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BULLETIN NO. 14 SEPTEMBER 1979

Message from our New Chairman (certainly not going to type Chairperson)
Editor

Since our Annual General Meeting in April, the summer has passed all too quickly. Many of us have combined our holidays and days out with a visit to a stamp shop or stamp exhibition, where we have searched through dealers stocks whilst leaving the rest of the family to sunbathe on the beach. Why do they seem to get more sunburnt than ourselves ?

When people say 'have you enjoyed your holiday', we reply 'yes' and enthuse on this and that stamp, cover or map we have found.

I hopethat you have all found new postal history material over the months to display to us during the coming season. The variety of material brought along from year to year by members continues to hold our interest and provide many of us with new avenues to explore in the world of postal history.

You will note from our programme below that the meetings to be held in Birmingham have moved their venue from the Midland Institute to Dr.Johnson House where we have found a suitable room at a reasonable cost. The building is next to Lewis's Store in the centre of the City. A map will appear in a later Bulletin together with details of parking and the route from the railway and bus stations.

Finally may I thank previous Officers for the work done on behalf of the Society, especially our retiring Secretary W.S.Chester whose continued support we look forward to and our past Chairman who has now shouldered the Secretary's burden. Please continue to support the Society by attending meetings (see below) and making contributions to the Bulletin so that our Society can go on from strength to strength in the advancement of Postal History in the Midlands.

Elizabeth Lewis

PROGRAMME OF SOCIETY MEETINGS FOR 1979/1980 (all Saturdays)

Please
note in
your
Diary
NOW

6th OCTOBER	STAMP FAIR & EXHIBITION	HINCKLEY
2 - 4 pm	Meeting in St.John Ambulance Hall, Brunel Rd. Car parking opposite. <u>Nine sheets by members.</u>	
17th NOVEMBER	STAMP FAIR & EXHIBITION	COVENTRY.
2 - 4 pm	Usual location at Sibree Hall. Details of meeting to be published in next Bulletin.	
8th DECEMBER	Bass Museum, Burton. Details later	
19th JANUARY	Dr.Johnson House, Colmore Circus, BIRMINGHAM	
23rd FEBRUARY	Details later for both meetings.	
29th MARCH	AGM and Auction at above	
19th APRIL	Special Meeting at Midland Federation BURTON	

THE UNDATED VILLAGE POSTMARKS OF SHROPSHIRE

by S. STOBBS.

(not to be reproduced without the consent of the Editor)

In 1829 instructions were sent out to all Postmasters that they were to remove the mileage figures from their name handstamps if it were found that they were incorrect. At the same time a number of new handstamps were issued without mileage figures and this gradually led to the ultimate disappearance of the mileage mark handstamps although some were, of course, still in use for many years thereafter, (e.g. HALESOWEN). The first handstamps which were issued in 1829 were Circular Unframed with seriffed letters but, from 1843, they were in a similar type but with sanserif letters. These namestamps had no date in the centre but, in 1838, the Authorities laid down that all Post Towns, who had a business of over £1,000 p.a., should change to a dated handstamp.

The Undated Postmarks continued to be used in the villages up to 9th September 1859 when, as an experiment, the Postmaster General agreed to do away with their use as a trial in London and in SHROPSHIRE. As no one grumbled, as had been expected it was laid down that from March 1860 they were all to be withdrawn.

There are a number of different types of Undated Village Handstamps used in Shropshire and in the listing below I set out the nine types which may be encountered:-

	TYPE
Unframed circular sanserif letters with 2 arcs below	C.1
Unframed circular, seriffed letters, with 2 arcs below	C.2
Unframed circular, with fleurons at foot	C.3c
Unframed circular with one arc below	C.4
Framed single circle, with letters around	D.1A
Framed single circle with letters across centre	D.4
Italic lower case lettering in straight line within rectangular frame	E.5
Italic lower case unframed Penny Post Village Type in two lines	G.1
Mileage marks, circular type still being used.	G.3

NAME STAMP	POST TOWN	TYPE	COLOUR	DATES RECORDED	REMARKS.
ADMASTON	Wellington	C.4	Black	1858	
ALBERBURY	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1850	
ASTON	Ludlow	C.1	Black	1845-1849	Full name:- "ASTON-on-CLUN"
ASTON-on-CLUN	Ludlow	C.1	Black	1850-1851	
BASCHURCH	Shrewsbury	G.1	Black	1842-1858	
			Green	1857	
BECKBURY	Shrewsbury	C.1	Red	1847)	
			Black	1848)	
BIGTON HEATH	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1855-1859	
BOMERE HEATH	Shrewsbury	C.1	Grey	1857-1858	
LOW TOWN					
BRIDGENORTH	Bridgnorth.	C.1	Black	1847-1854	Note "E" in "BRIDGENORTH" Correct name "BROMFIELD"
BROOMFIELD	Ludlow	C.1	Black	1849-1850	
BROSELEY	Ironbridge	C.2	Black	1838-1842	
BROSELEY	Ironbridge	C.1	Black	1844-1850	
	till 1845				
	Shifnall there- after				
BURWARTON	Bridgnorth	G.1	Black	1843-1850	
BURWARTON	Bridgnorth	C.1	Bright Yellow then Blue	1855-1859	

NAME STAMP	POST TOWN	TYPE	COLOUR	DATE RECORDED	REMARKS
CHESWARDINE	Market Drayton	C.1	Black	1848-1853	
CHIRBURY	Shrewsbury	C.2	Black	1845	
CHIRBURY	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1850	
CHURCH STOKE	Shrewsbury	C.2	Black	1842-1847	In Montgomery-shire
CHURCH					
STRETTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1848	
CLAVERLEY	Wolverhampton	C.1	Black	1845-1849	
CLEE HILL	Ludlow	C.1	Black		
			then Blue	1850-1852	
CLEOBURY	Bewdley	G.1	Red	1842-1848	Full name is Cleobury Mortimer -do-
CLEOBURY	Bewdley	G.1	Black	1841-1849	
CLUN	Ludlow	C.1	Black	1845-1853	
COALBROOKDALE	Wellington	C.1	Black	1852-1859	
CONDOVER	Shrewsbury	C.1	Green	1855-1858	
CRESSAGE	Shrewsbury	C.1	then Black	1851-1854	
CHURCHSTOKE	Shrewsbury	C.2	Black	1847	In Montgomery-shire
			Black	1846	
DAWLEY	Shifnal	C.1	Yellow	1848-1851	
DAWLEY BANK	Shifnal	C.1	Green	1859	
DAWLEY GREEN	Shifnal	G.1	Pale Brown	1840-1844	
DAWLEY GREEN	Shifnal	C.1	Yellow	1848	
DIDDLEBURY	Ludlow	C.1	Green	1846-1849	
DORRINGTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1852	
DUDLESTON	Chirk	C.1	Black	1851-1856	
EATON					
CONSTANTINE	Wellington	C.1	Black	1858	
FELTON	Ellesmere	C.1	Black	1847	
FORD	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1850	
GOBOWEN	Oswestry	C.1	Black	1857	
GRINDLEY BROOK	Whitchurch	C.1	Black	1859	
HALESOWEN	Birmingham	C.1	Black	1848-1849	In Shropshire till 1844
HALFWAX HOUSE	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1857	
HIGH ERCALL	Wellington	C.2	Black	1859	
HODNET	Market Drayton	C.1	Black	1850	
HORSEHAYS	Wellington	C.1	Black	1858	Correct name "HORSEHAY"
HINSTOCK	Market Drayton	C.1	Black	1852	
KETLEY	Wellington	C.2	Black	1845-1856	
KINNERSLEY	Wellington	C.2	Black	1854-1856	
LEBOTWOOD	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1857-1859	Correct name "LEEBOTWOOD"
LEIGHTON	Wellington	D.4	Black	1859	
LLANSAINTFRAID	Oswestry	C.1	Black	1859	In Montgomery-shire
-YN-MECHAN					
LLANFYLLIN	Oswestry	C.2	Red	1844	- do -
LLANFYLLIN	Oswestry	C.1	Blue	1848	- do -
LLANMYNECH	Oswestry	C.2	Black	1846	
LLANMYNECH	Oswestry	C.1	Blue	1858	
LLYNCLYS	Shrewsbury	C.1	Blue	1858	
LOPPINGTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Blue	1856-1858	
LYDBURY NORTH	Ludlow	C.2	Black	1851	
LEINTWARDINE/ 156	Ludlow	G.3	Black	1839-1850	Old mileage type still used. In Cheshire
MALPAS	Whitechurch	E.5	Black	1830-1848	
MARSH-BROOK	Ludlow	C.1	Blue	1848	
MIDDLE	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1850-1859	
MONTFORD	Shrewsbury	C.1	Blue-Green	1857	
MUCH WENLOCK	Ironbridge	C.2	Black	1844	
MUNSLOW	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1849-1858	
NESCLIFFE	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black then Green	1851-1859	

NAME STAMP	POST TOWN	TYPE	COLOUR	DATE RECORDED	REMARKS
ONIBURY	Ludlow	C.2	Black	1844-1855	
PONTESBURY	Shrewsbury	C.2	Black	1843-1851	
PONTESFORD					
BRIDGE	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1858	
PREES	Whitchurch	C.2	Black	1849-1857	
PULVERBATCH	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1848-1855	
RODINGTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Blue-Green	1851	
ROWLEY REGIS	Dudley	C.1	Black	1847	In Shropshire till 1844
RUYTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1841-1849	"Full Name RUYTON ELEVEN TOWNS"
RUYTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1857	
SIDBURY	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1840	
SHAWBURY	Shrewsbury	C.2	Black	1843-1845	
SHERIFF-HALES	Newport Salop	C.1	Black	1854	
TILSTOCK	Whitchurch	C.1	Blue	1851	
UPPINGTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1849	
WEM	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1838-1841	
WENLOCK	Ironbridge	C.2	Blue then Black	1838-1843	Full Name "MUCH WENLOCK"
WESTBURY (Salop)	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1839-1850	
WHITTINGTON	Oswestry	C.1	Black then Blue	1841-1848	
WINSTANTON	Shrewsbury	C.1	Green	1848	
WORFIELD	Wolverhampton	C.2	Black	1844-1848	
WORFIELD	Wolverhampton	C.1	Black	1849-1857	
WORTHEN	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1852	
WROXETER	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1847-1851	
WOORE	Market Drayton	C.3c.	Black	1839-1848	
WOORE	Market Drayton	C.2	Black	1854	
BOW STREET	Shrewsbury	C.1	Blue Green Black	1855-1856 1857 1859	In Cardigan-shire and almost 90 miles away
<u>SHREWSBURY SUBURBS</u>					
ABBEY FOREGATE	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1848-1859	
CASTLE FOREGATE	Shrewsbury	D.1.A.	Grey	1859	
COLEHAM	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1847-1851	
FRANKWELL	Shrewsbury	C.1	Black	1848-1858	

It will be noted that Villages from other localities have been included where their mail was dealt with by a Post Town in the County and conversely also Villages in the County have been listed whose mail was handled by Post Towns outside the County.

I should like to add my grateful thanks to my many friends in the Midland G.B. Postal History Society and the Birmingham Philatelic Society who had added items to the 75% of the list of those in my own collection.

Editors Note

Congratulations to our Founder Chairman, Steve Stobbs on the above article which obviously took a lot of research, and investigation to prepare. It should have been published before and like the article on following page by John Calladine it was prepared early in the year but circumstances prevented prior publication of both articles for which I apologise. Do not let the above put you off from writing "something" for future issues.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO THIS SUMMER ?

by John Calladine.

Do you remember the 1978 summer that-never-was ? Do you remember how you spent it ? Do you even remember how the editor asked you to spend it ? It's all there in Bulletin No.10 in a little piece headed, "What are you going to do this Summer ?" Go along to your local librarian, our Jon suggested, and discover the mine of postal history material he has hidden on his musty - or was it dusty - shelves. Then write and tell us about it.

It would seem that public libraries share with banks a desire to cause the maximum inconvenience to the largest number of people. Banks do it by closing on Saturdays and opening in the week only at a time when everyone else is at work. Libraries do it by opening on half-closing day and closing on half opening day - or something like that. I suppose it's not their fault that the "local" library I wanted to visit is a 2½ hour round trip on our hi-speed motorways. "No, it isn't half closing day". "Yes, the library is closed" "What a strange fellow you are to want a book on a Wednesday".

Spurred on only by thoughts of hot editorial tears on a cold drawing board, I returned on half-opening/half-closing day. Certainly the shelves didn't seem to be bulging with boxes of 17th century letters and faded Post Office Notices. But, thank goodness, there was a card index "M-N-O-P, here we are - POST. "Thinking I might have to call for help to carry the index cards, I faced the mammoth task with more than a qualm. Just two cards ? It had to be a joke: "Post Office and Posting House in Stourbridge 1839". "Postal Service - 3 letter sheets of 1852". At least they looked promising.

The first reference turned out to be "Robson's Directory of 1839" This is a useful book. Under the name of any particular Midland town it describes its important features and follows with an index of its professional inhabitants listed both alphabetically and by their trade classification. It painted a vivid picture of Stourbridge : 61 taverns, 54, beer retailers, 7 surgeons and one coffin maker. The Directory also has a paragraph about the local post office which included location, name of postmistress and the times of the mails to and from the principal cities. Apparently Birmingham wasn't one of them.

From the letter sheets, I noted postal markings and learned that the writer lent his name to a particularly windy street along which I first toddled to school earlier in the century. By this time the library staff were becoming caught up in the spirit of the endeavour as I had noted which filing cabinets they hid behind. They found two books which gave a mass of useful and useless information about 19th century Stourbridge but the key item was William Scott's "Stourbridge and it's Vicinity", written in 1832. It even admitted to there being a daily mail coach from Birmingham to Kidderminster thereby proving that Birmingham did exist before the days of ATV.

The library apart, there were other lines of enquiry suitable to summer pursuit. Many of the letters to and from Stourbridge that survive from the last century are from the files of the largest employer of the time, the ironworks of John Bradley & Co. Fortunately the company still exists on the same site, albeit a pale shadow of its former glory. A letter to the company produced information beyond reasonable expectation and an invitation to drop in. (The canal is next door and my wife suggested they were referring to that.) When a suitable "summer" day arrived, I steeped myself in the atmosphere of the time by walking the length of the Stourbridge Canal towpath including the final derelict arm to the ironworks. In what was perhaps the very same Victorian office from which those letters originated. I was offered a cup of tea. "How did the letters come on to the market and do you have any more" ? I enquired diffidently. The longest - serving employee volunteered the information that at the end of the war, they spent two weeks burning the articles! I showed them some of 'my' letters. They shook their heads sadly. "Nothing was sold - someone must have nicked them at the time". Whoever he was and whatever his motives, he deserves recognition

(See Figure One - Illustration of John Bradley's Ironworks)

Of course, not all Stourbridge letters are from John Bradley's ironworks. Elsewhere in the town (but where?) were the Leys Iron Works. I examined their letters more closely and came across an irrelevant but interesting correspondence about a man who lived near Stroud (Glos). Now Stroud really is "local" in terms of my present home. Stroud actually possesses not merely a public library but, opposite its front door, a museum. Did you know, for example, that the lawnmower was invented near Stroud? No?

The assistant "curatress" smiled. "You want to trace a Victorian businessman who lived in this area but you aren't sure whether it was in Stroud, Uley or Dursley?" "Do you know his name?" (Do I really look quite stupid?) "His name is Clyburn" I said. Her smile vanished and she spoke more deliberately "... and his first name?" "Richard" I replied. At this her eyes opened wide and she said I had better see the curator.

Whatever I had done with my summer, Mr. Editor, someone at an eminent university had spent his summer, winter and heaven knows what else assembling a mammoth folder about the said Richard Clyburn, the unsung Orville Wright of the agricultural machinery world. The bulging folder lay on the curator's desk. It seemed that only one mystery remained - why Clyburn disappeared from Uley never to be heard of again. In my hot little hand I held the answer; the story of his bankruptcy and disgrace, with the Leys Iron Works, Stourbridge, one of his many creditors.

If I did nothing to advance the cause of postal history this summer, I made some one at a distant provincial university very happy and, who knows, he may complete his PHD thesis. If I have made the editor happy, my cup runneth over and I can hardly wait for his next suggestion. What are we going to do next summer? Answers in a plain envelope please.

THE MISSENT HANDSTAMPS OF BIRMINGHAM

by E. LEWIS.

Up until 1793 letters sent to the wrong post towns were returned to London for resorting at the dead letter office, but in this year it was decided by the Post Office that such letters could be forwarded direct to their correct town with the normal mails with an endorsement to indicate the reason for delay. This endorsement was in manuscript at first but within a few years many towns began to use suitable handstamps.

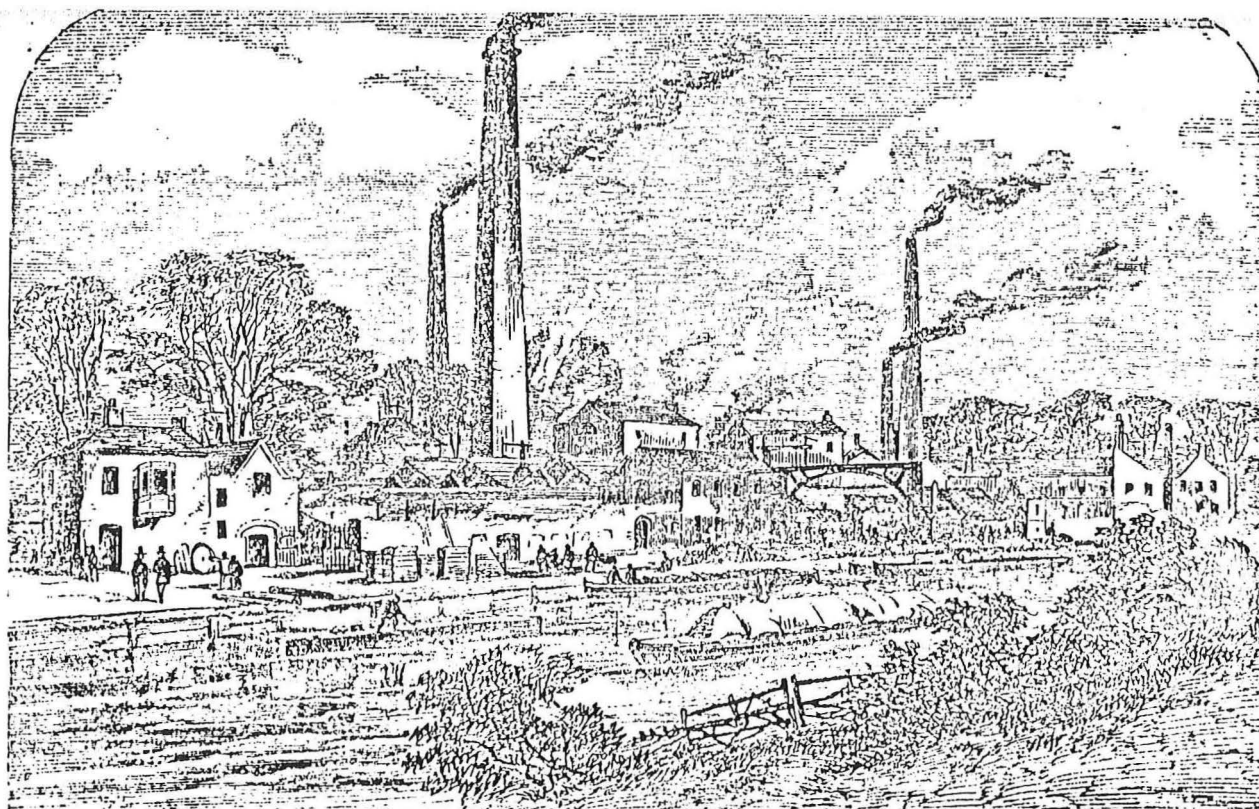
One of the first towns to use such a handstamp was Birmingham where a straight line type was brought into use in the very early years of the nineteenth century. Figure 1 illustrates the use of this mark on an 1805 cover addressed to Higham but it will be seen from the illustrations that the writer finished the Esq., in such a way that the postal clerk read the post town as Birmingham. This mark continued in use until it was replaced by a single line oval Figure 2. The second example of the two that I have of this type is on a letter sheet dated 1825 and shows wear to the oval frame and lettering. This no doubt led to the introduction of a new handstamp of similar type but with a double lined oval Figure 3, which continued in use until the early 1840's when a circular type Figure 4 was brought into use.

The last type used at Birmingham in the 1850's before missent handstamps went out of use was a straight line type similar to the first type but in two lines instead of three, figure 5. This is probably the scarcest of the five types and I have not seen it illustrated in any published literature.

Note : Illustrations on following page Ed..

Plea from Editor

We are running short of material for next Bulletin - give the matter some thought - short pieces and single illustration preferred. If not why not take advantage of free issue for WANTS and FOR SALE items - both have proved useful outlets for other members. Send anything to : Jon Baker, Editor, 13 Station Road, Hinckley, Leics. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS now due : £1.50 to Peter Baxter 72 Midhurst Road Kings Norton Birmingham



John Bradley & Co (Stourbridge) in 1860

See 'What are you going to do this Summer?'
by John Calladine

Tratford on Avon September 1875
James Hallett Esq
 MISSENT ¹³
 BIRMINGHAM *Higham*
Canterbury
Willoughby

Figure 1.



FIG 2



FIG 3



FIG 4

MISSENT TO

BIRMINGHAM

FIG 5

Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5

See THE MISSENT HANDSTAMPS OF BIRMINGHAM by Eric Lewis

[illegible]

POST CARD

2Y6



		¹ F	² R	E	³ E	F	⁴ R	A	⁵ N	K		⁶ F		⁷ T
			O	L		E		O			⁸ F	I	L	H
	⁹ R	O	W	L	A	N	D	O	N			Y		E
¹⁰ C					T		M				"	H	E	L
H				¹² T	E	X	A			¹³ O				E
A		¹⁴ T	O	D				¹⁵ T	W	O	¹⁶ T	O	N	
R		O		F					O		E		N	
¹⁷ S	O	V	E	R	N	E	E	N	T	E	N	N	Y	
E	E					O					O			F
¹⁸ U	N	L	E	A			E		¹⁹ L	A	E			O
N					²⁰ A	C	T	E						
²¹ P		²² O	L		²³ A		R		T					L
H		H		²⁴ I	M	F	O	R	T	A	²⁵ N	C	E	
²⁶ I	E	I			O		S		E					
D		F		²⁷ I	R	I	S	H	R	A	T	E		

Correct answers to Crossword compiled
by John Calladine - see Bulletin No 13