

MIDLAND MAIL

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



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Number 116, September 2000

"The Posts in the Centre of the Kingdom, comprising Newark, Nottingham, Derby, Lichfield with the 30 or 40 Miles South and North, and also to the Eastward, are of the most difficult nature and of the most refined Complexity."

So wrote Freeling in April 1836. We must wait until later in the season to see the context in which this was written but it will serve for the moment to remind us at the start of another season how fascinating is the postal history of the Midland Counties. It seems unlikely that a ride was introduced from Stafford to Lichfield in order that Sheffield should receive its mail a little earlier in the day. But just read on to find out why this was so.

May I also make the perennial plea of all editors for material for this journal. Elsewhere in this issue are two items which consist of a few lines about an interesting cover. I am sure that all members must have covers in their collection which would be of interest to others and about which they could write a few lines.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our new season will start with a whole-day meeting on **16th September** at **Northampton** on the theme 'The 1900's have passed'. The Northamptonshire Philatelic Society will join us for this meeting. If you have not returned the booking form to Derek Smeathers it would be appreciated if you would do so as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can ring Derek on **01604-406192**.

On **21st October** we meet at Carrs Lane, Birmingham when John Calladine and Chris Jackson will display 'Stourbridge' and 'Evesham' respectively, starting at 1.30 p.m..

Our meeting on **4th November** will be held in **Warwick** at the premises of Warwick & Warwick, starting at 1.30 p.m. Members are invited to bring displays of maps and related materials. The meeting will be preceded at 11 a.m. by a committee meeting.

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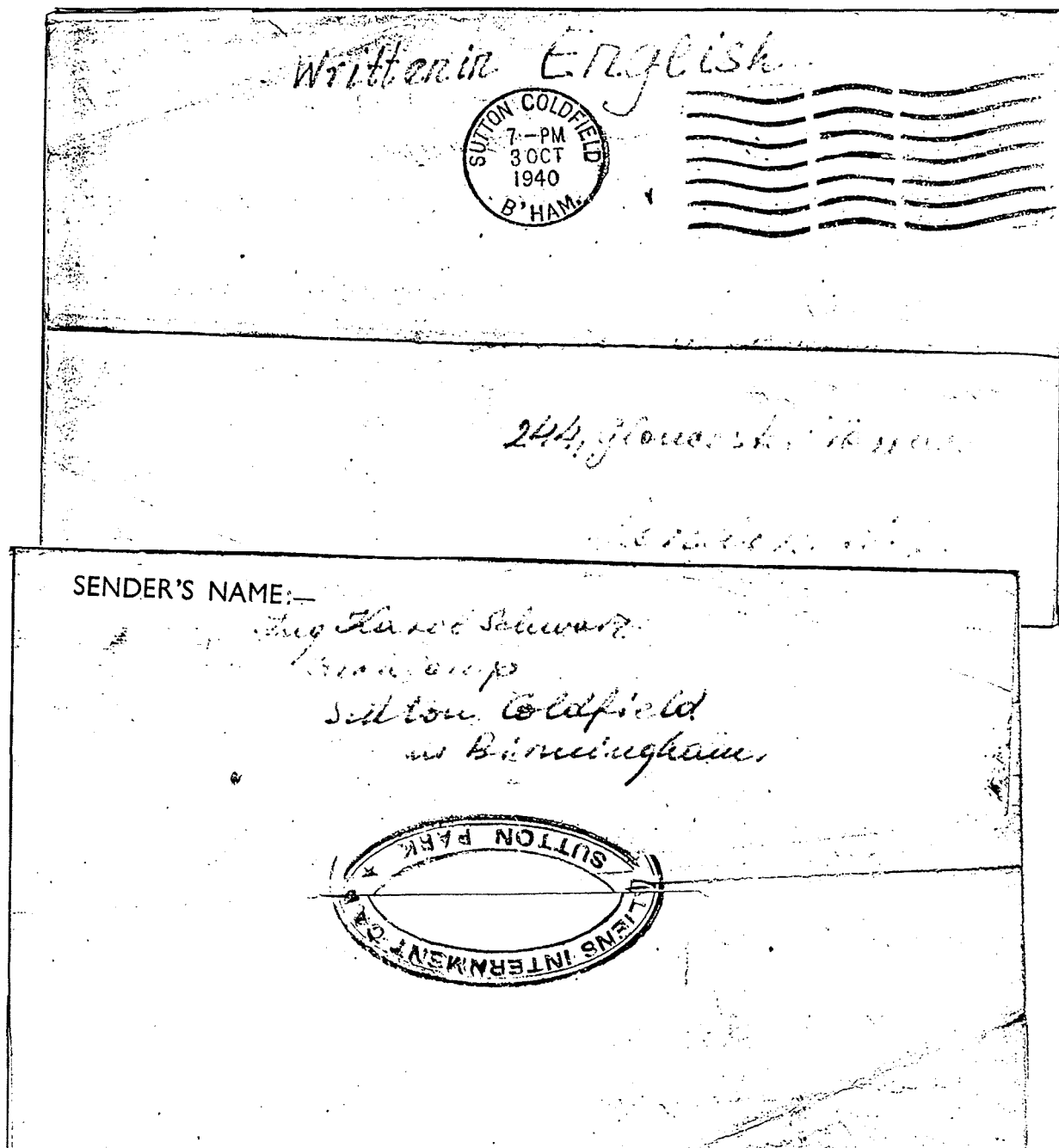
HELP WANTED

I have received a letter from Richard Beith, a member of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, who is writing a monograph on the postal history of the Free Czechoslovak Forces in the UK during WWII. In particular, he asks if anyone has information (either on the postal history or more general information) on the Sutton Coldfield Internment Camp which must have been operational in August-October 1940.

Richard has two lettersheets posted from this camp, probably from a Czechoslovak internee who may have been one of the left-wing Czechoslovak soldiers who had fought for the republic in the Spanish Civil War and subsequently had been recruited out of the refugee camps in southern France to join the Free Czechoslovak Army. When they reached the UK about five-hundred were interned at the end of July 1940 as they did not want to continue the fight against Germany, the Russian-German pact being operational at the time. After the German attack on Russia, most went back into the army.

If you can provide any information on the camp at Sutton Coldfield, please let me know and I will forward it to Richard Beith.

A lettersheet with the machine cancel of Sutton Coldfield and the oval cachet 'ALIENS INTERNMENT CAMP * SUTTON PARK'. A further item (not shown here) has only an 'OFFICIAL PAID' single circle on the address side.



[Ref: Post 40/156/1833]

THE BIRMINGHAM-LEAMINGTON MAILCOACH

In March 1833, Mr Churchill wrote to Freeling saying that he had completed the arrangements necessitated by the introduction of a mailcoach between Birmingham and Leamington. He went on to outline the benefits that this new coach afforded to the area: the saving of a day in the communication of Warwick and Leamington with the North and West of England; three more hours for Kenilworth to answer London letters by altering the time of the Coventry horse post; and unspecified benefits to the penny posts at Solihull and Knowle. At Leamington, the letters from Birmingham and the North were delivered with those from Oxford and Cheltenham etc. at 10 a.m. instead of the following evening at about 10 p.m., so saving a whole day and allowing the withdrawal of the late evening delivery apart from a few letters which arrived by the evening mail and could be called for at the office.

Mr Churchill went on to say that had he been aware of the establishment of the mailcoach before it had actually happened [An astonishing statement but, as we shall see, he was not the only surveyor who was not informed about possible changes.], he would have suggested that instead of leaving Leamington at 4.25 p.m., the mailcoach could have been dispatched at 3.35 p.m. so as to arrive in Birmingham in time for the evening delivery. Although the arrival in Birmingham at 7 p.m. was in time for the Liverpool, Manchester and Bristol mailcoaches, it was too late for the delivery of the town letters which had to remain in the office until the following morning. Also a 3.25 dispatch would have saved £20 p.a. by making redundant the Warwick and Leamington section of the ride from Coventry.

When the proprietor of the Warwick Advertiser complained that his paper was not delivered in Birmingham until the morning after its dispatch, Freeling readily consented to the earlier departure at 3.25 p.m.

[Refs: Post 40/259/1833 and 40/457/1833]

MORE ON BUXTON'S MAIL

Readers might like to refer to the following MM101/14, 112/17, 113/13 before reading this piece.

On 24th March 1833, Mr Karstadt wrote that the contractors for the mailcoach from Manchester to Buxton via Stockport and Chapel-en-le-Frith had given notice of their intention to quit on 5th April.

Initially, he suggested that the mailcoach should be replaced by a horsepost from Macclesfield to fit in with an accelerated London-Manchester mailcoach. However, that proposed acceleration was abandoned.

So, on 13th April, Mr Karstadt proposed the introduction a horsepost on virtually the same route as the mailcoach. The mailcoach had left Manchester at 3 p.m. so as to reach Stockport in time to take up the London letters etc. for Buxton, Tideswell, and Chapel-en-le-Frith as soon as they had been sorted. This sorting took half-an-hour and as the passengers could not be detained for that length of time, the mail was kept back so as to reach Stockport well after the arrival of the mailcoach from London, so delaying the delivery at Stockport.

Instead, the ride was to leave Manchester at 1 p.m. with the letters brought by the mails from Chester and Liverpool (with Dublin), and arrive in Stockport before the London mailcoach so the letters could be ready for delivery from London. It was to wait in Stockport until the mail brought by the London coach was ready and then take the direct rode to Buxton, a messenger meeting it at Whaley Bridge to take the bag for Chapel-en-le-Frith. The reason for not sending the ride through Chapel, a detour of nearly three miles, was so as not to delay the arrival at Buxton was to be at 5 p.m., over an hour earlier than the mailcoach.

The return from Buxton was to be at 5 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. (The earliest time at which passengers could have been expected.). This would ensure that the Buxton letters would arrive in Manchester in time for the morning delivery along with those from the Birmingham and York mailcoaches.

Mr Karstadt said that the London letters could have been in Buxton by 3 p.m. if sent by an express from Leek. However that ride had not been used for two or three years as the London letters amounted to only half of those coming through Manchester.

An express ride was used to carry the bags from Manchester in the time between the withdrawal of the coach and the introduction of the new ride.

[Ref: Post 40/293/1833]

There will be more on Buxton in the next issue.

AN ACCELERATION OF THE BRISTOL-BIRMINGHAM MAILCOACH

In the spring of 1833 it was arranged for this mailcoach to leave Bristol at earlier time. Although the various reports do not state the precise time, it does appear that the mailcoach was leaving Bristol at least half-an-hour earlier than it had done before. In Mr Rideout's district this affected the town of Cheltenham and the Worcester to Wolverhampton road.

Before the acceleration of the mailcoach a ride left Gloucester at 5 a.m. and at 6.20 p.m. reached Cheltenham from where it returned at 9.30 p.m., arriving in Gloucester at 10.50 p.m. But, after the acceleration, the coach arrived in Gloucester at 10.30 p.m. So, in order to maintain the connection it was necessary for the ride to leave Cheltenham at 9 p.m., depriving the inhabitants of thirty minutes to answer their letters for the North and the West.

After he had considered a number of alternatives, Mr Rideout proposed that a ride should run to Cheltenham from Tewkesbury instead of from Gloucester. This ride was to leave Tewkesbury at 1 a.m., reach Cheltenham at 2.15 a.m., return at 9.30 p.m. and reach Tewkesbury at 10.40 p.m. in time for the mailcoach.

As the distance covered by this ride was 8 miles 5 furlongs compared with 9 miles 4 furlongs for the Gloucester ride it was possible to save £15.15.0.

Before reading the next part members may wish to refer to articles in MM107/19, 108/18 and 110/12.

Mr Rideout explained that the line between Worcester and Wolverhampton was covered by two horseposts - one from Worcester through Stourport to Kidderminster, the other from Wolverhampton through Bewdley to Kidderminster. Also there was a daily post from Bewdley to Kidderminster.

As the ride, which departed from Worcester at 2.15 a.m. and arrived in Wolverhampton at 7 a.m., carried bags made up at Bristol, Dursley, Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury for the towns on the line, it could not leave Worcester until after the arrival of the mailcoach from Bristol. However, the ride also took up at Stourport, Bewdley, Kidderminster, Stourbridge and Dudley bags which were forwarded from Wolverhampton by the Birmingham to Manchester mailcoach.

Mr Rideout pointed out that as a consequence of the alteration in the times of the mailcoaches there was not enough time for the ride to cover the thirty-five miles, leaving Worcester after the arrival of the mail from Bristol at 1.30 a.m. and arrive in Wolverhampton in time for the Manchester mailcoach at 5.30 a.m.

Instead, Mr Rideout proposed to dispatch a ride from Worcester at 1.35 a.m. for Stourbridge (arrive 5 a.m.) passing through Bewdley and Kidderminster. Another was to start from Stourport at 1.30 a.m. for Wolverhampton (arrive 5 a.m.) calling at Bewdley, Kidderminster, Stourbridge and Dudley. The first post was to return from Stourbridge at 3 p.m. and arrive in Worcester at 7 p.m. The second was to leave Wolverhampton at 8.15 a.m. as before and reach Dudley in time for the down London mail (the Birmingham to Stourport mailcoach).

These changes made redundant the footpost between Bewdley and Kidderminster. They also involved an increase in expense of £4 p.a.

Mr Rideout ended his report of 11th April:

"I was in hope I should have made the proposed alteration in the rides between Worcester & Wolverhampton without any increased expense whatever & if I had had only three days notice of the alteration I think I should have succeeded. It was only on the morning of the 3rd inst. I was informed that the time of the mails arrival [?] was to be changed on that night. Consequently I was compelled to give orders for the rides to be altered so as to meet the mails without coming to any arrangement with respect to the allowances. I have also to regret that I was compelled to send one of my orders by express. Had I not done so the whole of the Cheltenham Bags to the North & West must have been delayed 24 hours."

So we have instances in which two surveyors were not informed about changes to the mailcoach system until the very last moment. One wonders if this was deliberate policy on the part of the Mailcoach Department or an oversight caused by pressure of work. Possibly it was the latter for we have seen in The Surveyors' Journals a number of instances where Mr Johnson, the Superintendent of Mailcoaches, worked closely with the surveyors.

[Ref: Post 40/276/1833 and 40/278/1833]

AN ACCELERATION OF THE LONDON-LEEDS MAILCOACH AND RELATED MATTERS

Some of the inhabitants of Sheffield asked in the spring of 1833 for an earlier arrival of the mailcoaches from London and Birmingham. In reply, Freeling said that while it was practicable to bring forward by half-an-hour the arrival in Sheffield of the mailcoach from London, the coach from Birmingham already travelled so fast that it was not possible to consider any further acceleration. So, if the people of Sheffield were content to have an earlier delivery of their London letters and wait for those brought by the coach from Birmingham to be included in the second delivery, he would suggest that the P.M.G. should authorise the alteration.

Then, in a later report, Mr Johnson said that the earlier arrival in Birmingham of the mailcoach from Bristol meant that the contractors for the Birmingham to Sheffield coach were willing to leave Birmingham at 5.30 a.m. and travel at a greater speed for a payment of an extra penny per mile. He suggested that the matter be referred to Mr Karstadt.

Mr Karstadt pointed out that if the coach to Sheffield passed through Derby before that to Manchester, all the letters from the Leicester line of road for the towns between Derby and Leeds would be delayed. Letters put in at Leicester overnight and sent off early in the morning reached the whole line to Leeds that day, arriving in Leeds at 6.45 p.m. Such letters if sent round via Manchester would arrive at Leeds in the night. However, he pointed out, Leicester did have another connection with the Leeds line by Melton Mowbray at 2 p.m. He went on to say that he was not aware of the extent of the intended accelerations but if it did not exceed an hour (9.35 a.m. instead of 10.35 a.m.) it could be arranged at Derby without disturbing other circulations. In fact it would be of benefit for it would make possible an earlier delivery in the town and an earlier dispatch of the ride to Bakewell and Wirksworth as well as that to Nottingham with letters from the west.

Another drawback mentioned by Mr Karstadt was that the Birmingham-Sheffield coach would pass through Lichfield before the arrival of the branch mailcoach from Wolverhampton. He suggested that this could be overcome by sending a ride from Stafford to Lichfield but Mr Churchill was better qualified to answer that.

Mr Churchill said that the main function of the Wolverhampton to Lichfield coach was to take letters from the Liverpool and Manchester lines [to Birmingham] for places such as Burton-on-Trent, Derby and Nottingham which averaged over two hundred a day. These letters reached Wolverhampton at 5 a.m. and were sent in the branch mailcoach to Lichfield where they arrived at 7.30 a.m. to be taken on by the Birmingham-Sheffield mailcoach at 7.44 a.m. Therefore any acceleration of the coach to Sheffield would make it impossible to maintain this connection.

He agreed with Mr Karstadt that the solution was to put on a ride from Stafford to Lichfield. The Liverpool-Birmingham mailcoach reached Stafford soon after 3 a.m. so the letters could be sorted and forwarded by a ride to Lichfield where they would arrive at about 6 a.m. This would place the communication from Manchester and Liverpool with Derby and Nottingham etc. on a more secure basis as the connection at Lichfield often failed.

Mr Churchill finished by asking if the Wolverhampton-Lichfield mailcoach could be withdrawn as, although it did provide a direct route between Wolverhampton and the Sheffield line of road, such letters could be sent through Stafford but would be subject to a considerable delay.

Freeling's response was that since the coach did not need to wait for that from Liverpool it could leave Wolverhampton earlier than 5.30 a.m. If the contractor was not willing to do this it would be replaced by a ride. The coach continued to run until August 1834.

[Ref: Post 40/510/1833]

THE MANSFIELD-NOTTINGHAM POST

The introduction of this post was also a result of the acceleration of the Leeds mailcoach.

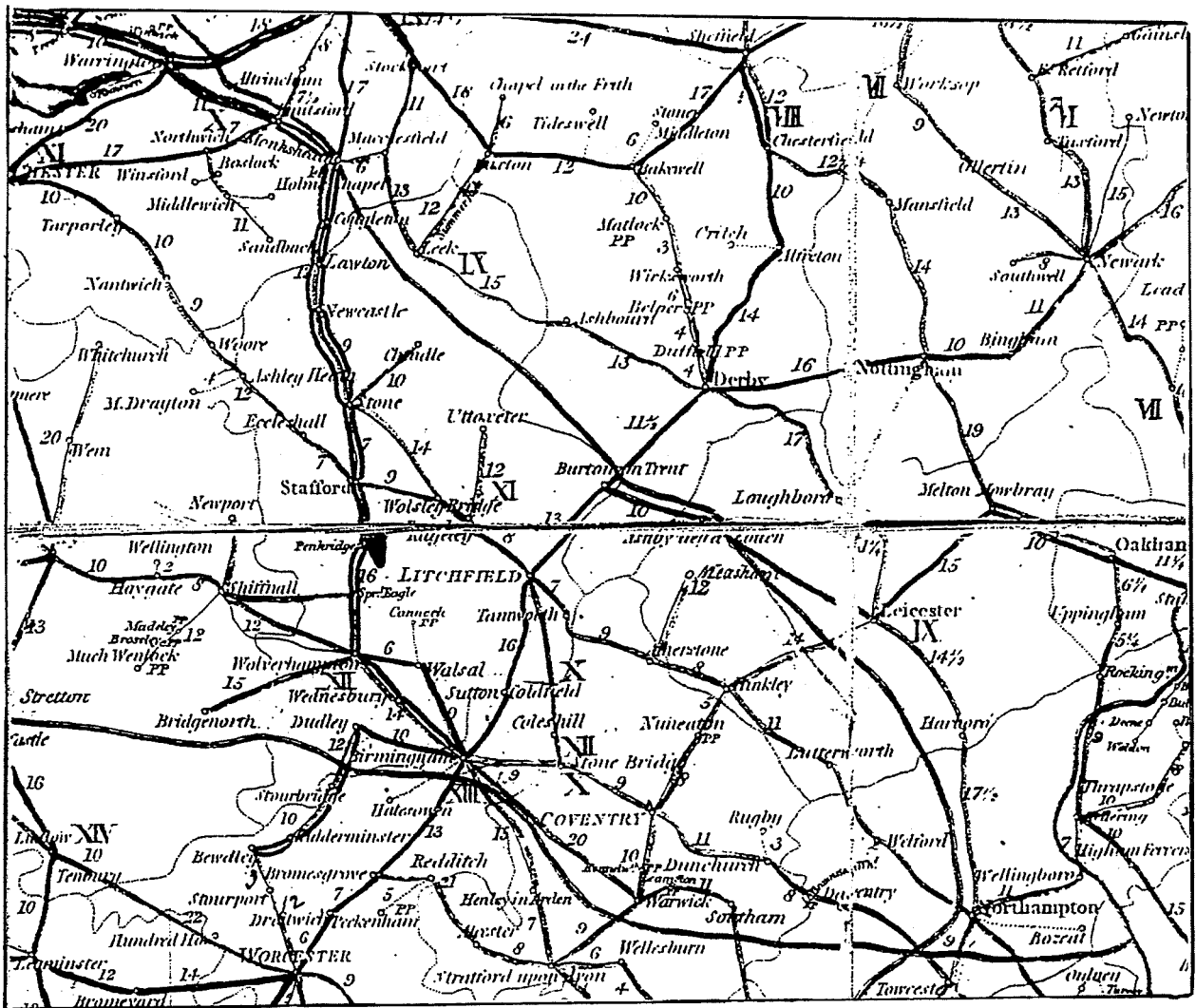
It will be recalled that this coach was one of those scheduled to arrive in London at night so as to enable the towns in Yorkshire such as Leeds to gain a day in the transmission of their foreign letters. However, this had the effect of curtailing the time for replying to London letters at a number of towns. For instance at Melton Mowbray an armed ride to Leicester at 3.20 p.m., and a ride left Nottingham at 3.30 p.m. (The up mailcoach left at 6 a.m.) for Loughborough from where the London letters were taken by the up Manchester mailcoach.

A few years before the people of Mansfield had asked for a post to Nottingham to connect with that to Loughborough but there was no a sufficiently large interval between the arrival of the mailcoach from London and the time at which the ride would have had to leave for Nottingham to give any practicable advantage.

The acceleration of the Leeds mailcoach described in the previous article altered matters for the mailcoach from London was now due in Mansfield at 10.45 a.m., so a ride to Nottingham leaving at 1 p.m. would allow two hours for answers to be written. Thus the replies would be received in London on the following morning instead of waiting for the up mailcoach at 4 a.m. the next day and not being delivered until the day after that.

Mr Karstadt said that he would have been reluctant to recommend the introduction of a ride to Nottingham as the cost for the fourteen miles would have been at least £112 p.a. while the London letters amounted to £319 p.a., but the return ride would be very advantageous. Since the acceleration of the mailcoach, the bye-letters from the Leicester line were delayed; the bye-letters from Birmingham and "that extensive line" along with those from Derby remained in Chesterfield from noon until the next morning. All these letters plus those from Manchester and Liverpool could be brought into Mansfield between 5 and 6 p.m. by the return ride.

[Ref: Post 40/748/1833]



WITHDRAWAL OF SOME MAILCOACHES IN 1812

In July 1812, an official at the Treasury wrote to the Postmasters General:

"The Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury having taken into consideration a Bill lately pending in the House of Commons, and intended to be again brought into Parliament for a repealing the Exemption from TurnpikeTolls enjoyed by Coaches carrying the Mail by virtue of the Act of Geo: 3Cap57, I have it in command to request your Lordships will take into your serious consideration the Complaints made in several parts of the Country of the Injury sustained by certain Turnpike Trusts in consequence of the Establishment of Mail Coaches upon the Roads under your management, and whether it may not be advisable in certain Cases that the Mail Coaches shall be discontinued on the Expiation of any existing contract, and the Mail provided for by other means in those Cases, particularly in which the Mail is now conveyed by a heavy coach, or whether in cases in which this may not be practicable without material inconvenience to the Service of your Department, some other means may not be found of remedying any real grievance which may exist."

[Yes, that is one sentence of about 180 words!]

In the last part of their reply two weeks later, Earls Sandwich and Chichester wrote:

"We beg to assure your Lordships of our readiness to attend to any Complaints, and that the subject has been for a length of time under our consideration, more particularly in regard to the cases where the Mail is conveyed by a heavy Coach - there are no traces in this Department of any complaint of Injury sustained by Turnpike Trusts, in consequence of the Establishment of Mail Coaches."

"In justice to the whole consideration we think it necessary to add that the Establishment of Mail Coaches has been in general the consequence of earnest Solicitation from the local interests, both landed and commercial, and that in many cases we have been under the necessity of refusing them."

The Bill was withdrawn but as a part of the compromise negotiated by Vansittart, the Chancellor of the Exchequer some mailcoaches had to be withdrawn.

In December 1812, Freeling wrote to Vansittart that in consequence of the letter of 24th July from the Treasury the following mailcoaches had been withdrawn: Warwick & Coventry, Shrewsbury & Aberystwyth, Ludlow & Aberystwyth, Dorchester & Stroudwater, Edinburgh & Dalkeith, Edinburgh & Musselburgh, and Chichester & Godalming. Also notice to quit had been served on a number of others: Worcester & Hereford, Gloucester & Hereford, Hereford & Brecon, Plymouth & Tavistock, and Alton & Gosport. In addition a few were listed which the Post Office had considered withdrawing but felt that there were good reasons why they should be retained. Only one of these was in the Midlands - that running between Leicester & Coventry which Freeling said had been established about eighteen months before and was "a material chain of correspondence."

Freeling ended his reply:

"Further that the Duke of Beaufort ... and many respectable Personages have anxiously applied to the Postmasters General that the Stroudwater Mail Coach may be reestablished, and the precise object of their application is that the mail may be sent by the Heavy Coach now travelling on that Road."

"Their Lordships, the Postmasters General also direct me to state that they have received several other Petitions within the last 12 months past for the Establishment of Mail Coaches to which they could give no encouragement under the circumstances which have attached to the whole Mail Coach System during that Period."

The background to this is that a number of the turnpike trusts were in financial difficulties and the exemption from tolls granted to the mailcoaches was estimated to be worth about £5000 p.a. Also, in Ireland the mailcoaches were not exempt from tolls. An account was kept of all the tolls leviable and this was paid quarterly by the Post Office authorities in Dublin. As the Exchequer used the Post Office as a source of Revenue one wonders how committed Vansittart was to their having to pay tolls.

Finally, the papers quoted above turn up in a report of 1833 for Freeling who, in recommending to the Postmaster General that a request that a newly introduced stagecoach should be used to carry mail between Liverpool and Holywell and Neston should be turned down, mentioned that "short" mailcoaches were objectionable as they caused a grievance to the turnpike trustees by their exemption from tolls, and enclosed the papers from 1812, pointing out that as a result of that correspondence many "short" mailcoaches had been withdrawn. He added that such mailcoaches had always been a source of trouble and they had acted upon the principle of not encouraging their establishment except in urgent cases.

[Refs: Post 40/432/1833. Joyce - *History of The Post Office* pages 352 to 356, (1893).].

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A FURTHER LOOK AT SIX-DAY POSTS

by Christopher Beaver

Here are two of the lists used in the tabulation of towns in the Midlands having communication with London six times a week in the period 1741-1782 (MM105/4f), but not previously reproduced in full.

The first, of 1748, is of particular relevance to the Midlands because among the new provisions to begin at Christmas (the Day itself was a Sunday) the letters "between London and Chipping Norton, Evesham, Worcester, Bromsgrove and Birmingham with the intermediate places ... on the three additional Post Days shall be conveyed through Oxford." So a lengthy notice repeatedly published in the London Gazette from 17th December expresses it. What this announcement calls the 'additional Post Days' were referred to in the Inland Office as the Bye Nights and on the British Library map of c1770 termed the Bye-Days.

The second list is of 1770 and therefore the one to compare in detail with that map in order to determine as clearly as possible by what routes each place listed actually sent and received its mail to and from London - on the bye-days as well as the post days ('General Days' they are called on the map.) It will be seen that this list is dated 5th July, but there was no notice to clarify what was new or recent then. That may be discerned by a comparison of it with the similar list of just two years earlier (see MM58/9). That one is actually 6th September 1768, but it followed the major alterations announced in the London Gazette in the June: "a Post six times a week instead of three as at present between England and Ireland both by way of Holyhead and Portpatrick" which included direct posts (instead of through London) between "many Commercial Parts in both Kingdoms." The new arrangements were all to commence on 6th July.

The sole town on the 1768 list omitted from the 1770 one is Oakingham [Wokingham], nor is it shown as sixday on the map. Forty-eight additional places having six-day posts with London include six which are not shown at all on the map, all the six surely having no more than subordinate offices. A further six do not on the map have a London post on the bye-days. This suggests both that the additional bye-day mails were not introduced simultaneously and that the 1770 list was issued a little later than the map was prepared. Since the map has no obvious alterations it can hardly have been in use for any length of time.

Here then arranged in a geographical sequence, are the additional places on the 1770 list. Those which do not appear on the map are put within (), and those shown as having communication with London on General Days only are indicated by an *. Fareham and Gosport have also a crosspost connection to Portsmouth and to Winchester, Salisbury and beyond.

(Footscray)	Godstone
Uckfield	Fareham*
Gosport*	Alresford
Rumsey	(Twickenham*)
(Hampton Court*)	Hounslow
Maidenhead	Newbury
Hungerford*	Marlborough*
Calne*	Chippenham*
Frome	Plympton
(West Wickham*)	Tetsworth
Ross	Monmouth
Enstone	
Halesowen	Stourbridge
Kidderminster	Bewdley
Lichfield	Newcastle under Line
(Burselem)	Holms Chaple
Knutsford	Congleton
Macclesfield	Market Harborough
Burton-on-Trent	Hatfield
Welwyn	Stevenage
Hitchin	Biggleswade
Swaffham	Braintree
(Bocking)	Halstead
Sudbury	Manningtree
Harwich	

List of 25th December 1748

General Post-Office.
By Order of the Postmaster-General, Bags for the following
Towns are dispatched from this Office every Night, and the
Letters delivered in Return every Day, (Sundays excepted)

Abingdon	Enfield	Littleton in	Thame
Attleborough	Essex in Surrey	Middlesex	Thanet
in Norfolk	Epsom	Lowell	Thames Ditton
Bath	Evesham	Lynn	in Surrey
Boltonfield	Exeter	Maidston	Tethford
Beebles	Farrington	Manningtree	Teddington
Birmingham	Faversham	Moulsey in	Tiverton
Bridgewater	Graveland	Surrey	Twickenham
Bristol	Grays	Newmarket	Uxbridge
Bromsgrove	Gerards Cross	Norwich	Walsall
Burntwood	Gloucester	Oxford	Walton on
Bury St. Ed-	Guildford	Petersham	Thames
monds	Hertford	Portsmouth	Wells
Cambridge	Hampton Court	Queenborough	Wellington
Campton	Hampton Town	Richmond in	Weybridge in
Canterbury	Hanworth in	Surrey	Windsor
Claremont	Middlesex	Ripley	Wingham in
Chatham	Hamin Surrey	Rochefer	Winton in
Chelmsford	Hain wick in	Royston	Kent
Chertsey in	Surrey	Rumford	Windham in
Surrey	Harwich	Sandwich	Norfolk
Chipping-Nor-	High Wickham	Saxmundham	Witham
ton	Ingateston	Sittingbourn	Witton in Mid-
Cirencester	Ilseworth	Shepperton in	dlesex
Colchester	Ipswich	Middlesex	Worcester
Croydon	Kilvedon	Stoke in Norfolk	Wolverhampton
Cobham	Kingston	Southall	ton
Darling	Kingston Wick	Sunbury in	Yarmouth
Dartford	Lalam in Mid-	Middlesex	
Deal	dlesex	Taunton	
Dover	Leatherhead		

N. B. Tunbridge Bag goes every Night from Midsummer to Michaelmas only

Door-keeper, R. Lumley, 50d.
Messenger, William Wagg, 50d.
Collector of London Port,
John Cook, 70d.
Assistants Searchers,
Joseph H. Steer, 150d. and
Surveyors, 60d. each.
S. Warren, AT. Sumpter, 50d.
Barman, J. Lock, J. Hill, 30d.
Porter, William Putts, 30d.
Watchmen, 25d. each.
John Walker, 40d. each.

GENERAL POST OFFICE

27 Dec: 1860. *Lombard-Street.*
Comptroller of the Bye-Nights,
Wm. Boulton, Esq;
Clerks of the Roads,
Chester, Ch. Creswell, 601
Assist. Tho. Bailey, 601
North, William Boulton, 601
Assistant, Wm. Wildman, 601
West, Jacob Shann, 601
Assist. Wm. Skule, 601
Bristol, Ed. Comber, 601
Assist. Edm. Barnes, 601
Yarmouth, John Briggs, 601
Assistant, John Ridley, 601
Kent, John Webb, 601
Assistant, Wm. Rowe, 601
Clerk of the Bye-Nights,
Henry Potts, 601
Assistants, T. J. Burton, and
Isa. Cabane, 601
Sorters,
Tho. J. Burton, Isaac Cabane,
Charles Colson, Wm. Ogilvie,
Wm. Arnold, Sam. Ardron,
Edw. Tho. Tidcomb, Chas.
Evans, Jn Irwin, Jas Bedford,
J. Bapt. Austin, J. Devereux,
H. Desborough, Joff. Ruddick,
Edm. Bukeley Overall, Tho.
Kempe, and Jas. Hutton, 601
Supernumerary Sorters,
Dan. Stow, Tim. F. Scute,

Jn. Atkinson, 601
 Collector, Wm. Ward, 2001
 His Clerk, Rich. Jago, 601
 Account. Tho. Hyett, 2001
 His Clerk, John Wyldbore, 601
 Inspector of the dead and mis-
 sent Letters, Jn. Watts, 601
 Surveyors,
 Richard Arbutnot,
 George Hodgson, esqs., 1001
 Johnsoa Wilkinson, esq. 2201
 Office-keeper, Thomas Bavin,
 601

FOREIGN OFFICE,

On the 4th. of July, 1770, His Majesty's Postmaster General was pleased to establish a Daily Post (Sunday excepted) to and from this Office, and the following Towns and Places in their respective Districts, Abingdon, Aylesford, Annan, Appleby, Ashburton, Attleborough, &c. &c. &c. Ban-

Sandwich, Saxmundham, Sevenoaks, (from Midsummer to Michaelmas,) St. Albans, Sheffield, Shipton upon Stower, Shiffall, Shrewsbury, Sittingbourn, Southall, Southampton, Stafford, Stevenage, Sutton, Stoke in Norfolk, Stone, Stourbridge, Stamford, Staines, Stratford on Avon, Stroud in Gloucestershire, Sudbury, Swaffham.
Tadcaster, Taunton, Tetbury, Tettsworth, Thame, Thetford, Thorne, Tiverton, Tunbridge, (from Midsummer to Michaelmas,) Tuxford, Twickenham.
Uckfield, Uxbridge.
Wakenfield, Wallall, Walsingham, Ware, Warrington, Warwick, Watford, Watton in Norfolk, Wells in Somersetshire, Wells in Norfolk, Wellington in Somerset, Welwyn, Wetherby, Whitehaven, Wigan, Wight, Isle of, Winchester, Windham in Norfolk, Windsor, Wingham in Kent, Wisbech, Witham in Essex, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Worktop, Workington, Wooburn, Woodstock, Wycombe High, Wycombe West.
Yarmouth in Norfolk, York.

Letters are sent from hence on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, for Arundel, Bournemouth, Chichester, Midhurst, Letchworth, Steyning, Shoreham, Wisbich, Crayes, and Newport in Shropshire, and return hither on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Likewise on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays to the Deveres, Melkham, Trowbridge, and Bradford in Wilts, and to Ringwood, Winniburn and Pool, and return hither on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays; to Bridgnorth on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and back every day; and to Somerton, Ilminster Chard and Axminster on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays and back every day.

A TABLE of the Rates of POSTAGE.

Postage of a single Letter in British Pence.

From any Post-Office in Great Britain or Ireland to any Place not exceeding one Stage from such Office	1
Between any Post-Office in England and any Place above one, and not exceeding two Stages from such Office, and not passing through London	2

THE TOWN SUB-OFFICE DESIGNATION NUMBERS ON REGISTRATION LABELS OF LEICESTERSHIRE

Readers are referred to the excellent article on Designation Numbers by Ray Woodward-Clarke in MM89/7. What follows is a list of the numbers used at each of the sub-offices in Leicestershire. As Ray pointed out, these labels were issued to certain firms and organisations but I have chosen not to list these here. Ray has similar lists for other counties which he will be pleased to send to other members on receipt of an S.A.E. Possibly what has been done here for Leicestershire could be done for other counties and the information more widely disseminated by publication in Midland Mail.

ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1 Bath Street | 2 Smisby Road | 4 Westfields |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|

BARWELL

- | |
|---------------|
| 1 Kirkby Road |
|---------------|

BLABY

- | |
|--------------|
| 1 Glen Hills |
|--------------|

COALVILLE

- | | | |
|------------|------------------|------------------|
| 5 Whitwick | 1 Coalville East | 2 Vaughan Street |
|------------|------------------|------------------|

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 6 Hugglescote | 7 Ravenstone |
|---------------|--------------|

HINCKLEY

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Derby Road | 4 Northfield Road | 5 Ashby Road |
| 6 Lower Coventry Road | 8 Tudor Road | 9 Burbage (Leicester "B" 1981) |

IBSTOCK

- | |
|------------------|
| 1 Leicester Road |
|------------------|

LEICESTER

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Highfield Street | 2 Campbell Street S.O. | 3 High Street |
| 4 Belgrave Gate | 5 Hinckley Road | 6 Humberstone Road |
| 7 London Road | 8 Melton Turn | 9 Southfields Drive |
| 10 Clarendon Park | 11 Welford Road | 12 King Richard's Road |
| 13 Belgrave | 14 Mayfield | 15 St Stephen's Road |
| 16 Argyle Street | 17 Charnwood Street | 18 Narborough Road |
| 19 Sparkenhoe | 20 Wharf Street | 21 Park Vale |
| 22 Pembroke Street | 23 West Bridge | 24 Queen Street |
| 25 Berners Street | 27 New Bridge Street | 28 Frog Island |
| 29 Wood Hill | 30 Imperial Avenue | 32 Aylestone Park |
| 33 Quorn Road (1921), Willowbrook Road (1945) | | 34 Havelock Street |
| 36 St Margaret's | 37 Boundary Road | 39 Leire Street |
| 41 Wharf Street | 43 Tudor Road | 44 Melrose Street |
| 46 Milligan Road | 49 Lorne Road | 50 Abbey Lane |
| 53 Evington Road | 54 South Knighton | 55 Uppingham Road |
| 56 Westcotes | 58 Scraptoft Lane | 60 Leicester Sorting Office |
| 64 Aylmer Road | 71 Green Lane Road | 72 Gwencole Crescent |
| 73 Blackbird Road | 74 Gipsy Lane | 75 Braunstone |
| 89 Ayston Road | 92 Wicklow Drive | 93 Brackley Close |
| 94 Wellinger Way | 100 Keightley Road | 124 Eyres Monsell |
| 157 Stocking Farm | | |

LOUGHBOROUGH

- | | | |
|--|------------------|--------------|
| 1 Ashby Road | 2 Bedford Square | 3 Park Road |
| 4 Great Central Road (1945), Southfields Park (1959) | | 6 Derby Road |
| 9 Knightthorpe Road | 11 Shelthorpe | |

MARKET HARBOROUGH

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 Northampton Road | 4 Connaught Road |
|--------------------|------------------|

MELTON MOWBRAY

- | |
|--------------|
| 3 Welby Lane |
|--------------|

SHEPSHED

- | |
|------------------|
| 1 Charnwood Road |
|------------------|

SOUTH WIGSTON

- | |
|-----------------|
| 1 Kirkdale Road |
|-----------------|

SYSTON

- | |
|------------------|
| 1 Leicester Road |
|------------------|

WIGSTON

- | |
|------------------|
| 2 Wigston Fields |
|------------------|

LEICESTER 1 - Highfield Street. Note the designation number is the typed '1'.

R LEICESTER 1 No. 1	His Majesty's Service		
<i>Mr. C. Case - Jones</i> <i>Leather Manufacturer</i> <i>Home</i>			
 POST OFFICE	This space is reserved for R LEICESTER 8 No 9490 Space on back for address of Sender.	REGISTERED LETTER. THIS LETTER MUST BE HANDED TO AN OFFICER OF THE POST OFFICE AGAINST A RECEIPT.	
LEICESTER 8 - Melton Turn		<i>To The School of Accountancy</i> <i>Regent House,</i> <i>2, West Regent</i> <i>Glasgow, C.2</i> Registration Fee _____ d. paid (see note on back)	

LEICESTER 67 - an unidentified designation number. It is possible that it belongs to a company or Leicester Sorting Office for a registered letter put into a letter box was treated as "Posted out of Course".

R LEICESTER 67 No 6429	REGISTERED LETTER THIS LETTER MUST BE GIVEN TO POST OFFICE TO BE REGISTERED AGAINST A RECEIPT.		
Space on back for address Posted out of Course			
<i>North on School Centre</i> <i>At Dovey Instructional</i> <i>Ceinus</i> <i>near Machynlleth</i> FEE PAID.			

General Post-Office, 13 April 1831

A Statement of the Balance due from the Postm. of *Oswestry*
on the 5th of *April* 1831. and Instalments due on Account
of the current Quarter; together with the Payments and Remittances
made in discharge thereof.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Balance due the 5th of <i>April</i> 1831. towards the Discharge of which the first Instal- ment is made on the 10th of the same Month ..	110	14	4			
2d Instalment due 25th of <i>April</i> —	50	-	-			
3d .. ditto .. due 10 th of <i>May</i> —	50	-	-			
4th .. ditto .. due 25th of .						
5th .. ditto .. due of						
6th .. ditto .. due 25th of						
Bills remitted before Quarter Day, but not due in Time to be credited in the Quarterly Account Current	5	-	-	210	14	4
Remittances since Quarter Day.						
<i>April</i> 14 —	50	-	-			
20 —	35	-	-			
26 —	40	6	5			
30 —	20	-	-			
<i>May</i> 6 —	43	7	6			
11 —	25	-	-	218	13	11
<i>Overpaid</i> 10 <i>May</i> 1831				7	19	7

Any Observations to be made on the above, should be stated in a Letter to the Secretary, separate from
any other Subject; and Dates, as well as Sums, must be given.

N. B. Bills due after Quarter Day, or Payments made thereafter, cannot be placed to the Credit of the
Account stated and made out for the Quarter preceding, but such Bills, &c. will of course be placed to the
Account for the Quarter in which the Money is actually paid to the Receiver General.

500. Printed by J. Hartnell, Wine-office-court, 1leet-street, for His Majesty's Stationery Office.—June, 1831.



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Solvent. Leather Dressing. Secol Archival Album Pockets. Postal History Display Albums. Melinex Pockets.
And More....

WHAT WAS A STAGE?

It would appear that towards the end of the eighteenth century the officials of the Post Office were not sure about the answer to this question. Apparently, in 1792, Pitt asked for information about charging the postage by distance rather than by the number of stages. In response Walsingham sent a letter which had been written to him by Thomas Todd at the G.P.O. in January 1792.

In this letter Mr Todd refers to a plan that he had drawn up in 1783 for improving the mail services, and in which he had commented on the postage charged in some instances being disproportionate to the distance the letters were carried and had said:

"I would recommend that no Rates be taken by the Stages as by the Act of the 5th [Should this be 3rd?] of this Present Majesty for the word Stage is a vague and indeterminate Distance upon which there was a difficulty in putting a Construction on the Commencement of that Act and it even creates disputes now ..."

[Ref: PRO 30/8/233, Part 3/379]

STAGES LENGTHENED AND SHORTENED

What follows is taken from a return submitted by Samuel Woodcock in September 1792 in response to a request made by Freeling for information on alterations to stages since "the Act of 1784". Only the returns of Messrs Hodgson and Woodcock appear to have survived. In his minute to the P.M.G. Freeling comments that the term 'a stage' has not been properly defined. I leave members to put their own interpretation on the information below.

STAGES SHORTENED

Names of Towns & Stages	Present Road	Former Road	Present Tax d	Former Tax d
Oxford - Farringdon	direct	thro' Abingdon	2	3
Oxford - Highworth	direct	ditto	3	4
Oxford - Cirencester	direct	ditto	3	4
Cheltenham - Tewkesbury	direct	thro' Gloster	2	3
Ludlow - Leominster	direct	thro' Worcester	2	4
Ludlow - Presteigne	direct	ditto	3	4
Worcester - Leominster	direct	thro' Hereford	3	4
Worcester - Presteign	direct	ditto	4	4
Woodstock - Banbury	direct	thro' Oxford	2	3
Bromyard - Leominster	direct	thro' Hereford	2	4
Bromyard - Ludlow	thro' Lmster	thro' Hereford	3	4
Bishops Castle - Leominster	thro' Ludlow	thro' Worcester	3	4

STAGES LENGTHENED

Names of Towns & Stages	Present Road	Former Road	Present Tax d	Former Tax d
Abingdon - Farringdon	thro' Oxford	direct	3	2
Abingdon - Highworth	thro' Oxford	direct	4	3
Abingdon - Cirencester	thro' Oxford	direct	4	3
Wantage - Farringdon	thro' Oxford	direct	4	3
Wantage - Highworth	thro' Oxford	direct	4	3
Highworth - Malmesbury	thro' Tetbury	direct	4	3
Wotton-u-Edge - Bristol	thro' Newport	direct	3	2
Wotton-u-Edge - Bath	thro' Newport	direct	4	3
Bristol - Sodbury	thro' Bath	direct	3	2
Gloucester - Cirencester	thro' Stroud	direct	3	2
Hereford - Leominster	thro' Worcester	direct	4	2
Hereford - Presteigne	thro' Worcester	direct	4	3
Hay - Leominster	thro' Worcester	thro' Hereford	4	3
Brecon - Leominster	thro' Worcester	thro' Hereford	5	4
Gloucester - Monmouth	3 days Bristol	daily Ross	4	3
	3 days Ross			

In a footnote Mr Woodcock wrote:

"The letters between Gloster and Cirencester and between Bristol & Sodbury have only been taxed 2d single since the alteration tho' 3d is certainly the legal charge - and single letters between Hereford & Leominster are taxed 3d, tho' 4d is the legal charge the road the Post now goes - yhis was done to prevent numerous complaints but the Surveyor begs to have the direction of the Postmr General on the [occasion ?]."

[Ref: Post 40/105/1792]

ALTERED RATES OF POSTAGE

This supplements the information to be found in MM73/7 ff, and covers those areas not considered at the time to be within the Society's area. Unfortunately I could not gain access to the documents used to produce that article. However, much of that information, but without the comments of Freeling, is to be found in another set of papers [PRO 30/8/232 Part 4]. The date of the table is 22nd February 1786 and the heading is "Rates of Postage for a single letter to and from undermentioned Places before the Conveyance by Coaches and since that Time". A footnote states that the differences in rates were caused by the letters being carried by different routes.

FROM	TO	OLD RATE	NEW RATE
Oxford	Banbury	2	3
Oxford	Burford	2	3
Oxford	Evesham	3	4
Chipping Norton	Oxford	2	3
Woodstock	Burford	3	4
Campden	Oxford	3	4
Nettlebed	Abingdon	2	3
Nettlebed	Oxford	3	2
Banbury	Warwick	2	3
Cirencester	Dursley	2	3
Cirencester	Berkley	2	3

THIS TOWN IS VERY TIRED OF THE MAILCOACHES

Two series of documents in the Chatham Papers (PRO 30/8/232 and 30/8/233) illustrate the tensions that existed between the officials of the Post Office and John Palmer on the introduction of the mailcoaches. One part consists of extracts from letters complaining about the "new mode of conveying letters". However, it is probable that these are the letters mentioned by Freeling, then a surveyor, from which were taken only the parts which reflected badly on the mailcoach system. [See MM73/7.]

From Chesterfield on 5th January 1786 we have:

"Letters for Lincoln, Cambridge, Suffolk, Huntingdon, Derby, Bakewell, Tideswell, Buxton and Chappell sent as forward letters to Nottingham. Great Complaints are made here as the Cross Road Posts are taken off and the Letters sent so great a distance round the Country, it is a great loss to the Government, as I can find letters are forwarded by other Conveyances. This Town is very tired of the Mail Coaches, so will the Coach Proprietors [sic]"

Then written at Ollerton on 9th January 1786 was:

"There are several Complaints from the Neighbourhood of the Cross Road Letters being very tedious and irregular in Conveyance."

Sent from Northleach on 12th January 1786 we have:

"I think the Cross Post to and from hence to Oxford, Witney and Burford and Gloucester is not on a plan likely to pay much to Government as I can find daily the four beforementioned places send and receive Letters to and from Northleach by the Guards [of stagecoaches?] or any other opportunity that happens. The Gloucester News Boy passing through Northleach weekly, carries a Horn to blow at every place he comes to, on purpose to pick up what Letters he can ..."

Letters in a similar vein were sent from Salisbury, Overton, Axminster, Ilminster, Shepton Mallett, Sherborne, Portsmouth, Bridport, Bridgewater (2), Frome and Fenny Stratford.

I hope at some point in the future to comeback to these papers for they contain much of interest to those interested in the introduction of mailcoaches.

[Ref: PRO 30/8/233 Part 1]

BOOK REVIEW

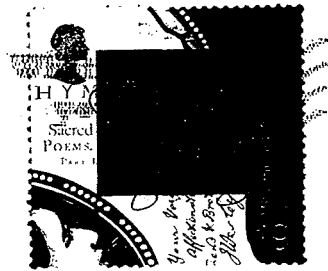
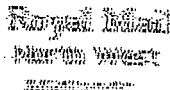
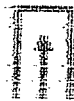
IMP - A Collector's Guide to Royal Mail's Integrated Mail Processors.

If you want to know about the postmarks that currently appear on your mail, then this book is an absolute must. It starts by showing how an Integrated Mail Processor (IMP) combines the functions of a Culler Facer Cancellor (CFC), an Optical Character/Video Coding System (OCR/VCS) and a Letter Sorting Machine. The path taken by a letter through the system is very clearly described, though I would have liked an explanation of how some of the steps are effected. A discussion of the trials at Watford is followed by details of the introduction of these machines nationally. There is a detailed look at the various types of postmark, including those to be found on the back of meter mail and printed postage impression mail, and the information that they contain. The second half of the book details the machines used at each mail centre, their dates of use etc. Those within the Midlands are at Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton and Worcester. This is a highly recommended publication.

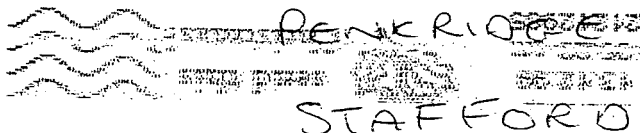
Paperback, A5, 40 pages. Available from the author, Trevor Horton at 66 Fennel Close, Chincham, Basingstoke RG24 8XF. Cost inc. p&p - £3.50.

A MODERN PUZZLE

Chris Beaver would like to know how the envelope shown below came to have three lines of red marks on it instead of the usual one or two. Also why is the cancellation produced by the IMP in two separate parts?



REV AND MRS BEAVER
70 FILANCE ROAD

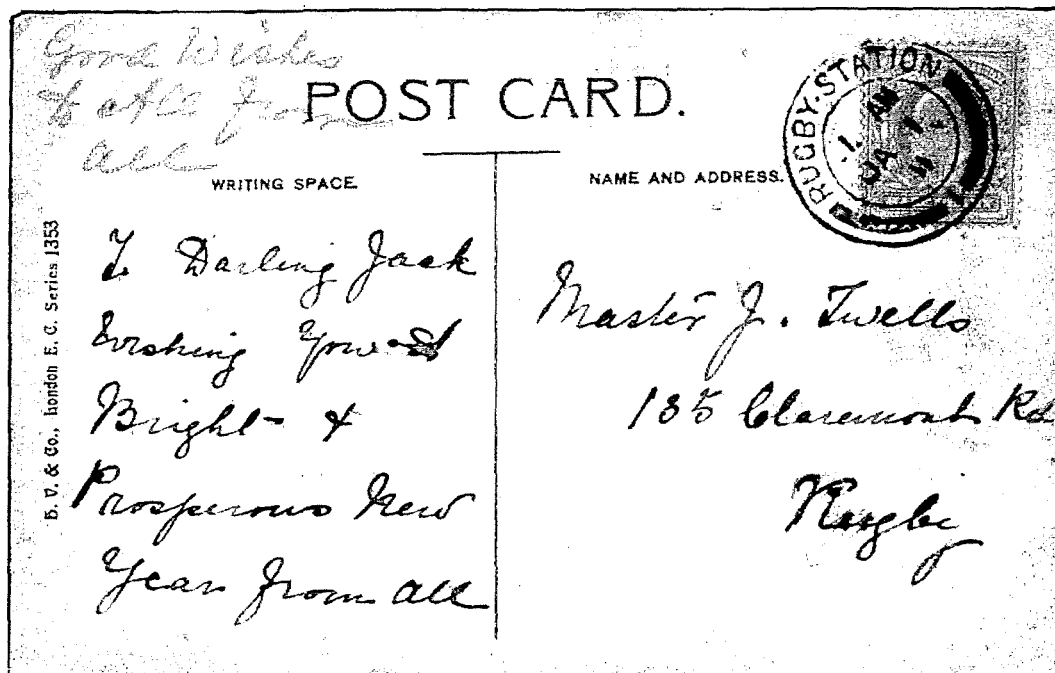


STAFFORD

ST 19 SST

TAILPIECE - ALL THE ONES

I am indebted to Alan Godfrey for sending the illustration shown below. The double circle cancellation is for 1 am on 1/1/11 with handstamp identification 1. Can anyone beat this?



THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

I hope that this will be issued in early November. There is plenty of room for articles, so please help your editor avoid sleepless nights by sending contributions to:

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

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