MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB)
POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Number 182, April 2014

I hate to tempt providence by saying that this will be the last Midland Mail that I will produce, since I find that if I vow never to do a particular thing then circumstances will dictate that particular vow will be broken. However, I do feel that it is time to pass the editorship into new hands. Both of my stints in the editor's chair have been thoroughly enjoyable and I thank all those who have in any way contributed to the production of Midland Mail. Brian Atkins has agreed, subject to ratification at the AGM, to take over the position. I ask that you all support him by producing a regular supply of articles.

OBITUARIES

It is with great sadness that we announce the deaths in the last few months of two members who have, in very different ways, made considerable contributions to the study of postal history and both of whom will be greatly missed.

Geoff Oxley was probably most well known for his book on 'The English Provincial Local Posts' which, although it was published over forty years ago, I still find it a valuable source of reference for areas outside the Midlands. Geoff was the editor of the Northamptonshire section of the first edition of the British County Catalogue. Although he was always prepared to offer advice and provide information to other Northants collectors, he moved on to other fields. His book on Postal Rates to Europe is a valuable source of information, covering much ground not to be found in the Moubrays' 'magnus opus'. Sometime ago, he mentioned to me, on a chance meeting in the BPMA, that he was considering taking up one of the counties neighbouring Northamptonshire. Possibly, it was mention of the Society producing an updated BCC that led him to rejoin the Society. Geoff is best summarised as one who was totally dedicated to postal history.

Orman (Tim) de Rousset-Hall had interests ranging widely from 'Flag Cancels' to the modern handstamps of sub-offices. He was of considerable help to me when I was collecting information for the book on Leicestershire. His generous and warm-hearted nature is reflected in the fact that, after an appeal for information in Midland Mail, he allowed me, initially a total stranger, to take away over a number of weeks his boxes of Leicestershire postmarks. The section on the different types of double circle handstamps was compiled entirely from notes that he gave me Thereafter, we met occasionally on Saturday mornings at his home in Market Harborough, when our conversation revealed his wide knowledge of postmarks and railways.

Tim was a member of the Post Office Users' National Council and of the local Post Office Advisory Council. It was in the latter role that he gave me some useful introductions. His activities in the local community involved a time as Chairman of the Market Harborough Urban Council as well as being an active member of both the Local History Group and the Theatre and Drama Society. I am sure that Tim will now be driving round the celestial sub-offices with his certificates of posting and charming the staff into giving him good impressions of their handstamps.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on **26th April 2014,** beginning at **1 p.m.** It will be followed at **1.30 p.m.** by the usual auction.

Please note that our May meeting, which is held in conjunction with Worpex, will take place on **10th May**, starting at the usual time of **1.30 p.m.**, will be held at a new venue Tudor Grange Academy, Worcester WR3 8HN, and not at the old venue as stated on the programme.

THE JANUARY MEETING

The meeting at Saint Germain's Church in Birmingham on 11th January was devoted to the topic of '*Picture Postcards from WWI*'. Unfortunately, I was not able to be present so what follows is based upon the notes submitted by some of the members who displayed material. I thank those who took the trouble to do this, either on the day or by post, and Mick Gill for co-ordinating the reports.

Mick Gill showed postcards of Newark, beginning with views of the troops leaving the town, including the departure of the Sherwood Foresters on 14th August 1914. This was followed by cards showing a parade drill at the grammar school of new recruits, and the drill & Musketry Staff at the Royal Engineers Training Centre. Three examples of the Engineers building wooden bridges over the River Trent were followed by cards showing the participants in two cross country races in 1917. Other postcards showed the Engineers clearing snow in the Market Place and a concert party, many with 'blacked-up' faces. As to the civilian contribution, a card showed munitions workers at Ransome & Co, one of only five ball bearing manufacturers at the time. The bonfire held in the Market Place on 18th November to celebrate the end of the war and floats in the Peace Parade held on 19th July 1919 were depicted on separate cards, while another showed a Wesleyan Chapel decorated for a Peace Service. Finally, for the President's benefit, Mick ended with Novelty pull-out postcards of Nottingham, one a soldier, the other views from an 'Armoured Aeroplane' For his second display, Mick showed a series of 'silk' postcards sent from France by Mick's uncle to his wife and young son. One still retained its original cellophane envelope with a pencilled '90', presumably the cost, 90 centimes.

Alan Marshall began with two decorative Christmas cards produced by a prisoner of war in the camp at Ruhleben. Then came a postcard from Alexandria which showed the Base Army Post Office cancel and censor's mark. Two picture postcards, one of which was titles 'Greetings over the Sea', showed circular naval cancels. We then saw two examples of unstamped, censored forces mail in the form of postcards of March 1917 and April 1918 from Abbeville and Le Havre respectively. An eight-man machine gun team was depicted on another card. Alan ended with an envelope sent to Nottingham from Rhodesia in April 1919 and which was redirected to 'Lt Parker, 33rd Battalion, Machine Gun Corps, France.

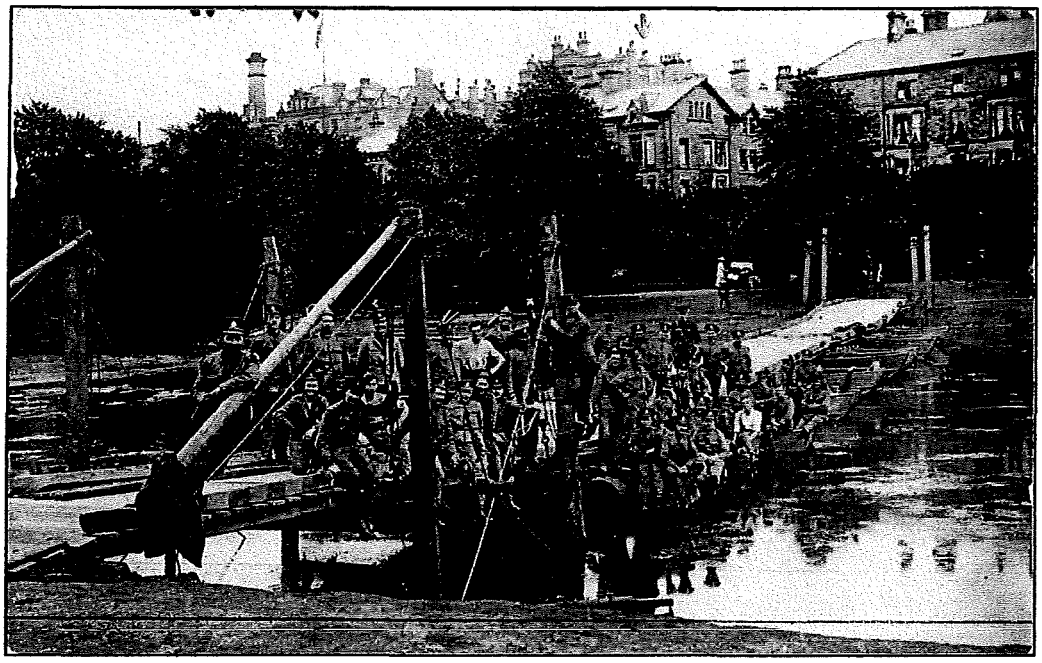
Guy Bridges started with two postcards of Park Hall, Oswestry No. 2 Camp, otherwise known as the West Camp. One of these cards showed German officers who were still Prisoners of War in 1919. Guy then produced a number of postcards of Prees Heath Camp, Whitchurch showing the huts being erected, the post office and the Military Hospital. He ended with a selection of postcards to a nurse at the Lady Foster Hospital, Much Wenlock, which showed the staff and soldiers in their hospital uniforms.

Derek Smeathers' first contribution consisted items to or from Northamtonshire, the first few of which were concerned with censorship or, in three cases, the lack of it. The name of the ship had been cut out from a card sent from a troopship on its way to the Dardenelles invasion, while a card from France with a message about 'Zepps' had also been censored. However, the censor did miss a message about thirty-eight soldiers sleeping in a cattle truck. Derek followed this with four comic cards, one of which showed German soldiers frightened by the Northamptonshire Regiment!! Among other items in Derek's first display were: a card from Salonica to the daughter of the Wanford postmaster; a red 'PAID' datestamp on a 'free' card from a soldier to prevent any surcharge; a Royal Flying Corps postcard of 1916 sent to Weedon; and a photographic card of an early Field Post Office in a tent with the staff of Royal Engineers. Derek's second display began with two postcards advertising the Northamptonshire Regiment with details of rates of pay. There was a card sent by a soldier of the regiment from the Battle of the Somme. Two cards sent by men of the Royal Welch Fusiliers were about their 'billets' in Northampton. Two other cards of the Welch Fusiliers at Northampton showed respectively men relaxing in the YMCA and a parade in Abington Park. We saw a Christmas card which had been made by a soldier using pen and inks as well as a typewriter. One of two cards of silhouette pictures relating to life in the Army showed a soldier waving at young ladies and was titled 'Signalling Practice'.

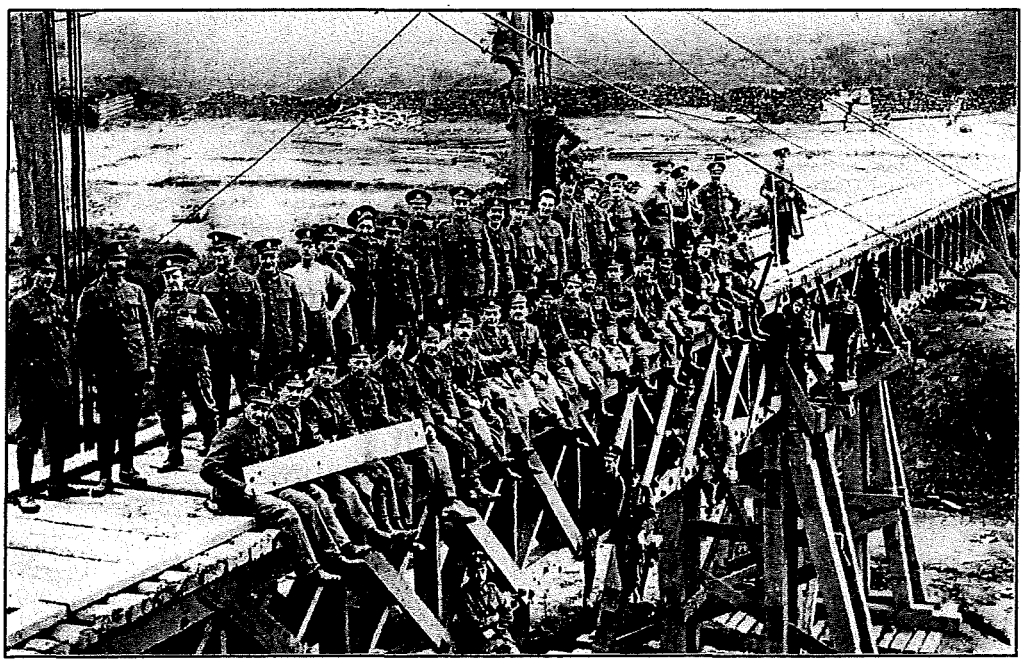
Richard Farman displayed postcards relating to the Royal Engineers at Buxton. Ten of the cards were written home showing all the aspects of training that took place in and around Buxton including digging trenches, route marches, field kitchens and the main training of bridge building across the lake in the Pavilion Gardens. These bridges included a Pontoon Bridge and a Light Bridge which could carry 7½ ton trucks. However, the biggest bridge, the Heavy Bridge, was built across a valley on the outskirts of Buxton. Richard's second offering was related to the Devonshire Hospital. A letter sheet which showed the massive dome of the building was followed by a series of cards, drawn in cartoon form, depicting the treatments in the thermal baths of the wounded soldiers. Some looked rather painful. All of these had been drawn by Private F C Jones of the Welch Fusiliers

Further display were given by Stuart Geddes (Canadian, Australian and American War Cemetery Monuments), Alan Godfrey (Australian photographer Capt George Hubert Wilkins MC), Clive Jones (Ambulance Trains and family 'silk' cards) and Bob Viney (family 'silk' cards).

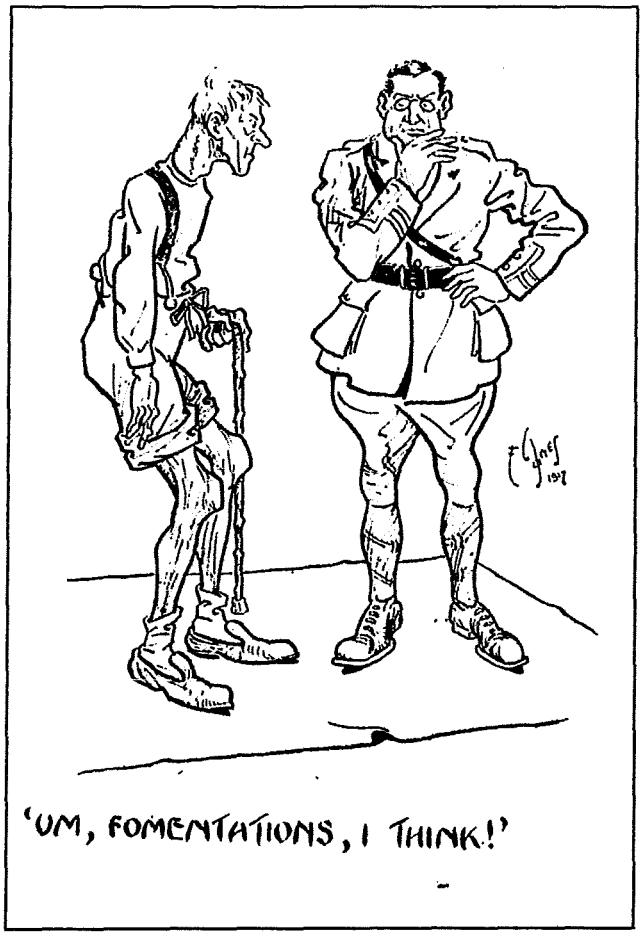
Some items from Richard Farman's display.



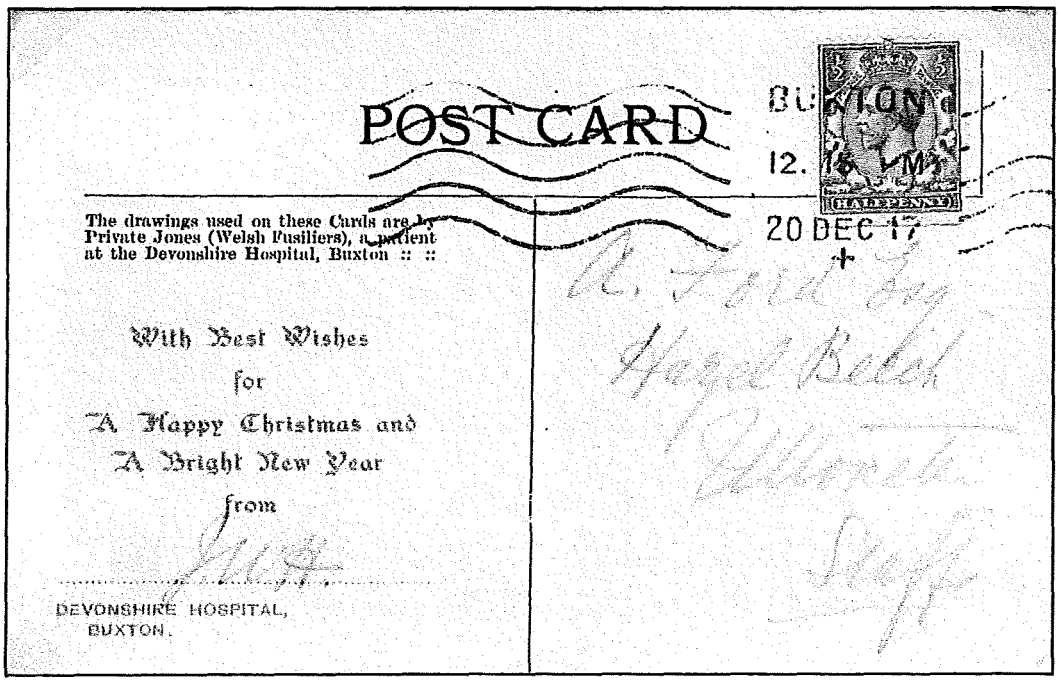
Part of the message reads, "P. C. Was taken last week when pontooning. Follow the arrow head for Muggins & note I'm standing on a barrel & looking at home on it." Sent from Buxton on 29th August 1915.



The message starts, "The Heavy Bridge built by our Coy. I'm not amongst the chaps. It's a fine job for 3 weeks work mostly in wet weather." On the reverse is part of a Buxton machine cancel for 8th July 1916 with the adhesive cancelled by a 3VOS 498 of Manchester. The card was sent to Turnham in Middlesex.



A card drawn by Private Jones of the Welch Fusiliers, a patient at the Devonshire Hospital, Buxton. A total of eighteen cards drawn by Private Jones appear to have been published by the Devonshire Hospital.



The reverse of the card shown above.

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

The meeting at the Black Country Museum on 15th February attracted 20 members and guests, a good turnout for this mid-winter event. The afternoon was devoted to members' single board displays of 'Postal History from World War 1'. If anyone thought they had nothing in their collection from that period, they soon discovered how wrong they were.

ALAN GODFREY began with material from Ruhleben Camp, sited on a racecourse near Spandau, which housed both British and Empire civilians. Many had been sailors on merchant ships visiting Germany when war was declared. We were shown the camp's own postage stamps, prepared for internal use only. After objections by German philatelists, of all people, the service closed in 1916. Alan also showed us three local Warwickshire items of the period.

CHRIS JACKSON had censored mail from soldiers 'on active service' and printed postcards from soldiers, with sentences crossed-out to comply with censorship regulations. There was a registered envelope from Barnards Green, Malvern, sent to the Caroline Islands on 17th April 1915. It was opened and re-sealed by the Japanese Post Office and returned to the sender via Yokahama and Nagasaki. Other WW1 items included an attractive advertising envelope sent from Allcock's, the fishing equipment manufacturers in Redditch, to Copenhagen on 14th January 1915 and an envelope (with contents) from Redditch to Philadelphia dated 26th April 1917.

BRIAN ATKINS showed postcards and postmarks from WW1 camps at Park Hall, Oswestry, Bettisfield, Whitchurch and Prees Heath, all in Shropshire. The Park Hall items included cards with three different cancels of the camp and a very attractive lady showing her "patriotism". A card of Hanmer village had a scarce example of the 'Bettisfield Camp' skeleton stamp. The cards and cancels of Prees Heath included an example of the '*Press* Heath Camp B.O.' error and the corrected 'Prees Heath' that replaced it.

GUY BRIDGES also had material from Park Hall Camp. We saw a 1916 registered letter from the camp and a parcel post label with 6d and 2d stamps cancelled by the circular rubber 'Park Hall/ Oswestry' parcel cancel, with a 1919 'Park Hall Camp B.O./Oswestry' circular datestamp alongside. There were Prisoner of War letter-forms from German officers at Park Hall in 1918/19 showing four different 'PC' (censored) marks. Other highlights included a postcard from Hamburg to an Officer at Western Camp, Park Hall, in 1919 and an envelope to Germany with an "Examined by British Military Censorship" label, in red, and a scarce violet oval "Park Hall West Camp/Oswestry' stamp struck in November of that year.

ROY SUMMERS displayed postcards, mainly from Wolverhampton. They included a photo of the war memorial in St Peters Gardens and a Union flag with a patriotic inscription beneath, "Every Man This Day Will Do His Duty". There was a card of the interior of a munitions factory showing-off its first week's output and a real photo card of a German field gun captured at Loos on 25th September 1915. Roy finished with an item he himself described as a "cheat", because it dated from WW2, but what meaning was the label "Mail Violated In Transit" intended to convey?

STUART GEDDES had postcards from German field hospitals, specifically dental hospitals, with various cachets. (The Allies never had dental hospitals.) We saw a cigarette card with a picture of one of those dental hospitals at work. To complete the dental theme, there was a 1919 letter from a dental company in America.

RICHARD FARMAN told us the story of the dastardly air raid on Burton on Trent on 31st January 1916 by three Zeppelins, none of which were intended to bomb Burton but, by a dreadful string of coincidences, did so. 15 people were killed and 72 injured. In particular, Shobhall Street was badly damaged by HE and incendiary bombs. Richard illustrated the event with contemporary postcards, including eye-witness accounts. Ethel Salt wrote "All round us here in ruins but we have escaped wonderfully".

JAN YOUNG also displayed picture postcards and letters sent from a Bromsgrove soldier in France to Evelyn, initially his girlfriend. They married when he was on leave and happily he survived the war. Jan's description of further wartime cards only as "pretty ladies' cards" did not do them full justice.

JOHN CALLADINE put up a series of Post Office Telegraphs forms, not used for their intended purpose but summarising each Saturday's official war news. They were undated but the contents, including the sinking of the cruiser "Pathfinder' and the fall of Antwerp to the Germans, indicated dates between August 1914 and January 1915, at the beginning of the war. The remains of a parcel post label, used to stick one form to its notice board, revealed that they came from the Wollaston, Stourbridge, sub-office. He concluded by taking us to the very end of the war and showing his father's demobilisation and identity document, with four handstamps of Hucknall, Notts.

ERIC LEWIS never fails us but he limited his display to three items, all as unusual as we would expect from Eric. We saw the front and back of a parcel posted to a navy diver interned in Holland on 10th December 1914, with a patriotic parcel post "on military service" label on the front and a "Parcel for Prisoner of War/ Opened by Censor and officially re-closed" label on the back, while a hand-illustrated cover from Army Post Office S36 bore a delightful watercolour of an officer, a lady and a maid 'holding' the APO circular handstamp of 15th August 1818.

ALAN SPENCER's display concerned the Canadian Expeditionary Force which, with a standing army of only 3,110 men, managed to assemble over 33,00 troops and embark them in the largest convoy to cross the Atlantic. A press release of 19th September 1914 contained details of the Canadian force and we saw postcards of the convoy en route to Britain together with cards and letters written on the way (for which no British postage charge was made). An example of the special rubber handstamp used by the Canadian postal corps was shown . This stamp was replaced by a steel stamp in January 1915 and Alan had a card with proof strikes dated 7th March 1915, just before the handstamp was returned to Canada. (Thereafter the Canadian Army used the British postal service.) There was a postcard from Canada to one of the soldiers training on Salisbury plain and a picture card of the CEF marching in the Lord Mayor's Show of November 1914.

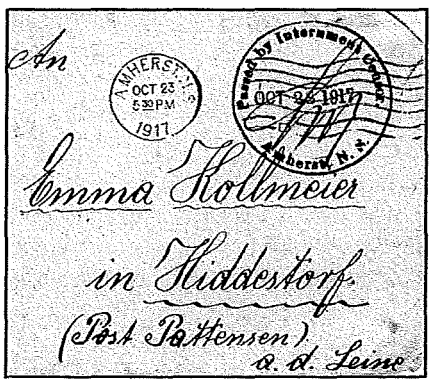
CLIVE JONES chose to show items from the WW1 period, although not always directly connected with the war. There was an item posted on the first day of the war from Sheffield to Germany and consequently returned from London. A card sent from London to Copenhagen in late 1914 had been censored. He then brought to our attention the variable colour of British halfpenny postage stamps in 1914. This was because, before the war, the green ink had come from Germany. The variation was well illustrated with the examples shown.

MICK GILL began with a Fred Spurgin patriotic postcard, "We can hold our own", of a boy and girl fending off a German goose, postmarked at Weston, Notts, in October 1914. A Newark postcard to a prisoner of war in Krefield in 1915 had a 'Post Free Prisoner of War' cachet in red. An envelope with the crest of the Royal Fusiliers was cancelled with a Clipstone Camp, Notts, strike. A comic postcard, "Keep the home-fires burning" showed a child burning his German-made toys. A Belgian card sent to North Leverton from France in September 1917 carried a field censor mark and was re-directed to Smethwick. Most unusual was a "'Wounded Soldier in Hospital' red triangular cachet, the only mark on a postcard sent from Salisbury to Nottingham in May 1918 and, finally, a postcard from a British prisoner of war in the Netherlands, en route home, bore a 'London FS Paid' Krag cancellation.

ALAN MARSHALL completed the first round of displays with Nottinghamshire correspondence from WW1. There was a 1915 censored envelope from FPO144 to John Player and Son Ltd, the famous tobacco manufacturer. A well-travelled envelope had collected 15 circular datestamps and three boxed instructional marks over a three month period. It was sent to the BMEF in 1916, redirected and returned on 11th July. A 1917 postcard from Nottingham military hospital to Guernsey advised of the railway facilities available for visiting soldiers in hospital and, also from 1917, was a pre-printed Soldier's Club envelope. There were several examples of Sherwood Foresters' prisoner of war postcards with various camp datestamps and censors' strikes, including Gottingen, Berlin Hospital, Limberg, Gustrow, Doberitz, Perchin and a rare Chemmitz pin-perf censor's mark.

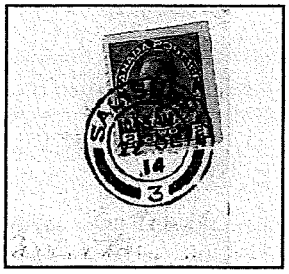
Half a dozen members then offered second displays and our chairman would have contributed another, had space allowed. The content of these can only be summarised briefly. Alan Godfrey had a selection of WW1 correspondence, most addressed to Welford on Avon, including several "honour" cards, where the writer certified that no useful information was being disclosed. Brian Atkins displayed a range of prisoner of war cards and covers mailed by German prisoners back to Germany from camps at Shrewsbury and Oswestry. Guy Bridges had many interesting items from Shropshire including a framed 'Attingham Park Aux Hospital, Shrewsbury' used in 1914 and a 1918 envelope endorsed "Soldier in hospital", unstamped but with the 'Auxiliary 'A' Hospital, Bridgnorth' cachet. Richard Farman told the remarkable story of Lily Thomas who sent 5,000 parcels independently and 21,000 officially from Burton on Trent to the troops. He also showed maps printed on the backs of German railway wagon labels, collected by sharp-eyed prisoners of war. Alan Spencer had a piece of trench art, a letter opener made from cartridge cases, letters from German prisoners held at Amherst in Canada and correspondence from some of the 8,000 Canadians of German or Austrian extraction held in internment camps in Vernon and Nova Scotia. Finally, to complete the afternoon, Alan Marshall showed nine sheets of registered, returned and censored mail from 1914 to 1921. Naval items included envelopes from the British cruisers, HMS Carrysfort (1915) and HMS Agincourt (1917) with examples of the seven and eight lined circular Naval stamps.

The Chairman commented on the breadth of material displayed and thanked all those who made a contribution.



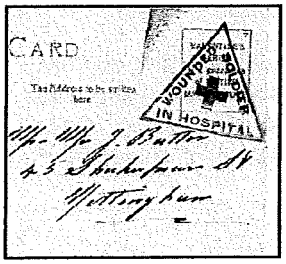
A letter sent from a German POW held at Amherst Camp in Canada.

Canadian stamp accepted by the UK post office at Salisbury without surcharge. (Alan Spencer)





Postcard commemorating the 'dastardly' raid by three Zeppelins at Burton on Trent when many were killed and severe damage inflicted. (Richard Farman)



An unusual cachet, struck in red, the only mark on a postcard sent from Salisbury to Nottingham in May 1918. (Mick Gill)

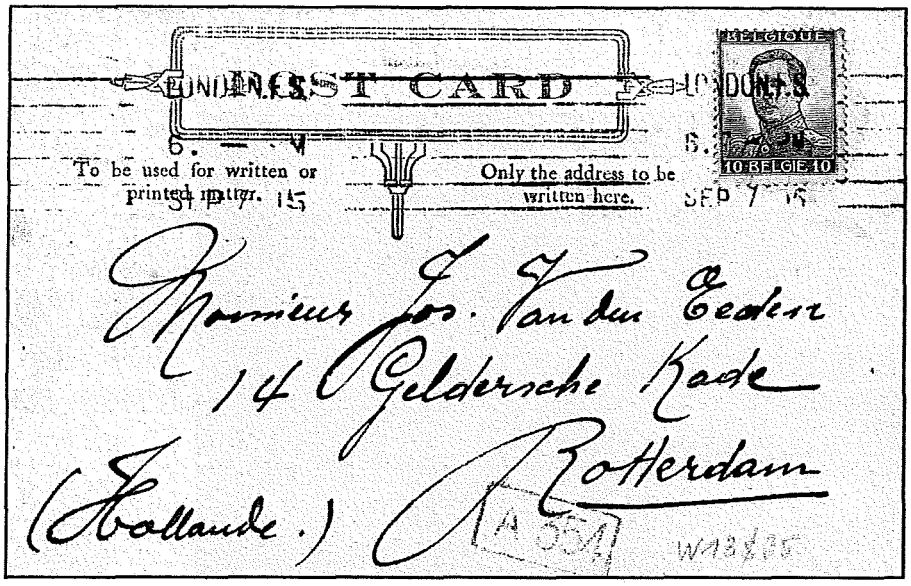


A reduced illustration of a hand-illustrated cover, in the form of an attractive watercolour of an officer, a lady and a maid - from Army Post Office S36. (Eric Lewis)

TWO WW1 ITEMS FROM THE EDITOR

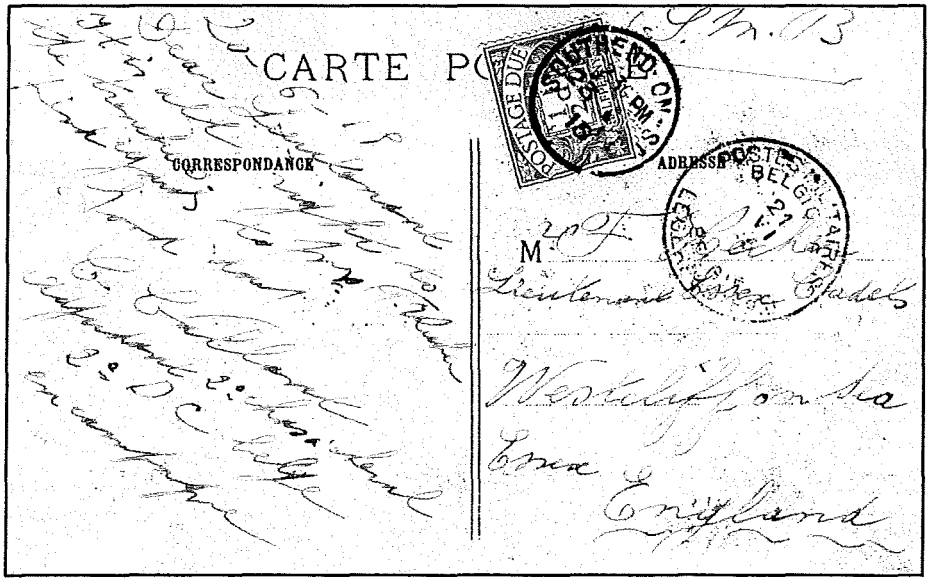
I am not sure how widely it is known amongst philatelists in this country that, in 1915, Belgian refugees were allowed to use on mail in this country any Belgian stamps that they had brought with them. A set of instructions regarding the mail of Belgian refugees was issued with the Post Office Circular of 20th April 1915. However, that circular in the bound volumes at the BPMA is not accompanied by the sheet containing the instructions. I would be very grateful to hear from anyone who knows the details contained in that supplementary sheet.

The plain postcard (reduced in size) shown below, written at Chislehurst on 7th September 1915, is franked with the 10c 'Pellens' issue of April 1913. It was cancelled by a machine at the Foreign Section, London.



An entry in the Post Office Circular for 11th August 1914 stated that unpaid or underpaid mail from H.M. Forces, whether serving in this country or abroad, was to be surcharged at the single Inland rate only. The P.O.C. for 1st September 1914 contained an instruction that mail from British troops serving on the Continent was to be delivered to the addressees without charge, whether unpaid or underpaid.

It would appear from the postcard below (reduced in size), which has been treated as an Inland postcard, that this latter concession did not apply to the troops of our allies. It is endorsed 'S.M.B.' – Service Militaire Belgique and has been struck with an unnumbered 'POSTES MILITAIRES BELGIQUE' handstamp. The lack of a number makes it difficult to tell from where it was sent, but the picture side of the card shows a street scene in Senlis, about 30 km north-east of Paris. The ½d postage due would have been the Inland postcard rate.





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153-157 London Road
Derby DE1 2SY

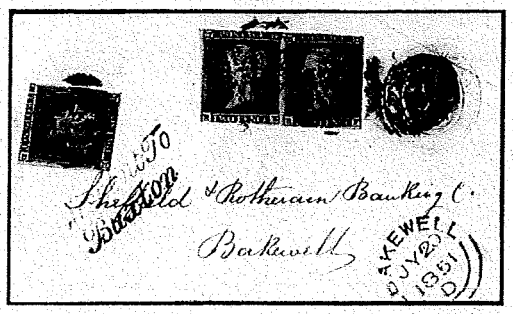
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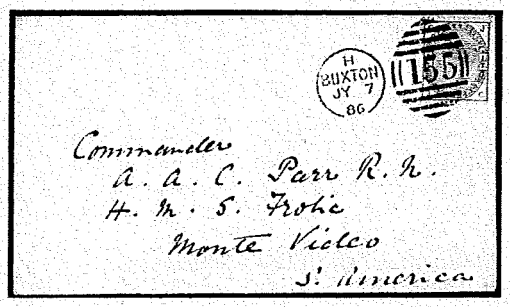
The Cavendish Gallery
7 Princeton Court, Putney
London SW15 1AZ

Over 60 years' Service to Philately

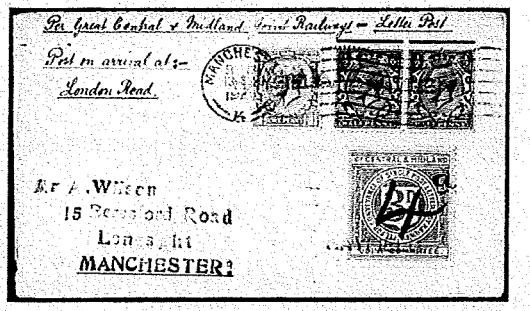
Auction June 2014

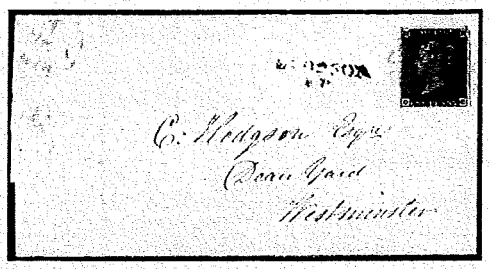


Cavendish's June 2014 auction will include the Stuart Smith Collection of Derbyshire Postal History, 1676-1900, with many 1d Black covers and particularly strong sections of Bakewell and Buxton.



Other specialised G.B. Postal History collections in this auction will include the Norman Higson Penny Posts (e.g. the Unique? Manuscript "Py Post" beneath a red "TEWKESBURY", ex Upton-on-Severn; as illustrated in Geoff Oxley's 'Penny Posts' book), the Mike Oxley collections of Durham/Northumberland, the Geoff Oxley Hertfordshire/Oxfordshire, the Stephens Yorkshire (in 50+ volumes) and much more.





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MIDLAND POST OFFICES OPENED OR CLOSED DURING 2013

by Ken Smith

BIRMINGHAM

Corporation Street	relocated 22-8-2013
Dunster Road, Birmingham 37	closed by July 2013

DERBYSHIRE

Alvaston, Derby	relocated 6-6-2013
Ashford-in-the-Water, Bakewell	closed 18-3-2013; Hosted Outreach started 24-4-2013
DERBY B.O. (Midland Road)	closed 11-5-2013
Derby City	opened 13-5-2013; (Crown Office, Babington Court)
Bedford Street (TSO), Derby	replaced by Stockbrook Road (PO Local) 11-11-2013
Middleton, Matlock	closed 29-7-2013; Hosted Outreach, Nelson Arms (c/o Two Dales)
Pleasley, Mansfield (PO Local)	closed 14-9-2013
Shirland, Alfreton	closed 22-8-2013; reopened/relocated 13-9-2013
Staveley, Chesterfield	temporary closure 21-11-2013; reopened 19-12-2013

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Avening, Tetbury (PO Local)	closed by 21-11-2013
Bromsberrow Heath, Ledbury	reported closed 31-10-2013
Chalford, Stroud	community shop closed c.31-1-2013
Minsterworth, Gloucester	closed 1-5-2013; Hosted Outreach, Apple Tree Inn (c/o Highnam) 29-8-2013
MITCHELDEAN	closed 27-11-2013; to open/relocate 9-1-2014
MORETON-IN-MARSH	relocated to Budgens Store 8-3-2013
Painswick, Stroud	closed 25-3-2013

HEREFORDSHIRE

Cradley, Malvern	closed 29-6-2013 (Partner Outreach)

LEICESTERSHIRE

Barkestone, Nottingham	removed from branch finder by December 2013 (The Chequers)
Millfield (TSO), Leicester	relocated 16-5-2013 (PO Local)
Long Clawson, Melton Mowbray	Hosted Outreach, Village Hall (c/o Harlaxton) 19-8-2013; had closed 22-5-2009
Stathern, Melton Mowbray	Hosted Outreach, Plough Inn (c/o Harlaxton) 9-5-2013; had closed October 2012

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Brigstock, Kettering	reopened 23-1-2013; had closed 18-4-2011
Broughton, Kettering	relocated to Co-op Store 21-1-2013
Upper Boddington, Daventry	Hosted Outreach, Village Hall (c/o Woodford Halse) 28-6-2013; closed 4-6-2011

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Bleasby, Nottingham	closed 9-11-2013
Clarborough, Retford	Hosted Outreach, Village Hall c.8-3-2013; had closed December 2010
Dunham-on-Trent, Newark	Hosted Outreach, Village Hall by 2-10-2013; had closed 1-10-2011
Elksley, Retford	Hosted Outreach, Memorial Hall 3-4-2013; had closed 12-11-2011
The Pastures (TSO), Nottingham	removed from Branch Finder by 4-6-2013

OXFORDSHIRE

BICESTER	relocated as MAIN, 18-1-2013
Cropredy, Banbury	Hosted Outreach, Red Lion (c/o Easington TSO) 29-4-2013; had closed 31-1-12
Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxford	closed 26-6-2013

SHROPSHIRE

Llangedwyn, Oswestry	closed c.30-4-2013; (In Denbighshire)
Baschurch, Shrewsbury	relocated 1-3-2013
Garden Village, Highley, Bridgnorth	relocated as PO Local 3-6-2013
Hadley, Telford	relocated as Main 21-5-2013
Hadnall, Shrewsbury	relocated as PO Local 26-4-2013
Ironbridge, Telford	relocated to Ironbridge Pharmacy 7-6-2013

STAFFORDSHIRE

Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent	relocated as PO Local 17-6-2013
Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent	relocated from portacabin to 8-10, High Street 9-10-2013
Hanbury, Burton-on-Trent	Hosted Outreach, Church 10-9-2013; had closed January 2012
Picton Street (TSO), Leek	closed 16-4-2013
Westwood, Leek	opened 19-4-2013
Beacon Street, Lichfield	replaced by Wheel Lane (PO Local) 24-6-2013
NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	relocated to 43, High Street 7-10-2013
STONE	relocated to Co-op Store2013 12-2-2013

WARWICKSHIRE

LEAMINGTON SPA	relocated to Spar Store 23-12-2013
Napton, Southam	closed May2013
Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry	Hosted Outreach, V Hall (c/o Stretton-on-Dunsmore) 23-7-2013; closed 16-8-12

WEST MIDLANDS

Jubilee Crescent (TSO), Coventry	reopened/relocated as PO Local 12-6-2013; had closed 29-6-2012
Merry Hill Centre, Brierley Hill	relocated 6-6-2013
North Bushbury, Wolverhampton	relocated 7-2-2013
Radford (TSO), Coventry	closed April 2013
WOLVERHAMPTON	relocated to Nisa Store 7-2-2013

WORCESTERSHIRE

Alfrick, Worcester	reopened at Community Shop as PO Local 22-4-2013; had closed 16-7-2011
Bretforton, Evesham	closed 27-4-2013
Honeybourne, Evesham	closed 3-9-2013; reopened in Premier Store 23-9-2013
Martley, Worcester	relocated to Martley Garage, PO Local 26-7-2013
St John's (TSO), Worcester	relocated 18-10-2013
Witton (TSO), Droitwich	closed April 2013



Bill Pipe



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LUDLOW RURAL POSTS, 1856

On 21st January 1856 a Mr Rocke wrote from Clungunford House to Mr Perrin, the postmaster of Shrewsbury:

"Sir,

Your letter of 19th respecting the proposed plan for the conveyance of our letters savours so strongly of the ridiculous, that I cannot imagine how an intelligent body of men (which I conclude the post office authorities profess to be) could have given it their sanction.

Why on earth our letters, which are now landed [?] *within half a mile of this place, at an early hour in the morning are to be sent an additional eighteen or twenty miles to be eventually deposited at an inferior post office seven miles from here, with the worst road in England intervening, I am at a loss to understand.*

I can only attribute the plan, either to great ignorance of [the] *locality on the part of the originators, or else to that indifference which has been so prominent a feature in everything connected with the claims of the parish,*

You may depend upon my giving the scheme (if attempted to be carried out) my strongest and most determined opposition.

I am Sir
Your obedt servant
John Rocke"

When Mr Beaufort, a surveyor, was asked for his comments he wrote that Clungunford and all its inhabitants belonged to Mr Rocke, a banker, who had recently incited the sub-postmaster to insubordination, resulting in his dismissal and now refused to have a new appointment made. When the proposed scheme for the revision of rural posts under Ludlow was drawn up, Mr Beaufort had asked Mr Perrin to ascertain Mr Rocke's views on the proposed arrangement for serving Clungunford which had until then been served from Shrewsbury [by rail?]. The above letter was Mr Rocke's reply.

So, what was the cause of this rather intemperate reply?

A Mr Forrest had drawn up a proposed scheme, detailed below, of nine rural posts under Ludlow.

1. Stanton Lacy House, Whitbach Lodges, Downton Hall, Hopton Cangeford, Stoke St Milborough.
2. Ludford, Overton House, Ashford Hall, Ashford Carbonel, (Bleathwood, Middleton), Ashford Bowdler, Wooferton, Brimfield, Wyson, Brimfield Common.
3. Gravel Hill, Green Rock, Dodmin, Henley & Henley Hall, Middleton [different from that in 2], Bitterley, Bitterley Court, Clee Hill as far as Knowlsey Church.
4. Rock Lane, Riddings, Ledwyche, The Sheet, Ploughnhill, Caynham, Whitton Chapel, Hope Bagot, Hope Court.
5. Knighton by mail cart.
6. Brampton Bryan, Bucknall, Bedstone, Hopton Castle, Beckjay, Clungunford.
7. Bromfield, Bromfield Station, Stanton Lacey, Langley, Culmington, Siefton Vicarage, Corfton, Diddlebury.
8. Leintwardine, Kinton, Whitton, Trippleton, Downton Castle, Downton Rock, Burrington, Paytoe, Stanway, Adforton, Walford, Buckton, Leintwardine.
9. Overton, Moor Park, Richards Castle, The Bank, Bilbury, Comberton, Orleton, Ashley Moor.

It is possible from the various letters and reports contained in this file to give some information on each of these walks.

1. This was, like all the others apart from 5, a footpost which ran on six days a week. There were on average 144 letters per week, and the arrival and departure times at Stoke St Milborough were 10.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. respectively.
2. The average number of letters per week in this post was 318. A sub-office was to be opened at Ashford Carbonel, the postmaster receiving an allowance for delivering at Bleathwood and Middleton.
3. There were an estimated 240 letters per week in this post which arrived at Clee Hill at 10.30 a.m. and departed at 3.30 p.m. On 14th August 1855 the P.M.G. had sanctioned the opening of a sub-office at Middleton with an allowance for delivering at Stoke St Milborough (in 1). However, the surveyor could not find anyone willing to take on the job. This explains the fact that the UDC issued on 8SEP1855 has never been recorded used.
4. This was an entirely new footpost as none of the places named had been served by an official post before. There were an estimated 149 letters a week.

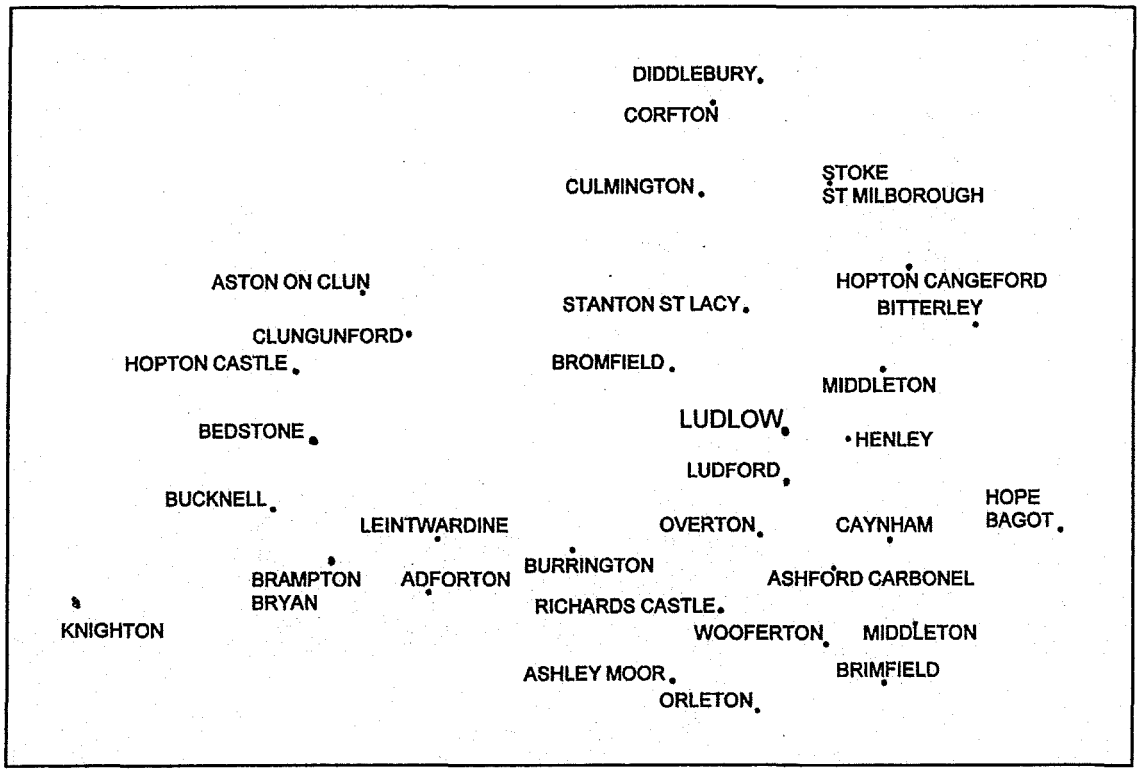
5. Knighton was served by a mailcart from Ludlow which arrived at 8.47 a.m. and departed at 5.15 p.m.
6. Brampton Bryan was also served by the mail cart from Ludlow, arriving at 7.47 a.m. and leaving for Ludlow at 6.15 p.m. There had been a branch post to Hopton Castle on three days a week. It was now proposed to close the office at Hopton Castle and to extend the post on six days a week as far as Clungunford where the letters (91 a week) were delivered by the postmaster of Aston-on-Clun (under Shrewsbury) at 7.45 a.m. However, there was no return post in the evening and this new post was intended to rectify that situation. The reason for Mr Rocke's objection was that in the proposed post the letters would not arrive until 11 a.m. So, the post terminated at Hopton Castle as before and the office there remained open.
7. As well as being served by the mail cart from Ludlow which arrived at 6.27 a.m. and returned to Ludlow at 7.30 p.m., Bromfield also received its letters by train from Shrewsbury [A day mail?]. There were sub-offices at Bromfield, Stanton Lacey and Diddlebury. The average number of letters per week was 368, the highest of all these posts if Knighton, with 641 letters, is excluded.
8. Leintwardine too received its letters by the mailcart from Ludlow, with an arrival at 7.32 and a departure for Ludlow at 6.30 p.m. This was a circular walk which left Leintwardine at 8 a.m., returning at 1 p.m.
9. The office at Richards Castle was closed and replaced by one at Orleton which, according to the surveyor was the largest village on the walk. This was probably in response to a petition sent to the P.M.G. by the inhabitants of the latter place. Part of this is reproduced below.

"*...in consequence of there being no Post Office within the said Parish your Memorialists are under the disagreeable necessity of sending their letters to a Public House until called for by the Postman. That the delivery of letters within the Parish does not take place until after 11 o'clock a.m. and the Postman returning at 3 too short a space of time is allowed between the delivery and dispatch, the delivery being from Ludlow which is distant from Orleton 5 miles.*
Your Memorialists also beg to call attention to the fact that as Her Majesty's Mails on the Shrewsbury and Hereford line pass within 1¾ of a mile of the said Village the letter bags might with greater facility be dropped at Wooferton Station and therby afford your Memorialists a delivery in common with other places.
Lastly your Memorialists beg to suggest with deference to the Public Service that the New School in the said Parish of Orleton would be a fit and convenient place for the Post Office.

In the new arrangement the mail arrived at Orleton at 10.30 a.m. and left for Ludlow at 6.30 p.m. Can any of our Shropshire/Herefordshire members say if the post office did in fact open in the school?

Reference: Post 14/70 – Revision of Rural Posts under Ludlow.

A SKETCH MAP OF PLACES IN THE LUDLOW RURAL POST



TWO MALVERN & MALVERN WELLS PENNY POST ITEMS

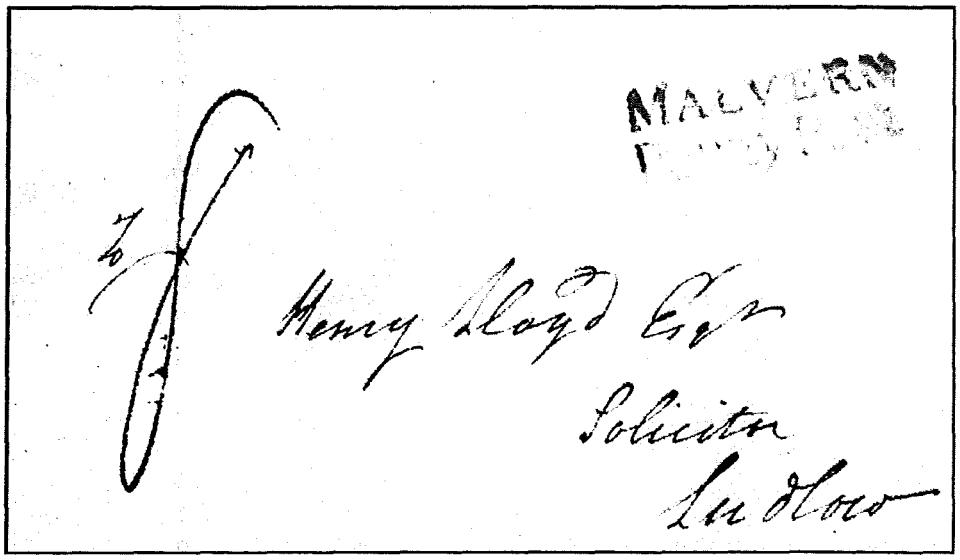
by Mike Wilesmith

In 1812 the Worcester Post Office, at 47, Foregate Street, established penny post receiving houses at Malvern and Malvern Wells. The Malvern Wells office was located in Wells Road, two miles south of Great Malvern, while that at Great Malvern was situated at Oxford House, Church Street.

Great Malvern was made a posttown in 1831 so ceased to be in the Worcester Penny Post.



'MALVERN WELLS/Penny Post handstamp struck in red on a cross – written letter from Essington's Hotel, Malvern Wells, 14th June 1823.



'MALVERN/Penny Post' hanstamp struck in red on a letter from a Mr Cullen of Malvern dated 13th March 1827.

MAIL ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY AND ITS CONSTITUENTS, 1840-1875

PART 2

Although the railway between Leeds and Bradford opened to passengers in July 1846, it was not until January 1847 that the Post Office gave notice of their intention to terminate the contract for the Leeds to Skipton mailcoach on 5th July. It appears that the railway was used immediately to carry the mail which was to be in charge of a guard travelling at a second class fare. A mail cart was used between Bradford and Skipton.

By March 1847 the line had been extended to Keighley. The Midland offered to alter the working of the 5.40 p.m. train from Keighley so that it arrived in Leeds at 6.30 p.m. for 3d a mile, the mail bags being in the charge of the Company's guard. On the other hand, the Company said that it was not possible to alter the time of the 6.30 a.m. train from Leeds to Keighley to 7a.m., without 'injury to traffic'. They offered to put on a special train at 7 a.m. for 6d. a mile which Maberly said should be accepted. These measures came into effect on 6th July 1847.

By December 1847 the Post Office was using the line as far as Skipton.

The Trent Valley Railway was officially opened on 30th November 1847. This route which gave a more direct route between London and the Northwest bypassed Birmingham, and caused a large number of changes to the circulation of mail in the West Midlands.

One of the consequences was that the connection between the train from Bristol and the down night mails from London was broken. The train from Bristol brought into Birmingham mail from the West of England as well as from the towns between Bristol and Swansea, not only in time for the mail train to Derby where a connection was made with the down train to Newcastle, but also for letters to be sorted at Birmingham for the down night mail train to Carlisle, Liverpool, Ireland etc.

A number of options were considered to overcome the delay that would be caused, including an acceleration of the train from Bristol. That chosen was to maintain trains running from Birmingham to Stafford and from Birmingham to Rugby to connect with the mail trains on the LNWR.

In April 1847 it was pointed out that, according to the provisional timebills for the opening of the Trent Valley Railway, the train from Lancaster would reach Rugby only twenty-two minutes later than that from Newcastle, and as the former train travelled faster than the latter, they would arrive in Euston at the same time. The solution was to accelerate the arrival at Rugby of the Newcastle train by five minutes and for the Lancaster train to take ten minutes less between Rugby and Euston. One can only assume there was a point at which the Newcastle train could be overtaken.

The Syston & Peterborough line opened between Syston and Melton Mowbray on 1st September 1846, and the opening of the section between Melton and Stamford on 20th March completed the line. It is probable that the part of the line as far as Melton took business away from the Syston and Grantham mailcoach for the contractor asked to be allowed to discontinue the service between Syston and Melton in July 1848. This mailcoach had carried the day mail bags for Melton Mowbray and Grantham. The Post Office granted that request and transferred the mail bags to the railway between Syston and Melton. The railway company charged 3d a mile - £40.2.0¾ p.a., the bags being in the charge of the railway guard.

When the Post Office responded to requests from Worcester in June 1847 to introduce a day mail from London, the mail bags for Droitwich, Bromsgrove and Worcester were carried by train from Birmingham in the charge of the guard of the train. The payment for this was the fare of a second class passenger – 4s 6d a day.

The Post Office refused to change the Rugby to Newcastle day mail to a T.P.O. in July 1847 as it would have been too expensive to do so. The number of places served and thus number of bags taken up by the train had to be restricted as there was a limit to the number of bags the guards could supervise. Six weeks later, the appointment of a fourth guard was approved as the amount of work was causing the health of the three guards to suffer.

The Chamber of Commerce at Leicester wrote in July 1848 asking for an improvement in their post with Manchester, Birmingham and the West of England. The mail from those places was delayed at Derby for several hours until the arrival of the up day mail from Newcastle, and so was too late for the first delivery with the result that they were not delivered until noon. The solution was to use an early train at 3.30 a.m. from Derby. The need for this train was short-lived as the up day mail was soon to be accelerated, giving an earlier arrival in Leicester.

The last post to Manchester etc from Leicester was at 2 p.m. as the contractor for the mailcoach to Coventry had quit on 6th July. The letters were now to be sent out at 9.50 p.m. by a train which reached Rugby in time to catch the down night mail train. The Midland received 3d a mile (£194.12.11 p.a.) for this service.

Throughout 1848 and 1849 there were frequent reports of delays to the mail trains on the Midland Railway. Though some improvement was noted in March 1849, a strongly worded letter was sent to the Company in the November as attaching fish trucks to the up night mail train often caused the train to arrive at Derby after the departure of that for Birmingham. This meant the connections at Tamworth with the down night mail on the L.N.W.R., and at Birmingham with the mail for Bristol were missed. The letter had some effect for it was minuted in the following March that there had been considerable improvement on the Midland in the previous few weeks.

A minute of 4th June 1849 recorded that the line between Lancaster and Settle had opened three days previously and that it was intended to use the 6.25 a.m. train from Lancaster and the 4.45 p.m. from Settle. [The North Western Railway was not worked by the Midland until 1st June 1852, but is included here for completeness.]

Although the line from Leicester to Burton-on-Trent opened to passengers in 1849, it was not used to carry mail until the introduction of a day mail from London in September 1856. A day mail from Ashby was provided in 1859.

GLOUCESTER AND TAMWORTH T.P.O.[14]

The reason for the introduction of this train, which ran for the first time on 1st November 1850, was to bring about a saving of about £2500 by dispensing with the trains between Birmingham and Rugby and between Birmingham and Stafford, which had been introduced on the opening of the Trent Valley Railway in 1847, combined with a reorganisation of the posts in the area. This involved the train from Gloucester taking 2 instead of 2½ hours to reach Birmingham so as to connect at Tamworth with the mail trains from London, Lancaster and Derby. As the mail was sorted on train there was no need to spend an hour at Birmingham while the mail was sorted at the post office.

Mr Churchill reported that although there was a difference at Birmingham between the level of the Gloucester and Derby lines, this was no obstacle to the running of a T.P.O. which could be moved from one to the other in five minutes. Maberly said that it would be much better to allow 15 or 20 minutes.

Mr Godby proposed that the T.P.O. should run through to Derby and that between Rugby and Derby should be withdrawn. This Maberly was not prepared to do for that TPO had been put on at the request of the directors of the Midland who ran the office free of charge. Yet in 1852, the Post Office paid 1s 5½d per mile for that train.

The times of the trains before and after the change are shown below.

	Before	After
Gloucester d	8.30 p.m.	9.03 p.m.
Birmingham a	11 p.m.	11.03 p.m.
Birmingham d	12 midn	11.23 p.m.
Tamworth a	1 a.m.	12.03 a.m.
Tamworth d	1.05 a.m.	1. 05 a.m.
Derby a	1.55 a.m.	1.55 a.m.
Derby d	11.15 p.m.	11.15 p.m.
Tamworth a	12.03 a.m.	12.03 a.m.
Tamworth d	12.05 a.m.	1.05 a.m.
Birmingham a	1.15 a.m.	1.40 a.m.
Birmingham d	1.40 a.m.	2 a.m.
Gloucester a	4.10 a.m.	4 a.m.

(The timebill for the London, Carlisle and Perth mail showed the down train arriving in Tamworth at 12.51 a.m. while the up train arrived at 12.33 a.m.)

The two sides could not agree on the payment for this train and the issue was not resolved for another eighteen months. In August 1851, the Midland when asked by the P.M.G. to state a price offered 2s/9d per mile in both directions between Derby and Bristol. Then, in the November, Mr Sanders offered the following terms per mile:

7.5 p.m. from Bristol to Derby
Bristol to Gloucester - 1/-
Gloucester to Birmingham – 1s 6d
Birmingham to Derby - 3/-

11.17 p.m. from Derby to Bristol
Derby to Birmingham - 3/-
Birmingham to Gloucester – 2s 9d

This came to about £4505 more than the Post Office had paid previously for the services between Derby and Bristol. While Rowland Hill was reluctant to go to arbitration, he felt that he could not recommend that the P.M.G. accept this offer.

While Mr Godby said that there would not be any change in the circulation of the mails in his district, Mr Churchill reported that the withdrawal of the trains from Birmingham to Stafford and to Rugby would necessitate changes in his district. So as to maintain the time of the dispatch of the London letters from Wolverhampton at 9.15 p.m., the ride between Wolverhampton and Birmingham through Bilston and Wednesbury, which had connected at Wednesbury with the Birmingham-Ludlow mailcoach, was to be withdrawn along with that between Wednesbury and Walsall. They were replaced by a mailcart from Wolverhampton through Bilston, Wednesbury and Walsall to Lichfield where it arrived at 11.30 p.m., giving time for the sorting the correspondence from Bilston, Wednesbury and Walsall before the arrival of the down mail train at 12.35 a.m. The return arrived 1½ hours earlier than had the ride from Birmingham. Wolverhampton had less time in which to post letters for the Northwest as the Birmingham-Stafford train had taken mail from Wolverhampton at midnight for the Northwest, Scotland and Ireland.

Mr Churchill also stated that it would be necessary to provide for the London night mail from Coventry, Kenilworth and Warwick which had been taken to Rugby by the train from Birmingham. He proposed to do this by altering the times of the Coventry & Nuneaton mailcart so that it connected with both the up and down night mail trains. Previously, it had only been fitted to the down train.

Further measures proposed by Mr Churchill were the withdrawal of the mailcarts between Tamworth & Burton-on-Trent, Birmingham & Leamington, and Tamworth & Fazeley. The first of these had been introduced to carry the London bags for Burton, while the second had carried letters from the North for Leamington and Warwick.

The changes in the times were a considerable benefit to Berkley, Wooton-under-Edge and Dursley in that they not only gained more time to reply to letters from the North but also their London letters. These were taken by train to Stonehouse Station from where they were forwarded by a ride to Stroud. From there, the GWR took them to London.

An improvement to the London night mail to and from Bradford took place in June 1851. The Midland offered the use of the trains 'in close connection' with the London mails at Leeds, at no extra charge, provided that a Post Office porter was sent in charge of the bags in the morning luggage train from Leeds and then to return free of charge from Bradford to Leeds. The offer was accepted. The Company also offered the use of any trains between Leeds and Bradford for £100 p.a. The P.M.G. referred the matter to Rowland Hill. No response is recorded but later documents suggest the offer was taken up.

In August 1851 the Midland offered to carry the up day mail from Leeds by a train to Normanton at 2.30 a.m., for the same sum as was paid for the mailcart between Leeds and Wakefield minus the cost of carrying the bags between the station and the post office. This offer, which amounted to £68 p.a., was accepted as it, *"would obviate the delay of the letters from Bradford for the Up Day Mail of which loud complaint is now made."*

The matter of the mail between Leicester and the Northwest came up again when, on 1st January 1852, the Midland withdrew the 10p.m. train from Leicester to Rugby as the 3d. a mile paid by the Post Office, and the fares from the few passengers made the train uneconomical to run. The number of complaints that then appeared in the local press, pointing out that the letters had to be posted by 1.45 p.m. instead of 9.15 p.m., reflected the importance of that mail to the business classes of the town.

Since the train carried over one thousand letters each night, the Post Office offered the Midland 6d a mile - £156.10.0 p.a. - to reinstate this train. Before the railway company could respond the surveyor had introduced a mail cart to Nuneaton to carry the letters. However, a minute of 24th December records that the train had been reinstated.

The line of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway between Abbot's Wood opened in April 1852. The Midland was offered 2/- a day for six days a week to carry the local day mail between Bristol and Birmingham over the *'new loop line'*. The Company refused to run the night mail trains over that line, possibly because of the extra distance involved.

THE CONTRACT OF 1852/53[8]

In May 1852, Rowland Hill suggested that the night mail train between Rugby and Derby for which the Post Office paid 1^{s}/5½^{d} per mile, or about £2621 p.a. should be withdrawn and the T.P.O. transferred to work between Tamworth and Derby, saving about £2000 a year.

He pointed out that this train connected with the cross-mail between Bristol and Newcastle at Derby from where the two mails proceeded northwards together. As there was another junction at Tamworth, the only purpose of the train from Rugby to Derby was to serve Leicester (with branches to towns such as Melton, Oakham and Uppingham) and Loughborough. These places could be served at less expense with only a small inconvenience by mail carts.

The notices to bring this about on 31st August 1852 had been issued when, on 23rd June, Mr Sanders wrote to say that the directors proposed an arrangement similar to that existing on the L.N.W.R. whereby for a period of seven years from 1st July the Post Office should have, in addition to the mail trains then running, the use of all or any of the other trains on the Midland Railway, both passenger and goods, for an annual payment of £23,000. Also, in order '*to terminate all matters in dispute*' a sum at the rate of £3600 p.a. should be added to the allowance for the services performed between Bristol and Derby from 1st November 1850. Although Rowland Hill felt that the latter sum was still too high, he recommended that the offer be accepted as, overall, it was to the advantage of the Post Office. He was, no doubt influenced by a letter from a Mr Williams, who acted as an arbitrator for the Post Office, that he considered the offer to be a fair one, and he could not see of any instances where a fresh arbitration would lead to reduced payments and some increases were more likely. Also, a list of payments showed that the Post Office already paid a little over £19,000 p.a. to which would be added any extra award for the services between Bristol and Derby. These payments are set out in Appendix B.

It proved to be impossible to draw up a contract by 1st July as the Treasury did not approve the terms until 1st September. Even then, there were a number of minor points to be settled. Eventually the contract was dated 30th June 1853 and was to take effect from 1st September 1852 for a period of seven years.

The notice to withdraw the T.P.O. between Rugby and Derby was countermanded on 29th July. This was not, as might be expected, to create goodwill during the negotiations, for Rowland Hill wrote to the P.M.G., "*After 31st August we would be at the mercy of the Company if they suddenly withdrew the train and subjected the public service to much temporary inconvenience.*"

A minute of 21st April 1853 records that the transfer of the TPO from the Rugby & Derby line to the Tamworth & Derby line had been postponed until the acceleration of the night mail to the North was carried out. This took place on 1st June 1853 according to a minute of 3rd June.

The contract contained twenty-nine clauses which, along with the three schedules which are shown in Appendix B, took up seventeen pages. The more important clauses are summarised below. The number in brackets at the end of each section is the number of the relevant clause.

The services then in force under six previous notices were to be performed until a notice of 29th June 1853 came into force on 1st August 1853. The services in this notice were specified in Schedule 1 of the contract. Schedule 2 listed the other services and Schedule 3 listed other lines that were to be used to carry mail if required. These are shown in Appendix C. (3)

The guards or other employees of the Midland were to take charge of the mails when required. (4)

The Company were to arrange the times of arrival and departure on their branch lines to suit the convenience of the P.M.G. (5)

Porters and other employees of the Company were to assist in the loading and unloading of the mail. (6)

The carriages required under this contract were to be provided by the Company and were to be painted and fitted up to the satisfaction of the P.M.G. or the Superintendent of Mail Coaches. (7)

The Company was to remove any carriages that were worn out and replace them with others. (11)

When more than one carriage was used to carry mail they were to be placed in such order as not to require more than one guard. (14)

The contract was to be for seven years from 1st September 1852. (17)

The P.M.G. was to pay for the services performed (except for any additional mail trains which might be required) £23,000 p.a. by quarterly payments. (18)

It was to be lawful for the Company to alter the times of any mail trains, except those under notice, on giving ten days notice to the P.M.G. But, then the P.M.G. would have the right to terminate that service and the £23,000 would be reduced by a set amount. This is set out in Table 4. (19)

The Company was to provide and run additional mail trains if required by the P.M.G. Compensation would be paid at '*such an amount as Rowland Hill of the G.P.O., or some other person appointed by him, determined to be the bare cost to the Company*'. (20)

'Bare cost' meant that the railway company should neither profit nor be at a loss by providing the mail train. In practice this proved to be very difficult to determine.

The acceleration of the night mails from London to Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow on 1st June 1853 made necessary a more extensive use of the lineside apparatus for the exchange of mail bags. Mr Stow reported that another thirty sets of apparatus would be necessary on the LNWR and Midland. A Mr Rutter of Birmingham offered to erect the apparatus at thirty stations and to fit it to six carriages for £707.8.0. Mr Stow did not name the stations

but a list of 1854[15] gives the following as having the apparatus: Belper, Loughborough, Wingfield, Cudworth and Barnsley. By 1858, Barnsley had been removed from the list and Charfield, Stonehouse, Ashchurch, Defford and Droitwich had been added. These five appear in a list of 1875 along with Berkley Road, Cudworth, Luton, Kettering and Market Harborough.

Another document[16] shows that at Loughborough two standards had been erected with one in use, while Belper, Wingfield and Cudworth each had three sets of apparatus all of which were in use. At all four places an allowance of £3.2.0 was paid dating from 1st November 1854. The reason for there being more than one set of apparatus was that there was a limit to the weight of the bags that could be carried on one standard.

In March 1854 an injury to a Midland driver caused by the apparatus at an unnamed location was reported. Fortunately the injury to the driver was not serious and he was able to return to work after a few days. A small gratuity was given to the driver. The Post Office then issued a warning to the railway companies that drivers should not lean out when passing the point at which the bags were suspended!

The day mails between Rugby and Leeds were accelerated at the same time as the night mails. A minute of October 1852 states that the use of the lineside apparatus would be necessary at Loughborough, Belper and Barnsley. This shows that the train was now to contain a TPO. Another minute, of March 1853, records permission for the fitting out of three vans to be used between Normanton and Edinburgh in connection with the day mail TPO between Rugby and Leeds.

Before the contract had been signed the Post Office took advantage of the fact that they could now use any of the Midland trains without further charge to improve the transmission of letters between Birmingham, Burton-on-Trent and Derby. It was proposed to use the trains from Birmingham and Derby at 11.5 a.m. respectively, and the 1 p.m. train from Birmingham to Burton where it arrived at 3 p.m. This last train was to be used to bring a London day mail bag from Tamworth – something for which the people of Burton had pressed for some time.

A proposal to send a bag from Burton to the down day mail at Tamworth by the 11.5 a.m. train from Derby was turned down as that train frequently missed the connection at Tamworth.

The lack of punctuality on that line was mentioned again in 1854. The Midland had agreed in June to alter slightly the working of one of their trains to allow Nottingham, Derby and Burton-on-Trent to send bags to the down day mail on the LNWR. But three months later it was minuted that this service had been abandoned as the train from Derby missed the connection almost daily.

The Midland was not the only offender as regards punctuality for, in November 1853, it was arranged that whenever the trains on the L.N.W.R. failed to make the connection at Tamworth, the bags for the Midland line should be sent on to Derby on a luggage train.

The Post Office used their freedom to use any of the Midland trains without further charge when, in January 1853, Mr Godby raised the possibility of making greater use of the Leicester to Peterborough line. He suggested the use of two trains in each direction: 7.30 a.m. Leicester to Peterborough, 12.10 p.m. Leicester to Oakham, 6.45 a.m. and 8 p.m. Peterborough to Leicester. Mr Godby said that although this would be very beneficial to the towns on the line, it would not be of much advantage to Leicester and Peterborough. However, on the earlier dispatch of the down day mail from London, it would be better to send the letters between the two towns direct rather than through London.

The wider importance of this line was shown in June 1854 when it was used to provide a day mail from Newcastle, York and Leeds to the Eastern Counties. These letters had previously been sent via London. By establishing bags from the up day mail on the Midland line to the towns between Syston and Peterborough, including Peterborough itself, it was possible to create a direct post not only as far as Boston, but also through to Norwich and Yarmouth by the use of the 11.40 train from Peterborough to Ely. The Midland train used was the 7.30 a.m. from Leicester

The Post Office decided in 1853 to send the day mail from London to Newcastle by the Great Northern line. As the day mail on the Midland line, which left Rugby at 11.50 a.m., arrived at Milford Junction after the departure of the G.N.R. train, the 8.20 a.m. from Rugby was used to carry the day mail bags from the towns on the Midland line for the Northeast and Scotland.

On the opening of the South Wales Railway, the Post Office was able to send the mail between South Wales and Bristol by rail through Gloucester, rather than using the Aust Ferry. A notice was served on the Midland that, from 31st August 1854, they were to run trains at the times shown in the left-hand box.

Bristol d.	11.55 p.m.
Berkley Road	12.42 a.m.
Gloucester a	1.15 a.m.
Gloucester d	11.15 p.m.
Berkley Road	11.48 p.m.

Bristol d.	12.45 a.m.
Stonehouse	1.40 a.m.
Gloucester a	2.0 a.m.
Gloucester d	11.05 p.m.
Stonehouse	11.25 p.m.

The notice stated that there was no intention to send any guard or other officer of the Post Office with this mail. A month later these times were altered by a notice which gave the times from 30th September as shown in the right-hand box.

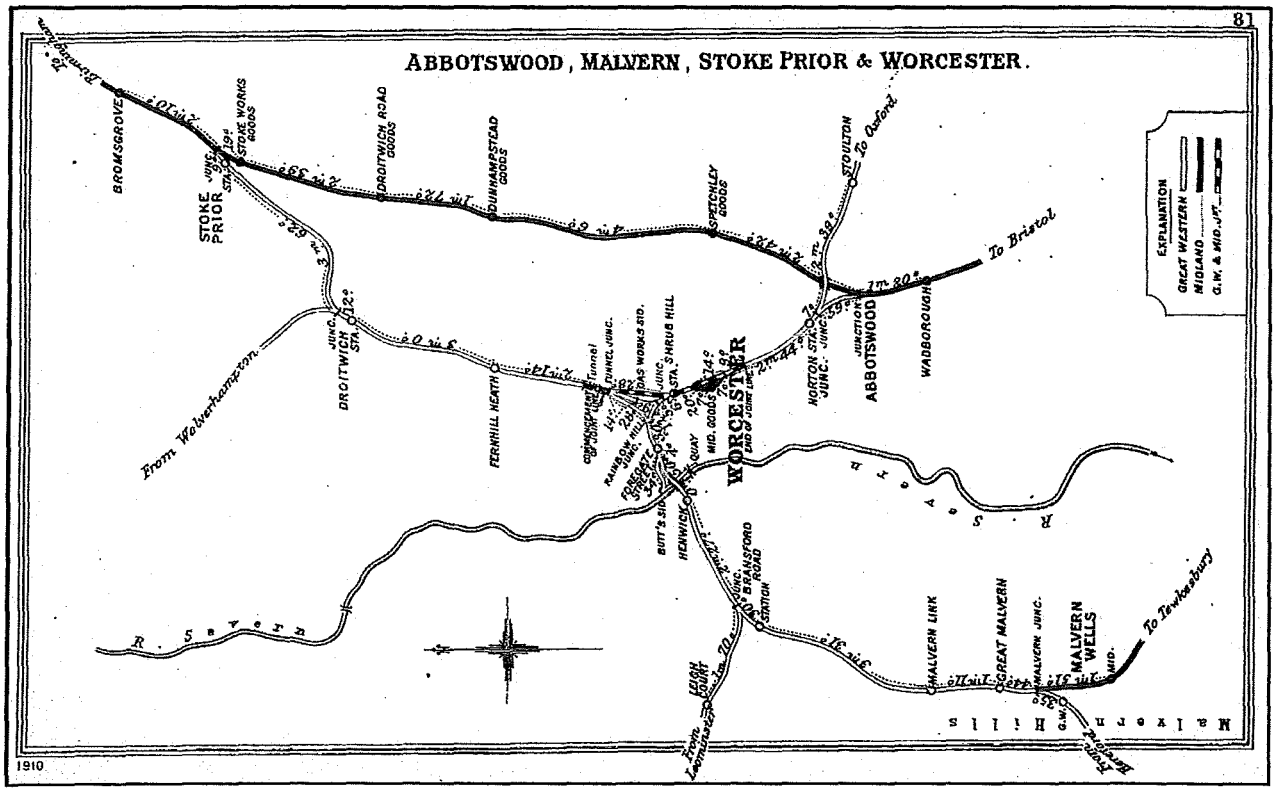
It was now specified that the Midland was to, '*appropriate exclusively a compartment or as much as may be required of the inside of a Second Class Railway Carriage for depositing therein the Mails and Post Office Letter Bags and for conveying the Guards in charge thereof*'.

The reason for the change in the times appears to have been part of a general acceleration of the mails on the GWR in which Gloucester's London night mail was to go through Bristol. However, circumstances have prevented me from following this up in detail. The notice was repeated on 18th December 1854, to take effect from 31st January 1855. As the details were unchanged it is possible the introduction of the acceleration had been delayed.

(It appears that a service was actually introduced/altered on the day after the 'from date' in the notices issued by the Post Office.)

On 1st June 1854, the Midland withdrew the 8.30 p.m. train from Birmingham to Gloucester which carried mail, not only from Birmingham but also from Manchester and Liverpool, for the down night mail on the GWR to South Wales. Under the provisions of the 1853 Contract the Post Office was entitled to reduce the payment to the Midland by £207.7.3 p.a., but as the railway company had altered the times of a luggage train to suit the Post Office, it was decided not to enforce this penalty. The only cost to the Post Office was for the carriage of the bags from New Street Station to Camp Hill.

In August 1854 the Midland offered to run the night mail trains between Birmingham and Bristol over the 'loop line' of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway between Stoke Prior Junction and Abbotswood Junction, provided that they received the sum of £90 p.a. paid for the mailcart between Spetchley and Worcester. Worcester was then able to dispatch its night mail 35 minutes later. Droitwich benefitted similarly.



REFERENCES

14. Post 30/79A Gloucester & Tamworth TPO
15. Post 18/119 List of Mail Bag Apparatus Stations
16. Post 11/71 Directory of Tariffs, 1846 - 1855

Appendix B, The amounts paid for trains carrying mail on the Midland Railway in July 1852.

From	Depart	To	Arrive	Basic Cost	Annual Cost
Rugby	12.5 a.m.	Leeds	5.20 a.m.	See note 1.	£5243.14.3
Leeds	7.45 p.m.	Rugby	1 a.m.		
Rugby	1.30 p.m.	Leeds	6.50 p.m.	6d per mile	£954.13.0
Leeds	2.35 a.m.	Rugby	8 a.m.	See note 2.	£2121.2.6
Bristol	7.5 p.m.	Birmingham	11 p.m.	See note 3.	£2795
Birmingham	2.10 a.m.	Bristol	6 a.m.	See note 4.	
Bristol	11.5 a.m.	Birmingham	3.10 p.m.	£1.11.0 per day	£485.3.0
Birmingham	11.10 a.m.	Bristol	2.50 p.m.		
Birmingham	2 p.m.	Worcester	3.10 p.m.	$4^{s}/6^{d}$ per day	£112.1.10[6]
Birmingham	8.15 p.m.	Gloucester	9.55 p.m.	$13^{s}/3^{d}$ per day	£207.7.3
Birmingham	11.20 p.m.	Derby	1.55 a.m.	£75 per week	£3900
Derby	11.17 p.m.	Birmingham	1.50 a.m.		
Derby	2.20 a.m.	Lincoln	4.55 a.m.	See note 5.	£1830.10.7
Lincoln	8.30 p.m.	Derby	10.45 p.m.		
Kegworth	2.56 p.m.	Nottingham	3.30 p.m.	5/- per day	£91.5.0
Nottingham	3.40 p.m.	Lincoln	4.53 p.m.	3d per mile	£130.1.9
Lincoln	12.15 p.m.	Derby	3 p.m.	3d per mile	£190.14.8
Syston	3.10 p.m.	Melton Mowbray	3.42 p.m.	3d per mile	£40.2.0
Masborough	3.44 a.m.	Sheffield	4.15 a.m.		
Sheffield	3.20 a.m.	Masborough	3.44 a.m.		£200
Masborough	9.14 p.m.	Sheffield	9.40 p.m.	£150 p.a.	
Sheffield	8.55 p.m.	Masborough	9.14 p.m.		
Sheffield	2.20 p.m.	Masborough	2.35 p.m.	5/- per day	£78.5.0
Masborough	2.55 p.m.	Sheffield	3.10 p.m.		
Leeds	5.20 a.m.	Bradford	6.20 a.m.		
Bradford	9.55 p.m.	Leeds	10.35 p.m.		
Leeds	12 noon	Bradford	12.45 p.m.	£100 p.a.	£100
Bradford	2 p.m.	Leeds	2.45 p.m.		
Leeds	4.10 p.m.	Bradford	4.55 p.m.		
Bradford	7 p.m.	Leeds	7.40 p.m.		
Leeds	7 a.m.	Skipton	8.15 a.m.		
Skipton	5.45 p.m.	Leeds	7 p.m.	6d per mile	£474.10.0
Leeds	3 p.m.	Skipton	4. 7 p.m.		
Shipley	6.7 a.m.	Bradford	6.15 a.m.		
Bradford	6.20 a.m.	Shipley	6.30 a.m.	6d per mile	£100.7.6
Shipley	6.25 p.m.	Bradford	6.35 p.m.		
Bradford	7 p.m.	Shipley	7.15 p.m.		
Shipley	3.27 p.m.	Skipton	4.9 p.m.	2d per mile	£39.15.6

1. This was made up of 1s 5½d per mile between Rugby and Derby and 11.85d per mile between Derby and Leeds.
2. Leeds to Normanton cost £68 p.a. while Normanton to Rugby cost 1/- per mile - £2053.2.6.
3. The cost of these trains was subject to arbitration. Between Bristol and Gloucester was charged at £2.16.0 per day, while the daily rate between Gloucester and Birmingham was £4.17.2.
4. This figure was the subject of arbitration.
5. The cost of the night mails between Derby and Lincoln was made up as follows:

   Derby & Nottingham Night Mails £350 p.a.
   Nottingham to Lincoln – 1s 6d per mile. £910.4.4 p.a.
   Lincoln to Nottingham - £1.11.3 per day , £570.6.3
6. There is an error here for the minute authorising this day mail states the payment was to be 4s 6d per day, £70.8.6 p.a.

APPENDIX C. Trains under notice in the 1853 contract.

Service	Depart	Arrive	Accommodation to be provided by the Company
Rugby and Leeds Day Mail	Rugby 11.50 a.m.	Leeds 3.45 p.m.	A travelling post office with each of these dispatches fitted up in such a manner as the Postmaster General shall direct.
	Leeds 2.35 a.m.	Rugby 8.00 a.m.	
Ditto (Sundays)	Leeds 2.35 a.m.	Derby 5.20 a.m.	A compartment or as much as may be required of the inside of a second class carriage fitted up as the Postmaster General shall direct.
	Derby 7.10 a.m.	Rugby 9.30 a.m.	
Rugby and Derby Night Mail	Rugby 12.5 a.m.	Derby 1.40 a.m.	A letter bag carriage in charge of a mail guard with each of these dispatches.
	Derby 11.30 p.m.	Rugby 1 a.m.	
Normanton and Leeds Night Mail	Normanton 3.45 a.m.	Leeds 4.10 a.m.	A compartment of a second class carriage fitted up as aforesaid with each of these dispatches.
	Leeds 8.44 p.m.	Normanton 9.14 p.m.	
Bristol and Gloucester Night Mail	Bristol 7.5 p.m.	Gloucester 8.40 p.m.	A compartment of a second class carriage fitted up as aforesaid with each of these dispatches.
	Gloucester 4.30 a.m.	Bristol 6.a.m.	
Gloucester and Tamworth Night Mail	Gloucester 9 p.m.	Birmingham 11 p.m.	A travelling post office fitted up as aforesaid with each of these dispatches.
	Birmingham 11.20 p.m.	Tamworth 12.5 a.m.	
	Tamworth 1.05 a.m.	Birmingham 1.5 a.m.	
	Birmingham 2.10 a.m.	Gloucester 4.10 a.m.	
Tamworth and Normanton	Tamworth 1.5 a.m.	Derby 1.50 a.m.	A travelling post office fitted up as aforesaid with each of these dispatches; also a letter bag carriage between Derby and Normanton.
	Derby 2 a.m.	Normanton 3.45 a.m.	
	Normanton 9.24 p.m.	Derby 11.9 p.m.	
	Derby 11.19 p.m.	Tamworth 12.5 a.m.	
Derby and Lincoln Night Mail	Derby 2.20 a.m.	Lincoln 4.55 a.m.	A compartment of a second class carriage fitted up as aforesaid with each of these dispatches.
	Lincoln 8.30 p.m.	Derby 10.45 p.m.	
Leeds and Skipton	Leeds 6 a.m.	Skipton 7.15 a.m.	The bags forwarded by these are to be in charge of the Company's Guards.
	Skipton 6.40 p.m.	Leeds 8 pm	

Trains listed in Schedule 2 of 1853 contract.

Service	Depart	Arrive	Accommodation to be provided by the Company
Bristol to Gloucester	Bristol 7.30 a.m.	Gloucester 9.0 a.m.	The Company's Guards to take charge of the bags.
Birmingham and Bristol Day Mail	Birmingham 10.45 a.m.	Bristol 2.45 p.m.	The bags forwarded by these dispatches are to be in charge of a guard appointed by the Postmaster General travelling in a second class carriage.
	Bristol 11.0 a.m.	Birmingham 3.10 p.m.	
Birmingham to Bristol	Birmingham 9.15 a.m.	Bristol 12.30 p.m.	The Company's Guards to take charge of the bags.
Birmingham to Worcester	Birmingham 2.0 p.m.	Worcester 3.5 p.m.	Ditto
Birmingham to Gloucester	Birmingham 8.30 p.m.	Gloucester 10.30 p.m.	Ditto

Birmingham and Derby	Birmingham 11.50 a.m.	Derby 1.15 p.m.	Ditto
	Derby 11.15 a.m.	Birmingham 1.30 p.m.	
Leicester to Rugby	Leicester 10.15 p.m.	Rugby 11.0 p.m.	Ditto
Leicester and Peterborough	Leicester 7.0 a.m.	Peterborough 9.25 a.m.	Ditto
	Peterborough 7.25 a.m.	Leicester 10.5 a.m.	
Leicester and Peterborough	Leicester 2.55 p.m.	Peterborough 5.30 p.m.	Ditto
	Peterborough 8.0 p.m.	Leicester 10.10 p.m.	
Stamford to Peterborough	Stamford 10.7 p.m.	Peterborough 10.45 p.m	Ditto
Kegworth to Nottingham	Kegworth 1.0 p.m.	Nottingham 1.25 p.m.	Ditto
Nottingham to Lincoln	Nottingham 3.40 p.m.	Lincoln 5.0 p.m.	Ditto
Lincoln to Derby	Lincoln 11.25 a.m.	Derby 1.15 p.m.	Ditto
Nottingham to Derby	Nottingham 10.15 a.m.	Derby 11.0 a.m.	Ditto
Masborough to Doncaster	Masborough 3.0 p.m.	Doncaster 3.45 p.m.	Ditto
Masborough to Sheffield	Masborough 3.10 a.m.	Sheffield 3.30 a.m.	Ditto
	Masborough 4.0 a.m.	Sheffield 4.20 a.m.	
	Masborough 2.55 p.m.	Sheffield 3.15 p.m.	
	Masborough 10.5 p.m.	Sheffield 10.25 p.m.	
Sheffield to Masborough	Sheffield 2.45 a.m.	Masborough 3.0 a.m.	Ditto
	Sheffield 2.20 p.m.	Masborough 2.35 p.m.	
	Sheffield 9.40 p.m.	Masborough 9.55 p.m.	
Normanton to Leeds	Normanton 9.20 p.m.	Leeds 10.0 p.m.	Ditto
Leeds to Rugby	Leeds 10.20 a.m.	Rugby 2.25 p.m.	Ditto
Leeds to Bradford	Leeds 5.30 a.m.	Bradford 6.30 a.m.	Ditto
	Leeds 12.5 p.m.	Bradford 12.50 p.m.	
	Leeds 3.50 p.m.	Bradford 4.20 p.m.	
Bradford to Leeds	Bradford 9.30 a.m.	Leeds 10.10 a.m.	Ditto
	Bradford 2.0 p.m.	Leeds 2.40 p.m.	
	Bradford 7.30 p.m.	Leeds 8.15 p.m.	
	Bradford 9.30 p.m.	Leeds 10.10 p.m.	
Shipley to Bradford	Shipley 5.38 p.m.	Bradford 5.50 p.m.	Ditto
	Shipley 7.25 p.m.	Bradford 7.45 p.m.	
Bradford to Shipley	Bradford 6.20 a.m.	Shipley 6.30 a.m.	Ditto
	Leeds 5.0 p.m.	Skipton 6.25 p.m.	
	Skipton 9.40 p.m.	Leeds 10.50 p.m.	
Skipton to Shipley	Skipton 8.10 a.m.	Shipley 8.55 a.m.	Ditto

WW1 EXHIBITION

On Saturday 2nd August 2014 the Birmingham Philatelic Society will be commemorating the start of World War 1 with an Exhibition in the ground floor Club Room at the Old Joint Stock, Temple Row West. This is located opposite St. Phillips's Cathedral in the centre of Birmingham. It is intended to be a rolling programme with different material displayed during the day. If any members of the Midland Postal History Society have any appropriate material that they would care to exhibit at some point during the day between 11.00pm and 4.30pm they are more than welcome. For further details they can contact Alan Spencer (0121 459 7650 or email alan.spencer9@btopenworld.com).

JON BAKER TROPHY

Your nominations for the best article to appear in Midland Mail during 2013 are urgently needed. How 'best' is defined is entirely up to you. Some possible contenders are listed below, though I may have missed some. So please look back through last year's issues and return the enclosed form to me or let me know by email at Johnesoer@aol.com. Alternatively, the slips may be handed to me before the start of the AGM on 26th April.

Bingham Nottinghamshire by Alan Marshall	177/12
Postal History of Prees by Brian Atkins	177/18
Midland Post Offices Opened/Closed in 2012 by Ken Smith	177/20
Second Class Pair-Horse Mailcoaches by John Calladine	178/11
The Whip of the West by John Calladine	179/13
The Long March, Dunbar to Portsmouth by Mike Wilesmith	179/15
An American Melodrama by Brian Atkins	179/20
Missent to Warwick by Bryan Jones	180/13
1849 Anglo-US Postal Treaty by Brian Atkins	180/14
Messenger Boy Forms by Derek Smeathers	180/20

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This will appear in late July/ early August with all the usual reports and features. Please support your Editor by sending articles, long or short to:

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