

MIDLAND MAIL



THE BULLETIN OF THE MIDLAND (G.B.) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



President: Mr W.J. Calladine

Chairman:
Mike Young

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

Secretary:
Elizabeth Lewis

Number 76, August 1992

THE LOCAL POST PROJECT

The Society's local post project is approaching the point where the efforts of those directly involved must be transferred from research and data assembly to production of the intended publication. It is therefore essential that members with relevant information pass it to the County Editors as soon as they possibly can. In particular, those members who have not completed 'pink questionnaires' for penny post and 5th Clause items in their collections are asked to do so without delay. There is no practical possibility of issuing a second edition of the intended publication for many years and, if the chance is lost to record all known strikes of the handstamps, to give comprehensive dates of usage and to make an accurate assessment of rarity, it will be too late to put matters right next year. Within the past month, the National Postal Museum has gone to great lengths to provide us with detailed data on all Midland items in their care and it will be a disappointment if it is our own members who let the project down. Please help - now.

W.J.C.

SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS

This is to remind you that subscriptions for the 1992-3 season are now due. Despite increased costs the amount remains unchanged at £5. Our Treasurer, Trevor Clewley, will be pleased to receive cheques for that amount at:

127 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B74 2AJ.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY EDITOR

Following the resignation of J.J. Calladine (not W.J. !) as the Society's Glos County Editor, John Hine has kindly agreed to assume the role. John now lives in Holland and his address is: Klumperstraat 9, 7667 PA Reutum, Netherlands. An air-mail letter weighing not more than 20 grams may be sent to Holland for the inland 1st class letter rate of 24p. As John Hine also has responsibility for the Gloucestershire material in the British County Catalogue of Postal History, he would be pleased to know of new entries or date extensions for that publication.

THE NEXT MEETING

The first meeting of the new season will be a new venture - a joint meeting with the Somerset and Dorset Postal History Group. This is to be held at the Village Hall, Cranham, Gloucestershire on Saturday 26th September at 11.00 a.m. Cranham is close to Cheltenham and Gloucester and has been chosen as being more or less equidistant between the "centres of gravity" of the two societies. It is relatively easy to reach by road or rail.

Each society will provide five 15 minute displays, to be given alternately and viewed in pairs. It is anticipated that there may also be other standing displays. An excellent lunch will be available at the nearby Black Horse public house. Members planning to attend the meeting will find full details on the sheet enclosed and are asked to return the slip to John Calladine before 5th September. We hope the Society will be as well represented as it was at the meeting with the Lancashire and Cheshire PHS last year.

THE REST OF THE 1992-3 PROGRAMME

24th OCTOBER. Committee meeting at 12.30 p.m., followed at 1.30 p.m. by nine sheet displays - "Something Old, Something New". The meeting will be held in the Deacon's Room at Carrs Lane Church Centre (back of Marks and Spencer), Birmingham.

21st NOVEMBER. "All Tied Up", a display by Eric Lewis which begins at 1.30 p.m. in the 70 Club at Carrs Lane Church Centre.

12th DECEMBER. Annual get together at the Bass Museum at Burton-on-Trent. The speaker will be Victor Short with a display suitable for the "season". The meeting will begin at about 10.30 a.m. Lunch will be followed by Victor Short's display.

9th JANUARY. Committee meeting at 12.30 p.m., followed by a display at 1.30 p.m. by Bill Hart entitled "Labels and Funnies on Cover". The meeting will be held in the 70 Club at Carrs Lane Church Centre.

6th FEBRUARY. Our Annual Competitions which will begin at 1.30 p.m. prompt in the 70 Club at Carrs Lane.

13th MARCH. This meeting will be held at the Worcester Guildhall in conjunction with the Worcester Philatelic Society Fair. It has been suggested that we put up some displays for our members or visitors to look at or talk about during the morning so that members will have a chance to discuss any queries they may have. The meeting proper will begin at 2 p.m. and will consist of nine sheet displays on "Inspectors and Instructional Marks". The Fair will open at 10.30 a.m.

3rd APRIL. A joint meeting at the Beauchamp Hotel in Shrewsbury with the Shropshire and Welsh Postal History Societies. The details, which will be arranged by Denis Salt will be available later in the season.

24th APRIL. A.G.M. and Auction to be held in the 70 Club room at Carrs Lane Church Centre. There will be a committee meeting at 11 a.m.; the A.G.M. at 1 p.m.; the Auction at 2 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chris Beaver has written to draw my attention to some omissions from the list of penny posts in the last issue (MM75/14-15). Please note the following additions:
Shipstone: Brailes, Cherrington.
Bewdley: Cleobury. Dudley: Brierly-hill, Kingswinford.
Stourbridge: Brierly-hill.

Chris has also pointed out, with reference to various comments I made in the article on the surveyors' journals, that originally the districts were generally based on main routes from London, segments of the country with London of course off-centre. This would explain Mr Western's interest in the Dunstable office. Chris does not know the date at which the districts were changed; this may emerge in a future issue.

Mr de Rousset-Hall adds more information to the list of Alcester handstamps. He has the dc, short thick arcs used on 11.3.46, and points out that the style with thin arcs was not introduced until 1949. He also has the ALCESTER WARWICKSHIRE/2 cds used on 10.6.51, and an ALCESTER WARWICKSHIRE/GREAT BRITAIN used on 15.3.60.

The comment by Mr de Rousset-Hall about the double circle handstamps with thin arcs reminds me that sometime ago I tucked away a snippet from the Post Office Circular of June 1949 to use at an appropriate time.

DF 1742

COMBINED STEEL STAMP—CHANGE IN DESIGN

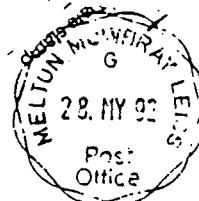
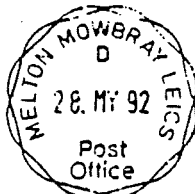
DF 1742

In future issues of the above hand stamp, which is supplied to offices which date-stamp correspondence, thin lines will replace the customary heavy bars which appear in the outer circle.

The maximum number of letters permissible for the place name in a combined steel stamp is now 33 instead of 28 as formerly, and this change should be borne in mind when new stamps are being requisitioned.
 (P.O.C. 15.6.49)

SID COMES TO THE MIDLANDS

As part of Post Office Counters' introduction of electronic cash registers at many of the larger Crown Offices, the old datestamps have been replaced by the self-inking variety. Examples from Leicester and Melton Mowbray are shown below. It is interesting to note that what was until some years ago the Head Post Office in Leicester now has handstamps which contain more than the name of the city. If members let me know of examples from their area, it would be possible, later in the season, to produce a list of those in use in the Midland counties.



MORE POST TOWNS

In order to relieve the pressure on the sorting office in central Leicester, a number of new posttowns has been created in Leicestershire. They are: Coalville, Ibstock, Markfield, Syston and Wigston.

As a result the postal addresses of these towns have been changed. For instance that of Coalville becomes "COALVILLE, Leicestershire" instead of "Coalville, LEICESTER". Also those of a number of villages have been altered. Those of Bagworth, Bardon Hill, Ellistown, Thornton, Heather, Hugglescote, Newton Burgoland, Normanton-le-Heath, Ravenstone, Swebstone, Whitwick, Coleorton, Griffydam, Swannington and Thringstone now end "COALVILLE, Leicestershire"; and those of Stanton-under-Bardon, Copt Oak and Ulverscroft end "MARKFIELD, Leicestershire".

A large number of postcodes has also been altered, for instance the old postcode sector LE6 5 of Ashby-de-la-Zouch has been divided into two new sectors LE65 1 and LE65 2.

These changes came into effect on 11th May. I am indebted to Andy Richards of the Leicester Letters District Office for supplying the details.

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10th October 1992

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IN FAVOUR OF REFORM

Below is a copy of a letter which I found recently in the Leicester Chronicle of 1838.

Mancetter Vicarage, near Atherstone
March 24th, 1838

SIR, - Atherstone is my post town, and I sit down to give you some particulars of the unequal rates of our postage. From Atherstone to London, 108 miles, 9d; to Leicester, 21 miles, 6d. if the letter goes by Hinckley, the nearest way; 8d. if it goes to Northampton, round by Market Harborough. If sent by Hinckley a letter is two days; if by Northampton and Market Harborough, more than thrice the distance, one day. To Rugby, 20 miles, 8d; to Birmingham, 20 miles, 7d; to Measham, 10 miles, 1d; to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, 3 miles further, 4d; to Tamworth, 8 miles, reduced from 4d. to 2d; to Hinckley, 8 miles, 4d., because the post offices are distant 8 miles and a furlong, though the towns, from the end of one to the beginning of the other are little more than seven miles apart. But this unreasonable tax may be escaped by sending a letter under cover to a friend at Nuneaton, there being a penny post from Atherstone to Nuneaton, and another from thence to Hinckley, but it occasions trouble and a delay, which can only be submitted to when a letter is of no consequence. I wrote to the post-office to have the postage to Hinckley reduced, but could not succeed, the distance being measured so nicely from one post-office to another. I consider the high and very unequal rate of postage oppressive, and injurious to the best interests of society, and that the Government is injured by it in its revenue. It is high time the whole system underwent a thorough reform, and I trust the time is not far distant. - I am, sir, yours respectfully,

B. RICHINGS

The 1d. rate to Measham is explained by the fact that that village was served by a penny post from Atherstone. Though Rugby and Birmingham may have been only 20 miles, by the shortest route, from Atherstone the respective charges were for 50-80 miles and 30-50 miles.

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If you have ever wondered why the postmasters of the last century applied their stamp to the reverse of letters so making it more difficult for us to display our covers, the answer is given in the first of the two notices below, which are reproduced by permission of P.O. Archives.

To all Postmasters.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,

3rd August, 1821.

AS certain of the Postmasters are in the habit of Stamping Letters in the Front, it is necessary to issue a General Instruction to all Postmasters, to stamp them on the Back, in order to avoid the possibility of defacing or obliterating any part of the Direction.

And I am to repeat the Postmaster-General's Injunctions, that all Letters shall be stamp'd legibly, and the Rates of Postage be marked upon them *in the plainest manner, and with as little flourishing as possible.*

By Command of the Postmaster-General,

FRANCIS FREELING,

Secretary.

To all Postmasters.

THE late Order issued to all Postmasters to stamp their Letters on the back, is not intended to include the Stamp used by Penny Post Receivers, they are invariably to affix their Stamp in the front of the Letter;—And if such should not be the practice in your Neighbourhood, and if any of the Penny Post Receivers within your delivery should not so stamp them, you will instruct them accordingly, and report any future neglect on their part.

FRANCIS FREELING,

SECRETARY.

General Post Office,

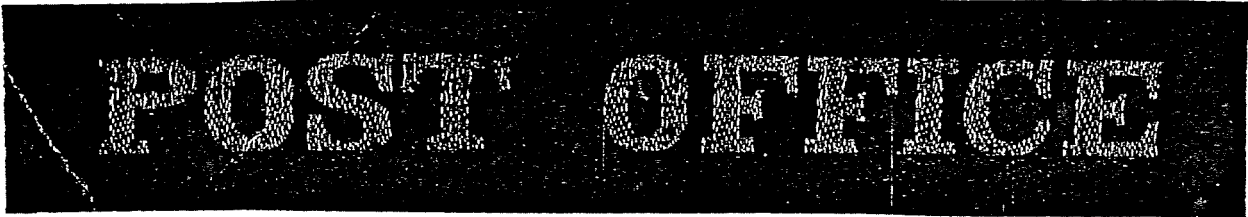
September, 1821.

POST OFFICE CAP RIBBONS

by Gay Parker

Some years ago, I acquired two cap ribbons, one of which is illustrated, from a carboot sale. It transpired that the vendor had bought all the remnants from Austen & Austen, Hatters of Atherstone, Warwickshire. Exhaustive enquiries and research suggested that the caps which the ribbons decorated may have been used on board ship, possibly on P.O. cable laying ships, but nothing could be proven.

Eventually, Mr Austen of the hatters family, to whom I am greatly indebted for this information, solved the mystery. The ribbons were used on slouch hats made for the Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) Post Office.



The identity of the manufacturers of the ribbons was still a puzzle. After drawing a blank at the Social History Department of the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and failing at Cashs weavers, I tried the company on my doorstep, Toye, Kennings & Spencers of Bedworth. After much discussion and excellent cooperation by Mr Bolton, the technical manager, the red silk ribbon was identified. Not only had the ribbons been made in Bedworth, but one of the senior weavers who actually produced the ribbons was still working there. Her name was Irene Jackson and she told me that the last time she wove the cap ribbons was around 1948. She remembers it was a very limited production run.

Mr Bolton was most kind, and showed me and my wife round the factory. What a far cry it must have seemed from 1948. Computer aided graphic design and automatic machines that could not only weave any lettering, but could be changed over in a matter of minutes. The ribbon below was woven as a favour



G.B. COVERS

Do you see my lists of GB cover material? If you don't and are a member of The Midland (GB) Postal History Society, you should! They contain a wide selection of interesting and unusual items - county material, difficult values and rates - from 1840 to date. Send for a copy of my latest list today. All 'Wants Lists' for specific items or county material will receive my personal attention.

ROGER HUDSON



P.O. Box 172,
COVENTRY CV6 6NF

Phone: 0203 636613

THE DEFEAT OF THE EXTRA POST PLANS

by Rev Christopher Beaver

(Part 2)

On 8th March 1821 Freeling went as summoned to "wait upon" the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt. Hon. N. Vansittart, and scarcely concealing his anger next day reports: "I have reason to believe that the agreement as enclosed has been virtually consented to at a meeting held at Fife House last week when Mr Burgess, Mr Gladstone of Liverpool and others interested in that District were present - the P.M.Gs are therefore no parties to it." He will prepare further observations with as little delay as possible "consistently with the serious import of this question to the public and to the interests of the Revenue under your management." As usual there is no allusion to the by-passing of the P.M.Gs or to any action by them, and their only comment is "Approved". There is no sign that Freeling's observations as promised were set down in writing, at least they were not reported. There must have been private conversations, for the next report - on 4th May, eight weeks later, refers to "all the serious evils" that the passage of the Extra Post Bill would cause, evils "which you have so repeatedly detailed", and also assumes that the P.M.Gs already know what is now being proposed - that the Extra Post should be allowed to carry passengers! Already the "Mail Coach contractors in London for themselves and their connections" have signed a petition "against the conveyance of passengers' luggage and parcels by the Extra Post", and the first petition to Parliament against the whole measure had earlier been sent from Edinburgh and Leith. Alarmed now that the whole system of mailcoaches really is liable to injury, and anxious to discharge his public duty, Freeling has written in protest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The next report of 21st May is to provide the P.M.Gs with copies of the "comparative statement" prepared by Johnson which the G.P.O. have already begun distributing to those who come for information about the effects of the impending legislation. Though the statement is "very ably and fairly made", comment the P.M.Gs, "distributing copies may be considered at the Treasury as taking part against their wishes"; this surely implies a lack of resolution on their part in opposing the perceived enemies of the Post Office. Was it politically inexpedient for them, and had they in fact been active in arguing for Freeling's case?

Whether Freeling and Johnson were now soliciting support is not revealed, but they were glad about the forthright warning expressed by the mailcoach contractors in their petition against the very idea of the Extra Post: the discontinuance of mailcoaches would ensue unless they received support from the Government "at greatly increased prices". It is signed by J. Willan of Bull & Mouth Street; W. Waterhouse of Lad Lane; John Eames White Horse, Fetter Lane and The Angel, St. Clements; W. Horne, Charing Cross; Thomas Fagg, Bell & Crown, Holborn; B. Brotherton of Liverpool; and Thomas Boyce, Spread Eagle, Gracechurch Street. One other petition welcomed by Freeling was from merchants of Liverpool and organised by the postmaster there who had publicised the matter in newspapers. In his covering letter he complained that he had found most people indifferent or willing to see the experiment tried.

The Treasury meanwhile had been active in drawing up an agreement to be made with Henry Burgess and preparing the necessary Extra Post Bill for Parliament. Then as a preliminary to a debate, a motion in the Commons of 17th May demanded copies of memorials and of correspondence between the Treasury and the Post Office, of the proposed contract with Mr Burgess, and of any petitions from the mailcoach proprietors, to be laid before the House. Copying "these voluminous papers" at the G.P.O. was completed by the 22nd by clerks of the Secretary's Office (six of whom were to share three guineas for their extra duty on the Sunday), though no request for them had been received from the House or the Treasury.

The Bill itself "to authorise His Majesty's Postmaster General to receive certain additional Rates of Postage for the Conveyance of Letters and Packets on the establishment of an Extra Post in Great Britain" was presented in the Commons on 28th-29th May by Mr Lushington of the Treasury and given its first reading. On the 29th Freeling received the papers the Treasury had prepared for Parliament and returned them with "additional papers necessary to compleat the series." There were several, hereported to the PMGs, which "we have not seen before", and which he therefore had copied, including one by Mr Burgess "I presume in observation on our statement as laid before the House of Lords. It abounds in misstatements and perversions."

Next day the various documents supplied from the Treasury were ordered to "lie on the Table and be printed". Following the Second Reading a few (delayed) days later, a Select Committee was appointed on 13th June to consider the matter and report. There are some familiar names among those appointed, a very distinguished group of M.Ps: John Ashley Warre; Nicholas Vansittart (Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1812-23); Sir Henry Brooke Parnell (later Baron Congleton); Dr Stephen Lushington; Sir Thomas Acland; General Gascoyne; William Viscount Lowther (Lord of the Treasury, 1813-27); John Calcraft; James Ashley Stuart Wortley; Mr Hume; John Maberly (father of Freeling's successor as Secretary of the Post Office); Sir John Newport (a previous Chancellor; Charles Grant (a previous Lord of the Treasury); Richard Martin; William Dundas; Joseph Birch; Michael Angelo Taylor; Mr Wodehouse; Lord Brudenhall (later Earl of Cardigan); George Philips (called "The Cotton King" because of his Lancashire enterprises; Pascoe Grenfell (a metals industrialist and fiscal authority); Archibald Lord Hamilton. To these was added a week later Frankland Lewis (subsequently Joint Secretary to the Treasury). On their behalf Mr Warre presented their brief report to Parliament on 26th with the recommendation that Mr Burgess "should be allowed to make his experiment." Freeling, when sending a copy of it with his "observations" to the P.M.Gs on the 27th, comments that "for the reasons & with the doubts expressed by that Committee the argument is against instead of being in favour of such experiment."

The Committee accepted that "considerable inconvenience may arise in the great mercantile towns from two deliveries and two departures of the post at different hours. How far this inconvenience may be counterbalanced by the advantages of the more speedy conveyance..... experience alone can enable the public to determine." A little is also given in the report concerning the contract arrangements: "Your Committee understands that Mr Burgess takes upon himself the expense of the proposed plan, with the exception of the charge that will be occasioned by the establishment of another office in London, the employment of an additional number of letter-sorters and letter-carriers, and also the incidental expenses which may arise from the increase of office-duty in some large provincial towns."

GREAT BRITAIN

1580-1901

Elizabethan to Victorian

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The Extra Post Bill with the Select Committee's Report came before the House of Commons, as already stated, on 26th June 1821. On this occasion the House resolved itself into Committee, decided by 32 votes to 28 not to put off discussion for six months (a procedural motion no doubt), went on to make several amendments to the Bill, and "on Mr Speaker's return resolved the Report be received on Monday next" that is 2nd July. There is no allusion at all in the Freeling reports to the P.M.Gs to these proceedings. It is clear he was dependant on what newspapers chose to mention, for the next week he begins a lengthy justification of his stance with the news of 3rd July: "It appears by the Public Papers of this day that the Extra Post Bill after a short Debate was lost in Committee last night, the numbers being 31 for and 39 against it. I feel the greatest satisfaction at the result." There is surely a note of disgruntlement with those to whom he reports in the passage: "Your Lordships will do me the justice to ackge that I have carefully abstained from urging anything on the score of difficulty in the execution of such a plan... It was enough to object to its principle, to point out its fallacy & to shew its probable ultimate results." The P.M.Gs simply sign this report without any comment at all. The Journal of the House of Commons does not give the impression as Freeling does that the matter had reached a conclusion, nor indeed that the House was in Committee: "That the Report be now received" was lost by 39 to 31, but an amendment "that the Report be received this day six months" was passed. In other words the matter was liable to be brought forward again by the Government in the next session. That vote was later to be referred to by Freeling as the result of the 3rd Reading.

Henry Burgess's determination was not dampened by this setback. If he could not yet contract a firm of an Extra Post, he could at least put to the test the idea of a "Light Express" carriage over one long-distance route - provided he could find willing private contractors to horse, with the best available animals, suitable vehicles. This he evidently managed during the summer months of 1821, and he announced such a two-horse passenger conveyance to begin on 1st October between London and Manchester, setting out at 4 p.m. that day from the Castle & Falcon, Aldersgate Street. Freeling was apprehensive on 28th September, as soon as he was aware, expressing the hope that it would not be made a "medium of transmitting letters to the injury of our Revenue." He had picked up a rumour that Mr Burgess intended to carry newspapers and was "inclined to advert to it." The P.M.Gs drily comment: "It will be necessary to watch this carriage." And that he must have seen to by having its performance on the first occasion precisely watched. On 4th October he sends the P.M.Gs copies of two letters from Manchester and states: "The journey was performed in 19 hours & 23 minutes which is at the rate of a little more than 9 miles and a half an hour the distance being as near as I can ascertain it 186 miles." Assuming the Express left on time it will have arrived shortly before 11.30 a.m. on the Tuesday. How long the trial lasted is unclear. That Burgess believed it vindicated his intentions is certain, for he prepared one further Memorial in the expectation that the Government would allow his plans to come to fruition little by little.

The contract Mr Burgess sought in 1822 would have allowed him to convey an Extra Post between London and Manchester and Liverpool for fourteen years at one shilling a mile. The Treasury asked for the P.M.Gs' response early in the year. The same objection in principle as before was made by Freeling, of course, coupled though with what sounded like a preferable offer. "If the Government desired to send a double mail to those places the P.O. could do it on more reasonable terms, without tying up the Dept. to a contract for 14 years." The Chancellor of the Exchequer summoned the Secretary of the Post Office to meet Mr Burgess at Downing Street on Saturday 30th March. As ever (it seems) Lords Chichester and Salisbury took no part and Freeling makes no suggestion that they should have done so; he simply reports to them, at very great length, a full week later on what turned out to be the crucial discussion. Freeling "found that Mr Burgess had brought with him the greater part of the Members who had formed his Committee in the previous session, viz Messrs Warre, Stuart Wortley, N. Calvert, Gladstone & Aldn Heygate." Only three of these appear to have been on the Select Committee, plus the Chancellor, so it seems to be a group of M.Ps who had backed Mr Burgess that is meant.

There is no mention of anything said by Mr Warre. "Mr N Calvert remarked that he had great doubts as to the propriety of any extra or double post. Mr Stuart Wortley said that he had never expressed any opinion as to the propriety or necessity of Mr Burgess' Plans, but that he gave him great credit for ingenuity and ability, that he had given up much valuable time, and had expended a great deal of money in consequence of the encouragement he recd from the Govern't. Mr Gladstone allowed that there was a great difference of opinion at Liverpool as to the propriety and effect of an extra post and that Mr Burgess' proposition as it now stood would be attended with great inconvenience & confusion to that town... After a good deal of discussion it appeared to be the opinion of Mr Burgess' friends that his plans ought not to be attempted." Discussion then turned to the question of compensation, which the Chancellor undertook to bring before the House of Commons.

On 2nd April the House voted on the proposition that a Select Committee be appointed to consider a payment to Mr Burgess, which was declined by 36 to 28. Freeling had delayed his report long enough to include this information. He presents the P.M.Gs also with a full resume of what has occurred over the previous three years because it is now "a moment when there is reason to think that the plan of an Extra Post is abandoned." He is able to express the pain and apprehension he has endured (as have the principal officers of the Post Office) while endeavouring "to discharge our duty faithfully by the Gov't & by the public." Each of the Postmasters General expresses his satisfaction with the outcome, Lord Chichester stressing that his "original objection to the principle" of the plan has never been shaken, Lord Salisbury relief that the most strenuous advocates "should almost unanimously have agreed that his plan was impracticable."

It would be surprising if there were not often in Freeling's mind recollections of the fierce opposition from the established staff and the Secretary which he, as agent of John Palmer, as Resident Surveyor, and as Anthony Todd's assistant, endured in the period when they were struggling to introduce and develop the mailcoach system. Had the principle he enunciated now operated then, no faster service would have been permitted to some towns while others depended on post boys and foot messengers. Wasn't London favoured with immediate intelligence and several posts a day? And what would happen to the principle as soon as 1830 when the railway opened between Liverpool and Manchester? Even mailcoaches were safely travelling at the speed Henry Burgess envisaged by the time Freeling died in 1836, and a year or two later many favoured towns were coping with double posts. It is plainly the case that there could not be equality of opportunity for businessmen in every part of the country until instantaneous communication became possible.

As for Henry Burgess it seems fitting to conclude with the hope that his talents and pounds were afterwards put to profitable use.

Sources. Post 21, map 14. Post 42: many entries 1819-22 under the Index heading "Extra Post". Parliamentary Papers: 1821 (592) xxi. Journal of the House of Commons vol 76; many entries 28.5.1821 to 2.7.1821 and Appendix 12.

FOR POSTAL HISTORY

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BY THE OLD RIVER BRIDGE AT HUNTINGDON

THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 2)

The first journal for 1793 of Mr Woodcock that I have been able to find covers the period from 18th to 31st January, during which time he was working at home on matters such as the examination of the way bills. He explained that it was his practice to have all the used bills sent to him by the first post so that he was able to detect almost immediately any irregularities. Freeling's order of the previous December concerning letters from the Oxford road was brought into effect when Mr Woodcock wrote to the postmasters of Oxford, Witney, Burford and Northleach telling them to charge letters for Tewkesbury on Cheltenham where the deputy was to sort and forward them immediately with the London bag.

Mr Woodcock remained at home during the first half of February. Amongst other matters he reported on the probable expence of guarding the "Horse Mails" in his district. This involved arming the riders. In the middle of the month he set out for Milford Haven to take charge of the office there and to instruct the newly appointed packet agent and postmaster. After he had left Milford Haven, Mr Woodcock inspected a number of offices in South Wales before he returned home on 7th March.

Nine days later he set out on an inspection of the offices on the road from Gloucester to Oxford. From Oxford he went on to Henley and Maidenhead. As he wished to consult Freeling about the extension of the post from Rhayder to Aberystwyth he went on to London. He arrived back in Gloucester on 26th March. Three days later he set out for Radnorshire to settle the Rhayder to Aberistwith post but spent one day at Worcester where he observed that:

"the letters for the Soldiers of a Regiment lately come to that town and forwarded after them from the last place they were quatered at were charged the additional Post. Permit me to make it a Querry whether under the circumstance of an Order from the War Office for a Regiment to march or change their Cantonments their letters sent after them should or shd not be charged the extra Post. The particular reason for my putting this question is that the Soldiers grumble very much at the surcharge."

Freeling passed this one on for he wrote in the margin "for Mr Hasker".

On 1st April, he went on to Presteign, but a very heavy fall of snow blocked the roads for two days and made it impossible to go on. The postmen from Radnor and Knighton were nearly lost and were forced to turn back. Mr Woodcock eventually, on the 3rd, reached Knighton where he opened a receiving house at the house of Mr Richard Williams. He commented that both Knighton and Kington wished to have a stamp and seal. On his way back to Gloucester, where he arrived on 7th April, he paid yet another visit to the Worcester office. I wonder if the deputy there felt that he was being persecuted. The postmaster of Ledbury was found to be taxing letters for Bath (thro' Worcester) only 4d.; he was told to charge 5d.

From 19th April to 28th May, Mr Woodcock was in charge of the Birmingham office during the suspension of the postmaster, Mr Gottwaltz. Freeling had intended that Mr Saverland should perform this duty. However he reported on 17th April that Mr Saverland had set off for Whitehaven before he could receive the letter directing him to Birmingham. Consequently he (Freeling) had written to Mr Woodcock telling him to go there and "take care of the Revenue".

Whilst officiating as the postmaster at Birmingham, he continued with his surveyor's duties - "examining into the circulation & taxing of the Bye & Cross road letters both charged on and passing thro' that Office, and corrected many errors that fell under my observation." Amongst the errors were that Lichfield charged 3d. instead of 4d. on letters to Alcester, and that Nottingham sent letters for Herefordshire through the Cross Post instead of London. Whilst at Birmingham, Mr Woodcock found it necessary to alter the riding work on the branch to Stourbridge and Bewdley as well as that to and from Lichfield (see MM70/11). The changes, which

came into operation on 20th May 1793, meant that the postmaster of Worcester was to carry "the Cross road bags" between there and Bewdley, and the postmaster of Stour-bridge was to undertake the carriage of the mail between Bewdley and Birmingham. It transpired that the postmaster of Worcester did not keep horses so Mr Fieldhouse of the Star and Garter Inn undertook the ride to Bewdley. After Messrs Attwood and Aynsworth, bankers in Birmingham, had been officially accepted as sureties for Mr Gottwaltz, Mr Woodcock returned the office to him.

Mr Woodcock spent much of June dealing with matters in Carmarthenshire, and then Oxfordshire. On the 27th he went to Chipping Norton and from there to Stow-on-the-Wold and Moreton-in-Marsh and nearby villages to examine a proposal to establish a post from Chipping Norton through Stow to Tewkesbury. Although he ordered a count to be made of the number of letters for the various villages, he was of the opinion that since Stow and the villages three miles around were served daily from Moreton, no alteration could add to "their present accommodation".

The first fifteen days of July were spent at home dealing with the usual paper work and "many other things there are also to look into and get up on after a Journey which cannot so conveniently be done abroad." By the middle of July he had collected sufficient information to be able to recommend that a post between Stow and Tewkesbury should not be introduced. He did, however, feel that it might be of advantage to the Revenue to start a post, on three days a week, to Winchcombe from either Broadway or Cheltenham. At the end of the month, he went to Monmouthshire; he returned to Gloucester on 12th August.

Apart from the 20th, when he went to Cheltenham, to get an account of the number of letters for Winchcombe, the next month was spent at home. During that time, he made out tables of postage for the deputies in his district.

When Mr Woodcock called at Ledbury, on 20th September, on his way to Hereford, he found that the postmaster there was so occupied with other business that he was not able to give the post office the correct attention. He was strongly cautioned. The only fault to emerge in a two-day visit to the Hereford office was that letters from Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire were frequently sent through the Cross Post instead of through London. From Hereford he went on to Radnorshire. At Presteigne he reported that the amount of business was greater than might have been expected since Kington and Knighton were served from there on three days a week.

On 29th September he was at Ludlow where he found the deputy not perfectly clear about the London and Cross Road circulation. He left her with correct tables of both. At this point he makes a comment on two of the forms that the deputies had to submit to London:

"The title to the forms No 5 & 6 lead many of the Deputys to suppose that the Account should be made up to the Old Quarter Day. Would it not be as well after the words (three months) to say vizt: from 1st of July to 30th September inclusive. I admit that if they refer to their printed instructions it will set them right, but considering how difficult it is to make some of them comprehend and retain the plainest directions I humbly conceive everything that can possibly lead to error in the printed forms shd be avoided."

This suggests that there had been some alteration in the dates on which accounts had to be submitted to London, but I have not had time to investigate this.

Mr Woodcock was yet again at Worcester on 2nd & 3rd of October. From there he went to Malvern to open a receiving house at the Crown Inn of Mr Ballard who had undertaken "the management of the business for the pence without any salary." The words "the pence" suggest that a delivery charge, probably 1d., was levied.

From 6th to 10th October Mr Woodcock was at Moreton-in-Marsh, establishing a Voucher between that place and Oxford, Woodstock, Chipping Norton, Evesham and

Worcester. He instructed the deputy in the circulation and taxing of letters, as well as sending a list of the Moreton delivery to all those offices with which Moreton was to keep an account. During his visit in December, Mr Woodcock helped the deputy make out his voucher and other accounts with the Bye Letter Office to which he was a stranger. I do not know how the bye letters of Moreton had been accounted for before then.

From Moreton Mr Woodcock went on to Chipping Norton where he received instructions to go to Stroud where the postmaster had failed and declared his inability to make good his payments. When he arrived there on 12th October, he immediately took charge of the office which he ran until 5th November. He found that the postmaster, Mr Barrett, had nothing to offer in aid of the debt but his household effects. After Mr Barrett had assigned all his effects to Mr Woodcock in trust, and an inventory and valuation had been made of them, Mr Woodcock arranged a sale. The accounts are shown on the next page. The remaining £68.13.5½ of Mr Barrett's debt was paid by his sureties. It is surprising to find that the P.M.G. allowed Mr Barrett to remain as postmaster, subject to certain conditions. Mr Woodcock, feeling it safe to entrust the office to Mr Barrett, returned home until new bonds were sent from London.

Whilst at home he prepared instructions for the deputies concerned about the post from Moreton-in-Marsh to Winchcombe which he had hoped to start on 1st December but the person who had undertaken the ride was not ready.

On the 25th and 26th November he was at Stroud attending to the execution of the new bonds of the deputy. He commented that while he had acted as the postmaster he had found the business of the office much interrupted by the custom of taking in letters to the last moment and frequently after the time at which the bag ought to have been sealed. He ordered that the box was to be shut half-an-hour before the bag was sealed, and 1d. charged on all letters posted in that interval. He went on to say that he had been informed that some of the inhabitants of Stonehouse had asked to have the post from Gloucester go via that town. Mr Woodcock commented that Painswick (through which the post then went) would have to be left unserved or the Revenue put to an extra expense. He added that a messenger went from Stonehouse and neighbourhood daily. Freeling commented in the margin that to his knowledge no such application had been received.

Mr Woodcock set out on 4th December for Moreton-in-Marsh to open the post from there to Winchcombe. He arranged for it to start on Sunday 15th December and to continue every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday thereafter. It was to set off from Moreton as soon as possible after the arrival of the mail from London, and reach Winchcombe between 11 a.m. and noon. The departure from Winchcombe was to be at 3 p.m. so as to reach Moreton in time for the up London mail. The postboy was to drop a bag at Upper Guiting with letters for that village, Lower Guiting, Stanway, Coscombe, Cutsdean, Farmcoat and Forde, and to take up a bag on his return. If the postboy was to drop and take up a bag, then there must have been someone to take charge of it and distribute the letters. Was there some form of receiving house in Upper Guiting? The sub-deputy (does the fact that Mr Woodcock used this term imply that Winchcombe was to be regarded as a sub-posttown?) was to be a Mr John Chadbourne. He was told to charge a halfpenny on all letters delivered within the town, and a penny on letters and papers delivered out of the town. Nothing was to be charged on letters put into the office. The intended route was found by Mr Woodcock to be "an intricate Road over the hills - in some part Stoney & bad, in others pretty well. Quite a Cross road very little used, and in snowy weather must often be blocked up."

The last part of 1793 saw Mr Woodcock in Wales.

Mr Western began 1793 in the southern part of his district at Uxbridge, Gerrard's Cross and Dunstable. The journal for the latter part of January is missing, but he recorded that on 1st February he returned to Derby from Stoney Middleton. Most of February was spent in Yorkshire. Whilst there he wrote to Hasker and the

Dr. No. Broughts Effects		Contra		6/15	
To Household goods &c.		47	18 4 1/2	By Expenses of Inventory	6
Lease of the House		23	2 ..	valuation and Sale. 18/9	6
Furniture sold with house		1	1 ..	By balance b/w	69
Cash & small debts		3	19 6	the purchase of the office	10 10 1/2
£ 76 " 10 1/2				£ 76	10 1/2
B3. the house was sold on		By b.c. omitted			
a deposit of 15 £ 0 0 and		to Mr. P. & Kin. 19. 6			
the remainder in her keeping		By balance to me 17. 15. 4 1/2			
in 1911 - which is to be		£ 69 : 16 : 10 1/2			
as per B. & C. statement					

postmistress of Northampton about the guards not calling in the morning at the office for the road letters and pouches. Then on the 11th he enquired why on the previous day the bags had not gone from Buxton to Macclesfield. The reason was that there had been a very heavy fall of snow. However he told the deputy at Buxton that he should never again detain the rider "on supposition" but to always make him try to get through and if he found the road impassable to turn back. The same postmaster was also told to send a letter-bill in his bag even when there were no letters.

The first fortnight in March was spent in Manchester dealing with the setting up of the penny post there. On the 20th he went to Stoney Middleton to open a receiving house. From there he went again to Manchester. He reported on an application from Belper that it was not advisable to send the post to Wirksworth through there. He also informed Mr Brightman of Stoney Middleton that he would be allowed £4 a year from 10th October 1792 and that he must take letters in for nothing but might charge one penny for each letter delivered from his receiving house. The postmaster of Sheffield was told that he would be allowed £4 p.a. from 10th October 1793 (a discrepancy here) to be paid to the receiver at Stoney Middleton to which place he was to regularly send a bag. The postmaster of Buxton was also told to send a bag there and not send the letters to Tideswell or "loose by the boy."

There appears to be no journal for April, but we can surmise that the month was spent in Manchester for he starts his journal for May by saying that he remained at Manchester till the 13th, instructing the new deputy and his new clerk. The period from 13th to 31st is described:

"Having employed Messengers in the Penny post - established the best checks in my power, and drawn out forms of the Accounts, went to London to lay same before and consult the Gentlemen of the Penny post office on the propriety of them and also to procure information respecting many difficulties that had occurred - this being the first Establishment of the kind in the country - reported on what had been done to the Postmaster General and returned home on the last day of the month."

Whilst in London Mr Western continued to write to various deputies in his district, amongst them the postmaster of Melton Mowbray who was told to send off the mail to Leicester an hour earlier on Mondays than on other days as the coaches from London were down earlier on those days. No doubt this was to do with the lack of a post in London on Sundays.

The first part of the journal for June reads:

"Returned to Derby the 2nd June - having procured directions how to proceed with the Penny post at Manchester, and their Lordships approving of the mode of the proposed checks, proceeded there on the 10th, established the accounts & put on two more carriers and arranged the whole on the footing they are proposed to remain - returned home on the 21st - sent the particulars to Mr Lott for his information at Bristol."

On the 25th he went to Lichfield to meet Mr Saverland whom he accompanied to Stone, Stafford and Knutsford where he remained until the 9th July. Mr Western gave as the reason the establishment of vouchers on the Liverpool & Manchester Roads to Birmingham, and Manchester to Lichfield. Mr Saverland was more specific:

"..attending to the alteration made in the voucher from Liverpool by the addition of five towns, to prevent all sorting at Stone & to bring the Cross Road Mail from that place into Wolverhampton before the coach from Shrewsbury, to save the constant expence of Expresses from Wolverhampton to Birmingham, and to reduce the salary paid to the late Deputy of Stone."

Mr Western gave full details of the instructions he had issued. These filled more than five pages. What follows are those orders which affected the Midlands.

The Manchester office was directed:

- (i) to keep a voucher on the sent side only with Walsall and Birmingham, and both ways with Lichfield, Stone, Newcastle and Congleton;
- (ii) to send no forward letters (i.e. those for destinations beyond the town concerned) to Congleton, Newcastle, Stone, Stafford and Walsall; but
- (iii) to send to Wolverhampton letters for Stourbridge, Enville, Stourport, Kidderminster and Bewdley in Worcestershire; and all Shropshire (except Woore, Drayton, Halesowen, Ludlow and Bishop's Castle);
- (iv) to send to the office at Birmingham the letters for Worcestershire (except those listed above), all Warwickshire (except Coleshill, Coventry, Dunchurch, Southam and Rugby), all South Wales and the West of England;
- (v) to send to Lichfield letters for Burton, Coleshill, Coventry, Dunchurch, Southam, Rugby, Daventry and Towcester. Also the following if they were put in after the departure of the post to Chester: Tamworth, Atherstone, Hinckley, Lutterworth and Nuneaton;
- (vi) letters for Burton, Lichfield and Birmingham might be sent forward to Derby if posted too late for the post to Knutsford.

The offices at Liverpool, Warrington and Knutsford were instructed to keep a voucher on the sent side with Walsall and Birmingham, and both ways with Stafford and Wolverhampton. Their orders for the letters to be sent to these four towns and Stone were the same as those issued to Manchester.

Congleton, Newcastle and Stone were told to keep a voucher on the sent side with Walsall and Birmingham, and both ways with Stafford and Wolverhampton. Their instructions about letters for these four towns were the same as Manchester's. In addition they were to send:

- (i) to the office at Knutsford letters for Middlewich, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel and Macclesfield in Cheshire plus those for Leek, Buxton, Ashbourne, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Tideswell and Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster, Thorne, Rawcliffe and Howden in Yorkshire;
- (ii) to Manchester letters for Bolton, Rochdale, Stockport, all Yorkshire (except those above), Alfreton, Chesterfield, Mansfield, Worksop, Ollerton, Retford and Tuxford.

Lichfield was instructed

- (i) to send to Knutsford only the letters for the four Cheshire towns in (i) above as well as those for Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Tideswell, Rotherham and Sheffield;
- (ii) to keep a voucher daily with Manchester to which office were to be sent letters for Bolton, Rochdale, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds and Bradford;
- (iii) that as Walsall and Birmingham would only keep vouchers on the received side with Stafford, Stone, Newcastle, Congleton, Knutsford, Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool the letters and the empty bags would be returned through his office.

Stafford was directed to send:

- (i) Ormskirk letters to Liverpool;
- (ii) to Warrington the letters for Scotland, Cumberland, Westmoreland and all Lancashire (except Liverpool, Ormskirk, Manchester, Bolton and Rochdale);
- (iii) nothing forward to Stone, Newcastle or Congleton;
- (iv) to Manchester and Knutsford the same as Congleton was directed to do.

Wolverhampton was to send to:

- (i) Liverpool, Warrington, Manchester, Knutsford, Congleton and Newcastle the same letters as Stafford was directed to do;
- (ii) Stone letters for Coventry, Coleshill, Meriden, Dunchurch, Rugby, Southam, Daventry, Towcester, Fenny Stratford and Stoney Stratford;
- (iii) Stafford letters for Woore, Drayton, Nantwich, Chester, Frodsham, Parkgate, Neston, Ireland, North Wales (except the counties of Merioneth and Montgomery),

Lichfield, Burton, Tamworth, Atherstone, Nuneaton, all Leicestershire and Rutland, Derby, Wirksworth, Matlock, Bakewell, Newark, Bingham, Nottingham, Kettering, Higham Ferrers, Wellingborough, Rockingham, Northampton, Oulney, Newport Pagnell, Woburn, Dunstable and St. Albans.

Walsall was told that bags would be received there daily from Stone, Newcastle, Congleton, Knutsford, Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool, but that letters for those places "and their respective branches" were to be sent with the empty bags to Birmingham.

Birmingham was also informed that bags would be received from those places listed under Walsall, but that the letters for those places were to be sent through Lichfield and with the bags empty. Also that he would receive the Walsall bags for those places empty which were also to be sent through Lichfield.

These regulations commenced on 6th July. I will leave the Staffordshire members to sort out the implications of it all.

On 12th July Mr Western set off for Sleaford, and after reporting on that office he inspected that part of his district which lay on the Great North Road, the Leeds Road, and the Burnley and Preston branches. All of which took until the middle of August. Even then he did not return home for there was a meeting with the solicitor about the trial of Edward Miles for the robbery and murder of the Warrington postboy in 1791. Then it was on to Cumberland to introduce a post. Whilst doing all of this he found time to write to a number of postmasters: to Grantham about the fact that on 5th August he had lost the Sleaford bag which had been taken to the Grantham office two days later by a servant of Lord Brownlow; to Worksop as on 7th August his horse had been so lame that the boy had been forced to go on foot a great part of the way making him too late at Mansfield for the coach; to Market Harborough saying that the pence on the road letters ought to be divided between him and the guard. This suggests that the guard of the mailcoach was in the habit of taking up letters from places between Harborough and Leicester and/or Northampton.

Eventually Mr Western arrived home on 8th September. Twelve days later he set out on another journey. He started by going to Nottingham and Newark for the purpose of getting the riding work done as cheaply as he could. This would have been for part of the Newark-Nottingham-Derby-Birmingham post. A visit to Sleaford followed before he returned home for four days. The first stop on his next journey was on 2nd October at Leicester where he was to re-establish the ride to Melton Mowbray which actually started on 11th October. A tour of inspection of the offices in the Kettering branch preceded another visit on the 10th to Sleaford to instruct the new deputy. He spent nine days there before going back to Derby.

Two days at the end of October were spent in Nottingham again dealing with the ride from Newark to Derby which was to cause more trouble in December.

On 13th November he went to Belper and Wirksworth to report on the possibility of altering the route of the Derby-Wirksworth post. It was eventually decided to reroute this through Belper. On the 17th he set off for Northampton to investigate the possibility of opening a post between there and the Huntingdon road. He went on to London to report on his findings.

It was necessary for Mr Western to go to Nottingham on 3rd & 4th December as the person who had done the rides stated that his time was up. He was persuaded to carry on until his successor had provided horses.

Two days, in the middle of the month, were spent in Leicester conferring with Mr Bartlett, the surveyor of the Home District, about the posts to Dunstable and Bedford. Also he submitted a report about a possible post between Stamford and Uppingham.

The new contractor for the Newark and Nottingham ride had sent word to that he was going to quit as the work was too much for his horses. Consequently Mr Western was forced to go to Nottingham for three days from the 18th. The man was told that if he was determined to quit he must give due notice and in the meantime do the work properly. On his way home Mr Western called at Belper to open a receiving house as the Derby-Wirksworth post was to go through that village.

Again some of Mr Saverland's journals appear to be missing for the earliest that I can find for 1793 is that for March. On the 10th he rode to Birmingham and the next day to Shifnal to take charge of the office as the deputy had absconded to avoid paying his debts. After a fortnight he heard from Freeling that Mr William Bishton of Drayton had been appointed the postmaster at Shifnal. After he had instructed the new deputy, he left for Wolverhampton on the 30th. Whilst there he charged some letters directed to Cecil Forrester Esq. M.P. at "nr Wolverhampton", as he had done at Shifnal on letters directed to Shrewsbury since neither of these places was the usual residence of the M.P. The next day he went on to Birmingham to inquire into a complaint made against the postmaster by Rev. Lane of Handsworth. He was detained at Birmingham on 2nd April by a heavy fall of snow but managed to ride home the following day.

From 16th April to 3rd May Mr Saverland was away on a journey to the Isle of Man. He travelled by the packet to Douglas from Whitehaven. On the return sailing the boat was becalmed for all one night and most of the following day.

There are no journals for May and June. The probable reason is to be found in a minute written by Freeling to Walsingham on 27th May. He stated that he had received a private letter in which Mr Saverland had asked his opinion on the propriety of applying to P.M.Gs for an extra allowance for the journies he had taken to Donaghadee and the Isle of Man. He went on:

"The great distance of both these places from Mr Saverland's District, the alacrity with which he undertook those surveys, and his having crossed the water in both instances, in the last of which he caught a severe cold which medical advice was necessary to remove, I trust will give some strength to his claim if your Lordship will suffer him to make it.

I recollect that in the year 1787 when I went over to Ireland to negotiate the Establishment of the Waterford and Milford Packets, the PMG were pleased to give me an allowance exceeding the Guinea per day as a compensation for the trouble I had and for having gone out of the Kingdom...."

Despite Freeling's plea Walsingham refused to grant any extra allowance.

Towards the end of June, Mr Saverland was on his way, in the company of Mr Western to Stone etc. He spent the week from 6th July at Stone instructing the new deputy before returning home.

The August journal reads:

"Left Home August 6th and came to Birmingham to meet Mr Johnson to establish a Penny Post in that Town & Neighbourhood, establishing Receiving Houses in Town & Country, instructing the Persons appointed to keep them, arranging & dividing the four Letter Carriers Walks in that Town into Eight Walks for as many Letter Carriers, & forming Cheques & Vouchers for the protection of the Penny Post Revenue."

And that for September:

"At Birmingham establishing a Penny Post in that Town & Neighbourhood as mentioned in the preceding Month; visiting the Receiving Offices in the Town & Country, instructing them in their Duty, procuring young Men of approved good

Characters for Letter Carriers & Country Messengers & attending to the general business of that Office. Left Birmingham Sept 26th & came to Lichfield, & the 27th came home."

Those two journals did not reach London until near the end of October. In a covering letter Mr Saverland explained that he had been ill but was beginning to get on horseback and hoped in a very short time to be able "to bear the fatigues of a Journey."

He left home on 8th November with the intention of surveying the offices in parts of Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. He visited the office at Rugby and in the evening arrived in Coventry where, the following day, he received a letter from Freeling telling him to suspend his journey and to hold himself in readiness to go to Birmingham on the business of the Bilstone and Halesowen Penny Posts. He remained in Coventry, inspecting that office, until the 13th when he left for Birmingham. His journal then reads:

"Staid at Birmingham inspecting the business of that office, obtaining Sargeant's Information against Chance the Walsall Carrier for illegally collecting and delivering of Letters, procuring Chance to be served with the Copy of a Writ under the directions of Mr Parkin the Solicitor, & waiting for Orders to withdraw the Penny Post to Halesowen & Bilstone. Saturday Nov 23 - received Mr Freeling's Letter that the Penny Post to Halesowen was to be withdrawn, discharged the Penny Post Messenger to that Place, acquainted the sub Deputy of Halesowen therewith & desired that he would procure a Lad & Horse to convey the Letters to and from Birmingham which I hoped he would be able to do by Monday week. Monday the 25th left Birmingham & came to Halesowen. Instructed the sub Deputy in the business of his office as it stood now the Penny Post was withdrawn, started the Lad on Horseback in lieu of the Foot Messenger, for which Service I told the sub Deputy he would receive the former Allowance of £20 a year."

On the same day Mr Saverland went on to Kidderminster to examine the office. On following days he inspected the offices at Bewdley, Stourbridge and Wolverhampton where he found a letter from Freeling telling him that the Penny Post to Bilstone was to be withdrawn. On the following day, 29th November he gave the appropriate orders for this to be done. The rest of the journal for November and that for December contain nothing of interest. They list the offices he visited in the rest of his tour - Shifnal, Newport, Stafford, Lichfield, Tamworth and Atherstone.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This should appear by the end of October. Please note the date of the October meeting as MM77 may not appear until after that meeting.

G.B. POSTAL HISTORY

ALSO: Some Foreign, Ephemera, Post Boxes - etc.

Wants Lists - for specific items or for general interests - will receive my personal attention

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