MIDLAND MAIL

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

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Number 107, October 1998

AWARDS

Congratulations to Harold Wilson whose exhibit 'The Early Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain' was awarded the R.A.G. Lee Trophy for an outstanding exhibit in the International Class at Stampex. Also to Dave Tarry whose 'Mauritius - The Sterling Period 1811-77' won the Silver Mailcoach and the Argyll Postal History Salver, and to Mike Jackson whose study of the Downey Head Plates was awarded a Large Vermeil in the International Class. Other awards included a bronze-silver to Harold Wilson for his 'Imperial Airways Crash Mail', and a bronze silver to this Society for Midland Mail (it missed a silver by one mark) and a small silver-gilt for 'The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland'.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our November meeting will take place on **21st November** at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham at 1.30 p.m. when members are invited to bring nine sheet displays on 'These covers are ...' - a title which should allow plenty of scope. There will be a committee meeting at 11 a.m.

On **12th December** we shall hold our traditional meeting at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent. Members are invited to provide standing displays from 10.30 a.m. up to lunch. Then, starting at 2 p.m., Denis Vandevelde will display 'Disinfected Mail with particular emphasis on Great Britain'. If you intend to join us for lunch which as in the past will consist of the usual Christmas fare please contact Richard Farman (01283-566515) by 4th December.

As the publication date of the next issue is very uncertain please note that our first meeting of 1999 will be at Carrs Lane Church Centre on **16th January when** Richard Farman will display 'Staffordshire'.

ALTERATIONS TO THE PROGRAMME

Please make the following amendments to your programme (and diary):

The MPF Convention & Fair at Carrs Lane will be held on Saturday 8th May.

Midpex will be held on 3rd July.

Eric, who composed the draft for the programme, did say at the AGM that we should have appointed a new Secretary!

DAVID SHAW
for
GREAT BRITAIN
POSTAL HISTORY

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THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

We began our new season by breaking new ground at Northampton on 19th September when we held a joint meeting with the Northamptonshire Philatelic Society. The morning was devoted to ten sheet displays by members of the two societies. The proceedings were ruthlessly chaired by Derek Smeathers who tolerated neither those who cannot count nor those who have no sense of time, with the result that the morning session finished at the exact time for lunch.

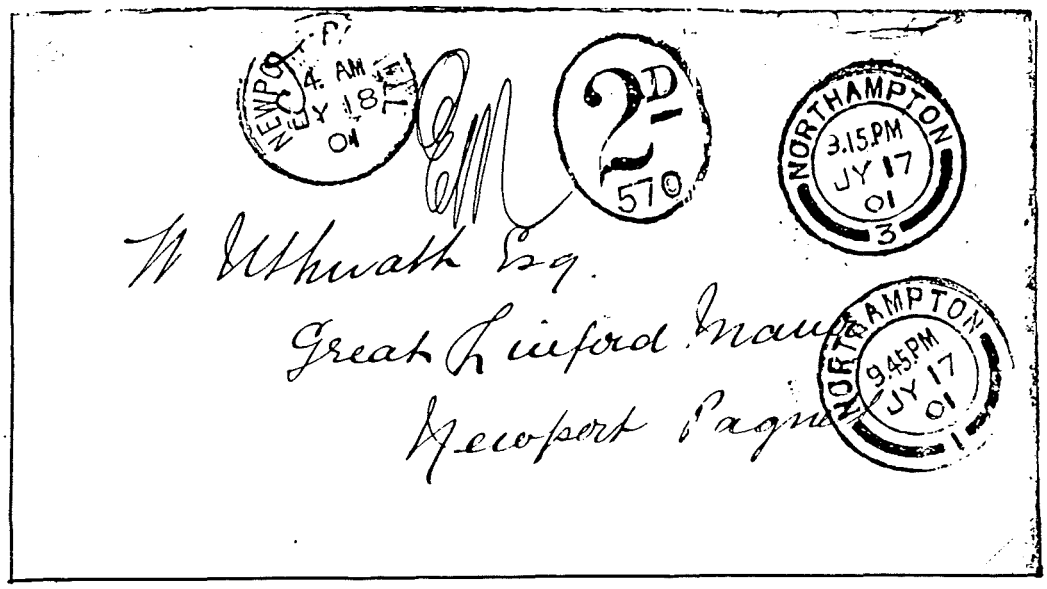
Paul Bradshaw started proceedings with photostats of early Northampton marks. Photostats for the only known examples of these marks of 1707, 1712, 1717 and 1729 are to be found in the Isham correspondence. This was followed by a display of material from Woodbridge in Suffolk by Judith Bradshaw. Eric Lewis then showed us a few oddments which caused considerable hilarity. Typical of these was a telegram to a fire station, 'Come at once. Rick on fire.' Some degree of sanity was then restored by Richard Farman amongst whose material was a letter of the Boer War period sent from Pretoria to Corfu at a rate of 2½d. Airmails to Scotland, starting in 1934, were produced by Harold Wilson.

A most unusual and fascinating topic was chosen by Mike Champness - 'Wafer Seals concerning the Temperance Movement'. Missents, Mulreadies and Skeletons were all to be found in Dave Tarry's sheets of Newport postal history. A lovely selection of eighteenth and nineteenth century maps of Worcestershire were produced by John Calladine. Amongst Chris Beaver's 'Errors from Staffordshire' were letters sent from Wolverhampton in 6181 and 9181. Tony Cassidy's ten sheets were devoted to Express Delivery Mail of Ireland. The morning was rounded off by David Hardwick whose material was about the alleged theft of 15,000 letters at Daventry.

After lunch, the entertainment was provided by Derek Smeathers with a display of the postal history of the town of Northampton. Derek began with a Civil War letter of 1644 signed by three of the committee running Northampton. A carrier's letter of 1675 referring to the Great Fire of Northampton asked for £200 to be sent under the dirty laundry for safety. Amongst the early marks were a 1722 'NORTH/HAMPTON' and a 1730 'N/HAMPTON'. These were followed by a variety of eighteenth century marks, ending with a two-line, curved handstamp of 1798. Amongst the mileage marks was the unusual 'NHAMPTON/66' which also turned up in mileage removed form in 1830. The postmaster of Northampton ran a very extensive system of local posts which was well illustrated by Derek, as were the handstamps from the Uniform Penny Post. The first half of the display ended with a number of skeletons from 1846-1850 struck in a variety of colours.

Material from the three Town Sub-offices which were opened in 1855 started the second part of Derek's display. Then came examples of the Northampton spoon, notable among which was a registered letter with ten strikes of the spoon. Material illustrating the carriage of parcels in the town by buses and trams was an unusual piece of postal history. More conventional were the labels and postmarks of the parcel post. Derek then showed a wide range of instructional and surcharge marks amongst which were a boxed 'NOT KNOWN AT/NORTHAMPTON' and a 'MISDIRECTED TO NORTHAMPTON'. Then came a range of modern skeletons before the final part of Derek's display, unusual modern handstamps.

As Chris Jackson said in his vote of thanks, Derek had not only shown us a wealth of material but also had explored the historical background to his material. It had provided us with a most interesting afternoon. Our thanks are due to Derek for arranging a most enjoyable day, and hopefully we will visit Northampton again before too long.



An item from Derek's display.

THE SKELETONS OF BRIXWORTH

by Derek Smeathers

The Northamptonshire village of Brixworth had a series of four skeleton datestamps in the early part of this century, covering a period of seven years. The circumstances in which these temporary datestamps came to be used is summarised below.

The single circle datestamp, diameter 22 mm, was in use at Brixworth before 1899, and by June 1909, it was well worn (Fig. 1). In that year, it was decided to issue a new cds, probably because of that wear. A skeleton datestamp (diameter 34 mm) was put into use pending receipt of the new permanent handstamp. There is no clear indication of WHEN in 1909 this happened because only one example of this skeleton is known, and, although the year is clear, it shows no letters for the month, just a jumbled collection of figures, some of which are inverted (Fig. 2).

By October 1910, the new cds, of diameter 21 mm, was in use (Fig. 3). However, by September 1913, a further skeleton was in use (Fig. 4), probably resulting from the cds being sent for recutting (as it appears again later). This skeleton is larger with a diameter of 36 mm.

The usual wording of all these skeletons is BRIXWORTH NORTHAMPTON, but the third one to appear has the misspelling NORTHAMTON, although it has the same diameter as the previous one of 36 mm (Fig. 5). The only example so far seen is dated 1st March 1916. The following month, a new cds appeared (Fig. 6) and although it is of the same general design as the previous one, the date is arranged differently. This handstamp may have been lost or damaged in its first few months of use, for the fourth skeleton is known used in August 1916 (Fig. 7). This is smaller with a diameter of 33 mm and was probably used until the double circle datestamp was received. This is known used in November 1916 (Fig. 8).

All four skeletons are known only in very few numbers, two of them by single specimens only. As more of them turn up, it may show that they were in use for quite short periods, possibly only days each. Everyone having one or more in his collection is requested to send photostats to the writer, who will respond with a grateful 'Thank You'.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES

IN THE INLAND OFFICE ORDER BOOKS, 1794-1836

The President, Inland Office Order Books (Post 14/238-317) were the means of issuing instructions to the staff. They are incredibly diverse in their contents with entries ranging from the routine adminstration of the Inland Office to notices to the public concerning rates of postage for overseas mails. While much of the contents is about the running of the Inland Office, I do find them a fascinating series of documents, in that they do contain much information for the postal historian. Though in many instances they do confirm findings elsewhere. Readers may find it useful to refer in conjunction with these lists to articles in Midland Mail such as 'The Surveyors' Journals', 'Which Way to Banbury Cross' as well as 'The Local Posts of the Midland Counties'

I have tried to extract the more relevant entries and group them under the heading of the appropriate county. Those familiar with these volumes will realise that I have not listed the numerous references to letters being missent. Whenever letters were missent by the Inland Office, the postmaster had to fill in a form listing the letters - to whom and where directed, and to what office they should have been missent. Usually the books contain a brief note of admonishment but sometimes the form returned by the deputy is placed in them. I noticed several from the Midlands; one that caught my eye was from Market Drayton with a lovely strike of the boxed mileage mark and listing twelve letters that should have been sent to places such as Woburn, Hinckley, Atherstone, Chester and Holyhead.

Many entries start with the words "On and from" followed by the date on which the change described was to take place. Where possible I have given the date of the action rather than the date of the entry.

My original intention was to go as far as 1837 in this article and then cover 1838-40 later this season as I suspect that there will be much material from those two years. However, time ran out when I reached the end of 1836!

Finally two words of warning: it should be borne in mind that these entries refer to mail sent from London and tell us nothing about the bye-letters or letters carried in the crossposts; I doubt if I have found all of the entries that are relevant as the indexing and handwriting do make the study of these volumes difficult in places. After perusing these lists, I feel that it might be necessary to revisit some volumes.

MAKING UP THE BAGS

The above is the heading on an entry, covering several pages, of January 1808 which shows the bags to be made up for a number of mailcoaches serving the Midlands. Since it covers several counties I have chosen to print the relevant parts separate from the other entries. Where the name of a town is in brackets the bag for that place was sent enclosed in the bag of the previous town.

GLOUCESTER MAIL

Hay, Ross and Hereford into the Hereford and Pembroke Sack. [Not every night]

Burford, Frogmill, Cheltenham (Tewkesbury), Gloucester (Ledbury*), Northleach and Witney into the Gloucester & Witney Sack. * Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only.

WORCESTER MAIL

Nettlebed (Wallingford) and Henley into the Hounslow and Nettlebed Sack.

Woodstock (Banbury), Tenbury (1), Pershore, Moreton-in-Marsh, Evesham, Enstone, Chipping Norton, Broadway (Campden), Ludlow (Bishop's Castle (2) and Aberystwith (3)) and Worcester (4) into the Woodstock sack.

1 - Not on Fridays. 2 - Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only. 3 - On Wednesday and Fridays to Welshpool. 4 - On the General Post nights the Worcester bag contained bags for Bromyard, Leominster, Presteign and Radnor; on bye nights it contained bags for Hay, Leominster, Hereford, Ledbury and Presteigne.

SHREWSBURY MAIL

Wheatley, Tetsworth (Thame), Stokenchurch plus 6 others into the Oxford Road Sack.

Oxford, Bicester and Wantage into the Little Oxford Sack.

Abingdon, Stroud (Minchinhampton, Wooton-under-Edge and Tetbury), Cirencester, Fairford, Faringdon (Highworth) and Lechlade into the Abingdon Sack.

Shrewsbury (Ellesmere, Oswestry, Whitchurch and Welshpool), Shifnal (Newport), Shipstone, Stratford-on-Avon (Kineton), Wolverhampton (Bridgnorth) into the Shrewsbury Sack.

CHESTER MAIL

Atherstone (Burton-on-Trent), Drayton, Hinckley, Lutterworth, Nantwich, Stafford and Tamworth into the Atherstone and Chester Sack. This mailcoach carried two other sacks containing a total sixteen bags.

LIVERPOOL MAIL

Stoney Stratford [Buckingham, (Brackley)], Towcester to the Liverpool guard.
Daventry (Warwick), Rugby into the Daventry Sack.
Birmingham (Walsall), Bromsgrove and Stourbridge [Kidderminster, (Bewdley)] into the Birmingham Sack.
Coventry, Coleshill, Lichfield (Uttoxeter) and Stone into the Fenny Stratford and Stone Sack.
Newcastle, Congleton, Knutsford (Middlewich) plus 5 others into the Newcastle andLiverpool Sack.
This mailcoach also carried fourteen bags for places between London and Fenny Stratford, and a branch mail to Winslow.

DERBYSHIRE

22FEB1794 Tideswell and Chapel-en-le-Frith often missent to Derby instead of Buxton. The postmaster of Derby does not always have time to sort and send them on to Macclesfield causing them to lose a day.

16JUN1797 Letters for Alfreton and its delivery and Peacock Inn and its delivery are to be charged 8d and charged on Chesterfield, being taken from Mansfield (delivery).

19MAY1801 Alfreton and its delivery plus Peacock Inn to be sent in the Derby bag instead of Chesterfield. To be taxed 8d and charged on Derby. (The London mailcoach is always at Derby before the Birmingham so these letters will go on the same evening to Alfreton and Peacock Inn saving half a day.

24MAY1801 The above not acted upon regularly until yesterday. Letters now arrive in Alfreton at about 5.30 p.m. North Wingfield to be sent to Chesterfield. South Wingfield and Wingfield Manor sent to Derby.

30MAY1801 Buxton bag to be sent in the Bakewell bag not the Macclesfield. Tideswell and Stoney Middleton to be sent in the Bakewell bag not the Buxton.

5JUN1801 Buxton in future must be charged no more than 8d, the distance being reduced to 166 miles.

25MAY1803 Critch, Fritchley and Wheatcroft to be taken from the delivery of Wirksworth and added to Derby.

6JUN1805 Buxton to be charged 10d and the bag to be enclosed in the Macclesfield sack instead of the Derby.

17JUN1805 Tideswell to be charged 10d instead of 9d and to be charged on Buxton instead of Bakewell. [Contains details of the Tideswell delivery.]

21JUL1806 Letters for Matlock and Matlock Bath to be put in the Wirksworth bag instead of the Derby.

11NOV1807 A bag to be made up for Alfreton to be enclosed in the Derby bag. [Details of Alfreton delivery]

5JUL1808 The Buxton bag to be sent in the Leek bag.

13JUL1808 Letters for Tideswell to be charged 9d.

3NOV1808 The Buxton bag to be sent in the Sheffield bag instead of the Leek.

For the next ten years an instruction was issued in June or July that the Buxton bag was to be sent to Leek, and in November or December it was ordered that the bag was to go to Sheffield. [I did not see the instructions for 1811.] The pattern changed on:
30NOV1818 The Buxton bag to be sent to Manchester. For the next few years the winter service was through Manchester while the ride from Leek operated in the summer. Then in 1821:
21OCT1821 The Buxton bag to be sent to Manchester.
5DEC1821 The Buxton bag to be sent to Sheffield not Manchester. From then the winter service was through Sheffield. Further entries are:
26JUN1828 Buxton to be sent to Leek. Postage reduced from 11d to 10d as distance is 167 miles.
6OCT1828 Buxton to be sent to Sheffield.
5JUN1829 Buxton to be taxed 10d. The bag to Buxton to be enclosed in that to Bakewell.
23JUN1829 Buxton bag to be enclosed in the Leek bag.
30JUL1830 "It appears that the Buxton Bag has been sent in the Bakewell Bag instead of the Leek. In June 1829 it was ordered to be sent to Leek instead of Bakewell & which order has been regularly attended to till the 27th inst. Mr Stow must receive an explanation of this for the information of the Secretary."
6DEC1830 Buxton bag to be enclosed in the Stockport instead of the Leek. Rate 11d.

20MAY1820 Printed list of places in the delivery of Derby. On 25th May this is said to contain a number of errors.

25MAY1822 All letters for Dronfield are to be sent in the Sheffield bag.

6FEB1829 Distance of Chapel-le-Frith in the delivery of Buxton is 172 miles. To be charged 11d.

6JUL1829 Tideswell to be charged 11d and enclosed in the Buxton bag. On 29th October still being missent to Bakewell.

29OCT1829 Castleton and Hope are also in the delivery of Buxton.

6DEC1830 Buxton bag to be enclosed in the Stockport instead of the Leek. Rate 11d. Tideswell and Chapel-le-Frith are also to be sent to Stockport and charged 11d.

5DEC1834 A bag to be made up for Matlock to contain the letters for the following places, hitherto in the delivery of Wirksworth: Matlock, Matlock Bath, Cromford, Bonsall, Darley, Winster, Lea, Holloway and Stanton Woodhouse.
Letters for Chapel-le-Frith to be sent in the Buxton bag and charged on that office.
Letters for Tideswell to be sent in the Bakewell bag and charged on that office.
The following will be the distances by the new route: Matlock 144, Bakewell 154, Tideswell 160, Buxton 166, Chapel-le-Frith 172, Wirksworth 141.
The postage to Buxton and Tideswell reduced from 11d to 10d.
The bags for Wirksworth, Matlock, Bakewell and Buxton to be sent to Derby.

Letters for Darley, Winster and Winsley to be sent to Bakewell instead of Matlock.

3DEC1836 Letters for Dronfield are to be sent to Chesterfield instead of Sheffield.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

4MAR1794 Winchcombe being sent by mistake to Cheltenham instead of Moreton-in-Marsh.

4MAR1796 Painswick should be in the delivery of Cirencester not Gloucester.

4MAR1796 On and from Tuesday next a bag is to be made up for Tetbury. [Details of the Tetbury delivery.]

8APR1797 "Sometime since the Clerks of the 8th Divn were informed that the Letters for Newnham were to be charged 5d instead of sixpence. ... no attention has been paid to that order for they are still charged 6d which causes much trouble between the postmaster of Newnham & the Inhabitants."

27JUL1797 A letter from Cirencester P.O. - "In reply to your letter of yesterday, the reason for my charging Letters with two rates of Postage is the Mail Coach Guards as well as my Post Boy have Letters given them on the Road to bring to this Office. I generally enquire on which part of the Road they receive them and if I find they were received at or on the other side of Tedbury, or at or on the other side of [Minchin] Hampton, such Letters I charge at the Rate of 7d - all letters immediately from this place I charge at the Rate of 6d."

4AUG1804 List of places in the delivery of Newnham which are to be charged 8d instead of 7d from Monday, 6th August. Includes Lydney and Westbury-on-Severn.

7JUN1805 Letters for Berkeley, Dursley and Uley to be sent "as formerly" and not to Bristol.

5MAY1807 List of places in the delivery of Newnham which are to be taxed at 9d.

JAN1808 See 'Making up the Bags'

30SEP1808 See Oxfordshire.

6JUL1809 Bags for Abingdon, Faringdon, Lechlade, Fairford, Cirencester, Minchinhampton, Stroud, Tetbury and Wotton under Edge to be sent by the new coach to Stroud, to go by the Worcester coach to Dorchester.

6SEP1811 A bag to be made up for Dursley. [Delivery list of Dursley] The following places though near Dursley should be sent to and charged on Cirencester: Hunters Hall, Lasborough, Kingscote, Nymphsfield, Owlpen and Uley.

20JUL1812 See Oxfordshire.

18MAR1813 All letters for Newnham in the delivery of Gloucester to be charged 9d only, a penny post having been established.

6JAN1814 A list of places (14) in the Gloucester delivery that should be charged 10d. Includes Newnham.

7OCT1815 Chipping Campden bag to be sent to Morton-in-Marsh

5SEP1816 Malmesbury and its delivery to be charged on Chippenham instead of Tetbury.

5FEB1820 The Tetbury bag to be enclosed in the Chippenham bag.

6OCT1820 Letters for Painswick are to be sent to Stroud instead of Cirencester.

5JUL1821 Cirencester bag and its enclosures to be put in a sack 'Northleach & Cirencester' to go by the Gloucester mail.

30AUG1821 Uley and Kingscote to be charged on Minchinhampton.

11APR1822 Distance of Lydney is 125 miles. Charge 10d.

19MAY1826 Frogmill ceases to be a posttown. Replaced by Andoversford - distance 94 miles.

30APR1827 See Herefordshire.

25AUG1827 On and from Monday next a Stroud Mail to be dispatched. Bags to be sent: Abingdon, Wantage, Faringdon, Lechlade, Fairford, Cirencester, Stroud, Minchinhampton, Dursley in the Minchinhampton, Wotton under Edge and Chepstow.

18FEB1828 Tetbury bag to be sent to Cirencester instead of Chipprnham.

12JAN1829 Postage to and from Lechlade now to be 8d. Cricklade letters are still charged 9d, although Highworth is 8d.

29JAN1829 Distance of Cricklade is now 86 miles.

18FEB1829 Chepstow bag to go by the Bristol mailcoach not the Stroud.

6JAN1830 Bag to be made up for Newnham - rate 10d.

12MAY1830 Bag to be made up for Coleford - distance 134 miles

28MAY1830 Tetbury bag to be enclosed in the Chippenham.

28MAR1833 Lea will be a sub-office under Gloucester. Distance 124 miles. Tax 10d.

17NOV1834 Letters for Painswick to be sent to Cirencester instead of Stroud.

30JAN1836 A bag to be made up for Chalford instead of Minchinhampton and the latter place to be a sub-office. Distance of Chalford 101 miles. Bag to be sent in the same way as Minchinhampton. Uley and Kingscote are sub-offices under Chalford.

5SEP1836 Letters for Frampton-on-Severn, Whitminster and Saul to be sent to Dursley instead of Stroud.

12DEC1836 All letters for Sodbury, Chipping Sodbury, Cross Hands and Badminton now charged on Cirencester. Acton Turville now charged on Dunkirk [Cirencester] and on Tetbury are to be charged on Chippenham. Cross Hands, Badminton and Acton Turville will be a penny post on Chippenham, the rate and the distance the same as Chippenham. The distance from London to Sodbury by the new route will be 111 miles 5 furlongs. Rate 9d.

HEREFORDSHIRE

27OCT1796 Leominster deputy ready to begin additional day's ride to Presteigne on Thursday next, 1st November. Inland Office are to expect a Presteigne bag every Friday plus old days.

13MAY1807 Bag to be made up daily for Hay. To be sent the same as the Hereford.

10JUN1807 Inland Office are not to expect more than 5 bags a week from Hay.

JAN1808 See 'Making up the Bags'

6OCT1810 Bag for Kington introduced. [Kington delivery list] Letters for Kington are not to be inserted in the Presteigne bag or charged on that town. A daily bag from Presteigne.

20MAY1813 On and from Saturday next the Hereford and Ledbury bags are to be sent as follows:
Monday, Wednesday and Friday by Worcester; Tuesday. Thursday and Saturday by Gloucester.
The Hereford and Ledbury bags will be dispatched from Hereford:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday by Worcester; Sunday, Wednesday and Friday by Gloucester.

The Hay bag is always to be sent through Gloucester.

21MAY1813 The Hay bag is to be enclosed in the Gloucester bag every evening.

28NOV1817 Mr Woodcock requests that the Ross and Hay bags are put in the 'Welch Sack' every night.

20APR1820 The Hereford bag to be sent every night via Gloucester instead of three days through Worcester. The Hay bag to be enclosed in the Hereford every night.

30AUG1820 The Ledbury bag to be sent every evening by way of Worcester.

6DEC1821 Hereford bag to be sent daily by Worcester and it will be returned the same way.

30APR1827 A sack 'Cheltenham & Hereford' to be made up every evening containing the bags for Tewkesbury, Ledbury, Hereford and Hay and to go by the Gloucester mail..

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

14MAR1794 Bags for Oakham and Uppingham are to be enclosed in the Stamford bag instead of the Northampton.

7DEC1795 Leicester bag to be sent by the Manchester mailcoach instead of the Leeds.

9DEC1795 Harborough bag to go by the Leeds coach. Melton Mowbray bag to go in the Leicester bag by the Manchester coach.

18JAN1797 Letters for Leicester must be charged 6d.

10OCT1800 On and from Monday next letters for Uppingham to be charged 7d, the distance being above 100 miles.

13OCT1800 The above order rescinded, the rate to be 6d.

28OCT1815 Letters for Ashby-de-la-Zouch are to be sent to Leicester instead of Atherstone.

4APR1817 Letters for Ashby-de-la-Zouch are to be sent to Atherstone instead of Leicester.

31JUL1820 All letters for Overseal, Netherseal and Moira Baths in Leicestershire are to be sent to Atherstone instead of Burton-on-Trent.

5APR1823 Letters for Ashby-de-la-Zouch are to be sent to Leicester instead of Atherstone.

9APR1823 All letters for Overseal and Netherseal are to be sent to Leicester.

6MAY1823 Letters for Ashby-de-la-Zouch are being sent via Leicester and must be charged 9d instead of 10d, the distance being 114 miles.

18AUG1825 It is very necessary to renew the order that letters for Kegworth, Shardlow and Cavendish Bridge which are now sent partly to Leicester and partly to Loughborough should be sent (however addressed) in the Leicester bag and not in the Loughborough.

23SEP1825 Letters for Kibworth are to be sent to Market Harborough instead of Leicester

25JAN1826 Letters for Kibworth and [Great] Glenn are to be sent to Leicester not Market Harborough.

SEP1826 Delivery list of Hinckley.

23MAY1830 Letters for Kibworth are to be sent as addressed to either Leicester or Market Harborough.

8JUN1830 A bag to be made up for Ashby-de-la-Zouch to be enclosed in the Leicester bag.

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

28FEB1794	A complaint that the postmaster of Wellingborough charges the Rockingham letters 5d instead of 4d. 5d is correct as the distance is more than 80 miles.
18AUG1794	Newspapers for Rockingham and Dean have been put into the Wellingborough bag. They should always go in the Kettering.
6JUL1795	Bag to be made up for Thrapstone.
7JUL1795	Rockingham letters often charged 4d instead of 5d and the newspapers often missent to Wellingboro'.
11JUL1795	On & from Monday next a bag to be made up for Oundle. [Delivery list - had been in that of Stilton].
23SEP1795	Rockingham & its delivery to be sent to Oundle instead of Kettering and taxed 5d. The post from Kettering to cease and that from Oundle to start on 24th September.
4DEC1802	Northampton bag to be sent in the Manchester mailcoach. [Presumably instead of the Leeds.]
23MAR1803	Details of the Rockingham (charged on Oundle) and Thrapstone deliveries.
8JUL1807	Postage to Kettering to be 7d.
15JUL1807	A bag to be made up for Higham Ferrers [details of delivery], 65 miles, tax 7d. To be sent in the same sack as the Kettering bag. Rockingham and some nearby villages [listed] to be taken from Oundle and charged on Kettering with a tax of 8d. Kettering is only 7d being 75 miles but Rockingham is 85 miles.
17JUL1807	A letter from Mr Scott at Higham Ferrers - "The London Bag arrived here this morning with the Letters taxed eight pence instead of seven pence, (the distance being sixty-six miles) and without any printed letter bills..." [There is a small discrepancy in the distance compared with the previous entry.]
22JUL1807	The Wellingborough bag is to be sent in the Higham Ferrers; the Thrapstone bag to be enclosed in the Kettering. Both bags to go by the Leeds mailcoach (via Bedford).
JAN1808	See 'Making up the Bags'
5AUG1817	Bags for Towcester and Daventry to go by the new Holyhead mailcoach.
16MAR1819	Distance of Brackley is 67 miles.
15MAY1820	Printed delivery list of Northampton.
7AUG1820	Wellingborough bag to be sent enclosed in the Northampton bag and not by the Leeds mailcoach. Tomorrow morning the bag from Kettering (including the Thrapstone) and the bag from Wellingborough will be received in London from Northampton by the Manchester or Chester mail - as shall be ordered. The letters <u>from</u> Kettering on and after this day [surely the 8th] will be taxed 9d. From London the tax to remain 8d. The bags for Kettering (Higham Ferrers & Thrapstone) to be sent from London by the Leeds coach as usual (via Bedford), 76 miles, 8d. But as it will be sent to London by Northampton - 84 miles - the tax will be 9d from Kettering. Thrapstone as before.
25MAY1821	The Brackley bag to be sent by the Kidderminster and Birmingham mail.
6NOV1822	Earl's Barton is in the delivery of Wellingborough; Barton Seagrave is in that of Kettering.
5JUL1823	The 'London and Buckingham' sack to be discontinued and replaced by a 'Edgware and Banbury'. Amongst others this contains the Brackley bag enclosed in the Aylesbury sack.
12JUL1823	The Brackley bag to be put into the 'Edgware and Banbury' sack by itself and not in the Aylesbury sack.
26JUL1823	See Oxfordshire.
6MAY1825	Letters for Rockingham and its delivery [printed list] are to be sent in the Uppingham bag instead of the Kettering. Any mistake will cause a delay of 24 hours.
21MAY1825	A bag to be made up for Rockingham, the P.M.G. having made it a 'regular posttown'.
15AUG1825	The Northampton sack to be sent by the Chester mail.
6JUN1836	The Northampton sack to go by the new Halifax mail instead of the Chester mail..

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

5JUL1794	Bags for Ollerton and Worksop to be enclosed in the Newark bag and not that for Mansfield.
23MAY1799	The Nottingham and Sheffield sack [containing the bags for Nottingham, Mansfield, Chesterfield, and Sheffield) to go by the Manchester coach [to Leicester] not the Leeds.
7SEP1807	The Nottingham and Sheffield sack to go by the new Leeds coach [via Bedford] instead of the Manchester.
6JUL1810	Bags for Tuxford, Retford and Bawtry to go by the York coach in a sack 'Tuxford and Bawtry'. Ollerton and Worksop are to be sent by the Glasgow coach.
18APR1820	A letter from Mr Hart: "On and from 17th inst & until further notice the London bag for Nottingham to be delivered to the Mail Coach for Loughborough, where the Guard is to deliver the Nottingham Bag for immediate conveyance by the Express Ride from thence, and on Tuesday 18th, a second Bag from Nottingham for London will arrive at Loughboro to meet the London & Manchester Mail for conveyance to London."
10FEB1835	The Worksop bag to go with the Ollerton in the Newark.
5AUG1835	Letters for Bingham to be sent to Grantham. Distance 122 miles.
6JUN1836	Nottingham and Mansfield bags to go by the new Halifax mail. The Nottingham London bag will arrive in the morning. The second bag from Nottingham will be discontinued. The forward bag will arrive on the evening duty as at present.

OXFORDSHIRE

JUL1795	List of villages (17) to be sent to Woodstock instead of Bicester. Includes Adderbury, Aynhoe and Deddington.
12MAR1796	Letter from the postmaster of Wheatley: "Please to send me down two Bicester Bags for the old ones is quite worn out. N.B. The Bags are of the smallest size."
10OCT1796	Bicester bag to be sent in the Oxford bag instead of to Wheatley.
10APR1801	Letters for Chipping Norton to be charged 7d instead of 6d.
12OCT1803	A bag to be made up for Wantage - to go in the Oxford bag.
JAN1808	See 'Making up the Bags'
30SEP1808	Little Oxford sack [Oxford, Bicester & Wantage bags] and the Abingdon sack [Abingdon, Cirencester, Fairford, Faringdon & Lechlade bags] to go by the Worcester coach instead of the Shrewsbury.
6JUL1809	Bags for Abingdon and Faringdon to go by the Worcester coach to Dorchester and from there by the new coach to Stroud.
20JUL1812	Bags for Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage, Faringdon, Lechlade, Fairford, Cirencester, Minchinhampton, Stroud, Dursley and Wotton under Edge are to be sent by the Shrewsbury mailcoach to Oxford.
20JUL1812	Bicester bag to be enclosed in the Oxford bag.
5JUL1817	The Abingdon sack to go on the Worcester mailcoach; the Hounslow and Nettlebed sack to go by the Gloucester mailcoach.
6SEP1817	In consequence of the Worcester mail being sent by the Wycombe road instead of the Henley road, the distance to Chipping Norton is reduced to under 80 miles. Letters to be taxed 8d instead of 9d. Distance is 77 miles.
MAY1820	Printed list of the Oxford delivery.
18NOV1822	The Abingdon and Fairford sack to be sent by the Gloucester mailcoach.
5JUL1823	Bag for Bicester to go on the Birmingham mailcoach.
26JUL1823	All letters for Aynho to be sent to Brackley instead of Woodstock.
16AUG1826	Distance to Bicester is 59 miles.
3NOV1829	Letters for Kidlington which was in the delivery of Woodstock are to be sent to Oxford.
6APR1835	Oxford bag to be sent by the Gloucester mail instead of the Worcester mail.

SHROPSHIRE

13FEB1801	Daily bags to be made up for Oswestry and Ellesmere.
25JUL1803	Letters for Church Stretton are to be sent to Ludlow on Mondays, Wednesday and Saturdays - charged 8d; and on Tuesdays and Fridays to Shrewsbury charged 9d.
JAN1808	See 'Making up the Bags'
4OCT1808	Ellesmere bag to be sent in the Oswestry.
6JUL1813	A bag to be made up for Wellington which is now a posttown. To be sent in the Shifnal bag.
5AUG1817	A 'Shrewsbury & Wolverhampton' sack to be made up for the new Holyhead coach, containing the following bags: Wolverhampton (Bridgnorth enclosed) Shifnal (Newport & Wellington enclosed), Shrewsbury, Welshpool (Bishop's Castle enclosed), Oswestry (Ellesmere enclosed) and Whitchurch. (Bishop's Castle on Tuesday and Thursday into Ludlow bag by Worcester mail as before.)
15SEP1821	Bishop's Castle bag to be enclosed in the Shrewsbury on the nights it has been sent in the Welshpool.
21MAY1823	Bishop's Castle bag to be enclosed in the Welshpool bag on those days it is sent to Shrewsbury. This is not to interfere with sending it by Ludlow on other evenings.
20NOV1824	Distance to Ellesmere is 170 miles.
22DEC1824	Distance to Bridgnorth is 138 miles.
14NOV1825	In consequence of the establishment of a mailcoach between Welshpool and Ludlow the Bishop's Castle bag is to be enclosed in that for Ludlow every night and not to be sent via Welshpool 3 days in the week as at present. Letters for Montgomery to be sent to Bishop's Castle instead of Welshpool.
5OCT1826	Letters for Knighton to be sent to Ludlow instead of Presteigne.
1AUG1827	Letters for Clun to be sent to Ludlow instead of Bishop's Castle.
12SEP1831	Ellesmere bag to be enclosed in the Oswestry. Distance to Ellesmere is 179 miles.
5JAN1836	Letters for 15 places (including Handley and Tatternhall) to be sent to Whitchurch instead of Chester.

STAFFORDSHIRE

2JUN1797	Walsall bag to go in the Birmingham sack and be sent by the Liverpool coach to Coventry instead of by the Shrewsbury coach.
1NOV1799	A daily bag to be made up for Uttoxeter and enclosed in the Lichfield bag.
21APR1801	Letters for Dudley and Bilston should be taxed 8d as the distance is above 120 miles. They are only taxed 7d - the same as Birmingham.
4MAY1801	The Burton-on-Trent bag to be sent to Atherstone instead of Lichfield. This order should have been given several weeks ago.
JAN1808	See 'Making up the Bags'
6SEP1809	Printed delivery list of Lichfield.
11MAR1813	The distance London to Walsall through Coventry is 119 miles; from Walsall to London through Oxford it is 129 miles.
3OCT1815	All letters for the Potteries are to go to Uttoxeter instead of Newcastle. [But see the next.]
24OCT1815	Consequent on the introduction of the Leicester to Liverpool mailcoach the following changes to take place on Saturday 28th inst: Letters for Lane End, Lane Delph, Hanley, Burslem, Cobridge, Tunstall, Etruria and Longport to be sent to Uttoxeter instead of Newcastle. Cheadle to be sent to Uttoxeter instead of Stone. Sandbach to be sent to Uttoxeter instead of Middlewich. The London bags for Burton, Uttoxeter and Middlewich to be in a sack 'Burton and Middlewich' and given to the Manchester guard. [Printed delivery lists of Burton, Uttoxeter and Sandbach.]
9NOV1815	Abbots Bromley have made an arrangement with the postmaster of Lichfield by which they will receive their letters daily. The letters are to be sent there instead of Uttoxeter.
15JAN1816	Letters for Betley are to be sent to Newcastle not Uttoxeter.

8APR1816	Letters for Etruria are to be sent to Newcastle not Uttoxeter.
2APR1817	Alterations to commence on 4th April on the withdrawal of the Leicester & Liverpool coach: the bag for Burton to be enclosed in the Atherstone; the bag for Uttoxeter to be enclosed in the Lichfield; letters for Cheadle to be sent to Stone instead of Uttoxeter; letters for Lane End, Lane Delph, Stoke, Shelton, Hanley, Burslem, Cobridge and Tunstall to be sent to Newcastle instead of Uttoxeter.
23MAY1822	On and from Monday next the Burton-on-Trent bag to be enclosed in the Derby bag.
11JAN1823	The distance to Wolverhampton is 123 miles not 133.
3APR1823	The bag for Burton-on-Trent to be enclosed in the Leicester one.
10JUN1824	Letters for Fazeley, Cliff, Middleton, Kingsbury, Drayton, Wilnecote and Dosthill are to be sent to Hinckley instead of Tamworth. Postage - 9d.
3JUL1824	Letters for Polesworth should be sent in the Tamworth bag not that for Hinckley.
16JAN1826	In future letters for Bilstone are to be charged 10d instead of 9d.
27DEC1826	Rugeley a sub-office under Lichfield is 127 miles from London. Charge shouldbe 10d not 9d.
6JUN1828	A bag to be made up for Lawton to be enclosed in the Newcastle-under-Lyne bag. Postage 10d as the distance is 156 miles. [Delivery list of Lawton includes places such as Kidsgrove.]
21JUL1829	In future the letters for Wolseley Bridge (129 miles), Great Heywood (131 miles) and Abbots Bromley (139 miles) are to be taxed 10d.
6AUG1829	A bag to be made up for Bilstone and enclosed in the Birmingham bag. Rate 10d as the distance is 120 miles. Delivery list of Bilston.
6JAN1830	A bag to be made up for Rugeley - rate 10d. The Uttoxeter bag to go in the Rugeley bag.
14DEC1830	A bag to be made up for Eccleshall - distance 147 miles.
6JUL1836	On and from tomorrow morning the bags from Lawton, Newcastle, Stone and Stafford will arrive by the Birmingham mail instead of the Holyhead.

WARWICKSHIRE

29APR1801	Letters for Dunchurch to be charged 6d instead of 7d.
5JUL1804	The bag for Southam to be discontinued and the letters charged on Daventry.
3NOV1807	The Warwick bag is to be enclosed in the Daventry bag.
JAN1808	See 'Making up the Bags'
5JUL1808	The Warwick bag is to be enclosed in the Stratford-on-Avon bag and will be received in the same way.
28AUG1810	The Warwick bag is to be enclosed in the Coventry bag. It will be returned as usual via Stratford.
20NOV1809	Sutton Coldfield is in the delivery of Birmingham but letters directed via Lichfield are to be sent to Lichfield and probably many will be so directed.
6NOV1810	A bag to be made up for Dunchurch - postage 7d. The Rugby bag will be enclosed in the Dunchurch.
7NOV1810	The postage for Dunchurch is 8d.
25MAY1812	The Birmingham and Coventry bags for London will be carried by a stage coach but in the care of a regular mail guard who will deliver them to the Inland Office.
27MAY1812	The letters from Birmingham will be charged 8d, the distance being 109 miles.
10JUN1812	The bag from Coventry will be received as before by the Liverpool guard.
5AUG1817	Bags to be sent by the new Holyhead coach - Daventry, Dunchurch (Rugby enclosed), Coventry (Warwick enclosed) and Birmingham (Walsall enclosed).
23JUL1818	Letters for Leamington are to be sent to and charged on Daventry. The Warwick bag is to be enclosed in that for Daventry.
24JUL1818	Letters for Leamington to be sent to Daventry and charged 9d.

24MAY1821 On & from Monday evening next the letters for Southam are to be sent to Banbury. Letters for Leamington, Knowle and Solihull are to be sent to Warwick. The Warwick bag to be sent by Kidderminster mail via Banbury. The bags for Shipston, Kineton, Stratford-on-Avon, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster to be sent by the Worcester mail to Oxford. The letters for Wellesbourne are to be sent to Stratford-on-Avon.

25MAY1821 The Shipston, Kineton, Stratford, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster bags to be sent in a sack 'Shipston & Kidderminster'. The Bromsgrove and Kidderminster bags to be enclosed in the Stratford bag as usual.

5JUN1821 The Kineton bag is to be enclosed in the Stratford-on-Avon.

1DEC1821 Bag for Shipston to be enclosed in the Chipping Norton and sent by the Worcester mail. The bags for Kineton, Stratford, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster to be sent by the Birmingham mail via Banbury. Bromsgrove and Kidderminster bags to be enclosed in that for Stratford. Letters for Wellesbourne to be sent to Kineton.

8DEC1821 Kineton bag to be enclosed in the Stratford bag. Stratford, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster bags to be sent in the same sack as the Warwick bag. Wellesbourne letters to be sent to Stratford.

25JAN1822 Letters for Wellesbourne to be sent to Kineton. The Kineton and Stratford bags to be sent to Banbury.

18FEB1822 Leamington letters to be sent to Banbury. The same rate of postage to be charged as at present.

5JUL1822 The bag for Kineton to be sent to Stratford. Wellesbourne to be charged on Stratford. The bags for Stratford and Bromsgrove to be sent to Chipping Norton. They will return the same way after 6th inst. The bag for Kidderminster to be sent to Birmingham. It will return the same way.

5JUL1823 Leamington letters to be sent to Warwick instead of Banbury. The Southam letters must be tied up in a separate bundle & the amount of postage shown on the back of the letters.

5APR1825 Letters for Nuneaton are to be sent to Coventry instead of Hinckley.

2MAY1825 Letters for Sutton Coldfield to be sent to Birmingham instead of Lichfield.

27SEP1829 A letter written by the postmaster of Banbury, pp B. Churchill: "The Southam Letters and Newspapers are not now tied up together as they usually were, consequently some of them have been delayed a Day. I will thank you to cause the amount of the Southam letters to be placed on the outside of the Packet in order that as little delay as possible may be occasioned in making up the Southam Bag."

23NOV1829 The distance of Southam is 89 miles.

20FEB1830 A Bag to be made up for Leamington to be forwarded by the Banbury and Birmingham mail. Rate 9d.

6JAN1831 The distance from Inland Office to the post office in Dunchurch being only 79 miles the letters are to be taxed 8d.

6JUL1836 Bag to be made up for Southam. Distance 89 miles. Tax 9d. [Delivery list of Southam - 17 places taken from the delivery of Banbury.]

Letters for Knowle and Solihull to be sent to Birmingham instead of Warwick.

WORCESTERSHIRE

14APR1801 Letters for Upton-on-Severn should be charged 8d. It stands at 7d in the list.

21APR1801 Droitwich should be taxed 8d as the distance is above 120 miles. Only taxed 7d - the same as Birmingham.

25FEB1805 Bag for Tenbury to be made up on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays instead of only three times a week.

5JUL1805 Bag for Tenbury to be made up on Wednesdays.

JAN1808 See 'Making up the Bags'

19JUN1809 Bag for Stourport to be enclosed in the Stourbridge along with that for Kidderminster. [Stourport delivery list.]

8FEB1817	All letters for Brierley Hill, Brockmoor and Brittal Lane (generally directed near Stourbridge) are to be sent to Birmingham.
5AUG1817	New Holyhead mail to take bags for Bromsgrove and Stourbridge (comtaining Kidderminster which contains that for Bewdley). All to be enclosed in the Birmingham sack.
25MAR1819	Bromsgrove and Kidderminster bags should be sent in that for Stratford.
5APR1820	Bewdley and Stourport bags should be enclosed in the Stourbridge bags.
3AUG1820	A bag is to be made up for Tenbury every evening.
24MAY1821	See Warwickshire
25MAY1821	See Warwickshire
1DEC1821	See Warwickshire
8DEC1821	See Warwickshire
5JUL1822	See Warwickshire
6DEC1822	A bag to be made up for Dudley - postage 9d.
10DEC1822	Delivery list of Dudley.
5APR1825	The Stourport bag is to be enclosed in that for Kidderminster.
9OCT1826	The distance to Stourbridge is 124 miles.
14AUG1828	Letters for Oldbury are to be sent to Birmingham instead of Dudley.
3APR1829	Upton-on-Severn bag to be enclosed in the Tewkesbury bag instead of the Worcester bag.
30JUL1830	Bag to be made up for Droitwich. Rate of postage unchanged. [Delivery list of Droitwich.]
21NOV1832	Bag to be made up for Great Malvern. Rate 10d. Distance 123 miles. The bag to go in the Worcester sack. [Delivery list of Great Malvern.]
6JUL1836	The 'Birmingham and Stourport' sack containing the bags for Dudley, Stourbridge, Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley is to be sent by the Birmingham mail instead of the Holyhead. On and from tomorrow morning the above sack will arrive by the Birmingham mail instead of the Holyhead.

(to be continued)

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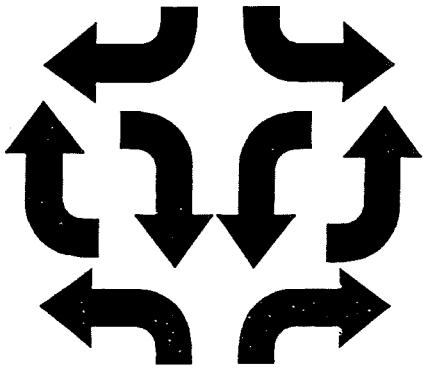
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THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 33)

Mr Churchill began 1824 by inspecting the offices at Stone and Uttoxeter where he also made a new contract, at a reduced price, for the Rugeley ride. He then went on to Cheadle to instruct the new deputy and to draw up a new contract for the ride to Stone. Then, two days were spent installing another new deputy, this time at Eccleshall. Mr Churchill's next call was at Ellesmere to draw up a new contract for the ride to Oswestry. At Liverpool he prepared for an alteration in the Birmingham and Liverpool mailcoach. [It is presumed in the time of departure etc.]

On 1st February, Mr Churchill arrived in Wolverhampton where he inspected the office and made "various regulations connected with the duty thereof." This was followed by an inspection of the penny posts at Shifnal, Broseley and Madeley.

Mr Churchill spent the first two days of March at Market Drayton, Hodnet, Peplow and Wollerton, arranging for those villages to receive their letters through Shrewsbury instead of Market Drayton. In the middle of the month, he had to go to Newport (Salop) as the post office there had been destroyed by fire and it was necessary to set up a temporary office. That accomplished, he went on to Hinckley to consider a memorial from Earl Shilton asking for a penny post to be carried by the Hinckley & Leicester ride. However, this would have delayed the London letters so it was arranged for a private messenger to carry the letters daily from Hinckley. [See Royal Mail in Leics & Rutland p83.] Mr Churchill then inspected the offices at Lutterworth and Rugby before going to Daventry on another application from Weedon for a post office. This was turned down, "every accommodation being afforded to the Village by the Ordnance Messenger to and from Daventry." The last week of March was spent in Birmingham, "engaged with Mr Johnson upon the alteration of the Liverpool and Birmingham Mail."

From 2nd to 6th April, Mr Churchill was occupied with the introduction of a mailcoach between Bridgnorth and Wolverhampton. His next task was to transfer the office at Wellington from the postmistress to her husband.

Mr Churchill next appeared in the Midlands on 9th May at Burton-on-Trent where he refused a request for a post office at Repton. However, a little later, he did recommend the opening of a sub-office at Fazeley "for the accommodation of that increasing neighbourhood." The establishment of a mailcoach between Lichfield, Walsall and Wolverhampton took up nearly a week. The last ten days of May were spent at Market Bosworth investigating the case of a missing letter with the result that the receiver was committed for trial and a new receiver installed.

Six days were taken up in June opening a sub-office at Fazeley, making the necessary arrangements at Hinckley and Lichfield, and regulating the delivery of letters for the adjacent villages. This was followed by an inspection of the penny posts at Sheepy, Twycross and Measham. [Appleby was not mentioned.] Next came a survey of the offices at Birmingham and Coleshill.

For the whole of July, Mr Churchill was in charge of the Wellington office, the postmaster having been declared insolvent.

After Mr Churchill had attended in mid-August the trial at Leicester of the former Market Bosworth receiver, he spent a week in the Birmingham area. First of all at Castle Bromwich where he installed a new receiver and altered the times of the post so as to "gain several hours in the delivery." At Handsworth, he arranged for the Wednesbury messenger to carry the letters earlier in the day. Towards the end of August, the loss of a letter from Luton to Lane End took him to the Potteries.

Mr Churchill spent only two days of September in the Midlands - at Shifnal altering the ride from there to Newport so as to give an earlier arrival of the post.

In early October, Mr Churchill and Mr Rideout met in Dudley for four days to discuss what improvements could be made to the Worcester and Wolverhampton ride so that it arrived at the latter place in time for the coach to Manchester.

November found Mr Churchill again spending nearly a month in charge of the Wellington office, securing the money owed by the former postmaster, and instructing the new appointee.

At the start of December, Mr Churchill was in Bridgnorth preparing for the withdrawal of the mailcoach to Wolverhampton. He returned to this on the 12th of the month when he re-established the horsepost. In the meantime he had been to Market Drayton to organise the carriage of the mail to and from Loggerheads where it met the Chester mailcoach. His last two tasks of the year were the acceleration of the rides between Newport and Shifnal, and between Uttoxeter and Rugeley.

Mr Karstadt spent six days in the Midlands in January 1824 - at Nottingham altering the crossposts there on the acceleration of the Leeds mailcoach. His only official business in the Midlands during February was a revision of the post between Nottingham and Derby so as to avoid the detention at Nottingham for nearly a day of the mail for Derby. [Readers might wish to refer to the article 'Derby-Nottingham-Newark (and Beyond)' in MM84/16 in connection with any mention of changes on the line of road Lincoln-Nottingham-Derby.]

For the first five days of March, Mr Karstadt was engaged at Derby putting in a new postmaster and making some "regulations in the Delivery." He then went on to Manchester on the withdrawal of the mailcoach to Sheffield via Glossop to make arrangements for serving the penny posts on that road.

Mr Karstadt had no further official business in the Midlands until near the end of June when he took some preparatory steps for introduction of a mailcoach from Lincoln to Nottingham and Derby. For most of July, he was in charge of the office at Leek as the postmaster was in financial difficulties. However the first half of August was spent travelling between Derby, Nottingham, Newark and Lincoln so as to complete the arrangements for the new mailcoach. This included discontinuing the rides and making out a new circulation list for Nottingham. Towards the end of the month, Mr Karstadt inspected the ride from Bakewell to Derby, the penny post at Matlock and the office at Ashbourne as well as the road from there to Wirksworth with a view to sending the ride that way. [Does he mean that Wirksworth, Matlock and Bakewell should be served from Ashbourne instead of Derby?]

Mr Karstadt spent the first eleven days of September at Leek installing a new deputy. Then, near the end of the month, he went to Northampton to investigate the state of the rides there with a view to reducing the prices. At the beginning of October, he was in Nottingham for two days preparing for the introduction of a ride to Derby. After a journey into Yorkshire and Lancashire, he returned to this matter on 17th December when he established a ride from Nottingham to Derby "in lieu of the irregular Mail Coach." He then went on to Leicester to prepare for a mailcoach from there to Birmingham.

Mr Rideout began 1824 by looking into three applications for penny posts. On 28th January he arrived in Minchinhampton to consider the possibility of a penny post to Chalford and Bisley. A fortnight later he was in Hay looking into an application from Glasbury. Then back to Minchinhampton to consider the merits of an application from Nailsworth. [See Local Posts of Midland Counties p 109.]

On 10th March, Mr Rideout was in Stratford-on-Avon to relet the ride to Bromsgrove. He immediately went on to Banbury to take charge of the office on the death of the postmaster, and to instruct the new deputy, a task which occupied him until 6th April. From Banbury he went on to Moreton in Marsh and Winchcombe to look into an application for a post from Cheltenham to Broadway, and for letters to Winchcombe to be sent from Broadway instead of Moreton. At the start of May, Mr Rideout was in the area of Kington and Leominster to see if the posts in that region could be improved. He then disappeared into Wales but re-emerged at Cheltenham near the end of the month to look into a complaint from Sir Francis Drake about the late delivery of letters at Keynsham Bank in that town.

Early June found Mr Rideout back in Chalford and Bisley on the matter of a penny post. Next came a journey to Hereford, Willersley, Eardisley and Kington on the matter of a possible post to Eardisley and a post from Kington to Eardisley. He went straight on to Worcester and Droitwich as he had received a complaint about the post between those two places.

Mr Rideout spent little time on official business in the Midlands during the three months. In July two days were taken up in installing a new postmaster at Stourport. In August, he considered an application for an alteration in the ride between Wotton-under-Edge and Cambridge Inn and for a receiving house at North Nibley. At the end of September, he looked into a request for the introduction of a mailcart between Bromsgrove and Kidderminster.

Travelling between Kidderminster, Dudley, Stourbridge and Bewdley to see how the Worcester and Wolverhampton ride could be altered so as to ensure its arrival at Wolverhampton in time for the Manchester mailcoach took up several days in October. Later that month, he established a penny post at North Nibley and instructed the receiver and the postmaster of Wotton-under-Edge about the operation of a penny post. The November journal appears to be missing. A request from Cheltenham for a mailcoach to Bath took Mr Rideout to the former town at the start of December. Finally complaints about letters being delivered opened necessitated a journey to Painswick and Stroud.

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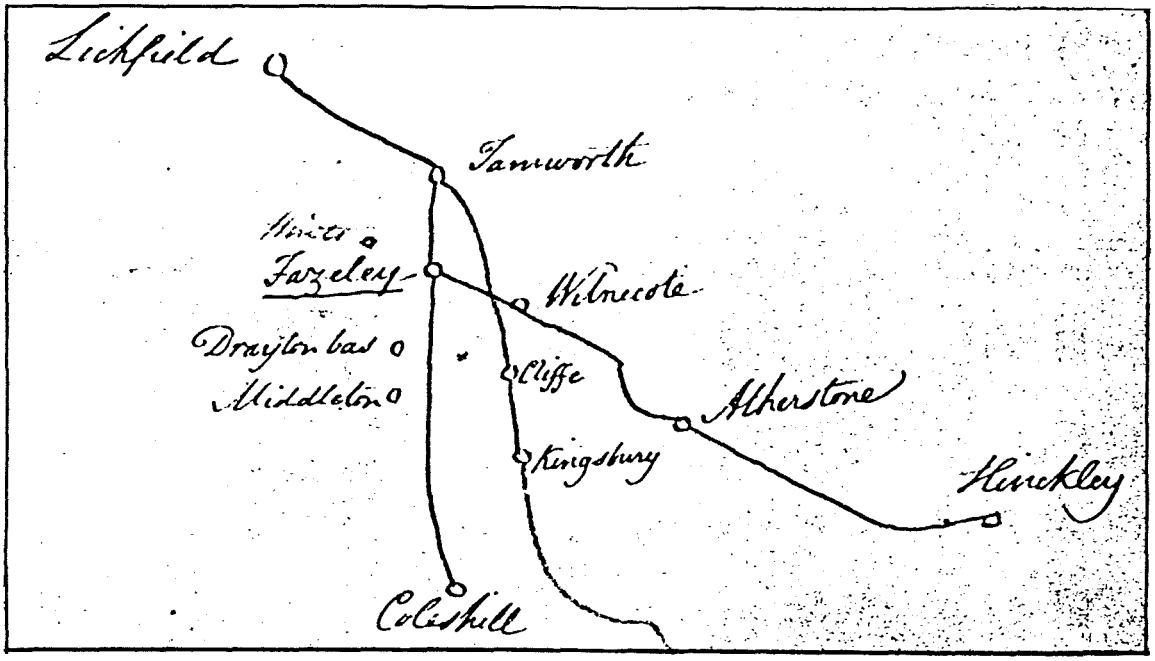
ADDENDA

A SUB-OFFICE AT FAZELEY

In May 1824, Robert Peel, "the Secretary of State for the Home Department", wrote to and met with Freeling on the matter of the post to Fazeley, a place of "rising Manufactures, and a populous and respectable Neighbourhood", where the inhabitants had the inconvenience of sending to Tamworth for their letters which limited the time available to write a reply.

Mr Churchill in his report said that the time for reply was limited to a little over two hours and that any letters not sent for were forwarded by a messenger from the Tamworth office on three days a week with a charge of one penny on each letter delivered at Fazeley. He agreed that because of "the extensive Manufactories and Navigation Trade", Fazeley and its neighbourhood had become a district of great importance and was entitled to much better postal facilities. The opening of a receiving office would benefit not only Fazeley but also the villages of Cliffe, Middleton, Drayton, Wilnecote, Dosthill and Bonehill. As the down Chester mailcoach stopped at Hinckley for breakfast and the up mailcoach stopped at Lichfield, there would be ample time at both places to make up a bag for Fazeley, giving it a daily communication with all parts of the country, and he proposed that Fazeley be made a sub-office under Hinckley and Lichfield. The bag would be left by the down mail at 9.30 a.m. and would return at 3 p.m.

Mr Churchill further proposed that the receiver should have a salary of £10 p.a. with the privilege of demanding a fee of one penny for the delivery of letters. He concurred with Peel's wish that the office should be opened at Mr Hacket's - the White Lion Inn - which was well situated for the convenience of the town and a place where the mailcoach generally stopped. [Ref: Post 40/264/1824]



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DROITWICH'S POSTS

A Captain Bearcroft complained in July 1824 about the inconvenience caused at Droitwich by the late arrival of the post from Worcester.

In his report Mr Rideout gave details of the posts at Droitwich. The letters from Birmingham and the North arrived by the Birmingham and Bristol mailcoach at 9 p.m., while letters from Gloucester, Bristol and the West arrived at 3.40 a.m. by the same mailcoach on its way to Birmingham. However, the mail from London and towns on the road to Worcester was carried to Droitwich by a foot messenger who left Worcester between 10.10 and 10.20 a.m. and arrived at Droitwich between 11.45 a.m. and noon. He returned at 1.30 p.m., arriving in Worcester soon after 3.

A horsepost would take about an hour to carry the bag, giving at least an additional hour for the people of Droitwich to answer these letters. The cost of such a post would be £54.12.0 p.a., set against which was the wage of the messenger of £36.10.0.

Freeling recommended that this should be tried experimentally for one year.

[Ref: Post 40/375/1824]

A CHANGE AT HANDSWORTH

In July 1824, A Mr Thornbery, who had recently moved to Handsworth, complained that although three mails (Kidderminster, Manchester and Holyhead) passed through there daily and Birmingham was only two miles away, it was not possible to reply to letters the same day. He pointed out that the mails from the South and West of England arrived in Birmingham at 6 a.m., the London and other mails at 9 a.m. and the "North Mails" [the Holyhead mail-coach?] at 4 p.m. Yet, the letters were not delivered at Handsworth until about 4 p.m. and on Mondays there was no delivery at all. He asked that a penny post receiving office be opened at Handsworth and the letters be dispatched from Birmingham as soon as possible after the arrival of the mail from London. Mr Thornbery also commented that the letter carrier extracted a penny from every individual for each letter, at which "I by no means grumble but would more cheerfully pay it in the morning than the evening." Also, the letter carrier had said that some days he had fifty letters to deliver, other days forty but generally not less than thirty exclusive of the letters of Bolton & Watt of the Soho.

Mr Churchill reported that Handsworth was served by the Wednesbury messenger who did not leave Birmingham until 2 p.m. with the result that the letters at Handsworth were not delivered until between 3 and 4 p.m. However, he had arranged that in future the Wednesbury messenger should leave Birmingham immediately after the arrival of the Liver-pool and Manchester mailcoaches at 10 a.m. which would enable him to deliver at Handsworth soon after 10 a.m., so giving ample time for answering the same day.

The request for a penny post receiving office was turned down by Mr Churchill since, although Handsworth was only two miles from Birmingham, the two were connected by buildings and if he were to propose a receiving office at Handsworth other places on the outskirts of the town would demand similar facilities. Also he doubted that there would be sufficient letters to meet the expense of a salary of a receiver as "it being generally preferred to send them to the principal office particularly when opportunities are occurring the whole of the day, as is the case between Handsworth and Birmingham." Mr Churchill finished his report by stating that the letters delivered at Handsworth were subject to the penny rate and were brought into the account of the Birmingham Penny Post.

[Ref: Post 40/454/1824]

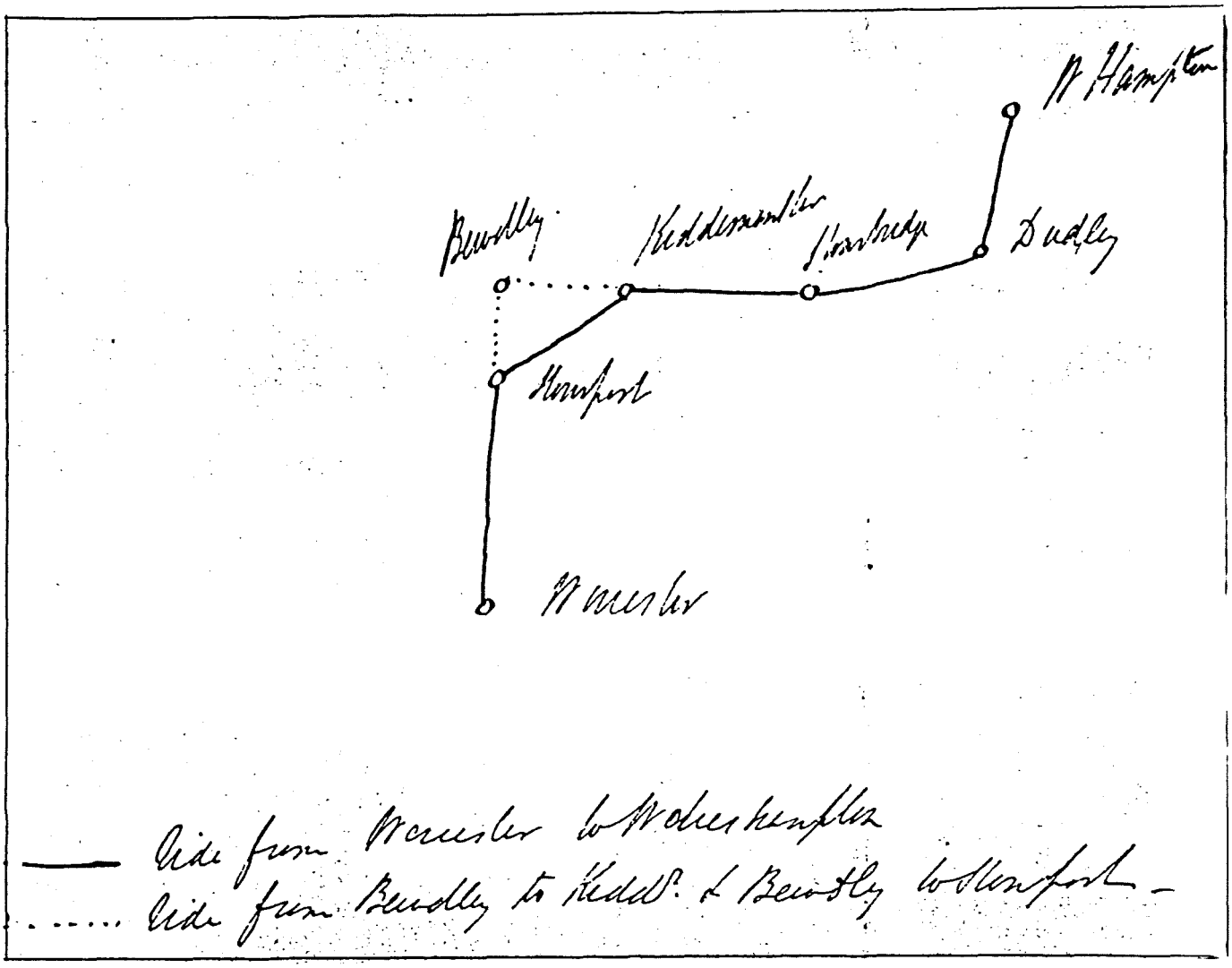
THE WORCESTER AND WOLVERHAMPTON RIDE

In a report dated 27th October 1824, Mr Rideout said that the time of departure from Worcester of the ride to Wolverhampton was determined by the time of arrival of the Bristol to Birmingham mailcoach. Although the ride was performed in the dark during the winter, the speed had to be 7½ miles per hour so that it could arrive in Wolver-hampton in time to allow the letters to be sorted for the Birmingham to Manchester mailcoach. Any delay to the Bristol mailcoach, as had been caused by floods recently, or to the ride itself meant that it arrived in Wolverhampton too late for the letters to be sent on by the Manchester mailcoach. The northbound ride was scheduled to leave Worcester at 3.30 a.m. and arrive in Wolverhampton at 8.48 a.m. In the opposite direction, the departure from Wolverhampton was at 10 a.m. with an arrival in Stourport at 2 p.m. and Worcester at 7 p.m. [No reason was given for the southbound ride being detained in Stourport for about three hours is not given. Did the London letters come in through Wolverhampton and go out through Worcester?]

Mr Rideout proposed that the ride could be brought into Wolverhampton twenty minutes earlier by leaving out Bewdley and going direct from Stourport to Kidderminster. This would benefit Stourport which would receive its northern and London letters thirty minutes earlier. He recommended that Bewdley be served by a double ride to and from Kidderminster. This would leave Bewdley at 5 a.m., with the letters for Wolverhampton and the North, to reach Kidderminster at 5.30 a.m. to meet the ride from Worcester, and return at 6 a.m. with the letters from the South. The second ride would leave Bewdley at 12.15 p.m., with the letters for the South, to reach Kidderminster at 12.45 p.m. in time for the ride from Wolverhampton, and return at 1.15 p.m.

Although the only drawback to this arrangement was that Bewdley would have thirty fewer minutes in which to reply to the Worcester and Southern letters, Freeling refused to sanction the proposal. Mr Rideout's response, contained in a report dated 17th December, was to suggest that the first ride should go at the times previously suggested, but the second ride should leave at 1.30 p.m. not for Kidderminster but for Stourport which would be reached at 2 p.m. The return to Bewdley would be at 2.30 p.m. By this means Bewdley would have the same time to answer the letters from Worcester etc - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 2.30 to 10 p.m. to answer its Wolverhampton and northern letters.

[Ref: Post 40/674/1824]



TAILPIECE

John Calladine has sent the following extract from the 'Antique Collector' by Verite (sic) Reily Collins:

"Have you ever wondered why our mail is known as post? Apparently in olden days the mailcoaches would hasten deliveries by hanging sacks of mail on posts outside villages which would then be collected by the 'post'man. Between Long Compton and Stratford-on-Avon there are seven of these posts by the roadside."

John was tempted to write to "Verite" and ask her why Sir Brian Tuke, Master of the Post, kept the existence of mailcoaches a secret for about 350 years.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

It is intended that this will appear in mid-January. I hope that it is not tempting providence to say that I hope to take the Post 14 extracts further. What is definite that there will be much on the happenings of 1825 in the Midlands. The rest will depend upon what is sent to:

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