



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



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Number 33, January 1984

New Year Notion

There would seem to be a need for a new government office in each of our towns and cities. Postal historians will know that, as early as the 17th century, there were offices where letters could be posted and collected and where, from 1840, postage stamps could be bought to pre-pay private or business correspondence.

It is an interesting relic of those times that the term 'Post Office' has survived to the present day to describe a building where motor vehicles may be taxed, dog licences procured, pensions drawn, gas bills paid, savings invested, TV stamps collected and reliable advice obtained on almost any subject under the sun - bar one. Yes, it is true that letters can still be sent from a post office but only a hardy soul would join the queue of bill-payers and pension-gatherers without a pack of sandwiches and a hot drink.

We probably need an office that deals exclusively with postal matters. An office where stamps can be bought, letters registered, certificates of posting sought, parcels weighed and accurate information on postal matters solicited. So that there will be no confusion with the other building, how about calling it a "Mail Office" ? It may not flow as readily from the tongue but it might at least provide those of us who still post a lot of letters with a proper service and, if postal history has then repeated itself, who can regret it ?

Forthcoming Meetings

The next meeting of the Society will be on Saturday 7th January at Dr Johnson House, Bull Street, Birmingham at 2 o'clock. This promises to be a fascinating afternoon with two of our members providing displays on very different topics. Frank Thompson has agreed to show us his collection of marks of the London Local and Government Penny Posts - "Dockwras" to you and me. When did you last see a collection of such scarce items? John Soer has been persuaded to bring to life his excellent book on the postal history of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and show us postmarks of 'Ashby and district'. Committee members are asked to note that a Committee Meeting will precede the main meeting at 1.00pm sharp.

The subsequent meeting will be on Saturday 4th February. Anyone who remembers the quality of the entries to our annual competition last year will need no further encouragement to enter or observe this year's nine sheet Postal History Competition. Entries may be on any aspect of GB postal history and it does not matter if you have never entered a competition before. Denis Salt is the current holder of the splendid trophy and the only member to have held it twice. If you wish to relieve him of the problem of dusting it, please set to work. The Annual Competition is at Dr Johnson House at 2 o'clock.

The December Meeting

There was another excellent turn-out of 17 members and guests for the annual gathering at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent, on Saturday 10th December. Nearly everyone was able to attend the lunch at the Museum arranged by our Secretary and knowledgeable members advised your reporter that the pints of the local product were the best ever. It is fair to say that the speaker faced a particularly good-humoured audience.

We had been promised a treat and we got it. Denis Charlesworth's display of 'Jamaica' was huge, varied, well-commentated and unusually interesting. There must have been nearly 200 sheets but it seemed like 20 and only copious notes remind one of how difficult it will be to summarise such a display. As few members knew much of Jamaica, it was essential to begin by "reminding" us that the island was discovered by Columbus in 1496 and Denis used an early map and 'maps on stamps' to set the scene. The postal history display began in 1676 with letters to and from the Governor, Sir Thomas Modyford. There was a 1695 letter from Port Royal to London which was annotated to show that it had been forwarded from Bristol and there was a letter carried by the short-lived Dummer's Packet Service which

operated from 1702 to 1711. Sir Charles Long knew a thing or two and had his letters carried by a merchant ship in 1709 and by naval ships in 1712 when things looked risky.

The first straight line handstamps were supposedly sent to Jamaica in about 1705 but nothing has been recorded earlier than 1746. We saw an example of the rare first type 'Jamaica' from 1758 and the earliest known strike of the third type from 1768. The slightly later straight line stamps issued to some towns included Spanish Town (1787) and Lacovia in two types (1787 and 1816). From about 1805, we saw various other stamps and the well-known Jamaican fleurons. We were told that collectors regard marks of Kingston as a separate field and we admired the first type 'Kingston' (1809) of which only four copies are known. There was an oval Jamaican ship letter mark of 1810, the earliest recorded Falmouth mark (1853) and an example of a letter sent in 1834 when naval brigs were rented to serve as packets. Transit marks on letters from such places as Panama and Ecuador in the 1840s well illustrated the scope of Jamaican postal history.

In the late 1840s, some wooden block stamps were made locally for the regularly used charge marks. We were shown both a '6' and a really delightful '1/-'. Inevitably, British adhesive postage stamps made their appearance in Jamaica (in 1858) and there they were - with 'A01' cancels and a very rare 'double A01' of 1859. The first Jamaican stamps followed in the 1860s and we were shown covers of the period. Picture postcards of the late 1890s and early 1900s provided a feast of interest and some very handsome squared circle cancels. Jamaica also used slogan postmarks and 'temporary' rubber datestamps, some of which proved no more temporary than English pre-fabs. Your reporter was intrigued by the 'Street Letter Box' cancel of 1938.

The final session began with the 1964 Miss World stamps on cover signed by the young lady herself but without, we were assured, the 'missing swimsuit' variety. Military censor marks of both wars followed. Apparently there were Canadian and American troops in Jamaica, not to mention German prisoners of war. There was a vast selection of postal stationery. The first cards were made by prisoners in the local penitentiary before the more official cards arrived. We saw registered envelopes and air mail forms, the subject of air mail bringing us right up to date. All the many first flights seemed to be represented backed up with photos of the aircraft and supporting ephemera. Our New Zealand member would have relished it.

Chris Beaver proposed the vote of thanks with the professional ease we

have learned to expect of him and he added the members' thanks to Richard and to the Bass Museum. The Society has now held meetings at the Museum since 1977 and both the welcome we have been given and the facilities provided have been outstanding. A special 'thank you' is due to the Director and staff of the Bass Museum and, of course, to Denis Charlesworth for providing us with such an enjoyable afternoon.

The Society Auction

As usual, the annual auction will follow the A.G.M. on Saturday afternoon, 8th April. This may seem a long time ahead but, in order that a catalogue can be produced and despatched with the next 'Midland Mail', details are required by the end of January at the latest.

Last year we had an excellent auction, with keen bidding by post and in the room, so why not contribute to this year's auction by submitting some of your unwanted items? Please send brief but clear descriptions, with condition, of your postmarks etc (shown as 'poor', 'good', 'very good', 'fine' or 'superb'), together with a realistic market price and your reserve price for each item, to Mrs E. Lewis, 27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands B67 5JG who has kindly promised to type a catalogue for us. Please do not send the items themselves to Elizabeth: they should be taken to the meeting on 8th April.

Remember that the modest commission of 10% deducted by the Society helps to boost our funds and helps to keep the annual subscription to a minimum.

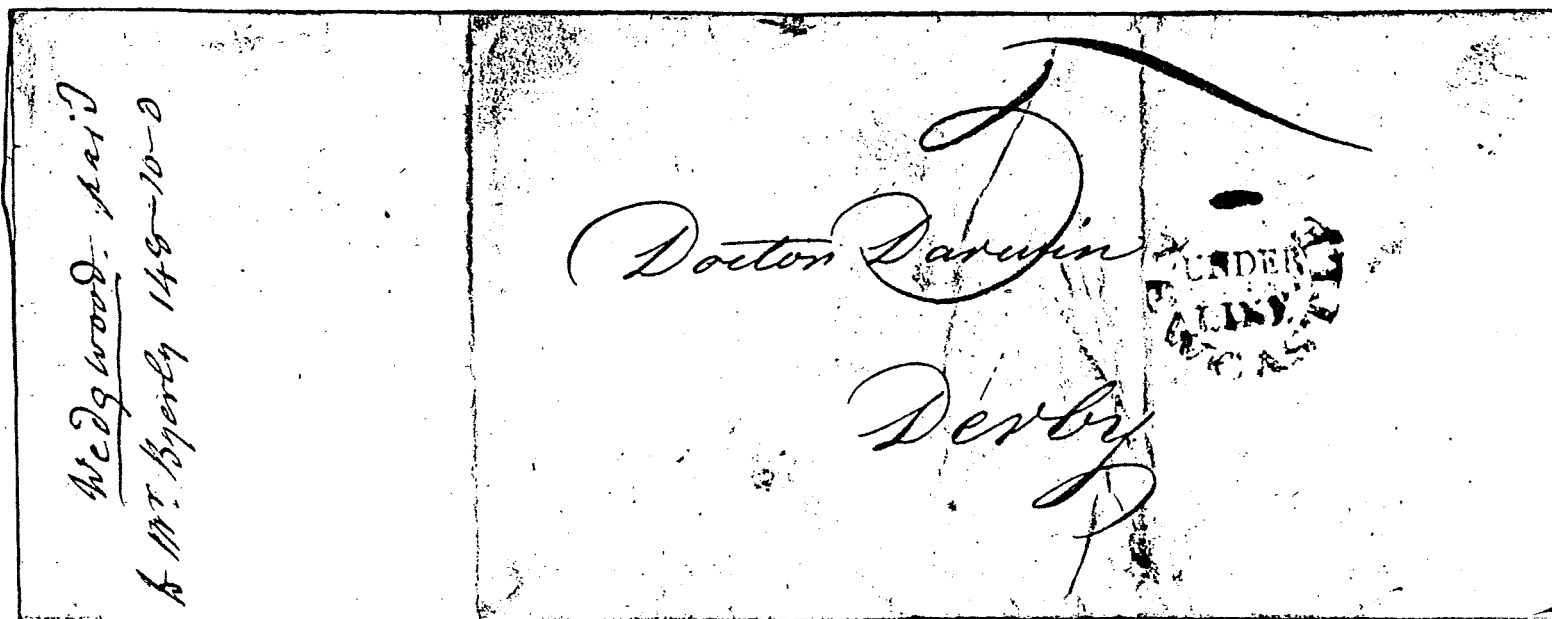
STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY of GREAT BRITAIN 1660-1982

Learned Members of the Midland Postal History Society may perhaps raise their eyebrows at the prospect of a small firm offering postal history and stamps over such a long period as some 300 years and being so broad as to include not only usual town and county material but also more specialised subjects such as Maritime, Railway & Military postal history to the specialised shades of Ed. VII stamps. Certainly no-one can be a specialist in all such fields but this will have two advantages to the collector (i) for the general collector a wide spectrum is offered in a single list & (ii) the specialist will spot the rare and the obscure which we have missed and as sales are at fixed prices will still be able to pick up a bargain. Send for a post free list to:

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FINDING OUT THE DATEby The Reverend Christopher M. Beaver

There are choosy collectors who say they would never buy a cover on which there is no date. Well, I'm not so discriminating. Some years ago I was attracted by an example of one of the three 'non-standard stamps' in my area of interest listed after the familiar provincial town stamps - 'NEWCASTLE fig.172 upright, UNDER/LINE across centre', recorded from 1799 to 1805 according to the Willcocks and Jay catalogue. Elsewhere it's described as a squashed circle; the arc around the top is not mentioned. There is nothing to suggest the stamp is non-standard because it was locally made. Its oddity is surely dictated by the need to accommodate 18 letters. Twelve Newcastles are listed in the British Isles alone and this one has been identified in at least seven different ways on the town's stamps.

The m/s '5' suggested the letter travelled from Newcastle to Derby before April 6th 1801 since the route would be on the London coach to Lichfield, then via Burton - 55½ miles according to the 1823 Post Office map; the maximum distance for 5d in the General Post being reduced from 60 to 50 miles on that date. A vague 'probably 1799-1801' would do for me for a pretty good strike of an elusive stamp, and it did so for a long while!

But also on the cover are a couple of illustrious names with Staffordshire connections which had added to the attraction and, gradually, the story emerged as the inter-connections of the Darwin and Wedgwood families were traced. I didn't discover who Mr Byerley was until the very end of the search and the significance of the 'paid to Mr Byerley 148-10-0' almost eluded me. This was what finally revealed that Dr Darwin replied without delay on Monday August 18th 1800. My cover was sent on or about

Friday 15th and that's near enough for me.

Standard reference books like the Dictionary of National Biography and the Victoria County History get you started. You find yourself discovering the achievements of those brilliant men of practical ideas who met as the Lunar Society and sparked in one another ever more ingenious inventions. Between them they encompassed the range of contemporary human knowledge, not just the skills that produced those developments in manufacture and commerce that began to change the world. That two of them, Erasmus Darwin 1 and Josiah Wedgwood 1, were the grandfathers of Charles Darwin is almost coincidental; like his father and sister, he married a Wedgwood.

It was the large deposit of Wedgwood archives at Keele University which finally revealed the story behind my cover, though the clue came from a recent full-scale biography of Erasmus entitled 'Doctor of Revolution'. In brief, his eldest son, Erasmus Darwin 11, was a successful solicitor who, because of his 'perennial and neurotic neglect of small business', had been given an ultimatum to prepare his papers for the accountant by December 30th 1799. During the night of 29th, having stayed up the two previous nights struggling belatedly to meet the deadline, he walked out of his new home, Breadsall Priory not far from Derby, and drowned himself in the lake. Dad, bravely taking the job on, spent most of 1800 sorting things out. Among the papers at Keele we find him in August settling dues to Wedgwood - £148-10-0. And Mr Byerley ? He was Josiah's sister's son, a partner in the business which at this stage was called Wedgwood Sons and Byerley. You'd hardly guess the letter was written within the family.



From a print after the portrait by Kneller of Derby
ERASMUS DARWIN

The reply (a part of which is reproduced by kind permission of the owners Messrs Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd and Keele University) is addressed to 'Etruria, Near Newcastle, Staffordshire', which brings us back to

postal history, for this is the year before the introduction of the official 5th Clause Posts. But what difference did that make in practice ? Surprisingly, perhaps, none the public were aware of. A Staffordshire Directory published in the early months of 1802 gives the names, occupations and addresses of seven post offices in the pottery villages served, it says, by a 'cross post from Newcastle'. (Oxley was unable to record which of them were established before 1814.) The Universal British Directory, back in 1793, gives times of delivery and collection, mostly twice daily, for offices in six of these places and there can be little doubt that by then, if a walk from Newcastle did not actually pass through Etruria, a messenger from Hanley or Shelton served the Hall and Works of the pre-eminent master potters whose world-wide sales depended as much on communication by letter as safe transportation by canal. And by the way, just as Dr Darwin declined George III's summons to London, preferring Lichfield and his Midland friends and exercising his skills free for near-peniless patients, so the Wedgwoods built a model village in the country for the extended family who were their workers and concerned themselves with the health and welfare of each one. _____

Dear Sir,

I have examined the book, of my late son, & believe the account you have sent me to be right, & have herein transmitted to you a note for the money, 14/8-10-0.

11 law-account due

Mr. Tho: Byerley

Etruria

near Newcastle

Staffordshire

A Visit to Post Office Archives - Part 5.

Four previous parts of this series have appeared in the Bulletin. In the first (Bulletin No.23), we discovered how to get to Post Office Archives and then, in turn, we looked at Postmarks (No.25), Postmasters (No.26) and Postal Routes (No.28). Ideally these, the final parts, would have appeared before now but the complexity of the topic needed considerably more research before pen was committed to paper. Happily a guardian angel, in the form of Jean Farrugia herself, has kindly agreed to vet the piece to make sure that no myths are created or perpetuated. The writer is deeply indebted to her and to the staff of Post Office Archives whose patience must be sorely tried by ignorant but persistent amateur researchers.

The topics in the earlier parts of the series are important because they help to establish key facts in local postal history.. But they, in themselves, only provide the skeleton of a body that needs to have life and breath. We want to know of the fury of the town's residents when the mailcoach was stopped, why the postmaster was summarily dismissed, who thought he was entitled to free delivery and failed to get it and what happened to the postboy who stole a banknote. These are typical of matters, large and small, that were discussed and resolved at the highest level and it must be remarkable that so much detail has survived the passage of time. It is our good fortune that Francis Freeling, Secretary of the Post Office from 1798 to 1836 and previously Resident Surveyor, established a system of minuting that continued for decades.

The papers that help us to fill in the vital detail of our local postal history are the Postmaster General's Reports and the Postmaster General's Minutes. These are surely some of the most important records in the entire archive. Perhaps two problems are most likely to tax a novice at the outset of his investigations: how are the volumes indexed and where are the papers housed ?

The key to understanding these records is the realisation that each series comprises, firstly, the volumes in which there are handwritten copies of minutes and reports from the Secretary to the PMGs and, secondly, the supporting documents to which these minutes and reports make reference. It is also useful to appreciate that there are several sets of volumes running in parallel to the Report series, the contents of which are similar but not identical. At the present time, many of the volumes are housed

in the public room and can be taken from the shelves but the supporting documents must be requested, by reference number, from the staff who will have them brought from hidden lairs in the basement. The indexing of the volumes is inconsistent. Some volumes contain their own index at the front, other indexes are contained in a master volume and some volumes have no index at all.

The two principal series of volumes are Post 42, Postmaster General's 'Reports' and Post 35, Postmaster General's 'Minutes'. These titles are not to be taken literally because Post 42 also includes some minutes from the PMG to the Secretary in its early volumes. Survivors of the actual documents to which reference is made in Post 42 are in Post 40 and, similarly, the documents relating to Post 35 are in Post 30 but far fewer of these still exist. The surviving documents have been separately catalogued in recent years and catalogues for Post 30 provide both "numerical" and "subject" indexing. Post 42 covers the period from 1790, when Freeling was Resident Surveyor rather than Secretary, through to 1841, a few years after his death. Post 35 covers the longer period from 1794 to 1920 but the minutes continue almost to the present day, principally as Post 38 (volumes) and Post 33 (papers). Until the late 1830s, when the parallel Post 42 series begins to fade out, Post 35 concerns mainly secondary personnel matters such as nominations for appointments but it is quite a good place to start research and it has a General Index of all minutes from 1792 to 1838 (Post 35/1-196). A section of the alphabetical index showing Coventry is illustrated below.

174

Loutham

Loutham 1792

Coventry.

1792.

Loutham - proposed extension of the Mail Coach 60.

Loutham - Coach not to be established. 125.

1797.

Loutham - appointment to succeed his Father - 327.

1810.

Deputyship - Loutham appointed - 430.

Loutham - "Loutham & Mail Coach." Vol.

Loutham

1832

1843

Loutham - 1832 1843
Loutham - 1832 1843
Loutham - 1832 1843
Loutham - 1832 1843

1812.

Loutham - Mail Coach discontinued - 241.

1815.

Loutham - Mail Coach Contractors give notice to quit 377.

The volume references at the right hand edge of the page have been lost during photocopying near the spine of the book so the Bromsgrove index has also been reproduced below to show such references more clearly.

<i>Broomsgrave.</i>	
1801.	Vol. 21.
<i>Mr. Gardner appointed on the recommendation</i>	} 391.
<i>of the Specializing Committee -</i>	
<i>Dep't resigns</i>	1840
	522
<i>Dep't competent.</i>	1841
	511
<i>Free delivery extended.</i>	360
<i>Late Dep't applies for a Pension</i>	397
<i>PM applies for increase of salary</i>	395
<i>see Brothwell</i>	1845
<i>Mr. Hadden's application in behalf of Mr. Jones</i>	} 371
<i>2 applied for office of Post</i>	
<i>Broseley. (Sales)</i>	
1810	Vol. 25.
<i>Mr. Wood's application in behalf of Mr. Jones</i>	278.

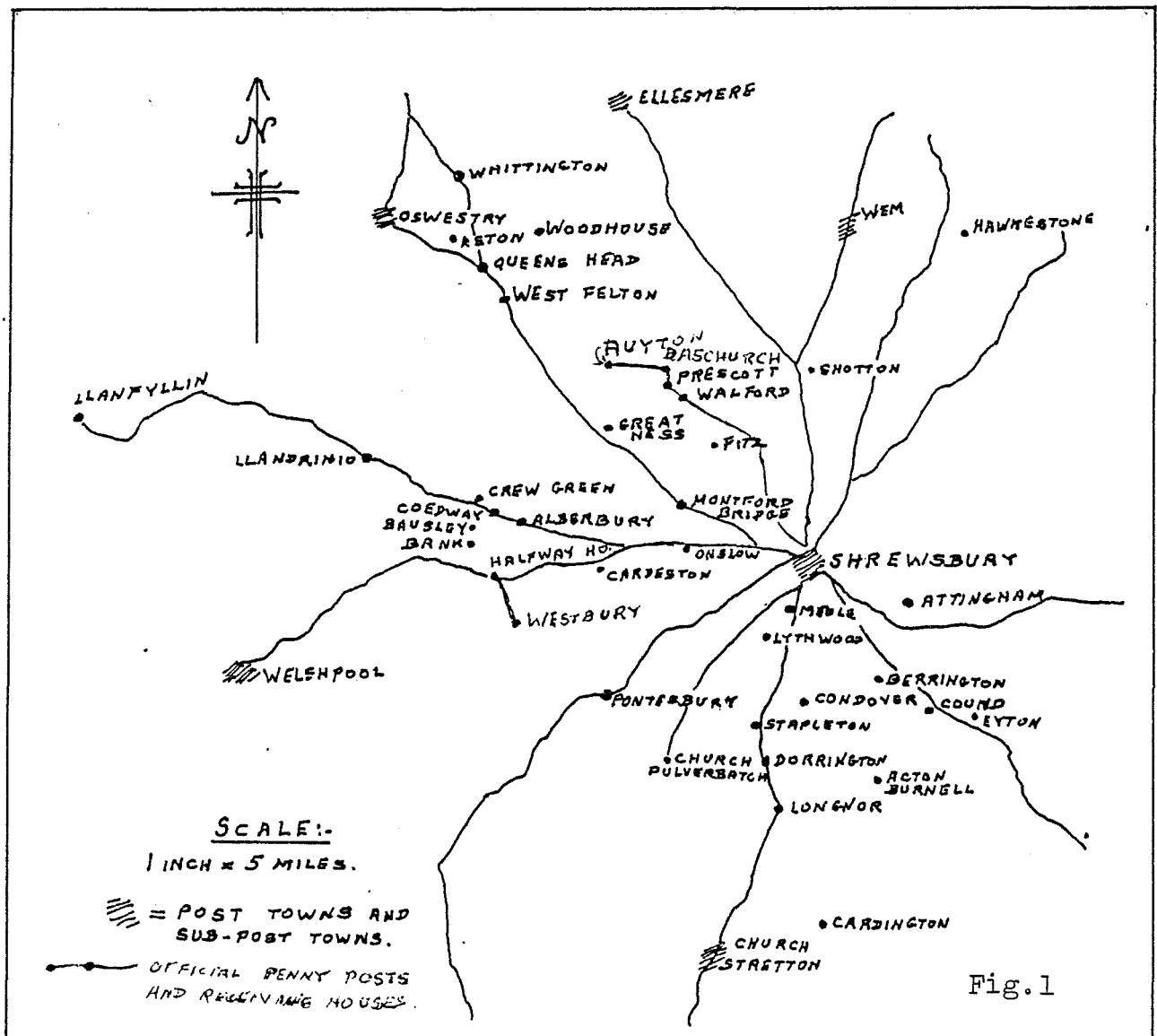
However, the page with the Coventry index illustrates a further useful point; the late addition of indexes for some smaller offices, such as Cowden, in the left hand margin rather than in the centre of the page. References to these small offices can easily be overlooked. Post 35/1-6 consists of volumes of minutes from the PMG to the Secretary, Post 35/7-1698 consists of volumes containing a copy of, or reference to, every minute submitted to the PMG by the Secretary and the PMG's subsequent decision. Post 30, as indicated previously, contains those of the actual papers referred to in Post 35 that have survived and comprises the original minute to the PMG and the letters leading up to and following the Secretary's submission.

Sharp-eyed readers may have noted that the Post 35 General Index begins in 1792 and yet Post 35 itself does not begin until 1794. The trick is to look under Post 42 where, somewhat surprisingly, the early volume references can be found. We will look more closely at Post 42 in part 6 of this series.

(Illustrations by courtesy of Post Office Archives)

THE SHREWSBURY LOCAL POSTSby Denis SaltPart 1 - The Unofficial Services

For many years prior to the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage on 10 January 1840, the villages around Shrewsbury were served by an extensive Local Post, probably largely (but not exclusively) organised by the Shrewsbury Postmaster. Such a Local Post was necessary because the General Post undertook the delivery of the letters to the Post Town only. A number of letters have been recorded marked with a manuscript 'l' indicating a charge of 1d for the delivery of the letter to such a village. No details have been found of the various rides or walks serving these villages but probably each ride or walk centred around one of the roads shown on the map (Figure 1 below).



On the other hand, some of the services may have run to a central village from which the inhabitants of neighbouring hamlets had to collect their

letters or make further delivery arrangements. One such place was Halfway House, an inn on the Shrewsbury to Welshpool road where the mailcoach changed horses. The proprietor of the Halfway House Inn arranged for bags to be made up at Shrewsbury and Welshpool comprising letters addressed to persons residing within a radius of 3 miles of his inn, or sometimes further. The bags were delivered to the innkeeper by the mailcoach and he arranged a daily delivery to Westbury (a village 2 miles from the Halfway House) at a charge of 1d per item. Persons residing elsewhere than Westbury presumably had to collect their mail from the Halfway House Inn. An arrangement similar to that at Halfway House may have existed at West Felton where a number of hamlets, often only one or two miles from Oswestry, received their mail from Shrewsbury, paying 1d per letter for delivery.

Three different categories of letter were handled by the Shrewsbury Local Post:

- (i) Letters posted in Shrewsbury for delivery within the town area, letters between Shrewsbury and one of the villages served (whether posted at Shrewsbury or at the village), and letters from one of the villages served to another such village.
- (ii) Letters reaching Shrewsbury from the General Post for delivery to one of the villages served.
- (iii) Letters collected by the messenger at one of the villages for delivery through the General Post to another Post Town.

Letters in the first category going from one village to another passed through Shrewsbury, even if both villages were on the same route out of Shrewsbury. All recorded letters in the first category are dated between 1794 and 1839 and were stamped with the Shrewsbury town stamp of the day and marked with a manuscript '1' charge. An example of a letter in this category, dated 8 June 1814 from Condover to Shrewsbury, is shown in Fig 2.

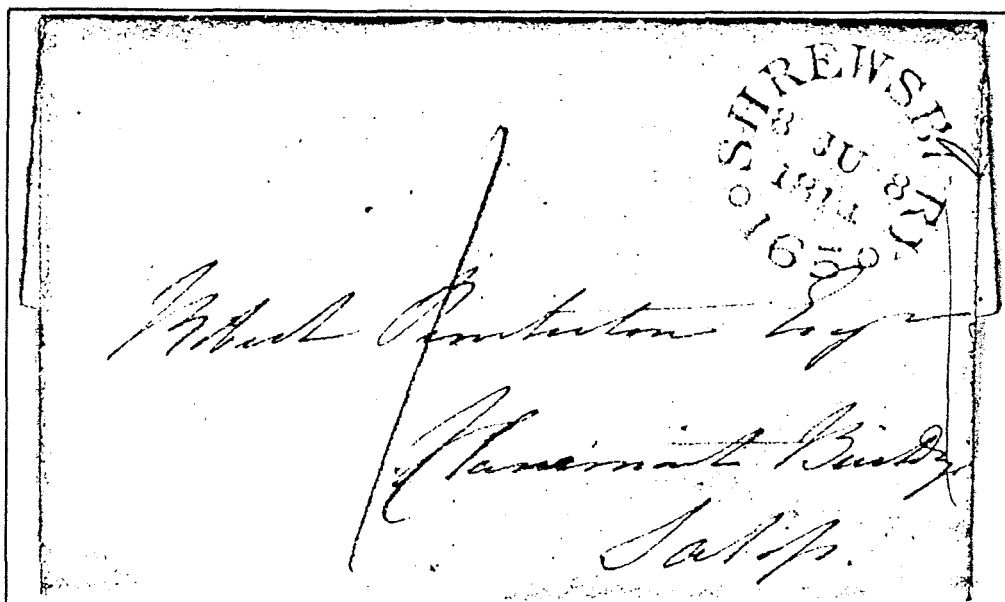


Fig 2.

Letters in the second category had, of course, been stamped with the town stamp of their place of origin and the General Post charge mark but no '1' was added at Shrewsbury, though presumably an extra 1d was charged for delivery. A letter belonging to this category, dated 24 April 1830, posted in London and addressed to Mr Henry Hotchkiss at Stapleton, Salop, is shown in Figure 3.

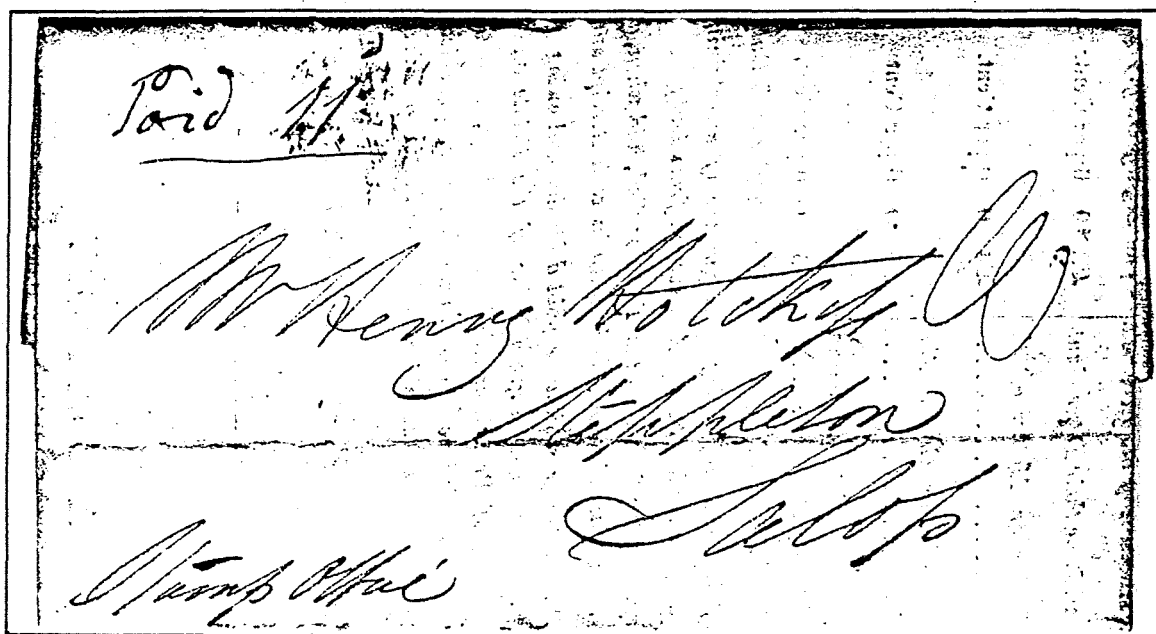


Fig 3.

It will be seen that 'Paid 1ld' has been written in the top left hand corner of the letter. The General Post charge is 10d and it is probable that this note in the top corner was written by Mr Hotchkiss' manservant to call his master's attention to the fact that he had paid 1ld, not 10d, to the messenger.

One of the letters in the second category is dated 27 May 1779 and the rest of those recorded are all dated between 1801 and 1839.

Few letters in the third category have been recorded. They are normally indistinguishable from letters posted in Shrewsbury itself since, as in the case of the second category letters, no manuscript '1' is added and the Shrewsbury town stamp would be struck on such letters anyhow. However, the writer has in his collection one letter dated 24 April 1823 in which it is stated, in the body of the letter, that it is being posted in Acton Burnell because the writer of the letter will have missed the post to London by the time he returns to Shrewsbury. Wherever a local delivery from Shrewsbury was made at an extra charge of 1d, it is safe to assume that a letter could be despatched at the village for a similar extra charge which will have been paid by the sender when handing it in but the letter will not bear any mark to indicate this. The charge for this local delivery or collection, as the case may be, appears always to have been 1d

for each letter.

The writer has recorded 119 letters falling within the first category and 44 in the second category, making a total of 163. From these, it appears that 38 villages were served by this Local Post and there were undoubtedly others of which the writer has not seen any letters. Most of these 38 villages are shown on the Figure 1 sketch map. The writer has also, in his collection, a number of letters written from some of the same villages to Post Towns other than Shrewsbury - the third category of letters referred to. Except for the one dated 24 April 1823 mentioned previously, there is nothing to indicate that these letters were handled by the Shrewsbury Local Post but, as the Shrewsbury Local Post was known to be serving the villages at the time, they almost certainly used it. The Shrewsbury Local Post also served Llandrinio and Llanfyllin, both in Wales and the latter 25 miles from Shrewsbury, from about 1790 to 1808. This appears to have been a special service though run as part of the Local Post.

In the next issue of 'Midland Mail', the second part of this article will continue the story of the Shrewsbury Local Posts by looking at the official Penny Post at Shrewsbury.

(This article is reproduced by kind permission of 'Shropshire Post' where it first appeared in issue No.8, March 1983.)

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THE
LONELINESS
OF A
LONG DISTANCE COLLECTOR
 (with apologies)
 by
D.P. WOODHALL



‘The Mail Coach’

N.Z. REGISTERED
 PUBLICATION

The Editor's mention, in the September 1983 issue of the Bulletin, of what used to be known as the "far-flung outposts of Empire" reminded me that I must be the farthest-flung of all members - in fact, if I take one step backwards, I'll be in the Pacific Ocean. So, what is a member resident in New Zealand doing collecting the postal history of Birmingham? I was born and brought up in Birmingham and lived there, apart from being evacuated to safer parts (Ashby-de-la-Zouch) during the early part of the war and doing my RAF National Service from 1947 to 1949, until I came to New Zealand in 1951, having joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force. I have been here ever since.

I have had a life-long interest in stamps and aviation (actually since about 1936) but I think my first contact with postal history must have been in 1947 when the 29th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain was held in Birmingham and, as a souvenir, issued a set of six cards illustrating various Birmingham postmarks from about 1740 to 1940. However, my interest in things philatelic was somewhat overlaid by my interest in things aeronautical until about 1976 when I decided to concentrate more on stamps and postmarks. At that time, I had accumulated numerous slogan postmarks, some of Birmingham, and I thought it would be a good idea to build on this base. My family correspondence generated quite a few examples and then more material arrived from friends and from what I might describe as 'ordinary' correspondence. This was a good start but it was not long before I decided to try to go backwards in time and I began to look out for Birmingham material locally and, where possible, from dealers in the United Kingdom. I haven't had a great deal of success in locating Birmingham material in this country, which is quite understandable as it is not everybody's subject. In fact, I know of no one else who collects such stuff! However, my contacts in the UK, both with friendly dealers and through correspondence with friends and

members of the Society, have been very fruitful and, while I would never be able to say that I have accumulated a comprehensive collection, at least I have some representative items from different periods and I now know a little more than I did even twelve months ago.

One of the major problems, apart from being unable to acquire suitable material, is my lack of knowledge of even simple aspects of the post in and around Birmingham. I have acquired numerous useful and detailed books during the last two or three years and these have all contributed something but much specific information I have received recently has come from those Society stalwarts, Elizabeth and Eric Lewis, who not only made material available to me but also gave me many background details which I should otherwise have found to be unobtainable. I am currently reading as much about Birmingham in the past as I can. There again, I am limited as to what can be made available through the local library service. In addition, I am certain that membership of the Midland(GB) Postal History Society has been very beneficial to me, especially through the Bulletin which I have found fascinating reading. I was lucky to obtain copies of back issues and I have gained much useful knowledge from them.

I often feel that my main difficulty is not having anyone locally to discuss collecting Birmingham material with. I am sure that all you members able to attend meetings do so not only for what you can see but for what you can hear from other members. My problem is partly offset by correspondence, of course, but it would be nice to talk to someone occasionally. Local collectors, I find, are just not interested. It is reasonable to expect them to be collectors of New Zealand and South Pacific material and many collect 'foreign' material too - but not from Birmingham or the Midlands. I always look forward to receiving letters, especially informative ones, and also to seeing any new books or publications on the subject, including magazine articles.

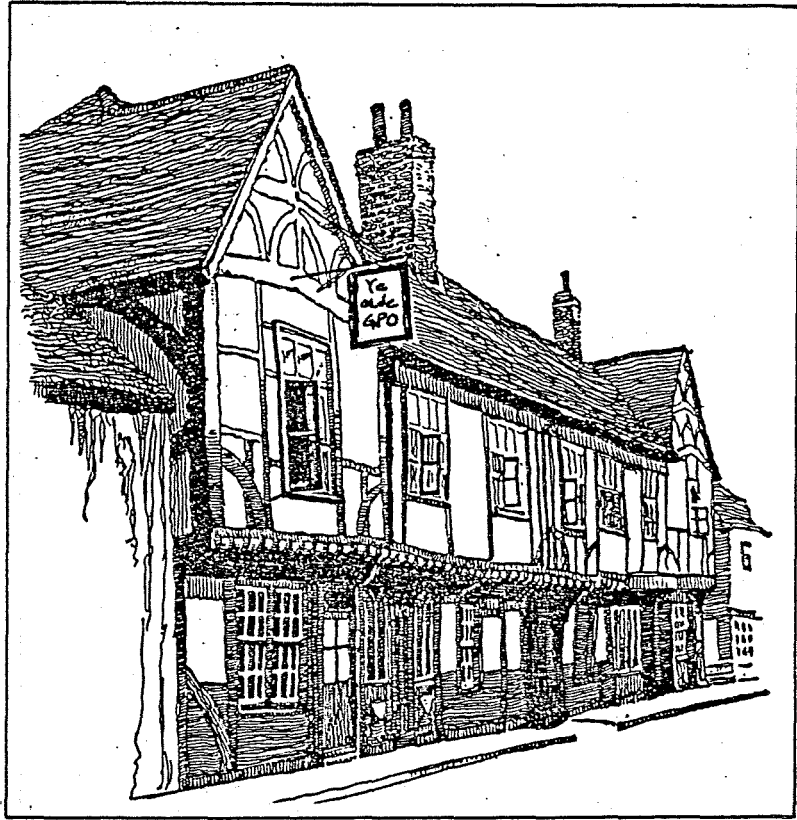
These notes are not so much intended to be a cri-de-coeur for help as a mark of appreciation for the assistance I have received from many members of the Society and, not least, to the Editor for allowing me this space in the Bulletin. Incidentally, if anyone wishes to write at any time, the Editor has my address.

+ + + + +

(Illustrated is the logo of the Postal History Society of NZ)

INNKEEPERS AS POSTMASTERS

Anyone researching their local postal history of the 17th or 18th century is likely to find that one of the innkeepers in the town was also the postmaster. The connection is not unexpected because the first "postmasters" in Elizabethan times were innkeepers who had been given the sole right to supply post-horses for travellers provided that they retained suitable horses for the royal mail. However, the continuation of the link between post offices and inns must have been questioned many times in the late 18th century as a minute of 1792, preserved in Post Office Archives, makes clear. It reads:-



"In answer to Mr Freeling's remark about giving Post Offices to Inn Keepers, the principle of it should be fully understood as the question occurs every day and in the various applications that are made the answer must be given accordingly.

The PMGs have always understood that two material reasons for employing innkeepers are because they do their own Rides and Expresses and keep their own horses and if one is lame another is ready otherwise an extra horse must be hired at a great expense to the Postmaster which neither the allowance for Riding Work or for Expresses will scarcely ever defray. Another reason is that they can do the duty at a smaller salary because they derive so great an advantage from the additional custom it brings to their House. A third very material reason is that the PMGs will thus have an opportunity of employing Mail Coach Contractors as Postmasters which will be an additional inducement to them to conduct themselves well in that business."

If the final point is less than clear, it should be remembered that mailcoaches were not owned by the Post Office but supplied to a contractor who operated them on a particular road and arranged the frequent changes of horses. Innkeepers were in the best position to win mailcoach contracts and their dual role as contractors and postmasters is understandable.

(Extract from Post 42 Volume 12 by courtesy of P.O.Archives.)

Bulletin No.32

The last issue of the Bulletin ('Midland Mail' henceforth) produced more reaction and interesting comment than all the previous issues combined. Unfortunately, there is insufficient space to cover everything below and some points have been held over until February. The Editor gratefully acknowledges contributions from Peter Baxter, Roger Broomfield, Colin Hamer, Arthur Kimberley, Denis Salt, John Soer, Harold Wilson and Mike Young.

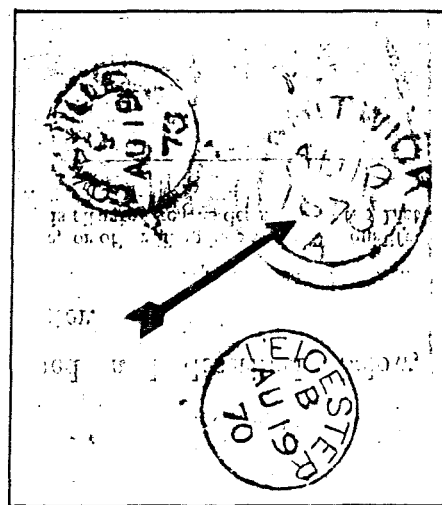
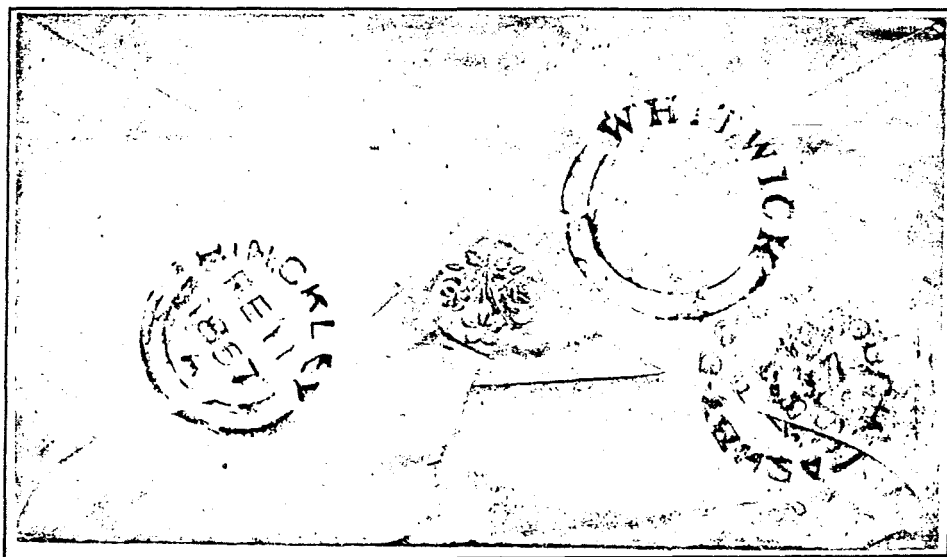
The Railway Postmarks of Rugby & its Stations

Harold Wilson has commented on two marks illustrated in David Hardwick's article. By arrangement between the Post Office and the railway companies, members of the public were able to send a telegram from any railway station with a telegraph office. The two marks shown as Figures 27 and 28 were not, Mr Wilson says, used postally but were, in fact, issued for use on telegram farms.

Late Use of the Double Arc CDS & UDC

Members may remember that the latest known use of a double arc CDS in the Midlands is currently December 1865. John Soer has now provided details of a mark that can beat that date with years to spare.

Whitwick (Leicestershire) was issued with a double arc UDC on 16 Nov 1843. It was issued with a double arc CDS on 15 July 1856. The first surprise is to find the UDC still in use on 10 February 1857, seven months after the issue of the CDS.



The second surprise is to find the Whitwick double arc CDS in use on 19 August 1870. In fact, John thinks it may well have continued in use until 1874 when Whitwick apparently received its first single circle date-stamp.

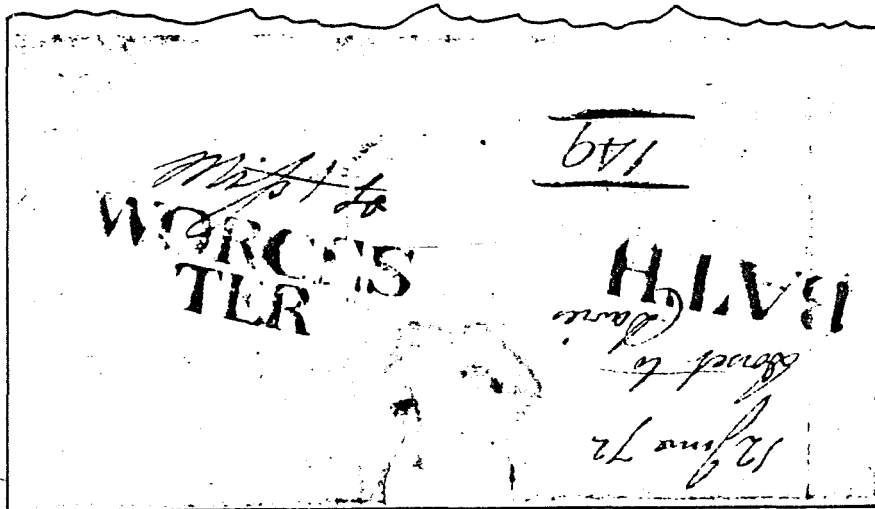
This may well prove to be the final word on late use of a double arc CDS - unless you know better. In the next issue, we will return to the subject of late use of double arc UDCs.

To what Place.	Date when sent.	Stamps.
Leicester	1874 " 4	

A member has asked whether we might also look at the late use of duplex cancels in the Midlands. He has a Ledbury duplex used on 4 October 1921 and he would like to know if anyone has seen a later Ledbury duplex. Well, have you - and have you seen any other Midland duplexes used after 1920 ?

Missent Marks

There has been some controversy over Steph Stobbs' remark at the September meeting that the first official instructions for marking missent letters date from 1793 or thereabouts. Mike Young has provided this lovely example of a manuscript 'Missent to' Worcester from 1772 in way of contradiction.



According to Willcocks, examples of a manuscript 'Missent to' are found as early as the 1680s. The first 'Missent' stamps appeared about a hundred years later. The question is whether anyone can confirm or contradict Steph's date of 'about 1773' for the first official instructions for marking missent letters ?

The Last Penny Post Handstamps

Denis Salt found the item on the Oxley Type 5 or 'village type' penny post handstamps of interest and adds:

"Ironbridge (in Shropshire) had been a receiving house for Shifnal Penny Post since October 1806 and was issued with an Oxley Type 5 stamp on 21 March 1838 (two days after Colonel Maberley's proposal received the PMG's approval). Wenlock and Broseley had also been receiving houses for Shifnal Penny Post since 1806 but no Oxley Type 5 stamps were ever issued to them. However, the circumstances here are unusual.

Ironbridge had operated a penny post only to Shrewsbury (and beyond) since 1 December 1834, using a boxed 'Iron Bridge/ Penny Post' stamp (Oxley Type 3) for this purpose. It also continued to act as a receiving house for Shifnal Penny Post and, in this capacity, continued to use the boxed 'No.1' stamp which it already held. On 3 March 1838, approval was given to Ironbridge being made a Post Town and effect was given to this about the end of March. From then onwards, it operated a full penny post in its own right with receiving houses at Wenlock and Broseley. These places had both been issued with UDCs on 15 February 1838 (replacing their boxed 'No.3' and 'No.2' stamps respectively) and the 'Ironbridge/ Penny Post' stamp (Oxley Type 5) was also struck, at Ironbridge, on letters originating from Wenlock or Broseley. On becoming a Post Town, Ironbridge ceased to be a receiving house for Shifnal Penny Post, of course, and Wenlock and Broseley now operated as receiving houses through Ironbridge Penny Post only. This left Shifnal with a single receiving house at Madeley (which had become a receiving house in January 1837 but had no stamp of its own until issued with a UDC, also on 15 February 1838). Finally, Dawley Green became a receiving house for Shifnal Penny Post in August 1839 and was issued with a 'Dawley Green/ Penny Post' stamp (Oxley Type 5) on 15 November 1839 but the writer has seen no letter with this stamp prior to 10 January 1840, when Uniform Penny Postage was introduced and the penny posts were merged in the General Post.

In spite of the Oxley Type 5 penny post stamp being frequently called 'village type', it was, in fact, issued to any Penny Post Town or receiving house requiring a new Penny Post stamp from 1837 onwards. "

DawleyGreen
PennyPost

A Unique Opportunity to Acquire some Real Postal History

A member has FOR SALE a G.R. wall letter box by W.T.Allen & Co. of London. This box has been fully restored and is in pristine condition. It is complete with letter basket, collection plate and the complete history log book sheet from the G.P.O. giving details of the keys issued, maintenance etc. There is also Proof of Purchase from the G.P.O.

The box is from the Coventry sub post office at Longford and was only recently taken out of service. Hardship forces the sale so the best offer over £40 will secure the item. The restoration alone must be worth every penny of that.

Please phone your offer to 0203-314922.

Books that may interest you - 8.

MESSENGER Charles. 'Terriers in the trenches: Post Office Rifles at war, 1914-18'. Picton Publishing, April 1982. 170 pages, 30 illustrations, 11 maps. £12-95

PEACH Jack. 'UK Machine Marks'. Vera Trinder Ltd, 38 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9EU, 1982. £6-00 plus 50p postage.

PIRIE J.H.Harvey. 'Antarctic Post and Stamps'. Harry Hayes, 48 Trafalgar Street, Batley WF17 7HA, Sept 1982. 72 pages, 47 illustrations. £5-00

SEDGEWICK W. and WARD R. 'Rural Post Service over Three Centuries'. Yorkshire Postal History Society, 48 Banner Cross Road, Eccleshall, Sheffield S11 9HR, Oct 1982. 28 pages, 6 illus., paperback. 75p.

SINFIELD Lt Cdr C.A. 'The Post in Portsmouth'. Portsmouth and District Philatelic Society, 96 Marmion Road, Southsea, Hants PO5 2BB. 78 pages, heavily illustrated. £4-50 (or £5-00 by post).

+ + + + +

GREAT BRITAIN POSTAL HISTORY

DO YOU COLLECT COVERS? My List of GB Cover Material from 1840 onwards contains many interesting and unusual items — County Material, Difficult Values, Unusual Rates, Elusive FDC's. SAE for latest copy, Wants List for specific items or areas welcomed.



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Tailpiece

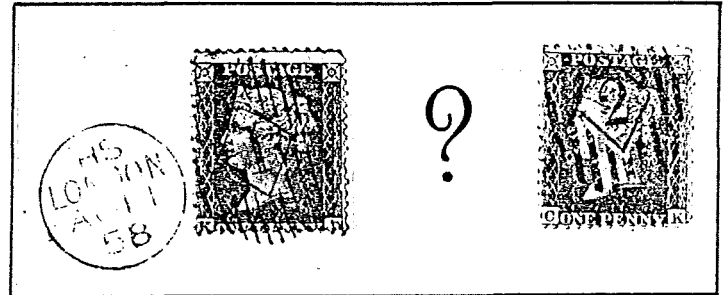
How often is postal history given a mention by the sporting press ?
Our grateful thanks to the Birmingham Sports Argus.

SPORTS ARGUS, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1983

Rideout is right on the mark



MATCH ACTION
by Martin Swain

Undated Circular Marks

Members of remarkable memory may recall that, following a meeting at the beginning of the 1982/83 season, it was decided to circulate copies of a questionnaire on which members would be asked to provide details of all the Undated Circular Marks of the Midland counties known to them. The compilation and issue of the questionnaire has been delayed for all manner of improbable reasons but it is confidently expected that you will receive a copy with the next 'Midland Mail'. And when will that be ? Read on ...

The Next 'Midland Mail'

The 'Bulletin' is dead; long live the 'Midland Mail'. The next issue will appear on 21st February with its new title page. Behind the flashy cover, Denis Salt will write about the Official Penny Post at Shrewsbury and the editor will conclude his lengthy visit to Post Office Archives. There will be a follow-up to the story of those two Cradleys and, from Staffordshire, the strange tale of the 'Brierley Hill Anomaly'. Add to that the usual reports and the Society Auction list and it all adds up to another bumper issue. There's more in the 'Midland Mail' - much more !

Hon. Editor: John Calladine, Dunley House, Cranham. Gloucester

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