

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

President: Derek Smeathers

Chairman:
Mel Matthews
(0121 6898147)

Treasurer:
Eric Lewis
(0121 4291222)

Secretary:
Mick Gill
(01636 672868)

Programme Secretary: Richard Farman (01283 566515)

Number 166, August 2010

In the unlikely event that you should be driving through Wokingham and see a long queue emerging from a rather distinguished looking building, do not think that tickets for some 'not to be missed' event are on sale. It is only people wanting to transact business in the post office, and the inevitable result of closing two, reportedly profitable, town sub-offices. On a recent occasion, I counted forty-seven people in the queue, three counter positions, one of which was selling foreign currency, out of six in use. I gave up, caught the train to Reading where, even if the number of people waiting is greater, there are two 'Post and Go' machines. A Post Office official promised that more counter staff would be employed when the two sub-offices closed; clearly a promise on a par with that of political parties. To close profitable offices seems to be 'the economics of the mad-house', but since the origin of this nonsense is Brussels, should we be surprised?

Are Royal Mail in such dire financial straits that they cannot afford any ink? I ask because so much of our mail has adhesives which have either not been cancelled or the cancellation is so faint as to be almost illegible. Two examples are illustrated on the back page. One of the worst offenders appears to be the Thames Valley Mail Centre in Swindon. Since its inception, I, and other people, have looked for a good machine cancellation from there without success. To be fair though, Leicester usually produces clear ink-jet postmarks.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our new season begins on **11th September** at **Kington St Michael** where there will be a joint meeting with the Somerset & Dorset Postal History Society. The speaker at 10.30 am will be Malcolm Ray-Smith who will show *Early Provincial Marks*. In the afternoon members are asked to bring a one board display on the same topic. A booking form is enclosed with this issue.

On **16th October** we meet at **Carrs Lane Church** in Birmingham. At **1.00 pm**, Bob Viney will display *Rutland Postal History*. The meeting will be preceded by a Committee Meeting at 11 am.

Those of you who saw the exhibits were surely impressed by Tom Slemons display of Suffolk Postal History. Tom will be our speaker in the afternoon on **13th November** when we meet at the premises of Warwick & Warwick. The morning, beginning at 11.00 am, will be devoted to members' one board displays of *Large or Unusual Items*.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2010-2011 SEASON

If the box below contains an 'X', your subscription has not yet been received by our Treasurer. In that case, Eric Lewis (27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick B67 5JG) would be pleased to receive a cheque for £10 at your earliest convenience. A renewal form was sent out with the previous issue of *Midland Mail*.

COLOURED POSTMARKS, 1852

In June 1852, it was decided that different colours of inks were to be used in different parts of the country. New inks were to be supplied to all Postmasters who used **dated** stamps. Those offices which did not use datestamps, since they were not Money Order Offices, were to continue to use blue ink which they had to provide. (Instructions to Sub-Postmasters, 1852.)

The colours to be used in the Surveyors' Districts in England and Wales were:

Home District	Brown No. 1	Western	Orange No. 2
Eastern	Black No. 4	Midland	Blue No. 7
South Wales	Pink No. 6	North Wales	Green No. 5
Northern	Red No. 3		

The minute (Post 35/5842/1856) gives recipes for each of the colours, the first of which is shown below. Since part of the document is not visible on a copy because of folding, I have provided a transcript.

No. 1 Brown	<i>2 Ounces of Drop Black 4 Ounces of Indian Red & 12 Ounces of Sweet Oil</i>
----------------	---

No. 1 Brown	2 Ounces of Drop black 4 Ounces of Indian Red & 12 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 2 Orange	6 Ounces of Chrome Yellow 1 Ounce of Venetian Red & 11 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 3 Red	7 Ounces of Venetian Red and 7 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 4 Black	6 Ounces of Drop Black and 10 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 5 Green	8 Ounces of Chrome Yellow 1 Ounce of Prussian Blue and 26 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 6 Pink	4 Ounces of Rose Pink & 8 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 7 Blue	1 Ounce of Prussian Blue and 9 Ounces of Sweet Oil
	All the materials named in the above Recipes require to be well ground on a Painters Slab.
No. 8 Red	4 Ounces of Printers Red Ink diluted with 3 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 9 Orange	2 Ounces of Chrome Orange ground with 4 Ounces of Sweet Oil
No. 10 Orange	3 Ounces of Red Lead 3 Ounces of Chrome Orange ground with 9 Ounces of sweet Oil

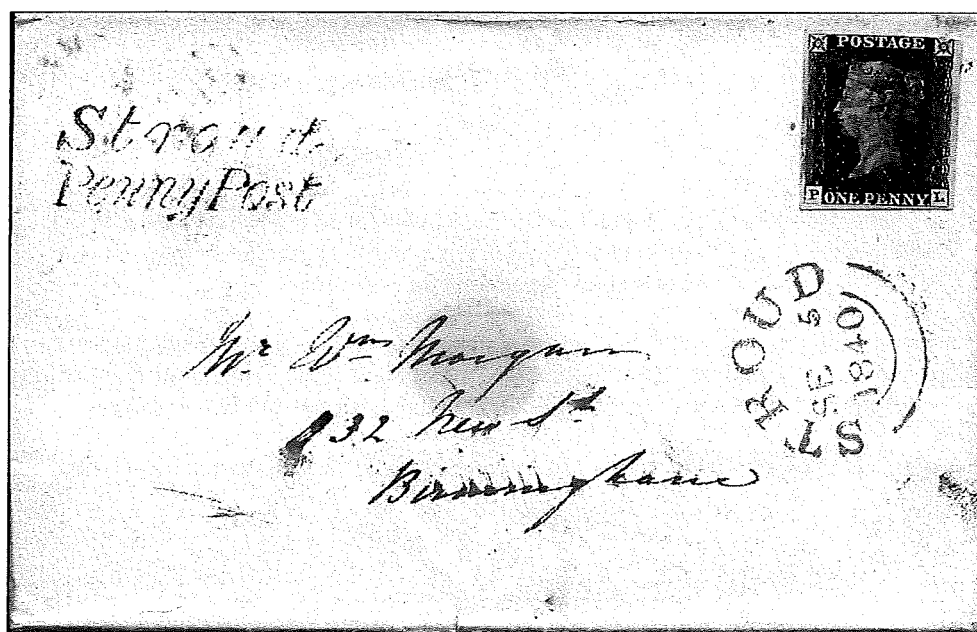
THE USE OF PENNY POST HANDSTAMPS FROM POST TOWNS AFTER UPP

In 'Midland Mail' 165/18, the Editor asked if the practice of using penny post handstamps issued to post towns occurred anywhere in the Midlands after 1840, other than at Lutterworth. The straightforward answer is that it did and, if one interprets "after 1840" as "after the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage" in January 1840, it occurred surprisingly widely.

Post towns listed in the Society's 'local post' book (and its Oxfordshire supplement) with PP stamp usage after January 1840 include Stroud and Wotton under Edge in Gloucestershire, Daventry, Peterborough and Thrapston in Northamptonshire, Newark in Nottinghamshire, Enstone and Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire and, straying just outside the Midlands to an office in Berkshire but with receiving offices in Oxfordshire, Wallingford. Even this list may not be exhaustive.

As the Editor makes clear, receiving houses often continued to use their penny post stamp after UPP when they had no other identifying stamps. In fact, many receiving offices did not receive their penny post handstamps until 1840. Perhaps the most striking example of this is outside the Midlands, at Exeter, where no fewer than 34 type 5 penny post stamps were issued to the receiving houses of Exeter on 30th October 1840. It is evident that these stamps will have been ordered before 1840 and that contracts for their manufacture were not terminated abruptly. Progressively, throughout the 1840s, type C2 and then C1 undated circular stamps (UDCs) were issued to the majority of receiving houses and use of the obsolete penny post handstamps became unnecessary.

Although the receiving offices did not have any other handstamps to identify themselves, the post towns now had circular datestamps (CDSs) and, with the Post Office disinclined to create extra work, there was no apparent reason for unnecessary use of their penny post stamps to be continued. From evidence across the Midlands, one can be confident that the explanation lies elsewhere. Perhaps nowhere is the explanation clearer than at Stroud. The Stroud Penny Post stamp was issued to the town in 1838, shortly after the local 'penny letters' had been brought to account. Its issue probably coincided with a decision to make Nailsworth, where a considerable quantity of correspondence originated, a receiving house of the Stroud Penny Post. Circumstantial evidence from letters of late 1838 and 1839 suggests that the use of the Stroud Penny Post handstamp was confined to letters from the Nailsworth area. After the introduction of UPP in January 1840, all letters known with the Stroud Penny Post handstamp that bear the sender's address clearly originated in Nailsworth, the last of them dated 18th September 1840. A type C2 UDC was issued to the Nailsworth office on 10th October 1840 and no use of the Stroud Penny Post stamp has been recorded thereafter. We can safely conclude that the Stroud Penny Post stamp was not used at the post town but at its Nailsworth receiving house.

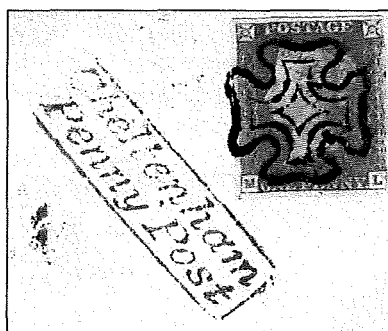


Use of the Stroud Penny Post stamp on 5th September 1840.

The situation in Oxfordshire at Enstone and Chipping Norton was similar. The type 1 Enstone Penny Post stamp was used until the mid-1830s. No letters bearing that handstamp have another Enstone mark. However, a boxed stamp was introduced late in 1837 and thereafter all letters with the boxed Enstone Penny Post handstamp also have an Enstone UDC or, later, an Enstone CDS. This suggests that the penny post handstamp was being used at Charlbury, the sole receiving house, rather than at the post town. Recorded use continued until March 1842. Charlbury was issued with a UDC on 20th June 1842 and use of the Enstone Penny Post mark immediately ceased. The sole receiving house in the Chipping Norton Penny Post was at Long Compton. There is no recorded use of this scarce handstamp before 1842. Again, its use shortly after a UDC was sent to Long Compton.

Wallingford is just within the county of Berkshire but its three receiving houses, Benson, Shillingford and Dorchester, are in Oxfordshire. What is particularly unusual is that it was sent both a type 5 Wallingford Penny Post handstamp and a CDS on 27th June 1840. (The issue of a penny post handstamp to a post town after UPP may be unique.) The reason for this is almost certainly that Wallingford temporarily lost its post town status to Benson in 1837 and regained it in 1840. There is therefore every reason to believe that, as with other minor offices, a penny post handstamp was ordered before UPP but delivered when it was no longer relevant. Letters from Shillingford with dates of 27th June 1840 and 27th May 1843 have been seen with the Wallingford Penny Post stamp. However, two more covers have been seen dating from 1845, originating in Dorchester, that also bear the stamp. Shillingford never received a UDC and is believed to have closed before 1845. Dorchester received its UDC on 4th July 1846. Was the Wallingford Penny Post handstamp passed from one office to another?

The example of late use of the Lutterworth Penny Post stamp on 27th October 1845, as described by the Editor in 'Midland Mail', is less straightforward than the examples above because the cover also bears a strike of the Bruntingthorpe UDC, the minor office where the letter appears to have entered the post. However, there were three other villages near Bruntingthorpe that had been served by the Lutterworth Penny Post, Fowlesworth, Leire and Wibtoft, none of which had their own handstamps. The problem is that neither did any of these villages have an official office until at least 1846. Is it possible that, notwithstanding their lack of an official office, a messenger or the receiver at Bruntingthorpe used the Lutterworth stamp to indicate the true origin of the items. (Letters that passed from one receiving house, through a second, to a post town are not common but are in no way unique.) A Frowlesworth UDC was issued on 27th June 1846.

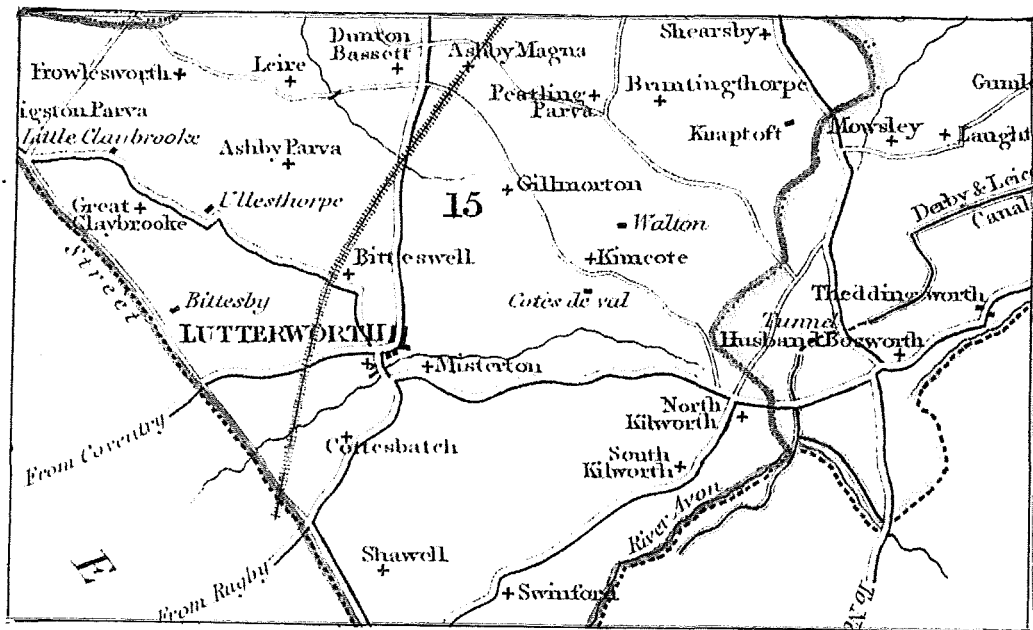


A Cheltenham Penny Post stamp used after 1840 with a 1d red brown adhesive. At which of the Cheltenham receiving houses this stamp was used is not known but it was certainly not used at the post town.

In summary, we can be certain that many of the penny post stamps issued to post towns used after 1840 were handed to one of the receiving houses and remained there until a UDC was issued. The situation at Lutterworth in 1845 is less clear but it would be surprising if it were not used in similar, although not identical, circumstances.

(The above is a co-ordinated response from John Hine, Martin Scroggs and John Calladine.)

Editor's Note. I would like to thank John, Martin and John for their detailed response. Since I received their response, another cover from the same correspondence has surfaced. Fortunately, the envelope still contained the letter which was written at Walton. In 1844, an official post was introduced from Lutterworth through Gilmorton, Kimcote, Walton, Bruntingthorpe to Peatling Parva. These village are to the north-east of Lutterworth whereas those served by the Lutterworth Penny Post - Ashby Parva and Ullesthorpe, were to the north-west. The only post office that was opened at the time on the route described above was in Bruntingthorpe. I can think of two possible explanations for the use of the Lutterworth Penny Post handstamp. Firstly, as suggested previously, that it was used by the messenger to mark letters that he was given on his walk. Secondly, that there was an unofficial receiving house at Walton, but I have no evidence for such an office.



Gilmorton Post Office c 1910

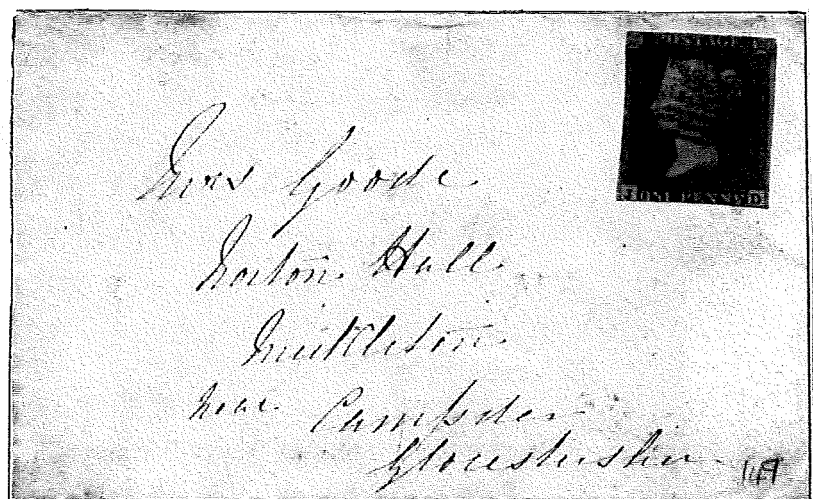
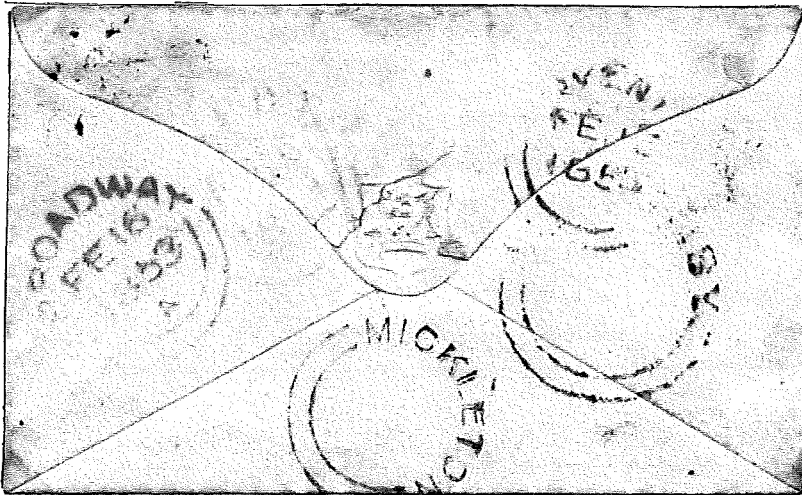
A MYSTERY UDC FROM 1853

by Colin Fountain

I recently bought a cover addressed to Mickleton, Gloucestershire to add the clear strike of the 'MICKLETON' UDC to my Gloucestershire collection. In addition to the Mickleton handstamp, which was used as an arrival mark, there is another UDC, presumably from the place of posting, which is far from clear and I wondered if another member is able to identify this for me. The name appears to be 'AL-----SY' struck in blackink but I cannot find anything matching this in the Society's UDC book or indeed in my map of road books covering the whole country. The penny red adhesive has been cancelled with an indistinct barred oval which may be '223', and the datestamp of the head office of posting, although not a complete strike (in green) appears to be 'COVENTRY'.

In the list of UDCs for places under Coventry the only one which seems to come close to this lettering is 'ALLESLEY' for which there is only one recorded date of use (23FEB44). This replaced an incorrectly spelt handstamp inscribed 'ALLESBY' but my example appears to have more letters than this and the incorrect handstamp was replaced ten years before my cover. Does anyone have any other ideas?

Editor's Note. I suspect that this is a strike of the serrified 'ALLESLEY' which considerably extends the date of usage. Perhaps the Warwickshire collectors could say if they agree or disagree with this comment.



HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR COLLECTION – A BASIC GUIDE

Based on a Paper given at the 87th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, Derby on 8th July, 2005.

By David R Beech FRPSL, Curator and Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library

Introduction

Many philatelists understand that they are the guardians of the material in their collections for themselves and for future owners. It is unfortunate when some collectors show a disregard for looking after their collection and dismiss comment with a remark like "it will be OK in my life time". It is to show that looking after your collection is not a complicated affair that I have written this article. Having said that this is a brief or basic guide only and interested parties seeking more comprehensive information should consult a professional paper conservator.

The British Library is custodian of national collections of international importance some of which have been in its care for over 250 years. During this period it has developed, along with the library and archive community, policies and practices designed to protect those collections. The curators' job is to understand the issues and work with the conservator, who will have specialist knowledge and practical experience. In 1989 the British Library published the book *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, written by the late T J Collings, a leading paper conservation expert, and R F Schoolley-West, FRPSL former Head of the Philatelic Collections. This title appeared in two editions, one in collaboration with the American Philatelic Society.

To break down the subject into manageable portions I have divided it into seven sections which are: Environment, Light, Paper, Gum, Plastics, Physical issues and Treatments.

Environment

Philatelic Collections should be stored at a temperature under 18 centigrade and with relative humidity of between 55 and 60%. Recent research has shown that gummed and perforated material is under less stress at these slightly more moist conditions than had previously been recommended. Outside these conditions collectors run the risk of the growth of fungi if too hot and too humid. Remember that one cause of foxing is believed to be dead fungal growth so by avoiding bad conditions you can help to avoid those unsightly stains. If too dry paper suffers stress and with an unused stamp with gum a tension will develop between the gum and the paper. This tension may be sufficient to split perforations. Dampness is probably one of the main dangers to paper and especially to gum. Ventilation of a room or storage container is likely to reduce the level of moisture; some mild and gradual heating may be of assistance in carrying moisture away. Never heat a damp room without adequate ventilation as this may promote the growth of fungus.

Clean air is important too as pollutants may cause damage. Smoking is incompatible with philately because of damage from ash, staining and the transfer of smell.

Light

The best lighting conditions to keep your collection in is complete darkness. We do need to study our material and show it to fellow philatelists and for this we need light; but how much? In simple terms material on exhibition should be shown in no more than 50 lux, which is 50 candles worth at a distance of one metre. Light contains ultra violet (UV) and a maximum of 10 micro watts per lumen is advised. It is the duty of all philatelic exhibition organisers to arrange these conditions. This is the same standard as is used by art galleries for exhibitions of prints and drawings, so it is not impossible to achieve. While most organisers will at least avoid direct sun light nearly all fail to come even close to the conservation standard of 50 lux. Clearly it may be a difficult and expensive thing to achieve but measures should be taken to reduce levels and the resulting damage. That damage has taken place is clear from the examination of collections protected from light and these include the British Library's Philatelic Collections and the Royal Philatelic Collection where the bright and fresh colours are often remarked upon.

One international exhibition held in Europe since 2000 under Federation Internationale de Philatelie (FIP) rules and supervision seemed to have no or little regard for the dangers of light. The exhibition halls had one third glass roofs resulting in high lux and UV levels. These were measured on a cloudy day randomly around the halls. The minimum was 91 lux and 165 micro watts per lumen and the maximum was a horrifying 3,395 lux and 479 micro watts per lumen. Over half of the frames, where the levels were measured, exceeded 1,000 lux! Fading undoubtedly resulted. If FIP supervision of international exhibitions is have any meaning for the protection of material on show it must at least set standards that seek to avoid the worst of the bad conditions. I challenge FIP to do so before it is too late!

Photocopying of material has its hazards too in the form of not only of light but heat too, the latter causing a stress in the paper. Some more modern machines may be less harmful and further research work here is needed.

At the Philatelic Collections office at the British Library all of our lights have UV filters as do the windows and we never leave material exposed to light unnecessarily.

Paper

Papers are complicated in form and structure. For this basic guide it is perhaps sufficient to say that the best papers have a pH of between 6.0 and 8.5. pH is the measure of the extent to which material is acidic or alkaline. Paper which is acidic usually goes brown like modern newspapers and paperback books. Philatelic material may suffer from being acidic and the most obvious examples of this are postal stationery post cards. Many of these are so bad that they probably have a life of only a few years, perhaps in some cases ten to twenty years. The problem can be addressed by deacidifying the item but it is recommended that this be undertaken by a professional conservator. Post cards that have been used with typewriting or manuscript addresses or messages and perhaps with additional adhesives will need special care as the process is one where wetting is involved. The deacidification process will arrest the acid attack at the time of treatment but it will not reverse the browning of the paper.

Clearly album pages should be such that they cause no damage to the material mounted on them and so need to be acid free and comply to ISO 9706 standard for permanent paper.

Gum

As I have indicated gum is often in tension with the paper it is applied to and this can be reduced under the appropriate storage conditions that I give in the Environment section above. If the gum becomes too dry (and especially if it is thickly applied) it may crack and go on to crack or damage the paper of a stamp or cover, etc. The removal of gum is probably in the best interests of stamps in the long term. This is controversial and further work needs to be carried out as to how this may be achieved with the best results. Removal by water may not be the answer in many cases and inks may be affected.

Pressure sensitive adhesives, that is self adhesives on stamps, are emerging as a major conservation concern. Clear tapes, like *Sellotape* and other similar products, are pressure sensitive and as most of us know the adhesive turns brown and leaves a stain on just about anything that it has been stuck to. Will this be the case with self adhesive stamps? By the way never repair any philatelic item with a pressure sensitive tape; it was never designed for this purpose.

Plastics

A great deal has been written about plastics in philately which are used as mounts and protectors. Here I am only going to say that top museums, libraries and archives only use polyester (*Mylar* and *Melinex* are commercial names) without any anti static coatings, with paper or similar materials. They never use PVC which can ooze plasticisers and forms acid as it decomposes.

Physical Damage

That care should be taken in handling material should be taken for granted. One University library that lends books had or has a notice that said something like "Books should be stored with care and should be kept away from rodents, silverfish, insects, children and other vermin".

I have seen small photo corners cause much damage especially to covers. The act of using them may cause physical damage to the corners of a cover over time. Clearly material should be handled with clean hands, but even so the moisture on all skin will transfer to the stamp or cover. This is why in libraries and archives rare materials are often handled with special gloves.

Peelable stamp hinges if applied correctly are safe to use. Many collectors are not good at using hinges and it would be a good idea if philatelic societies gave lessons to new collectors on their use. In any event minimal moisture should be used and the hinge should only be applied to the very top of a stamp. Plastic mounts are a safe alternative if made of polyester.

The writing in pencil on covers of a price by dealers and others should be avoided as every time it is removed by eraser it will damage the paper and if repeated will eventually cause a hole in the paper.

It may be of interest to the reader to give the policy we apply at British Library Philatelic Collections on the mounting and housing of its collections. Such arrangements have to last one hundred years. Stamps or covers are mounted in polyester mounts on conservation quality album pages which are placed in a polyester protector. These, about sixty at a time depending on the material, are stored in conservation quality boxes with a waterproof buckram covering, which are kept upright on the shelf.

Treatments

Philatelic material that needs any kind of treatment should be shown to a paper conservator. Not all treatments are advisable, indeed some will cause damage. This many not at first be apparent but it may emerge in time. The bleaching of items is not recommended and many of the methods or techniques carried out in the past have ruined stamps and covers. Do not be tempted to do it yourself!

Another point to remember is that repairs, cleaning, etc may be acceptable in some areas of paper object collecting, but not in philately as in some instances fraud may result either in a sale or in exhibiting. Only in exceptional and rare instances will any repair work be acceptable. A good example of this is the first stamps of Hawaii, the Missionary stamps of 1851-52, which are printed on very thin and fragile paper. Many of the 199 copies that exist are repaired. If they had not been they probably would not exist today!

As I said at the beginning you are the custodian of your material for your life time or until you sell. Do look after it for future generations otherwise nothing will exist to collect, study, research and enjoy!

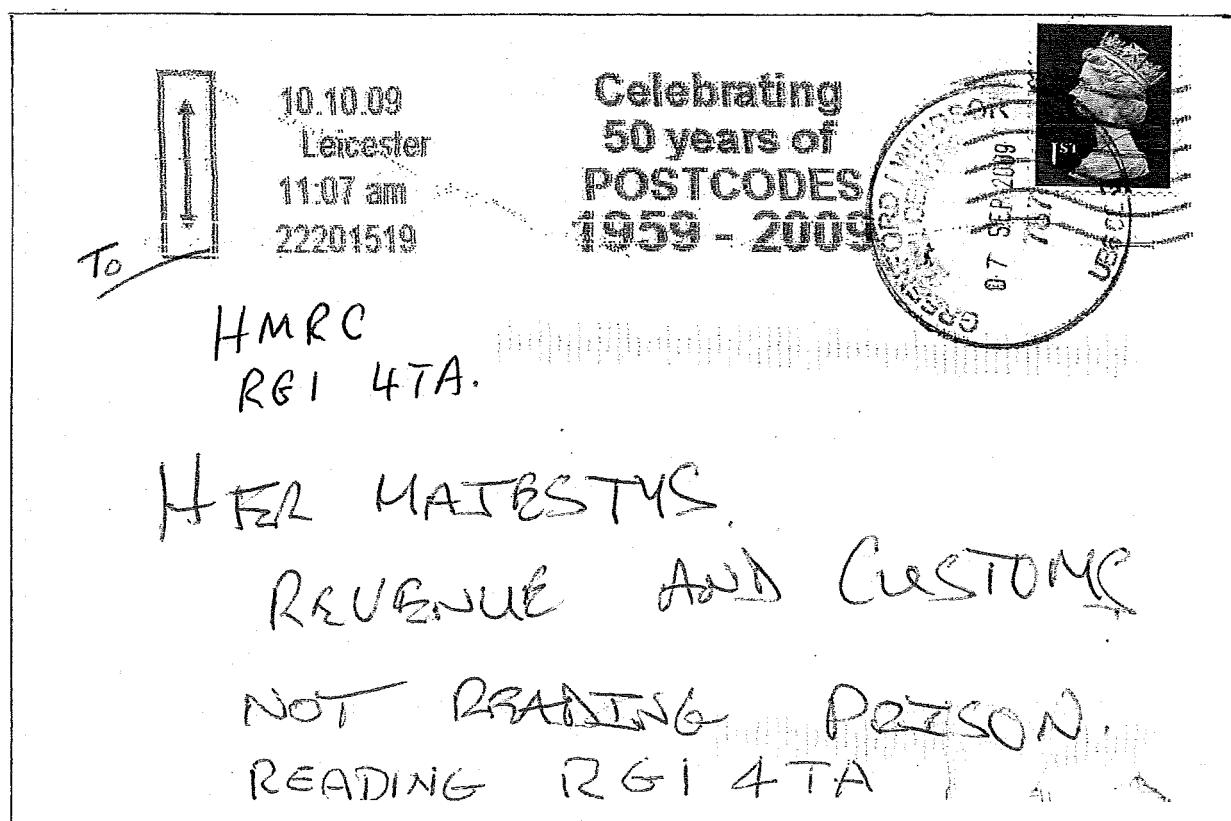
I should like to thank Barry Knight, Head of Conservation Research at the British Library, for checking aspects of this paper.

David Beech is a Past President of The Royal Philatelic Society London, a former Trustee of the philatelic charity, the Stuart Rossiter Trust, and a Trustee of the Revenue Philately Trust.

Copyright

MISSENT TO LEICESTER AND READING PRISON

The sender's address on the back of the envelope shown below indicates that the letter was posted in Slough on 7th September 2009, addressed to 'HMRC RG1 4TA'. Three days later, it was in Leicester from where, it is to be presumed, it was forwarded to Reading. I wonder what the postman thought HMRC stood for when the letter was delivered to Reading Prison rather than Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. Any suggestions?



STRATFORD-ON-AVON FIRST DAY POSTMARKS 1964-1989.

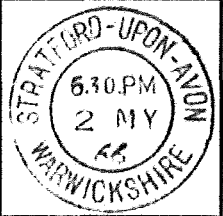
by Bryan A Jones.

I would doubt whether there is any single place within our collecting area which has more individual first day postmarks, whether "plain" or "pictorial", than Stratford-on-Avon.

A chance purchase of a run of first day covers, covering the period 1964 through to 1989, set me off exploring the range of postmarks being used. As unfortunately is common, this run of f.d.c's had already been shown to a small dealer who had in somewhat typical fashion described them as virtually valueless and suggested that they might be of some interest to "the grandchildren". What interested me was the fact that each cover was cancelled with a Stratford-on-Avon first day of issue postmark, and for a relatively small investment I therefore collected over 70 f.d.c's with what I subsequently discovered was a range of different first day postmarks, all of which I believe were applied at the main post office in Stratford-on-Avon.

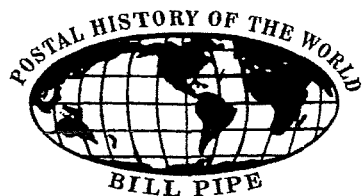
This article deals with the "plain" postmarks, mostly specifically "first day" postmarks used during the period from 1964 through to 1989, commencing with the 400th Shakespeare Anniversary issue, this being the first occasion that a "First Day of Issue" postmark was expressly used at Stratford-on-Avon. I plan to produce a follow-up article in the near future which will cover the multiplicity of other first day or commemorative postmarks issued for use at Stratford-on-Avon during the period after 1964.

Plain First Day Postmarks used at Stratford-on-Avon from 1964.

Code	Characteristics	
SFD1	27mm Single Ring. Stratford-upon-Avon around bottom rim. Hyphens between Stratford, upon and Avon. All lettering in capitals. First and only use for 400 th Shakespeare Anniversary	
Used 23 April 1964 on 400 th Anniversary of Shakespeare's Birth.		
SFD2	27mm double ring datestamp, also used on normal mail. Stratford-upon-Avon Warwickshire in capitals around rim. Time code above date. Hyphens between Stratford, upon and Avon.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 1 July 64 (Int Geographical Congress); 3 August 64 (Int Botanical Congress); 4 Sept 64 (Forth Bridge); 8 July 65 (Churchill); 9 August 65 (Salvation Army); 1 Sept 65 (Commonwealth Arts); 1 Sept 65 (Lister); 13 Sept 65 (Battle of Britain); 20 Feb 67 (EFTA); 24 April 67 (Flora); 10 July 67 (Paintings).		
SFD3	30mm Single Ring. All lettering in capitals, no hyphens in name. Occasional use known on other mail 1968 - 73. Normally applied in black, but known on two occasions applied in violet (see below). Also known, in modified state, with time code added below dateline, in March 1979, cancelling additional stamps applied to a normal fdc.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 29 April 68 (Bridges); 12 August 68 (Paintings); 15 Jan 69 (Ships); 25 Nov 70 (Christmas - applied in Violet); 22 Sept 71 Architecture - applied in Violet); 1 Jan 73 (European Communities).		

SFD4	The first appearance of the "Generic" first day canceller. 25mm Single Ring. Stratford-upon-Avon/Warwickshire in mixed case lettering in two lines below dateline. Date with year in full in single line across centre.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 28 Feb 73 (Trees – Oak); 18 April 73 (Explorers); 16 May 73 (Cricket); 4 July 73 (Paintings); 14 Nov 74 (Royal Wedding); 28 Nov 73 (Xmas); 24 April 74 (Fire Service); 12 June 74 (UPU); 27 July 74 (Trees – Horse Chestnut).		
SFD4a	Variation to SFD4 – diameter 26mm – slightly larger. Other characteristics the same as SFD4. Treated as sub-type because although the above example shows apparent wear, subsequent issues show the use of SFD4 in pristine condition.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 15 August 73 (Inigo Jones); 12 July 73 (Commonwealth Parliamentary Conf); 24 October 73 (Dec Definitives). Note that following issues revert to use of SFD4 (see above).		
SFD5	26mm Single Ring. Arrangement as for SFD4. Name in larger (initial letter - 1.5mm) and smaller (1mm) capitals.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 10 July 74 (Great Britons); 4 Sept 74 (6½p Defin); 9 Oct 74 (Churchill Centenary); 27 Nov 74 (Xmas); 15 Jan 75 (7p Defin); 22 Jan 75 (Charity); 19 Feb 75 (Turner). 26 Nov 75 (Xmas); 8 June 77 (Comm Heads of Govt); 15 June 77 (S Jubilee – Addt Value).		
SFD5a	Variation on SFD 5. Diameter and layout identical to SFD5. Minor variations in size of lettering, distinguished by changes in length of Stratford-upon-Avon 21mm compared to 20mm on SFD5, Warwickshire 13.5mm compared to 12.5 on SFD5.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 3 Sept 75 (Inter Parliamentary Conf); 13 August 75 (Railway); 24 Sept 75 (Definitives); 22 October 75 (Jane Austen).		
SFD5b	A second variation on SFD5. Larger diameter 27mm. Single Ring, layout identical to SFD5.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 25 February 76 (Definitives); 10 March 76 (Telephone); 2 March 77 (Chemistry); 7 Feb 79 (Dogs); 21 March 79 (Flowers).		
SFD6	26mm Single Ring. Name in two lines below dateline, lettering all same size (2mm) in capitals with hyphens.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 28 April 76 (Social Reformers); 2 June 76 (U.S Bicentenary); 30 June 76 (Roses); 4 August 76 (Cultural Traditions); 29 Sept 76 (Caxton); 24 Nov 76 (Xmas); 12 January 77 (Racket Sports).		

SFD6a	Variation on SFD6, layout identical but using smaller lettering throughout (1.5mm). Dateline and name set low within centre, 4mm gap to lower rim.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 11 May 76 (Silver Jubilee); 5 October 77 (Wildlife); 23 Nov 77 (Xmas); 1 March 78 (Hist Buildings & Min Sheet); 26 April 78 (10½p Defn); 31 May 78 (25 Anniv of Coronation); 5 July 78 (Horses); 2 August 78 (Cycling); 16 June 82 (Admirals); 23 July 82 (Textiles); 17 Nov 82 (Xmas); 26 Jan 83 (River Fish); 9 Mar 83 (Commonwealth Day); 6 July 83 (British Army); 24 August 83 (Gardens); 5 Oct 83 (Fairs); 16 Nov 83 (Xmas); 6 Mar 84 (Cattle); 10 April 84 (Urban Renewal); 25 Sept 84 (British Council); 22 Jan 85 (Trains); 12 Mar 85 (Insects); 14 May 85 (Composers); 30 June 85 (Royal Mail); 19 July 88 (Armada); 19 Jan 89 (Birds).		
SFD6b	Variation on SFD6a, dateline and name set higher within centre, gap 6mm between Warwickshire and bottom rim.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 11 July 79 (Year of Child); 15 August 79 (Defins); 26 Sept 79 (Police); 24 Oct 79 (Rowland Hill); 16 January 80 (Birds).		
SFD7	26mm Single Ring – Stratford-upon-Avon in mixed case lettering; Warwickshire in capitals.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 22 Nov 78 (Xmas); 9 May 79 (Euro Assembly Elections); 6 June 79 (Horseracing); 21 Oct 79 (Xmas); 30 Jan 80 (Defins); 12 March 80 (Liverpool & Manchester Railway).		
SFD8	25mm Single Ring. First appearance of new type with lettering around rim, with date lower centre.	
Known used on following f.d.c's:- 5 July 1994 (Golf); 8 August 1995 (Shakespeare's Globe Theatre).		



THE MAGPIE

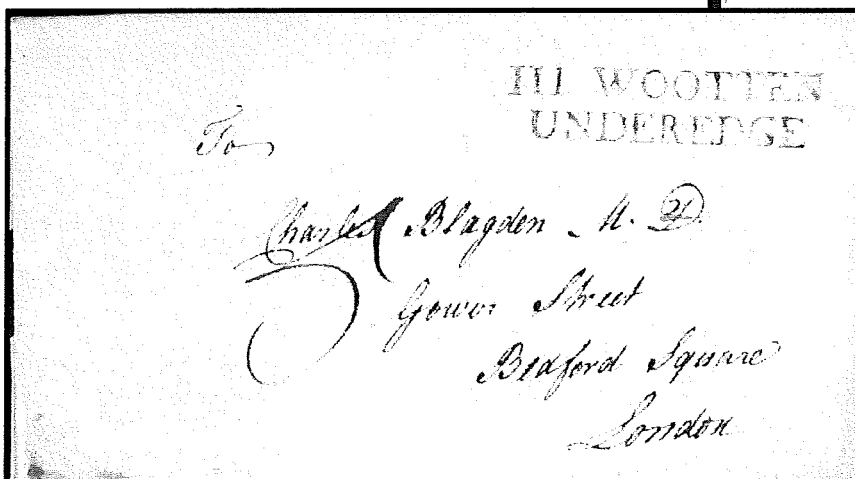
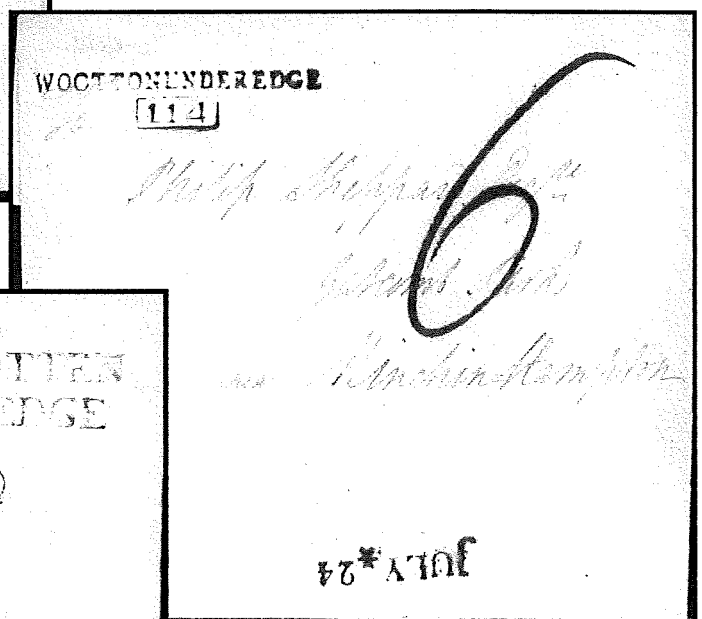
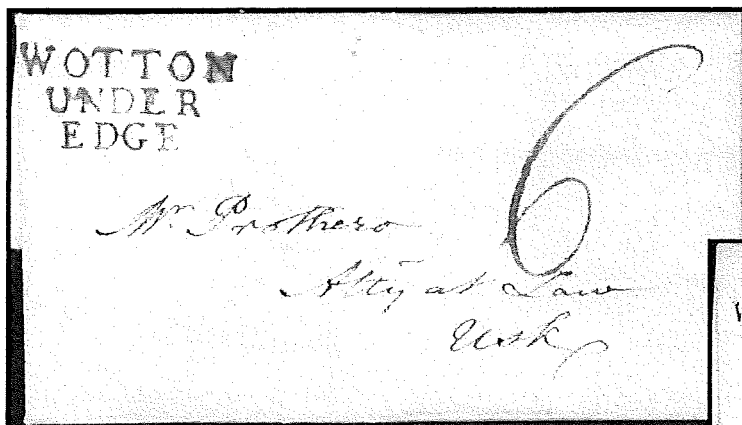
POSTAL AUCTIONS & LISTS
POSTCARDS & EPHEMERA
PAPER COLLECTABLES
POSTAL HISTORY

W.T. PIPE
7 Richard Close
Upton, Poole
Dorset
BH16 5PY

Tel: 01202 623300
Fax: 01202 631149
Web: www.magpiebillpipe.com
Email: magpiebillpipe@free.uk.com

Gems from September Auction.

**THE GILBERT WHEAT COLLECTIONS
OF WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE and
SHEFFIELD POSTAL HISTORY -**
Featuring in our 1,000 + lot **WORLDWIDE AUCTION,**
Wednesday 8th September
Plus 'Round-the-World' postcards, fine GB, etc.



Visit our NEW website, now with fully searchable current catalogues and archived Prices Realised -

www.cavendish-auctions.com

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

Ph: 01332 250970 Fax: 01332 294440

Email: stamps@cavendishphilauc.demon.co.uk



LATE USE OF A LEICESTER MILEAGE MARK?

I was at first rather puzzled recently when offered a cover (fig. 1), clearly dated 'August six 1810' and supposedly struck with the straight-line mark of Leicester LC54 which is recorded used in 1800-01. However, it was soon clear that it was not LC54 a strike of which is shown in fig. 2 for it measured 35x4 mm and not 37x4 as claimed. So, what was it? The date of use suggested that it should be a partially struck mileage mark. Inspection showed that it was neither MMM 4015 (used in 1806) nor MMM4016 (used 1808-09). To my surprise it turned out to be a partial strike of MMM 4013 (used DEC1801-FEB1802) (fig.3), especially surprising as three other mileage marks had been used since its recorded usage. So, why was this handstamp brought back into use? Had the other handstamps been lost/damaged? Is the partial strike because of incomplete inking or had the mileage box broken off? It should be noted that in 1811, a dated circular mileage mark came into use at Leicester. I would welcome reports of any Leicester mileage marks used in 1810.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

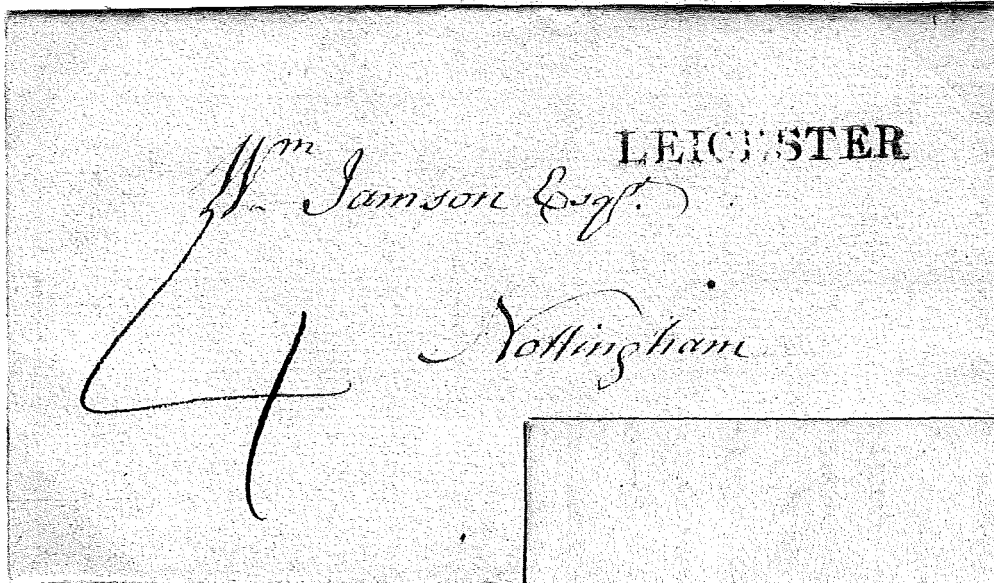
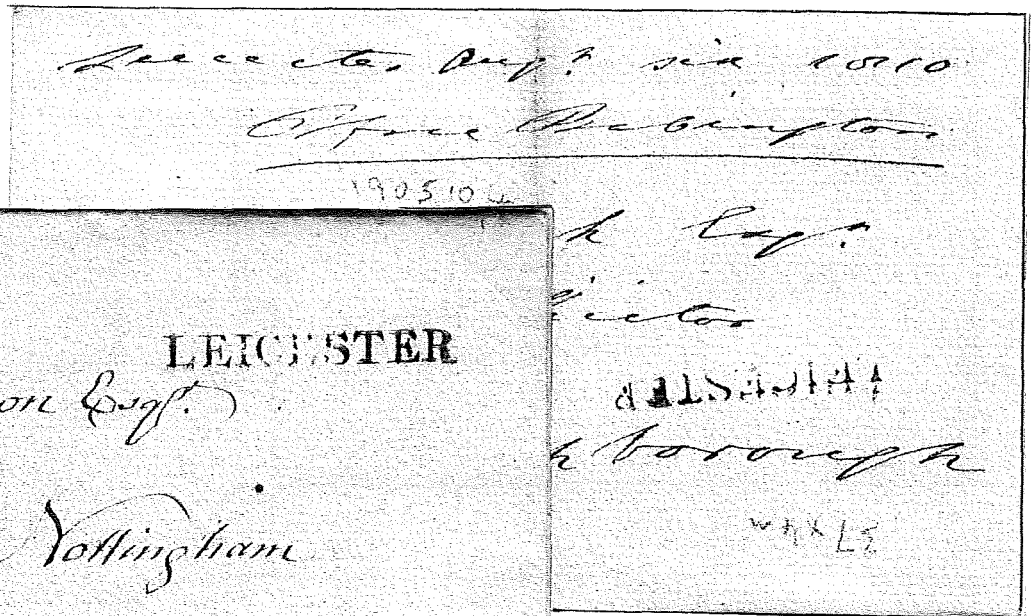
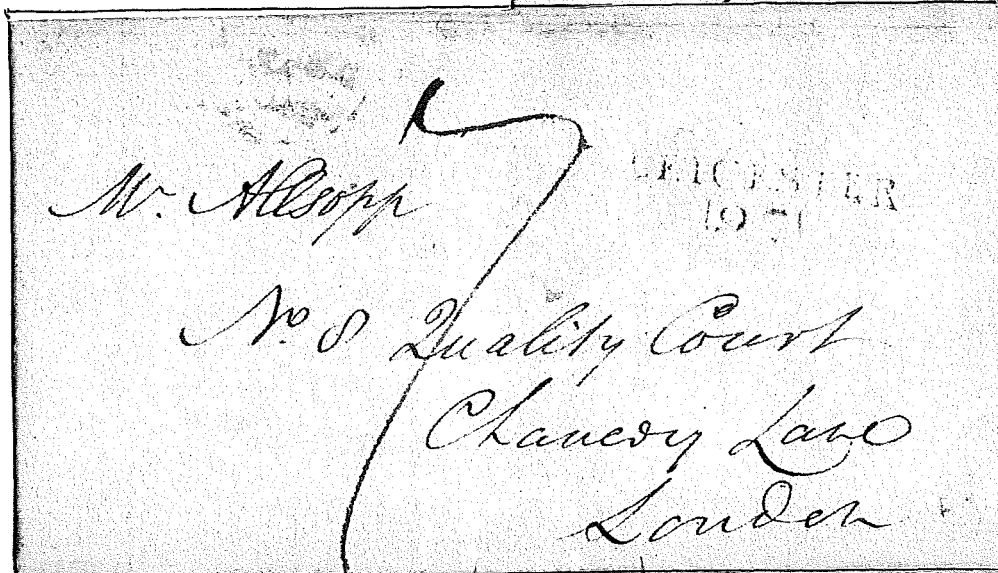
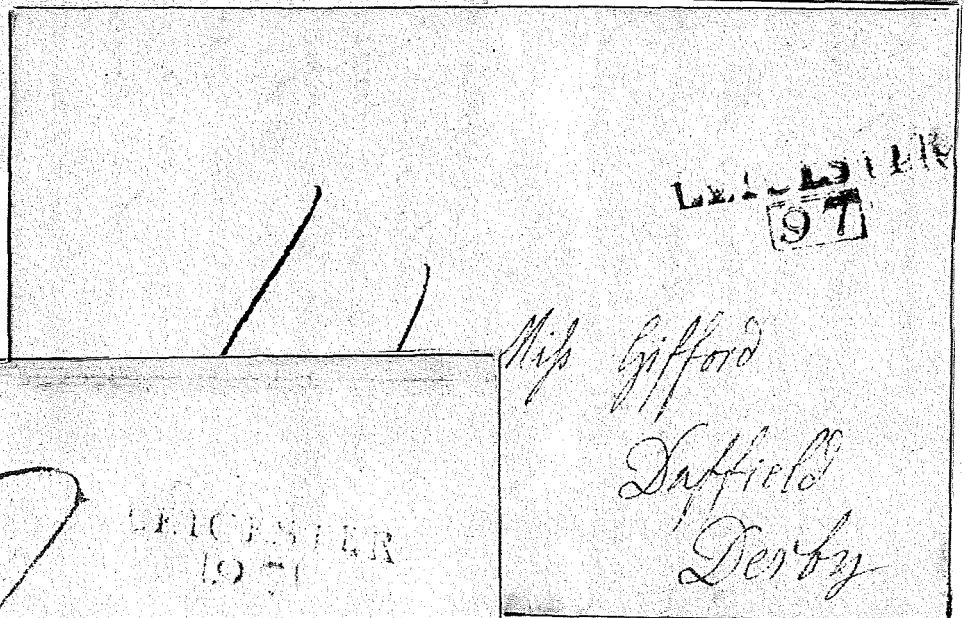


Fig. 3



PRICES OF HANDSTAMPS

My thanks to Eric Lewis for sending this copy of a page from the Steel Impression Books.

*Prices of Stamps &c. Contracted
for three years from 1 Oct 1842
Messrs. Morden & Co. Pavement Engravers*

X Steel Stamps dated	8/2
Steel Stamps not dated	8..2
Steel types	4 ^d
Brass labels	6 ^d
Brass Seals	2/9
X Too Late Stamps	3/3
X Ship Letter Stamps	6/6
X Brass Stamps	1/-
Wood Paper Stamps	10 ^d
Receiving - House Stamps	8/2
X Figures for Stamps	4 ^d
X Steel Figures	4 ^d
Steel dated Horn Stamps	6/11
X Brass Paid Stamps	4/6
X Brass Free Stamps	5/8
X Paid Crown Stamps	3/2
Sets Steel Figures	11/3
X Double Sets Steel Figures	13/3
X New Dating Steel Stamps	2/6
X Recutting Steel Stamps	3/8
New tamps to Steel Stamps	3/6
Cleaning Steel Stamps	8 ^d
New Stamp Handles	11 ^d
Cleaning Horn Stamps	8 ^d
X Recutting Steel Types	2 ^d
Recutting Bye Stamps	3/9
New dating Bye Stamps	18/-

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ray Haffner writes:

"Thank you for the June edition of 'Midland Mail' received this morning – as usual it is an interesting journal.

I must say that the review of the 24th April Meeting encompassing Mel Matthew's slide illustrated talk on POST BOXES was exceptionally interesting. It's quite the best descriptive piece that I have ever read on the subject. In less than two A4 pages we have a succinct history including facts unknown to me before e.g. E VIII R cipher replaced by G VI R and WWII black and white painted pillar boxes. Obviously Mel's display was exceptional – but so was your write-up! Many thanks.

Editor's Note. Thank you Ray for your kind comments, but all I did was to report an outstanding display.

THE COLOUR OF POSTMARKS

I had intended that these comments would appear at the end of the article on page 2, but that ruined the layout of the whole issue.

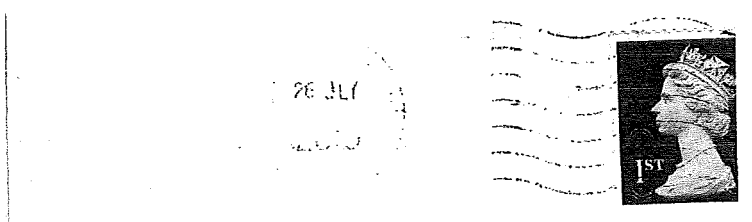
I often wonder why we pay so much attention, and sometimes pay a premium for colours other than black, to the colour of postmarks, and to debate the exact colour. For unless there was an operational reason for the use of a colour e.g. red to denote a prepaid letter, the colour of a postmark probably reflects no more than the colour of the inkpad which was nearest to the stamper at the time.

Then, there is the fact that so many dyes are subject to changing colour with the passage of time. I was intrigued by the article on page 2, though I doubt that those mixing the inks carried out a risk assessment as they would have to now. Chrome Yellow is lead chromate the colour of which can vary tends to be reduced (not oxidised as poor strikes are sometimes described). There was probably enough sulphur dioxide in the air in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century to change the colour of any inks containing that pigment unless they were well protected from the atmosphere. Then Prussian Blue, or iron(III) hexacyanoferrate(II) !! to the chemists, is very susceptible to change by air and light. No wonder it is sometimes difficult to decide if a postmark is blue or green or even blue green if the ink contains that compound.

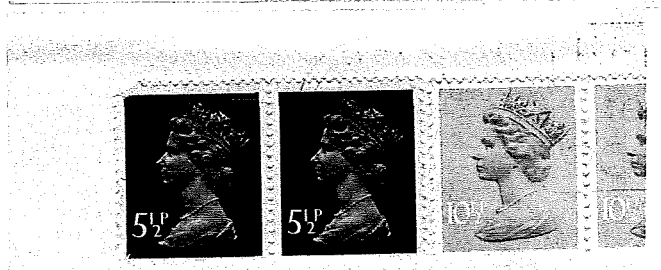
Recently, I was offered a mileage mark in the unrecorded colour of green. It certainly looked greenish but close examination showed that it was in fact black, and the different dyes had separated slightly, possibly caused by dampness. Probably there had been chemical changes too. So, for me, the only importance of colour is does it improve the appearance of a display.

RECENT MACHINE CANCELLATIONS

Thames Valley Mail Centre



Derby



THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This should appear towards the end of October provided that plenty of articles are sent to:

John Soer, 51d Barkham Road, Wokingham RG41 2RG