

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Number 178, April 2013

The comment that meetings devoted to members' displays never fail to bring out a very wide range of fascinating material has been made many times in this journal. Although there are over one hundred members of this society and compared with many societies meetings are well attended, it is the usual, familiar faces that turn up at meetings. I appreciate that some members are unable to attend because of distance, infirmity or other commitments, but some new faces at meetings would be welcomed and would be assured of a friendly reception. So, if you have never attended a meeting, do come along, or, at least, introduce yourself to those present on the Society's stand at Midpex. If there is anything that you would like to see the Society doing, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Committee.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting followed by our Annual Auction will be held at St Germain's Church Hall, Birmingham B16 9TD on **Saturday 27th April**. The auction lots will be available for viewing from 11 a.m. until the start of the AGM at 1 p.m. The auction is scheduled to start at 1.30 p.m.

On the **11th May** we pay our annual visit to Worcester where our meeting is held in conjunction with Worpex. The meeting begins at 1.30 p.m. and there is no set theme for the meeting, so members are asked to bring along one board displays on any topic of their choice.

Then on **6th July** the event of the year – **Midpex** – will be held at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, CV31 1XN from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. The last Midpex, the first to be held at this venue, proved to be a great success, so please make a note in your diaries of this 'not-to-be-missed' event. If you do not have travel directions, then the Midpex website – www.midpex.co.uk gives full details.

Our first meeting of the new season will be held at Kington St Michael on **7th September**. Full details of this meeting will be issued with the next '*Midland Mail*', but, again, please make sure that you have made a note of that date in your diaries.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

First of all I must apologise for the fact that the presentation in this edition is not all that I would wish. Unfortunately, my printer has jammed and I cannot apply some of the finishing touches that I would like to do. This should appear towards the end of July or at the start of August. While I have some material in hand, more articles, long or short, would be welcomed so that I can meet the target of having twenty-four pages in each edition. So, even if you do not have the time to produce a long article, write a small piece on some of your favourite covers and email it to Johnesoer@aol.com or send it to:

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

THE JANUARY MEETING

For the topic of surcharged/underpaid mail Brian Atkins began by showing four 18th century covers from Shropshire which had had their original charges cancelled by an inspector's crown and new charges added, in all cases because of the number of sheets used. The 1756 example, with inspector's initials as well as a crown to authorise the rate change, contained a printed sheet from the Town Clerk of Shrewsbury outlining the carrier's charges to London for the next quarter. Two covers showing 'In all' increased charges followed; the 1769 one having the scarce WHITCHURCH arc town stamp. Next were two Scottish Additional-half tax marks of Carlisle and Edinburgh and an 1819 cover from Whitchurch to Northwich where the original 9d rate for 80 to 100 miles via Wolverhampton, Stafford and Chester (the long route!) was erased and initialled and raised to 1/6, also initialled but with different initials. The frame concluded with the only known example of the postage due 2 from Whitchurch and a Wellington 2 dated 1870.

His second frame began with an overseas theme with an 1861 underpaid cover to America marked INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE, which was correctly treated under the 1849 Anglo-US Convention as a totally unpaid cover, so that the recipient had to pay the full 24 cents owing. An 1869 cover from Karauli, India to Cleobury Mortimer had a stamp which had fallen off, so that the correct 6anna rate was short paid. It was assessed as 11d to pay (equivalent of 2d underpaid, plus 9d fine!). A delightful 1864 cover to the Haute Savoie was marked as 30centimes due as the recipient had moved to Chamonix and the letter was 'trouvée a la boîte' (found in a box, presumably a postbox). Taxed 20th century postcards to the USA; a 1924 post card with a London paquebot cancel and franked 1d but, for some reason, taxed 1½d; the only known example of the Ellesmere 2^D/274 and examples from Shrewsbury of 1^D/708, 1^D/TO PAY/708 and 2^D/708 postage due marks rounded off his second frame.

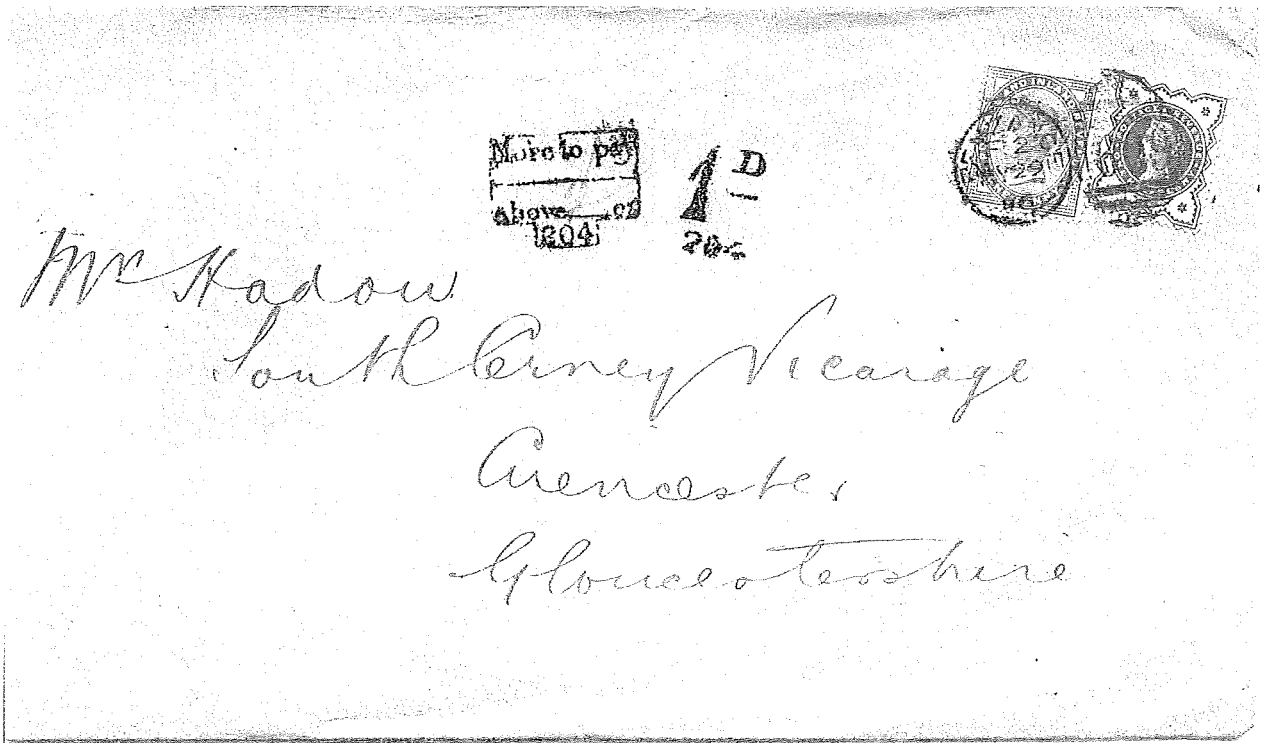
Trevor Radway commenced by showing a charged cover to Ross on Wye in 1990 where the recipient had an unwelcome early morning knock on the door with the postman asking for £116.71 for Customs Duty on a philatelic item from USA. Another 1985 item to Colchester with a demand for £26.45 was less of a shock. This action by Customs was not new because a parcel from USA in 1938 was also charged 2s 1d. A 1921 envelope with Victorian stamps did not please the Post Office in Chesham so they stuck a 4d TO PAY 15 mark on the letter and an adhesive postage due 4d to collect the money was added at London W6. The stamps were invalid. Two interesting covers from Dublin were then shown. During the Provisional Period 10th January 1922 – 6th December 1922 only English stamps overprinted by Dollard were acceptable so 2 English GV 1d stamps & perfined by Dublin Corporation used on 9th April 1922 were not. The recipient in Leicester had to pay 4d. A letter from Dublin on 26th May 1922 had 5 invalid English halfpenny stamps and one Dollard overprinted halfpenny. The correct postal rate was 3d so the recipient in Halifax had to pay 5d, not 6d as there was one correct stamp on the envelope. An oversize 1906 postcard from Russia, by Imm only, was charged 3d. A Registered letter from Eastbourne in 1978 addressed to Dublin requesting Value Added Tax was 'Returned to the Sender'. The last item was a Blackpool 1952 Cash on Delivery (COD) item for £2 which the prospective recipient in Warrington "DEFINITELY / REFUSED" and we will never know what it contained.

A 1921 advertising envelope from Nottingham to Switzerland with two 'cut-out' 1d stamps from postcards was Mick Gill's first item; underpaid, it was charged 10 cents on arrival. Two envelopes to Orston Hall, Notts, both postmarked on 31 August 1931, followed. Presumably the recipient had gone on holiday as both were redirected to the same hotel in St Jean Luz near Biarritz in France, attracting a 60 cent charge. There, they were redirected a second time to an hotel in Carcassonne, both attracting a charge of 1 franc 20 cents. However, the recipient had already left for home so they were redirected a third time, back to Orston, where they arrived on 26th September both with a charge of only 1d. Both envelopes had identical markings. Next came a 1932 Air Mail letter from India to Newark damaged in transit but with a charge of 1/10½. This was followed by examples of '541' (Newark) framed 'To Pay' handstamps along with 'Liable to/Letter/Rate' in black, 'Postcard/Rate' (in green) and 'Posted/Unpaid' (in black and green) from the 1950s and 60s. An Air Mail envelope from Beeston to Nottingham (with 'Air Mail' deleted had an '8^D/55/To Pay/Posted/Unpaid' framed handstamp with the 8^D altered in manuscript to read '2^D'. The number 55, allocated to Bawtry until 1906, had been allocated to Beeston in 1924. The last two items were examples of the correct use of the Taxe fraction, one from Nottingham to Switzerland was charged 35 cents accounted for by ordinary Swiss stamps, the other from Durban to Nottingham, first missent to Nottingham Road, a small town north-west of Pietermaritzberg, which attracted a charge of 3d which should have been 9d.

Alan Marshall began with a carrier's letter of 1798 with an oval Lombard St Unpaid 1d. This was followed by two examples of the only 'real' UPP small '2' of Nottingham, and then examples of the various marks with a larger '2' up to 1867. These included the only recorded example of one struck in blue and one showing a late use of the small circular 'A to L More to Pay' of London. On his second board Alan showed examples of the Postage Due and 'More to Pay' marks of Nottingham, on both incoming and outgoing overseas mail including, amongst other countries, New Zealand (1909), Germany (1906), Switzerland (1907) and Sweden (1911). Finally, Alan showed a receipt of 1989 with £127 'To Pay' stamps as payment of Customs Duty on a package from Australia.

The first item shown by Guy Bridges was a printed form posted unpaid at Dunchurch on 10th January 1840, the first day of Uniform Penny Postage, and was charged 2d. This was followed by two letters posted in Edinburgh in early 1840. One showed the distinctive handstruck '2' incorporating the date, while the other, although franked with a penny black, was charged '2' in manuscript with the handstruck 'Above Authorised Weight' in red ink alongside. The Scottish theme continued with a number of different 'More to Pay' marks and handstruck '2's, including the distinctive 'frying pan' type of Glasgow. Guy finished with a selection of different 'More to Pay' marks and handstruck '2's from various London District Offices.

Colin Fountain displayed scarce handstruck postage due markings from various Gloucestershire towns. From Cheltenham was the handstruck 1 used in 1855 for redirection fee. Also shown was a different, unrecorded 1 used on a redirected cover in 1877 which may have been applied in Cheltenham or London. From Cirencester was "More to pay / above oz / 204" together with "1^D / 204" from 1896 (shown below). Colin commented that these "More to pay" handstamps had been issued to several Gloucestershire towns but that most of them were unrecorded in use. From Dursley there was a rectangular handstamp from 1924 inscribed ½D POSTAGE / DUE / FOR / RETURN / TO / SENDER in purple. Gloucester was represented by a handstruck 2 of 1845 indicating the double rate for an unpaid letter after the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post. There were also handstamps from the 1920's and 30's which incorporated Gloucester's number 312. Numbered handstamps were also shown from Lydney (559), Moreton-in-Marsh (534) and Stroud (757).

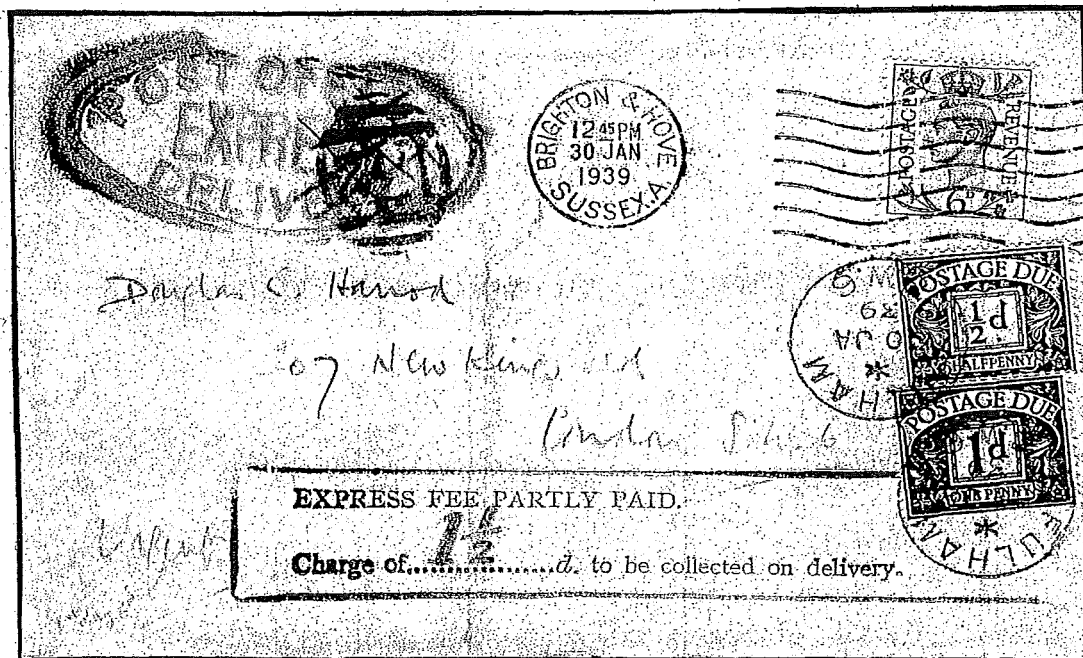


Two items from Edinburgh started Alan Spencer's display. The first cover was sent on the 10th January unpaid while the other, sent on 1st February 1840 showed an unusual handstruck '2'. These were followed by a number of postcards from overseas with a range of 'Liable to Letter Rate' handstamps. An envelope was subject to compulsory registration as it contained money. Of two envelopes which had been posted with 'poached egg' labels one was accepted at the ½d rate while the other was surcharged with a 1d postage due label. Alan then showed two examples of bulk postage due. The first consisted of a label attached to an envelope, the other of postage due labels cancelled on a blank Post Office memorandum sheet. Of particular note was an envelope with a handstamp denoting that the Express Fee had only been partly paid (illustrated on the next page). Alan's final item was an envelope showing a 'Do Not Surcharge/Deficient Postage/03/FEB/1995/Has Been Collected by Revenue/Protection Swindon A.P.C.'

Alan Spencer writes: At the Societies January meeting I showed this cover as part of my display and it seemed to cause some interest. It was sent express delivery from Brighton to London on 30th January 1939 the Express fee of 6d being paid but not the 1½d postage. The oval 'Post Office/Express/Delivery' handstamp (applied at Brighton?) has been overstamp with an inverted 132 Duplex handstamp and an 'Express fee partly paid' handstamp applied in London. It has blue lines on the front and back suggesting intended registration. It is also a First Day Cover for the 6d adhesive and the ½d postage due label used on cover is also uncommon. All this leads to some speculation:

- a) Was it sent by a collector wanting to get a first day cover for the 6d adhesive and the Post Office making the assumption that it was an express letter? This seems unlikely as it was not posted locally.
- b) If it was intended as an express letter (as per the 'Urgent' endorsement) why was the postage not challenged by the receiving office?

Whatever the story behind it not a bad little item considering it came out of my 'Miscellaneous' box and was only written up for this display.



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THE FEBRUARY MEETING

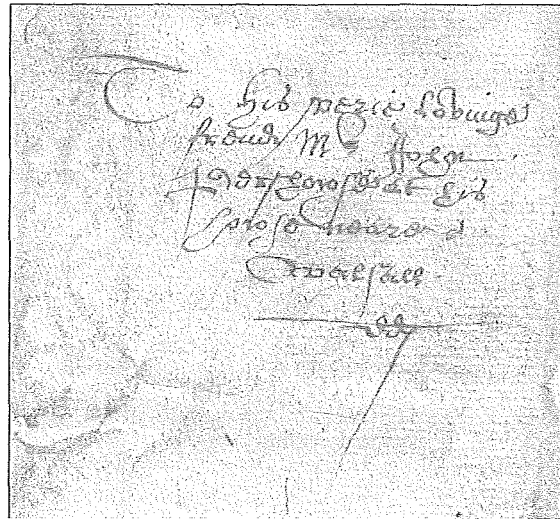
The February meeting, held at the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, has suffered more than once at the hands of the British weather. This year a largely fine and sunny day delivered 17 members and friends to see and hear Gordon Hardy's display of "Derbyshire". On this occasion, what we heard was every bit as interesting as what we saw, for Gordon had plenty of social information to add spice to a fine display of the county's postal history.

The earliest map we saw was from 1695 by Morden. We were reminded that, while the south of Derbyshire provided reasonably easy transport conditions, the coal mines were in the east and, further north, the Peak District provided much more difficult terrain. The earliest postal routes were to provide communication for Mary Queen of Scots, imprisoned in Wingfield Manor and Chatsworth House in 1569. We were privileged to see one of the earliest known letters in private hands sent from Derbyshire to Walsall in 1612, during the reign of James I. By the time of Witherings post, in around 1635, the Royal Mail served the county but most letters were still conveyed by carriers. We saw a letter from the Commonwealth Period, charged 6d, and another letter of 1660 advising that the local militia should now be disbanded. With the arrival of Henry Bishop in charge of the post, confidence increased and Gordon had an early letter from London to Tideswell.

The principal postal route between London and Derby was established in about 1661, with a footpost continuing to Sheffield. It was diverted in 1690 to run via Leicester and Nottingham. Postal charges were significantly increased in 1711 and we were reminded that half the revenue from the post office at that time was used to pay random pensions to such as the illegitimate royal children. The earliest Derbyshire handstamps appeared in 1705/06 for Derby and Chesterfield. There are many Derby straight line handstamps, an alternative spelling of "Darby" being favoured in the 1750s and '60s.

An early crosspost letter in the display, from 1736, was from Derby to Disley in Cheshire and was taken via Chesterfield and Chapel en le Frith. Another crosspost letter was from Chesterfield to Newark. These routes were among those set up by Ralph Allen. The earliest letter into Derbyshire from abroad we were shown was from 1798.

Specimen 'Walsingham' mailcoach timebills in the display, from the 1790s, were from Leeds to London, via Wakefield, Chesterfield, Mansfield, Nottingham and Leicester and from Carlisle to London, via Derby and Leicester. They were followed by a selection of Derby mileage marks and, before the mid-display break, an interesting selection of Derbyshire county maps, including an 1806 Laurie and Whittle, another unusual out-of-scale schematic map showing the roads very clearly and an 1848 map by Thomas Hutchinson.



A letter of 1612, one of the earliest recorded from Derbyshire.
 "To his verie Lovinge friend Mr John Pershowe at his house near Walsall"

The second part of the display began with a number of 1d black adhesives on cover, with the key features of the stamps enlarged many times for the benefit of the philatelists among us who like to plate such things but no longer have the 20/20 vision required. There were two such covers from Derby, not to mention a Mulready. We were told that an early missent mark is the 'Missent to Derby R.O.' stamp which, like the 1d black, first appeared in 1840. It is most commonly found on mail to Ashbourne, mistakenly put into the Derby bag. Derby also had several '2' stamps for unpaid mail in the General Post.

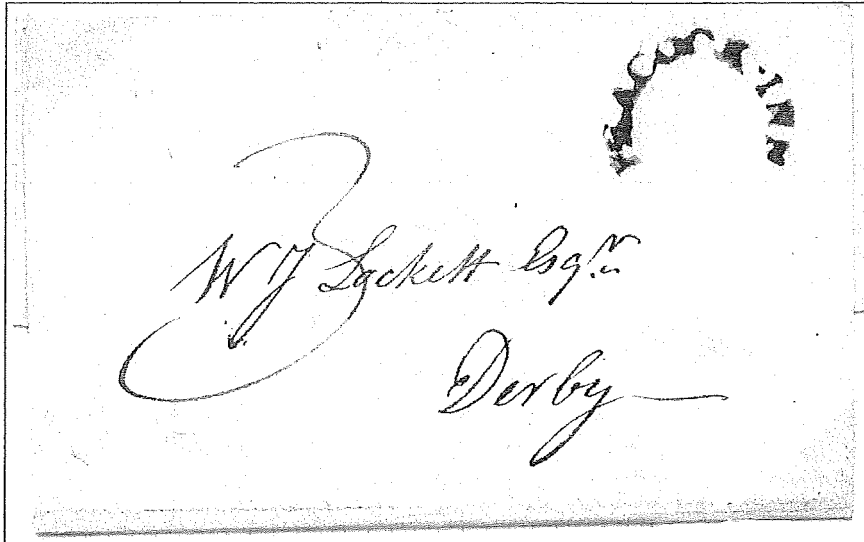
The local posts were not neglected. There were official Derby Penny Posts to Duffield (No.1) and Belper (No.2), where there was a thriving textile industry. There was also a "semi official" local 2d post, operated by the postmaster but known to the authorities, that used a 'No.2' receiving house stamp as a 2d charge mark. (Martin Willcocks was unwilling to believe this but the evidence is clear.) It is thought that these posts may have made use of official mailcoaches and mail carts in the 1820s and '30s.

Gordon turned his attention from Derby to Wirksworth, an important lead mining centre. There were letters from Sir John Moore written in the 1780s. There were also four Wirksworth mileage marks, including the earliest recorded example from 1802. The Wirksworth Penny Post linked it to Matlock and Matlock Bath before a Matlock Penny Post was established in 1835.

The Peacock Inn at Oakerthorpe has always been a popular and distinctive mark for collectors. Examples of the mark can only be found from the late 1790s and early 1800s. We were shown strikes of 1800 and 1802. (Peacock Inn ceased to be a post office c1806 when the construction of a new road made it superfluous.) They were followed by marks of Alfreton, a mining town where your scribe spent his summer holidays in wartime! We were shown examples from 1807, the first of its mileage marks, and 1822, the second mileage mark. Beside the Alfreton mileage marks, we also saw several pages of mileage marks from other Derbyshire towns, including Ashbourne and Buxton.

An entertaining item that rounded-off the display was a 1777 letter from Nottingham to Chesterfield. It was written in dialect and it had the misfortune to be taken to London and back because the post office could not recognise the writer's spelling and writing of the Chesterfield address. Those of us who studied the item thought the spelling of Chesterfield unclear but probably correct.

Our Chairman, Mel Matthews, in thanking Gordon Hardy for a most entertaining afternoon, commented that he only mentioned the price of items when he had acquired them cheaply, none costing more than 99p, and wondered if Wendy's presence had any bearing on this. He rightly commented that those who had chosen to spend the afternoon in "another place" – a reference to a certain meeting elsewhere – had missed a treat and he presented Gordon with a certificate of appreciation to generous applause.



A letter of 3rd February 1802 from Butterley with the Peacock Inn handstamp.

THE MARCH MEETING

There was a good attendance at the meeting on 2nd March which was held at the Collingwood Centre in conjunction with the fair held by the Streetly Philatelic Society and for which the topic was 'Bookpost/Printed Paper Rate'.

Guy Bridges opened the proceedings with a bankruptcy notice sent to Wem in 1871 and franked with a ½d stamp cancelled by a Shrewsbury duplex. Another item sent from Shrewsbury was a printed 'Per BOOK POST' envelope 'From Shropshire & North Wales Fire Office, Shrewsbury' bearing a ½d slate adhesive cancelled with a squared circle in 1885. Printed Paper items included a list of subscriptions towards the 'Clement Memorial' in 1872, an advertising folder, also from 1872, for 'SPRATT'S PATENT' animal foods which contained a written invoice. However, it was only stamped at the ½d rate when posted in London where it was struck with the framed 'TOO LATE for Evening Dispatch S.E.' A long envelope sent OHMS in 1880 from the 'WAR OFFICE' in London to the 'Shropshire Militia, Shrewsbury was redirected to Chirk with 1½d stamps added, and then redirected again from Ruabon to Chirk. Guy's final item was a coloured illustrated folder, containing pictures of the Prime Minister and the candidate 'to vote for, Col. Kenyon-Slaney, for the 1900 'NORTHERN OR NEWPORT DIVISION OF SHROPSHIRE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION' bearing a ½d stamp cancelled by the scarce '708' 3VOS of Shrewsbury.

We saw more Shropshire material from Brian Atkins, including a large bookpost cover sent in 1866 from Whitchurch to London at a rate of 6d (6 x 1d reds; a printed registered letter re 'The Bankruptcy Act of 1869' sent from Broseley in 1881; a halfpenny newspaper wrapper uprated with the Q.V. ½d orange sent to Tasmania in 1880, and a similar item sent from Shifnal in 1898 sent to the USA at the surface printed paper.

Clive Jones produced some superb TPO material to begin his display. We saw a strike of the scarce 'C.68' Taxe Mark used in the London & Dover SC on a postcard sent to Paris in 1906 and franked with a ½d adhesive. Although the senders of cards from Belgium and France had crossed out the words 'Carte Postale' and inserted 'Imprime' on postcards, the sorter in the TPO was not impressed for he applied the 'C.72' handstamp, so causing the Inland Office to apply a ½d surcharge. A piece of a W.H. Smith wrapper of 1866 was cancelled with the 'C.68' obliterator of the 'French Day Mail', while another wrapper of the same company, addressed to Italy and rated at 1½d which included a late fee of 1d, was struck with the scarce 'TO/2' mark. Clive finished bookpost items sent to or from Sheffield.

Mick Gill started with a small booklet '*Nothing to Wear – A Satire on the present Extravagance in Ladies' Dress*' sent as printed matter from Newark to Long Sutton, Lincs in 1858. Next came an 1866 printed notice from Retford to the Guardians of the Poor, Stokeham, near Tuxford, advising of an outbreak of cholera in the Retford Union. A photographer's 'Book Post' stiff board cover from W. Talbot, Newark to Collingham in 1867 was accompanied by two examples of Talbot's art. A 'Book Post' bookmark card sent from Mansfield to Nottingham in 1905 had, sadly, only a partial strike of a 504/Mansfield duplex, but a very fine strike of a Mansfield duplex as well as a '1^p/504' charge mark were to be seen on an envelope printed 'Book Post', also sent in 1905, from a works at Pleasey Vale, Mansfield to London which had been posted unpaid. A postcard from Birmingham to Newark in 1923 annotated 'Printed Matter' had been disallowed and surcharged 1d, while a 'Printed Paper' postcard sent from Chesterfield to Newark in 1844 with a 1d meter mark had been allowed.. Mick's final offering was an early 1900s 'Book Post' giant postcard of Newark Parish Church, published by Davage of Newark which had been posted at the 4d letter rate in Sheffield in December 1967.

'Newspaper Tax Stamps' was the topic chosen by Gordon Hardy who explained that between 1629 and 1640 the Star Chamber suppressed the reporting of news through censorship. Although the Star Chamber was abolished in 1641, strict controls were introduced by Cromwell and maintained after the restoration. It was not until 1695, when Parliament refused to renew the Licensing Act that a free press became a reality. [I will refrain from commenting on the idiots that purport to govern us in 2013.] The first English daily newspaper the '*Daily Courant*' appeared in 1702 and by 1709 the '*Spectator*' was selling 4,000 copies a day. The Act of Parliament that introduced a tax on newspapers was passed in 1712, and the first newspaper tax stamp was introduced on 1st August 1712. Gordon showed us a copy of the '*Spectator*' issued on 17th October 1712. This was followed by examples of the various dies and rates.

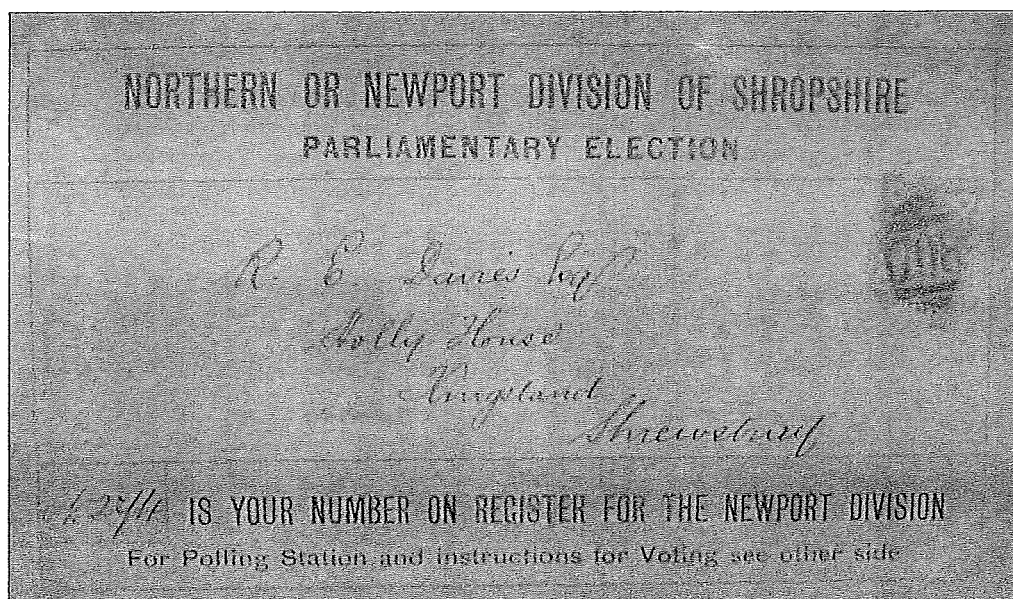
Chris Jackson produced three very interesting items of Redditch postal history. The first was a hand-drawn envelope sent from Settle to Redditch, addressed to 'The Bank' Redditch – what is now Lloyd's Bank. At a first glance the second item did not appear to be particularly special, merely a folded sheet sent from Redditch to Tardebigge in 1903. However, it contained an account of the receipts and payments in connection with the raising of money for the repair of the tower and spire of the church in Tardebigge. Chris' final item was a superb illustrated letter sheet for 'Francis Morrall's Needles' which explained the transfer of the business to Francis Morrall and promised to supply needles of a higher quality at a lower price.

Derek Smeathers thought he had shown much of his Northants 'Printed Paper Rate' material to previous meetings of the Society, so he begged leave to show some of his Cumbria items on the subject. These included a registered letter of January 1872 (fee 4d), a postcard and a wrapper specially made for PPR, two items cancelled by red PAID datestamps, and a printed form from a London supplier of legal documents, parchments etc and posted in Westmoreland, addressed to Staffordshire, by their representative as he travelled back to London. The last sheets showed an account from a large slate quarry in 1882, with a photograph of the post office where it was posted – the entrance door was just five feet high!

Cards advertising the wares and sales of London House, Newport, Monmouthshire were the first items shown by Stuart Geddes. This company was said to have sold everthing. These cards had been struck in red with the circular 'Paid/½d' handstamp of Newport. Stuart then showed a number of items from the docks in South Wales. A 'Prices Current' sheet was sent as a book post wrapper from Cardiff to Cadiz in 1890 with a ½d vermilion cancelled by the D57 duplex of Bute Docks. Another Bute Docks duplex, this time cancelling a twopenny blue, was to be seen on a circular with a printed 'By Book Post' sent to Sweden in 1872.

There was time for those who had brought more material for a second showing. Derek Smeathers (for the reason mentioned above) showed Victorian revenue stamps from Northamptonshire. He admitted knowing 'next to nothing' about these, but found them interesting. There was an embossed 10/- stamp tied by a London datestamp on a Northampton Solicitor Commission warrant of 1847; five different 'one penny' Victorian stamps on various documents; a sixpenny green postage & revenue stamp on a sales document of 1884; a violet Inland revenue stamp paying the postage on a letter; and the last six sheets were of revenue stamps inscribed 'NORTHAMPTONSHIRE', including proofs, varieties and coloured overprints, both mint and used. Brian Atkins produced more material from Shropshire as well as a map of London. Among Clive Jones' second offering were a number of printed matter items sent as registered letters. These could be sent at the ½d rate provided that the registration fee was paid in full. Of particular note was an item of 1879 showing the Registered Crown mark of Truro

Our Chairman thanked all those who had brought material and commented that it had been a very entertaining afternoon with a wide range of interesting material.



Correction to the routing of two covers from Newport, Shropshire to California referred to in an article in Midland Mail Number 160, page 8. (1848/9 UK/US Treaty)

by Brian Atkins

A communication from my good friend Dr Gray Scrimgeour of Victoria BC, Canada indicates that I was incorrect in making the assumption that the two covers below sent from Newport, Shropshire to California went overland from New York to San Francisco. At that time the route from New York to San Francisco was by sea to Aspinwall (now Colon), Panama; by train across the isthmus and then from Panama City to San Francisco by sea. The Civil War (1861 – 1865) and incursions with Indians meant the journey across country was so dangerous that mail by sea was the safer option.

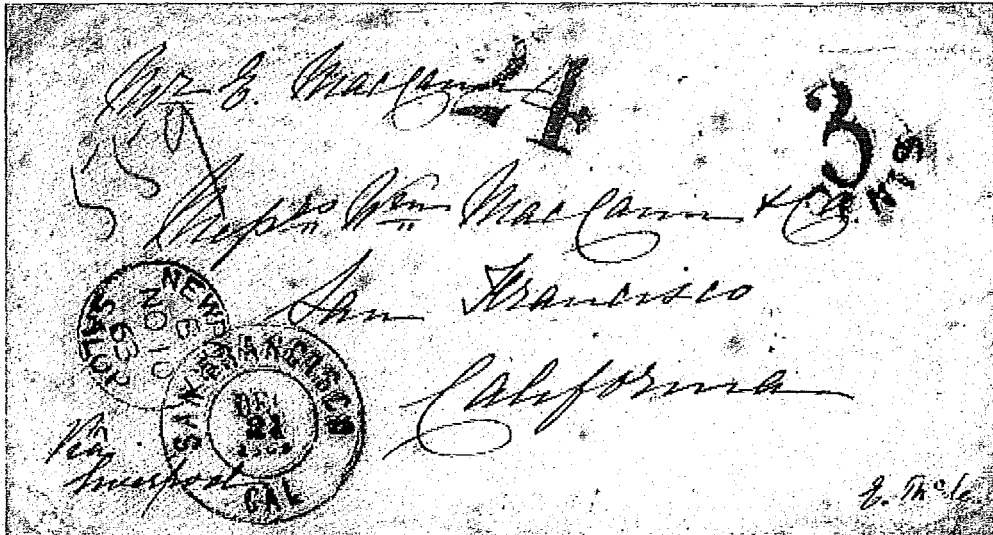


Fig 1, Unpaid 1863 cover from Newport, Salop to San Francisco

America (North German Lloyd Line) dep. Southampton 11th Nov, arr. New York 23rd Nov 1863

Ocean Queen (Pacific Mail Steamship Co. – PMSSCo.) dep. New York 23rd Nov 1863

St. Louis (PMSSCo) dep. Panama 4th Dec (2AM), arr. San Francisco 3AM, Sunday 20th Dec 1863

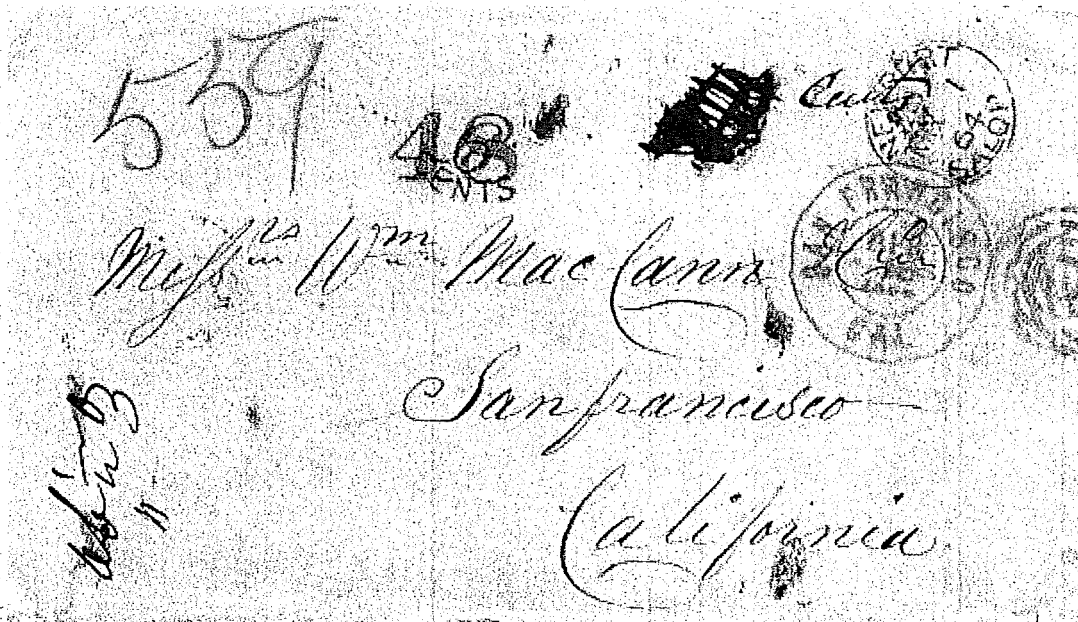


Fig 2 Unpaid 1864 double rate cover from Newport to San Francisco

Edinburgh (Inman Line), dep Liverpool 2nd March 1864, Queenstown 3rd March, New York 17th March

Ariel (PMSSCO.) dep New York 23rd March,

Orizaba (PMSSCO.) dep Panama 2nd April, arrived San Francisco, Sunday 17th April 1864.

Reference – *Daily Alta California* newspaper digitally accessed 25th January 2013

SECOND CLASS PAIR-HORSE MAILCOACHES THROUGH THE MIDLANDS IN 1838.

by John Calladine

It is probably true to claim that no postal history society has done more to unearth information about the English mailcoach system than our own society. For this we owe a great debt to the late Reverend Chris Beaver who painstakingly researched the detail of the London mailcoaches, not only running to and from the Midland cities but throughout the country. His final and greatest achievement was the publication in 'The GB Journal', Volume 5 number 2, of a tabulation of the routes and dates of operation of all the London coaches. Coaches that did not originate in London were not neglected. In 1997, Chris attempted a listing of all mailcoaches that ran in the Midlands between 1784 and 1840. His article appeared in "Midland Mail", No. 101/4. Much information can also be gleaned from the Society's publication 'The Midland Counties Mileage Marks and Mail Routes to London, 1784-1840' (published in 2005) on pages 26 to 33. However this work was understandably concerned with London coaches and some other Midland coaches connected to them.

In 1837/1838, when Rowland Hill's suggested reforms led Parliament to consider the future of the postal service, a Select Committee on Postage was established to question those with relevant knowledge. The Committee produced two significant reports and much of the detailed information collected by the Post Office as part of their evidence was published as appendices to these reports. Appendix 45 to the First Report, dated 5th April 1838, includes two lists, one being a list of the 59 First Class mailcoaches running at that time, more than half of them London mailcoaches, and the second a list of a coincidentally identical number of Second Class coaches, only two of them London coaches (a Birmingham 'day' coach and a Dover coach exclusively for foreign mail). Twelve of these Second Class coaches ran to or through the Midland counties.

Considerable detail is given about these coaches, including facts never considered fully before, and, although it is only a snapshot of the situation at one moment towards the end of the mailcoach era, it is valuable because nothing quite like it is available elsewhere.

Why are these coaches described as Second Class coaches? It is in Post 30/474K/1814 that we have our first clear definition of the different classes of mailcoach. It is probably well known to our members that the principal mail routes were operated by so-called 'Patent' coaches, built and maintained by a single Post Office appointed contractor to a single approved but evolving design. All First Class coaches were Patent coaches and allowed four inside passengers but only two outside passengers. At that date there were 23 first class routes, 18 of them from London. Second Class coaches were also patent coaches but were permitted to carry four outside passengers. 27 routes were listed at the time, none of them London coaches. Third Class coaches were owned by the contractors operating the routes and could carry varying numbers of outside passengers, often exceeding four. (There was also a small Fourth Class, not of significance.)

A glance at the 1838 appendices is sufficient to suggest that the classification of coaches had changed in the intervening years. By the 1820s, some Second Class coaches were owned by the contractors and some were still Patent coaches but, by 1838, Second Class coaches were all effectively what had originally been described as Third Class. The appendices conveniently give the name of the builders of the coaches. All First Class mailcoaches were either built by Wright, Williams & Co, by Wright, Williams, Croall & Co or by Wright, Williams, Croall, Wallace & Co. Some background to this is given in an article in "Midland Mail" (146/7) that considers whether any mailcoaches have survived. In 1836, a new contract for Patent coaches was split between Wright and Williams in the Southern District and Croall and Wallace in the Northern District. It seems likely that the 'Wright' element was in London, the 'Williams' element in Bristol, the 'Croall' element in Edinburgh and the 'Wallace' element in Manchester. This was probably necessary to cope with the large workload that required a contractor's premises similar to Vidlers, who had held the contract since 1784, and none was of that size. Interestingly, the 1838 list does not indicate that any coaches built by Vidlers had survived.

The other obvious feature of the list of Second Class coaches is that, apart from the two London coaches, only four coaches were pulled by four horses. All the remaining coaches are what is termed pair-horse mails, i.e. are pulled by two horses. The four horse coaches are the unusually long distance (200 miles) Birmingham-Yarmouth coach, that carried six outside passengers, the Ipswich and Yarmouth coach, that carried eight outside passengers and a Taunton-Tiverton coach that also carried eight outside passengers, plus a Manchester-Derby coach that covered a difficult route. (By 1838, almost all First Class coaches had been permitted to carry four outsides and even five between Cheltenham and Aberystwyth.)

Fortunately this early impression that the nature of First and Second Class coaching had changed can be verified by the detail of evidence given to the Select Committee, published in the House of Lords Sessional Papers. The Superintendent of Mail-Coaches, Mr George Louis, previously a Post Office Surveyor, was called to give evidence. He was questioned on this subject by the Chairman and it is probably helpful to include his evidence, as he gave it.

The Chairman: What distinction do you draw between Patent mails and others?

George Louis: The distinction is this: we rather now call them First and Second Class but they were 'Patent' mails formerly. The Patent Mails are furnished by the Post Office building contractor; the Second Class are furnished by the horsing contractor.

Chairman: Are they bound by the same rules as to size and specification?

George Louis: No, the rule is not so strict as to size and specification but they still undertake to build a coach according to the orders of the Postmaster General.

Chairman: All those of the First Class are alike?

George Louis: They are.

Chairman: Are the mails of the Second Class alike?

George Louis: They differ in some respects but they are a good deal alike.

Chairman: Are builders permitted to exercise their own discretion as to the difference of size?

George Louis: We do not interfere whether the interior is larger or smaller but the general appearance of the mail we do interfere with.

Chairman: You regulate those in your First Class but not those in your Second Class?

George Louis: Yes, those of the First Class are built to specification to keep them in one shape.

Chairman: Why do you distinguish them into two classes?

George Louis: The mailcoach system has always been supported by the regular First Class coaches. It has been an arrangement of the PMG ever since the establishment that they should be made exactly and precisely according to his wishes and be supplied by the contractors.

Chairman: Why has the distinction been permitted by the Post Office of two classes?

George Louis: In the first place, there is no Second Class coach that carries a great number of (mail) bags. The First Class coaches are generally supposed to apply to those carrying a great number of bags. Beside, the public . . . prefer a Patent coach if it can be got in preference to that which is not Patent – the Second Class – and there are instances where we can supply a First Class coach cheaper than the sum allowed in the contract for the Second Class.

Chairman: Have the public ever been consulted in any way as to the giving them First or Second Class coaches?

George Louis: I do not think they have ever been particularly consulted: the thing has gone on as a matter of regulation for 50 years. I do not think that any other, except the First Class coaches, could be made available for the large weights they carry. The Mails are supposed to be of superior workmanship; the wear and tear of them is generally greater than that of other coaches.

Chairman: Are the Committee to understand that the coaches from Liverpool, Manchester and Exeter and other large cities are of inferior construction to those called mail-coaches?

George Louis: They are not constructed so completely according to our specification. It does not follow that every Second Class coach is an inferior mail . . .

Chairman: Why should not the mails from all great towns be equal in commodiousness, in strength and in comfort to those from London?

George Louis: In regard to strength, the wear and tear is not so great (and) the distance is shorter. The inspector looks after them continually to see they are in a proper state . . . In most cases, they are much the same in commodiousness and, besides, most of these Second Class mails are pair-horse mails. The pair-horse mails are made lighter and smaller than the others and we could not get contractors for these short distances to take coaches that are governed by our regulations.

In those exchanges, we learn a great deal about Second Class coaches. They are generally pair-horse coaches and of lighter construction than a Patent coach. Although Mr Louis says the Post Office does not “interfere” with the design of the interior, the 1838 Appendix suggests that the inside dimensions are identical, albeit a little smaller than those of a First Class coach. The differences are not great:

	First Class	Second Class
Height from roof to floor	4 feet 8 inches	4 feet 7½ inches
Headroom from top of cushion	3 feet 4 inches	3 feet 4 inches
Measurement from cushion to floor	1 foot 4 inches	1 foot 3½ inches
Length of interior from back to front	4 feet 10 inches	4 feet 6½ inches
Width of interior from side to side	3 feet 7 inches	3 feet 5½ inches
Distance between the seats	1 foot 8 inches	1 foot 8 inches

A typical family car has slightly less headroom, perhaps 4 feet 5 inches, and the height of the seat cushion from the floor of the car is perhaps just about 1 foot or a little more. Unlike those using a modern saloon car, passengers of unusual height had the option of travelling on a coach as an outside passenger!

From the evidence to the Select Committee, we learn that Second Class coaches, pulled by only two horses, were lighter and smaller. The Appendix to the 1st Report also includes the "Rate of Speed per Hour" for each route. This is obviously affected by the terrain but the majority of the First Class coaches travelled at between nine and ten miles per hour. The four-horse Second Class coaches maintained a similar speed but, notwithstanding the lesser weight of the Second Class coach, the pair-horse coaches more usually averaged seven or eight mph. This would have relatively little impact because these coaches were running over a much shorter distance than a First Class coach. Again, putting aside the five four-horse coaches, the pair-horses travelled an average of 24 miles and many of them less. 24 miles at 10 miles an hour would be covered in a little less than 2½ hours, at 8 miles an hour it would take 3 hours.

Having learned something of the type of coach operating the Midland routes, other than the London routes, in 1838, it is time to list them. In the alphabetical order used in the Appendix to the Select Committee Report, the pair-horse coaches were as follows:

<i>Names of the towns where the coaches started & arrived</i>	<i>Coach builder</i>	<i>Speed m & f</i>	<i>Distance m & f</i>	<i>Rate paid per double mile</i>
Ashby and Burton	Miles	6 3	9 0	4d
Bath and Cheltenham	Williams	9 2	49 0	5d
Birmingham & Leamington	Mucklow & Chapman	8 1	24 1	4d
Birmingham & Shrewsbury	Waddell	9 0	45 0	3d
Birmingham & Tamworth	Mucklow & Chapman	6 3	15 0	3d
Birmingham & Worcester	Waddell	8 4	26 0	3d
Grantham & Nottingham	Butler	8 0	24 0	4d
Leicester and Ashby	Miles	6 3	17 0	3d
Leominster & Presteigne	Lake	7 0	14 0	3d
Manchester and Glossop	Newton & Bromley	7 4	15 0	4d
Shrewsbury & Newtown	Brown	8 0	32 0	3d
Wotton and Chalford	Perry	7 4	12 0	6d?

The list excludes a Second Class Birmingham & Stourport coach that ran from 1827 until December 1840. It was possibly overlooked because it was a coach for which the contractor received no payment from the Post Office, there being sufficient passenger traffic to provide the contractor with an adequate return.

An aspect of interest is the companies that built these coaches. No coachmaker by the name of Miles has been discovered in the Ashby, Burton or Derby area but search opportunities have been limited. There was a coachmaker of that name in London, whose premises were at 29 Steward Street in Bishopgate. A much more likely contender is a coachmaker in Granby Street, Leicester, by the name of William Miles, as the Leicester and Ashby coach was from the same source. The Bath and Cheltenham coach was probably built by one of the Williams coachbuilders in Bristol, either John Williams at Bedminster Bridge or Walter Williams at Temple Gate. This is the company that, in 1826, built the "mailcoach" kept at the Red House Stables Working Carriage Museum and loaned to the Society for our book launch. (They were also an element of the post-1836 Post Office mailcoach contractors for the Southern District, for which they had a seven year contract.) Mucklow and Chapman, who built two of the Birmingham coaches, described themselves as carriage, gig, coach and harness manufactures and their premises were in Carr's Lane (a not unfamiliar location to our members). They bought, sold and exchanged carriages of every description and also let them by the hour, day, week, month or year. The other Birmingham manufacturer was Waddell. This would undoubtedly have been John Waddell in Sheep Street, who described himself as a Royal Mail, post coach and carriage manufacturer. As these pair-horse coaches were supplied by the horsing contractor, rather than by Royal Mail, Mr Waddell's claim was technically inaccurate but of great use to us. The Grantham and Nottingham coach was built by Butler. He appears in the Nottingham Annual Register of 1840 as John Butler of Lincoln Street and Parliament Street. In addition to building coaches and making harness, he had "all kinds of vehicles let to hire". The Leominster and Presteigne coach was built by Lake. There was no coachbuilder of that name in Leominster in the 1835 Pigot directory, nor was there any known coachbuilder in Hereford. For the moment he must remain a mystery. The Manchester and Derby 4-horse coach was, unsurprisingly, built by John Waude, a well-known London coachbuilder who had close links with Royal Mail and the mailcoaches. He built the innovative Manchester Telegraph stagecoach, with its curved perch and steel springs, which he correctly claimed to be superior to Vidler's contemporary mailcoach design. He was indirectly responsible for the new mailcoach competition in 1836 and the new Patent mailcoach contract. The Manchester and Glossop coach was built by Newton and Bromley, who one would have expected to be a Manchester coachbuilder. However, they do not appear in Pigot's 1841 directory nor does an 1835 directory indicate that Glossop boasted any coachbuilder or harness maker. An 1827 directory of Liverpool suggests the coach was not built there. Pigot's 1838 London directory shows a Joseph Newton as a coachbuilder in London but no mention of Bromley and it looks unlikely. Finally we have Brown in Shrewsbury and Perry, perhaps in Gloucester. There were six coachbuilders in Shrewsbury, none named Brown. However, there was a James Bowen of Pride Hill, Shrewsbury, and one wonders whether the name was corrupted on the list. The builder of the Wotton and Chalford coach was not from Gloucester. There were, indeed, two coachbuilders in Gloucester but, according to the Pigot Directory of 1835, the builder of the coach would have been T.E.Perry of Stroud, also harness makers. Considering how close Chalford is to Stroud, this makes eminent sense.

An aspect of mailcoach operation that has always seemed less than clear is how the fare structure was established for the passengers who used mailcoaches. When George Louis appeared before the Select Committee, he was questioned on this point. He was asked if the Post Office regulated fares. He replied that the Post Office did not "interfere" – a favourite word of his – with the fares for the passengers and it did not require the contractors to advise the Post Office of their charges. He also admitted that the Post Office had great difficulty running a mailcoach service on the cross roads without saying what effect that may have had on the fares the contractors charged. It is apparent that the Post Office was obliged to pay contractors more per double mile on some of the more minor routes. That price could have been affected by a scarcity of passengers or by the more difficult terrain, requiring better horses.

Finally, after looking at several aspects of Second Class mailcoach operation, we should look at those Midland routes that survived into 1838. The **Ashby and Burton** coach and the **Leicester and Ashby** coach were effectively a single service. From 1815, Ashby de la Zouch received its London letters from Leicester, rather than Atherstone and they were carried on a Leicester-Liverpool mailcoach. This coach was withdrawn in 1817 and for some six years, Ashby letters were again routed through Atherstone. However a Leicester-Burton mailcoach was introduced on 6th April 1823 and Ashby could then be served once more from Leicester. The contractor found that the Ashby-Burton section of the service was not profitable and, in 1825, this section of the route was covered by a horse-post. As the 1838 return shows, by 1838 a mail coach was once again operating between Ashby and Burton (and had been since 1831). It will be noted that the contractor was able to negotiate payment of 4d a double mile, rather than the 3d a double mile paid between Leicester and Ashby. The service ceased in 1840. (For more complete information see John Soer's 'The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland', Society publication No.4).

The **Bath and Cheltenham** coach, via Cirencester, was established on 5th July 1828. It replaced a Bath-Oxford coach, discontinued in the January of that year, that had at various time carried letters from Tetbury to Oxford, where they were transferred to one of the 'up' London coaches running through the city. (There was, of course, considerable correspondence between Bath and Cheltenham, both significant spa towns.) Oddly, the Bath-Cheltenham coach exchanged bags at Tetbury but did not stop in the (post) town. 'Up' letters were off-loaded at Cirencester where they took the Stroud-London coach to the capital. (More information about the context of this coach's operation can be found in the Society's publication No.5, 'The Midland Counties Mileage Marks and Mail Routes to London, 1784-1840', pp175/6.) The service ceased in 1842.

There were four Second Class pair-horse Mails from Birmingham, plus the 4-horse **Birmingham-Yarmouth** coach that covered 200 miles at an average speed of nine mph. (A copy of an 1836 specimen timebill for that important coach, which passed through Coventry, Hinckley and Leicester, may be found in 'MM' 42/8.)

The listing of a pair-horse **Birmingham-Leamington** coach in the Appendix dated 4th April 1838 refers to a service established in 1833 that was intended to save a day in the communication of Warwick and London with the north and west of England. By arriving in Birmingham at 7pm, it was in time for letters to be carried on mailcoaches to Liverpool, Manchester and Bristol. (See more in 'MM' 118/4). The mailcoach ceased in 1839.

Although there had been a London-Holyhead Mail through Birmingham and Shrewsbury since 1808, its purpose was to carry the Irish letters, not letters between Birmingham and Shrewsbury. When it began to run over a faster route in 1817, the Post Office re-established a London-Shrewsbury mail through Birmingham, following a route first used in 1785 and thereafter known as the "Old Shrewsbury". The "Old Shrewsbury" ceased in 1819 when a new through London-Birmingham coach was introduced and thereafter there was a need for a coach between **Birmingham and Shrewsbury**. That it was a Second Class coach is not a surprise considering the distance was only 45 miles but, as it ran at 9mph, the same speed as many First Class coaches (and an excellent pace for a pair-horse coach), nothing was lost.

A **Birmingham-Tamworth** coach had been running since 1821. However, there was an important re-timing and re-launch of the coach in 1827. Thereafter it left Birmingham at 3.30pm instead of 6pm. Previously it had reduced the time to exchange letters between Tamworth and Birmingham by 5 hours; it now reduced the time by 9 hours in one direction and 15 hours in the other. (See more in 'MM' 110/16.) According to our 'mileage mark' book, the Birmingham-Tamworth mailcoach continued until the end of October 1838, when it was replaced by a mail-cart.

A **Birmingham and Worcester** coach would have been needed because the branch of the London-Birmingham coach that served Dudley, Stourbridge and Kidderminster from 1827 to 1840 terminated at Stourport, not Worcester. (Worcester had its own mailcoach link with London and onward connections to such as Leominster and Kington.) The Birmingham-Worcester coach, established in 1834, ran through Bromsgrove and Droitwich, a distance, at that time, of 26 miles. A Bristol-Birmingham coach (that briefly became a Bristol-Manchester coach) had covered the same ground since 1787 but the timing of the coach, particularly from Bristol, was inconvenient. The introduction of the new coach led to three deliveries in Worcester, rather than two, and the advantageous re-timing of the two deliveries at Droitwich. (See more in 'MM' 118/14.)

Moving away from Birmingham, there was a **Grantham and Nottingham** coach, covering a distance of 24 miles. Grantham, in Lincolnshire, lies east of Nottingham on a road via Bingham. The coach ran from 1835 to 1847, although A.W.G. Hall in his 'History of the Post Office at Nottingham' implies it was running in 1833. Nottingham's London mail was carried on the London-Leeds First Class coach while, from Nottingham, mail-carts ran to Mansfield, Derby and Lincoln, with just this one Second Class coach to Grantham carrying both mail and passengers. All would have been important cross-posts, linking offices that received their London mail by other routes (except Mansfield, served by both the London-Halifax coach and the London-Leeds Mail).

From the end of the 18th century, letters for Presteigne had been sent to Leominster. A Worcester-Leominster First Class mailcoach and, from 1822, a Worcester-Leominster-Kington First Class mailcoach ran until April 1838. The Appendix to the Select Committee report lists a Second Class pair-horse coach between **Leominster and Presteigne**, a distance of only seven miles that would continue the delivery of Presteigne's London letters from Leominster. It was established in 1836 and ran until July 1838.

The two Second Class coaches listed from Manchester were the Manchester and Derby coach and the Manchester and Glossop coach. The **Manchester-Derby** coach ran from December 1834 until July 1841, through Buxton, Bakewell, Matlock, Cromford and Belper. Letters for these towns had, over the course of 50 years, been re-routed several times and Buxton had been served through Macclesfield, Leek and Sheffield, as well as Manchester (particularly in the winter months). The establishment of the Manchester-Derby coach was the final change of the mailcoach era. This was a hilly route and it is not surprising that a four-horse coach was used, at a contracted rate of 4d per mile. It avoided the Wirksworth road, which was said to be unsuitable for a mailcoach. Instead, Wirksworth was connected to the mailcoach route at Cromford and Belper. (See more in 'MM' 117/13 and 118/17.) Glossop was sometimes served by a First Class Manchester-Sheffield mailcoach but, briefly in 1824, and then, continuously from July 1832 until April 1842, its mail was carried by the Second Class pair-horse **Manchester-Glossop** coach over a distance of 15 miles. It was established when a Manchester-Sheffield coach, via Glossop, was finally withdrawn on 5th July 1832. The Sheffield-Manchester coach had been described as "a half Patent coach", possibly either a First Class Patent coach allowed to carry extra outside passengers or a Patent coach used as a Second Class coach.

The **Shrewsbury and Newtown** coach was one of a number of cross-country mailcoaches that ran from or through Shrewsbury during the mailcoach era. At one time, a horse post ran as far as Aberystwyth, presumably through Welshpool and Newtown. These posts were not carrying Shrewsbury's London letters, of course, but were connecting various Welsh towns to London through Shrewsbury. The Shrewsbury-Newtown coach was established in 1823 and ran until 1852. (Coaches carrying mail in Wales ran throughout the 19th century.) From 1839, for one and two years respectively, mailcoaches also ran from Newtown and Welshpool to Aberystwyth, the former taking the road through Llanidloes and the latter presumably following a more northerly route avoiding Newtown.

Last but by no means least in our list of Second Class coaches is that between **Wotton (under Edge) and Chalford**, a prosperous woollen town in Gloucestershire. (For the full story and its context, see 'Midland Mail' 86/8.) In 1826, the proprietors of the Old Passage ferry across the River Severn agreed to carry mail without charge if a mailcoach were established. The Post Office saw the chance to offer the inhabitants of Chepstow, to the west of the Severn, a chance to answer their London letters on the same day they received them and a Chalford-Chepstow mailcoach was therefore established in August 1826. It was not a success and, in January 1829, the contractor announced he would not operate the service beyond Wotton under Edge. In February 1829, the Post Office agreed to truncate the service and thus began the Second Class Wotton-Chalford Mail. (Chepstow letters were then sent via Bristol.)

In his article in 'MM' 101/4 et seq, Chris Beaver listed five more Second Class pair-horse coaches that ran from 1839 and were therefore established *after* the Appendix to the Select Committee's report was published. These were:

Chipping Norton & Birmingham, from 5th July 1839 to 5th July 1842. (This was, if fact, a revival of a coach that had run in 1835 and 1836.)

Wolverton & Banbury, established on 29th October 1838. Wolverton was an important railway station and this mailcoach service continued beyond 1850.

Newtown & Aberystwyth, from 5th April 1839 until 5th July 1840. (This coach is mentioned above in the discussion of the Shrewsbury-Newtown coach.)

Wolverhampton & Bridgnorth, from 24th February 1839 to 5th July 1843. This was the revival of a coach that had run for just eight months in 1824.

Coventry & Stratford, established on 5th July 1838 and therefore too late for the Appendix. It ceased on 5th July 1840.



Bill Pipe

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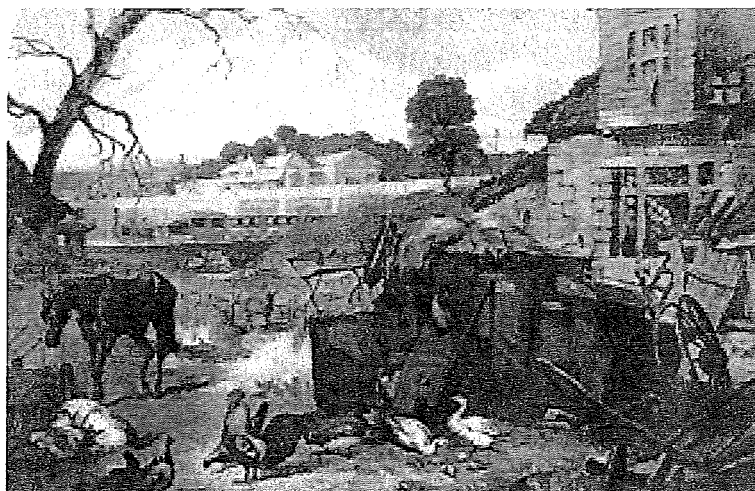
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Detail of a pair-horse coach from a painting by Charles Cooper Henderson in the Tate Gallery. This is not a mailcoach but a post-chaise. It may claim some passing similarity to a pair-horse mailcoach but no authentic painting of such a coach is known, famous artists preferring to depict the drama of a Patent mailcoach with four horses.



'Past and Present through Victorian Eyes' – an abandoned mailcoach is used to store hay or straw and, in the background, is the cause of its demise. 1838 saw the mailcoach era drawing to an end.

Although the Appendix to the 1st Report of the Select Committee only gives a snapshot of the situation in 1838, when a number mailcoaches had already been withdrawn, a wider picture of Midland mailcoaches can be seen in Chris Beaver's article in 'MM' 101/4-10. Some members may not be aware that Chris deduced much of his information from the payments made to horsing contractors by the Mailcoach Office. Knowing the contracted distances and the appropriate rate of payment to horsing contractors at the time, the destination and the route of the coach was determined. It took immense persistence and many years of work to complete the task and we are the fortunate heirs to his efforts.

No. 45.
AS TO MAILS, MILEAGE, &c.

A RETURN showing the Number of Mail Coaches, of the First and Second Class, in England; with the Names of the Builders; the Inside Sitting Places; the Number of Outside Passengers allowed; the Number of Horses, and the Rate of Speed; the Names of the Towns the Mail Coaches start from; the Number of Miles travelled, and the Amount of Tolls paid each Trip, and the Rate of Mileage on each Road respectively.

FIRST CLASS

MAIL COACHES of the FIRST CLASS.	NAMES of the BUILDERS.	The Inside Sitting Places.	Number of Outside Passengers allowed.	Number of Horses.	Rate of Speed per Hour.	Names of the Towns the Mail Coaches Start from and Arrive at.	Number of Miles Travelled.	TOLLS each Trip.	Rate per Annum of Mileage, and per Double Mile.	
									Per Annum.	Per Mile.
London and Bath	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London and Bath	110	4	£ 693 4 3	4 1/2
Derby	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Derby	330	7	£ 922 2 1	3 1/2
London, via Banbury, and Birmingham	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London, via Banbury, and Birmingham	119	2	£ 734 21 7	4 1/2
London (Carlisle) Birmingham	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London (Carlisle) Birmingham	108	4	£ 815 13 6	5 1/2
London (Liverpool) Birmingham	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London (Liverpool) Birmingham	108	4	£ 815 13 6	5 1/2
London (Manchester) Birmingham	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London (Manchester) Birmingham	108	4	£ 815 13 6	5 1/2
London and Brighton	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	London and Brighton	121	2	£ 675 1 3	3 1/2
Carlisle	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Carlisle	322	7	£ 1,378 8 3	4 1/2
Derby	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Derby	126	2	£ 799 9 2	4 1/2
Derbyport	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Derbyport	416	1	£ 1,684 2 7	5 1/2
Dover	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Dover	73	2	£ 452 16 6	4 1/2
Exeter	Wright, Williams & Co.	3	4	10	10	Exeter	176	2	£ 1,107 17 8	4 1/2

A section of Appendix 45 to the 1st Report of the Select Committee on Postage (1838) listing some of the First Class Mailcoaches.

Bristol, via Binton, and Bath	Williams	4	2	7	7	Bristol, via Binton, and Bath	13	2	£ 29 6 4	4 1/2
Canterbury and Deal	Steady	4	2	8	8	Canterbury and Deal	18	2	£ 82 2 4	4 1/2
Cardiff and Merthyr	Crook	4	2	8	8	Cardiff and Merthyr	25	2	£ 114 1 1	4 1/2
Cardiff and Merthyr	Moyle and Chapman	4	2	8	8	Cardiff and Merthyr	29	2	£ 229 10 4	4 1/2
Cardiff and Merthyr	Farre	4	2	8	8	Cardiff and Merthyr	47	2	£ 216 11 4	4 1/2
Cardiff and Merthyr	Smith	4	2	8	8	Cardiff and Merthyr	33	4	£ 101 17 8	4 1/2
Cardiff and Merthyr	Woodhouse	4	2	8	8	Cardiff and Merthyr	15	4	£ 141 8 8	4 1/2
Cold Blaw and Haverfordwest	Williams	4	2	8	8	Cold Blaw and Haverfordwest	12	2	£ 73 1 1	4 1/2
Devonport and Launceston	Elliot	4	2	8	8	Devonport and Launceston	28	2	£ 170 6 8	4 1/2
Doncaster and Hull	Red and Sea	4	2	7	7	Doncaster and Hull	40	3	£ 300 7 1	4 1/2
Exeter and Bodleigh	Ward	4	2	7	7	Exeter and Bodleigh	15	2	£ 60 11 4	4 1/2
Exeter and Bodleigh	Hayman	4	2	8	8	Exeter and Bodleigh	40	3	£ 213 6 8	4 1/2
Falmouth and Penzance	Elliot	4	2	7	7	Falmouth and Penzance	25	2	£ 114 1 1	4 1/2
Grontham and Nottingham	Blacker	4	2	8	8	Grontham and Nottingham	24	2	£ 115 1 1	4 1/2
Hull and Patrington	Hewitt and Mean	4	2	7	7	Hull and Patrington	10	2	£ 73 1 1	4 1/2
Ipswich and Yarmouth	Wright	4	2	8	8	Ipswich and Yarmouth	51	2	£ 243 7 4	4 1/2
Launceston and Clapham	Dunn	4	2	7	7	Launceston and Clapham	20	2	£ 91 5 1	4 1/2
Leeds and Halifax	Haworth	4	2	9	9	Leeds and Halifax	18	2	£ 82 2 4	4 1/2
Leicester and Ashby	Miles	4	2	10	10	Leicester and Ashby	17	2	£ 98 17 1	4 1/2
Leicester and Ashby	Lea	4	2	7	7	Leicester and Ashby	14	2	£ 63 17 4	4 1/2

A section of the second page of the Appendix listing some of the Second Class Mailcoaches.

HOW TO AVOID A SCANDAL AND GET RICH BUT COME TO A SAD END OR AN AMERICAN MELODRAMA UNCOVERED BY SHROPSHIRE POSTAL HISTORY

by Brian Atkins

For a time, there existed high in the Rockies, 50 miles or so west of Denver, Colorado, a small town called Brownsville or Brownville, nobody seems sure of its exact name. It no longer exists due to a series of mud and rock-slides, which took place between the late 1880s and June 1912, the last of which finally engulfed the little town, which once boasted 600 people. There were a large number of British miners working in the gold and silver mines, which included the Seven-Thirty Mine at an elevation of 10,451ft. The nearest town to Brownsville, now, is Silver Plume, with about 250 inhabitants and some cared-for homes interspersed with a few ramshackle buildings. The post office is still there, though whether it is in the original location I don't know, it doesn't look like the original building (fig 1, photo taken in 2012).

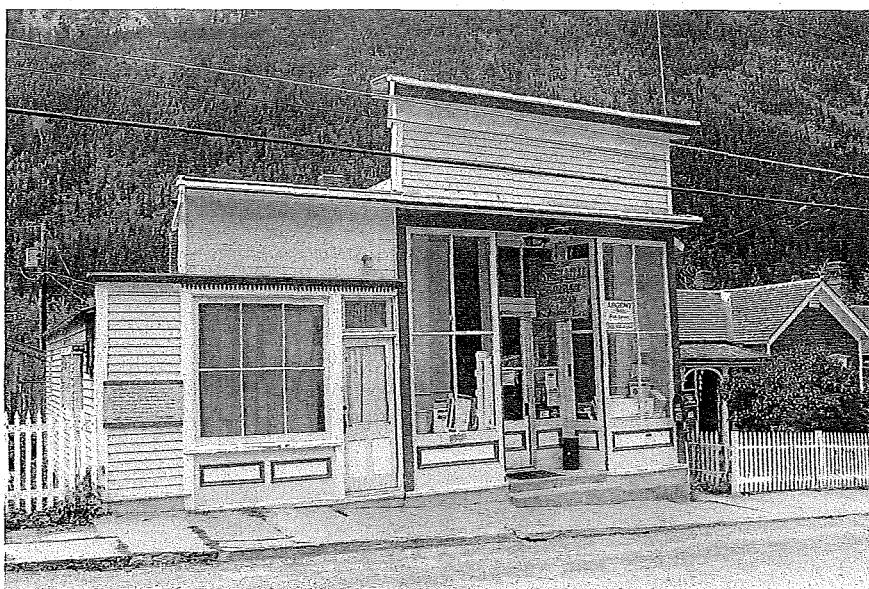


Fig 1. The post office in Silver Plume, Colorado. 850, Main St and still in business.

Alfred Griffin of the Middle Temple, London, (called to the bar Nov 1833), purchased Brand Hall near Market Drayton, from Purney Sillitoe. Sillitoe later retained the services of the notable architect, Sir John Soane to build nearby Pell Wall Hall, between 1822 and 1828, at a total cost of £20,976 (£1.6m using the 2009 retail price index). One of Soane's few country houses; it has been partially restored but is currently not in very good shape with only the original shell remaining. Griffin had three sons, Heneage Mackenzie, Marten Harcourt, (called to the bar January 1861) and Clifford; Marten Harcourt inherited Pell Well Hall on the death of Sillitoe (see fig. 7). The reason for it being willed to him is not known. Marten married Isabella Elisabeth Spencer (January 1865) who could trace her ancestry on her mother's side to Charles II¹.

Having been educated at Oxford, Heneage Mackenzie Griffin, arrived in Colorado in 1874. By the late 1870s he was living in Silver Plume (see fig.2,) and later settled in Georgetown, 3 miles east, now on Route I70 in western Colorado (see fig.3). As far as I can discover, Heneage never married. There is no doubt that he became very wealthy and after a visit from his niece, Annie Sophie Cory, in 1899, he returned to England in 1902, eventually touring around Europe with Cory and her mother, his sister Elizabeth. His niece took to writing under various pseudonyms, two of which were Victoria Cross and Victoria Crosse (honestly). She had nearly two dozen novels published, described as popular, racy and erotic, three collections of short stories, several plays, and saw some of her works adapted for film. Perhaps her best known novel is *Anna Lombard*, published in April 1901, which sold six million copies, ran through more than thirty editions and remained in print until the 1930s. Uncle and niece travelled widely, especially after her mother's death in 1916. They were in England during the First World War, but thereafter spent their time in the grand hotels of the Italian lakes and the south of France, mostly at the Riviera Palace Hotel, Menton. Heneage Griffin died in Lanzo d'Intelvi, Province of Como, Italy in September 1939; his niece spent the war in Geneva. She died in a nursing home, the Clinica Capitanio, in Milan on 2 August 1952, aged 84, her novels out of print and forgotten but leaving several litigants squabbling over an estate valued at over £100,000^{3,7}.

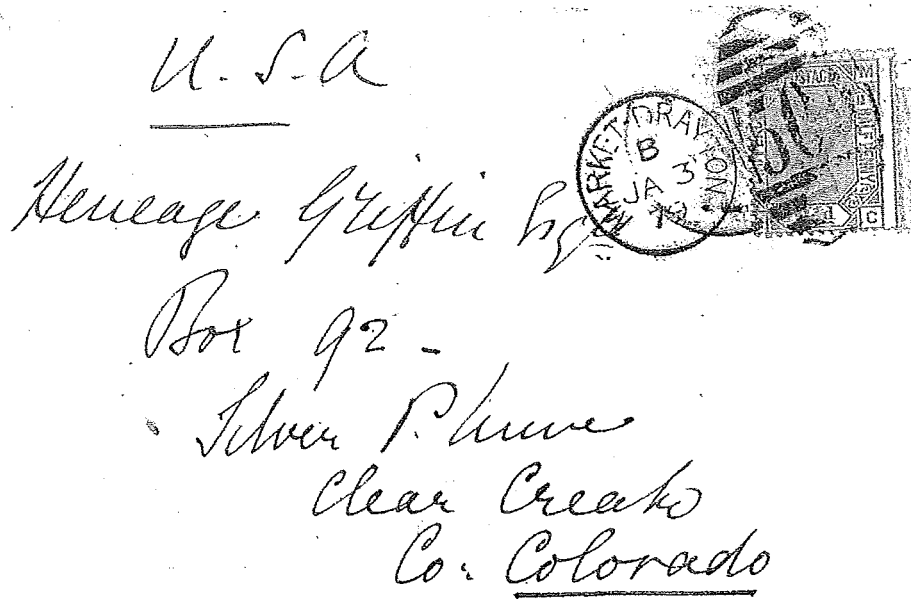
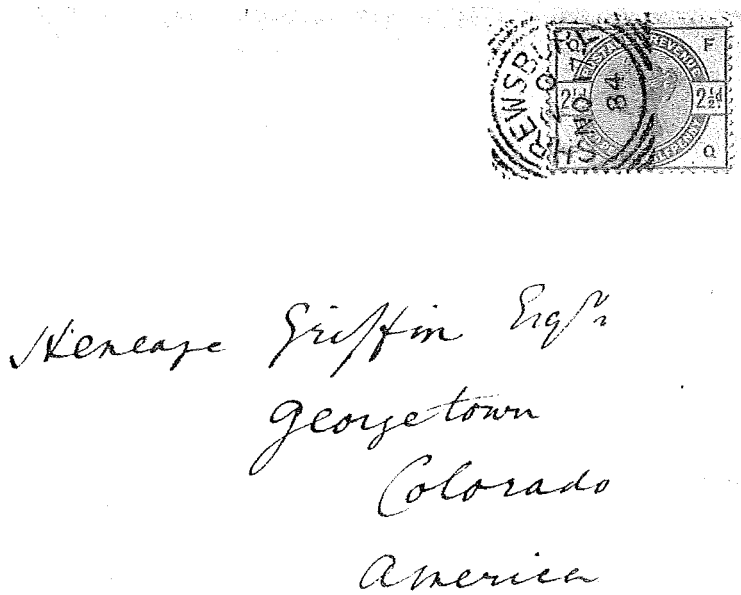
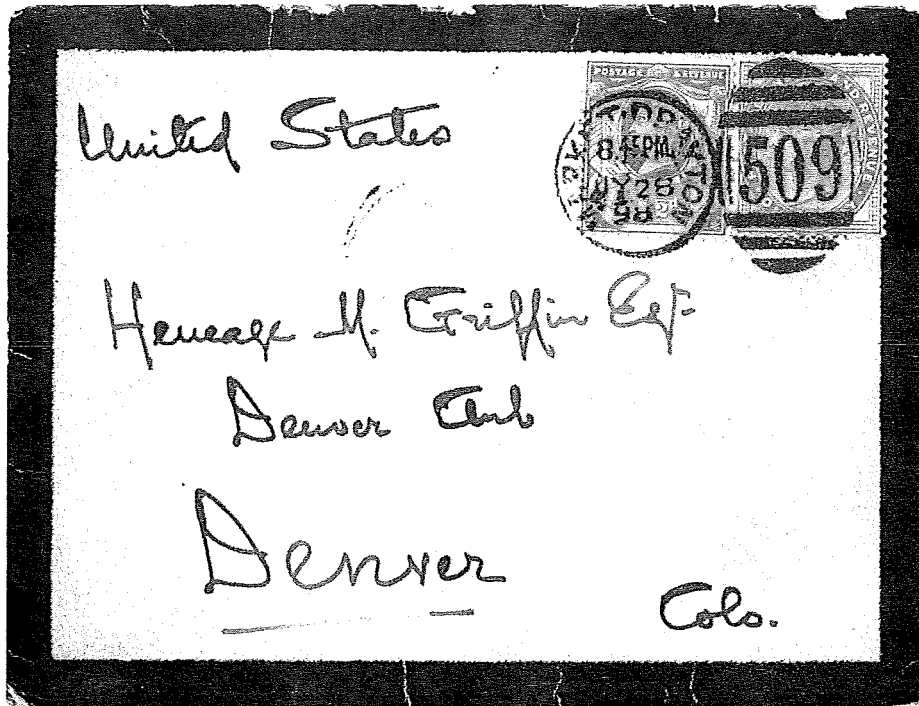


Fig 2. Market Drayton to Silver Plume, CO with the 2½d rosy-mauve, plate 12 paying the UPU rate. (courtesy of Guy Bridges). The Seven-Thirty Mine was registered in the name of The Clear Creek Company.



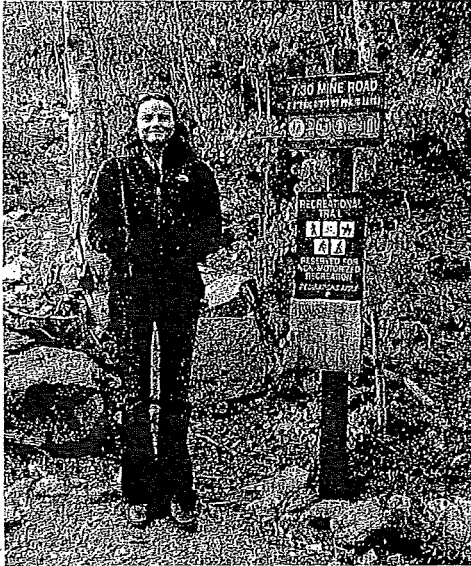
In 1880 Heneage's brother Clifford joined him in Colorado after a little family difficulty. Clifford's fiancée had been found dead in his room on the eve of their marriage and true to British upper class tradition his family ushered him abroad with unseemly haste to avoid a scandal and, most likely, the law as well. Avoiding legal consequences was never too great a problem for the so-called 'upper classes', but a scandal was another matter! The brothers became owners of the Seven-Thirty Mine above Silver Plume, (so called as its starting whistle blew at the more gentlemanly hour of 7.30am, whereas the whistles of the other mines blew at 6.30). The mine produced mostly silver and a little gold and eventually Heneage Griffin's new-found wealth brought him membership of the Denver Club (see fig 4). Clifford built himself a modest cabin on the mountain and led a singularly reclusive life, though he was not averse to

'thumping the bar' with the miners in Silver Plume on the odd occasion (sadly I couldn't find anything resembling a bar in Silver Plume in August 2012!).⁴



In an effort to keep his melancholy brother occupied, Heneage Griffin made Clifford superintendent of the mine but it appears that Clifford was unable to erase the memory of the tragedy he left behind in England. He became more and more introverted and distraught and began to hew a great hole out of the particularly tough granite-like bedrock. Whether he was tormented by guilt and wanted to punish himself or, merely, to occupy himself to forget we shall never know. When not hewing his hole in the granite he would sit on the porch of his isolated cabin and play a 'melancholy violin'. That is until the night of 19th June 1887, when the music suddenly stopped and a shot echoed throughout the mountains. Clifford Griffin was found face down in the hole he had dug with a bullet in his heart. A note requested he be buried where he fell. His brother used his influence to keep the cause of death out of the newspapers (avoiding another scandal, of course). He supervised the erection of a large hand-quarried monument of Silver Plume granite over the grave; the monument still stands high above I70⁵. There is quite a strenuous mile and a half walk from Silver Plume traversing mountain slopes, clambering over muddy creeks and scrambling across scree to reach the monument but the view down to the valley and the I70 is breathtaking. Equally impressive is the opposite view from the road, as the pointed edifice can clearly be seen jutting out defiantly on its rocky promontory.





Two covers exist from America addressed to Marten Harcourt Griffin at Pell Well Hall, one from Concord, New Hampshire in September 1873 and the other from Newport, Rhode Island in August 1874. There are also three addressed to him in the 1870s from India to Market Drayton, one of which is illustrated below, and three in the 1880s from Market Drayton to Dinan, France. The cover below is franked 6 annas but overpaid one anna as the rate from India via Brindisi reduced to 5 annas in July 1878⁶. It was carried on the P&O *Pekin* from Bombay on 24th Feb, arriving Suez 7th March and from Alexandria on the P&O ferry *Isis* to Brindisi. Elizabeth Fanny Griffin married Colonel Arthur Cory in January 1860 and Annie Cory was born in Rawalpindi in 1868, her family not returning to England until 1881⁷. Was Marten's sister writing to him as she toured India with her husband and daughter? Unless a letter turns up, we shall never know!

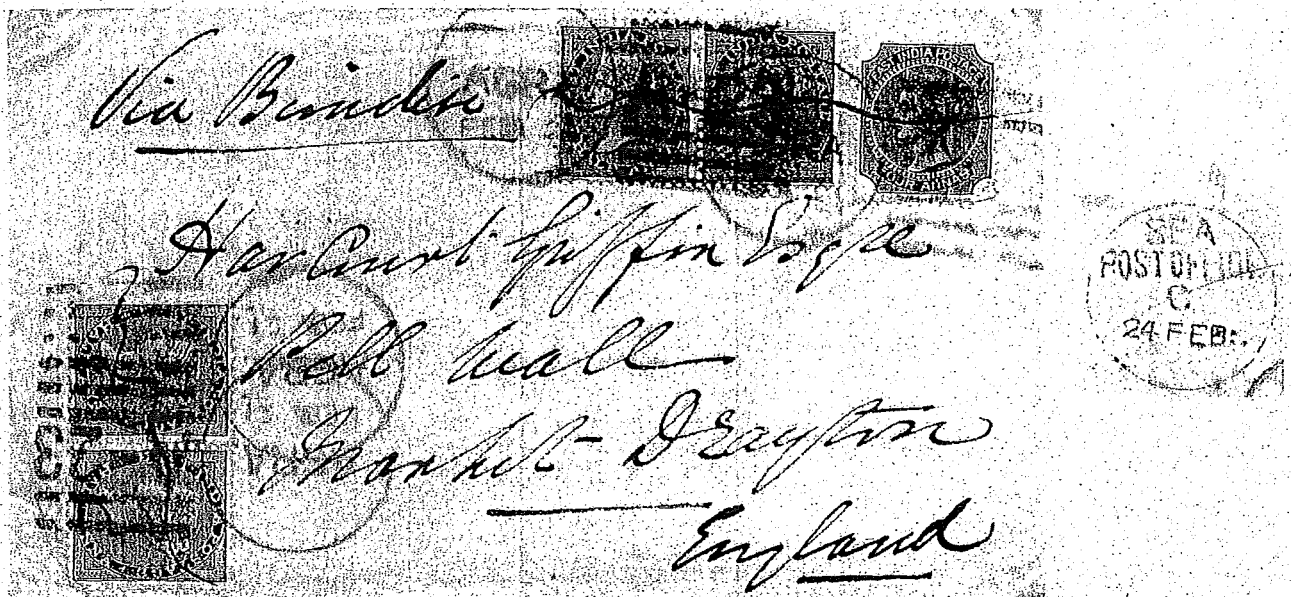


Fig 7. 2nd Feb 1879 cover from Agra, India to Market Drayton

References

1. The Times, 4th February 2006, obituary of Anthony Reginald FitzRoy Griffin.
2. http://www.dicamillocompanion.com/houses_detail.asp?ID=1575
3. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; Cory, Annie Sophie, 2004
4. Ghost Towns of the Colorado Rockies, Brown (Caxton Press, 2003)
5. From the Grave: A Guide to Colorado's Pioneer Cemeteries, Wommack (Caxton Press, 2003)
6. Overseas Letter Postage from India, 1854-1876, Martin & Blair, Robson Lowe, 1975
7. Victoria Cross, a Biography, Charlotte Mitchell, University of Queensland 2002

Others

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THREE WISE MEN?

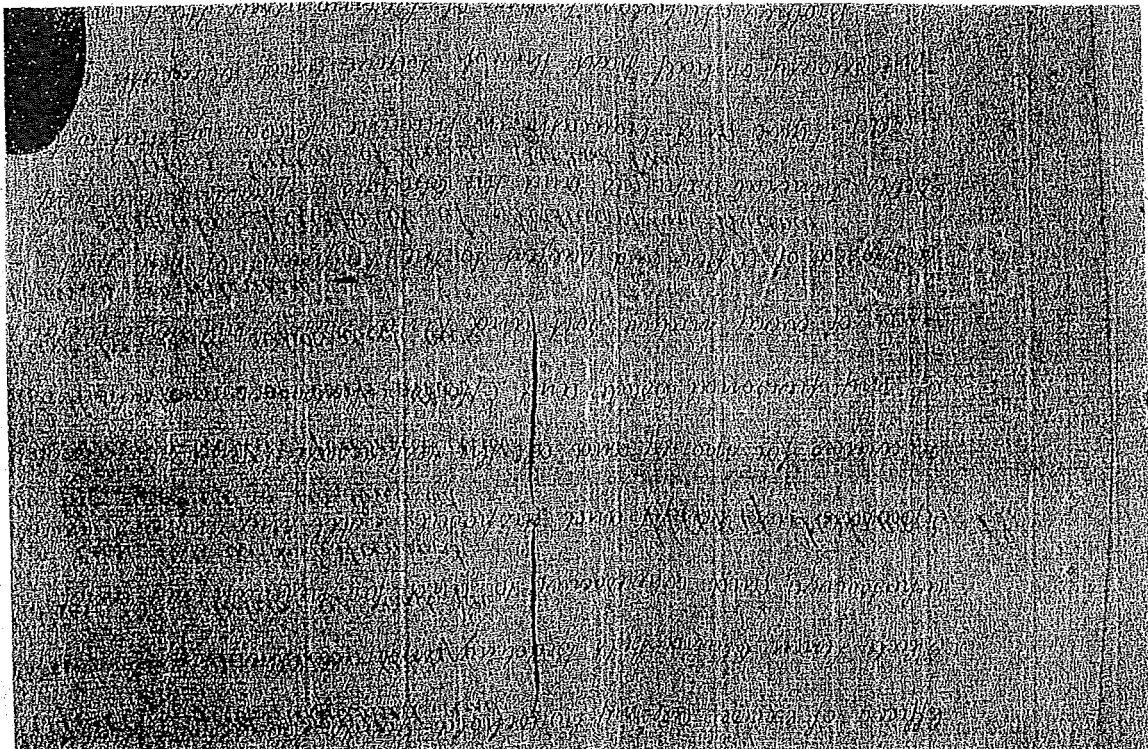
by Derek Smeathers

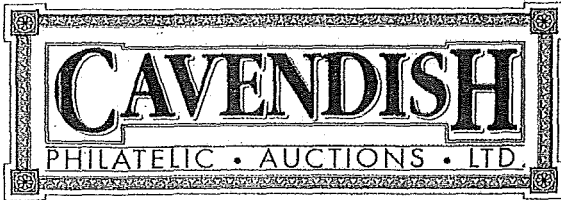
The name Stacey Wise is well-known to collectors as the man who made the paper for the very first adhesive postage stamps. He was based just outside Northampton and at the time one Family had dominated the local paper mills for decades, the Hayes. It was time for another!

The earliest record of paper-making in Northamptonshire is in 1724 when John Hayes had a mill on the River Nene at Wansford, near Peterborough. A Mr W. Hayes, writing in 1893, claimed that the Hayes family in 1800 owned ten mills across the county, including Vigo Mills in Northampton, Boughton Mill just north of the town and Rush Mills on the Bedford Road. Francis Hayes had married a Miss Wise of Maidstone in Kent, and in 1795 he was well established in the Boughton Mill and a much respected businessman active in Northampton politics. In 1804 he became the mayor of the town, but a year later he died just as his term of office ended. His wife continued the business for a few years but later married again.

Meanwhile, Rush Mills (under another of the Hayes family) suffered financial problems in 1811 and was advertised for sale in the Northampton Mercury newspaper, complete with paper-making equipment and machinery. John Hayes (exact relationship unknown) took over the business, and by 1814 was producing quality paper watermarked with his name, mainly supplying banks such as the Royal Bank of Scotland. At about this time, a certain Stacey Wise was working at a papermaking mill in Maidstone, Kent, and showing a great deal of interest in watermark technology. By 1819 'Mr Wise' was chief clerk to John Dickinson, specialist papermakers in London.

By 1831, John Hayes was insolvent and Rush Mills was vacant again. In 1833, Stacey Wise leased the factory and the following year he purchased it. He built up the business and established connections with Perkins, Bacon & Petch, printers and publishers in London, and also with Worster & Co, fly boat operators of Long Buckby, with whom he negotiated the construction of private wharfing facilities at Rush Mills. Paper watermarked with his name and the year is known from 1835 onwards, and even after his death in 1842 as the business was continued by his wife and a son, though we do not know the son's name. I have letters signed 'Stacey Wise, Jnr' and 'for my Father', and paper with watermark 'STACEY WISE 1844' exists. What has recently turned up is a letter written on paper watermarked 'CHARLES WISE 1822' by a solicitor in the Registrar's Office, Northampton and posted there. It is dated and postmarked 1828. Is this name just a coincidence or is it connected in some obscure way with Stacey's family? We know there were two of the Wise men in papermaking; do we now have a third? Who was Charles Wise?





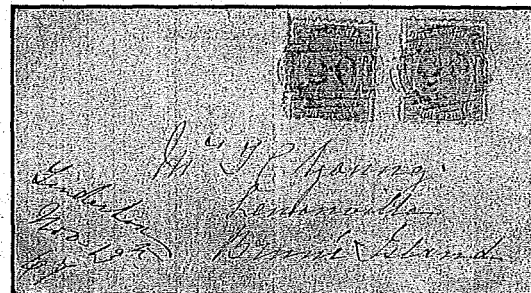
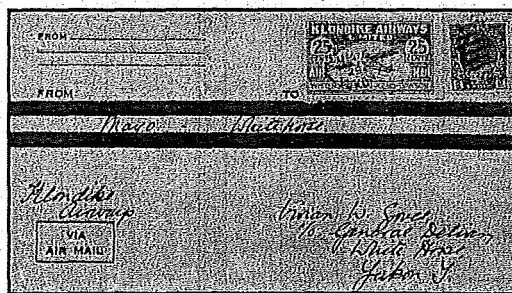
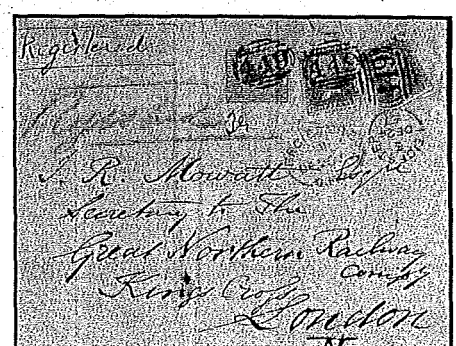
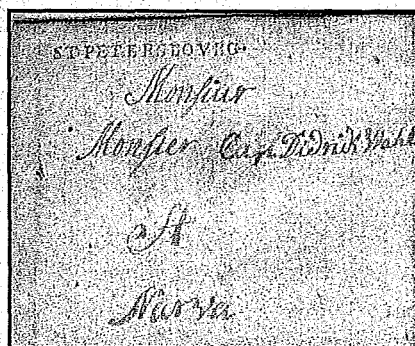
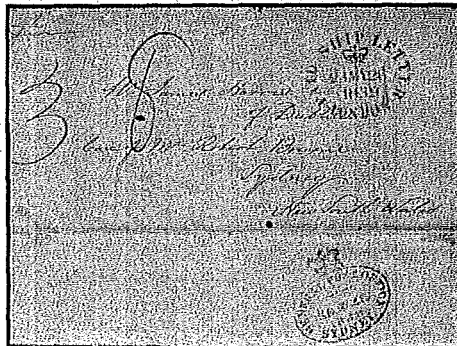
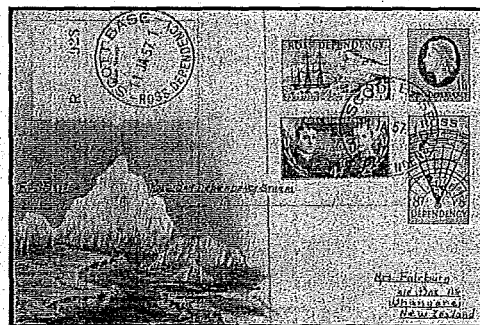
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