



MIDLAND MAIL

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



President: Mr. W.J. Calladine

Chairman:
Richard Farman

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

Secretary
Elizabeth Lewis

NUMBER 65, MAY 1990

The eagle-eyed amongst you will have spotted the change of President. It was "Ches" who was largely responsible for the founding of this Society, and despite his many other philatelic activities he has done much to develop the Society. I am sure that we shall be in equally sound hands with our new President, John Calladine. It is doubtful that the Society's books would have ever got into print had it not been for his energy and enthusiasm.

I hope that those of you able to get to Stamp World '90 enjoyed your visits. For my part, the journey was as squalid and miserable as most trips across London are these days with escalators out of action at both ends of the tube journey. However the facilities at the "Ally Pally" were very good, with plenty of space to move around and even somewhere to sit down. My only complaint was that the lighting above the displays, particularly in the West Hall seemed rather poor. Although I don't know what awards they gained my congratulations to Vivien Sussex, Michael Jackson and James Grimwood-Taylor on their enthralling displays. I shall be very interested to see what award James received for to my inexpert eye he seemed to be breaking some of the rules with some of the material he included. But to me it was all part of the story and added considerably to my understanding. I also liked the approach in the exhibit of Shropshire postal history.

However did you notice that the only exhibits of provincial British postal history came from overseas. I wonder if this is symptomatic of a bias against local postal history on the part of the philatelic establishment. In fact I am sure that it is. I well remember the occasion of our local philatelic society's competition evening a few years ago when the judge (a person very eminent in philatelic circles) commented that entries of local postal history were bound to lack significance. Apparently "significant" means from London or foreign parts. So it seems that the most carefully researched display of say Salop has less significance than an entry on "The Camel Posts of Upper Volta". When I mentioned this to a dealer (not one of our advertisers I hasten to add) he said that material from this country was much easier to find. I replied that I would believe him when he could sell me covers from the Melton Mowbray Penny Post or that of Market Harborough. I am still waiting.

Enjoy your summer break but do find time to pen a few lines for Midland Mail.

THE APRIL MEETING

Sixteen members gathered at Carrs Lane Church Centre on 28th. April for our Annual General Meeting and Auction. After apologies for absence had been noted, the minutes of the previous AGM were read. The matter of the rules of the Society had been raised there and a working party set up to draw up a set of new rules. After some discussion of the proposed rules, those present voted in favour of their adoption. Copies will be distributed to members in due course.

We then proceeded to the reports of the Officers. Our Chairman and Secretary both thanked all the Officers of the Society for all their hard work behind the scenes. The Treasurer reported that although the cost of running the Society was barely met by income from subscriptions etc., profits from the sale of the Society's books meant that he was able to recommend that the subscription remain at £5. This was later adopted unanimously. The Editor stated that since the last AGM five issues of Midland Mail of about twenty pages had appeared. Comments on the type face had favoured that used in the previous issue, so he would continue to use that. HE MADE HIS USUAL APPEAL FOR ARTICLES.

When we came to elect the Officers, our President Mr. Chester announced his retirement from the post. John Calladine was elected unanimously. The remaining Officers, County Editors, MPF Representative and Auditor were re-elected unopposed.

Under the heading of "Other Business", the matter of the next Society publication on local posts was raised. Members will hear a lot more about this at a later date. Next season's programme was discussed. Full details will appear in the next issue, but subject to confirmation, the dates for the rest of the year are; 8th. September, 6th. October, 3rd. November and 15th. December.

The awards for the various competitions were then presented. That for pre-1840 went to Alf Fieldhouse, 1840-1939 to Ted Coles, post 1939 to Paul Hill. The Jon Baker Rosebowl was awarded to Chris Beaver. Congratulations to them all. At this point your Editor had to leave and so is grateful to Elizabeth for the list of auction realisations at the top of the next page.

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



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B	2.00	C	4.80	D	10.00	E	2.00	F	1.00
K	0.50	L	1.00	M	4.00	N	3.00	P	1.00
S	1.00	V	0.50	W	0.50	2	7.00	3	14.00
4	1.70	5	4.00	6	4.00	7	1.00	8	4.00
9	1.00	14	5.00	22	4.00	23	3.00	24	4.00
25	0.50	26	17.00	27	10.50	28	12.50	29	8.60
30	1.00	31	3.50	32	4.00	33	4.25	34	1.00
35	1.80	37	3.30	38	1.00	39	1.75	40	1.00
41	1.00	42	3.75	43	2.30	44	2.00	45	4.25
46	2.40	47	1.00	48	5.75	49	1.60	50	1.50
51	1.40	52	1.50	53	2.75	54	1.80	55	1.50
56	1.20	57	1.25	59	1.00	60	5.00	62	2.00
64	5.00	65	1.50	67	1.10	73	2.00	74	5.00
75	25.00	76	1.00	77	2.00	78	0.60	79	1.00
80	4.00	81	3.00	82	5.00	83	3.25	85	1.00
86	3.00	87	1.00	88	3.00	89	4.75	90	1.80
91	7.50	92	12.00	93	3.75	94	5.00	95	5.00
96	8.50	97	10.00	99	4.50	100	2.25	101	5.50
102	0.50	103	0.75	105	0.75	106	3.00	107	0.50
108	2.10	109	3.00	110	1.50	111	2.10	115	1.00
116	14.00	117	3.60	118	9.00	119	0.80	122	1.50
123	4.50	124	7.50	125	95.00	127	2.80	128	0.80
131	1.00	133	6.00	134	27.50	135	14.00		

STAMP WORLD '90

That the Society's gathering of local postal historians at Stamp World on 9th May was billed as a "get-together" rather than a meeting was no accident for this was primarily a social event. It attracted 30 visitors which, to be realistic and not merely hopeful, was a good response. Among the stalwarts were a dozen members from our Society (well done!), three from Kent, two each from Surrey and Somerset & Dorset and single representatives of East Anglia and Lancs & Cheshire. All the above societies contributed 15 sheet displays (two from the Midlands) and we are very grateful to Eric and Elizabeth and to Harold Wilson for their fine efforts on our behalf.

While the wine was sipped, there was a rare chance to thumb through the publications of the other societies. If the event was primarily social, there was some talk in a more serious vein and a widespread feeling that those of us interested in local postal history lack an adequate focal point, particularly since the demise of the GB Group of the Postal History Society. (In fact several commented that the PHS appears more inclined to despise local postal history than promote it!) Above all there was felt to be a need for an annual index of articles that had appeared in national and society journals. A further proposal was to find a university (Buckingham?) to "sponsor" local postal history.

The Society was particularly pleased to see John Hine on a visit from Holland and to welcome Mr. D. Chambers as a new member. The most disappointed visitor was probably the gentleman who, seeing a poster at the exhibition advertising "local postal history" and finding a room full of people, believed he had stumbled upon the long-dreamt-of meeting of enthusiasts studying the postal history of Alexandra Palace. One hopes even his visit wasn't wasted.

W.J.C.

CORRESPONDENCE

As a follow-up to her letter in the last edition Vivien Sussex has written:

"What is very obvious travelling around the country is that there are a number of collectors who have every postmark from 1750 to 1980 of a tiny place, or sometimes of a larger area, but haven't any real idea why they were used or their place in the story of GB postal history as a whole. Also it is very boring to see mileage marks or the penny posts of one town, followed swiftly by the same for umpteen others. I am not anti-GB (I do have four collections based on it) but those inward looking tiny groups really must move with the times. Recently I was asked to give a display to one such, at my own expence, for ten members. This involved travelling 200 miles and loss of half a day's work."

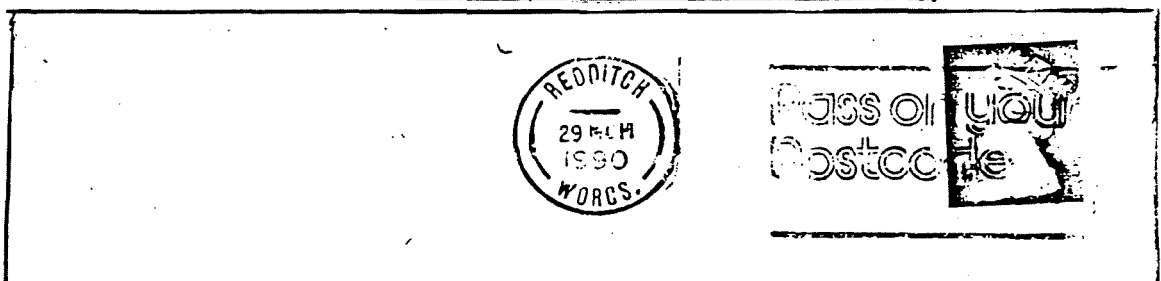
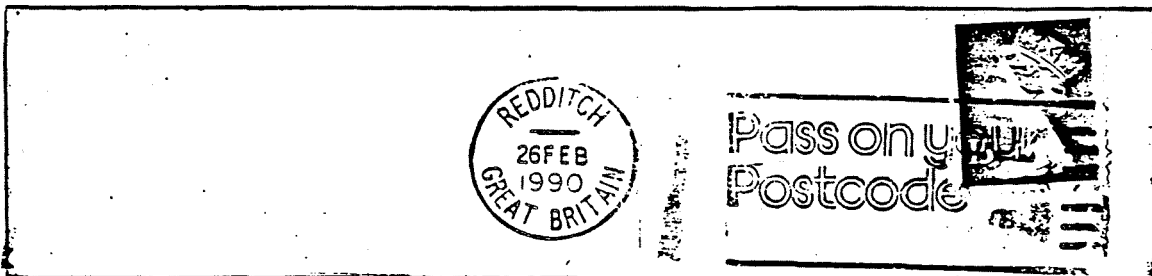
Chris Beaver has written:

"I knew I'd somewhere sometime seen an answer to your query (MM61/7) about Bishopmarks, and here it is in the postal history book I have had longest (since 1950) - T. Todd, "A History of British Postage Stamps", pub. 1941. After giving the first known dates of Bishopmarks, he goes on "These Scottish Bishopmarks are very different from the English types, being elliptical in shape and divided into two halves. There were evidently twelve top halves, one for each month, and thirty-one lower halves, one for each day. Later Bishopmarks used in Scotland were more like the English types and were in one piece." I've not seen this contradicted and assume it's based on observation rather than records - i.e. the fact that other Bishopmarks than the earliest Edinburgh ones consistently show one line of ink at the divide and a complete and aligned circle."

Mr. Godfrey has written from Alcester, enclosing the two envelopes reproduced below. He comments:

"It appears that the idea of cancelling in red must have caused some confusion in Redditch, since for the most of January and February the dater die of the cancellation shows 'Redditch Great Britain'. This would seem to have been taken from the "Paid" franking plate in error. This has now been corrected and the latest cancellations show 'Redditch Worcs.' "

Editor's Note: I am afraid that I am not able to reproduce the two cancellations in their true colour of red.



A NEW ARRANGEMENT

by Rev Christopher Beaver

By a happy chance a letter of January 1822 recently acquired makes reference to the altered timing of the up Liverpool Mail. It was the first radical departure from the arrangement that had prevailed for nearly four decades: all mail movements throughout the kingdom are determined by the 8 p.m. dispatches from London and arrivals there in the early morning, around 6 a.m.

Two young friends are planning the adventure of a lifetime, without benefit of travel agents. They have introductions and some offers of accommodation. Edward has made little progress in his first fortnight of attempting to learn Italian. He's glad Henry has found someone who does know the language willing to accompany them as servant - presumably also as driver and guide. Never mind the expense of that. He had not expected the hire of a "strong and secure" carriage to be less than £50, which Henry has negotiated, London to London apparently though for how many weeks is not revealed. Next week Edward will come to London, to stay at Ibbotson's Hotel in Vere Street so that they can discuss the homeward route in particular, perhaps there or at Henry Wilson's home at Highbury Hill.

Edward Buller writes from the family base, Dilhorne Hall in North Staffordshire. He's going to a ball near to Lichfield on Friday, and will stay there over the weekend and come on to London on Monday, that is January 14th. Fortunately he spells out more detail: "I purpose to deposit my precious person in the Liverpool Mail for London, where I believe, by a new arrangement, it arrives about eleven at night. On Tuesday therefore I shall be at your service either in Town or at Highbury as may be most convenient."

It must be hoped Edward did get a seat inside the coach, for 15 hours outside would have been no picnic in January, even if most of the journey was in daylight and the weather proved fair.

The 1827 time-bill has this mail due to leave Lichfield at 8.37 a.m. after a half-hour stop, changing coach and guard at Coventry, a half-hour allowed for dinner at Stoney Stratford, and timed to reach the GPO at 10.5 p.m. Just when the change to arrive in the evening was made I do not yet know. The matter was under discussion in 1821 according to a report in the Times of 23rd August, so maybe it happened that autumn. Until one finds a more precise reference I suggest Edward Buller's wording makes it more likely it was on or about 6th January 1822. The primary object was for Liverpool, and Manchester by means of a crosslink to Knutsford, to gain a day in communication with the continent. For the first time mail passing through the capital was not delayed at the GPO from morning till evening.

Editor's Note: A similar alteration was made to the timing of the Leeds Mail (via Nottingham, Oakham and Uppingham) in the latter half of 1820, but like Chris I have not yet found the date when the change was made.

BOOK REVIEW

HAND-STRUCK STAMPS: PROOF BOOKS ETC. 1823-1989. A catalogue of Post Class 55. Available from P.O. Archives, 23 Glasshill Street, London SE1 0BQ. Price £2 including postage etc.

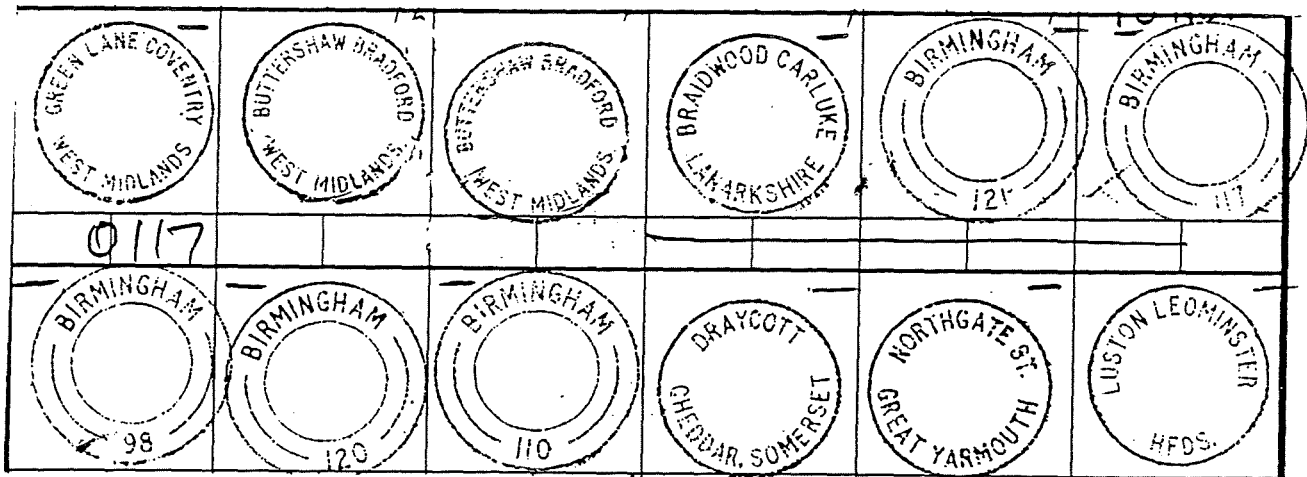
This is the latest in the series of catalogues of the various Post Classes published by P.O. Archives. Regular visitors to Freeling House will, no doubt, be familiar with the original series of proof books of handstamps, both steel and rubber. However this catalogue gives details of much new material. The steel impression books now have a continuous run from 1957 to 1989. In addition to the original series of rubber proof books, those of a number of manufacturers covering the period 1973 to 1989 are now available for inspection. Those from Ambrose appear to contain mainly handstamps for internal use by the GPO. However I did notice some interesting instructional marks and the DERBY / TICK DUTY shown by Harold Wilson some time ago. What did surprise me in other volumes was the number of town sub-offices that have been issued with the oblong parcel post handstamps. I had not realised that they cancelled mail of any sort other than registered packages. Though I should add my observation only applies to the Leicestershire towns. Also rather more villages than I realised have the same type of stamp.

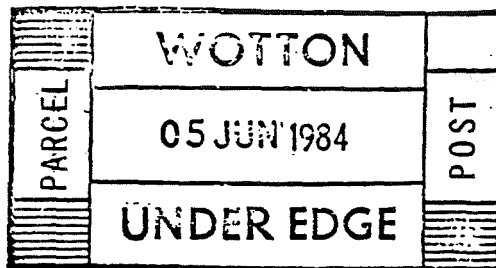
Also catalogued are a series of "Life Histories". These files originate from the Supplies Department and record the usage etc. of a variety of handstamps. The last issue of Midland Mail contained extracts from one on steel datestamps. There are over thirty similar files. My last visit only allowed a few minutes to dip into one on rubbers covering the period 1893 - 1955. A few glances were enough to whet the appetite, so possible there will be more in MM before the end of next season. This catalogue will be very useful to anyone interested in hand-struck postmarks of this century who intends to visit Archives.

The postmarks illustrated on the opposite page are all taken from the rubber proof books, and are to give some idea of what is available. The parcel post stamp at the top is unusual in that no post town is shown; South Kilworth also received a similar stamp. That at the bottom of the page was sent to Leicester. Although I have seen copies of handstamps serving the same purpose, this is the only type specifically for use on parcels I have seen. I have no record of its actual use.

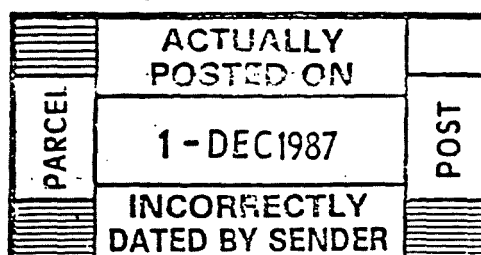
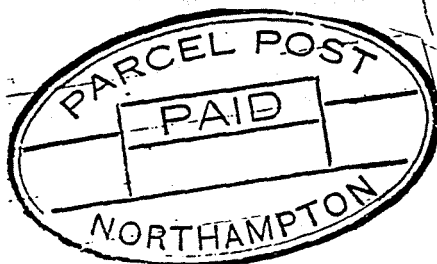
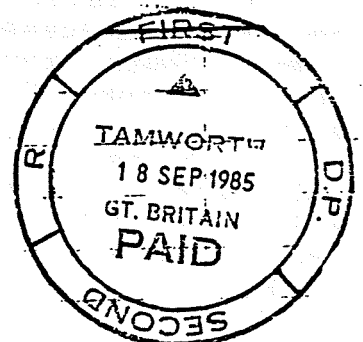
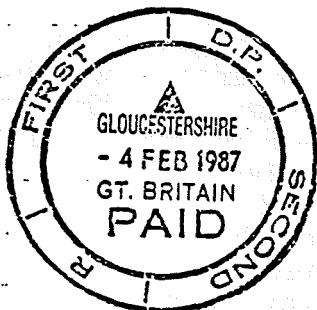
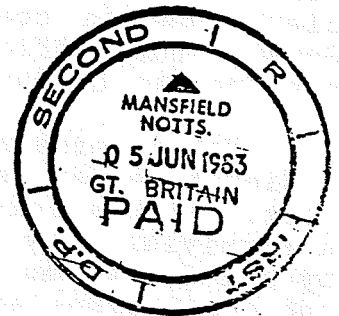
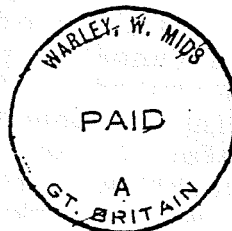
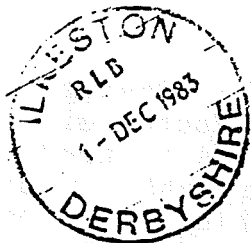
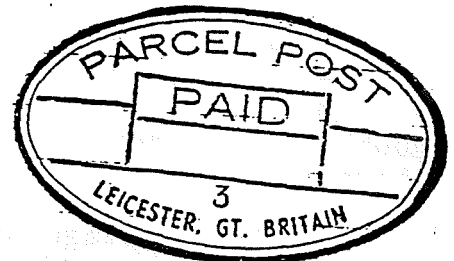
Finally a number of impressions are marked that the stamp is to be returned to the manufacturer. Sometimes the wrong sort has been supplied; other times there is a spelling error. However can you spot why two of the postmarks below were not issued.

My thanks to P.O. Archives for permission to reproduce the postmarks shown.





YOUR POSTAL ADDRESS
IS STONELEIGH, COVENTRY
YOUR POSTAL ADDRESS
IS LEEK, WOOTTON, WARRICK



MILEAGES IN THE 1830s

by Rev. Christopher Beaver

With few if any exceptions mileage stamps were not issued after 1825 when double arcs became the norm for provincial offices. Because so many were inaccurate, directions were given to excise figures of mileage to London. The timing of this relates to the removal of the GPO itself on 28th-29th September 1829 from Lombard Street to the new building at last erected on a slum-clearance site where until its dissolution had once stood the Priory of St. Martin, between St. Paul's and Aldersgate and roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the northwest. In the next few years new double arc stamps were substituted for the defaced ones nearly every where.

The postage on mail passing through London continued to be calculated at the GPO (not at the sending office) by adding up the total mileage in the General Post. The (unpaid) postage to London was crossed through and a new figure substituted. Such mail almost invariably remained from morning till evening in London. To deal with it the GPO clerks needed constantly to refer to up-to-date lists showing every General Post office (at least) together with its mileage by the route in use for its London mail. A good many clerks were involved.

Not surprisingly a book was printed in 1830 showing the "Postage of a Single Letter to and from London according to the Actual Routes of the Post." with a column in which the mileages might be inserted if needed. A surviving copy belonging to Robert A. Partridge was evidently in use by him for a few years and from this are extracted below his insertions and corrections against the names of (all?) Midlands offices listed.

In the later 1830s the system was altered as a result of protests concerning unnecessary delays of which the all day retention at the GPO of mail routed through London was so evident an example. The introduction of some "day mails" and the opening of the London and Birmingham Railway in particular encouraged demands for further improvement. In May 1837 it became the responsibility of the sending office to assess the whole General Postage on mail passing through London (See MM56/7). Then on 19th September 1838, it was announced that postage was to be calculated according to the distance "by the nearest carriage road", no longer by the actual route on which mail was carried. This decision cannot have been immediately brought into effect unless each office had already received its own list of postage to every place or instructions to calculate the figures and draw up its own list. As far as I know this is a subject awaiting research and no examples of such lists have survived.

Many of the mileage figures inserted in Robert Partridge's copy of the 1830 list coincide with figures on stamps in use in 1829 and comparatively few were subsequently amended. Such sub-offices as are included have the mileage of their post-town if in a Penny or 5th Clause Post. The only town whose postage to and from London was raised as a result of the removal of the GPO was Colchester, charged 8d for a single letter because now reckoned as 51 miles. Any places west of London reduced would hardly make protest. The subsequent alteration of Dunchurch's mileage from 80 to 79 did cause such a reduction, which will raise a smile from those familiar with Mr. Caldecote's removal of the 80 milestone forty and more years previously (MM61/9). Perhaps this is the most interesting alteration: Halifax originally shown as 208 miles was subsequently amended to read "To Halifax 195, From Halifax 206", the

rate of 11d. not needing to be changed. The down mail was no doubt made to go direct from Sheffield, the up continuing to go by the Liverpool - York mailcoach as far as Leeds, and since no amendment was made on the introduction of the Halifax mailcoach in the summer of 1836 the book was perhaps out of use before then (MM41/9, c.f. 43/5 for up and down variations). Ormskirk shows an alteration from 232 to "up 232, down 216" and then to 216 both ways.

We concentrate our attention on the Midlands offices. One entry of interest is Solihull, for its mileage is not that of Birmingham but like Knowle's that of Warwick. This suggests an omission in Oxley's listing of Penny Posts under that town. More surprising yet probably similar is Abbots Bromley's 139, the same as that of Uttoxeter; the post-town was 12 miles from Rugeley (127) and Abbots Bromley roughly half-way on the route of the cart which plied between them; it looks as though it was not a General Post sub-office like Wolseley but a Penny Post office under Uttoxeter.

Then, what explanation is there for the many increases of 6 to 8 miles of mileage in Staffordshire - and Cheshire too, in fact? The answer relates to the alteration in timing of the up Liverpool mailcoach to arrive in London about 7.30 p.m. Replies could no longer be written to letters from the south to catch the same day's coach so a ride was introduced in 1831 to connect at Stafford with the up Chester mailcoach which travelled via Northampton not Coventry. However Partridge should also have altered the Potteries Fifth Clause offices, and Trentham at least of the General Post sub-offices, and it is more than doubtful whether the down mileages were increased as well as the up (MM38/10). There is no sign of any similar provision on the route of the Leeds up mailcoach which was likewise changed to reach London in the evening. (Editor's note: See my note at the end of this article.)

At Penkridge the 15 miles increase - and additional 1d. postage - is attributable to being served (for London etc. mail) by the Manchester - Birmingham coach, and since this will have been instead of the Walsall Penny Post the cost was in fact the same; its north mail will already have been by the mailcoach (MM49/5ff). The mileages in the Black Country repay careful perusal too. Compare Bilstone with Wolverhampton; the implication is London mail for the former travelled by Warwick and Birmingham (MM57/19) not on the Holyhead mailcoach. Darlaston has the Wednesbury (and Birmingham) mileage, whereas Willenhall has that of Walsall, implying Penny Posts by 1830 not recorded in Oxley (c.f. MM41/5ff)

Readers with different areas of interest please comment further. Why and when, for example the considerable alterations against Buxton, Tideswell, Broomsgrove, Painswick and Thrapstone?

Editor's note: This may be an appropriate point for me to comment that in 1820, rides were introduced so as to allow the inhabitants of Melton Mowbray and Uppingham to answer letters from London etc. by return of post. There were then differences in the up and down mileages. I would appreciate full details of any covers of that period from those two towns which carry mileage marks, including where appropriate whether it was an evening or morning arrival in London.

MIDLANDS MILEAGES FROM ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.

Distances inserted in m/s on the list published for HMSO in 1830, some later altered. Offices marked * are in italic script in the original.

Abbots Bromley	139	Alcester*	106	Alfreton	141
Ashbourn	141	Ashby dela Zouch*	114	Atherstone	108

Bakewell	154	Banbury	75	Bawtry	150
Belper*	127	Berkley*	115	Betley*	150
Bewdley	135	Bilstone	129	Bingham*	133
Birmingham	109	Bishop's Castle	167	Bozeat*	77
Brackley	74	Bridgenorth	138	Broadway	93
Bromyard	129	Broomsgrrove	124 115	Brosely*	135
Burslem*	150	Burton-on-Trent	124	Buxton	166 199 166
Campden	92	Cannock*	118	Castle Bromwich	109
Chapel in Frith	172	Cheadle*	151 157	Cheltenham	102
Chesterfield	151	Chirk*	176	Church Stretton*	166?
Cirencester	91?	Cobridge*	150	Coleford	134
Coleshill	103	Coventry	91	Darlaston*	109
Daventry	72	Derby	127	Droitwich*	121 116
Dudley	119	Dunchurch	80 79	Dunkirk*	108
Dursley	115 112	Eccleshall*	147	Ellesmere	175 179
Etruria*	150	Evesham	99	Fairford	82
Fazeley*	116	Frogmill*	97	Gloucester	112
Hagley*	125	Hales Owen*	117	Hanley*	150
Hay	162	Henley-in-Arden	105	Hereford	141
Higham Ferrers	65	Hinckley	100	Iron Bridge*	135
Kenilworth*	91	Kettering	75	Kidderminster	132
Kineton	108	Kington	155	Knowle*	97
Lane Delph*	150	Lane End*	150	Lawton	156 164
Leamington	95	Lechlade	78	Ledbury	125
Leek	155	Leicester	99	Leominster	141
Lidney*	131	Litchfield	119	Longport*	150
Loughborough	110	Ludlow	147	Lutterworth	89
Malvern*	115 123	Mansfield	139	Market Bosworth*	100
Mkt Drayton	159 161	Market Harboro'	85	Matlock*	144
Melton Mowbray	106	Minchinhampton	102	Morton in Marsh	85
Nailsworth*	102	Newark	122	Newcastle u Ln	150 158
Newent*	112	Newnham	124	Newport*(Glos)	115
Newport(Salop)	143	Northampton	67	Northleach	99
Nottingham	125	Nuneaton*	91	Oakham	96
Ollerton	135	Oswestry	171	Oundle	84
Painswick*	111 105	Penkridge*	118 133	Pershore	106
Peterborough	78	Redditch*	98	Retford	142
Rockingham	84	Ross	129	Rugby	83
Rugeley	127 142	Shelton*	150	Shiffnal	135
Shipstone	88	Shrewsbury	153	Sodbury*	116
Solihull*	97	Southam*	89	Southwell*	130
Stafford	140 138	Stamford	85	Stoke*(Staff)	150
Stone	141 147	Stony Middleton*	160	Stony Stratford	52
Stourbridge	125	Stourport	138	Stow on the Wold*	89
Stratford-on-Avon	98	Stroud(Glos)	105	Sutton Coldfield*	109
Tamworth	117	Tenbury	138	Tetbury	111
Tewkesbury	111	Thrapstone	85 74	Tideswell*	171 160
Towcester	61	Trentham*	145	Tunstall*	150
Tuxford	135	Uppingham	89	Upton on Severn*	111
Uttoxeter	139 154	Walsall	118 120	Wandsford	83
Warwick	97	Wednesbury*	109	Welford	81
Wellingborough	78	Wellington(Salop)	144	Wem*	163
Wenlock*	135	Weobley*	141	West Bromwich*	109
Whitchurch(Salp)	174	Wickwar*	119	Willenhall*	118 120
Winchcombe*	103	Wirksworth	141	Wolseley*	129
Wolverhampton	123	Woore*	161	Wootton-under-Edge	112
Worcester	115	Worksoop	151		

A LIST

OF

POST-TOWNS

AND

PRINCIPAL PLACES;

WITH THE

POSTAGE OF A SINGLE LETTER

TO OR FROM

LONDON,

ACCORDING TO THE

ACTUAL ROUTES OF THE POST.

LONDON:

JOSEPH HARTNELL, WINE-OFFICE COURT, FLEET-STREET.

For His Majesty's Stationery Office.

1830.



			D.		
	Pence.			Pence.	
Clifton.....	10	122	DAGENHAM.....	4	12
Clithero.....	11	223	Danbury.....	7	30
Cobham.....	5	19	Darlaston.....	9	109
Cobridge.....	10	150	Darlington.....	12	245
Cockermouth.....	13	304	Dartford.....	5	16
Toddenham.....	8	69	Dartmouth.....	11	211
Colchester.....	8	51	Darwen.....	11	212
Coggeshall.....	7	41	Daventry.....	8	72
Coleford.....	10	134	Dawlish.....	11	185
Coleshill.....	9	103	Deal.....	8	74
Collyton.....	10	151	Deddington.....	8	75
Colne.....	11	218	Dedham.....	8	51
Colnbrook.....	6	21	Denbigh.....	11	213
Coltersworth.....	9	100	Derby.....	10	127
Cottishall.....	9	117	Dereham.....	9	110
Congleton.....	10	176	Dewsbury.....	11	192
Conway.....	13	238	Devizes.....	9	92
Corfe Castle.....	10	130	Devonport.....	11	219
Corwen.....	11	193	Diss.....	9	94
Cosham.....	8	73	Dolgelly.....	11	210
Coventry.....	9	91	Doncaster.....	10	159
Cowbridge.....	11	173	Dorchester.....	10	123
Cowes.....	9	95	Dorking.....	6	28
Cranbourn.....	9	100	Douglas (I. Man).....	17	206
Cranbrook.....	8	53	Dover.....	8	72
Crawley.....	7	31	Downham.....	9	99
Crayford.....	5	16	Driffield.....	11	201
Crediton.....	11	181	Droitwich.....	9	119
Crewkerne.....	10	135	Dudley.....	9	119
Crickhowell.....	10	162	Dulverton.....	11	187
Cricklade.....	9	86	Dunchurch.....	8	79
Cromer.....	10	129	Dunkirk.....	9	108
Cross.....	10	146	Dunmow.....	7	42
Cross Hills.....	11	227	Dunstable.....	7	34
Croydon.....	4	11	Dunster.....	11	185
Crookland.....	8	78	Durham.....	12	263
Cuckfield.....	7	40	Dursley.....	9	112
Cullompton.....	10	144			

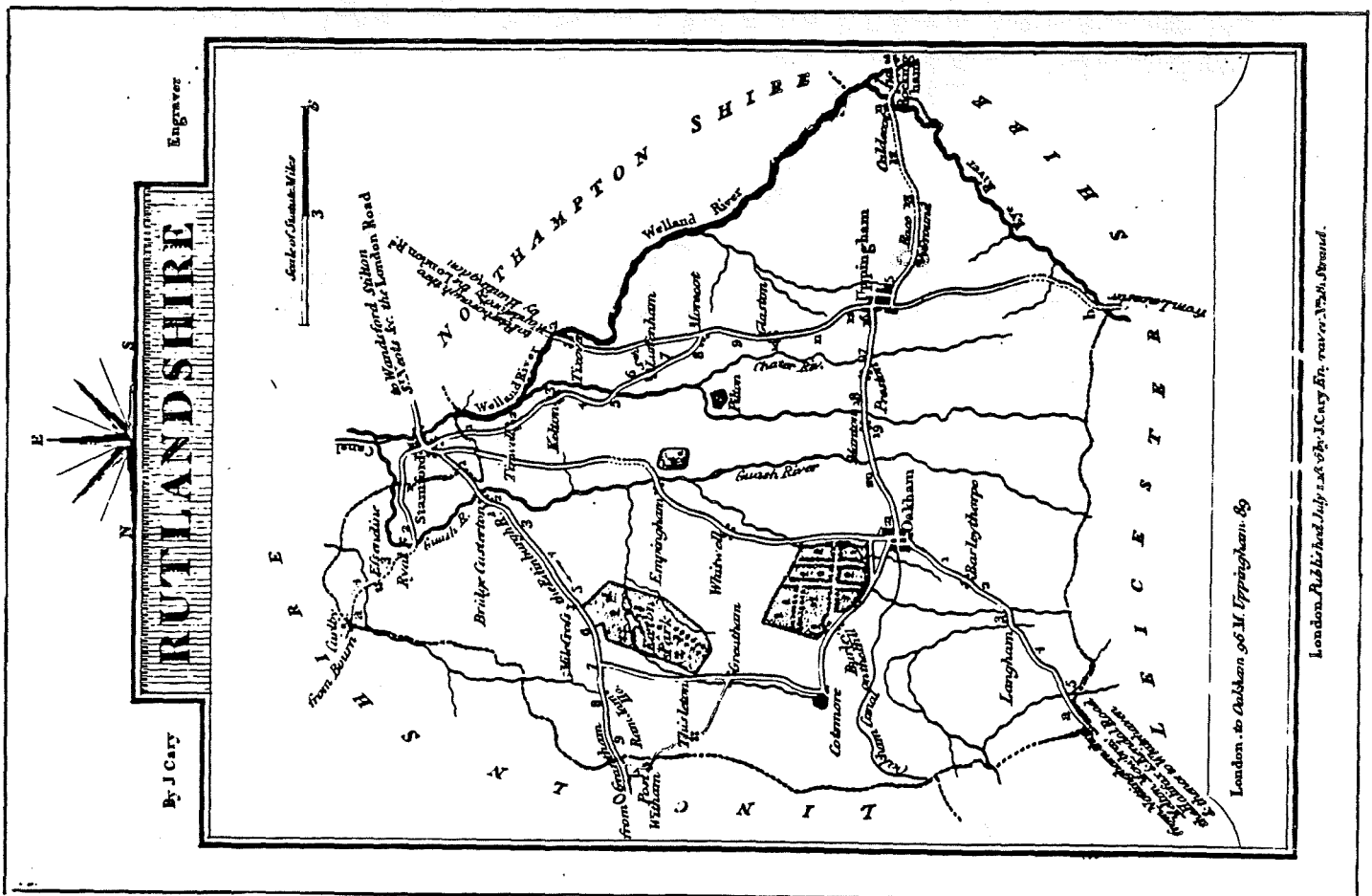
GREETHAM INN

For some time I was puzzled by the existence, in the period 1787 - 1837, of straight-line marks "GREETHAM" for there was no record of an official post office in the Rutland village at that time. Although it should be said that Greetham Inn was not in that village but a mile or more to the east on the Great North Road and some seven miles to the north of Stamford. Harpur stated that it was one of the foremost inns and posting houses on that road.

Then I found a report of 1794 (Post 40/22C/1794) which showed that this was another example of an unofficial office of which the Post Office had full knowledge. In July of that year Sir William Lowther wrote to the Postmaster General:

"My Lord

The Post Office having, about (three?) years ago, been pleased at the Request of myself as well as of a very respectable List of Persons residing in the neighbourhood of Greetham in Rutlandshire, to direct a Bag with our Letters from the South to be made up at Stamford, & from the North at Grantham, provided we satisfied the man at whose house they were to be left at Greetham, as some Regulations of Office prevented his having a regular appointment from Your Lordships - a short time ago in consequence as I apprehend of an application from the Post Mistress at Stamford, the man at the Greetham Inn was directed by Mr. Freeling to charge a Penny for each letter received at, & issuing from his house, half of which was to go to the Post Mistress at Stamford. Conceiving this Demand as unreasonable & unauthorised by any additional trouble arising to the Stamford office as the letters could be equally delivered there, tho' not forwarded by the Mail Coach, for which I recollect ten minutes was allowed by Mr. Palmer for the Mail to stop at Stamford, I have to suggest Your Lordships will be pleased to revoke the



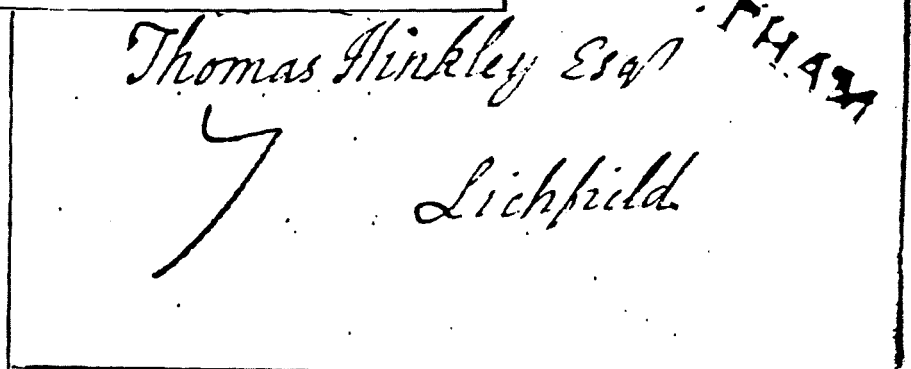
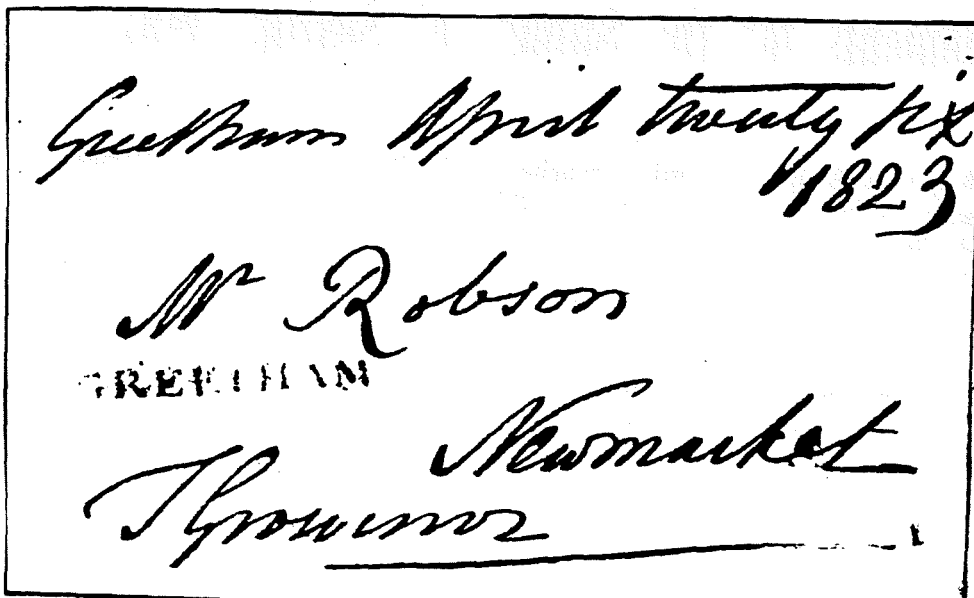
order....as the man at Greetham has no appointment from the Office, but is merely an agent for the Persons whose Convenience was consulted in this business, perhaps Your Lordships may entertain some doubt how far any order of this kind may affect him...."

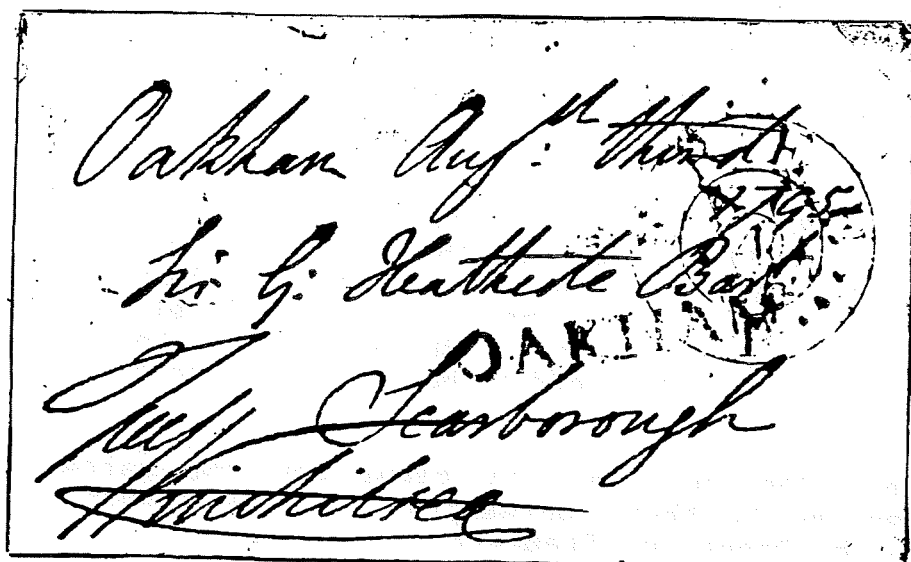
Mr. Western, the surveyor, reported that Mrs Gardiner, the post mistress of Stamford was put to a lot of trouble by the Greetham bag but was paid nothing for it - "such is the custom of the Office". Not only did the bag contain Sir William Lowther's letters but also those for the Earls of Gainsborough and Winchelsea, and Sir Horace Mason. It was necessary for a person to help her sort all the letters and papers from the London bag for Greetham while the coach was stopped. Also she had to postpone making up the London bag in the evening until the coach arrived.

The report does not make it clear how the matter was resolved. Freeling commented to their Lordships that the custom was entirely in the favour of the Deputy of Stamford.

I am indebted to John Hine for providing copies of the two covers shown below. The upper one, as can be seen, dates from 1823, the lower one from 1798. Over the page is a copy of a cover sent by the Earl of Winchelsea in 1795. Obviously not all his mail went through Greetham. I do not know why it was sent to London as Oakham's mail was sent via Stamford from 1794.

It is possible that a Greetham straight line mark was used after 1840 for a mail coach ran past the Greetham Inn until the withdrawal of the Leeds - Stilton coach in August 1846. Though an official post from Oakham to Greetham was authorised in July 1844, the month in which a UDC was issued. I wonder if our Coordinating Editor can comment?





SEALING WAX

An unusual contribution to the postal services of this country is revealed by an extract from the Post Office Circular of 24 April 1890.

New Arrangements for the Supply of Sealing Wax.

On and after 1st May next, Sealing Wax will be supplied by the Department to every Provincial Office at which the allowance for Office expenses, exclusive of Office rent, amounts to as much as £25 a year, and a contract for its supply has been entered into with *Messrs. Craddock and Co., Vincent Parade, Balsall Heath, Birmingham.*

The following will be the arrangements:—

A Postmaster, when requiring ordinary Sealing Wax, of which not less than half a cwt. will be supplied at one time, must send a requisition to his Surveyor, but addressed to the Contractors. The Surveyor, if he finds the requisition correct, will send it forward to the Contractors, who, on executing the order, will send a delivery note with the wax ordered. Upon this note, the Postmaster must certify that the wax has been received in good condition, giving the date of its arrival, and the note must then be forwarded to the Surveyor.

The Contractors will deliver the Wax—carriage free.

The Superior Wax and the Superfine Wax—of which only small quantities are used—will continue to be issued from Head Quarters.

UNIFORM PENNY POSTAGE

In recent months we have been treated to many learned articles on the reforms of 1839-40, but none that I have read mention that some people actually paid more for their mail after the introduction of penny postage than they did before. The following is part of a petition from the vicar of Heather, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, to the House of Commons which was dated 7th March 1840. An earlier petition had asked for an extension to Ibstock of the penny post ride from Hinckley to Market Bosworth.

In consequence of the time and trouble occasioned by obtaining afresh the signatures of individuals residing at such remote distances, your Petitioner is induced to apply to your honourable House, not merely for his own behoof, but that of all who signed the memorial, and who are more than ever interested to obtain the accommodation they sought in the memorial, to grant them what they conceive to be a measure of justice, in consequence of the increased correspondence which the reduction in the rate of postage has occasioned.

Your Petitioner, while expressing his own gratitude and that of the memorialists to your honourable House for passing the Act for the reduction of the Postage, begs to call the attention of your honourable House to the following facts: "That every Post Letter before the reduction in Postage took place cost him nine pence upon an average; seven pence the Government charge, and two pence the carriage from the Post town, and conveying the answer. That every such letter now requiring to be answered costs him three pence, viz. one penny the postage, two pence the transmission of the letter from and to the Post. That the number of letters your Petitioner now receives requiring to be answered is quadrupled. The effect, therefore, of the reduction to your Petitioner is tantamount to an increase of three pence on every letter he before received through the Post; besides which, your Petitioner and the other Clergy who signed the memorial are daily receiving circulars of one kind or another of no value or importance to them, for every one of which they are obliged to pay the carrier's charge from the Post town of one penny.

Your Petitioner would also represent to your honourable House the great insecurity which at present prevails in transmitting letters to and from a Post Town by an irresponsible person, to any considerable distance, the person employed being often an old woman or a boy, incapable of making any resistance, as happens to be the case with the carrier employed between Ibstock and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, who in the winter season is obliged to travel an hour after sunset.

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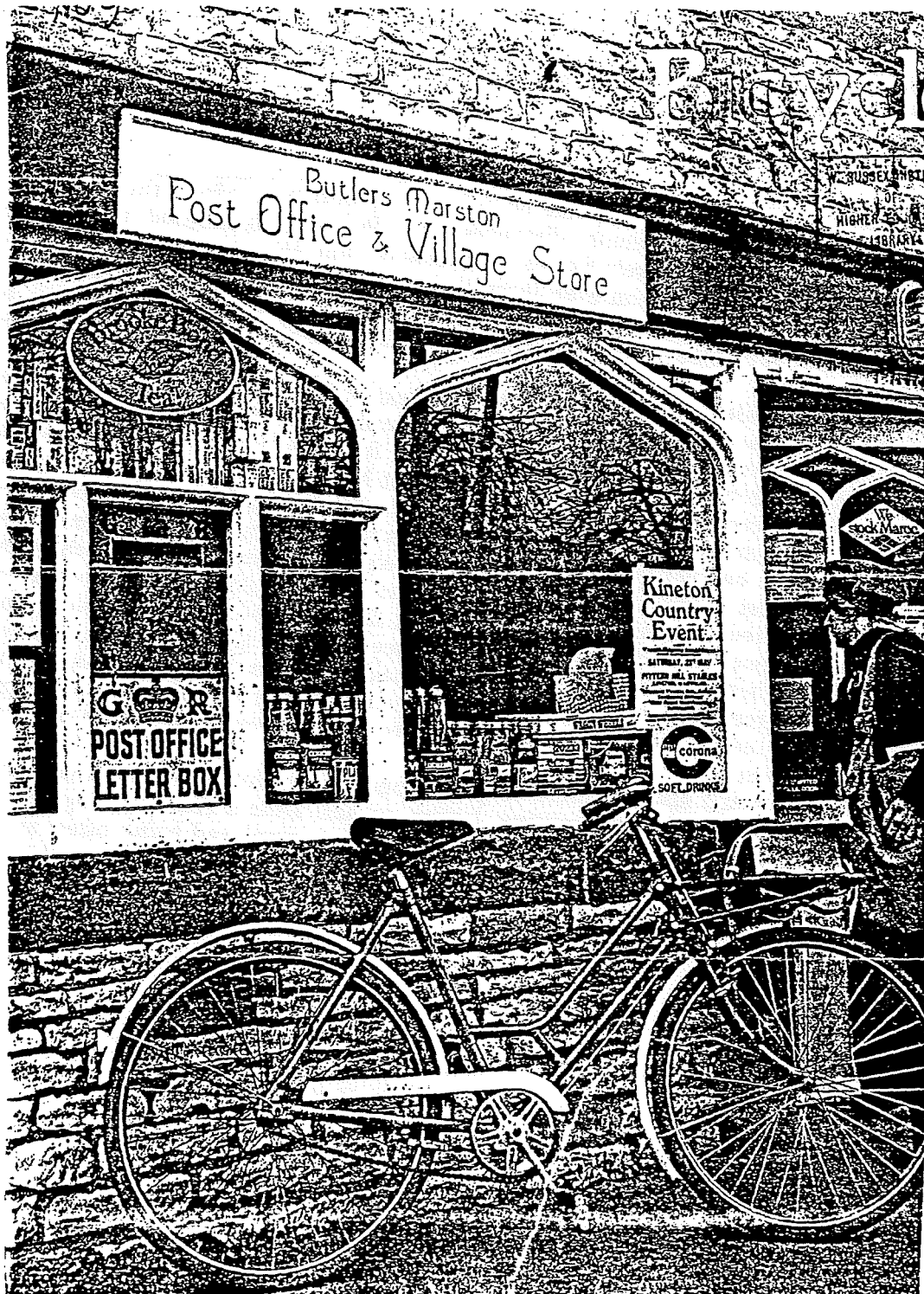
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BUTLERS MARSTON POST OFFICE

My thanks to Gay Parker for sending this picture. It appears to date from the 1950s. Of particular note is the letter box.



EARLY DAYS AT DUDLEY

In July 1792, the Post Office authorities in London received the following letter from a Mr. V. Garratt.

"Sir,

I take the liberty to represent to you the disagreeable situation that I have frequently experienced at the Town of Dudley, in the course of my journey thro' Worcestershire, and particularly since establishing a Bank there, whose Bills are payable on demand in London. I have been obliged to leave my letters containing a number of small Bills on demand to a large amount at an Alehouse in the care of a common Servant, there being no regular appointment of Postmaster in that town, which appeared to me so contrary to the improved regulations which have taken place in the General Post Office here (London), that I determined to acquaint you with the above circumstances; being convinced, that on a proper representation of the importance of the Town of Dudley and its neighbourhood, (by the increase of Manufactories and many navigable canals), that the Postmaster Generals would take the case into their consideration, and appoint a proper Office for the reception of Letters, under their own inspection, which would prevent great numbers of the inhabitants of Dudley and the adjacent Villages from sending their letters by private hands to their different correspondents in preference of entrusting them to the care of such improper Persons as above stated. I am credibly informed by a Gentleman in the Excise, that the collection of the Excise Revenue in the Town of Dudley and its environs, amounts to upward of £43,000 (£73,000?) p ann. which sufficiently proves the magnitude of the Manufactories.

I am....."

On 25th. July, Freeling informed Walsingham that he had instructed the postmaster of Birmingham to appoint a deputy at Dudley "such as the principal people should approve of". He added that he felt that their Lordships should consider if Dudley and many other towns which he would list should be entitled to London bags when the new office was built.

Two days later he wrote again to Walsingham:
"The inhabitants at Dudley have been accustomed to pay a Gratuity for the delivery of their Letters. I presume to think that the sum this Gratuity produces will be sufficient for the new Deputy 'till such time as Dudley be made an Office. At present its name is not mentioned in any of our books, nor is it at all recognised by us."

G.B. POSTAL HISTORY

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

Wants Lists - for specific items or for general
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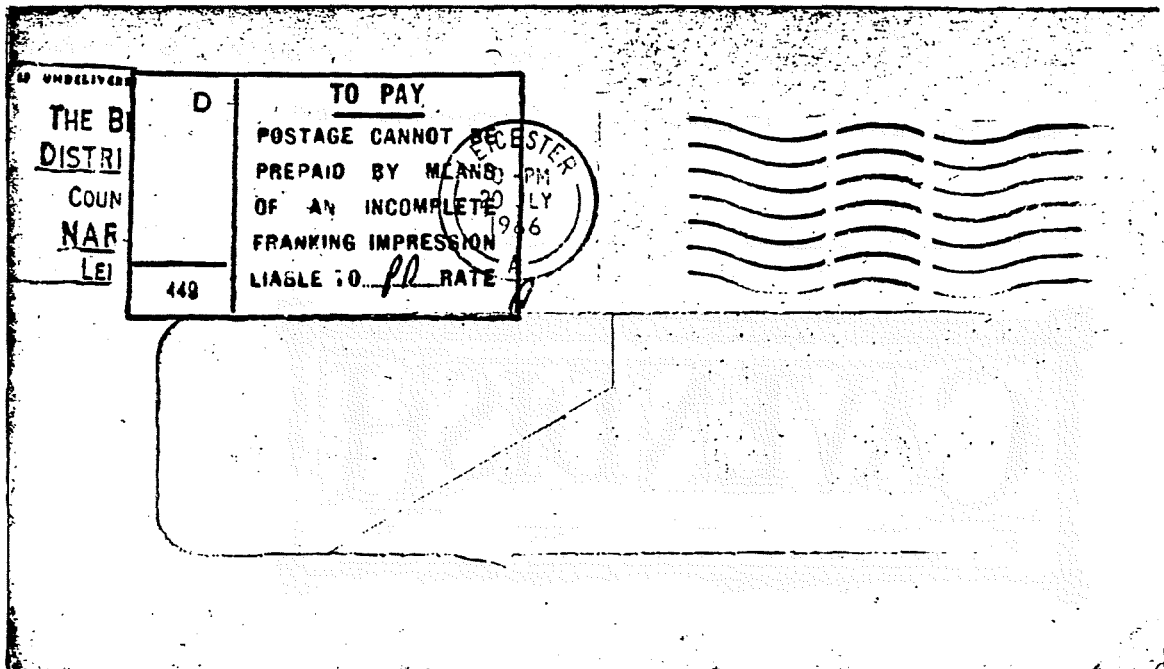
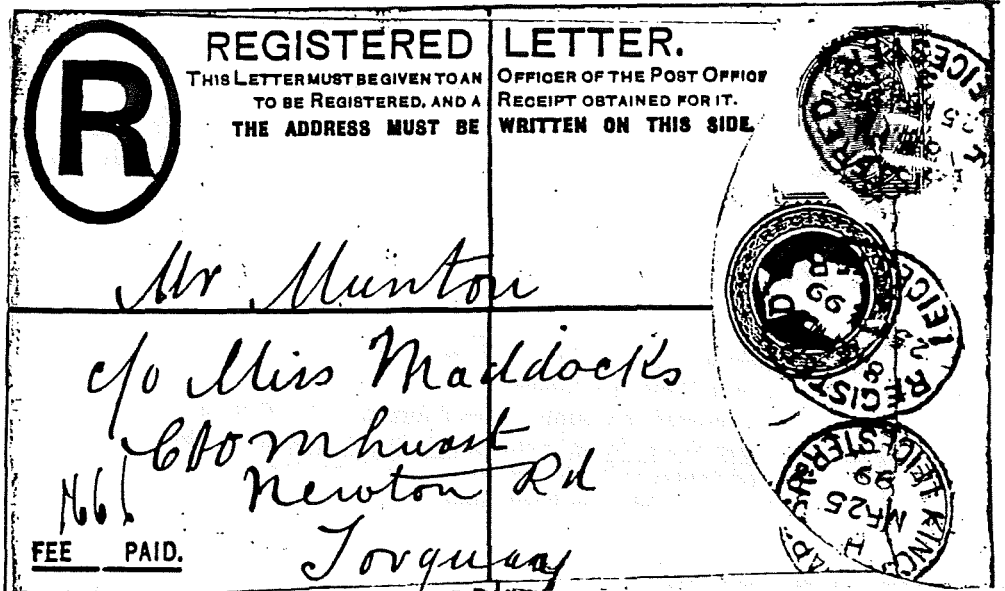



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TAILPIECE

My thanks to Paul Hill for the following cutting. Lest you think that we are in our centenary year, I would add that an inspection of the catalogue of the Newspaper Library at Colindale will show that several publications, from various parts of the Midlands, have carried the name of this journal. Paul's example was from Market Harborough.

1886	Restoration of St Peter and Paul, Great Bowden.
1887	Queen Victoria's Jubilee.
1888	Leicestershire County Council formed. Little Bowden Parish transferred to Leicestershire.
1890	Piped Water Scheme completed. Midland Mail founded.
1891	Population 5876. Second Grammar School built.
1893	St Hugh's Mission Room built.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

I hope that this will appear in August. I do not intend to tempt providence by saying what I hope to include. All articles gratefully received by:

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