



MIDLAND G.B. POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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BULLETIN NO. 5 FEBRUARY 77

Editorial

EVERYTHING HAS BEEN IN TWO'S

Since the December issue of the Bulletin we have advanced by two on every front - two new members two articles for publication - two Want Ad's - two members have paid their Annual Subscription and next two meetings have been arranged.

Our two new members are Mr. A.Spencer of No.24A Perry Road, Oldbury and Mr. F.Page of White Hse. Bosbury, Ledbury and the opportunity is taken of welcoming them to the Society. We are now 32 strong and look forward to an increase in our membership. You must know someone who has a Midland Postal History interest, so get them to write to our Treasurer indicating their collecting interest together with a pound note as Annual Subscription.

One of the articles received forms part of this Bulletin together with the Want Ads.

The following members are reminded about 1976 Annual Subscription - Messrs G.L.Durie, H.W.N. Norvill, J.C.Steward, R.D.R.Corser, D.K.Waddams and R.R.Trevor.

NEXT MEETING

Will be held on Saturday 26th February in
ROOM 14 (not our usual Room) at
Birmingham & Midland Institute, Margaret Street
(Street Parking nearby) BIRMINGHAM

Commencing at 2 pm - until approx 5 pm.

Members are requested to bring along up to nine sheets of Midland postal history or similar with them where possible - dont forget that guests are always welcome. Guest in lieu of Display O.K.

A. G. M.

Will be held in APRIL (Details later). It will be a fairly informal affair with something special after. Held at our usual meeting place.

INVITATION TO YOU

You are invited to attend a meeting organized by Birmingham Philatelic Society on WEDNESDAY 9th March at Birmingham Institute, Margaret Street which will commence at 6.30 pm when two of our Members, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis of Smethwick will be giving a Display on the Postal History of

XMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

The 'heading' of this Bulletin comprises variations of the following early postal strikes :

- a) 'Hot Cross Bun' 1681 to 1686 probably the first Provincial Town Stamp used. Chichester area. The pattern is exactly the same as an early map of the city of Chichester.
- b) Midland G.B. Postal History Society - based on same lettering of Birmingham town stamp 1720/1805.
- c) Birmingham Chandelier of 1772.

TWO correct answers were received from John Calladine and Andrew Watton who received a 'small prize'.

FEBRUARY QUIZ (not applicable to P.Farmer)

see page 4
for
illustration

'Small Prize' for members who can give details of this experimental handstamp used by 39 Main Post Offices in Midlands and Lancashire between 1902 and 1910.

'MIDLAND' POSTAL CANCELLATIONS - 1840 to present day

As a first step in our programme to produce a brief catalogue of types of 'Midland' cancellations you will find enclosed two working paper check lists for any SPOON and SQUARED CIRCLE cancellations you may have originating from Midland Towns. Please fill in the check list as applicable and send to following County Organizers as soon as possible :

SHROPSHIRE	S.Stobbs, 28 Rosafeld Ave Halesowen, West Midlands.
WARWICKSHIRE	W.S.Chester, 17 Rock Close Coventry, Warwickshire
STAFFORDSHIRE	A.R.Lloyd, 5 Marsh Lane, Penkridge, Staffordshire
WORCESTERSHIRE AND HEREFORDSHIRE	Mrs. E.Lewis, 27 Rathbone Rd. Smethwick, Warley.
BIRMINGHAM	P.D.Baxter, 72 Midhurst Rd Kings Norton, Birmingham

Even if you only possess one or two, as I do, please compile the details and send them off. We hope that all members will take part in this well worth activity. Thank you. Chairman.

WANTS, FOR SALE, EXCHANGE ETC. (No charge to members)

Wanted : Example of *Wordesley Penny Post* - preferably pre 1840 - but any example would be acceptable. If you have one (and wish to keep it) even a photostat copy would assist. Write direct to John Calladine, Dunley, Cranham, Gloucester.

Exchange : Various postal history items of 'Midlands' no longer collected in exchange for Leicestershire items and 'much travelled' and re-addressed covers. Let me know what you have to exchange for what you want in exchange. Editor ; 13 Station Rd. Hinckley Leics.

POST SCRIPT - How are you getting on with that short article for the Bulletin ?

If you cannot produce an Article a new member will do

by John Calladine

Of all the stamps applied to letters in the Midlands, the circular date stamp must be the most familiar. Dated stamps with two arcs were introduced in about 1829, the arcs replaced the mileage numerals which were featured on so many earlier stamps. Post offices with an annual revenue of less than a thousand pounds had to be content with an undated circular stamp, but Stourbridge (Worcestershire) was a thriving industrial town and was using a dated stamp in the late 1830's.

The same circular date stamp continued in use well after the introduction of adhesive postage stamps and was more usually applied to the back of a cover or, if on the front, was applied well away from the postage stamp. The day, month and year of the dated stamp were formed by metal 'slugs' inserted in the stamp and changed daily. A simple enough task one might think in the unhurried Victorian world but one that gave the staff of Stourbridge Post office - then in Enville Street - a few headaches.

FIGURE ONE is of a typical Stourbridge circular date stamp of the early 1840's. The name of the town takes up much of the circumference and the letters have serifs. (Serifs were dropped in the mid-1840's). But it is the relationship of the date to the town name that is of particular interest here. A second example at FIGURE TWO looks much the same at first glance. A second glance shows the date to be completely inverted.

If inversion of the date was not a habit at Stourbridge, neither was it an isolated example. FIGURE THREE shows a similar mistake made some eight months earlier and before the introduction of adhesive postage stamps. Both happen to be on letters leaving Stourbridge rather than arriving in the town. Surely it could not have been deliberate ?

Naturally it was also possible to invert a part of the date rather than the whole of it. An 1843 cover (FIGURE FOUR) illustrates just such an error. The day and month have been inverted while the year remains correctly positioned.

Postal historians may be relieved that other post offices in the Midlands had better control of their staff than Stourbridge. Just look at the beautifully struck UPRIGHT circular date stamp from Ashbourne, Derbyshire (FIGURE FIVE) A model of clarity applied on the twentyeighth of September in the year of our Lord Oh, Well.

The next article to be published in the Bulletin is entitled 'THE NEW JERUSALEM' - an interesting and surprising diversion into the background of an 1806 letter from Stourbridge to Gloucestershire.

Watch this space ***

Now you see how it is done - we await further articles from members for April and the rest of the year.

Editor.

Send them to : 13 Station Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire

Cut off and give to a friend
this enrolment form :

I wish to apply for membership of the Midland G.B. Postal History Socy
Annual Subscription £1.00 *****

Name Address



SEE PAGE TWO.



FIGURE ONE

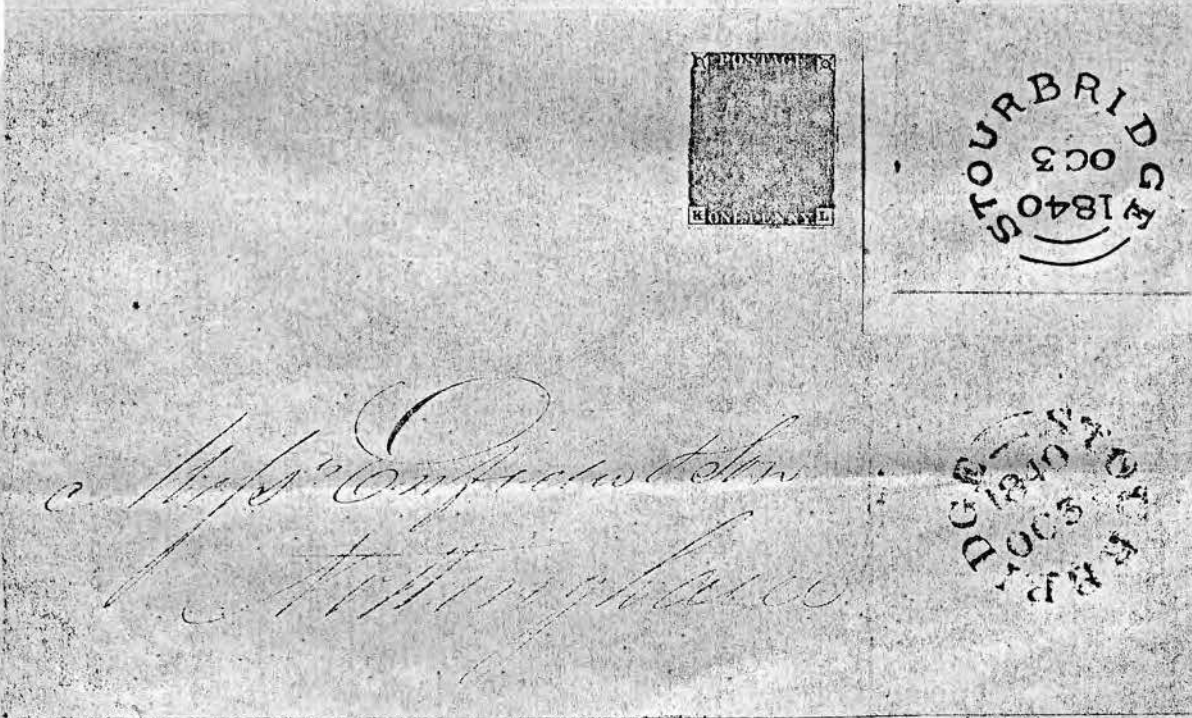


FIGURE TWO

To be read in conjunction with Article "THAT WAS THE DATE THAT GUM"

Mr. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
of London

rec 18

STOURBRIDGE
1840
FEB 17

FIGURE THREE

Messrs. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
of London

1840

1840
FEB 17

STOURBRIDGE
1843
FEB 16

FIGURE FOUR

Messrs. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
Messrs. J. J. J.
of London

1840

1840
FEB 17