

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.midlandphs.org.uk



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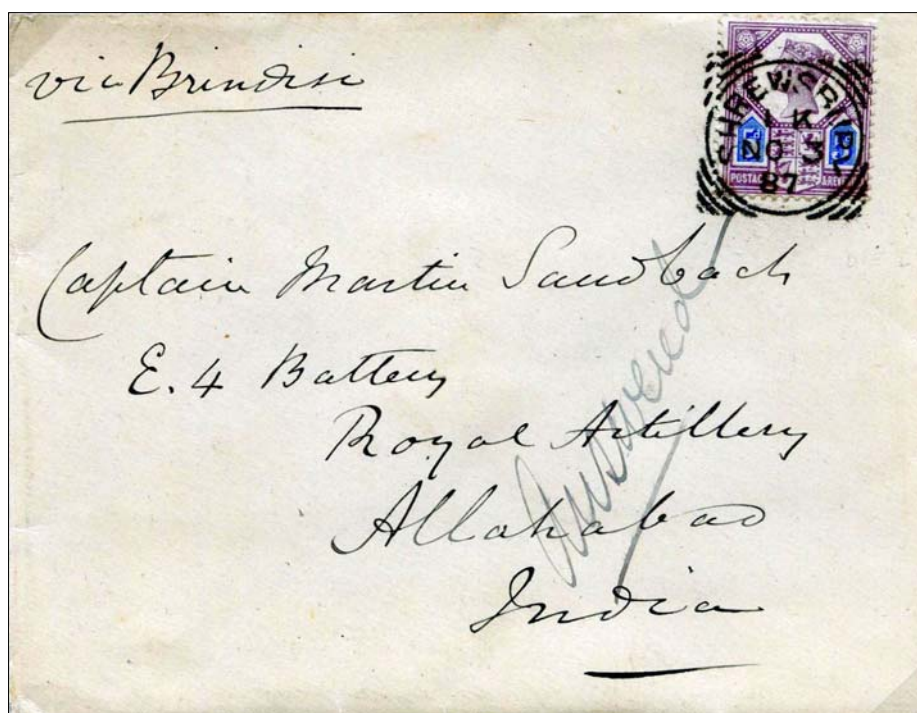


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P&O Mongolia, Brindisi to Alexandria, P&O Sutlej, Suez to Bombay, correct 5d rate to India from Feb 1880

See page 8 for postal history and stamps related to the Sandbach family

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EDITORIAL

Another festive season has come and gone and we are heading well into the 21st Century and the age of technology. Many of us are using a word processing programme to produce our pages, as I do to produce Midland Mail; I'm sure some members are buying off the internet (of course you are, go on, admit it!) and some are communicating by e-mail. We are benefitting from the technological advances but juxtaposed in the middle of our neat 'word processed' page is a 16th, (if you are lucky), 17th, 18th or 19th century cover! Whilst we use technology, it really is for the young, I'm sure you have noticed how many of them don't look where they are going with their noses stuck into their phones, which, in turn, are often plugged into their ears! So, will the younger generations be aware enough to become interested in postal history? Who will buy our covers when we come to sell; an archive? Markets seem buoyant but if anyone from an auction house is reading this, perhaps you would give us your thoughts of the future and some statistics of present sales like percentage of unsold lots, selling price as a percentage of estimate, etc.

Jim Weston: It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Jim Weston and send condolences to his family

Michael Tuttle: we welcome Michael to the society as a new member. His interests are Staffordshire, Warwickshire & West Midlands with railway connections (well he does live in Crewe!)

JANUARY MEETING - cancelled as the location was no longer available due to refurbishment, hence no report.

Letters to the editor

Brian Purcell writes that he has had an item LOST IN THE POST; a previously unrecorded INDIA LETTER / BRISTOL in red on an entire from Calcutta to Birmingham dated 8 NOV 1819, enclosed with a similar example in black. The items were posted in Derby in mid-September and failed to arrive in Worcester. Anyone who has any knowledge of their present whereabouts is asked to contact Brian on 01905 452415 or Sam at Cavendish Auctions on 01332 250970. Brian sent a photocopy of the unrecorded item but it hasn't reproduced very well. It has what looks to be a CALCUTTA POST NOT PAID double circle top right; the INDIA LETTER / BRISTOL struck vertically in red just left of centre and appears to have been rated at 1/1, inscribed between the two marks.

Bob Viney writes by e-mail that he read Bill Gillham's letter in Midland Mail No 188 / 2 and that he, too, would be happy to hear from members with Rutland material they wish to dispose of. He goes on to say that he also noticed mention of the prize winners at the Midland Philatelic Federation Convention at Alcester but he saw no mention of his Gold medal winning entry of *Rutland from 1584 to 1974* in the National at York. Your editor was moving house and did not go to York and forgot to check the Palmares, a serious omission. Gold was also won by our member James Grimwood-Taylor for *The Early Overseas Mail of Sydney (N.S.W), 1806-1850*.

John Paulson writes in response to Peter Martin's request for information about Barrow Hill and Clown postmarks in MM 188 / 23, that he has six examples of BARROW HILL, five on picture postcards and one on a parcel post label between 29 SEP 1904 and 22 JUN 1910 with times 11am, 5.45pm and 8pm. As for CLOWN, the only 19th century mark he reports is an 1871 on a small piece and he doesn't know when the E was added (but see below).

Alan Marshall has found an error in his account of MOUNTSORREL in MM 188 / 20. Three lines from the bottom of page 20 it reads 'If not, then the date of Richard's second item becomes the latest recorded date of 11 FEB 1857', which date should read 11 FEB 1847, not 1857. He also states that the latest date of the MOUNTSORREL udc should, possibly, be 29 NOV 1855 (unless John Soer can refute this, he says!)

Peter Martin reports that he has heard from the Postmark Society about CLOWN and the added E, who tell him 'In about 1947 the E was added to become CLOWNE and a double-circle mark was then issued as per the copy left from 1966'. Peter also says if anyone wants to swap stamps he can scan and send the ones he has in exchange for CLOWN 19th century ones.



1966 CLOWNE

John Soer wonders if we should distribute copies of the auction catalogue to other societies to widen the scope but he would still insist that only members submit lots.

Finally your editor would like to remind members that his address has changed to **37, Greenfields Rise, Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 1EP**, at which all mail will be gratefully received! Some correspondence has been going to his old address at Ruabon, much to the consternation of the new owner, who is not a postal historian!!!

A MIDLAND RAILWAY MISCELLANY

John Soer's account of his presentation to the meeting at Warwick on 7th November 2015

It is usual for displays of this type to begin with a map and, on this occasion, there was a plethora of maps, the first of which was from c1875 and showed the extent of the Midland Railway at the time the Settle and Carlisle line was being constructed. This was followed by a similar map from a later date and four individual sheets of the Midland Railway System Maps (often known as the 'Distance Diagrams'. These were probably the finest maps produced by any of the pre-grouping railway companies, covering the whole of the Midland System, including joint lines, in 90+ maps at a scale of one inch to the mile. Fortunately, these have been privately published at a reduced scale in four volumes which were available for inspection.

A number of miscellaneous items represented some of the companies which amalgamated to form the Midland Railway. Notable among these were a letter from George Bradshaw to the North Midland Railway enquiring about changes to the timetable, and a receipted bill from the Hoyland & Elsecar Colliery to the Midland Counties Railway for about 29 tons of coke. Unfortunately part of the illustration at the top had been torn away.

Station postmarks came next, beginning with the 'Missent to / Derby. R.O.' handstamp on a letter sent from Bakewell to Macclesfield. John Hine has described superbly the postmarks of Gloucester Station. Here we saw the full range from the circular datestamps with arcs, through the single circles, the '312' numeral cancellations, the duplex marks to the squared circles. Of note was a letter sent on Christmas Day 1872 from Swansea to Gloucester where it arrived on the same day. An attractive item was a printed letter-sheet of the Gloucester Steam Ship Company sent at the Printed Paper Rate on which the ½d adhesive had been cancelled by the duplex mark on 13th June 1873. A letter sent from Birmingham and endorsed 'Not known at Snigs End Staunton' sounds like something from Tolkein rather than a piece of postal history. Normanton Station was represented by the two different duplex marks, a single circle and an oval registered handstamp. The last of these was on a letter sent in December 1895 and on which the two 2d adhesives had unusually been cancelled with a handstamp consisting of an 'R' in an oval.

Two covers carrying the '*Missent to Rugby / and Newcastle RWPO*' mark began a section of TPO material. The first from December 1851 was on a letter sent from Carlisle to Ambleside and then redirected to London. The second took four days to go from Leicester to Ashby-de-la-Zouch in July 1845, only three weeks after the start of the TPO. It was of particular interest as it mentioned George Stephenson and the Coleorton Railway in Leicestershire.

In 1856, London was split into ten postal districts, each with its own District Office. These acted as post towns, exchanging bags not only with each other but also provincial post towns. Unlike the other TPOs the District Sorting Carriages did sort mail from London for certain post towns, so as to reduce the workload in London. A letter sent from London to Brighthouse was struck with the 'MIDLAND / DIS^T – S.C.' HANDSTAMP. It was not until 1868 that the Midland acquired its own terminal station, St Pancras, in London. The first train into the new station was the night mail train from Leicester which arrived at 4.15 a.m. This train later ran to and from Derby. A time-bill of 1898 showed the train leaving London at 8.30 p.m. and arriving in Derby at 12.10 a.m. The return times of Derby dep. 12.50 a.m., St Pancras arr. 4.20 a.m. possibly explain why the handstamps from the northbound train seem to be more common than those from the train in the other direction. Examples of the marks for the train when it was classified as a sorting tender and, from July 1908, as a sorting carriage were shown. Next, came the Midland T.P.O. which ran between Bristol and Newcastle. Most of the postmarks shown were single circles struck on missorted items. Of particular note was an example of the six-pointed star 'MID R^Y / NIGHT' struck on a letter of 1867 from Dundee to Builth.

Items showing the various marks of the Lincoln & Tamworth mail train that attracted particular interest were: a letter written on decorative note paper (1880); a pictorial postcard sent from Indianapolis in the U.S.A. to Lincoln in 1899 which was headed 'Private Mailing Card / Authorized by Act of Congress May 19th 1898'; and the scarce duplex mark 'LINCOLN·SORTING·TENDER' used to cancel the adhesive on a letter sent from Leadenham, Newark to Barnsley in 1891.

Postcards of the relevant station accompanied a number of covers from the Railway Letter Service. Although the regulations did not allow this service to be used for letters going overseas, a letter sent from Rushton Hall, Northamptonshire to Rustenburg in the Transvaal did pass through this system, being posted at Glendon and Rushden station on Friday, 12th June 1903. It is probable that this was to make sure that the letter caught the weekly sailing for South Africa on the following day. As the arrival in Rustenburg was on 6th July, it is likely that it did so. From 3rd June 1918 to 31st May 1920, the basic rate for a letter was increased to 1½d, and, consequently, the fee for the Railway Letter service was increased to 3d. A letter sent in January 1920 from Upminster on the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway (taken over by the Midland in 1912) had the fee paid by a Midland Railway 3d parcel stamp.

There were more parcel stamps to be seen in the next section. A large letter was sent as a parcel for a charge of 4d from Thornbury station to Bristol, while a fragment of colourful wrapping paper sent from Derby showed the 2/- and 6d parcel stamps. It was not always necessary to go to the station to hand in a parcel, for in many larger towns the Midland had offices where bookings etc could be made. Postcards of Cheltenham, High Street and Oxford Circus showed such offices.

It was, I suppose, almost inevitable that a display focusing on one railway company showed contain postmarks from Railway Sub-Offices. Most of the examples shown came from Gloucestershire – Thornbury, Wotton-under-Edge, Sharpness and Newtown, but Elstree and Rushden also featured. A postcard which showed the double circle of the last of these was accompanied by a postcard showing the post office at Rushden in a very fine, large building. It is now in a pharmacy in the High Street.

The next board contained items of postal stationery used by the Midland Railway, nearly all dating from the nineteenth century and consisting of envelopes, wrappers, postcards and printed forms. A printed letter sheet sent from Bristol to Derby was sent to Loughborough where it was stamped with the boxed missent mark. The route through the Midlands of the Midland T.P.O. was traced with the Junction Diagrams of the Railway Clearing House as well as postcards of a number of the stations, including no fewer than three of the stations at Ambergate, Bromsgrove and Moseley. A diversion caused by engineering works took in Redditch and Alcester.

Official pictorial postcards were first produced by the Midland Railway in about 1900. The earliest consisted of vignettes of places in the area covered by the Midland on the correspondence side, with an undivided back. It is likely that these were sold from slot machines on stations. In 1904 the Midland began to use coloured postcards showing a map of their system with a small vignette in one corner for correspondence purposes. Such was the demand for these that the company produced four sets for sale in 1905. Three of these sets were shown along with a set 'The Peak District', depicting places in Derbyshire such as Cromford, Matlock and Monsal Dale.



The larger railway companies ran a number of hotels at some of their larger stations and used postcards to publicise these. A particularly attractive set of nine cards was produced by the Midland in 1905 showing five of the hotels. Five of the nine were of the Midland Hotel in Manchester which was the largest of their hotels and did actually contain a post office. One card of note carried the question, 'Have you lunched at the Midland Grand?', to advertise the new 2/6 (12½p) luncheon which was 'served in the Magnificent Dining Room'. This card had been posted, the 1d adhesive being cancelled by a single circle of the London & Derby Sorting Carriage.

The display ended with two large line engravings of railway engines designed by Samuel Johnson, taken from editions of 'The Engineer' of 1876.

Our Chairman, Chris Jackson, introduced John at precisely 1.30pm to the 21 members present for John's excellent and varied display. I apologise to John for inadvertently adding the letter s to Railway in the small programme – Ed!

**THE DECEMBER MEETING AT BURTON-on-TRENT; MEMBER'S STANDING DISPLAYS
AND AN ACCOUNT OF MICHAEL LOCKTON'S DISPLAY – THE POSTAL HISTORY OF EXETER**

Cometh the hour of 10.30am, members and guests began to trickle into the room set aside for the day. Nine members put up standing displays related to the Cross Posts, listed as follows with a brief note on items that caught the eye:

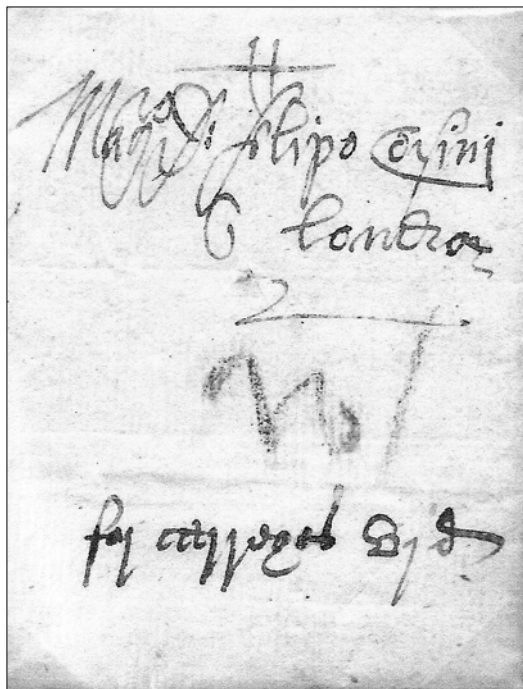
John Calladine	1710, Exeter E; 1714 Bristol B; 1709 BRIDGE / WATER X
Gordon Hardy	1736 X-post Derby endorsed <i>by Chesterfield to Chapel-le-Frith</i>
Brian Purcell	Excellent, very early Bristol Bs
Chris Jackson	1733 Worcester to Bridgnorth; 1742 Kidderminster endorsed <i>To Mr Tho. Williams in Holywell in Flintshire by way of Chester, thence to Holyhead</i> – all agreed it is an odd endorsement.
Brian Atkins	1714 WHIT / CHURCH X endorsed <i>by way of Chester</i> to Liverpool
Richard Farman	1701 BOLTON endorsed <i>by way of Chester</i> to Stone
Clive Jones	Yorkshire items which connected to the Midlands via various sections of the Hull to Derby Cross Post and various routes across the Pennines, eg: 1733 Norton (south of Sheffield) east to Doncaster, north to Ferrybridge, then west to reach Liverpool
Mick Gill	1761 London Gazette noting 11 new cross posts

There were less than one-frame displays from **Derek Smeathers** and **Alan Godfrey**.

At 12.30pm 46 members and guests gathered in Burton's The Brewery Tap Restaurant for a turkey Christmas lunch and our final celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Society.

Slightly later than the 2pm scheduled, **Chris Jackson** introduced our speaker, **Michael Lockton**, who stated his talk / display was to be on **Exeter Postal History** with the odd diversion to the **Great Cross Post**. He began by stating that from Tudor times, the London-Exeter post road was the main artery to the West Country, carrying the mail for onward transmission to Plymouth, Falmouth and the world beyond. During the reign of Elizabeth, Exeter was the third richest city in Britain, a position it slowly lost with the coming of the Industrial Revolution. He added that Exeter was one of the few towns whose postal history was a microcosm of the postal history of Great Britain and he would illustrate the development of postal communications in Exeter with the associated rates, routes and postal markings from Tudor times until the end of the Victorian era. Altogether Michael filled 24 frames of nine sheets per frame over two sessions. For each session Michael put up all the sheets on the 12 frames and then pointed out the subject of each frame, picking out one item, or two at the most, which were of the greatest interest; we could all learn from his method as it left us with plenty of time to view! As he stated '*postal history is a visual art*'!

After his Introductory page his first covers were written from Exeter on consecutive days, 13th and 14th February 1573, by Thomasso Baldisare to Felipo Corsini in London, two of the earliest letters to show a 'postal' rate – a

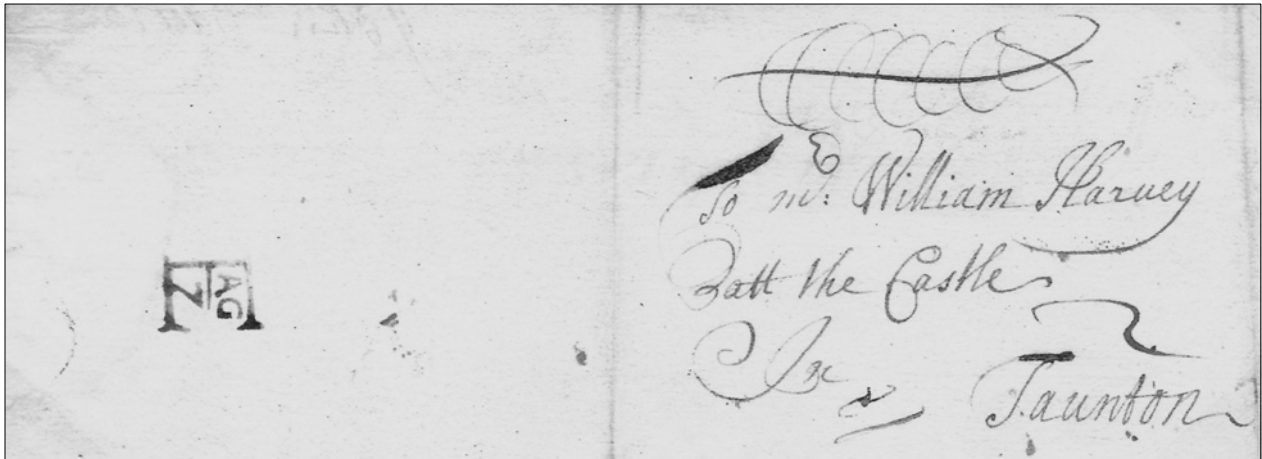


private system with accepted rates. The letter of 13th February is the earliest known English letter with a 6d rate. There are 243 known similar, provincial merchant's letters with 20 from Exeter; Michael stated he has 5 of them with 4 having postal markings.

A 1643 Civil War letter discussed the second Siege of Exeter in June of that year. The free franking system began in 1652; there was an entire from the first year of use and another with the earliest Bishop mark after the great fire. A letter of 1697 from Barnstable to Exeter went through London, a journey of 370 miles when the direct route was 30 miles; it was charged 3d for each leg! However a 1698 letter from Exeter to Bristol went via the cross post and then, remarkably, a 1700 letter from Exeter stamped **EXON** had the earliest known English town mark, which rather put out one of our members who thought he had the earliest mark with a 1701 BOLTON! A 1717 letter showed the H for Hatherleigh (Hatherley?) with only 5 copies known. There were many 18th century strikes with Exeter **E** and straight-line **EXETER** with two later examples going to the United States. A 1791 etching showing Exeter post office next to the Cathedral, a location which illustrated the importance of the post office at that time, was alongside a stunning serpentine **EXETER** of the 1790s.

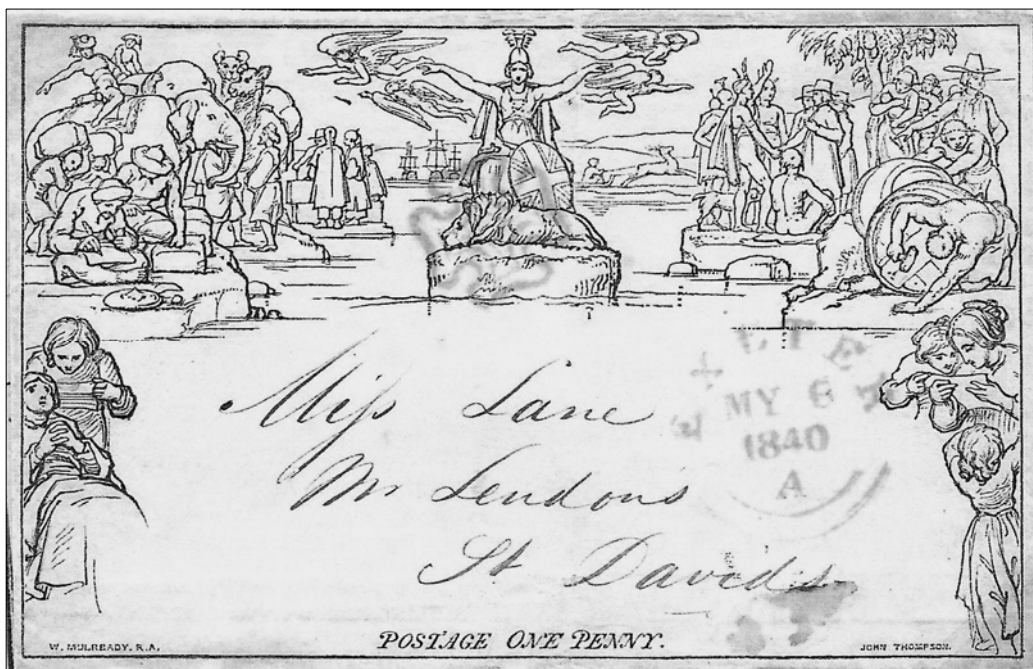
13th February 1573 Corsini letter

An 1806 Napoleonic Prisoner of War entire from Crediton to Paris had the fee paid in Paris. We were then treated to a frame of Exeter Ship Letters which included an 1828 INDIA LETTER / EXETER incoming from Mauritius. There was one complete frame (9 sheets) with a variety of Missent marks followed by an 1834 entire from Chester to Exeter which appears to have gone the whole way on the old cross post route. But the astonishing thing about the final frames of part one was firstly the display of the use of the Exeter Scottish Addl½ mark (particularly 1836) along with an 1836 entire from Cork to Exeter via Waterford and Milford charged 1/3½, thus showing the Welsh additional half pence mark (your editor confesses to not having previously seen an example!). The first half ended with the Exeter Penny Post, which was established in 1812 with Receiving House numbers 1 to 29, an extensive system, though there were more than 29 receiving houses, possibly as many as 45. A 4th DEC 1815 letter from a surgeon with the No2 receiving house mark of Princeton (later Dartmoor Jail) discusses bullet wounds!!



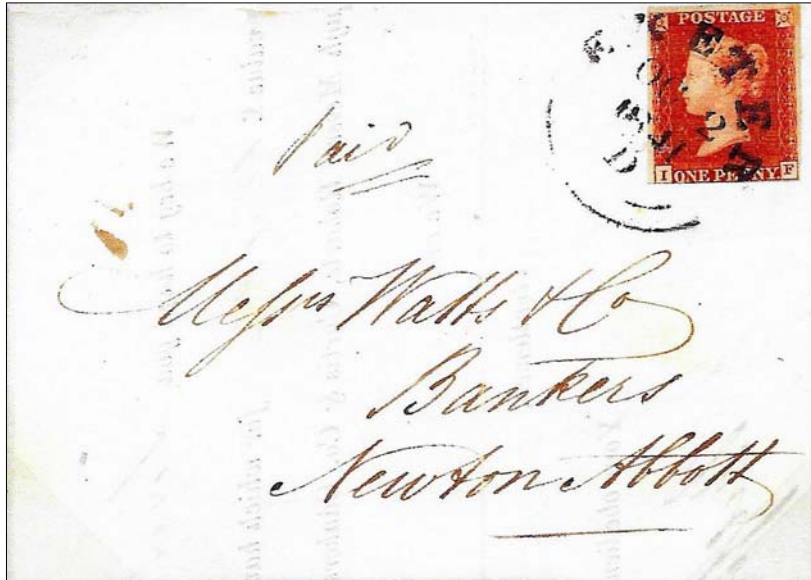
Entire dated 'Bideford 6th August 1700 with an Exeter E dated AG / 7, ms 2 for under 80 miles by the Act of 1660.

The second half began with the Exeter Twopenny post (1821 – 1836), which was confined to towns outside the city walls but still used the Exeter penny post marks. It is likely that the postmaster thought he was being underpaid and was pocketing the extra penny. Although the Post Office took 15 years to get round to it, they eventually decided the twopenny post was illegal and in 1837 it reverted to a penny post! There were Uniform Fourpenny Post items and a first day of Uniform Penny Post but the highlight of this part of the display was a 6th May 1840 1d Mulready (see below) with Britannia clearly cancelled by a red maltese cross and a light but discernable EXETER MY 6 1840 in a similar shade of red ink, inside there was an unsigned note which read *Thank Rowland Hill for this letter!!!*



6th May 1840 Mulready posted within Exeter

The postal stationery continued with a 2d Mulready cancelled with a black maltese cross and one with Britannia cancelled with the Exeter number 285 and also a caricature envelope, the details of which I'm ashamed to say that I didn't note down, my apologies! A 13th May 1840 entire franked with a 1d black is the earliest recorded from Exeter. The 1d blacks also included a plate 5 pair dated 16th April 1841 to Ashburton and a plate 5 multiple of four for a letter not exceeding 2ozs dated 6th April 1841 to the same solicitor in Ashburton. The penny red section included two with 'Wessex' marks (see one below) and there was a selection of village penny post marks, oddly issued in October 1840, rather late, as Michael noted.



2nd October 1841 City Bank Exeter printed advice notice with 1d red cancelled with the EXETER cds

Michael has a second collection of 1d pink postal stationery envelopes and there were many of these, along with 1844 number cancels of Exeter but, again, we were amazed by an 1850 very early Archer perforation, issued ahead of other offices and officially issued in 1854. An 1856 cover was cancelled with a rectangular mark, the reason for use and origins of which are unknown. Exeter was not issued with a spoon duplex cancel but there were sideways duplexes and another 'rare' item, a first day of use on 1st October 1870 of the ½d 'bantam' postage stamp! A 5th July 1870 postcard advertised the Theatre Royal Exeter. Five weeks later 169 people died in a fire in the theatre, as a result of which parliament passed an Act which stipulated every theatre should have a safety curtain. An early telegram of the nationalised Telegram service and a final frame of early picture postcards rounded off one of the best, if not *the* best, displays that your editor has been privileged to witness.



Our speaker, Michael Lockton (right) admiring his work and why not, it is remarkable



Your editor taking his notes and two 'hangers on'!!
(Thanks to Malcolm Allinson for this excellent photo)

PHILATELIC ITEMS AND LETTERS RELATED TO THE SANDBACH FAMILY AND ASSOCIATES

by Brian Atkins

This article will have a ‘thematic’ feel to it in that I am relating some of the history of the Sandbach family, illustrated with covers, stamps and letters. I am well aware that we are a Midland Society but some examples will not be to or from the Midlands, so I hope readers will tolerate some ‘thematic licence’.

Samuel Sandbach was born in Tarporley, Cheshire in 1769; his father, Adam, was a ‘yeoman farmer and innkeeper’ (Hanshall, History of Cheshire, 1817). By 1788 Samuel had made his way to Grenada in the West Indies where he fell into business with two Scots, James McInroy and Charles Parker and Parker’s uncle, George Robertson; they soon expanded their business in Grenada to Demerara, then a Dutch colony. When the French invaded Grenada in March 1795, Robertson and Parker were in London, the whereabouts of Sandbach is not recorded, but McInroy managed to escape to Demerara with the company property in their sloop *Rambler*. Robertson died on his Demerara estate in 1799. In 1801 the firm of Sandbach & McInroy was set up to look after their trading concerns and later that year they and Parker returned to Britain where they set up the trading firm McInroy, Parker & Co. in Glasgow. By now Samuel Sandbach had married Elizabeth Robertson (1802), a niece of the late George Robertson and also in 1802 he and McInroy set up a branch of the company in Liverpool¹. The Maritime Museum in Liverpool holds an 1808 letter to McInroy, Parker & Co., about ‘Negroes for Plantation Caledonia’², thought to be a rice plantation in Pawleys Island, South Carolina run by a Scottish emigrant, Major Robert Nesbit.

In 1796 Phillip Frederick Tinne (1772 – 1844), born at The Hague to a family of refugee French Huguenots, emigrated to Demerara, where his uncle was secretary to the colony. In 1801 he became first clerk of the colonial secretariat and by 1804 owned two coffee plantations. Between 1810 and 1812 he embarked on a Grand Tour of Europe, got married and returned to Demerara, where he undoubtedly had previously had involvement with the Sandbach, McInroy, Parker triumvirate, for in late 1812 he boarded a ship for Liverpool, made his way to Glasgow and after much discussion and negotiation was made a full partner in the company to trade out of Liverpool as Sandbach, Tinne & Co, ship owners, produce brokers, general merchants and plantation owners exporting from the West Indies sugar, coffee, molasses and rum as well as importing coolies from Asia to the West Indies from the late 1860s^{1,2}.

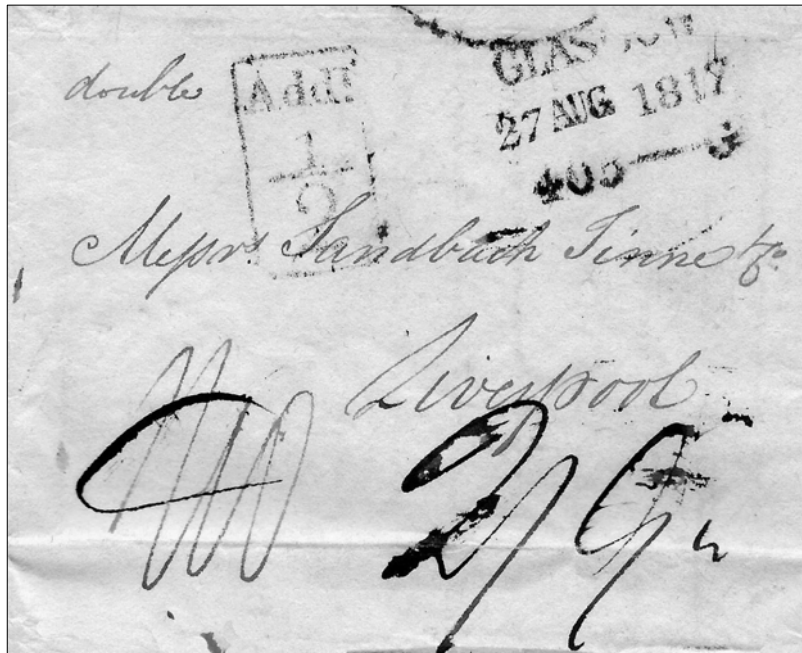


Fig 1, 27th August 1817 entire letter from McInroy, Parker & Co., Glasgow to Sandbach, Tinne & Co., Liverpool, charged 1/10 double the single 11d rate for 170 to 230 miles (Act of 1812), amended to a triple rate of 2/9 due to enclosed invoices for the cargo of the ship *Oscar*, which had ‘sailed yesterday forenoon, quite full’, plus Scottish / Glasgow additional ½d wheel tax making a total of 2/9½d to pay. The letter also states ‘that our underwriters will not touch the *Diana*’, though it is not clear why they wouldn’t do it. The opening sentence of the letter thanks Sandbach & Tinne for 5 letters they had written to the Glasgow company prior to this one sent to them, so maybe the Liverpool company didn’t understand either!

The *Rambler*, *Diana* and *Oscar* were three of the many ships owned or leased by the various companies but the first ship to appear in the registers of Sandbach, Tinne & Co., was the 435-ton sailing ship *Sandbach*, launched in Liverpool in 1828¹. This ship is found on the stamps of British Guiana from the 1853 issue to the KGV issues of 1921 / 27 as well as much postal stationery.



Fig 2, 2c orange
1860



5c ultramarine
1890



4c brown/purple
1907



2c red, 1921



24c purple/green
1921

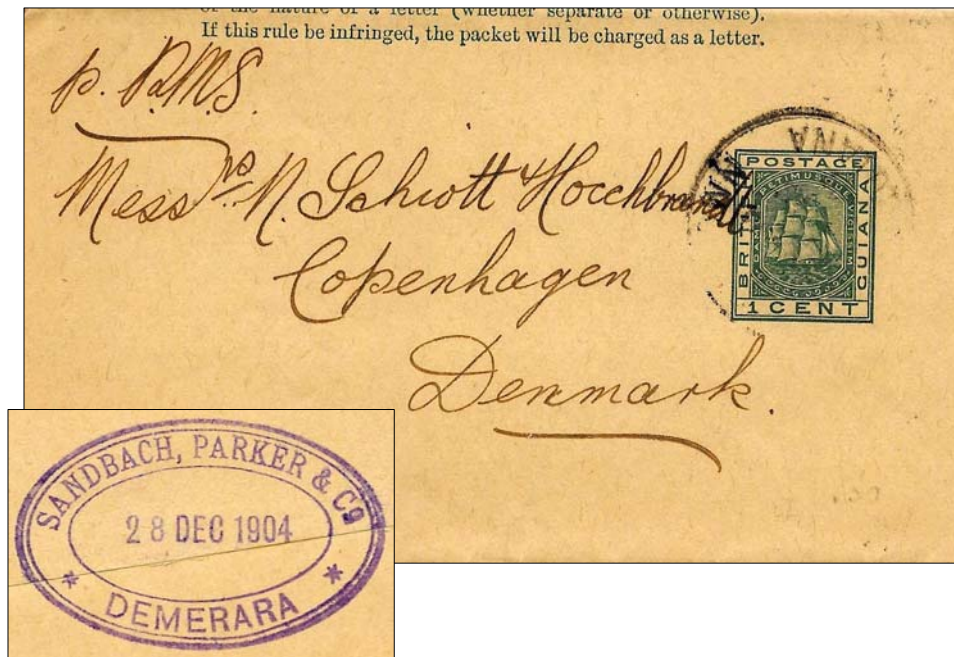


Fig 3, British Guiana
1c postal stationery
wrapper to Denmark,
showing the *Sandbach*.

SANDBACH, PARKER
& Co / DEMERARA /
28 DEC 1904 cachet on
the reverse.

Arrived Copenhagen 13
January 1905.

So prestigious was the company that Samuel Sandbach became Mayor of Liverpool in 1831. The family lived at Woodlands, Aigburth, Liverpool and at the grand, Sir Gilbert Scott designed, now Grade 1, Hafodunos Hall near Llangernwy, North Wales, purchased by Samuel in 1830 before his retirement from the company in 1833.



Fig 4, 7th Sep 1852
mourning envelope to Mrs
Sandbach, The Woodlands,
Aigburth, Liverpool with
the imperforate 1d red
cancelled by the 67 of
Beverley, Yorkshire.

Samuel and Elizabeth Sandbach had 10 children, most of whom survived to a ripe-old age. The offspring we will be interested in is Henry Robertson Sandbach (1807 – 1895), who appears to have lived at Hafodunos much of the time.

He married twice, his first wife, Margaret Roscoe died of cancer and childless in 1852. On 13th November 1855 he married Elizabeth Charlotte Williams, the daughter of Martin Williams (1782 – 1856) of Old Hope, Westmoreland, Jamaica and of Bryngwyn, Bwlch-y-Cibau, Montgomeryshire, which Williams had purchased in 1815³.

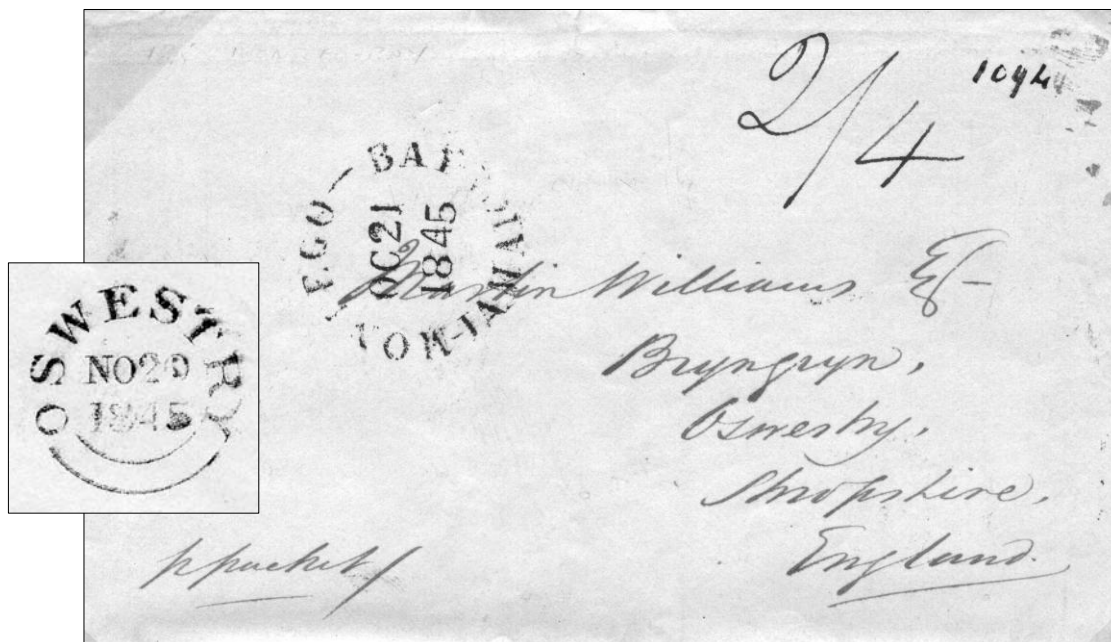


Fig 5, To Martin Williams, Bryngwyn from Montego Bay, Jamaica, 21st October 1845, charged 2/4, the *double* rate. Post Office Directory of 1844 states 1/2 between Jamaica and UK, including 2d colonial charge payable to Jamaica. Carried by the steamer *Thames*; Kingston, Jamaica 24th October, Southampton 18th November after a '*rapid voyage*' (*The Times*, 20th Nov 1845). Letter arrived at Oswestry post office, for delivery on 20th Nov 1845.

Henry and Elizabeth Sandbach had five children, two of whom will be of interest to us, **Henry Martin Sandbach** (1858 – 1895, known as Martin) and **Arthur Edmund Sandbach** (1859 – 1928), both of whom went to Eton and entered the Army. Arthur served in many countries of the, then, empire, but Martin spent most of his time in India.



Monogram of Frances Bentinck on reverse of cover. She was Martin's aunt, his mother's sister, one of Martin Williams' four daughters.

Fig 6, 16th February 1873 letter to Martin Sandbach at Eton, aged 15; two ½d rose-red, plate 6 pay the 1871 1d rate up to 1oz. Oswestry was the post town for Bwlch-y-Cibau, 12 miles south west and in Montgomeryshire, Wales.

Arthur Edmund Sandbach had a distinguished Army career until being ignominiously removed from France in 1917. After Eton he attended the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, passing 11th out of 12 in his class, following which he was commissioned in the Royal Engineers as a Lieutenant on 6th April 1879. He served in the Anglo-Egyptian War (1882), seeing action at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, the Sudan Campaign (1885), generally in India (1886 – 1888), the Burmese Expedition (1886–87), the Sikkim Expedition (1888), Hazara Expedition (1891) and

Gilgit (Kashmir, 1892-1893). He was promoted Captain on 1st April 1889 and Major in November 1897. During the Nile Expedition of 1898 (Battle of Omdurman) he was assistant adjutant-general in the Egyptian army, mentioned in despatches and promoted a brevet Lieutenant-Colonel. On returning from Egypt he became Military Secretary to the Viceroy of India, until November 1899, when he was sent to South Africa (Second Boer War)⁴.

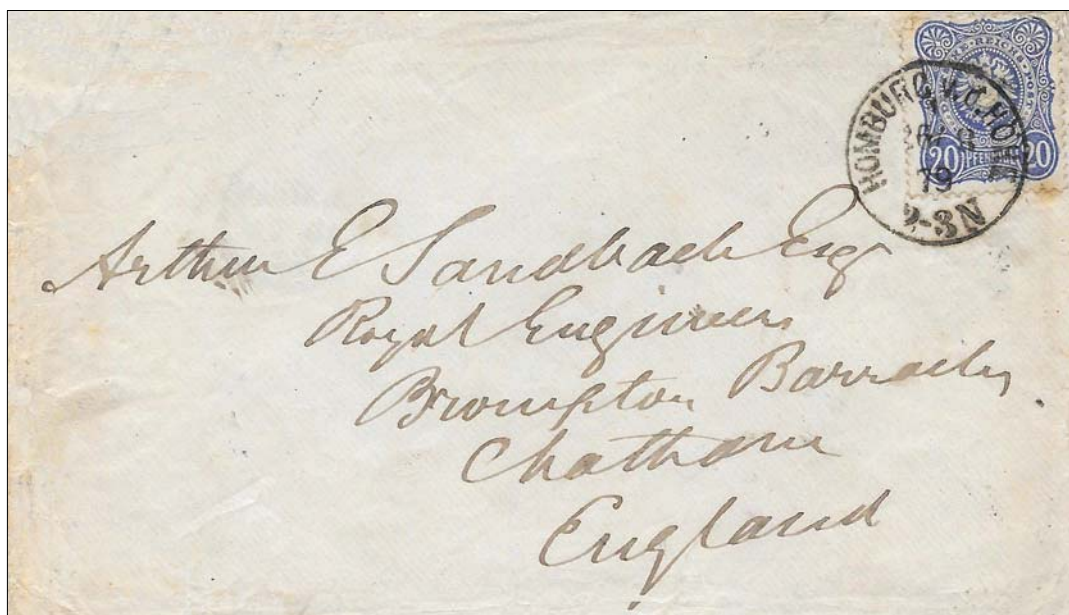


Fig 7, Hamburg 26th Aug 1879 20pf to Arthur Sandbach at Brompton Barracks, still the home of the Royal Engineers.

Much of the substantial 'Sandbach correspondence' is through Abergele, the nearest post town to Hafodunos, their North Wales estate, but luckily for a Shropshire collector there are covers mailed through Oswestry in the north west of the county, some of which will be shown below dealing first with Arthur Sandbach and his aunt Kate.

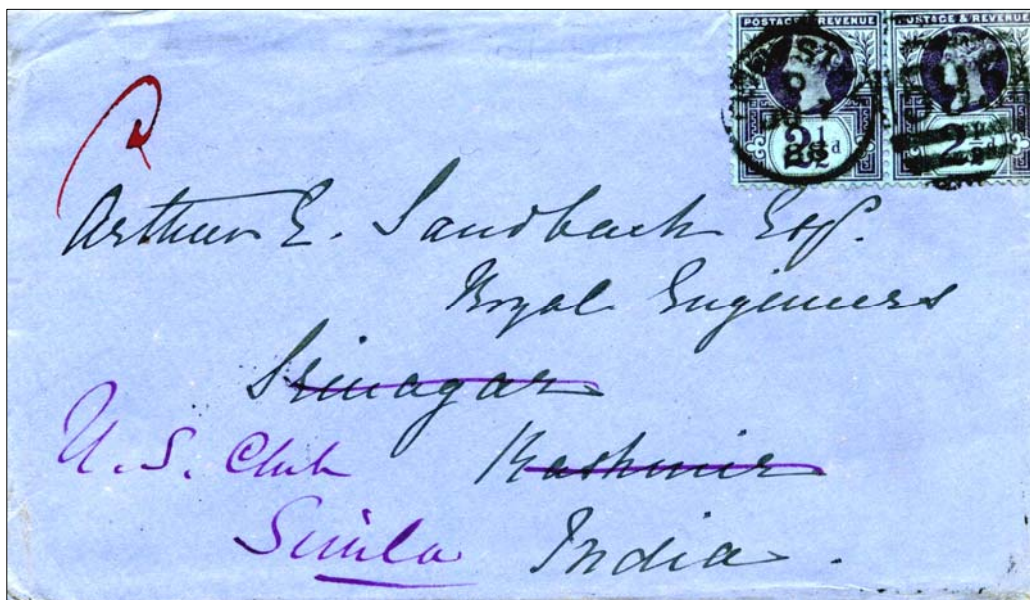


Fig 8, June 1887 Oswestry to Srinagar forwarded to Simla. P&O *Arcadia* from Brindisi, 11th June 1888 (Australian packet to Aden), P&O *Siam*, Aden 18th June 1888, Bombay on 23rd June. Kashmir 29th June, Simla 3rd July 1888. From 1st February 1888, the P&O had full use of the Suez Canal, with letters to India now at 5d per ½oz.

But who was writing to him from Bryngwyn? We have already seen that their aunt Frances Bentinck wrote to Martin (see Fig 6) but on Martin Williams' death in 1856 the estate was left jointly between four daughters - Mary, Frances Bentinck, Kate Williams and Elizabeth Sandbach (Arthur and Martin's mother). Kate remained unmarried and eventually became the heiress spending most of her life at Bryngwyn⁵. The cover below (Fig 9), dated 21st Aug 1887, contained a letter written to her by Arthur Sandbach, in which he writes 'My Dear Aunt Kate....Mr Goulburn

and I left Umballa on Monday morning by 6am train and after 5 days continuous travelling arrived at Baramula (30 miles north west of Srinagar) on the Jhelum (river) yesterday at about 12 o'clock and there we got our boats to travel up to Srinagar the capital of Kashmir.....we have each a boat for ourselves and one for our servants and stores, of which I shall lay in for six weeks, take a shikari (guide) and march off to try and get some bears or ibex. Gwynfyd, in the address, was a small house to the north east of the village, it may have been a 'dower house'.

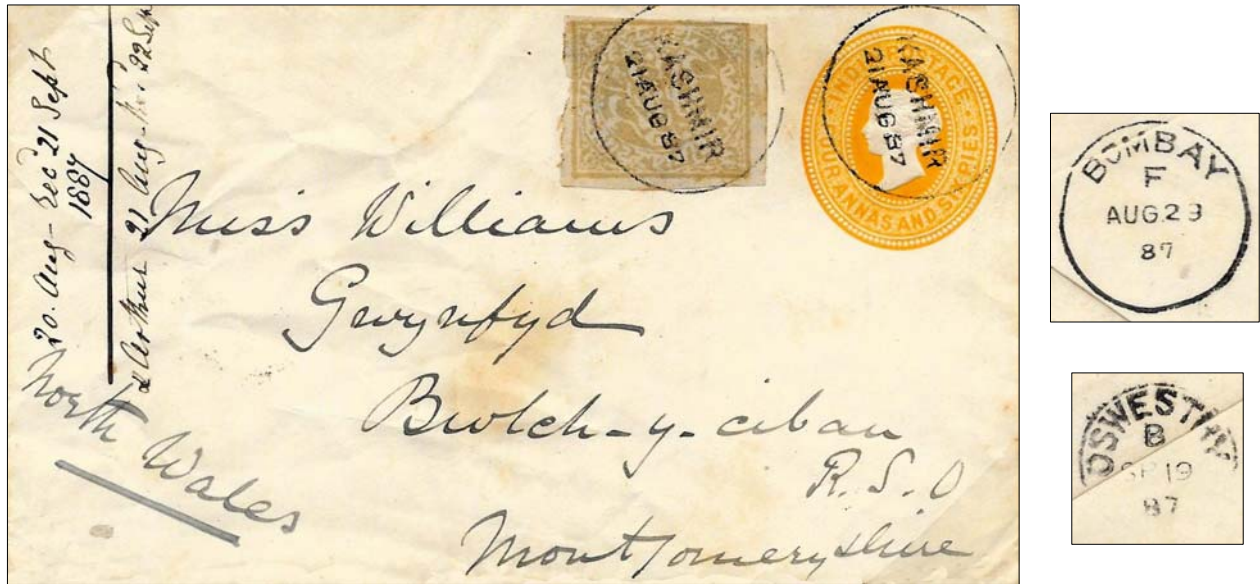


Fig 9, 4anna 6pie rate to the UK from 1st February 1880 - postal stationery envelope. The 1anna Kashmir stamp was for the transport of the letter from a local Kashmir office to an official India post office⁷. P&O *Surat* from Bombay 30th August 1887, Alexandria 13th September; P&O *Tanjore*, Alexandria, 13th Sept, Brindisi 16th Sept 1887⁸.

Miss Kate Williams did not only inherit Bryngwyn, she also inherited the Jamaican property, though this turned out to be a millstone as it became unprofitable and run down due to a dissolute and corrupt agent. She travelled to Jamaica in 1890 (see Fig 10) to try and sort things out but was unsuccessful and it was eventually sold in 1938⁶.

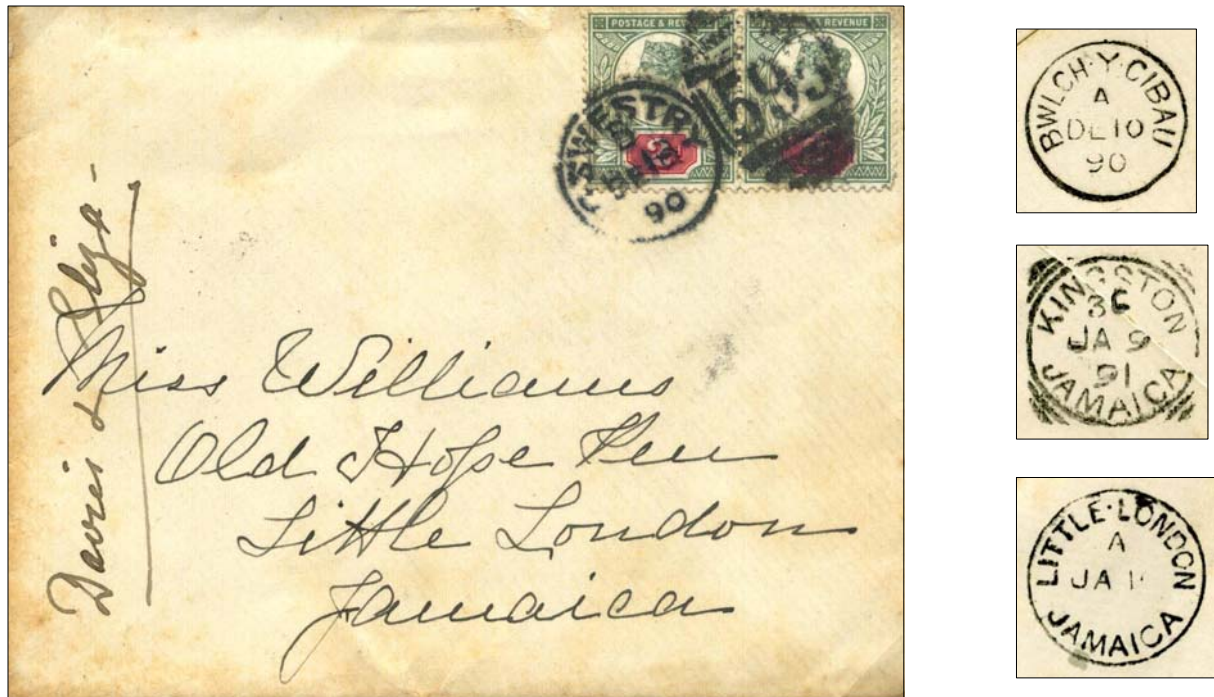


Fig 10, 10 Dec 1890, Oswestry to Jamaica, carried on RMSC *Orinoco*, departed Southampton 24th Dec, Kingston 9th January 1891. 4d per 1/2oz (PO Guide April 1880) paid by two QV 2d green and red (SG199 / 200). In 1887 Arthur wrote to his aunt 'How shamefully Jamaica has treated you again'. Perhaps there was to be justice, of a form, as there are numerous references to the number of slaves kept at Old Hope Plantation, one giving 214 in 1826⁹.

By August 1898, Arthur was part of the Nile Expedition and at the Battle of Omdurman.



MILITARY POST OFFICE
CAIRO – 31 AUG 1898



WADI HALFA – 6 SEP 1898

Fig 11, Cover from Oswestry to Egypt, 25th August 1898 sent at 2½d UPU rate. P&O Egypt from Brindisi 28th August to Port Said, arrived 30th Aug 1898. The Battle of Omdurman took place on 2nd September 1898, while this cover was in transit up the River Nile.

So, who was writing to him? The handwriting on Figs 6, possibly 7, 8 and 11 looks similar and as the **FB** monogram was on the Fig 6 cover, was it Frances Bentinck or was it Kate Williams? Do sisters have similar handwriting?

After Egypt Arthur was in South Africa for the 2nd Boer War, where he was Chief Intelligence Officer to General Sir Redvers Buller, GOC of the forces. From March 1900 after the 118-day siege of Ladysmith ending on 28 February 1900 he was assistant adjutant-general at Natal Army Headquarters in Ladysmith and mentioned in despatches.

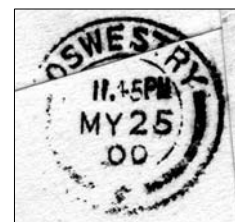
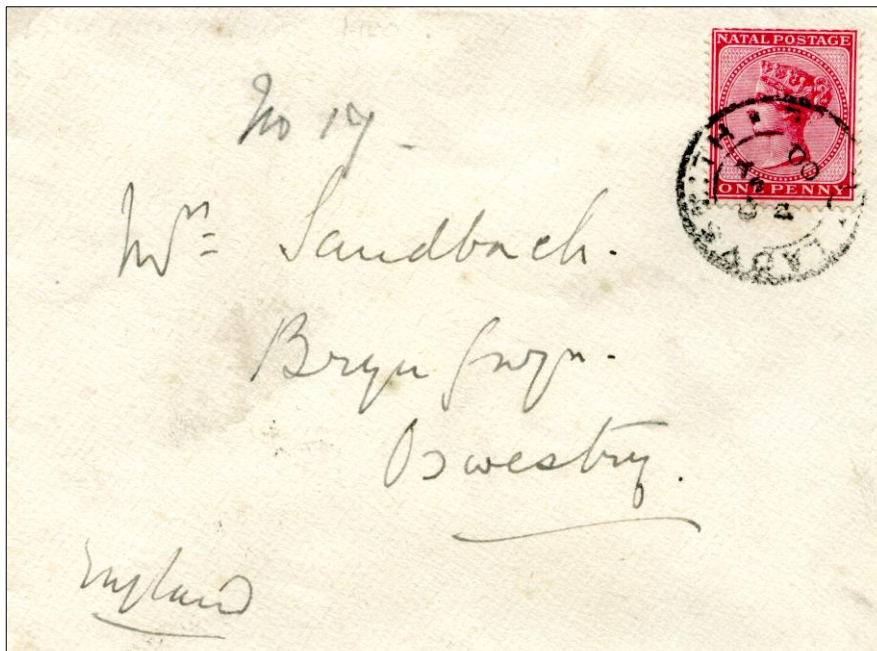


Fig 12, To Bryngwyn, Oswestry (note England but Bryngwyn was firmly established in Wales!) with the Natal 1d red cancelled by the LADYSMITH double circle date stamp for 4 MAY 1900, code C, five weeks after the lifting of the siege. The Union Castle Line Carisbrook Castle departed Cape Town 9th May 1900 and arrived at Southampton on 25th May 1900; the letter reached Oswestry later that evening having been 22 days in transit.

Returning from South Africa in 1902, Arthur married the Hon. Ida Douglas-Pennant, a daughter of George Douglas-Pennant, 2nd Baron Penrhyn, with whom he would have one daughter. In 1904, he returned again to India where he was appointed to command the 1st Sappers and Miners, the senior Indian engineer regiment. Accordingly, he was promoted to the brevet rank (reward for valour or distinction but without the authority or pay of the rank) of Colonel in February 1904, and the substantive rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in April 1905.

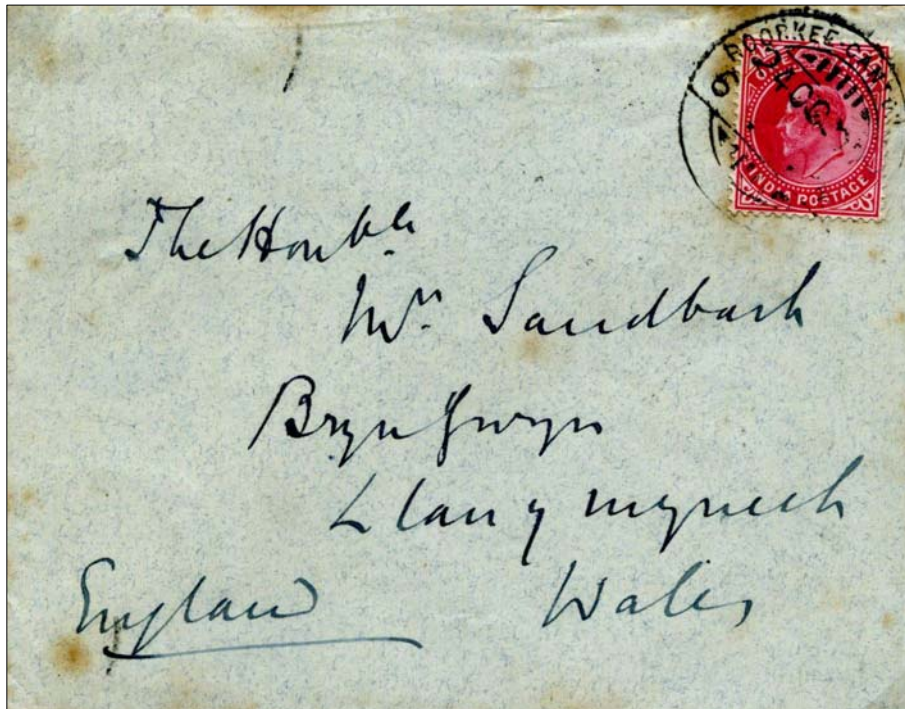


Fig 13, Roorkee Cantonment 24th October 1907, P&O Persia, Bombay 26th Oct 1907, Aden, 30th October, Brindisi 6th November 1907. Note 1st P.W.O. SAPPERS & MINERS monogram on the reverse.

In 1907 he relinquished command of the 1st Sappers, and returned to England, where he was appointed Officer Commanding Royal Engineers at Aldershot. In 1910, he transferred to Irish Command as the Chief Engineer. In this post he was given a substantive promotion to Colonel and a temporary rank of Brigadier-General. He spent the first few weeks of WW1 as Temporary Commandant of Havre, France and was later responsible for salvaging 60-70,000 tons of stores threatened by the German advance. He was described by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien as a 'competent Chief Engineer', not the most ringing of endorsements. He remained with the Second Army only until May 1915, when he returned home to be Inspector of Engineers, a classic appointment for someone not thought up to active service or to be in need of a 'rest'. On 15 November 1915 he was given command of the 68th (2nd Welsh) Division, Territorial Forces. On 14 February 1916 he assumed command of 59th (2nd North Midland) Division, the first Territorial Division to be deployed in Ireland in the aftermath of the Easter Rising. It seems that the inquest reports, held at the National Archives, Kew and released in 2001, into the subsequent executions, suggest the soldiers for the firing squads came from the 59th 2nd Midland Division. In February 1917, at the age of 58, he took the division to France but he did not survive for long. Sir Henry Rawlinson visited the division following reverses it had suffered in early April 1917 and was shocked by what he found. He recommended that Sandbach be sent home and he went the next day. Only a few days earlier Sandbach had 'degummed' Brigadier-General Maconchy, one of his brigade commanders and shortly before his own dismissal, Maconchy had 'degummed' one of his battalion commanders, Lieutenant-Colonel Rayner. All three travelled back to England on the same boat¹¹! They were all considered too old for their jobs, Sandbach and Maconchy were 58 and Rayner 50. In Army parlance to be 'degummed' was to be relieved of command and, in this case, sent home, more or less in disgrace.¹⁰

Following the War, Sandbach was appointed as a Justice of the Peace in Montgomeryshire, and in 1919 served as the county's High Sheriff. He died on 25 June 1928 and is buried in a private plot in the cemetery at Bwlch-y-Cibau.



Fig 14, Undated photograph of Arthur Edmund Sandbach taken from the book *Hafodunos Hall* by Mark Baker, with permission.

During his training for the Engineers at Woolwich, Arthur Sandbach was nicknamed 'The Lordly Stag' because of his 'unusual smartness',¹⁴ and from this photograph one can see why he was so called.

That also fits with his love of hunting. As we shall see Arthur Sandbach spent a lot of his time hunting in India and whilst he undoubtedly served with distinction in many parts of the 'empire', his downfall during his two postings to the French battlefields of WW1 in his late 50s was startling in its suddenness and severity, particularly that in 1917, when his superiors were clearly of the opinion that he did not have the necessary qualities required of a field officer in the heat of battle.¹⁰

Henry Martin Sandbach, born 2nd June 1858 was the elder brother of Arthur. Only two years after leaving Eton, at the tender age of 19, he was with the Royal Artillery in India (see 1877 cover at Fig 15, below).

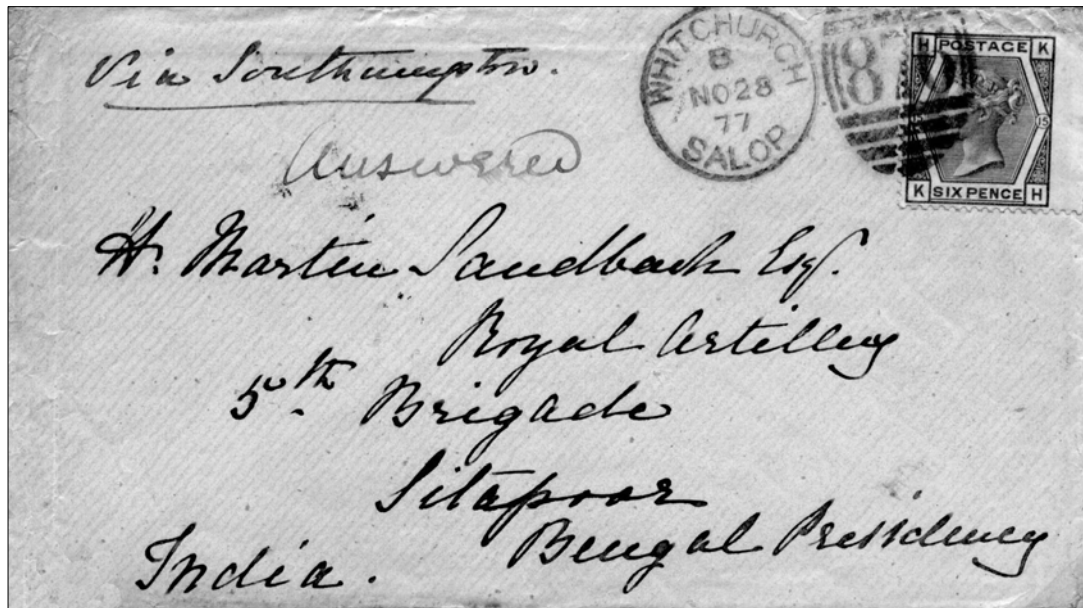


Fig 15, Probably from Terrick Hall, the residence of Samuel Henry Sandbach, a first cousin of the brothers Arthur and Martin (not to be confused with their brother Samuel) and 1½ miles north of Whitchurch, Shropshire, now sold off as flats. Addressed to Sitapore (now Sitapur) in Uttar Pradesh 60 miles north of Lucknow, arrived Sitapore 29th Dec 1877. P&O Peshawar, Southampton 29th Nov, Suez 13th December, P&O Sumatra, Suez 14th Dec, Bombay 26th December 1877. The General Post Office Notice dated 1st January 1876 stated 'Entry of British India to the General Postal Union. Letters via Southampton 6d post paid, 9d unpaid, no postcards'.

By February 1880 Martin was in Afghanistan with the Hazara Mountain Battery of the Royal Artillery fighting the Second Afghan War (1878 – 1880), taking part in the relief of Kabul (aren't they still fighting there?). In July 1878 Russian envoys arrived in Kabul but in early August Afghanistan refused to receive a similar British mission and on 21st November 1878, British armies invaded Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass and two other passes from northwest India across what was to become the Durand Line (more later).

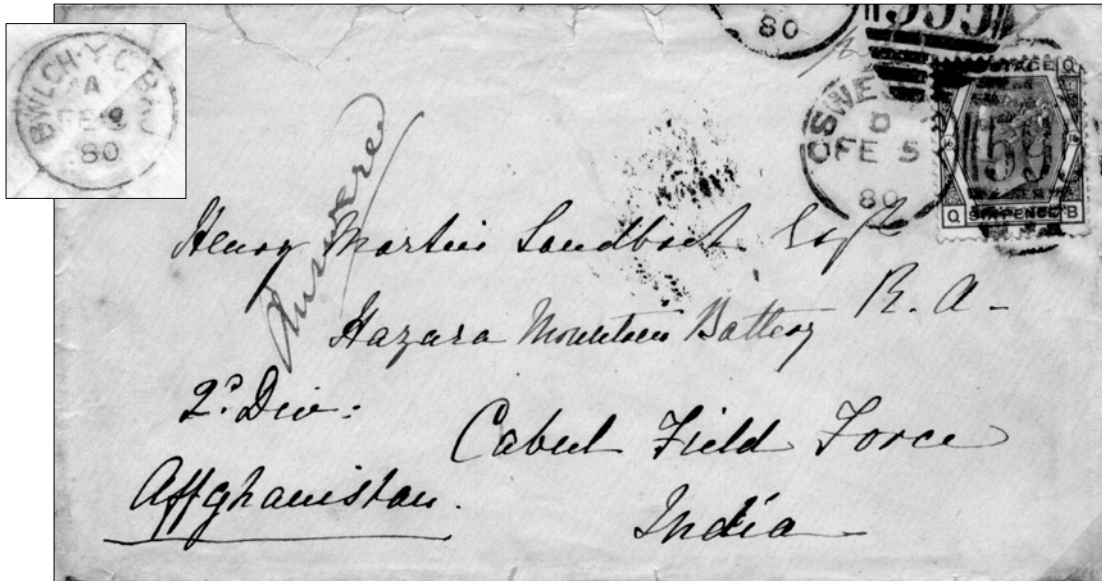


Fig 16, The General Post Office Notice dated 1st January 1880 stated 'After the end of January mails will cease to be sent to India, Ceylon, etc., via Southampton. Thenceforward the mails for India will be forwarded via Brindisi only, 5d per ½oz post paid'. SEA POST OFFICE cds 13 FEB 1880, set C. P&O Sumatra Brindisi 9th February, P&O Nepaul, Suez 13th February, Bombay 24th February 1880. The mail was made up on the Friday (as usual) 6th February for Brindisi and if the new rate was to be applied the charge should have been 5d but the letter was sent at the 6d UPU rate and thus was *overpaid 1d* or was it? From *The Times* - 'The arrangements recently made by the Post Office to transmit the mails to Brindisi via Dover and Calais in lieu of Southampton were inaugurated yesterday (Feb 13th), when the Indian mails were conveyed to Calais by the French mail packet *France*'¹¹. Hence the above rate is correct.

That they were a close-knit family is undeniable. I have four letters without covers addressed to Samuel, the eldest brother, two from Arthur and two from Martin, in one of which, from the Kalapari Valley, 80kms above Srinagar dated 3rd September 1887, he writes '*Thank Papa, Mother and Margy for their letters of the 4th August*'. On 21st August 1887 from The Jhelum, Arthur wrote '*...and Sophy's socks will now come in useful*'. Sophy and Margy were sisters of the brothers. There are descriptions of travelling into Kashmir by train and of getting around by boat near Srinagar and questions about home but the one thing that is common to all four letters is hunting, either for ibex, bear or 'a twelve pointer stag' and fishing for Mahseer (a type of carp), which, Martin wrote, '*sulk in the deepest water they can find when hooked...the fishing in Kashmir is hardly worth the candle, anyone coming here should devote himself to shooting, I have been rewarded all day so far by 2 fine bearskins and one little musk deer*' and '*The best bag this year has been made by Martin Kenward and Lewis Flowers, 2 globe trotters, who brought back 25 ibex, but of these they bought at least 5 at 10/- each*'. As we shall see, hunting would bring about Martin's demise.

Letters also mention Martin's '*pal Durand*', another Shropshire connection. In August 1887 Arthur writes to his aunt from The Jhelum, '*Today we go to Srinagar, where I get news of Martin and Durand*'. And on 12th September, Martin writes to Sam, '*Durand is off in an hour to catch the chief and all his people before they start on their tour on 1st October*'. Was the chief an officer in command or a local dignitary, probably the former?

Sir Henry Mortimer Durand (1850 – 1924), was political secretary at Kabul during the 2nd Afghan War (1878 – 1880) and foreign secretary of India from 1884 to 1892. In 1893 he negotiated the frontier between British India and Afghanistan, the Durand Line, now the official international border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. A branch of the Durand family, spelled Durant, lived at Tong Castle and Ruckley Grange, near Shifnal from 1764. Durand was British ambassador to Spain (1900 – 1903) and to the United States of America (1903 – 1906). Quite remarkably, when he was recuperating from illness in Simla he started the Durand Cup a football competition first held in 1888. Once the preserve of British Indian Army troops, it is now one of the leading prizes in Indian football; the Army passed on the actual running of the Tournament to a civilian administration in 2006¹². Two years after his death, Sir Percival Sykes wrote: '*Durand served his country right well, and generations yet unborn will benefit from the Durand Line that he negotiated*.' That judgment now looks highly questionable as it messily divides the Pathan people between Afghanistan and Pakistan as Michael Korda confirmed '*...the (Durand) line was not only porous but meaningless to the local tribesmen, whose only loyalty was to their faith, clan and tribe, and who raided impartially on both sides of the border*', when writing about T. E. Lawrence's posting to RAF Fort Miranshah, Waziristan in 1928 (Hero, *The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia*, page 631, Aurum Press, 2012).



Fig 17, Cover to Sir Henry Mortimer Durand from Ruckley Grange, Shifnal, 3rd Feb 1892. P&O Rome, Brindisi 7th February, Aden 15th Feb, Bombay 20th FEB 1892, Overland to Calcutta. The General Post Office Notice dated 1st October 1891 stated "To all places in the Far East reduced to 2½d per ½oz, post paid".



Fig 18, Abergele 22 DEC 1887 to Malta.

MALTA 28 DEC 1887 on reverse.

Considering the above dates probably sent via Marseilles but no packet ship found to fit the dates.

The correct rate reduced to 2½d by the UPU Convention of 1st April 1879 paid with the Queen Victoria 2½d purple on blue Jubilee Issue, (SG 201).

The letter from Shrewsbury on page 1 must be one of the last letters Martin received before he left for home after his return to his unit in Allahabad from Kashmir for he had written to Sam on 12th Sept 1887 'They have refused my extension of leave, saying they cannot spare me from Allahabad, so I shall have about 2 months before embarking'. He goes on to say 'We are due to arrive at Portsmouth on 26th Jan on H.M.S. Crocodile' – see Fig 18, above, for a cover from Abergele to Malta, sent to await the arrival of the troopship. Editions of *The Times* from their archive state that H.M.S. Crocodile sailed from Bombay on 31st Dec 1887, left Port Said on 13th January and passed Gibraltar on 21st January 1888. There is no date given when she arrived in Malta but the Crocodile arrived at Portsmouth on 25th January 1888 with D Battery 4th Brigade Royal Artillery under the command of Capt. Sandbach (sic) for Woolwich¹³. So even *The Times* of yesteryear made factual errors of spelling!

Martin returned to India after his leave but I have no covers to or from him during this period. On 2nd January 1894, the London Gazette proclaimed that Captain Henry Martin Sandbach was to be promoted Major and in November 1895 he began a journey on leave to England, stopping off at Aden, from where he crossed the Gulf of Aden to Somaliland to go lion hunting. He had with him two shikaris (guides), a servant, two camel men and a horseman. A lion was spotted and the horse and camel men manoeuvred their animals to corner the animal for Sandbach to take aim. At some point the lion, badly wounded, eked revenge by attacking one of the shikaris as Sandbach was reloading. He fired again, whereupon the lion dropped the shikari and bounded straight at Sandbach severely wounding him in the chest and arms. The lion was killed and Sandbach was taken back to Aden, still alive, but with surgery not being immediately available, gangrene set in and he died on 6th December 1895, the hunt having begun on 14th November¹⁴. The record does not state what happened to the shikari. Henry Martin Sandbach is buried in Maala cemetery on the southern side of Aden Harbour, south of the present airport. The cemetery is under the auspices of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, from the website of which the photograph of the unkempt grave below was gained. An inscription on the marble is very difficult to read from the photograph but there is an inscription on a brass plaque in the village church at Bwlch-y-Cibau, which reads:



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
HENRY MARTIN SANDBACH,
MAJOR ROYAL ARTILLERY,
WHO DIED AT ADEN DEC 6TH 1895
FROM THE EFFECTS OF WOUNDS
RECEIVED WHILE LION HUNTING
IN SOMALILAND,
AGED 37

THIS TABLET IS ERECTED
BY SOME OF HIS BROTHER OFFICERS



Henry Martin Sandbach taken from
The London Illustrated report of his death

The light in the church is poor and a photographic flash just reflects off the brass, so I have reproduced the sentiment as accurately as I can, including the slightly larger red letters. There is a similar brass plaque in Bwlch-y-Cibau church to their aunt, Kate Williams, erected by Frances and Charles Bentinck her sister and brother-in-law.

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WARWICK ROYAL SHOW 1931

by Alan Godfrey

The Royal Agricultural Society of England's annual show, known as the 'Royal Show', was first held in 1839 and was held at a different location each year until it found a permanent home at the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh, near Kenilworth from 1963 to 2009. During the nineteenth century Warwickshire had hosted the Royal Show on four occasions: 1859 at Warwick Racecourse, 1876 at Aston Park, next to Aston Hall, 1892 at Castle Park in Warwick and in 1898 at Four Oaks Park Sutton Coldfield.

The next occasion, the ninetieth Royal Show, was from 7th to 11th July 1931 again situated on a 90 acre site in Castle Park, Warwick. This event was to coincide with the centenary celebrations of the Warwickshire Agricultural Society. At first there were concerns that show might have to be cancelled as there had been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, but fortunately the animal movement order to and from the show was lifted on Tuesday 30th June, allowing the show to go ahead.

Visitors included the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VIII), who flew in and landed at Warwick Racecourse. The Warwick Advertiser of 11th July reported that the cheers from the public were "at times almost deafening" and the Prince's mode of transport had "just that touch of adventure about it that appeals to everyone". As a result of popular demand, the Prince's route to the showground was changed to go through the town centre so that more people could catch a glimpse of the Prince. As well as visiting the show, he took tea at the castle and planted a tree in the grounds.

The general depression in the country meant that the number of implement exhibitors was lower (only 388 stands) and the visitor attendance was also lower: just 1,867 on the first day (despite fine weather), 11,273 on the second day and 24,198 on the third day. However, 3061 animals were exhibited. Admission cost the public 10/- (50p), which was seen by some as excessive in the prevailing economic climate. Most of the animals and equipment for the show were carried by rail to the Great Western Railway's Cape Yard in Warwick (including those brought to the town by the LMS). Specially constructed platforms (700 feet long by 35 feet wide) and a siding (for 22 vehicles on each side) were made available to allow two trains to be unloaded at once, and a 6 ton crane was provided for lifting heavy items. About 590 vehicles of livestock in 32 special trains were received between 3.00pm on Friday 3rd July and 3.00pm on Monday 6th July. To meet the requirements for returning the animals after the show special trains were scheduled at hourly intervals from 7.00pm on Saturday 11th July to 9.00am on Monday 13th July. In addition transport between Cape Yard and the showground was also supplied by the GWR, in its own fleet of lorries.

Post Office services were also provided for the use of visitors and exhibitors. Mail was cancelled by a special hand stamp showing the place of posting as "WARWICK ROYAL SHOW". Initially two cancellers with identification 'A' were used at the main entrance between 30th June and 13th June, one was a circular stamp for cancelling registered letters and dating receipts (see below) and a rectangular one was for cancelling parcels (in violet ink). Three additional hand stamps with identification 'B' were in use from 6th July to 11th July. One (28.5mm diameter) showed the date in one line, another 30mm diameter showed the date in two lines (see next page), the third was a rectangular hand stamp for use on parcels. The circular hand stamps were 'skeleton' stamps made up of loose type a style frequently used in temporary post offices. As often found with skeleton postmarks, the short period of time that they were in use means they are all quite scarce. Small coloured stickers (sometimes known as poster stamps, see bottom right) were also made available to visitors for use on mail to publicise the show.

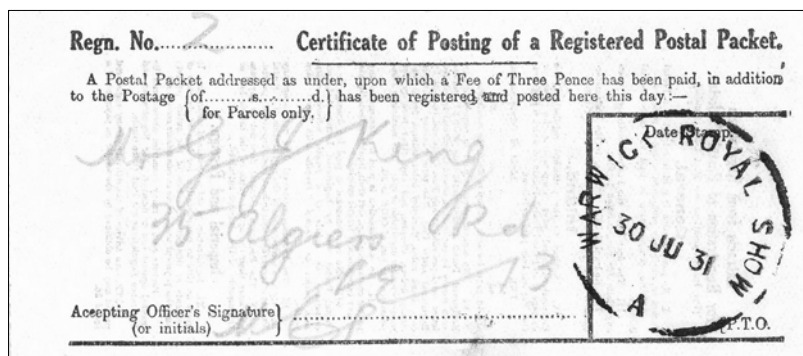


Fig 1, The Skeleton date stamp with date in one line and identification letter A, cancelling the registered letter receipt related to the registered cover to George King found on the next page

Although the Warwick Royal Show did not receive as many visitors as the previous Royal Show in Manchester had achieved, probably because of the poor weather during the show and the economic situation in England, it was still judged a success by RASE.



Fig 2, Skeleton Show cancel, identification letter B, on a philatelic registered cover to George King, London

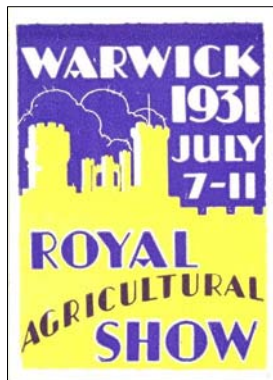


Fig 3, The poster stamp for advertising and the rectangular violet parcel stamp dated 7th July 1931

Are YOU on my mailing list for G.B Postal History?

I provide a photocopy service of all new stock to clients on my mailing list
New clients will receive photocopies of existing stock which caters for
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I have a good range of most MIDLAND counties from pre-stamp onwards.

Please drop me a line or phone to advise me of your collecting
Interests and see what I can offer

BRIAN PURCELL LTD

P.O. BOX 749 WORCESTER WR4 0UR

TEL/FAX: 01905 452415

AN OLD POST ROAD IN NORTHANTS

by Derek Smeathers

The line of old post routes can still be followed even though they have been superseded by modern motorways and building developments. One of these routes connected eastern Northamptonshire with London via the North Road, but fell into disuse before 1800. It started at Caxton between Huntingdon and Royston on the old North Road (now the A1198) and headed west to St Neots and then north-west through Kimbolton to enter Northamptonshire near Clapton (a hamlet now known as Clopton), shown on the 1724 map of the county by H. Moll.

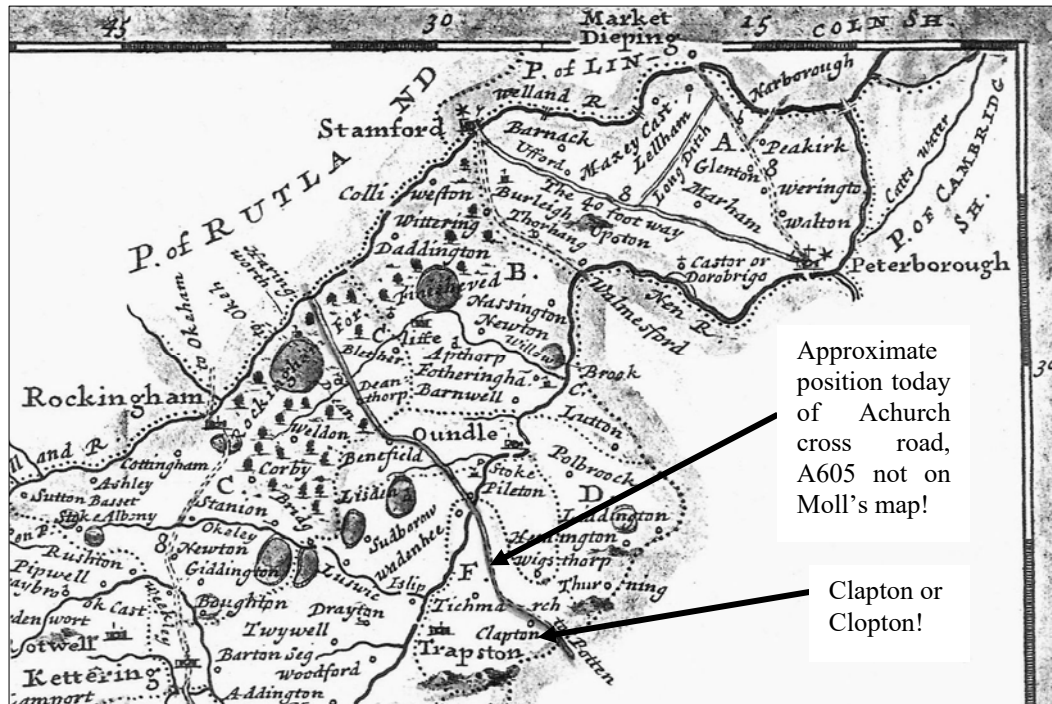
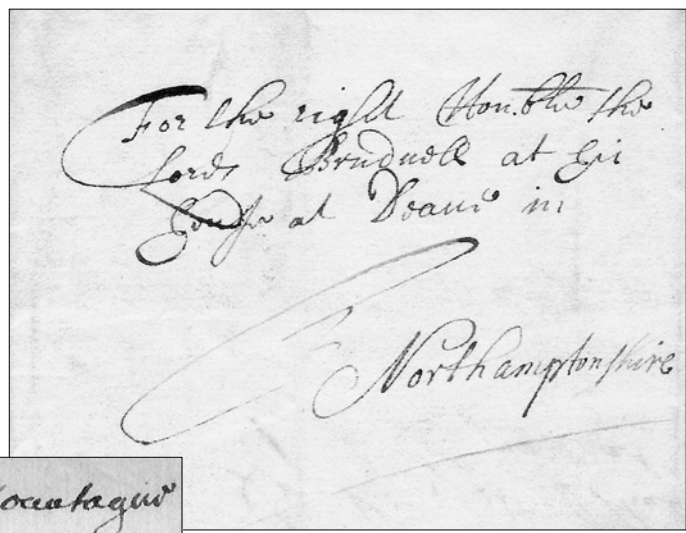


Fig 1, 1724 part of H. Moll map of Northamptonshire, showing the Old Post Road going north-west from Clapton

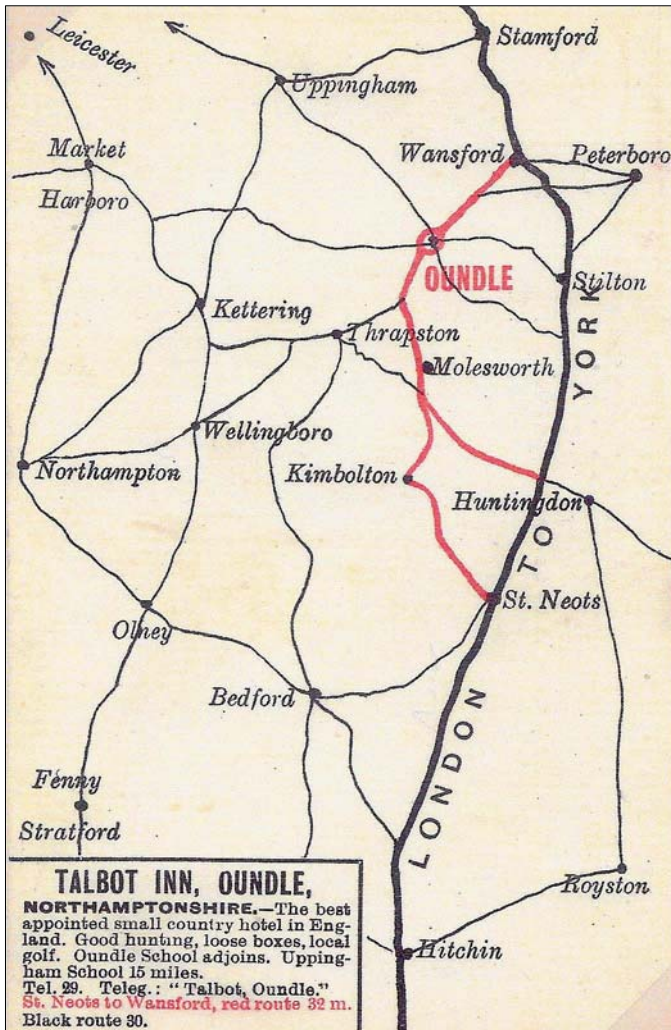
The country lane continues north-westwards to cross the Roman road (now the A605) at Achurch cross-roads (now a modern roundabout) where letters from London for Thrapston and Oundle were left for collection by messengers from these towns during the 18th and early 19th centuries – see the Society's 1993 Local Post book, page 195. The post road continues north-westerly as a quiet country road, passing the villages of Lilford and Pilton, and is clearly used nowadays by the occasional farm vehicle and little else. Near Bearshank Wood, the metalled surface gives way to a grassy bridleway unsuitable for cars, so I take to shanks pony along the edge of the trees, the southern edge of the old Rockingham Forest, a royal hunting ground. The bridleway becomes a footpath for 4 or 5 miles, crossing minor roads and passing the village of Lower Benefield to arrive at Upper Benefield on the busy A47, where the path ends. Beyond it the land was used as an airfield for the USAAF in 1942. All trace of our post road has gone.

To resume our journey we skirt around the airfield to Deenethorpe village. About a mile away on the left is Deene Hall, built in 1300 and purchased by Sir Robert Brudenell in 1514; the family still live there. The Brudenells are one of the county's oldest families with many honours and titles including Duke of Montague, Duke of Buccleuch and 7th Earl of Cardigan, who led the Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War.

Fig 2, Front panel of entire dated 2nd Nov 1654 from Baron Mountague (note spelling on reverse) to the Lords Brudenell, charged 3d, no other postal markings.



The line of the post road is now part of the A43 arterial road towards Stamford, but shortly after leaving Deenethorpe a country lane resumes the old road passing through the hamlet of Laxton and about 3 miles further comes to Harringworth where it descends to cross the Welland Valley and leaves Northamptonshire for Oakham in Rutland.



Why did this road lose its importance? One obvious reason is that alternatives appeared which would provide a better route between Oakham and London. We know this because in March 1789 the surveyor, George Western, reported on the condition of the road between Oakham, Kettering and Higham Ferrers as part of the post road from Nottingham to London. This road went through Bedford and was more direct than taking the connection to the North Road. Full detail of Mr. Western's report can be found in MM 129 / 12; Mr Western thought it would be a better route.

It is interesting to note that 130 years after this post road went out of favour, a picture postcard was used in 1930 by the Talbot Inn, Oundle, as an advertising feature with the picture side being a map of the area with the old road outlined in red encouraging people to use it instead of the main North Road, here called the London to York road. The Talbot was a noted centre of business in the area, going back to the 16th century with connections to Fotheringhay Castle and Mary Queen of Scots. Today, it remains as such, it is right in the centre of the town and is as busy as ever with many meeting rooms and catering facilities. For an important venue such as that to advertise the old post road must show that it was far from dead, at least that portion from Achurch cross road to St. Neots anyway.

Fig 3, Postcard advertising the Talbot Inn, Oundle, c1926, showing part of the old post road in red which left the North Road at Caxton, near St Neots.

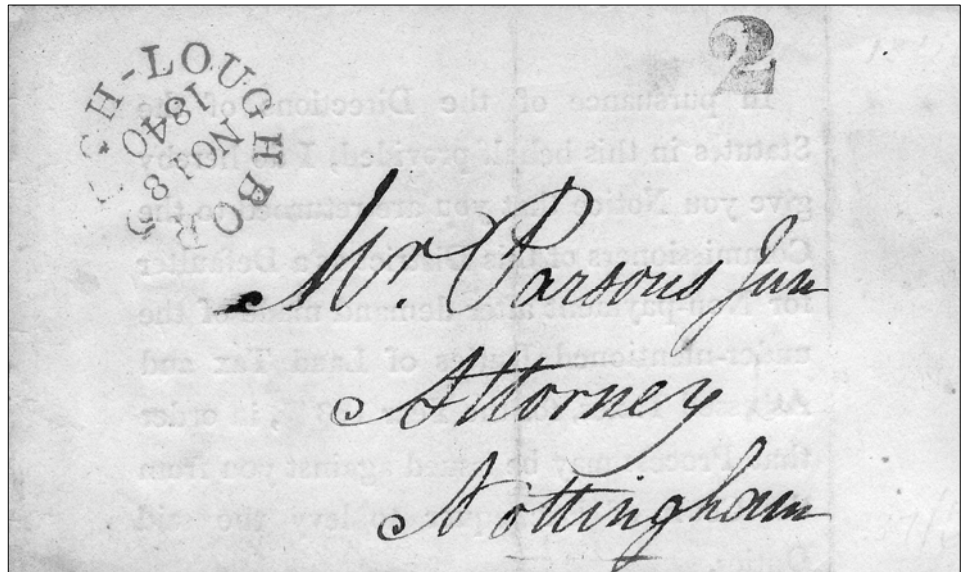


Fig 4, Entire dated 25th September 1778 from Thrapston to Leeds, Yorkshire, manuscript *Turn at Caxton*, prepaid 4d for over 80 miles under the Act of 1765. Over inked THRAP / STONE (British County Catalogue NN21, 27mm x 12mm, known 1775 to 1783) on reverse.

A RESPONSE TO AN UNRECORDED LOUGHBOROUGH '2' MARK IN MM 188 / 21

from John Soer

When I saw Clive Jones' article on the Loughborough '2' I did wonder if it was the same hand stamp as **LC101** but rather worn. Having looked at my copy (see right), there is no doubt that they are different hand stamps. The maximum width of my copy is 8½mm; the height is definitely 10mm. I doubt that the Loughborough office had need to use their 2 hand stamp very often, so any wear in 4 years would surely not have been enough to explain the



difference between the two strikes. I also have a cover with a manuscript 2, which suggests that **LC101** came into use Oct/Nov 1840; it is recorded from 8 NOV 1840 to 30 AUG 1842.

JON BAKER TROPHY

For new members – every year we hold a vote for the best article to appear in Midland Mail the preceding year. Suggestions for articles this year are below but you are at liberty to vote for any article that has caught your eye.

Please contact your editor by telephone or e-mail (see front page) or by sending the attached voting slip by regular mail – **NEW ADDRESS on bottom of page 2 this issue** – in time for the AGM in April. Many thanks.

- 1) Marshfield, Gloucestershire by John Calladine (MM 186 / 8)
- 2) Unofficial Mail Delivery to Nethercote, Warwickshire by Ian May (MM 186 / 12)
- 3) A Little of Nottingham Railway History by Alan Marshall (MM 186 / 18)
- 4) Mail on the Midland Railway and its Constituents, 1840 – 1875 by John Soer (MM 187 / 10)
- 5) The Chippenham Penny Post into Gloucestershire by John Calladine (MM 188 / 11)
- 6) An Easy Way to Understand Japanese Postal History by Derek Smeathers (MM 188 / 18)
- 7) Any article from this edition of Midland Mail (MM 189)



Bill Pipe

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