



MIDLAND MAIL

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



President: Mr. W.S. Chester

Chairman:
Richard Farman

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

Secretary:
Elizabeth Lewis

NUMBER 60, MAY 1989

No doubt, by now, most of you will have seen the contribution of the Post Office to arousing concern for the environment. Personally, I would rather have a half-decent postal service than green splodges on my mail. I cannot recollect when a first class letter arrived here on the day after posting. Recent examples include four working days for letters to reach me from Leicester and Coventry; three days for a registered letter from Derby, and to cap them all a second class letter took ten days to get here from Worcester. At least there have been some improvements. The mail now arrives at about 10 a.m. instead of 3 p.m. as it did a month or so ago.

Those of you who have experienced the delays on the A 50 and the A 453 at Ashby de la Zouch can expect even longer queues starting from the post office there, for the present Crown Office is to be replaced by a sub-office in a local newsagents. The idea of providing a service seems to be an alien concept to the present Post Office management. All that matters is economy and profit. It is interesting to compare the present attitude with that of say Freeling, who whilst always mindful of "the Revenue" always appeared ready to extend and improve services provided that no losses were incurred.

G.B. COVERS

Do you see my lists of GB cover material? If you don't and are a member of The Midland (GB) Postal History Society, you should! They contain a wide selection of interesting and unusual items - county material, difficult values and rates- from 1840 to date. Send for a copy of my latest list today. All 'Wants Lists' for specific items or county material will receive my personal attention.

ROGER HUDSON



P.O. Box 172,
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Phone: 0203 686613

STEPHENSON STOBBS

Stephenson Stobbs, who was born in Shrewsbury in 1903 and died on 9th. March 1989, became the first Chairman of the Midland (G.B.) Postal History Society when it was formed in 1976, but he had had a long philatelic history by then. I don't know when he joined the Birmingham Philatelic Society but he was Secretary from 1933 to 1940, an Honorary and Permanent Vice-President and twice was President. He was a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society (London) of which he became a member in 1947. He was a member of the Society of Postal Historians from 1953 and was made a Fellow in 1971, in which year he was President. Also, he was active in several other societies.

Before he became a postal historian Steph, as he was known to his many friends, was a stamp collector in which his interests were Australian Commonwealth, Denmark, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

When he turned to Postal History his first love was Shropshire which he had collected since 1928. Later he built up fine collections of Australian Forces on which he published in 1976 a history of the postmarks of World War II, the Boer War (begun in 1953), Prisoner of War Mail and Masonic mail and ephemera. In latter years he reduced these collections to three: Shropshire, Boer War and Masonic.

I first met Steph when I came to Birmingham in 1948 and our friendship had grown with the years. He was great company and always willing to help and advise younger collectors. All who knew him will grieve his passing. The death last year of his wife, who had been an invalid for some years, greatly affected him and, I think, hastened his own death. He leaves a son, Roger and a daughter, Ann to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

C.W.E.C.

THE APRIL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting which was attended by seventeen members was held at Worcester on 29th. April. Our Chairman reported that the latest edition of the U.D.C. book was available. After outlining the events of the year, Richard thanked the committee for their hard work especially Elizabeth for arranging such a varied programme. Elizabeth began her report by saying that Richard had said all that she wanted to say. She mentioned how much we all will miss Steph Stobbs. Richard was congratulated upon his superb display at the December meeting. Finally she thanked the committee members for all the work they had done. Trevor then took us through the balance sheet for the year. He recommended that the annual subscription be increased to £5 since we had reached the point where expenditure was overtaking income. This was passed nem. con. Since it is three years since the last increase, there can be few complaints. Possibly it is appropriate to mention at this point, that the Annual Auction, to which Elizabeth and Eric devote an enormous amount of time and effort, is a useful fund raiser. If in future, all members resolved to donate one item for the Society's funds, future increases may be avoided. The Editor had little to say, mainly because he had forgotten to prepare a report. He did say that Midland Mail had averaged twenty pages per issue but if this was to be maintained contributions from members were needed.

Mr. Chester then took over the chair for the election of the officers all of whom were re-elected. There were two changes amongst the County Editors. Frank Peach, who was thanked by Richard for his services, retired as the Derbyshire Editor to be succeeded by Harold Wilson. The new Shropshire Editor is Guy Bridges. Trevor Clewley volunteered to act as our representative to the Midland Philatelic Federation. Finally Eric Lewis was re-appointed as auditor.

Under the heading of A.O.B., Chris Beaver asked the Co-ordinating Editor if he add an plans for future publications. Although the Chairman ruled the question as being out of order some inconclusive discussion followed. Finally the various awards were presented. The trophy for the pre-1840 competition went to Elizabeth Lewis; that for the 1840-1938 competition to Eric, so completing a Lewis double. Mr. Chester almost had to present himself with the post-1938 trophy. John Calladine was awarded the Jon Baker Rosebowl for his work on the two books the Society has produced this season. Then a little ahead of schedule the meeting moved on to the Annual Auction, the results of which were as follows:

A	5.50	B	3.50	C	3.00	D	6.00
E	5.00	F	1.50	G	6.00	J	1.00
K	2.00	L	0.50	1	3.00	2	5.00
3	13.00	7	6.00	8	1.00	9	1.75
11	1.00	13	15.50	14	14.00	15	6.00
16	11.00	18	2.50	19	1.50	20	3.50
21	6.50	22	2.00	23	3.00	24	3.00
25	1.00	26	6.00	27	3.50	28	2.25
29	3.25	30	5.00	32	6.00	33	4.50
35	1.50	37	9.50	39	1.00	40	5.50
41	5.00	42	7.50	43	11.00	44	13.00
45	3.75	46	10.00	47	6.00	48	8.00
49	7.50	50	13.50	52	4.60	54	2.50
56	1.80	57	11.00	58	3.75	59	2.50
60	1.50	61	16.00	62	9.50	64	6.00
65	3.50	67	5.00	68	0.80	71	1.60
72	33.00	74	5.00	75	4.00	76	5.00
77	1.10	79	0.80	84	7.50	85	2.50
89	2.50	91	2.00	93	2.50	94	2.00
95	2.50	98	1.40	99	2.20	100	0.80
102	3.50	103	8.00	104	2.50	105	3.50
106	30.00	108	5.00	109	3.75	110	6.00
112	1.00	113	2.20	114	7.50	115	2.25
116	1.30	120	2.40	122	0.60	124	4.00
127	1.50	128	1.20	130	0.50	131	5.50
132	2.00	134	2.00				

CORRESPONDENCE

Mike Young has written concerning the last Midland Mail:

"1. 59/13 para 4. Uniform 4d. Post was introduced on 5th. December 1839 and Uniform 1d Post on 10th. January 1840.

2. 59/20 Birmingham Pkts. I have seen several of these marks and thought that they were quite common." (To emphasise this point he produced two recent examples at the A.G.M.)

Chris Beaver has also written on the first point. As regards the second, Mr. de Rousset-Hall reports an impression dated 6 January 1949, and since then he has seen it on more than one occasion. His example has no . between BROKEN and PKTS but otherwise matches that illustrated.

A number of people have commented on the great loss the Society has suffered with the death of Steph Stobbs. Gay Parker speaks for them all when he says that on joining the Society he was immediately made at home by Steph who at every meeting Gay attended always shook hands and made him feel wanted. He was a perfect gentleman completely without any "side".

From New Zealand, Dereck Woodhall writes:

"There have been numerous articles and even books written about the various types of handstamps, datestamps in wood, brass and steel, and even rubber, but I do not recall ever seeing a description of a stamping pad. Does anyone know what sort of stamping pad was used in the early days, presumably from the time of the introduction of the Bishop Mark? I find it hard to visualise such a thing.

When I look at my modern stamp pad, especially when re-inking it, I can't believe that it is pretty much the same as the earlier types. If they were different, in what way were they different? Who invented them? Who re-designed them in the modern style? It would be interesting to know for like so many things that we tend to take for granted, the stamp pad's origin may well be lost in the mists of time."

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THE UNDATED CIRCULAR MARKS OF THE MIDLAND COUNTIES

The Third Edition of the Society's UDC book has just been published. This truly is a bumper edition having increased in size by more than 40% to 170 pages.

Amongst the entirely new features are the inclusion of the county of Gloucestershire, an introductory chapter on undated circular marks and, probably for the first time anywhere, an attempt to list the transfer of minor offices between post towns during the currency of UDCs. Once again, much new usage data has been added and, included, in the new illustrations, are similar sans-serif (C1) marks of each county. The Third Edition is on sale at £8 but members of the Society are being offered the book at the discounted price of £6, as near to cost as can safely countenanced.

It is anticipated that copies of the book will be available at the first meeting of the new season but members not wishing to wait until then should add £1.30 for packing and second class postage, the cost of which has necessarily increased with the size and weight of the book. Orders should be sent to: John Calladine, Dunley House, Cranham, Gloucester GL4 8HQ.



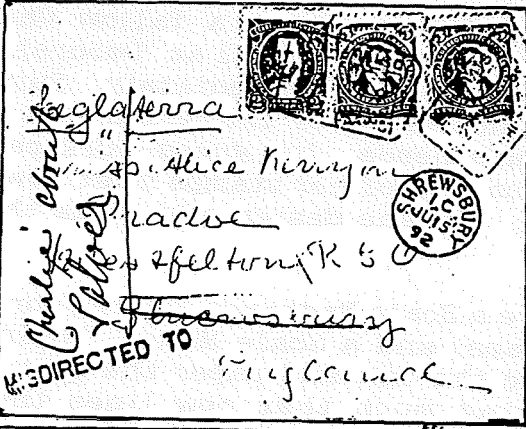
THE STEPHENSON STOBBS COLLECTION

SHREWS BURY
1782

The "Stephenson Stobbs" Collection of Shropshire Postal History will be included in our 17th June sale. It comprises 13 massive file boxes full of album-pages.

1724

SALOP



Regla terra
Miss Alice Kington
Shrewsbury
26th June 1872
Directed to

SHREWS BURY
1785

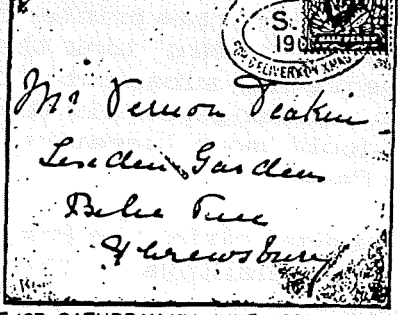
SHREWSBURY. 1918
NEXT OF KIN NOTIFIED.

SHREWS & TAMWORTH
1872

1903: ONE OF ONLY 2 KNOWN

PARCELS POST.
SHREWSBURY
(For Postage Stamp and Date Stamp.)

1884: ON LARGE PIECE WITH ADDRESS PLUS 6" DULL GREEN, ETC.



Mr. Vernon Tarkin
London, Garden
Shrewsbury

Received open and sealed at the Shrewsbury P.O.

SALOP.
1915
P.C.
SHREWSBURY

1872 (Ex N. YORK)

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EMPLOYED IN THE SERVICE OF THE G.P.O."DEBORAH PINNOCK - STAMP AND BRASSMAKER"

by Rev. Christopher Beaver

Fascinating little snippets of information have a way of turning up in unexpected places. In the ongoing search for records concerning the surveyors of the eighteenth century, the relevant volumes of Post 58 (Nomination and Appointment) and Post 59 (Establishments) were proving very useful if somewhat tedious. Page after page, volume after volume, giving names of post offices, postmasters and staff. Then suddenly something different, a page headed "List of the Several Trademen employed in the Service of the General Post Office." It is in Post 59 volume 11, page 19, and dated at 5th. January 1760.

There were originally twenty-five names, six of them paired, presumably partners, and in the next column headed "Trades and Professions" their twenty-two classifications. Further columns were ruled, evidently for payments over a period to each contractor to be recorded, but no figures were written in. Six of the names were subsequently changed, probably within the following three or four years, and one classification added, a Wax-Chandler, bringing the total to twenty-six people of twenty-three trades.

British Telecom's "Yellow Pages" today include most of the "trades and professions" on this list, but what did the "Tinman" supply, and was the "Nightman" (the only one without a Christian Name!) responsible for sewage disposal?

Originally the list included five women - a Tallow Chandler, the Coal Merchant, an Upholsterer, and the Plumber, as well as "Deborah Pinnock - Stamp & Brass Maker" who somehow caught the eye immediately. Surely her business supplied the standard straight line stamps of the period sent out to provincial offices, as well as meeting London's needs. It's guess-work perhaps which are hers, but one good impression from any of her stamps must now cost many times what she was paid for making it. Did she design and make them with her own skilled hands or employ others?

Following next on the list are a Scale Engraver (George Corbould, a familiar surname, ancestor of Henry perhaps) and a Scale Maker. Their work surely was distributed far and wide, as were the ink and paper the Stationers Jacob and Richard Tonson provided, including much that now lines the shelves of P.O. Archives; there is no separate printer on the list. A further woman replaced her husband apparently, for "Mrs" took the place of Robert Seeley, Chimney Sweeper, "Eliz." being subsequently substituted for her title; was it in fact a young son of her household who endangered his life up in the sooty stacks? Rather more congenial and no doubt more lucrative was the work of the Clockmaker and the Purveyor of News Papers.

Except in the capital cities the Post Office did not yet have its own buildings or provide their furnishings. The remaining "trademen" were no doubt contracted to work as and when required on the buildings the G.P.O. owned or rented in the vicinity of Lombard Street. There were a Carpenter, a Plaisterer (sic), a Turner, a Glazier, a Blacksmith, a Painter, a Bricklayer, a Mason, and a Pavior (sic).

17

List of the Clerical Tradesmen employed in the Service of
the General Post Office. -

Their Names Trades & Professions. -

~~William Rogers~~ ~~M^r. Thompson~~ ~~John~~	} Tallow Chandlers	
~~M^r. Jacob~~		
Richard Tonson	} Stationers	
~~W^m. Paterson~~		
~~John~~ ~~W^m. Paterson~~	- Wax Chandler -	
M ^r . Isaac Jamieson	- Surveyor of News & Papers -	
Thomas Hart	- Carpenter -	
~~Thomas~~ ~~William~~	- Coach Merchant -	
Elizabeth Head	} Upholsters	
Samuel Luck		
Deborah Pennock	- Stamp & Draft Maker -	
George Corbould	- Steel Engraver -	
~~John~~ ~~William~~	- Scale Maker -	
John Chettle	- Plasterer -	
Christopher Rose	- Turner -	
Richard Hoare	- Glazier -	
Frederick Leonard	- Tinman -	
~~John~~ ~~William~~	- Blacksmith -	
James Bentley	- Painter -	
George Hoare	- Bricklayer -	
Wade Dent	- Mason -	
~~Elizabeth~~ ~~Robert~~	- Chimney Sweeper -	
Sarah Hooper	- Plumber -	
Henry Rogers	- Clock Maker -	
~~Robert~~ ~~William~~	- Nightman -	
~~Thomas~~ ~~William~~	- Pavior -	

It was the sighting of "Stamp and Brass Maker" that prompted taking a copy of the page, with the supposition that here at last is positive evidence of what practically all handstamps were made of until Alfred Pane's contract began for the supply of steel ones in January 1825, after experiments in the previous couple of years at just a few offices (cf. MM27/9). More careful perusal and a little imagination brings to life a considerable variety of real people each chosen to carry out specialist or vital tasks "in the service of the G.P.O.", women and men of whom there is rarely any direct record, all busy behind the scenes or in their own workshops. No other such list turned up in the many volumes through which I searched.

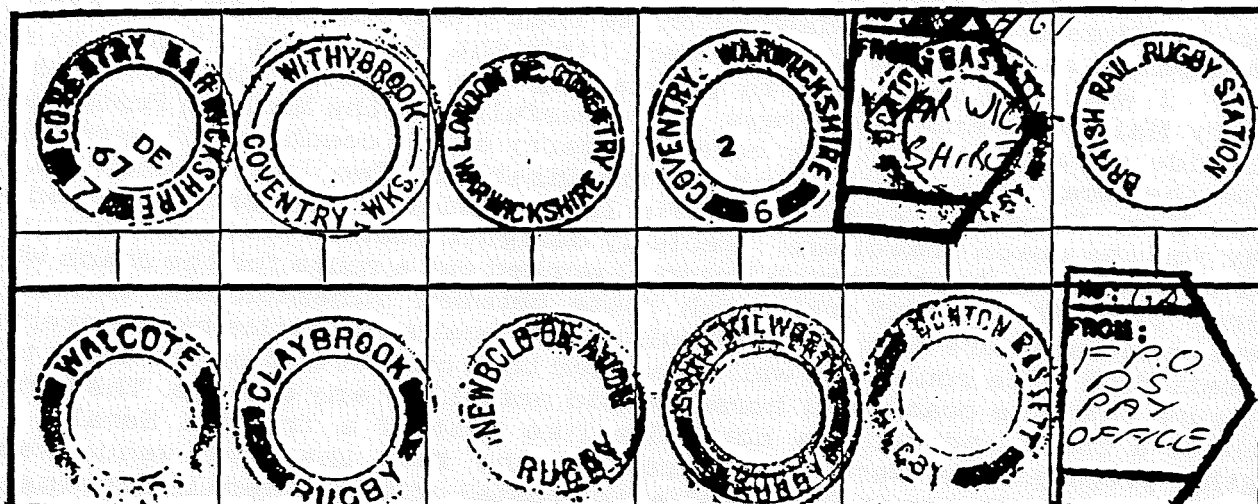
In a quite different source some earlier payments to tradesmen do occur. The Pinnock business can be traced back forty years: "Wm. Pinnock his bill for Brasses & Stamps for 1 qtr ended Lady Day 1721 £2.04.00", and similar amounts paid to him each quarter (Post 2/18). The previous volume, covering 1708-12, has payments for lead seals and leathen bags, but none for stamps; unfortunately the volume(s) covering 1712-20 have not survived. Geoff Oxley states that that he has come across an allusion to postmasters being charged 6d. for a new stamp; if that price corresponded with the payment made to the maker and it was only stamps for which he was paid, then Mr. Pinnock will have supplied something like four hundred in the calendar year 1721. The Deborah Pinnock of the 1760's is more likely to be the daughter or daughter-in-law of William than his widow, but who can tell?

The same volume shows the "Nightman" was much less regular in claiming what was due to him, for among the November payments are these consecutive entries: "To Joseph Close Nightman his bill for taking away the soile the 17th. of April to 21st. of July 1721 £12.19.06", "To him more for taking away ye soil of the office 18 Augt £1.17.06."

Moving on to the change to steel stamps there are reports of one careful experiment in the use of a stamp with steel date plugs at the G.P.O. It was a Paid stamp (so presumably a "tombstone") supplied to the Inland Office on 10th. February 1825 and passed on "with very strict instructions to the stamper to take great care in keeping it clean from being clogged up." (Possibly it should be emphasised that the date slugs, supplied by Alfred Pane with the steel handstamp to Birmingham post office, were made of brass.) A "fair trial" continued until September as was reported on 8th. October: "it gets so rusty from the moisture of the composition that it is at all times very difficult & sometimes impossible to transpose the types; and from the accumulation of rust the types become too sharp(?) or too large for the spaces left in the stamp to receive them, by which the impression is imperfect, and the brass one has been used for the last fortnight." In a further report of 12th. November the senior messenger who had long experience of changing date stamps "states that from the moisture of the composition (Water Colour) getting to the Types they become so fix'd that they could not be transposed without using force by which the figures were liable to be defaced & thereby render the impression imperfect - he also adds that the handle got so firmly fixed that it was several times sent to a Blacksmith to be removed." Daniel Stowe went on to say that it might possible to make up a composition with oil which would produce a good impression. An oil colour had been used but given up since it had an offensive smell. He referred to the Malvern Penny Post stamp which produced "a most excellent impression". The steel was to be preferred on account of its sharpness and he would find out, from a chemist, if the offensive smell could be obviated. (Post 15, ref 19, pages 269, 498, 535.) Presumably this experiment was carried out with a red-brown composition then in use at the G.P.O. and it merely emphasises that the inks as well as the metals used affected the longevity of the stamps and the clarity of the impressions they made.

GONE FOR SCRAP

A number of volumes in Post 55 at P.O. Archives which are often overlooked by those researching postmarks are those containing impressions made by P.O. Stores of withdrawn handstamps during the period 1964-80. They appear under the heading "Security Scrap". Many of the impressions are far from clear, probably because of the worn nature of the handstamps. An example from November 1971 is shown below.



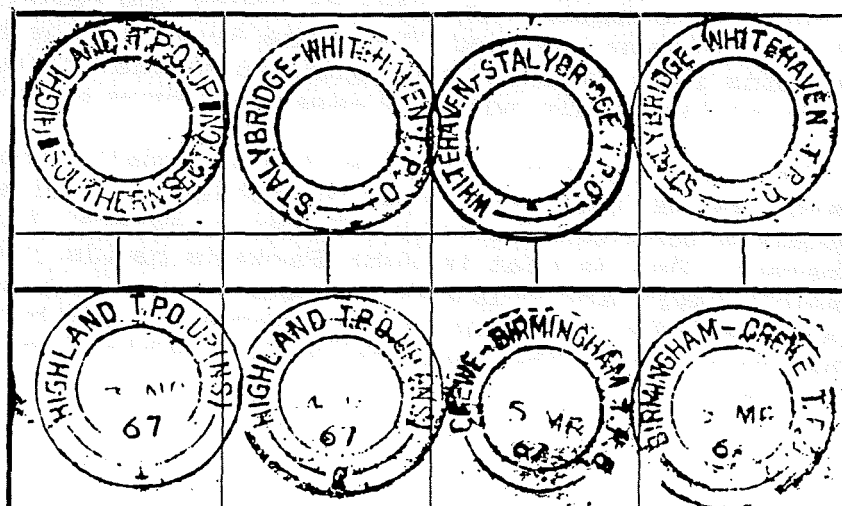
The date on which a stamp is recorded in these volumes does not always provide a reliable guide to the date on which that stamp was withdrawn from service. For those I have studied other evidence suggests that the interval between withdrawal and being scrapped can vary between a few weeks and several years. Indeed some handstamps known to have been withdrawn appear not to have been scrapped in the period covered by these volumes, for instance those from the villages of Rutland. I wonder where they are now. In some cases the date slugs remain in place and probably record the last day of use. Notable amongst these is the single circle of Lubenham, last used in 1929?, but not scrapped until June 1967. There must be a story behind that. Two Birmingham items scrapped in 1966 are also shown below.



Finally one for the Co-ordinating Editor, and a few for the T.P.O. fans are shown.



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of P.O. Archives.



SOUND, "CLEAR THE ROAD."

by Gay Parker

Last year, I was flattered to be asked by the local museum to put on an exhibition of Postal History. I thought it was likely to be a low key affair as part of the Council's Victorian season, and imagined that I would have to put on a display on a small table tucked away in a corner. After several meetings with various officials, it slowly dawned on me that I WAS the exhibition. After an initial panic, at the scale of the project, I thought, "Well in for a penny, in for a pound." I was very fortunate in persuading the Norwich Union to send the Mercury Mailcoach and four Greys. I successfully got the Midland Postal Board to provide a hundred first day covers, to carry on the coach, which were sold in aid of the local branch of Riding for the Disabled. Two local hostleries, The George Eliot, Nuneaton, and The Griffin Inn at Griff kindly provided food and toddy for the coach travellers. Specially designed posters were provided by the local authority and the Norwich Union. I worked out a route for the coach which covered part of the 1825 mailcoach route between Nuneaton and Bedworth. Several meetings were held with the police and local authorities before everyone was satisfied. The route was well traversed both on foot and by car many times to ensure that the coach and horses would not suffer any damage. The turning circle of a coach and four is not quite like that of a Triumph Herald! The lengthy preparations were not helped by the fact that the venue was at Nuneaton, the coach was in East Anglia, the postal officials were in Birmingham, and little old me in Bedworth. Ironically, the postmen decided to go on strike at a crucial stage of the negotiations, causing me to run up a phone bill the size of the National Debt! Have you ever had that sinking feeling that you wished you had never started something.

So, on a cold, misty October morning, my wife and I along with two friends found ourselves on the car-park of Nuneaton Leisure Centre, confronted by two huge transporters in the white and blue livery of the Norwich Union. The rear of one was a mobile stable, whilst the front served as an office. The other vehicle, the front section of which was used as a galley/crew quarters, carried the magnificent London - Norwich mailcoach. The coach in red and black paintwork which was comparable to that of a Rolls Royce was winched down the ramps to await the Greys. The grooms and back-up crew were extremely efficient, so that in no time at all the wonderful horses of John Parker were harnessed up and ready to go, with the tack and harnesses shining beautifully in the early morning light. The girl grooms changed into their smart black hats and jackets. John Drane, of the Norwich Union P.R. Dept. also doubles as the Mail Guard. He not only looks the part in his scarlet jacket and beaver hat, but is a mine of information about mailcoaches. It was nice to see him telling the children from the local schools how the system used to work. He is also quite proficient on that essential instrument, the posthorn. Mike Drake, the P.R. Co-ordinator, placed a ladder so that the travellers, dressed in capes and top-hats or bonnets, were able to mount the coach. Then we were ready for the off. John Drane sounded "Clear the Road" on the horn, and with a deft pull on the reins from John Parker's gnarled hands the team of four greys moved off slowly and smoothly, with the ease that comes only with years of practice.

The experience of riding on top of a mailcoach is difficult to describe. One reason being that when one is achieving a lifetime ambition, emotion and nostalgia tend to take over. However, several things do become immediately apparent. One, is that in John Parker's hands, you are travelling in the best possible style, and it is good to observe a craftsman at his very best. Another is that to handle the reins of four horses in ONE hand is incredibly complex. The other hand holds the coachman's whip, which I only saw used once, and then it was a tap.

The coach completed, without incident, the short journey to the museum where the Mayor and Mayoress awaited us to go in and open the exhibition. The press and BBC TV Midlands were there, plus several video cameramen. John Drane passed over the mail to the Mayor, who thanked him for safeguarding it. The first day covers went on sale and were immediately snapped up raising £182. The Mayor was very complimentary about the whole organisation and I reluctantly had to make a suitable speech, thanking all those who had made the whole thing possible. It was good to see people there from all walks of life and differing interests including the Letter Box Study Group, the Midlands Postal History Society and the Coventry Die Cast Model Club. After a quick gulp of wine we returned to the coach for the short trip through Nuneaton to the George Eliot Hotel which in 1825 was called The Bull. We arrived outside but nothing happened. John Drane blew "Come to the Cookhouse Door" on his posthorn with great aplomb. There were signs of curtains being drawn aside at the first floor windows, and then like magic, the staff appeared bearing trays of hot whiskey toddy which was most welcome to the travellers. Although the patrons, Mr. and Mrs. Patterson were on holiday and missed this piece of 19th. century history being re-enacted, they will be able to see it for the whole trip was recorded on videotape.

From the museum onwards, I was privileged to sit beside John Parker "up front". As we trotted towards the Griffin Inn, the oldest in the area, I was able to observe the rapport between coachman and horses. I felt that much more was obtained from the team by word of mouth than by the reins. I swear that the horses understood exactly what John was saying. He told me how one of the team when she was young, had walked on a grating that was coloured white and yellow, and had not been prepared for the change of surface. Ever since, that horse would not walk on anything coloured white or yellow. Surely enough as we passed over a zebra crossing she stepped over all the white parts without even looking.

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We entered the carpark of the Griffin to be greeted by a serving wench of the period. She was quickly given a kiss by John Drane. Mine hosts Ve and Jim McKenzie made us extremely welcome with suitable victuals. The coach crew were asked to pose for yet another photocall. John Parker, who is known for his grim, weather beaten countenance, said, "I never smile you know. It's in the Guinness Book of Records about me smiling." To which Mike Drane's response was "When was that, 1947?" However John Parker's main concern is for his beloved horses. There is a lovely shot on the video of him clowning with them. He talks to one, then tries to put his hat on the head of the other leading horse. As if to ask for attention, the first one gives him a friendly butt.

We then proceeded to Bedworth where we were scheduled for a halt outside the almshouses of 1840. The journey was not as uncomfortable as one might think. My only complaint was that the backrests did irritate one's backbone a little. It was much warmer than I had expected, but a lot depended on the direction of the wind. We had about two hours on board, but I can imagine that years ago the journey could have been quite a trial, especially during winter.

When we arrived in Bedworth, we were greeted by an amazing sight. There were literally hundreds of schoolchildren, who had been given the time off, awaiting the arrival of the coach. Neither I nor, I suspect, the coach crew will ever forget the reception we received. I am pleased to say that Mrs Holland, one of the teachers from my youngest son's school, had made costumes of the period for them to wear.

At first, the children were a little afraid of the horses but they gradually gained confidence, and slowly drew nearer and nearer. This they may have regretted later, as one of the horses decided to relieve itself. This was accompanied by great applause. Even John Parker smiled. He later said to me, "They always do it; it's the highlight of the day." After about half an hour, we left for the return trip to Nuneaton. I can assure you that it was a day that Bedworth will never forget, the return of the mailcoach after about 150 years!

As we returned to Nuneaton, the evening and the cold were drawing in. John told me that the horses get a little nervous at dusk; apparently they have only about half a human's vision in that light. We arrived back at Nuneaton and I do not know which was the worse, the fatigue or the flow of emotion which I could feel sweeping over me. It is with a sense of pride that I was able to create this historic occasion for the town, but above all thanks must go to John Parker and Norwich Union for keeping alive part of our heritage.

Copies of the hour long video can be obtained by ringing 0203 314922.

SIX-DAY TOWNS, 1775

Although this list appeared in MM47, I have reproduced it again so that all the available lists appear as one series, and several members have joined since the time of that issue. I have marked with a cross those towns that did not appear on the previous list. Significant among these is Lichfield

GENERAL-POST-OFFICE, April 5th, 1775.

His Majesty's Postmaster-General have been pleased to establish a Daily Post, Sunday excepted, to and from this Office, and the following Towns, and the Places in their respective Districts.

Abingdon.	Coltsworth.	Hertford.	X Newbury.	Stoke in Norfolk.
X Alresford.	X Congleton.	X Henley.	Newcastle upon Tyne.	Stone.
X Ampthill.	Coventry.	Hereford.	X Newcastle under Line.	Stourbridge.
Annan.	Croydon.	X Hitchin.	Newmarket.	X Stratford on Avon.
Appleby.		Holkham.	Newport-Pagnel.	Stroud, Gloucestersh.
Ashburton.	Darling.	X Holm's Chaple.	Northallerton.	X Sudbury.
Atleborough.	Darlington.	Holt.	Northampton.	X Sunderland
	Dartford.	Holyhead.	Nottingham.	X Swaffham.
	Daventry.	X Hounslow.	Northwich.	
X Baldock.	Deal.	Howden.	Norwich.	Tadcaster.
Banbury.	Derby.	Hull.		Taunton.
Barnard's-Castle.	Dereham.	X Hungerford.	Oxford.	Tedbury.
Barnet.	Donaghadee.	Huntingdon.		X Tetworth.
Barnsley.	Doncaster.	Huthersfield.	Penrith.	Thame.
Bath.	Dover.		Petersfield.	Thetford.
Bawtry.	Dumfries.	Ingatestone.	Plymouth.	Thorne.
Beccles.	Dunstable.	Ipswich.	X Plympton.	Tiverton.
Beaconsfield.	Durham.	Ireland, { by Mail to London & by Packet to Cork	X Poole.	Tunbridge { from Aldenham to Maidstone.
X Bedford.		Isleworth.	Portsmouth.	Tuxford.
X Bewley.			Prescot.	X Twickenham.
X Biggleswade.	East Grinstead.		Preston.	
Birmingham.	Enfield.	Kelvedon.	Queenborough.	X Uckfield.
Bicester.	Enstone.	Kendal.		Uxbridge.
Bocking.	Epsom.	Kelwick.		
Bradford in Yorkshire.	Exeter.	X Kidderminster.	X Ramsbury	Wakefield.
X Braintree.		Kingston.	Ramsgate, { from Ramsgate to Maidstone.	X Wallingford.
Bridgewater.		X Knutsford.	Rawcliffe.	Wallall.
Brighthelm-stone. { from Brighton to London & by Packet to Dover	Fairford.		Reading.	Walsingham.
Bristol.	X Farnham.	Lancaster.	Retford.	Ware.
Bromley { from Bromley to Maidstone.	Farmham.	Leatherhead.	X Ringwood.	Warrington.
Brough.	Farringdon.	X Lechlade.	Ripley.	Warwick.
Burntwood.	Ferrybridge.	Ledbury.	Rochdale.	Watford.
Burroughbridge.	Feverham.	Leeds.	Rochester.	Watton in Norfolk.
Bury St. Edmund's.	X Foot's-Cray.	Leicester.	X Ros.	Wells in Somerset.
Burnham in Norfolk.	X From.	Lewes.	Rotherham.	Wells in Norfolk.
X Burfelen.	X Gainsborough.	X Litchfield.	Royton.	Wellington in Somerset.
X Burton upon Trent.	Garling.	Liverpool.	Rumford.	X Welwyn.
	X Gatehead.	Loughborough.	X Rumsey.	Wetherby.
	Gerrard's-Cross.	Lowell.	Ryegate	Whitehaven.
Calne.	Gloucester.	X Luton.		Wigan.
Cambridge.		Lynn.	X Salisbury.	Wight. Isle of
Canterbury.	Godalmin.		Sandwich.	X Winborn.
Carlisle.	X Godstone.	X Macclesfield.	Saxmundham	Winchester.
Caxton.	X Gosport	X Maidenhead.	Sevenoake { from Macclesfield to Manchester.	Windham in Norfolk.
Chatham.	Grantham.	Malden.	St. Alban's.	Windsor.
Chelmsford.	Gravefend.	Manchester.	Sheffield.	Wingham in Kent.
Chesterfield.	Guildford.	X Manningtree.	Shipston upon Stower.	Witham in Essex.
Chester.		Mansfield.	Shifnal.	Wolverhampton.
Chichester.	X Hales Owen.	Margate, { from Margate to Maidstone.	Shrewsbury.	Woolburn.
X Chippenham.	Hallifax.	Market Harborough	Sittingbourn.	Woodstock.
Chipping-norton.	X Halled.	X Marlborough.	Southall.	Worcester.
Chorley in Lancashire.	Hampton-Court.	Marlow.	Southampton.	Worktop.
Cirencester.	Hampton in Gloucestershire.	X Middlewich.	Stafford.	Workington.
Claremont.	tershire.	X Midhurst.	Stamford.	Wycombe. High.
Clay.	Harborough	X Monmouth.	Staines.	X Wycombe. Well.
Cobham.	X Harwich.		X Stevenage.	
Cockermouth.	Hastemere.	Namptwich.	Stilton.	Yarmouth in Norfolk.
Colchester.	X Hatfield.	X Nettled.	X Stockport.	York.
Colnbrook	X Havant.	Newark.		

A Mail is dispatched from London to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh to London every Day, Wednesday and Sunday excepted; as also to and from Morpeth, Alnwick, Belford, and Berwick; and a Post is established Six Times a Week between Edinburgh and Aberdeen, Glasgow, Greenock, and the intermediate Towns.

Letters are sent from hence on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays for Arundel, Brighthelmstone, Petworth, Steyning, Shoreham, Wilsch, Grays, Newport in Shropshire, Peterborough, Spalding, Boston, and Louth, and return hither on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Likewise on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays to the Devizes, Melksham, Trowbridge, and Bradford in Wilts, and return on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

To Bridgenorth every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, and from thence every Day.

And to Somerton, Ilminster, Chard, and Axminster, every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and back every Day.

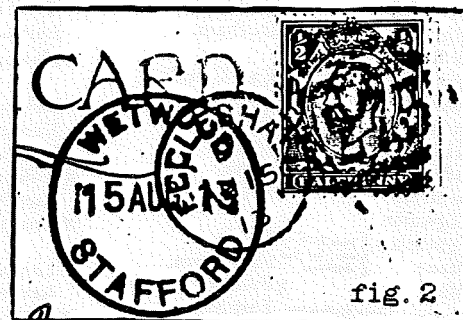
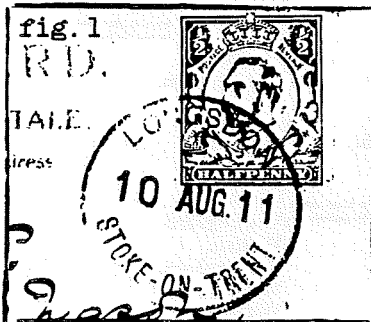
By Command of the Postmaster-General,

ANTH. TODD, Secretary.

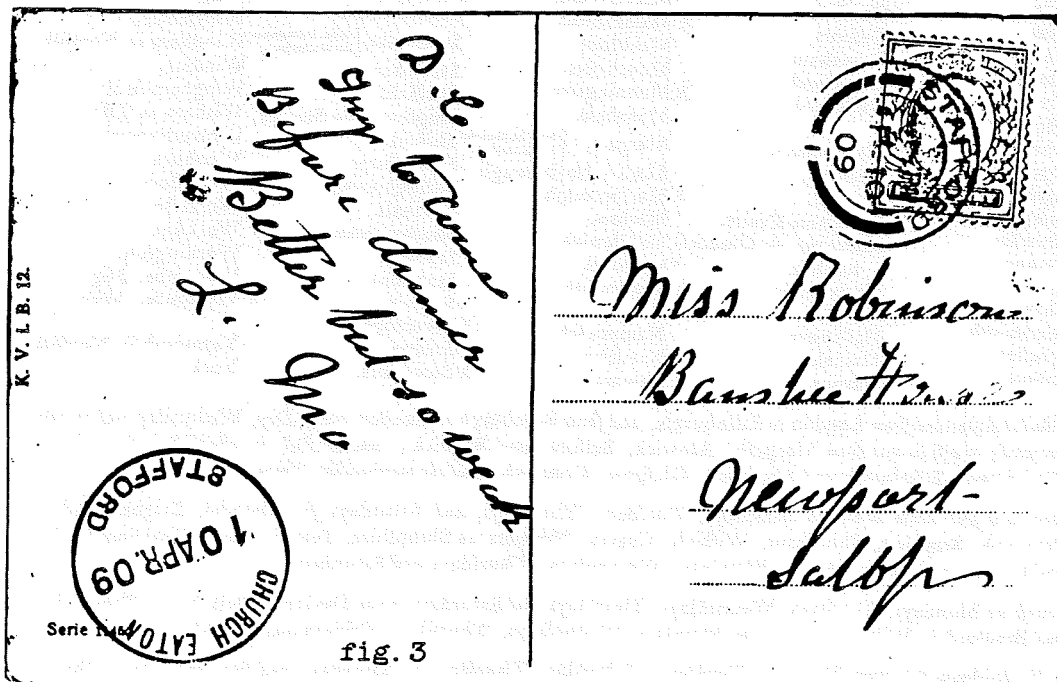
VILLAGE RUBBER STAMPS c.1905 - c. 1932,
ILLUSTRATED FROM STAFFORDSHIRE

by Rev. Christopher Beaver

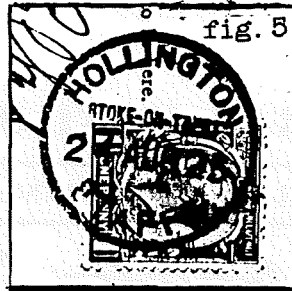
Handstamps made of india-rubber instead of steel were for many years issued to offices serving very small communities because of their relative cheapness. Generally such an office had no other stamp. A typical village rubber, of 28mm. when issued, has the location round the top with the post town round the base. The date is central in one line; the month in three letters with a dot after the letters, the year being in two figures only. From c.1905 it might be used on mail handed in or put in the office box (fig. 1) as well as for all counter work.



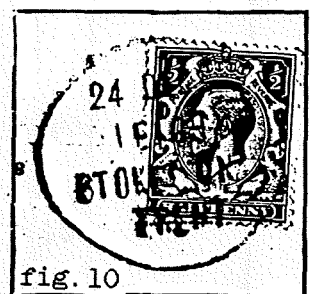
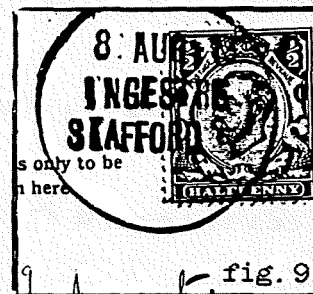
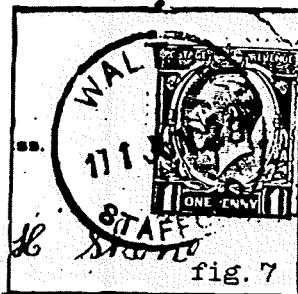
Some postmasters left cancellation to their parent offices long after a 1905 change of instruction (figs. 2 & 3). By 1918 only the village stamp was required, not both.



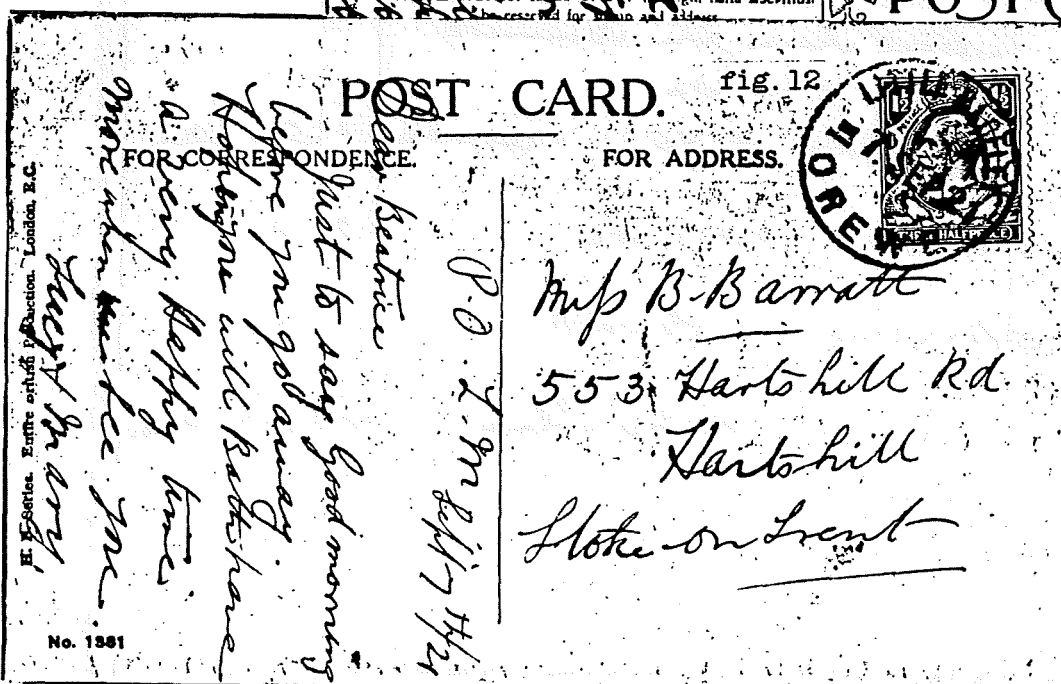
Many rubber stamps issued after 1905 included the county, the parent or post town then being placed horizontally above the date (figs. 4 & 5). Being so large, a rubber tended to be struck only once across two adhesives, though contrary to regulations (fig. 6). Stamps for offices under the county town remained in the original form to the end as obvious county names are omitted (fig. 7).



Violet ink of a stipulated composition was supposed to be used because the oil in the ordinary black ink quickly damaged the rubber, but many offices used any alternative available or ignored the direction. This in time caused the stamp to become distorted (fig. 8). Occasionally a temporary replacement needed to be made up from loose type. Such skeleton rubbers were 30 mm. in diameter and had space for four horizontal lines, the date occupying the top one (figs. 9 & 10).



If an office was transferred to another post town, a new stamp would need to be ordered and sent from London (figs. 11 & 12). For the sake of clarity, in later years rubbers were made with larger letters if possible. Issue of village rubbers ceased in 1932.



ANOTHER TIME-BILL

This one is for one of the less well-known mailcoaches. Read all about it in the next issue.

**GENERAL POST-OFFICE.**

EDWARD, EARL OF ST. GERMAN, Postmaster-General.

Loughboro and Kuneaton **TIME BILL.** *Mail coach*

Contractors	Miles	Time allowed. H. M.		Hours	Mins. after.
			<i>Despatched from Loughboro</i>	8	30 <i>M</i>
<i>11½</i>	<i>1:10</i>		<i>Arrived at Leicester</i>	9	40
<i>13½</i>	<i>1:35</i>		<i>Arrived at Hinckley</i>	11	15
<i>5</i>	<i>35m</i>		<i>Arrived at Kuneaton Station</i>	11	50. <i>P.M.</i>
			<i>Mail Train from London due at 11.59-</i>		
			<i>Return</i>		
			<i>Mail Train from Tamworth due at 1.11. am</i>		
			<i>Despatched Mailcoach to Loughboro</i>	1	25 <i>am</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>- 35</i>		<i>Arrived at Hinckley</i>	2	0 -
<i>13½</i>	<i>1:35</i>		<i>Arrived at Leicester</i>	3	35
<i>11½</i>	<i>1:10</i>		<i>Arrived at Loughboro</i>	4	45. <i>am</i>

When any loss of Time occurs, the Postmaster is to state the Cause of it in the proper Column.

THE END OF LANE END

*The Letter to every Money order Office
and to Surveyors. Sep! 14th 1848*
Instructions, No. 31, 1848.



By Command of the Postmaster General.

NOTICE to the PUBLIC,

AND

**Instructions to all Postmasters,
Sub-Postmasters, and Letter Receivers.**

GENERAL POST OFFICE;
September, 1848.

THE Sub-Post Town heretofore called
“ **LANE END,**” in the Parish of Stoke-
upon-Trent, in *the County of Stafford*, will
in future be designated **LONGTON.**

Postmasters, &c., will make the necessary
alteration in any Official List in which the
name may appear.

ATHERSTONE RURAL POSTS

The following posts were listed in a document dated 15th. July 1852 in Post 14, Ref. 223, p.50ff.

Atherstone - Sibson

Mancetter, Witherley, Ratcliffe Culey, Sibson, Temple Hall, Wellsborough.

Atherstone - Hartshill

Mancetter, Hartshill, (Chapel End, Snow Hill, Ansley Hall, Ansley Church, The Boot, Nuthurst Heath, Galley Common, Nuneaton Common.)

Atherstone - Norton juxta Twycross

Warton, Austrey, Norton.

Atherstone - Hurley

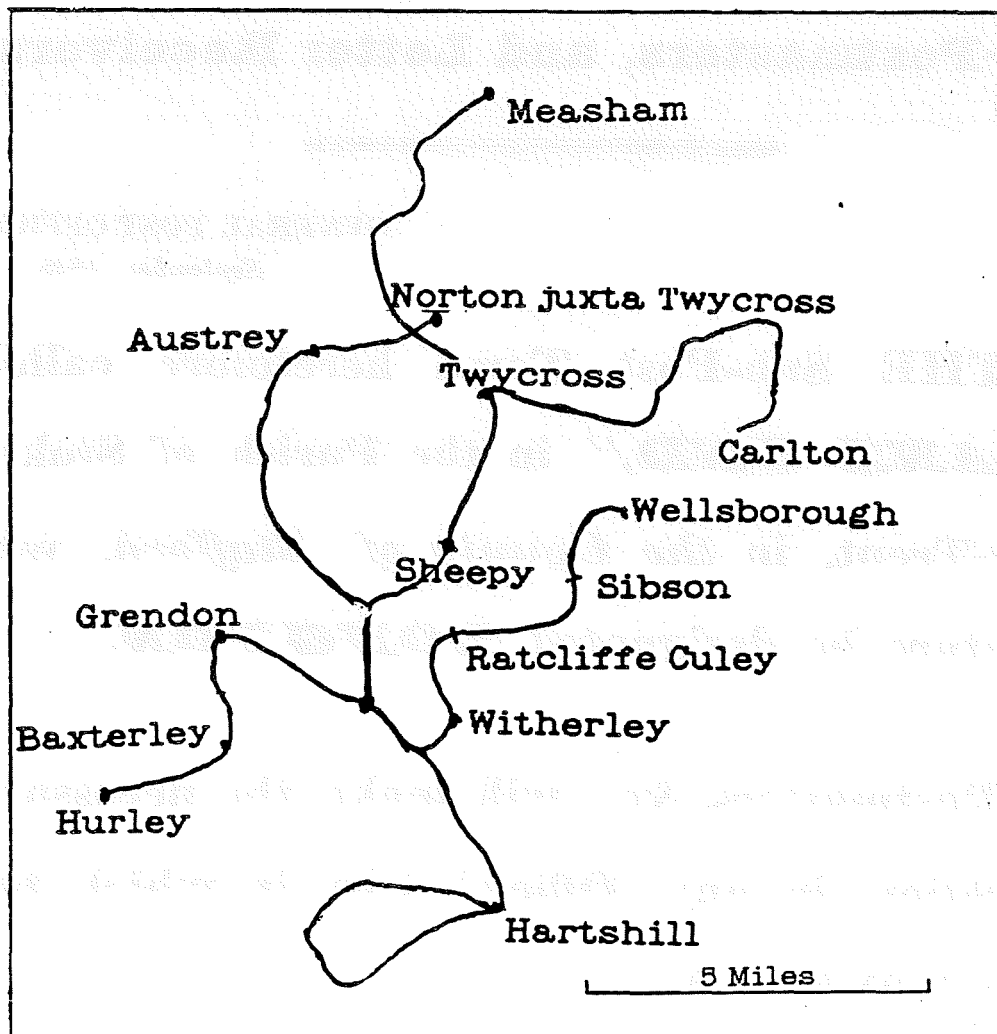
Pinwall, Grendon, Baddesley, Baxterley, Hurley.

Atherstone - Gopsall

Sheepy, Twycross, Gopsall. (This footpost never came into being. These villages were served by a mailcart to Measham, the cost of which was guaranteed by Earl Howe.)

Twycross - Carlton

Bilstone, Congerstone, Shackerstone, Odstone, Barton in the Beans, Carlton.



BURTON-ON-TRENT RURAL POSTS

The following are the daily walks listed in Post 14, Ref 223, p. 56ff. which is dated 15th. July 1852. A glance at page 109 of the new version of the U.D.C. book will show that it took a year to bring some of these walks into operation. The first walk appears to be listed in virtually reverse order, but I have listed it as it was written.

Burton - Bretby

Hartshorn, Nethertown, Hartshorn Grange, Midway, Winshill, Bretby.

Burton - Hilton

Horninglow, Rolleston, Tutbury, Marston in the Dove, Hilton.

Burton - Yoxall

Branston, Tatenhill, Barton, Yoxall. (From 1854 Dunstall was included in this walk.)

Burton - Coton in the Elms

Stapenhill, Walton, Rosliston, Coton. (Did this in fact go on to Lullington which is not mentioned in the document?)

Burton - Willington

Stretton, Clay Mill, Egginton, Willington.

Burton - Coton in the Clay

Shobnall, New Inn, Wood End, Hanbury, Coton Hall, Coton in the Clay.

Burton - Repton

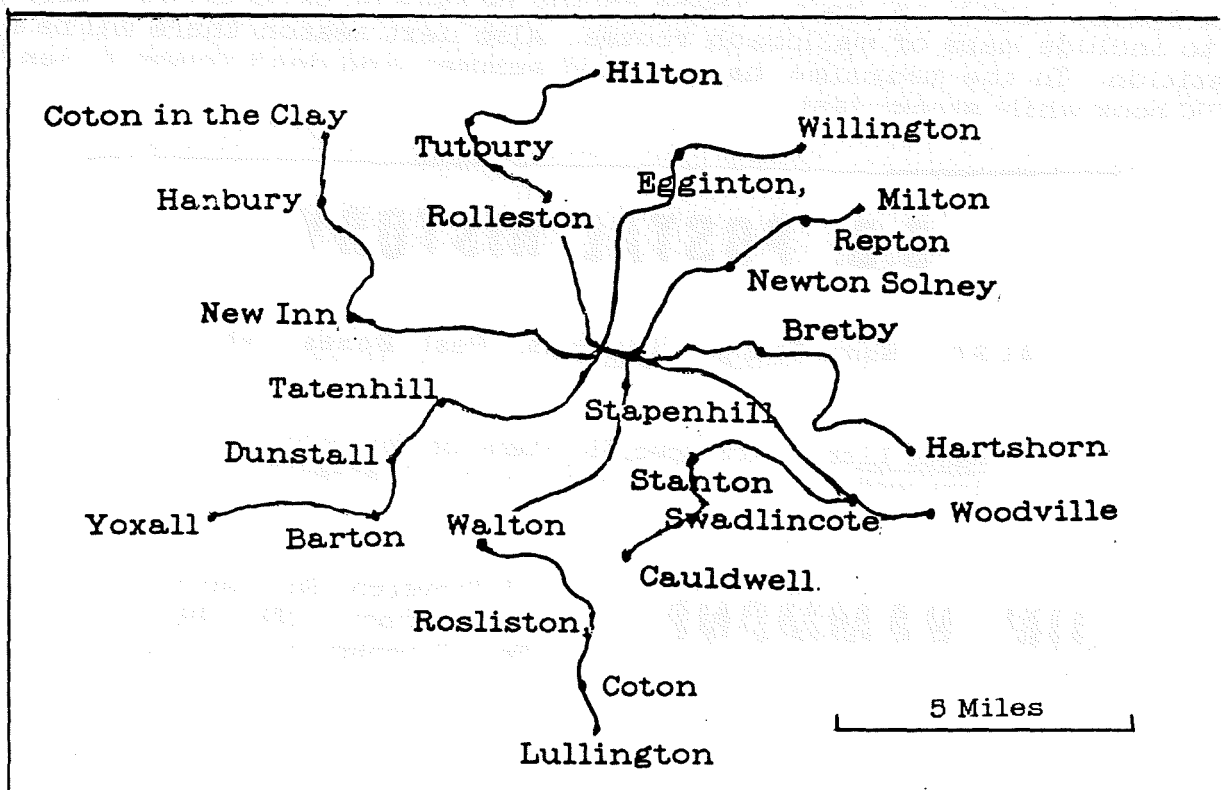
Newton Solney, Repton, Milton.

Burton - Woodville

Woodville. (Presumably carried by the mailcart to Ashby-de-la-Zouch.)

Woodville - Stanton

Swadlincote, Newhall, Stanton. (In 1855 this was extended to Cadley Hill and Cauldwell.)



TAILPIECE

To give a taste of summer John Calladine has sent a photograph of a very picturesque sub-office with gleaming paintwork, roses round the door and even a hanging basket. The office is at Symond's Yat in Herefordshire. Obviously, it needs to be seen in glorious technicolor to do it full justice.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

I hope to send this out at the beginning of August but if that proves impossible it will be about 9th. September before it is posted. As to the contents, I prefer not to commit myself too soon. There should be more on Cavendish Bridge, and I hope to include maps of mailcoach routes. Also next season there will be a new competition. In the meantime, have a good summer, and don't forget to send for the UDC book while stocks last.

G.B. POSTAL HISTORY

ALSO: Some Foreign, Ephemera, Post Boxes - etc.

Wants Lists - for specific items or for general interests - will receive my personal attention

JIM HAMMOND

5 Staverton Rd, Daventry
Northants. NN11 4HL.
Tel. Daventry (0327) 71842