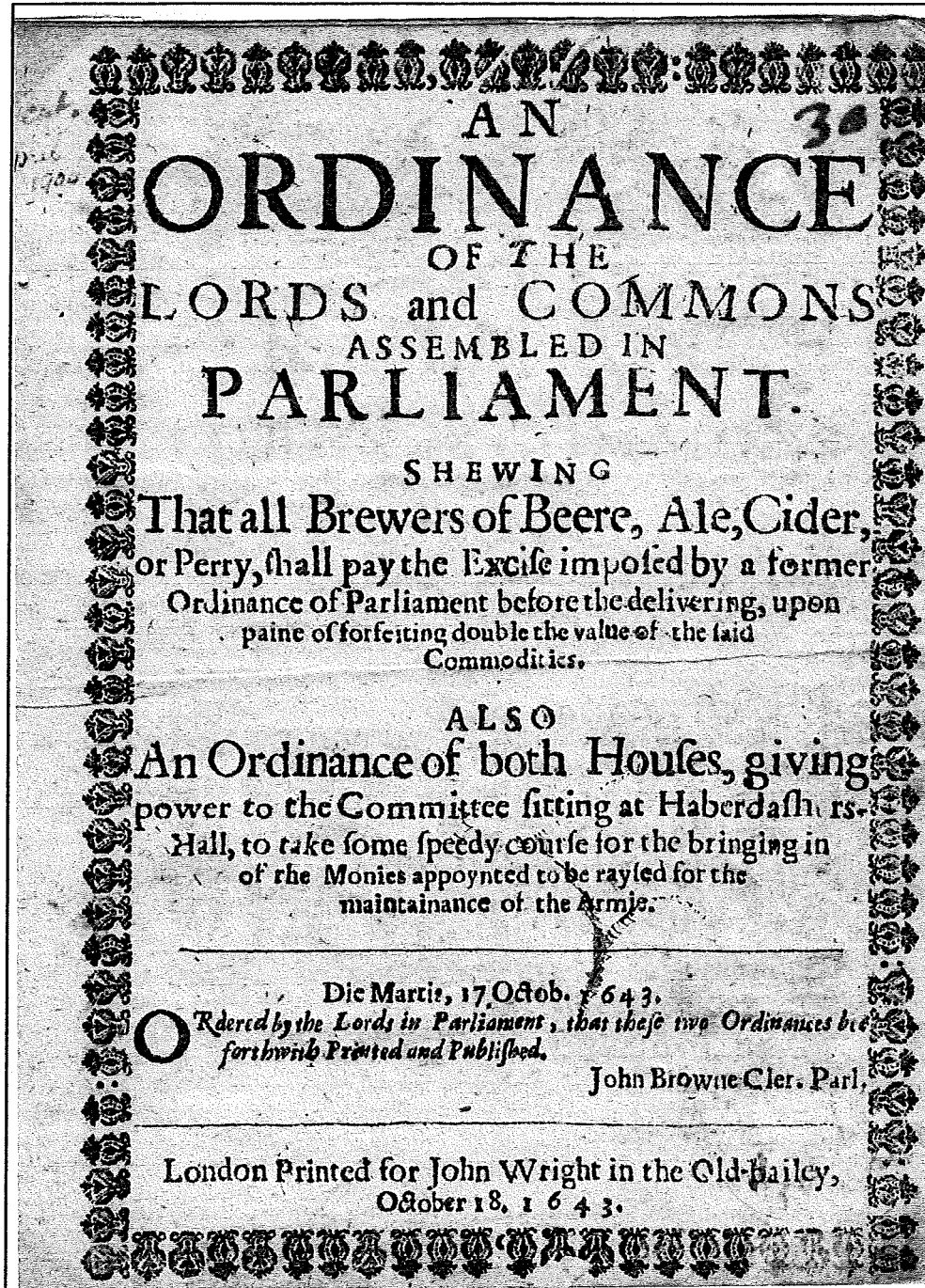
Cavendish House, 153 - 157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY, U.K.

www.cavendish-auctions.com

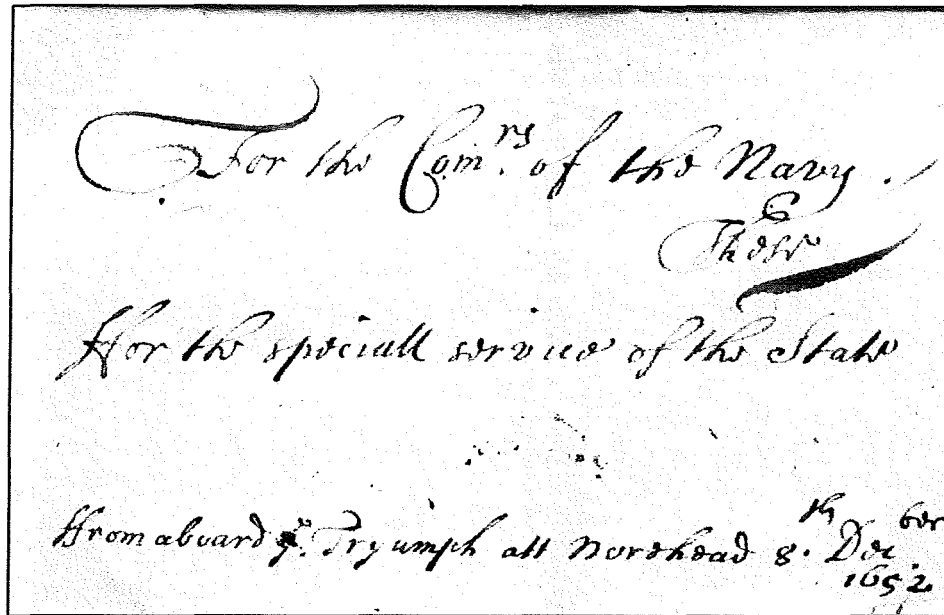
THE DECEMBER MEETING

Our annual meeting at Burton-on-Trent was this year given over to the topic of 'Military Mail', and in the afternoon we were entertained by Richard Farman on his home ground. What follows in the next four pages can be no more than a very brief account of a wide-ranging display of superb postal history.

Richard began with a copy of 'Die Martis' from October 1643 which contained an Ordinance of both Houses of Parliament dealing with the raising of money for the maintenance of the Army.



Next came a letter of the Civil War period written in 1652 on board Robert Blake's ship the Triumph at Norhead, and which was endorsed 'ffor the special service of the State'. One of the signees was Valentine Walton, regicide, who as a strict republican whose hostile to Oliver Cromwell, although he was his brother-in-law. This letter is one of the known letters from 1652 and is shown on the next page.



The Union of England and Scotland on 1st May 1707 was represented by a letter written in bath on 27th April and addressed to 'w Bennett/younger of grubet/muster master general of the force in/scotland/at Edinburgh'. This showed a 'BATH' mark, a London Bishopmark, a charge of 3d to London, 'in all 6' which was corrected to 8^d on the reverse.

A letter written from Orgreave Hall, near Alrewas in Staffordshire contained information about the advancing army of Bonnie Prince Charlie. The letter ended with the statement 'We doubt that they will get to Derby before the Duke of Cumberland.' In fact he arrived in derby the next day, 5th December 1745.

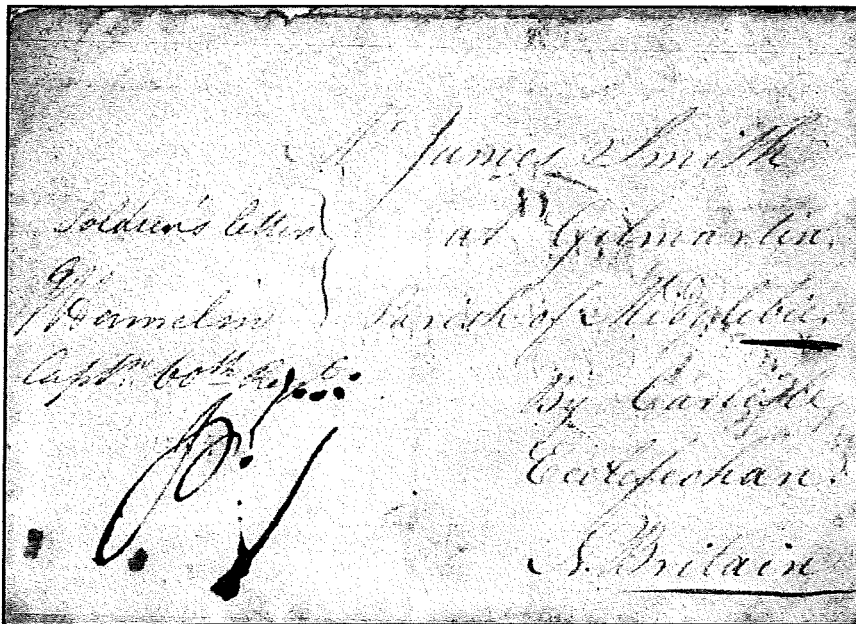
Two letters from the Seven Year's War, 1756-1763, came next. The first was written as a 'Free' letter in Gibraltar on 20th June 1761 and franked by William Whitmore, MP & colonel in the 53rd (Shropshire) regiment of Foot who served in Gibraltar from 1756 to 1758. The letter was carried by favour to Portsmouth where it was posted. On arrival in London on 12th September it was marked with a 'P', denoting 'Privilege Mail', before being sent on to Edinburgh where it was 'to be left in the Laigh Coffee House'.

The endorsement 'Sick & Hurt/Office ppd' was to be seen on a letter sent on 11th April 1756 from London to the 'Physician and Council' of the Haslar Hospital, Gosport. Despite the endorsement the postage was prepaid as denoted by the endorsement in red ink 'P3'. Although the letter was sent on official naval business, the office did not hold the privilege of a 'Free' post. However, the office would have had to account for all paid postage, so it was in effect sent 'Free'.

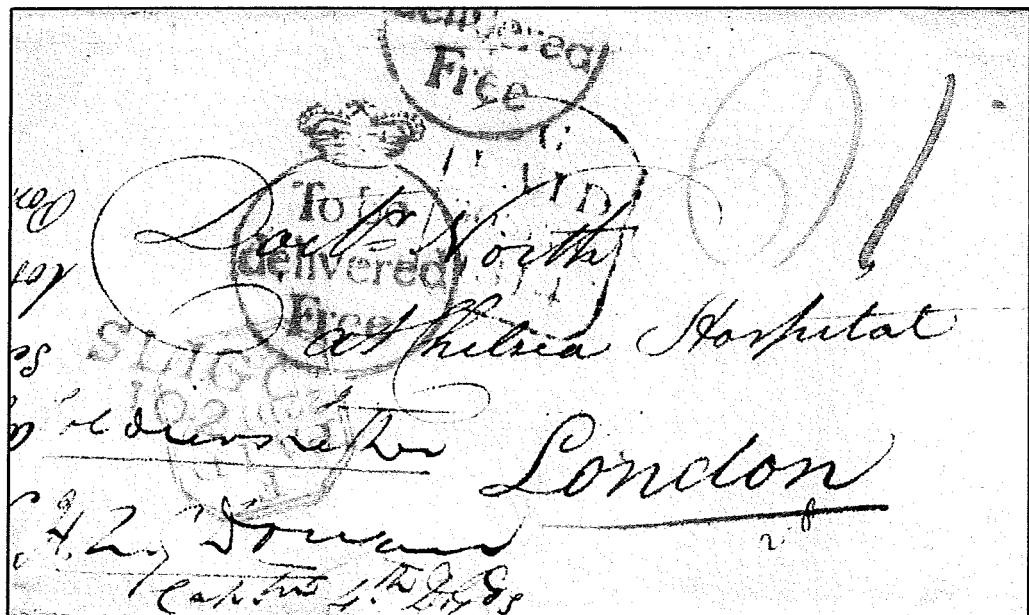
We now come to the heart of Richard's display – the Napoleonic Wars. Although both the Navy and the Army used the 'Free' system from its inception in 1652 to get urgent military mail through the postal system as fast as possible, it was not until 1795 that serving seamen and soldiers were awarded the penny concessionary rate. Despite the heavy penalties for those caught, this concession was abused by officers and other ranks. Richard showed examples of the correct use of this privilege and abuse, both detected and undetected, by officers. There were covers sent at the 1d concessionary rate stamped with the circular mark 'To be delivered Free' since this was applied to show that such letters were carried free within penny and twopenny local posts. An Act of Parliament had given the 'Free' privilege to the hospitals at Greenwich, Chelsea and Kilmamham for the sending of pension letters.

Letters from Loughborough and Melton Mowbray showed how the militia and the yeomanry regiments were raised. These usually consisted of troops of 60 to 80 men, a sergeant and two officers. The officers raising the regiment would write to the army agents appointed by the government so as to arm the regiment with rifles, bayonets and ammunition etc. The letter from Loughborough (sent in July 1798) asked for '60 Stand of Arms, 3 Halberts, 2 Drums in? Flints, 60 Cross Balls with Plates Cartridge Boxes, 4 Officers Sword Belts, 6 extra Breast Plates, and Blank and Balls Cartridges for 60 Rank and File.'

A letter sent by Sergeant John Smith from the hospital at Parkhurst and correctly authorised by J. Hamelin, Captain of 60th Regiment.



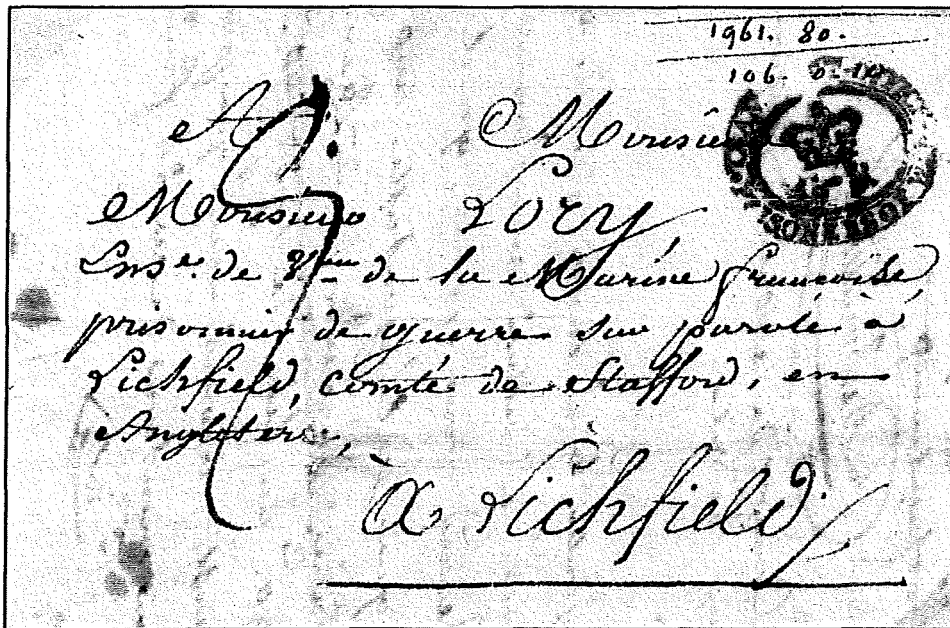
A letter sent from Sligo to the Chelsea Hospital about James Magee, aged 22 years, who lost his left leg at Pondicherry. The letter was countersigned by H.Z. Donovan, Capt'n 4th D. Gds. It was marked with the 'To be delivered/Free' stamp for free delivery within the Twopenny Post to Chelsea.



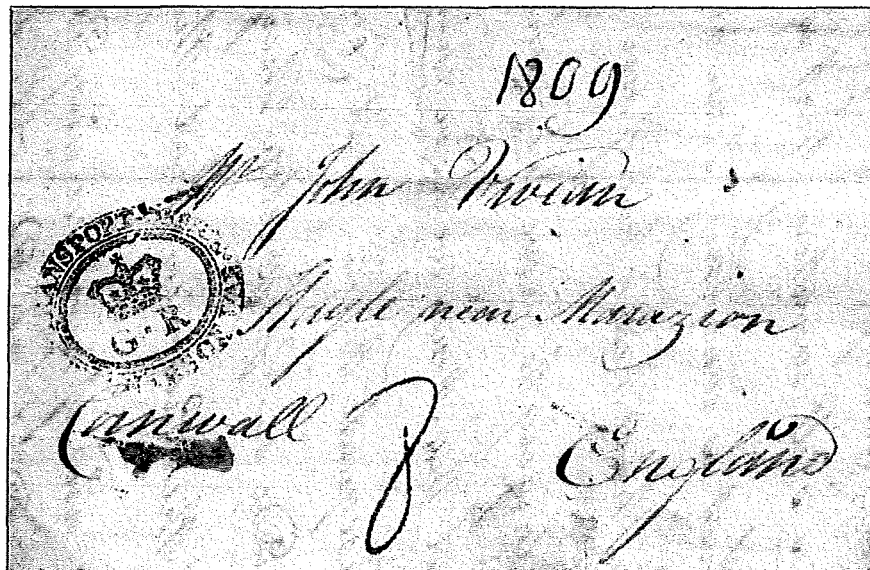
A fascinating section consisted of mail to and from prisoners of war, both British and French. French officers held in this country were allowed parole and were paid 10s 6d a week. In addition to this, they were allowed to earn whatever money they could, which they did by teaching Music, Art, French etc. There were a number of parole towns in the Midlands – Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Lichfield, Leek, Ashbourne, Derby and Chesterfield. Some 450 prisoners at Ashby are listed in the parole book, but probably only 150 resided there at any one time. One of them, a Joseph Gorman, an Irish mercenary fighting for the French broke his parole. After his recapture he spent the rest of his time as a prisoner on one of the hulks.

After the war one of the parole prisoners wrote to his friends in Ashby, making a donation towards building a new Baptist church and saying he hopes to see them all in the following year.

A letter sent in 1813 from Antwerp to a prisoner in Lichfield and struck with the oval 'TRANSPORT OFFICE/(crown)/G-R/PRISONERS OF WAR' handstamp which was a censor's mark which denoted that the letter could be forwarded to the prisoner.

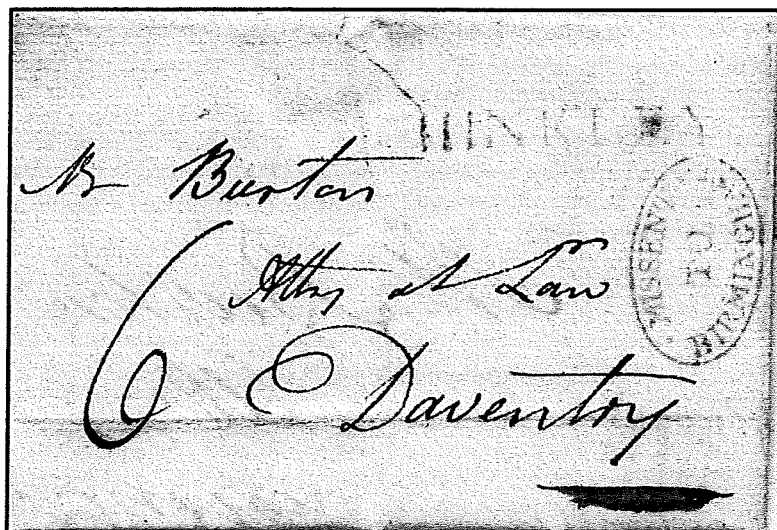


A letter sent by a British P.O.W. from Givet, France on 20th June 1809 via the Cartel Port of Morlaix to Plymouth where it arrived on 9th January 1910. Forwarded to the Transport Office, London and then put into the General Post to Cornwall for which it was charged 8d.

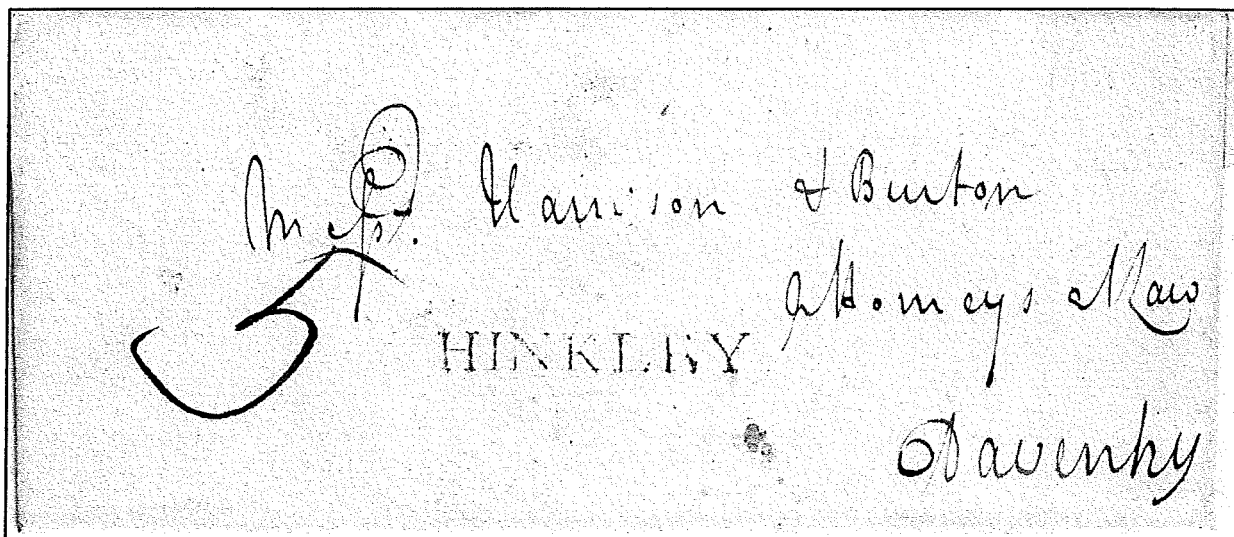


LATE USE OF A HINCKLEY HANDSTAMP?

My thanks to Ian May for sending a copy of the item illustrated below which is a letter sent on 28th April 1812 from the Harrow Inn, near Hinckley, and which carries a mark 'HINKLEY' c38x5mm, struck in red ink, as well as an oval 'MISSENT TO/ BIRMINGHAM'. At first, a glance at the updated County Catalogue would suggest that this is a strike of LC 23b 'HINKLEY/100', recorded used in 1808-09, in which the mileage box has broken away. However that handstamp is only 31mm in length. Further perusal of the catalogue suggests that this could be a very late usage of LC 21 'HINKLEY' which is 40x5mm in size and is recorded used in 1792-97. Could it be that LC 23b was broken so this old handstamp was put into use until the arrival of LC 23d the first recorded use of which is 23rd July 1812.



For comparison, I have shown below a cover struck in black ink with LC 21 in March 1797.



So, it appears that a line should be inserted under LC 21:

re-used

R

28APR1812

“CHARGED ON” AND “MISSCHARGED ON” MAIL

By Ian M May

I first broached this subject in Midland Mail 99 after obtaining a cover with a manuscript “Charged on Coventry” and following a discussion with Ron Stables, a member of the Scottish Postal History Society. Ron pointed me to a series of articles in the Scottish Post which helped explain the meaning of the mark. I have now obtained other items which I consider can be explained in a similar way. In order to assist I need to repeat the method of accounting used by the Post Office for unpaid mail described in the previous article, which is.

- 1 Items received at an office were sorted into batches for the outward mails dependent to the office to which they were to be forwarded.
- 2 Items were then rated and the total number of items and the total charges entered onto a bill and charged to the receiving office to which they were ultimately sent.
- 3 The letters were sent with the appropriate bill to either the receiving office or an intermediate office from where they were forwarded to a further office and so on until they reached the receiving office. When the letter reached the receiving office, the bill would be checked. Mail was only charged to the receiving office and not against any intermediate offices.
- 4 Because letters were charged to the receiving office, it now had the responsibility to collect the relevant charges from the addressees. Any undelivered or uncollected mail was accounted for together with the charges collected. In England the money and accounts were sent to London either fortnightly or monthly. Any interest received on the monies while in the hands of the postmaster was considered to be the postmaster’s perquisite.

The cover shown in Figure 1 dated 22nd March 1839 was, I assume, initially sent to Coventry from Halesowen. I also assume it was charged at Halesowen against Coventry rather than Warwick. On arrival at Coventry it would have had the manuscript “Charged on Coventry” added and then be forwarded to Warwick. The “Charged on Coventry” mark was to inform Warwick to indicate the incorrect charging in their accounts as they would now collect the 6d postage.

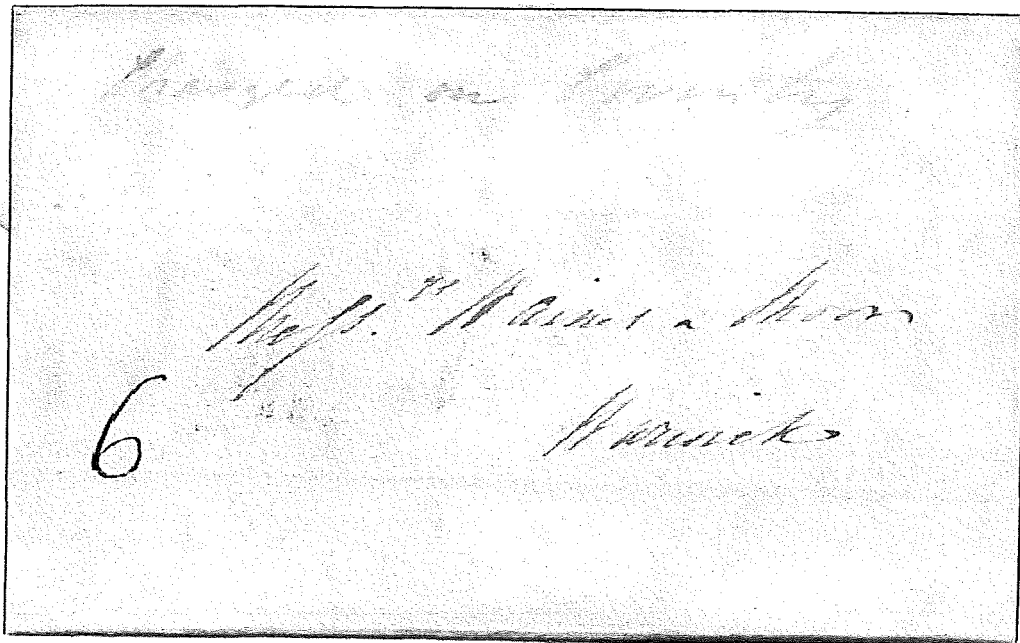


Figure 1 Charged on Coventry

Figure 2 shows a letter dated 2nd September 1827 sent from Buckingham. A similar assessment to the above can be applied. In this case the letter was sent and charged on Warwick. It was then forwarded from Warwick to Henley in Arden.

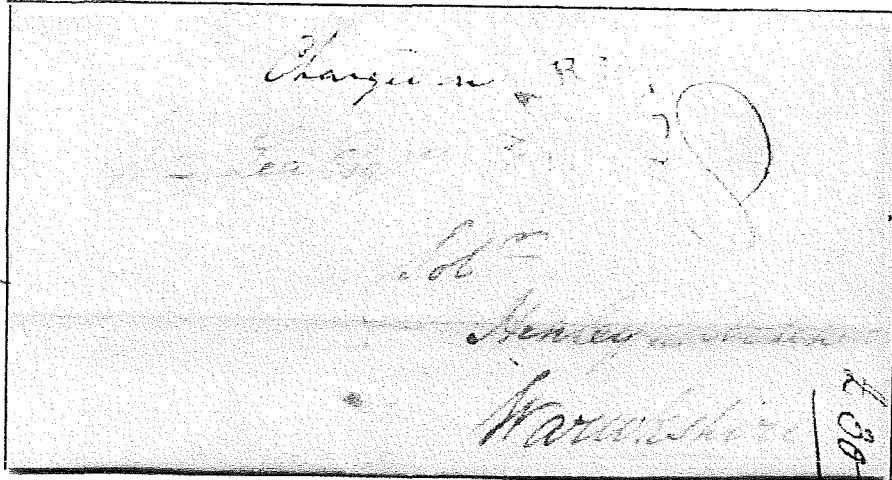


Figure 2 Charged on Warwick

The cover in Figure 3 dated 12th March 1813 was sent from Benthall near Ironbridge to Thurlaston near Dunchurch. The manuscript marking in front of the Coventry mileage mark is "Misschgon" – an abbreviation of "Miss charged on" and I assume has the same meaning as the "Charged on" markings on the covers in Figures 1 and 2. In this case the post town that it should have been billed to is Dunchurch.

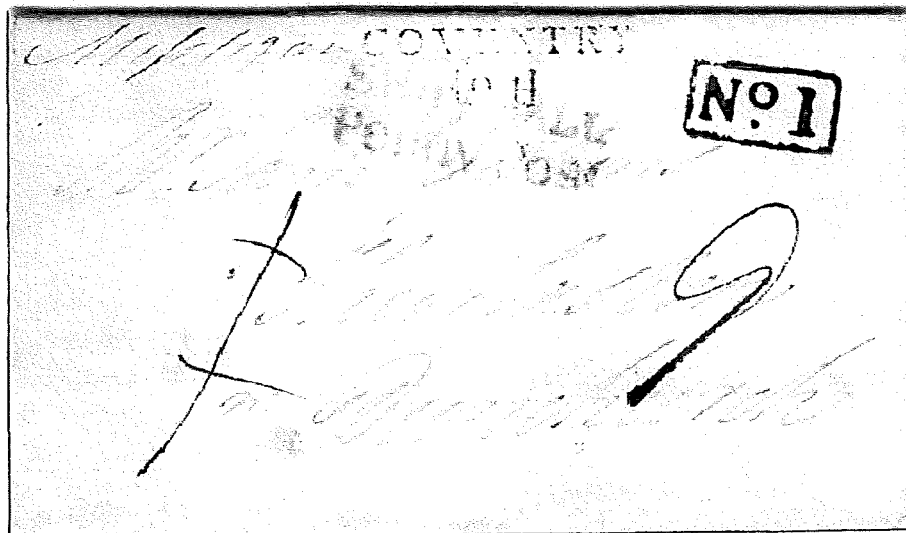


Figure 3 Misschgon Coventry 91

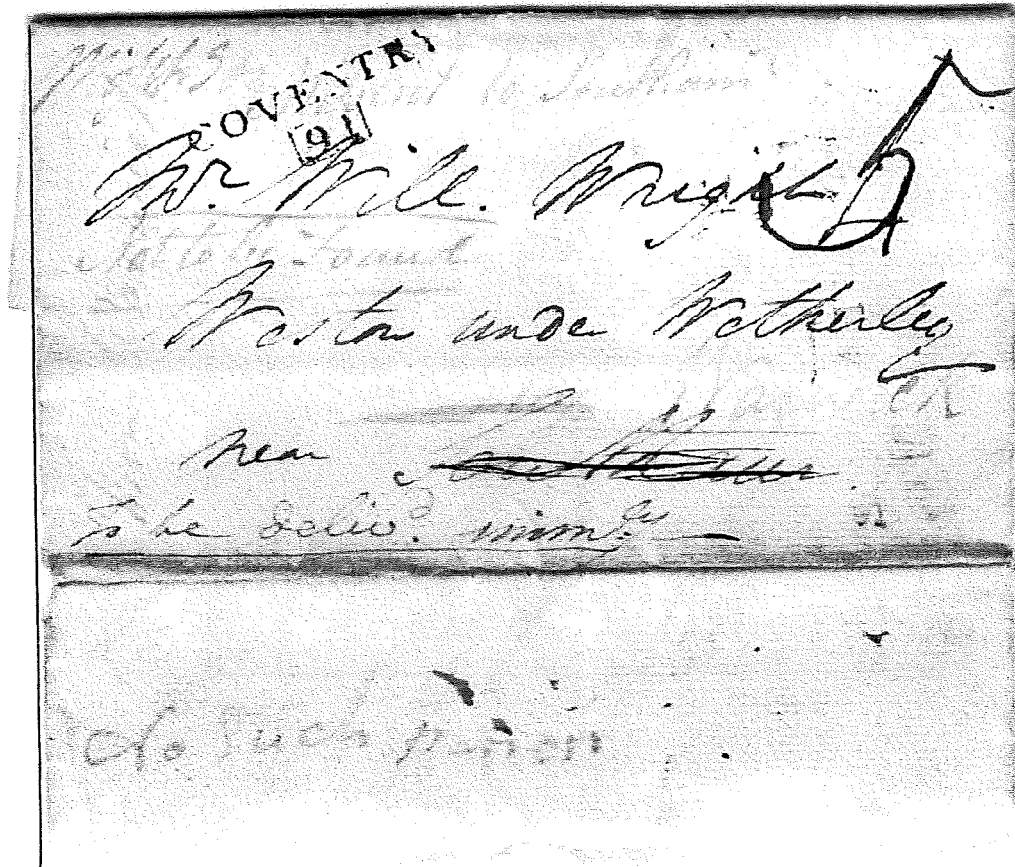


Figure 4 A redirected Misschgon Coventry 91

The cover shown in Figure 4 deserves a bit more of an explanation regarding what I believe to be its travels. The contents are about a girl who has been arrested who had a pocket book in her possession containing some cash notes and a promissory note dated October 11 1806 made payable to Will Wright. The letter, which is from Daventry, was originally addressed to Mr Will Wright, Weston under Wetherly, Southam. Unfortunately the letter is not dated. On the address panel in the top right hand corner is a very faint red Daventry/72 mileage mark – possibly NN46 recorded 1809 – 1816. the letter is rated at 4d, this would be the rate from 1805 for up to 15 miles.

The letter arrived at Southam and a manuscript “missent to Southam” and a faint Southam/83 mileage mark in black, recorded 1816 – 1831, was added vertically on the right hand side. Southam in the address was cancelled and changed to Coventry in red and re-rated at 5d which would be the correct rate from Daventry to Coventry from 1805 – 1839.

It then arrived at Coventry a manuscript “misschgon” with a Coventry 91 mileage mark in black, recorded in 1805 and then as a missent mark in 1813 – 1814; were added. Coventry in the address was cancelled and Warwick added.

When it arrived at Warwick a manuscript mark which could be be “from” or “known” Warwick was added. There are also a manuscript “Not to be found” and on the reverse in pencil “No such person”. It is not obvious were these were added.

Covers with three mileage marks are not very common. It is a pity that two of the three are so faint.

Concluding remarks.

The Postmaster at Coventry seemed very keen to ensure the accounts were kept correctly!

I would be interested in members’ views about the above. Is this marking used elsewhere? I assume it is likely to be used by other post towns. I would also be interested to know why it was used rather than a missent mark. Coventry was using manuscript missent marks by 1813 and missent handstamps by 1811, according to the Society’s Midlands Edition of the British County Catalogue. Warwick was also using a missent handstamp by 1831 and possibly earlier. Of course members of the public would understand a “missent” mark but would probably be puzzled by a “mischarge on” or “charge on” mark.

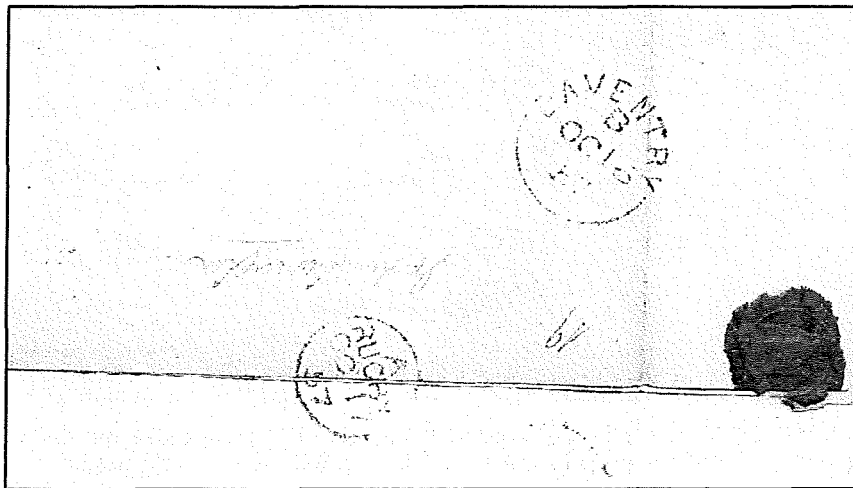
CRESSWELL MARKS

by Ian M May

Recently I came across the item shown in the figure with a pencil note pointing at the Rugby mark stating it was a Cresswell. I was aware of the Cresswell undated circles issued to some sub-offices in Birmingham and Coventry. However, this was new to me so I have tried to discover a bit more and below is what I have found with the help of John Calladine and Martin Scroggs plus some guesswork on my part.

Mackay^[1], page 44, discusses a franking machine which is called Creswell's Rotary Stamping Apparatus. Two examples of postmarks for which it was used are given, namely the Rugby Shoe and a Bagshot Duplex with a small diameter dater. Further details are given, page 92, which also mentions that it was first demonstrated at a Surveyors' Conference at Leamington on 18th March 1857. A further example is shown which comprises of two small London dated circles. Mackay concludes that 50 machines were in use and states that *"it seems clear that Cresswell's invention was more in the nature of a self inking device involving a rotary stamping pad it cannot be regarded as a machine in the modern sense"*.

In MM41^[2] page 8 there is the text of a minute part of which states: ".....a proposal for supplying gratis to all offices a stamping pad invented by Mr Cresswell is under consideration" This minute is dated 6 September 1859. I suspect that the date is in error and it should be 1857. The Rugby Shoe and the Cresswell shown in the figure were issued together on the 9th Sept 1857, SIB^[3] vol 14 page 23.



At this point I have to admit I am somewhat confused. Are there two parts to the Cresswell story?

The first is the Creswell's Rotary Stamping Apparatus which was supplied to larger offices for example Rugby, London and Basingstoke.

The second part being the production of the small diameter undated circles issued to Birmingham and Coventry for example. Were these used with normal inking pads as the number of usages per day would be low?

Or possibly Creswell could see the advantage of his rotary stamping pad and so also tried an experiment with locally produced small diameter undated circles in some of the sub offices of Birmingham and Coventry?

Finally, the earliest recorded date of use of a Cresswell small diameter undated circles I believe is June 1858 - I do not know the origin of the approximate date of July 1857 given in the Society's UDC book^[4] but I suspect they could have been made a later than July 1857. My best estimate would be that they were issued at or about the same time as the Rugby Shoe, possibly even later.

Closure.

This article contains some guesswork – what I am hoping for is members of the Society will be able to correct the above where necessary and provide further information.

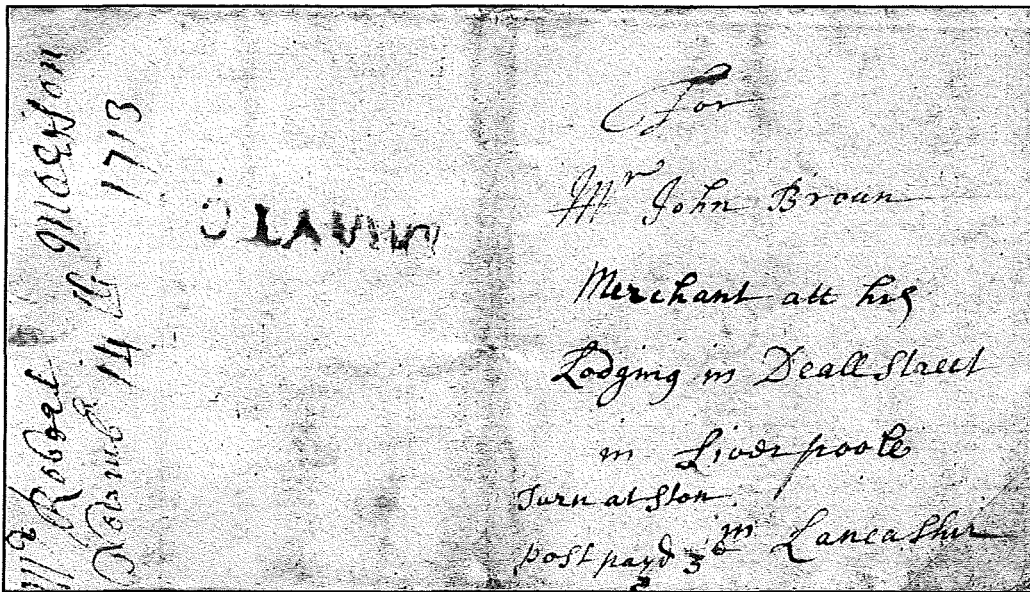
References

- 1 Mackay James A., Postmarks of England and Wales, Self published, 1988.
- 2 Midland Mail, No 41, September 1985.
- 3 Steel impression book, vol 14 page 23.
- 4 Midland Postal History Society, The undated circular marks of the Midland counties, 4th edition, 1996

EARLY MARKET DRAYTON COVERS – A COUNTY CATALOGUE ERROR

by Brian Atkins

It was John Calladine who noticed it at the meeting in Warwick, when I had shown early Market Drayton covers. Quite correctly he pointed out that there was an overlap of dates with SH292 and SH295 and that such an overlap, in the early days, was very unusual. The error, for that is what it is, is mine and mine alone! I placed some information in the wrong column and it remained there all through the publication of the Shropshire postmark book, which Guy Bridges relied on, right through to the publication of the Midland edition of the county catalogue, for which Guy was Shropshire editor. The fact is that SH292 has one record only and the latest date of 22 FEB 1733 quoted in the catalogue, is, in fact, an example of SH295, the dates of which run from 18 OCT 1731 to 08 JUN 1778. If you have the book, please erase 22 FEB 1733 from SH292! The two earliest straight-line marks are illustrated below.



SH290 – Entire dated 14 Nov 1713 to Liverpool, post paid 3d for up to 80 miles under the Act of 1711. Turned at Stone (note endorsement *Turn at Ston!*) via Congelton, Knutsford and Warrington to Liverpool.



SH292 – Entire dated 28 Jan 1726 to London, charged 4d for over 80 miles under the Act of 1711. Originally recorded in the collection of the late Ed Druce but not in his sale, present whereabouts unknown.

MAIL ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY AND ITS CONSTITUENTS, 1840-1875

PART 1

The aim of this article is to show the use that the Post Office made of the trains of the Midland Railway to carry mail up to the year 1875. The article was written for possible inclusion in a journal concerning the Midland Railway, but I hope that in a modified form it will be of interest to members. I have added to the original article a small amount of detail on local mail carried by road where I think it is appropriate to do so and I have the material to hand.

For a general discussion of the relationship between the Post Office and the railway companies, I doubt that Chapter 4 of Martin Daunt's *Royal Mail, The Post Office since 1840*¹ can be bettered.

Mail was first carried by rail in 1830 within two months of the opening of the Liverpool to Manchester Railway. However the replacement of the mail coaches by the railways to carry mail was not without problems, particularly with regard to the remuneration due to the railway companies.

For over half a century from 1785 much of the mail was carried between the larger centres of population by mailcoaches. Although from 1787 the Post Office laid down the design, the Post Office did not own the mailcoaches. They were provided by a number of contractors who also supplied the horses and the driver. The contracts to run the mailcoaches were sought after for they did not have to pay the tolls on the turnpikes, and they took precedence over the other traffic.

An analogous situation on the railways would have been for the Post Office to run their own trains, carrying a small number of passengers, on the lines of the various companies, free of charge. Such a scheme was suggested in the Report from the Select Committee on Railroad Communication of 1838. It is likely that opposition from the railway companies meant that this did not find its way into the Act of 1838.

The first clause of 1838 Railway (Conveyance of Mails) Act² empowered the Postmaster General to order a company, on giving at least 28 days notice, to carry mails and guards by ordinary or special trains running at such hours and speeds and making such stops as he directed. In practice, these trains were divided into two groups – notice and agreement trains. For the former, the timetable was fixed by the Post Office, whereas for the latter, the timetable and stopping places were fixed by mutual agreement. In addition to these were the ordinary trains of the companies which the Post Office found suitable for carrying mail.

Section II of the Act enabled the P.M.G. to demand, if required, the whole of a carriage be used to carry mail. While Section III stated that if required the railway company must provide a separate carriage for sorting letters.

Section IV directed that, if required by the P.M.G, instead of being carried in the railway carriages, the mail was to be conveyed in mailcoaches carried on the '*usual or proper Trucks or Frames*' of the Company.

As regards payment to the railway companies, Section VI of the Act said that they should receive a '*reasonable remuneration*' which was to be determined by mutual agreement or, failing that, by arbitration. Details of any arbitration were given in Section XVI; the matter was to be decided by two arbitrators, one representing the railway company and the other the Post Office, who, if they could not agree, could choose an umpire whose decision was binding. In 1854 this was changed to a system in which a single arbitrator, acceptable to both sides, heard evidence from both sides before making an award. The weakness of the 1838 Act was that it did not give any guidance on how a '*reasonable remuneration*' was to be calculated.

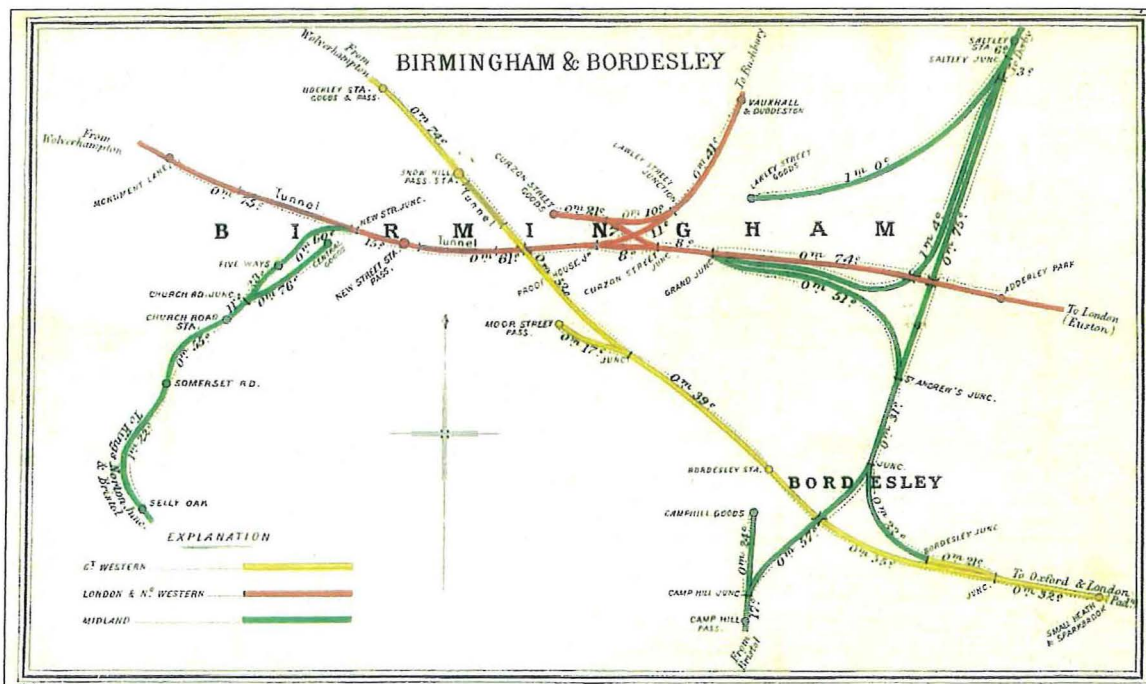
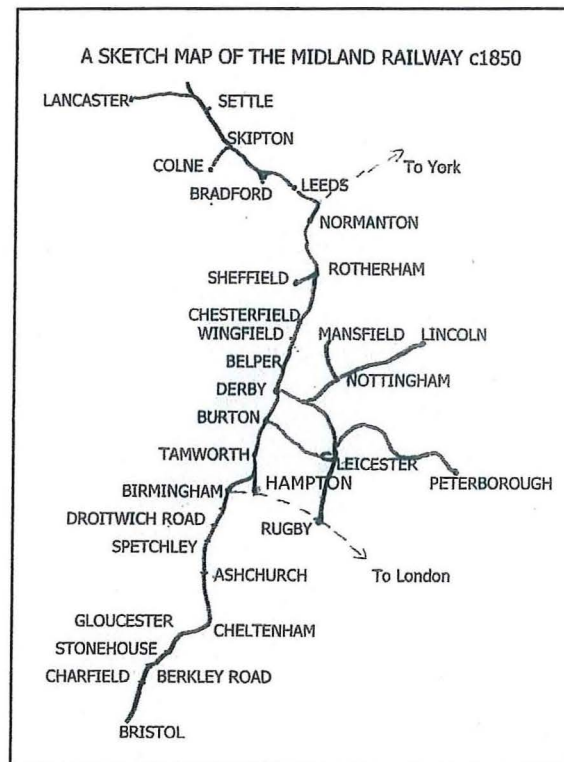
It may be helpful to understand some of what follows by briefly looking at the various Acts of Parliament that dealt with the carriage of mail by the railways during the period covered by this article.

An Act of 1844³ stated that the mails should be carried at a speed which the Inspector General of Railways certified to be safe, not exceeding 27 mph, including stoppages. It is clear that later the post Office and the railway companies connived at breaking this regulation. I cannot find when this speed was altered but it was still in force ten years later. The same Act empowered the Post Office to send any mail guard with bags, not exceeding the weight of luggage allowed to other passengers, by any trains other than a mail train. The Midland, and possibly other companies, charged a second class rail fare for this.

The sending of the letter bags by rail without a Post Office employee in charge of them was authorised in 1847⁴.

The Regulation of Railways Act, 1868⁵ enabled the P.M.G. to demand that any special train used to carry mail be appropriated for the exclusive use of the Post Office. Two other clauses in that Act are interesting from the social history aspect. The first required the railways to provide smoking compartments for each class of passenger when there was more than one carriage of each class in the train; the other stated that the railway companies would be subject to a fine of not less than £200 or more than £500 if they in any way provided transport to prize fights.

Although the Midland Railway did not begin to work the North Western Railway to Lancaster until 1852, it is shown on the upper map to fit in with later text. The lower map is of a later period, being taken from the 1910 atlas of the Railway Clearing House Junction Diagrams and has been reduced in size. The Lawley Street terminus of the B&D was situated on the site of the Lawley Street Goods Depot and was sandwiched between the lines of the L&B and Grand Junction lines whose stations were to the east of the Curzon Street Good Depot.



The Regulation of Railways Act, 1873⁶ required a railway company to carry without any prior notice any mail, whether in charge of a Post Office guard or not, and to provide reasonable facilities for the receipt of such mail at any station. [I wonder if this Act has been repealed as it would, I imagine, cause a not inconsiderable amount of consternation if Royal Mail turned up at Euston with a large van full of letter bags and demanded that Virgin Trains take them to Glasgow on the next train.]

The first constituent of what was to become the Midland Railway to carry mail was the **Birmingham & Derby Junction Railway**. The contractors of the Birmingham and Sheffield mailcoach were given notice to quit on 5th April 1840. The next day a train carrying mail that had arrived on the London & Birmingham Railway left the Lawley Street terminus in Birmingham at about 3 a.m., and stopped at Coleshill, Tamworth and Burton-on-Trent, arriving in Derby at 5.40 a.m. In the opposite direction mail was carried on a train that left Derby at 8.25 p.m. The Post Office paid £547.10.0 p.a. to the B&D. In addition the London & Birmingham Company demanded £73.7.7½ p.a. for carrying the guard with his mail bags between Birmingham and Hampton-in-Arden.

In November 1839, the people of Nottingham complained about the lateness of their mail and asked for it to be carried on the **Midland Counties** line from Derby which had opened on 30th May 1839. At first it was not possible for the Post Office to grant this request, but on the 6th April 1840, the train from Birmingham carried mail for Nottingham, the letters going forward from Derby on a Midland Counties train at 6 a.m. and after an acceleration on the Midland Counties at 3.30 a.m. Although a sum of £146 had been agreed for this service, in November 1840, Mr Bell wrote that this train must be withdrawn unless a further payment was made. Colonel Maberley replied that the matter should be held over as the introduction of the line between Birmingham and Gloucester would entail a change in the time of the mail between Derby and Nottingham. In April 1842 the Post Office gave the company three months notice of their intention to stop using the Derby-Nottingham line. They had found that it would be cheaper to use a mail cart.

The **North Midland Railway** first carried mail from Derby to Sheffield on 17th June 1840. Bags were set down at Belper, Wingfield (for Alfreton and Mansfield), Chesterfield and Rotherham. Sheffield was served by trains on the Rotherham & Sheffield Railway. An arbitration award made in January 1842 stated that the P.M.G. was to pay the Sheffield and Rotherham Company £1.3.0 a day for conveying the mails in compliance with notices of 23rd July 1840 and 12th February 1841.

Throughout 1841 and 1842 the complaints about delays to the mail trains on the North Midland were so numerous that eventually Col. Maberley decided that the Company should be allowed more time to run the train over their line. This meant that the mailcoach from Edinburgh to Berwick and Darlington had to leave at an earlier time.

The **Midland Counties Railway** ran services through to Rugby for the first time on 30th June 1840. On 24th August a train left Rugby for Leeds with mail taken up from the London & Birmingham R.P.O.⁷ In a schedule drawn up by one of the surveyors the train was to leave Rugby at 1.15 a.m. and reach Leeds at 6.45 a.m. The up train was to leave Leeds at 7 p.m., reaching Rugby at 12.30 a.m. If these were indeed the times, they had certainly changed by December 1841 as will be seen below. Leicester, Loughborough and Derby received their London mail by the down train, but letters for Belper, Wingfield and Chesterfield continued to circulate through Birmingham, for as the surveyor, Mr Godby, said, 'otherwise too much work will fall on the R.P.O.' Consequently, two mail trains ran north of Derby. That from Birmingham left Derby over two hours after that from Rugby.

A minute of 19th August 1840 records that the Treasury had authorised the use of a room at Derby station as a sorting office to save the time that would be lost in taking the bags to and from the post office. The lack of such a facility at Birmingham was to cause problems in later years.

In 1842 the Post Office realised that a train left Leicester for Rugby at 11.50 a.m., fourteen minutes after the arrival there of the Yarmouth-Birmingham mailcoach, and connected at Rugby with the day mail for Birmingham. It was decided to use this train and withdraw the mailcoach between Leicester and Birmingham from 5th July. There was a saving of over £300 for the Post Office.

For some reason which is difficult to see some of the local gentry asked in 1843 that the 9.45 a.m. train from Rugby be used to bring the letters to Leicester instead of that at 6.30 a.m. Although he had his doubts, Colonel Maberley granted the requests. Inevitably there were complaints when the letters arrived in Leicester three hours later than before, and a request was made that the return post be sent by a train at 6 p.m. instead of 11.30 a.m.

In anticipation of an earlier arrival in Birmingham of the mail from Bristol a notice was issued on 5th January 1841 by the Post Office demanding that, from 4th February, mail should be carried between Birmingham & Derby according to the following timetable:

Birmingham d	12.15 a.m.	Derby d	11 p.m.
Coleshill a	12.54 a.m.	Burton a	11.33 p.m.
Tamworth a	1.20 a.m.	Tamworth a	12.15 a.m.
Burton a	2.2 a.m.	Coleshill a	12.46 a.m.
Derby a	2.40 a.m.	Birmingham a	1.25 a.m.

The Company replied that the charge they made for running these trains had proved to be inadequate to cover the expenses. As the mails were carried by special trains at times set by the P.M.G which were not convenient for the traffic of the Company the directors asked for a payment of 4s 6d per mile or £21.3.0 a day. The reaction of the P.M.G. was to send the matter to arbitration where Robert Stephenson for the B&D and Lieutenant Harness could not agree on a figure. The award of Robert Stephenson is shown in Appendix A. The umpire, Sir John Burgoyne, awarded £14.13.3 a day or 3s 1d a mile. In 1843, this sum was reduced to a fraction over 2s 7d per mile⁸.

As the trains from Birmingham and Rugby now connected at Derby, that from Birmingham was withdrawn north of Derby, the bags being taken forward by the Rugby train. The London bags for Belper, Alfreton and Chesterfield with their enclosures were transferred at Rugby instead of Birmingham. The Midland Counties timetable of 1st December 1841⁹ shows the mail train leaving Rugby at 12.20 a.m. and arriving in Derby at 2.49 a.m. The earlier arrival in Derby enabled the mail to Nottingham to be sent out over two hours earlier at 3.40 a.m.

An acceleration of the night mail train on the London & Birmingham line, which started on 6th April 1841, resulted in a change of the times of the mail trains between Birmingham and Derby. The train from Derby left there at the same time but arrived in Birmingham twenty-five minutes earlier. The train from Birmingham left twenty-five minutes later and arrived in Derby at the same time as before.

The manager of the B&D had suggested the later departure from Birmingham as *'it will in the event of the Lancashire mails being late prevent risk of collision from our Mail Train following the London Train too closely ...'* Also the L&B were not happy that the 1.25am arrival in Birmingham would be only five minutes before their train from London. They wanted a gap of at least ten minutes.

From the 25th June 1842 the B&D used their direct line from Whitacre to Birmingham; Coleshill was then served from Forge Mills station.

We now turn our attention to a line to the south of Birmingham.

Although the line of the **Birmingham and Gloucester Company** did not reach Curzon Street, the station of the L&B, until August 1841, the line was used to carry mail from 6th February 1841 when the northern terminus was at Camp Hill. We can be certain about this date for the Birmingham-Bristol, Birmingham-Bath and Birmingham-Worcester mailcoaches were withdrawn on 5th February 1841¹⁰. The Bristol mail now arrived in Birmingham four hours sooner than before.

Each night two trains were to run in both directions. It was proposed that the departures from Birmingham should be at 12.34 a.m. and 3 a.m., while the times of arrival in Birmingham would be at 9.50 p.m. and 11.35 p.m. The departures from Gloucester were to be at 7.15 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.¹¹.

The terms demanded for this service were unacceptable to the Post Office, so the matter was referred to arbitration where a sum of 2s 7½d a mile or nearly £28 a day was awarded.

Mr Stow in response to a question from the Company said that the mail coaches would not be forwarded by the railway and that the accommodation required was the same as that on the Midland Counties and North Midland – two compartments of a second class carriage properly fitted up for the guard and bags.

The mailcoaches were probably those from Gloucester to Bristol and Gloucester to Bath which were the remaining parts of the routes of the first two of the three coaches listed above. This was sometimes done when a line under construction only covered part of the route of the mailcoach. For instance the coach from London to Bristol was carried on the G.W.R. between Paddington and Twyford, then Reading and finally Hay Lane during the construction of the line to Bristol.

Mr Stow may have had in mind two instances on the G.W.R. and one on the Grand Junction when sparks from the engine set fire to the mail bags. Thereafter, the coaches were covered with tarpaulins.

Worcester was served by a mailcart from the station at Spetchley, Tewkesbury received it mail by train from the station at Ashchurch, and Droitwich's mail came through Droitwich Road Station

In November 1841, the Birmingham & Gloucester offered to provide a sorting office at Gloucester station for £10 p.a. This was accepted and sorting started on 22nd February 1842. This was an important facility for the mail from the mailcoaches passing through Gloucester for the railway could be sorted at the station rather than taking it to the post office.

When the question arose in early 1843 of having one instead of two mail trains in each direction to save over £5700 p.a., Maberly was not in favour as to have done so would have delayed considerably the posts to South Wales where the people were expecting to receive their mail earlier in the day. The proposal was to dispense with the first of the two trains from Gloucester to Birmingham, and the second from Birmingham to Bristol. The first train from Birmingham was to leave at 1.45 a.m. instead of 12.44 p.m.

The times of the northbound trains (Some intermediate stations have been omitted.) along with the onward connections are shown below:

Gloucester	7.15 p.m.	9 p.m.
Tewkesbury	7.51 p.m.	9.35 p.m.
Birmingham	9.45 p.m.	11.30 p.m.
To London	11.2 p.m.	
To Derby	12.30 a.m.	
To Lancaster		1.50 a.m.

A mailcoach arrived in Gloucester at 6.51 p.m. with mail from the southwest, including the packet port of Falmouth. These mails went forward on the 7.15 p.m. train. Mailcoaches from Carmarthen and Pembroke arrived in Gloucester at 7.30 p.m. and 8 p.m. respectively. The mails from these went forward on the second train along with those carried by a mailcoach from Aberystwyth which arrived in Tewkesbury at 7.48 p.m.

As there was an hour between the arrival of the second train in Birmingham and the departure of the train to Derby, it might be thought that the letters for the Derby line could have been carried on the second train. However, the surveyor pointed out that although the two stations were only a few hundred yards apart, the letters had to be taken to the post office for sorting before being taken back to the station, and there was not time to do this within an hour.

Southbound, the times of the two trains and the times of arrival in Birmingham of trains from the north and from London were:

From Lancaster	11.42 p.m.	
Derby		1 a.m.
London		1.30 a.m.
Birmingham	12.44 a.m.	3.10 a.m.
Ashchurch	2.38 a.m.	5.4 a.m.
Cheltenham	2.56 a.m.	5.22 a.m.
Gloucester	3.14 a.m.	5.40 a.m.

The first of these trains was connected to three mailcoaches which carried mail which had originated in London. A coach for Aberystwyth left Tewkesbury at 3.53 a.m.; Coaches left Gloucester for Pembroke and Carmarthen at 4 a.m. and 4.15 p.m. A train at 1.45 a.m. replacing the above two trains would have meant holding back the departure of these coaches.

This Maberly was reluctant to do, though the places in South Wales would have received mail from the Derby line a day earlier. At the time an acceleration of the mail from London to Ireland via Birkenhead was being considered, and Maberly ended his report by commenting that an earlier arrival in Birmingham of the mail train from London would facilitate the use of only one mail train from Birmingham to Gloucester.

The mail from London to Ireland was accelerated on 12th April 1844^{12,13}. The mail train from London then arrived in Birmingham at 12.57 a.m. and left for the North at 1.17 a.m. The up train arrived at 12.45 a.m. and departed for London at 1.5 a.m.

Mr Stow, Superintendent of Mails, reported in the January that apart from the junction between the up night mail from Lancaster and the down night mail from Derby being disturbed, there would be no other inconvenience other than the dispatch of the mailcoach from Tewkesbury to Aberystwyth being put back twenty minutes.

The B&G was served with a notice to the effect that there would be one instead of two trains in each direction. The 7.15 p.m. train from Gloucester and that at 3 a.m. from Birmingham were withdrawn. The time of the 12.44 a.m. dispatch from Birmingham was moved to 1.10 a.m. The train from Gloucester connected at Birmingham with the mail trains to Derby, London and Lancaster while the 1.10 a.m. departure took mail from all three of the trains from those places.

The connection with the train from Derby, which arrived at 1 a.m., was made possible by Derby exchanging direct bags with towns served by the line between Birmingham and Bristol, so avoiding the need for sorting at Birmingham.

Although here was an interval of seventeen minutes between the arrival of the train from Derby and the departure of the train to Lancaster, Mr Stow said that it would be possible to transfer the bags from one line to the other in that time.

Mr Godby pointed out that the train from Lancaster would arrive fifteen minutes after the departure of the train for Derby, so letters from the north-west and Ireland for the Derby line would be left behind. It was not possible to alter the times of the train for Derby if a connection was to be made with the down night mail at Derby. A time bill of April 1845 shows the train leaving Birmingham for Derby at 12.30 a.m. This time was altered to 12.05 a.m. on 30th June 1845, so it appears no attempt was made to maintain the connection at Derby.

An arbitration award for the remaining service between Birmingham and Gloucester was £4.17.2 a day or 11d. per mile – a saving of £8395.17.11 p.a. for the Post Office. A table of information required by the Treasury stated that the mail bags were carried in a compartment of a carriage, 11ft 7in long, 6ft wide and 6ft 4in in height. The average weight of the bags carried from Birmingham was about 6 cwt, with a maximum weight of a little over 8 cwt, while those sent from Gloucester had an average weight of 5 cwt with a maximum of over 6cwt.

On 22nd July 1844, the line between Gloucester and Bristol was used to carry mail for the first time but the minute did not give the times of the trains used. This resulted in the withdrawal of the mailcoaches between Bristol & Gloucester and Bristol & Stroud along with the introduction of the following posts: a double ride between Charfield Station and Wotton-under-Edge; a double ride between Berkeley Road Station and Dursley; a double ride between Stonehouse Station and Stroud; a ride from Stroud to Dunkirk via Woodchester and Nailsworth; a foot post between Gloucester and Painswick; a foot post Dursley-Uley-Kingscote and a foot post from Wotton to Wickwar.

No doubt the difference in gauge between the two lines was responsible for an allowance being paid at Gloucester for helping the guard transfer the mail bags from the Bristol trains to those for Birmingham.

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY

Although the Act authorising the formation of the Midland Railway did not receive the Royal assent until May 1844, the start of that year is a convenient point to start this section for a minute of 10th January 1844 stated that the Treasury had approved the establishment of a day mail from Rugby to Newcastle. A further minute of 27th January recorded that the down day mail should be introduced with as little delay as possible.

The same minute said that there would not be an up day mail as it would be much more expensive than the down train. However, a week later it was reported that a return day mail from Newcastle would expedite letters from the North of England for London, the South of England and the Eastern Counties by up to 24 hours. The terms obtained from the various railway companies for a proposed up day mail proved to be acceptable, particularly as the train would carry few passengers over part of the route. It was said that this train would restore the advantages given by the old London and Edinburgh mailcoach.

The Treasury gave permission in May 1844 for the up day mail to run daily. It had been intended to start the service on 1st June, but this was dependent upon the opening of the Darlington & Newcastle Railway which did not open until 19th June. The P.M.G. had signed the timebills and notices for both the up and down trains in May. The date of 12th June was inserted into these notices for the start of the two services. The 19th June is more likely to have been the starting date unless mail carts were used between Newcastle and Darlington. I have not been able to find any mention of that.

Colonel Maberly felt that benefits of the down day mail should be confined to Leicester, Nottingham (served by a train from Kegworth), Derby, Belper, Rotherham, Sheffield and Leeds. The last two towns were to receive their letters by trains from Masborough and Normanton respectively. There was not only the cost of the train to be considered but also the allowances for taking the bags to and from the stations as well as the increased wages of the letter carriers for making the extra delivery. With regard to Loughborough, Chesterfield, Barnsley and Wakefield, he felt, and Lord Lichfield, the P.M.G. agreed, that an account should be kept of the number of letters to be benefitted before authorising the extra expenditure. These two trains, together with a mailcoach between Leicester and Coventry, enabled the Post Office to dispense with the use of the two local trains between Leicester and Rugby mentioned above.

Towards the end of May 1844 Mr Hudson offered, on behalf of the separate railway companies, to run a travelling post office with the night mail in both directions between Rugby and Newcastle for the same payment they already received. While Maberly recommended that the P.M.G. should accept this offer, he was fully aware of Hudson's motives for he wrote,

"Mr Hudson naturally looks forward to the completion of the Railways by the Eastern line to Scotland, and in his desire to promote this great object, in which all the Companies are interested alike, it is easy to discover the motive which induces him to facilitate the acceleration of the Mails on easy terms for the Post Office."

A year later the Treasury approved the introduction of a TPO between Rugby and Newcastle. A minute of 5th July recorded that the arrangements for the new TPO were working well, so it is possible that it ran for the first time on 30th June 1845, for from that date the Birmingham-Derby mail train left Birmingham and arrived in Derby twenty-five minutes earlier.

The contractor of the Derby and Nottingham mailcoach gave notice of his notice to quit on 5th April 1846, or earlier if possible. The Midland offered to run trains in conjunction with the mail trains for £350 p.a. which was £15 cheaper than the mailcoach.

Although two of the mail trains between Birmingham and Bristol were withdrawn in 1844, within two years two others had been introduced. A minute of January 1846 records that an offer of 8d per mile only applied to the trains leaving Gloucester at 4 a.m. and Bristol at 7 p.m. which at the time the offer was made were the only trains used to carry mail bags. The offer did not apply to the trains (carrying a guard and mail bags) leaving Gloucester at 2.05 p.m. and Bristol at 11 a.m. Under the Act of Parliament the Company could only claim the ordinary fare of a second class passenger. A further minute in the same month said that the directors of the Company had clearly misunderstood the letters sent by Mr Stow as to the nature of the arrangements for the midday local post which had recently been introduced. The mail guards were to be told that they must not use the compartment of a carriage, which Mr Stow had understood

The time of the departure of the train from Birmingham was altered on 1st April 1846 on the later dispatch of the night mail train from London. No details were given but the December 1848 time-table shows a departure at 1.40 a.m., thirty minutes later than before.

A minute of March 1846 records that a Midland train to York was to carry the bags for the Newcastle line from London to Rugby. Initially, Maberly had insisted that the bags should continue to be carried on the London & Birmingham mail train on the grounds that there would be a greater risk of delay at Rugby if the bags were carried on the York train. [Why this should have been so is not clear.] But Mr Bell had written saying that the Midland would find it difficult to carry out the change fixed for 1st April unless the bags were carried on the York train. The P.M.G. then agreed to this on the understanding that it was being tried as an experiment and should it lead to any delay in the dispatch from Rugby, the bags would again be sent by the Birmingham train.

The line from Nottingham to Lincoln opened on 4th August 1846. The Post Office immediately made plans to use it to carry the night mail from London. However, the Midland did not intend to run a train from Nottingham in connection with the down night mail, nor were they prepared to alter the time of the train from Nottingham to Derby to fit in with the earlier departure from Leeds of the up night mail. Inevitably the Post Office served the appropriate legal notices and time bills on the Company.

The Midland demanded 1s 6d per mile for the night mail from Nottingham to Lincoln. Maberly felt that this was reasonable but 1/- a mile for the return mail was too high as the time was not inconvenient for passenger traffic. He suggested the matter should be referred to arbitration, although Lord Lichfield, the P.M.G., preferred to avoid arbitration. A minute of 14th December 1847 records an award of £1.11.3 per day for the night mail from Lincoln to Nottingham - the equivalent of 11'3^d per mile - only a little lower than that demanded by the railway company.

The Treasury authorised in March 1847 the extension of the down day mail to Newark and Lincoln as there were on average over 1,000 letters that would be carried. The arrival time in Lincoln would be at 5.35 p.m. - "*in ample time for the delivery of the letters*". A minute of 24th April records the acceptance of the terms of 3d. a mile with the bags in the charge of the Company's guard. The same terms applied to a train from Lincoln which connected to the down day mail at Derby.

(to be continued)

REFERENCES

1. Royal Mail The Post Office since 1840, M.J. Daunton, The Athlone Press, 1985. ISBN 0 48511280 9.
2. Post 114/53. An Act to provide for the Conveyance of Mail by Railways, 1 & 2 Victoria, Chap. 98.
3. Post 114/53. 7 & 8 Victoria Chap. 85, Section XI.
4. Post 114/53. 10 & 11 Victoria, Chap. 85, Section XVI
5. Post 114/53 Regulation of Railways Act, 1868, 31 & 32 Victoria, Chap 119, Section 36.
6. Post 114/53 Regulation of Railways Act, 1873, 36 & 37 Victoria, Chap 98, Section 18.
7. Post 30/49A Midland Counties Railway; Rugby-Leeds Mail Service.
8. Post 30/86A Midland Railway Contract, 1852.
9. RAIL 981/345 Midland Counties Railway Timetable, December 1841. (National Archives)
10. Midland Mail 127/10
11. Post 30/50B London, Bristol, Gloucester & Cirencester Mail Acceleration.
12. Post 30/58B Ireland & England Mail Services Accelerated, Part 1.
13. Post 30/59 Ireland & England Mail Services Accelerated, Part 2.

(Continued on page 24)

Appendix A, Robert Stephenson's Award to the Birmingham & Derby Railway in 1841

Type of Expense	Award		
	£	s	d
2 Train Enginemen - ½ a day each at 7/- a day	7	0	
2 Train Firemen - ½ a day each at 4/- a day	4	0	
1 Pilot Engineman at Hampton – 1 day at 7/-	7	0	
1 Pilot Fireman at Hampton – at 4/-	4	0	
1 Pilot Engine man at Derby – 1 day at 7/-	7	0	
1 Pilot Fireman at Derby – 1 day at 4/-	4	0	
2 Labourers at Derby, pumping water, loading coke etc	6	0	
Engine Cleaners at Derby and Hampton – 1 day each at 3/-	6	0	
1 Man pumping water, loading coke etc at Hampton	3	0	
1 Man at Kingsbury and Oakley, pumping water - ½ day at 3/-	2	0	
Superintendence	3	11	
Coke for Engines, 3 tons at 20/6 per ton	3	1	6
Repairs of Engines at 5d a mile, 97½ miles (See Note 1)	2	0	7½
Oil for 3 Engines, 2 gallons at 4/- a gallon	8	0	
Waste & Petty Stores	4	0¾	
Depreciation of 3 Engines & Tenders (See Note 2)	1	6	3
Maintenance of Way	1	5	8
Coaching, Wear and Tear (See Note 3)	12	0	
2 Guards, half a day each	4	7	
Porters at Hampton, Tamworth and Burton (See Note 4)	12	0	
Derby Station, rent etc	4	3	
Toll paid for use of Birmingham Station	19	6	
Gatekeepers (See Note 5)	4	0	
Oil, Grease and Stationery (See Note 6)	12	11	
Mileage Duty on Passengers	7	6	
General Management, in proportion to receipts from passengers etc			
Director's and Secretary's Department	15	10	
Engineers, Cashiers and Accountants	14	4	
Rates & Taxes	10	4	
Total	16	17	3¼
Contingencies, Interest & Profit at 50% on total expenses	8	8	7¼
Deduct average nightly receipts for passengers & parcels	5	18	0
Total Expense per day of running the Mail Trains	19	7	11

- Notes. 1. Lt Harness used a distance of 95½ miles; Robert Stephenson used 97½ miles.
 2. Lt Harness calculated the depreciation at 2d a mile; Stephenson used 10% p.a. per day on a cost of £4800.
 3. Depreciation and wear and tear on two 1st class coaches at ½d a mile - 8/-, and on two 2nd class at ¼d per mile - 4/-.
 4. Two porters at Hampton Junction, one at Tamworth and one at Burton each at 3/-.
 5. The gatekeepers were at Coleshill, Glascote Wharf, Burton Drawbridge and Abbots Bromley, ½ day each at 3/- a day.
 6. Oil for Hampton, Tamworth and Burton stations cost 6^s7¼^d
 The cost of oil for train lights was 4^s7½^d
 Grease for four carriages – 4lbs at 2½d cost 10d.
 The cost of Stationary was 10¼d.

Both arbitrators were in agreement, with a few small exceptions, on the working expenses, though Harness separated these into 'ordinary expenses' and 'extra expenses'. However, they differed on the matters of management expenses and profit.

Stephenson wrote that he had tried as far as was possible to determine the actual expenses incurred by the Company in running the mail trains, though some had been omitted as they could not be calculated accurately.

The sum of £20.6 for General Management had been arrived at by dividing the total charge for management by the number of trains that the Company ran. Stephenson admitted that this was strictly not a reliable method, but he could not think of a better one.

In fixing upon 50% as the addition to the actual expenses, he had been guided by the Company's half yearly returns which showed that the working expenses, exclusive of interest on borrowed capital, were £19,712 and the surplus receipts £10,818, making the average surplus 55% of the receipts.

Harness did not agree with the assumption that every train should produce a profit calculated at such a high percentage on the working expenses. He argued that the price paid by the Post Office should repay all the expenses solely incurred for that Department with a return of 5% p.a. on the additional stock required, as well as a toll calculated on the gross weight carried which he gave as 3¼ tons gross over 77 miles 1d per mile which came to £1. 1. 11¼. His total award was £13. 3. 0 per day which he said should be reduced by £5. 6. 10¼ per day if the line were used by other traffic at night.

The umpire's award of £14.13.3 a day was much closer to the sum proposed by Harness than that of Stephenson. Unfortunately, he did not state the reasons for his award.

Continued from page 24.

So as to avoid an inordinately long list of references, I am not generally including references to Post 35. If any members would like the reference to any piece of information, please let me know.

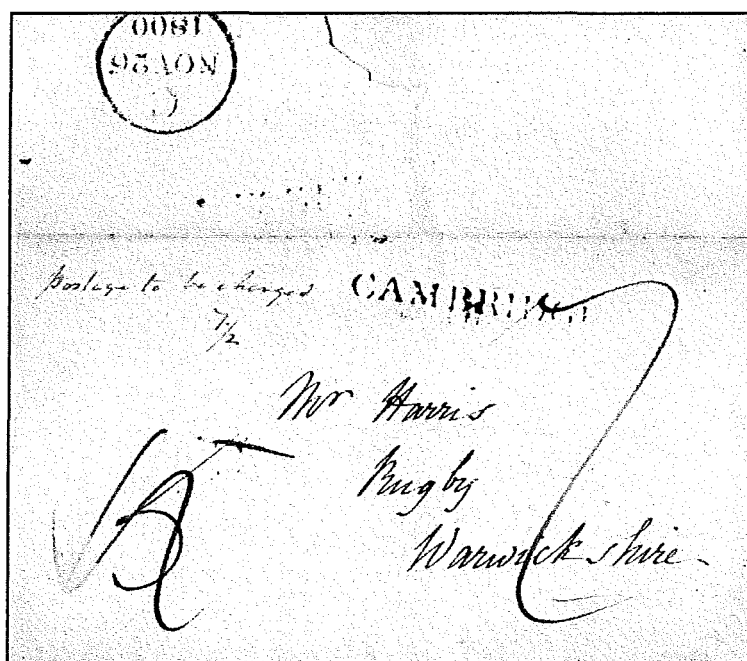
Apart from the histories of the Midland Railway by Williams (5th Edition 1876, reprinted by David & Charles in 1968, Stretton (1903) and Barnes (1966), the other main source of information used is:

The Midland Railway – A Chronology - , John Gough, Wild Swan Publications, 1989. ISBN 0 901461 12 1.

For those interested in the early railway history of the Birmingham area, the first two volumes of Richard Foster's four volume work, 'Birmingham New Street, The Story of a Great Station including Curzon Street', are worth seeking out. They contain some superb photographs, not only of the railways but also the canals and central Birmingham.

AN EXTRA HALFPENNY CHARGE AT RUGBY

Again I am indebted to Ian May for the illustration shown below which is of a letter sent from Cambridge to Rugby in 1800, and which is '*endorsed postage to be charged 7½*'



The extra charge of a halfpenny at Rugby has been mentioned before in Midland Mail – MM 56/9 & MM61/9. However, for those who do not have access to those issues, a brief summary of the facts is included here.

In 1794, the then postmistress, Elizabeth Miller, claimed that when the office was opened by her father, one penny was allowed on each letter carried between Rugby and Dunchurch from where Rugby received its letters. This was reduced to one halfpenny in about 1789 when complaints were made after the tax on the London letters for Dunchurch was raised from 4d to 5d as it had been found that Dunchurch was more than 80 miles from London.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This should appear in early April and will contain all the usual reports plus a continuation of the article on the Midland Railway. However, there is still a need for articles long or short which should be sent to:

John Soer, 51d Barkham Road, Wokingham RG41 2RG or Johnesoer@aol.com