MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY
www.midlandphs.org.uk

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17th October 1894 postcard sent EXPRESS from Shaftesbury to London
Express fee paid with QV 3d purple on yellow 'Jubilee' (SG202)
See page 3 for the account of Richard Farman's display at Dudley

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Editorial – well, sort of one!

Picture the scene at a Stampex back in the mists of time:

A - I'm a **tachydromologist**, are you?
B - Oh, no, I'm a **philatelist**.
A - Jolly good, how are your perforations?
B - Wonderful, thank you, I'm learning about the Archers.
A - Aren't they on the radio, how *is* Doris these days?
B - No, silly, they're perforations, what about your skeletons?
A - Funny you should ask, I've been boning up on them.

Many thanks to everyone who has produced an article for Midland Mail this year, without you the journal would be nothing!

Please keep them coming!

Are the days long gone when this bit of banter would have lifted your goonish spirits? My friend Roger Green, who lives on the Greek island of Idra, came up with tachydromologist for a postal historian, based on the Greek for Postman. Now, of course you don't have to know any Greek but has anyone got any other ideas? What might postal historians want to call themselves; is tachydromologist too,……..well, too tacky? OK, I'll stick to the day job!

Simon Iredale: we welcome Simon to the Society as a new member. His interest is Shropshire to 1840 including the first adhesives.

Miles Newey: we also welcome Miles to the society as a new member. His interests are Derbyshire (Chesterfield), Malta and Cornwall.

John Hine e-mailed the picture below, he writes: *it was passed on to my brother with some old family photos from relatives, They seemed to have connections with Stanwick near Wellingborough, Northants but the sign above the door appears to have a longer name above POST OFFICE. As the building is so unusual with its thatched roof and stone-clad walls perhaps someone can recognise it*?



Peter Martin writes again, this time about his ancestry and CLOWNE; he states '*one of my cousin's nieces has been tracing the Martin family tree and she turned up that one of my ancestors, my great grand father, Telemachus George Martin married Susan Revill Tomlinson on April 15, 1879 in Clowne, Derbyshire and had 11 children in their 25 years of marriage, one of them being my paternal grandfather Edwin. Susan Revill Tomlinson is a direct descendant of Richard Revel, the first recorded sub-postmaster in Clowne. I KNEW there was a reason why I was so interested in Clowne postal history'. In 1852 & 1857 he is recorded in White's Gazetteer as a Tailor in Clowne, Worksop, Derbyshire It is also stated that the Post Office is at Richard Revill's, letters arrive from Chesterfield by gig mail at 8.30am and are despatched at 5.15 pm*. Peter also states he would '*LOVE to get my hands on a letter from Clowne handled by my ancestor by marriage from the 1852-1872 period when Richard Revel was postmaster*'.

Marvellous, Peter! So now, everyone, keep your eyes peeled on your trips to those stamp fairs!!

THE FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING at the BLACK COUNTRY MUSEUM

The sound of the gavel (do we have a gavel?) duly rang out at the appointed hour of 1.30pm on 13th February to bring the 21 members and 2 guests to order for our chairman, Chris Jackson, to introduce **Richard Farman**, our speaker for the day, whose topic was to be '**The Origin and Development of Picture Postcards**'.

Richard began by saying that his talk could be divided into five sections with the first section being **Early illustrated items from 1715 to 1910**. A 1715 item showed the decorated initial letters of a newspaper as no engravings or pictures appeared at this time. He followed this with a c1775 elaborately decorated letter sheet from the Earl of Bristol purchasing embossed cloth from a mercer at 55/- a yard, with Richard stating that postally used letter sheets are very difficult to find pre-1840. A 'yellow ticket' allowed the Earl of Chesterfield to gain entry to a day's 'Hare Coursing' and 'free' letters containing political cartoons were sent at no cost to the sender. There were 1835 letter sheets depicting a complete brewery and the 1840 postal reforms allowed envelopes to be used with illustrated letter sheets with a range of examples shown including some illustrated envelopes that were artist painted from the Edwardian period.

In the 1850s the **Carte de Visite** appeared, which was Richard's second section. You left your calling card with a picture of yourself. Later topography carte de visites (size 4" x 2½") and cabinet cards (6½" x 4½") became popular. The backs of these cards are very collectable being highly decorative and full of information on the photographers from such pioneers as Tucks, Frith and Valentines who became picture postcard publishers. Seaside views were popular, especially those of Rock & Co, which had matching letter sheets.

The third section comprised **Postal Stationery Postcards** (1870 to 1900). Austria produced the world's first postcard on 1st October 1869 followed by Great Britain on 1st October 1870 but with the postage stamp printed on it; you could not use a plain card and affix a stamp – the ½d 'bantam' was issued on 1st October 1870 for Book Post. The initial GB postcards were for use in Britain only and the address had to be on the front of the card. Advertising pictures quickly began to appear and then, in July 1875 the 1¼d Foreign Postcard was issued, the only time a ¼d has been part of the postal rate, it was half the overseas letter rate as set by the Treaty of Berne (General Postal Union). Cancellation had to be speeded up because of the volume of cards and hole-punched cancels came in. In 1871 the first **Valentines card** was used (see left Fig 1, 14th Feb 1871, privately printed on an official postcard).



Richard showed cards with an additional 1d red to pay the late fee and two examples of cards with an extra ½d stamp affixed but surcharged 1d as contrary to regulations but he also showed similar cards where the surcharge had been ignored. Under the Universal Postal Union regulations from 1st April 1879 the postcard rate to Europe became 1d, whereas it varied from 1d to 2½d to other parts of the world covered by the convention. In 1872 the 1d pink with Queen's head embossed at Somerset House appeared but privately printed postcards were not for sale to the public. On 25th January 1895 court size postcards or correspondence cards were allowed with Richard showing a first day of use in GB and one to New Zealand uprated with ½d stamp. The first official postcard was issued for the Patents Office and cost 8d, ½d postage and 7½d patents application fee. There were two Express Postcards with 3d added for sending urgent orders, together with Railway Letter Stamps on card paying extra to Burton railway station for delivery from the Burton post office. Finally exhibition postcards were shown of the Royal Naval Exhibition with a special cancel available from the post office at the top of the Eddystone lighthouse. The cancellation was used again for the Forestry & Gardening Exhibition.

Richard divided the last part of his talk into two sections **Early Picture Postcards** (1st September 1894 to 1904) and **The Golden Age of Postcards** (1904 to 1914). He proceeded by informing us that there is much discussion as to what is the first picture postcard with some claiming the privilege for an 1854 card with Forfar and Kincardin Hounds while others see that as a forerunner. Richard claimed that the

first picture postcard should date from 1st September 1894, when Post Office Regulations changed and it was permitted to affix your own ½d postage stamp to the postcard, achieved after much campaigning by the MP Henniker Heaton (*he of Ocean Penny Postage – Ed*). Richard's earliest example is dated 4th September 1894 and is an advertising card for Slazengers. The early ones were court size (4½" x 3½") and of excellent quality being chromo-lithographs printed in Germany. Richard showed a 1d postal stationery card used to Germany but with a picture of Derby Library. 1898 to 1902 was the period of the Intermediate card (4¾" x 3") again with the address only. His earliest local card was a Buxton multi-view of 1897 and he also showed two remarkable cards from the oil-fields of Baku (Azerbaijan) to Burton-on-Trent. He finished with photographic cards, novelty cards and a vast array of postally used collectable cards, an embossed card which had to be sent in an envelope and a ½d card in an envelope but this was surcharged as it was contrary to regulations as it was still not allowed.



Fig 2, First day of use of the Court size postcard 21st January 1895 to New Zealand uprated to a 1d

On thanking Richard, Chris Jackson stated "As comprehensive a display of a small subject that you will ever find"!

The second part of the meeting was devoted to members' one board postcard displays:-

Martin Scroggs began by showing three cards (1882, 1886, 1889) sent at ½d rate, one of them of vinegar brewers. On 1st September 1894 a newspaper sent a card at the ½d rate but a similar card of August of that year was surcharged as it was against regulations. He then showed cards of different sizes, a smaller than permitted one of 1897 was not surcharged, a 1904 'midget' card and a German card that was 5mm too tall were!

Jan Young stated the first detailed documentary record of Bromsgrove (originally BREMESGRAVE) is in the Domesday Book, where it heads the list of the 'Kings Lands' in Worcestershire. It was more valuable as a market town than Birmingham with the salt industry of particular importance. Bromsgrove's initial street was called the 'Old Saltway'. Jan displayed postcards of Bromsgrove from 1907 to 1937 including a 1911 celebration of George V coronation showing postal workers. She included a 'rogue' Valentine card as the meeting was dated 13th February!

Roy Summers displayed cards related to Wolverhampton including Princes Square; 1918 German Field Gun; Snow Hill; Wednesfield Road; The Wergs, Tettenhall, tram station; Chubb safe manufacturing company and he finished with railway cards including a picture of the demolished GWR station.

Brian Purcell showed postcards of Hednesford and **Stuart Geddes** showed Welsh language cards.

Chris Jackson displayed a few early postcards which included the first and second type together with a court card and one from 1902 where the message referred to the sender having collected 196 cards and had bought an album. The remainder of the display was taken from his collection of Post Office postcards which are displayed with items cancelled at that office. These included Offenham Post Office which was shown together with an anonymous Parcel

Post label which had the office in manuscript, a QV 6d Jubilee stamp and a rubber cancellation of Offenham. One from Rubery was shown with a telegram together with the envelope both with Rubery handstamps.

Clive Jones in Part 1 Clive exhibited an 1870 York card; a card from 1871 with a 2d. Late Fee for direct posting into the Midland TPO addressed to Ludlow; 1871 and 1872 Carlisle & Glasgow Sorting Tender; 1878 Caledonian TPO with 1¼d card to Holland; early cards to Burton Union Bank at Ashbourne and two early cards from Gloucester station with TPO marks one without a late fee.

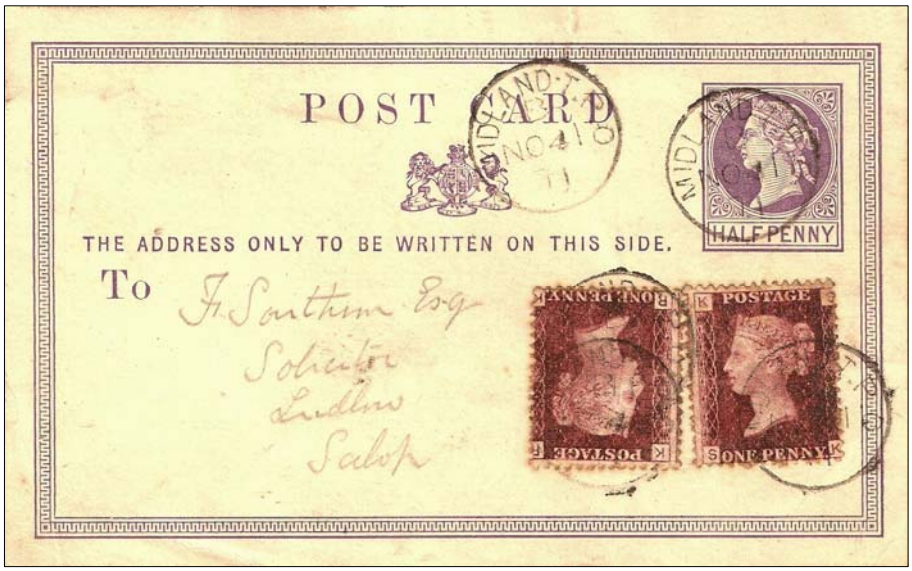


Fig 3, November 1871 postal stationery postcard cancelled MIDLAND T.P.O., with 2d Late Fee paid to Ludlow.

In Part 2 Clive showed an 1895 card from Mashonaland, the only country to issue postal stationery cards and not postage stamps. A 1900 court sized card from Ripon, a 1904 registered card and postcards featuring views to enhance displays, e.g. TPO apparatus, post office buildings etc. He finished with four 1904 St. Louis Exposition cards by Tuck, including an unrecorded item, which were the precursor to the millions of cards issued by the LNWR.

Malcolm Allinson showed some of his collection of picture postcards of his native village of Astwood Bank, which had a lot of different cards for such a small village - well into three figures. There were cards of Whitsun processions, other early 20th century events and many photographic street scenes. Many cards showed individually named large houses, most of which still exist. The reason for such a small village having that number of "mansion" properties is that despite its rural location, the area carried a high number of manufacturing establishments, mostly in the needle and fish-hook trade, and these houses generally belonged to the factory owners.

Alan Godfrey regaled us with cards from Stratford-on-Avon, including 1899 with the Shakespeare stamp and others with various views going to Paris, USA etc. Then a 1903 Birkswell Christmas card, a 1¼d Foreign card and finally a card of the Welcombe Hotel, purchased by the LMS Railway, which opened the hotel in July 1931.

Gordon Hardy began with an 1898 court card with three small views of London to France; 1911 Midland Grand Hotel; 1895 Burton Union Bank; 1903 Matlock Baths; an 1878 1¼d Foreign Card from Derby to Switzerland; 1899 Germany to Romania sealed with postage due label and 1900 Romanian New Year card dated in the Julian calendar.

Mick Gill showed Newark cards with undivided back. He began with a pair of gold edged court cards with small vignettes of Newark Castle embellished with gold scrolls. Cards with views of the castle and town were followed by cards of the castle which was partially demolished after the surrender of the town in May 1646 but still with its impressive Norman Gate House in which King John died in October 1216. After views of Trent Bridge we saw the parish church from Kirkgate, one with Mick's 2 x great uncle Charles Gill's house which he demolished in 1907 for the building of Newark's new Head Post Office. He showed a card of 'A Quaint Courtyard', otherwise known as Queen's Head (or Ash's Yard) and closed with two Frith's cards which allowed more space than usual for a message.

Alan Marshall began with 1899 & 1900 court cards at ½d rate of Nottingham Post Office, one to France; 1890 ½d prepaid liquor advertising / order court card; 1900 & 1901 cards of Nottingham market; 1871 2 x ½d mauve card; 1877 1¼d Foreign card Nottingham to Switzerland; 1889 & 1896 2 x ½d brown postal stationery cards with added ½d stamps to France and Uruguay respectively; 1892 2 x 1d red UPU cards to Paris and Saxony and 1896 Newfoundland 2cents reply card, posted at St. Johns on 6th September with a Liverpool ship cds 20th Sept and Nottingham cds 21st Sept 4am and reply posted in Nottingham 21st Sept 1892 10.15am.

THE MARCH MEETING at St GERMAINE'S, CHURCH HALL, BIRMINGHAM

At 1.30pm on 12th March, our Chairman, Chris Jackson, brought the 18 members present to order and introduced the topic of the day – Member's One Board displays of **Multi-Directed and Dead Letter Mail**.

John Soer began the afternoon's entertainment with a Returned Letter from the Dead Letter Office which was sent to Ashby-de-la-Zouch in 1838. Unfortunately, John did not have the letter which had been enclosed therein. The next item showed strikes of two penny post marks. The letter was sent in July 1836 from Cambridge to Congerstone which it reached through the Atherstone Penny Post, probably by the receiving office at Twycross. It was then redirected to Scarborough, but was put into the post at the receiving office in Market Bosworth (in the Hinckley Penny Post) where it was struck with the very scarce boxed mileage mark instead of the usual 'No. 2'. A letter sent from Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Linton, near Burton-on-Trent, spent fifteen days travelling to and fro between Ashby, Burton, Linton and Leicester. It was not clear if it actually reached the addressee. John's last two items were registered letters. The first, sent from Netherseal to Donington-le-Heath was misdirected to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. When it arrived at its destination it was endorsed 'Refused'. A registered letter sent from Ashby to Burton-on-Trent showed the initials of six postmen who had tried to deliver it.

Malcolm Allinson showed Bishop Marks, claiming that at that time all mail had to go via London for accounting, the onward journey was therefore 're-directed'. The audience was split on whether this interpretation was too liberal. He began with a letter from Dublin to Bewdley in January 1661, the first year of the Bishop Mark and then a pair of letters from Edinburgh to Rotterdam in 1682 and 1695, the second of which was a triple rate letter prepaid 1/3 (3 x 5d) to London, but the foreign postage was calculated as 15 stuivers for the triple rate letter (10 stuivers otherwise) and 3 stuivers as a delivery fee (otherwise 1 stuiver), thus the delivery fee was trebled, but not the onward postage rate. Letters from Scotland to New York and from Northampton to Jamaica followed, both with appropriate Bishop Marks; the Jamaica item having its London BM stamped in red, which is understood to be rarely seen. Malcolm's final item did qualify under today's title in that it contained six Bishop Marks, four of which were applied on the same date in London – incoming, two attempts at delivery in London and then redirection to Glasgow. Ironically the contents did state that the sender "….expects you to have left London before this letter reaches it"!

Alan Godfrey started with a 1787 cover from Stratford on Avon to Marlow in Bucks. Addressed to Wm Clayton MP, charged 3d, it was redirected to Brighthelmstone (Brighton) and a new charge of 6d added, which was deleted and a "FREE / S" handstamp applied ('S' being the inspector's mark of J Stafford). A cover of 1833 from London to Warwick had a manuscript note "if undersheriff changed be pleased to forward this", as the undersheriff had changed, the letter was redirected to Henley-in-Arden with the original charge of 1/6 (double rate) amended to 2/4 to include 4d at double rate. A widely travelled cover of 1870 addressed to "Henley, Stafford" obviously confused the Post Office as it was sent to: Hanley Castle (near Worcester), Hanley (Stoke on Trent), Henley-in-Arden and Henley on Thames and was still undelivered. However, the most travelled item was sent in 1900 from Goodwin & Co, brass founders of Birmingham to "Sherbourne", the enterprising Post Office tried: Sherborne (Dorset), Sherburn (Durham), Sherburn (E Yorks), Sherburn-in-Elmet (N Yorks), Sherborne (Glos) and Sherbourne (Warwick) before returning the letter to sender. It collected 18 hand stamps and numerous manuscript markings in the process.

Mick Gill began with an 1859 cover to Leicester, redirected to Nottingham with a WATERLOO St LEICESTER udc and ms 1, redirected a second time to Chesterfield with a 1d red over the original stamp. Next was an 1861 cover from Newark to Gamston, Retford, returned to the sender from the RLB, London. An 1873 cover to Kirton circulated to Kirton Lindsey, Kirton, near Boston and to Kirton, Notts was followed by an 1886 cover to the Bishop of Nottingham but proved not to be for the Catholic or Anglican gentleman! A 1914 cover from Peterborough to 'Flittin' was not for Fletton and was re-addressed to the Midland Station, Nottingham but returned to Fletton, then sent to Flitton, Ampthill via Bedford. In 1960 a cover from Goole to Staddlethorpe, 10 miles east, was sent to Stragglethorpe, Lins and then Staythorpe, Newark. When returned to the sender it had three diamond annual account marks and Mick recognised the hand of one of his former colleagues.

Clive Jones first half display showed many fine items of missent Yorkshire P.H., including a scarce 1869 Missent to Bawtry item, addressed to Oldcotes, Notts, also a pair of returned unpaid letters from Wensleydale showed scarce "Crown" instructional marks used in early 1848 reading *This letter has been REFUSED & The Party to whom this letter is addressed cannot be FOUND*.

Guy Bridges displayed an 1821 cover from Holywell to Neston redirected to Welshpool in the Welshpool penny post; an 1839 entire from Newport to Trentham, Staffs, forwarded to Wolverhampton in the Newcastle penny post; an 1860 cover from Calcutta addressed to Meole Brace, Stafford with a manuscript Missent to Stafford and a MISSENT TO BIRMINGHAM before being correctly delivered via Shrewsbury and an 1880 St. Louis, USA to Ellesmere with *Try Shrewsbury* before languishing in the RLB, Liverpool!

Gordon Hardy exhibited a 1798 Yarmouth to London to Donnington Park, Derby charged 4/-; 1792 Rochdale to Derby to Chester; 1817 Freeling returned letter; an 1824 Derby to London to Wheatley, Oxon; 1869 London to Duffield, Derbyshire but sent to Driffield, Yorks before being sent to Duffield for delivery.

Chris Jackson began with a lovely Nov 1840 redirected 1d black cover from Worcester to Upton to Hereford; a wonderful cover from Worcester to the Crimea, forwarded to the Army & Navy Club in London before being returned to Worcester; an 1889 cover from Malvern to Bombay, forwarded to Murree, another cover to India from Pershore to Delhi forwarded to Woottan and two 20th century covers, 1937 Lye, Stourbridge to Paramatta, forwarded to Crow's Nest, Sydney, NSW and 1941 Malvern to Malaya and returned.

Stuart Geddes showed two covers from 1897, one of July / August with 27 postmarks and the other with nine attempts at delivery at various Whitchurch towns (Salop, Glamorgan, Hampshire and Oxfordshire)

Brian Atkins' 1855 cover went all over south west Shropshire; his 1894 cover went to various Whitchurch towns, whereas his 1905 cover addressed to a photographer at *The Fairground Hereford* went round most of Hereford, Shropshire and Staffordshire. An 1860 cover from Sydney NSW went to Penrith, Cumberland and was forwarded to two Shropshire villages and an 1864 cover from Shrewsbury to Miss Orde at Sallenches, Haute Savoie was redirected to Chamonix for 30 centimes, the letter was written by the wife of the recipient of the above Sydney cover! An 1890 2½d 'jubilee' cover from Oswestry to Missouri ended up in the US Dead Letter Office!

Pete Elms 1875 cover from Birmingham (24th Oct) went to Northwich (26th), Stockport (27th), Congleton to Devonport (28th Plymouth?), Middlewich (29th), Holmes Chapel (30th) and back to Middlewich (1st Nov 1875)!!

John Calladine showed a 1776 entire from Farmingon (Glos) to London, forwarded to Weybridge which had managed to pick up 5 Bishop marks; 1839 Barbuda to Sir Bethel Codrington, Doddington was put into the London 2d post, then the General Post to Cirencester, the Cirencester penny post to Cross Hands and immediately redirected to London via the Chippenham penny post; an 1855 Sir Thomas Phillips letter (the antiquarian of Middle Hill, Worcs) puzzlingly sent to Stourbridge, endorsed *Try Worcester*, MISSENT TO WORCESTER and finally delivered in Broadway as it should have been; 1881 London to Methley, Yorks (8 miles from Leeds) had 20 attempts to deliver; 1839 Prince of Oude to Cheltenham, re-addressed to Northwick (Broadway) in Campden penny post, re-addressed to Leamington with the original 4d charge raised to 2/1!

Alan Marshall regaled us with an 1814 entire from Nottingham to London to Loughborough to Wymaswold, at a total cost of 4/9 instead of 1/6; 1826 Freeling returned letter, 1826 entire from Nottingham to London to Bristol with *Not to be Found* and **Postage to London Not Paid** strike; 1843 Mabberley Dead Letter Office; 1886 cover from Notting Hill to Nottingham redirected to Liverpool with 1d and ½d To Pay stamps (no 1½d To Pay stamp at Nottingham); 1882 cover from London to Prudoe Castle with 8 cancels and only known Missent to Bingham (cds).



Fig 1, 1852 1d pink pse from London to Northumberland with the only recorded **Missent to** and cds **Bingham**.

Eric Lewis: 1834 letter had 11 attempts at delivery, an 1845 letter had 23 attempts at delivery and 1851 had 30 attempts (at least 30 initials of postmen but were they asked in the delivery room if the letter was theirs and initialled it if not?); 7th Nov 1900 from Blackheath to Vicarage Road, Birmingham but **Not to be Found / 75** after trying 5

districts, returned to sender and 1900 Upper Holloway to 'Brummagen' but Undelivered for Reason Stated, a skeleton **BIRMINGHAM RLB** and a boxed **½d POSTAGE DUE FOR RETURN TO SENDER** (see below);

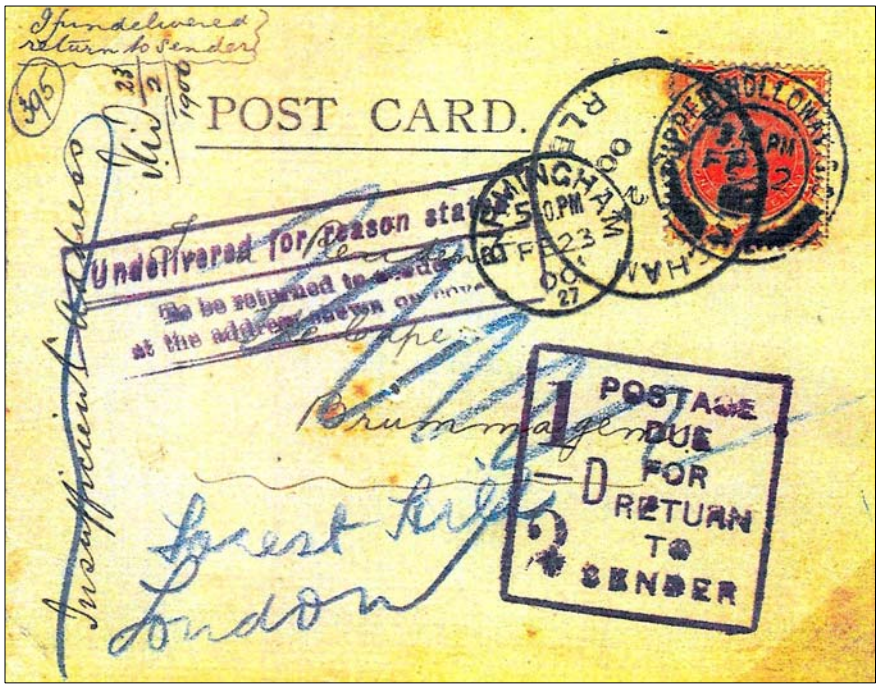


Fig 2, February 1900 UPPER HOLLOWAY to *Brummagen* but undelivered and returned to sender with ½d postage due

Derek Smeathers began with an 1815 letter to Towcester misdirected to Southampton (instead of Northampton); Wolverhampton to Daventry but missent to Hinckley, then redirected from Daventry to London with 3 mileage marks of different types in three different colours! A Sep 1835 letter was 'turned' twice with marks of London, Northampton and Wellington (Som) with total payable 2/8 but with one charge of 8d with 8 pen strokes for an illiterate postman! Dec 1840 1d black cover from Scotland to Peterborough, redirected to Burghley, Stamford with ms 1d; Dec 1851 to Corby where the PO have added 'Rockingham' so the letter went via Leicester and ms 4d charge; 1891 from USA to Rothwell, Eng., delivered to Rothwell, Northants and *Not Rothwell, Kettering, try Leeds*.

For the second half: **Clive Jones** displayed a rare Bristol & Newton Abbot T.P.O. mark on an 1892 item sent from Glasgow to Bedford, then to Keynsham via the T.P.O., Taunton & Bristol, before a final re-direction to Bala via Birmingham! Other postal mishaps included London to Halifax (Yorks.) via Nova Scotia; and a 1901 cover sent from Birmingham to Rotherham, which ended up on a detour to Rotterdam!

Alan Marshall's second display began with an 1859 wrapper from Liverpool to Mollington, missent twice to Nottingham within 3 days; 1916 envelope from Nottingham to BMEF with 20 cancellations / manuscript marks; 1917 cover Nottingham to BEF, France with *Not to be Found*; 1942 War Office cover from Bournemouth to Ripon with numerous manuscript marks prior to redirection to Nottingham; 1943 Cover Widnes, St Helens, Halifax, Nottingham, India displays 7 cds marks and redirection labels; 1947 POW Nottingham letter to ex-military workmate in London with follow up letter 5 months later having redirection labels and **Return to Sender** due to repatriation of POW.

Derek Smeathers second offering were all from the 20th century beginning with a postcard form Penarth to Harrold Lodge, Nr Wellingboro, in an area where 3 counties meet and postal deliveries are often delayed by incorrectly addressed mail, Harrold is in Bedfordshire but the card went to Wellingborough, then Bozeat, returned to Wellingborough, marked *Not Bozeat*! A postcard sent to Farthinghoe, Banbury was sent to Brackley, who delivered it! A postcard from South Africa addressed Kettering Northampton had a **MISDIRECTED TO NORTHAMPTON** in violet to explain the delay. A card from Southern Rhodesia addressed 'Moccasin Works, Southampton' had **NOT SOUTHAMPTON** and ms *Try Northampton*. A 1943 cover to solicitors in Oundle, Northants was delivered but had a violet boxed stamp **Your Correct Postal Address is OUNDLE, PETERBOROUGH, NORTHANTS**, when Peterborough was the mail centre for eastern Northants villages. A 1943 cover from the USA to an airman at Grafton Underwood B.17 base was sent to his new base but he was MISSING and the cover was returned to the US. Jan 1948 POW letter-form from a camp near Northampton but the sender was working at a camp near Kettering and the letter went back to Northampton for its 'Free Postage' marking.

Altogether another wonderful day with some excellent items displayed by an enthusiastic group of members.

CHECK YOUR SKELETONS

by Alan Marshall

It is well established that the skeleton / traveller stamps were brought in to cover a stamp breakage or loss, etc. A noteworthy occurrence is to have recently located a small envelope addressed to Clifton, near Nottingham with an example of the 30mm large double arc seriffed Nottingham cds without a code letter (NG188) dated 3rd December 1845, an extension of 5 months of the latest date. But this date happens to coincide with the earliest recorded date of the NOTTINGHAM / 5 skeleton stamp (NG189) recorded 4 times between 3rd to 7th December 1845. The question is was it really broken prior to the skeleton stamp being used on that day? Was it created because the next planned stamp was going to be late for use? The next stamp was a 30mm large double arc sans-serif cds with an earliest recorded date of 11th December being 4 days later than the latest skeleton recording.

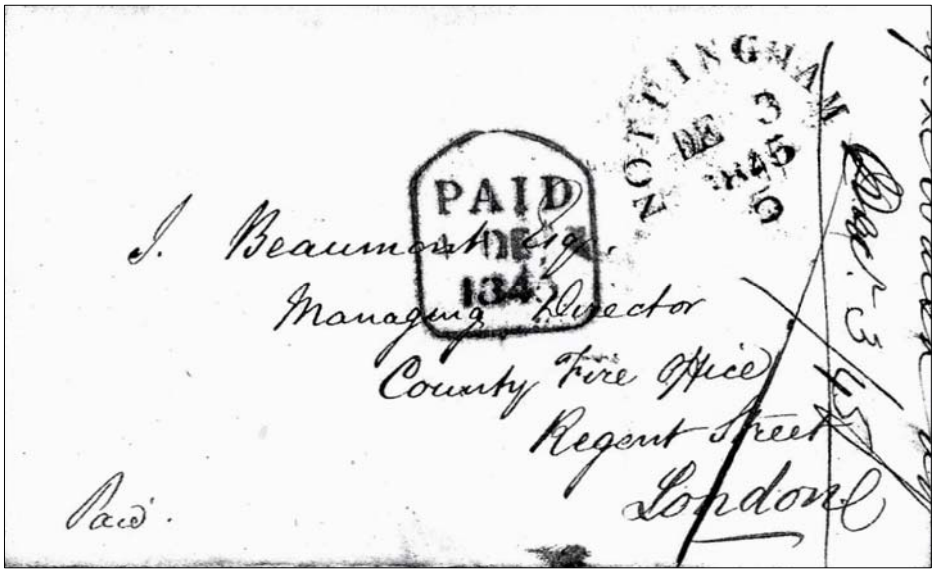


Fig 1, Entire letter Nottingham to London 3rd December 1845

Fig 1 shows a prepaid entire to the Managing Director of the County Fire Office in London. The letter is of interest in that it is a complaint about the delaying tactics of the local agent of the County Fire Office. The complaint concerns the transfer of County Fire Office shares to one of the largest and most wealthy hosiery manufacturers in Nottingham from someone who pays more insurance than any other professional gentleman in the town!



Fig 2, Cover from Ashby-de-la-Zouch to Nottingham, 2nd December 1845



NOTTINGHAM date stamp 3 DEC 1845 on reverse of Fig 1.

Fig 2 shows a cover to Clifton with a 27mm ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH cds of 2nd Dec 1845 and on the reverse a NOTTINGHAM cds of 3rd Dec 1845 (NG188), which extends the latest recorded date of the sporadic no code letter mark to just beyond that of the date stamp with code letter of 27th November 1845.

As referred above the next stamp was a 30mm large double arc sans-serif cds recorded 11th December 1845. In his book *The Post Office at Nottingham*, Hall lists the latest recorded example in blue or green as 3rd June 1847. Had it been possible to locate this example it would have proved to be another intriguing situation as it creates an overlap with the second NOTTINGHAM / 2 skeleton (NG190) recorded 2nd to 20th June 1847. The non-inclusion of the sans-serif date stamps in the Midland County Catalogue meant that the difficult decision 'without proof don't record' was avoided! It was the second skeleton, which apart from one example of three recorded on 16th June, amongst 14 recorded in all, introduced the use of blue ink at Nottingham for use with the smaller 25mm double arc sans-serif cds first recorded on 6th July 1847. The Midland Blue No7 ink was not officially introduced until December 1852.

Some observations about the tiny village of Clifton are of interest. The small envelope (Fig 2) is only the third item of any real postal / social history interest that has surfaced for Clifton. The Clifton family took their name from the village after the Norman Conquest. The manor of Clifton was acquired in the latter part of the reign of Henry III remaining in the family until 1958. The Hall, bought by Nottingham Corporation, became a grammar school before being annexed to Nottingham University and subsequently converted to become two conjoined homes.

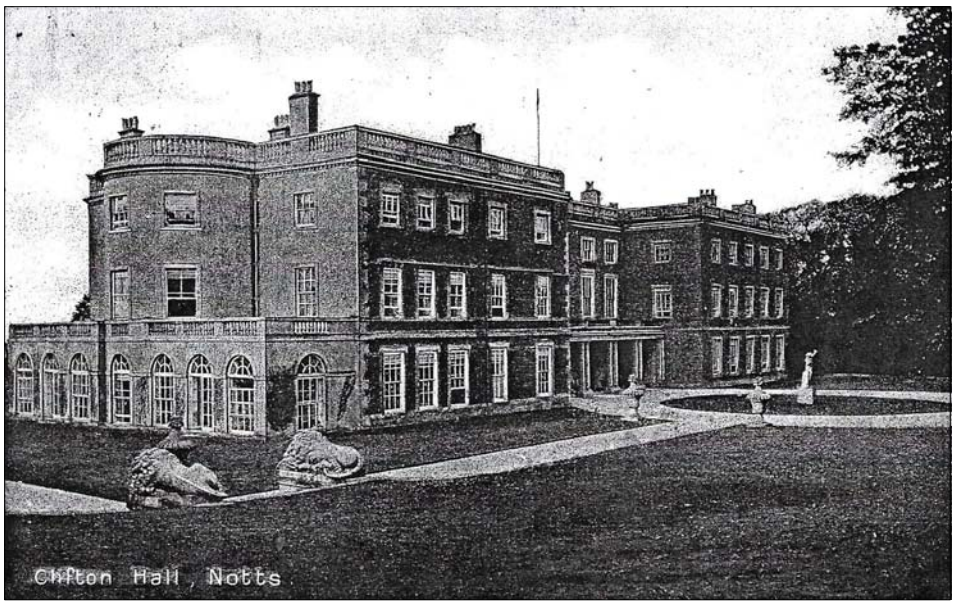


Fig 3, Clifton Hall

The first item, and only wrapper located, is a *Free* from Gervaise Clifton from Clifton Hall to the Earl of Lauderdale dated 3rd March 1763, sent following the death of his father Sir Robert (Knight of the Order of the Bath, 1725), see Fig 4. It is another of the uncommon double strikes of NOTTING / HAM (*the similar strike on the reverse is not shown due to space restrictions – Ed*) during the period of use of NG132 (1760 to 1765), common to the Plumbe correspondence. The Free signature is not an obvious Clifton one and maybe it accounts for the double strike of acceptance.

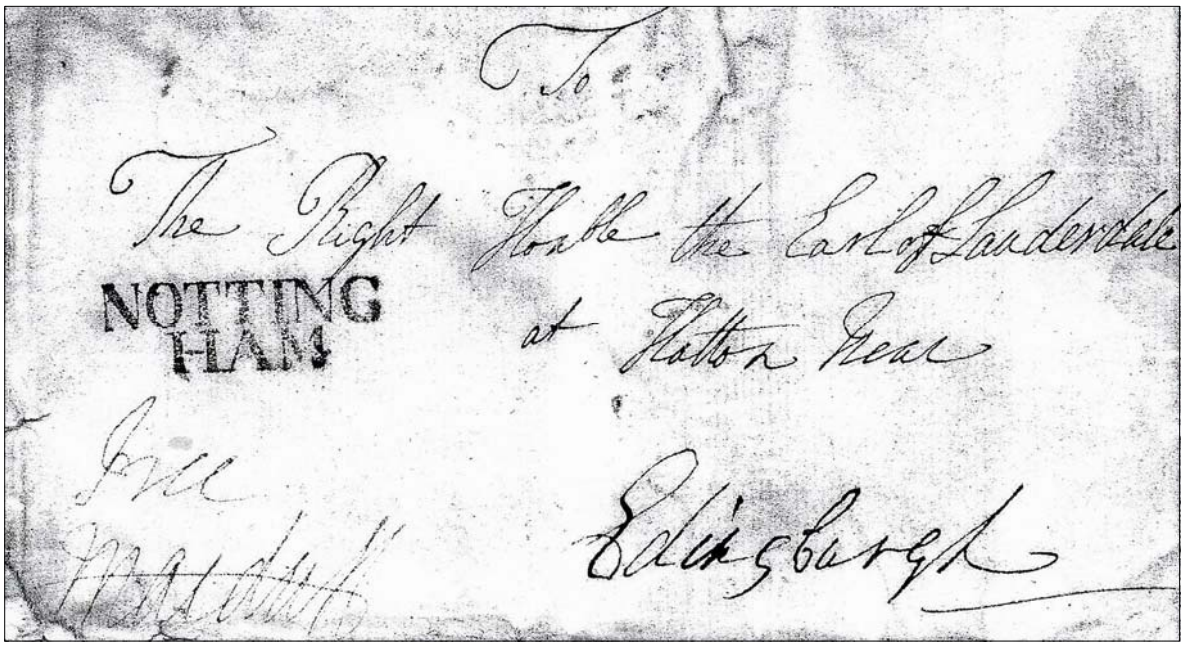


Fig 4, Nottingham to Edinburgh, 3rd March 1763

The second item (Figs 5 and 6) is a Perfumed Sachet Postcard with a ½d stamp dated 17th January 1907 addressed to a Miss Churchill at the Hall, presumably a servant girl, from the next small village, Barton-in-Fabis, one mile away along the River Trent (see Figs 5 and 6). There is, however, correspondence from Nottingham to Westminster to Sir Robert Henry Clifton, Bt (1832 – 1896), M.P. for Nottingham from 1861 to 1866 (see Fig 7) and again 1868 to 1896, and a preponderance of postcards of Clifton Grove during the early years of the 20th century. The Grove is a one-mile avenue of trees, *Lover's Walk*, running north-south to Clifton alongside the River Trent. Not only was the Grove popular with couples from Nottingham but the Hall was a regular rendezvous for parties of the nobility, it being accessed from the river by boat.



Fig 5, Birthday Greetings, front of the Perfumed Sachet Card

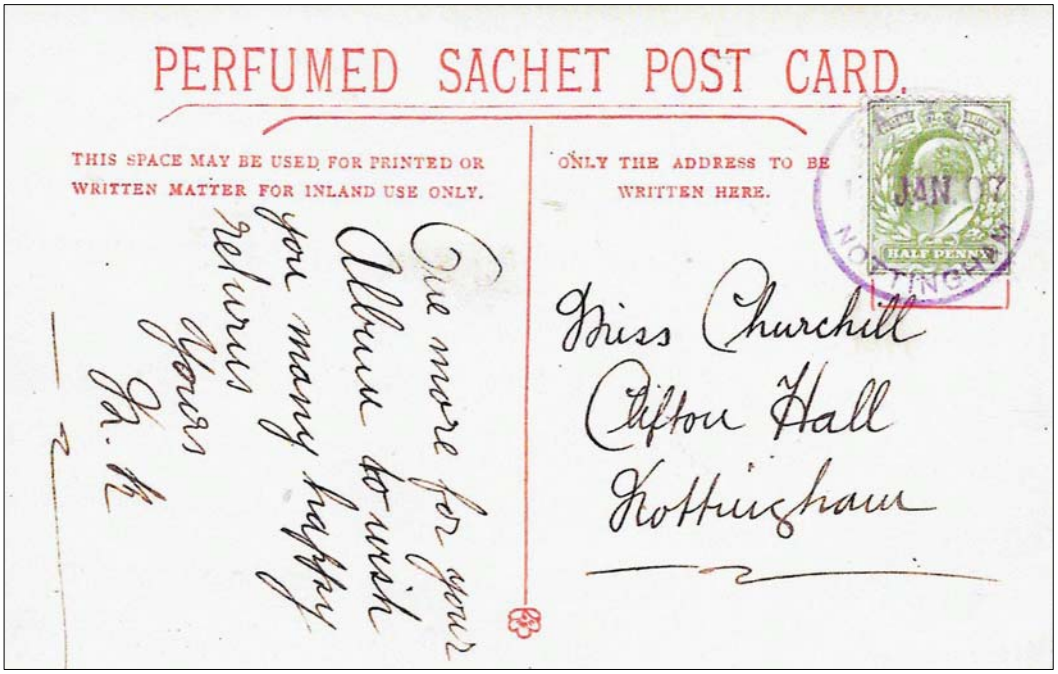


Fig 6, Reverse of the Perfumed Sachet card to Clifton Hall, Nottingham, 17th January 1907



Fig 7, April 1862, Nottingham to Sir Robert Clifton, London, redirected

The above cover shows a small crowned redirection mark only applied on letters within the same postal area as the original address and therefore not subject to a further charge; the letter presumably being redirected from the House of Commons to the nearby Westminster Palace Hotel. There is also a manuscript 1 unpaid broad brush stroke, although the cover has a 1d red 'star' stamp. The redirection mark is over the broad 1 mark with another manuscript mark over the redirection one.

A mourning cover to Sir Robert exists dated 14th March 1864, also from Nottingham, addressed to the House of Commons, London and redirected to 17, St. James' Place, SW. This cover also shows the small circular, crown R redirection mark as that above but this time without added manuscript marks.

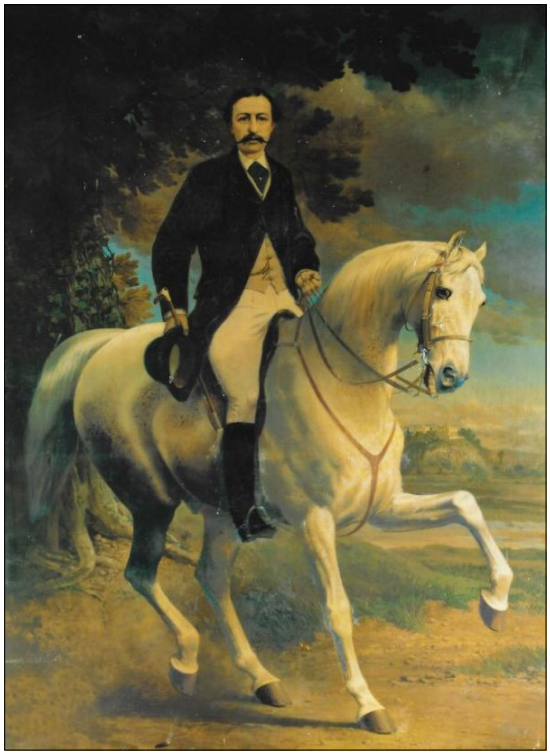


Fig 8, Sir Robert Henry Clifton

Included is a copy of a 9ft x 7ft painting (Fig 8 much reduced) of Sir Robert Henry Clifton, Bt, the Nottingham MP, painted by the French born Alfred de Prades in 1870. Christies, who in 2001, were advertising the painting with an estimate of £25,000, granted me the copy having informed them that the castle in evidence behind Sir Robert was not Clifton Castle but Nottingham Castle viewed from the Grove. The clean, clear looking castle reflecting recent rebuilding following a fire in 1832. The picture sold for £14,100.

It is alleged that the horseman's foot is, in fact, a girl's foot because the painting started off as a portrait of the Colonel's daughter who was killed in a riding accident in the Grove whilst the picture was being painted.

Finally the tiny village of Clifton, along with the equally tiny village of Glapton, were eclipsed by the largest council house estate in England built immediately after WW2 to house the residents from the demolition of the considerable area of cramped Victorian houses of the Meadows district in Nottingham covering the land between the castle and Trent Bridge. The village of Glapton disappeared but Clifton survived.



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WARWICK ROYAL SHOW 1931 - FEEDBACK

by Ian May

Alan Godfrey wrote about the Warwick Royal Show held in 1931 in the last issue of Midland Mail.[1] For members interested further details of the Show can be found in reference [2] and details of the carriage of the animals by the Great Western Railway in reference[3]. I suspect that information can also be found in the local papers but that is a project for a later date!

For details of the postmarks one needs to consult both Special Events Postmarks of the United Kingdom[4] and Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales[5]. The former lists the two marks with the identifier A, a circular skeleton and a parcel canceller used in the office at the main entrance to the show but lists only one of the two circular skeletons and the parcel canceller with identifier B used at the office within the show. In Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales all three circular skeletons are listed, the one with identifier A and the other two with identifier B, as also described in reference 1. Fig 1 illustrates the circular skeleton with identifier B and the date on one line.

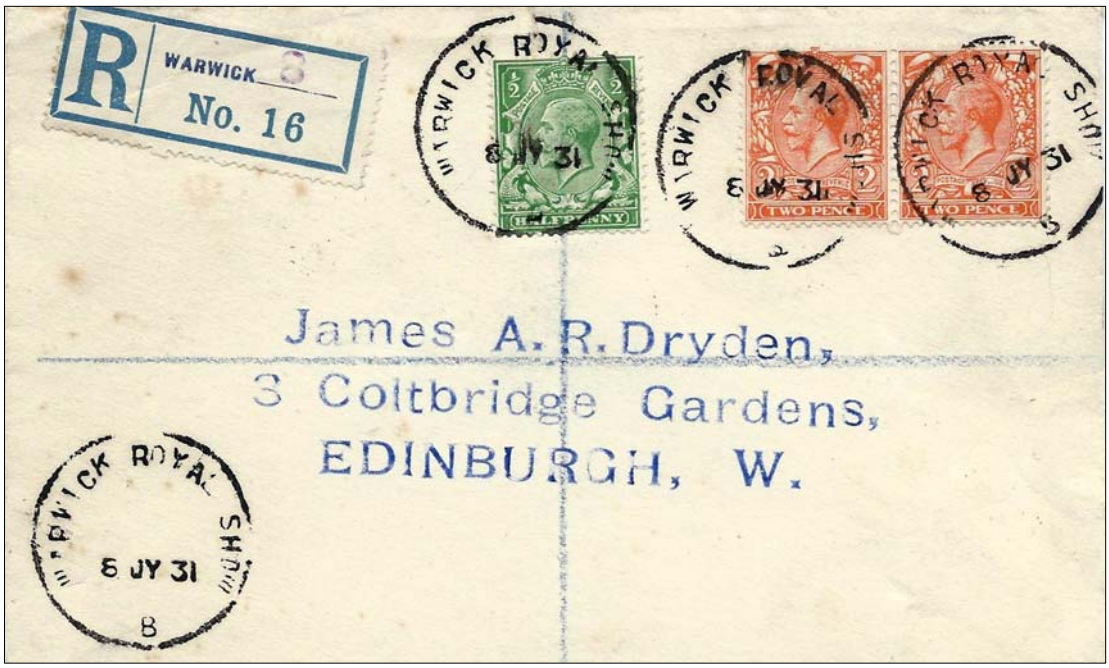


Fig 1, WARWICK ROYAL SHOW skeleton 8th July 1931, identifier B

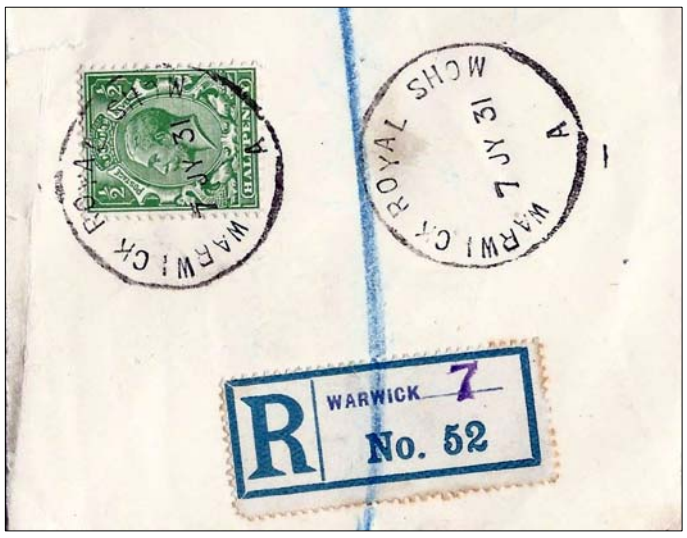


Fig 2, Part of a cover showing Registration label WARWICK 7

Sub-offices within a town were given a number to be used on registration labels[6]. The office at the main entrance was given the number 7 (Fig 2), whilst the office within the Show was given 8 (shown in Fig 1), and also shown Fig 2 in reference[1]. I am not aware that these numbers were re-allocated after use at the post offices at the show.

The only other use of a special postmark for a show in Warwick, that I am aware of, was in 1937. A circular skeleton was in use for one day, 23rd July 1937, and inscribed "Warwick Show" (Fig 3). In this case large format registration labels were used with the office date-stamp to identify the office of posting. These labels were used, amongst other uses, at temporary offices at shows[6].

As mentioned in ref [1] the Royal Show moved to a permanent home at The National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh, near Kenilworth in 1963 and shows were held until 2009. There was a temporary post office available during the shows. At various times the office came under Kenilworth or Coventry and a number of different hand-stamps were used[4], but that could be the subject of another article!



Fig 3, WARWICK ROYAL SHOW skeleton 23rd July 1937

References.

1 Midland Mail, The Midland (GB) Postal History Society, Number 189, January 2016.
2 http://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/topics/culture/royal-show
3 http://www.warwickshirerailways.com/gwr/warwick-royal-show.htm
4 Pearson, George R., Finch, Alan, and Peachey Colin G., Special Event Postmarks of the United Kingdom, British Postmark Society, 1984.
5 Mackay, James A., and Peachey, Colin G., Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales, 2nd Edition, British Postmark Society, 1996.
6 Mackay, James A., Registered Mail of the British Isles, Published by the Author, Dumfries, 1982.

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A NEW MILEAGE REMOVED HANDSTAMP FROM STROUD

by Colin Fountain

The Gloucestershire town of Stroud used two different mileage hand stamps concurrently in the late 1820s, both inscribed STROUD / 109. GL726 was a two line hand stamp recorded used from 21 Feb. 1823 to 4 Dec. 1828 and GL728 was an undated circular hand stamp issued 5 May 1825 and recorded used from 18 July 1825 to 31 July 1828.

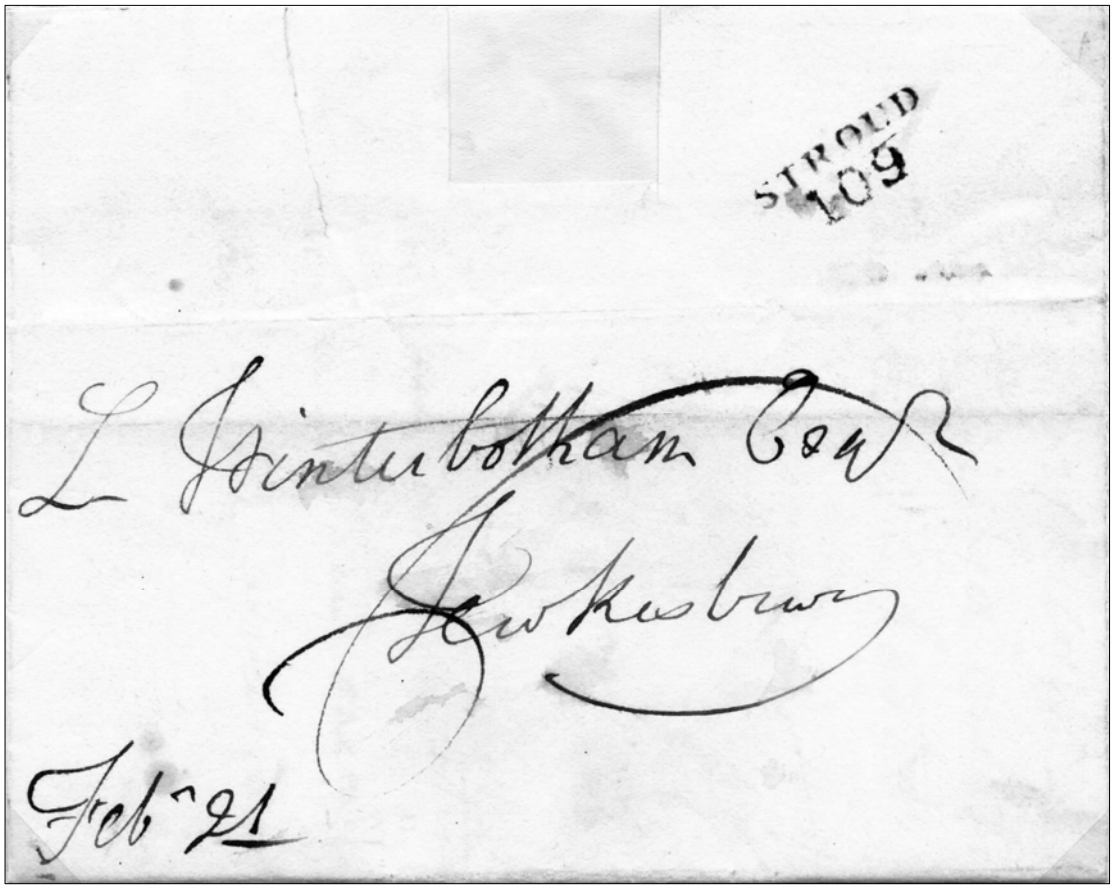


Fig 1, February 1823 Stroud to Tewkesbury with STROUD / 109 (GL726)

The earliest example of GL726 is shown and is an entire addressed to Tewkesbury and charged 6d, the rate for 20 to 30 miles.



Fig 2, Circular STROUD / 109 from a November 1827 entire to London with LONDON arrival cds

The example of GL728 from 22 Nov. 1827 is on an entire addressed to London, charged 9d, the rate for 80 to 120 miles and has a red arrival date stamp applied in London the next day (*Only the relevant postmarks of the entire are shown as it was too large to illustrate in any meaningful way – Ed*).

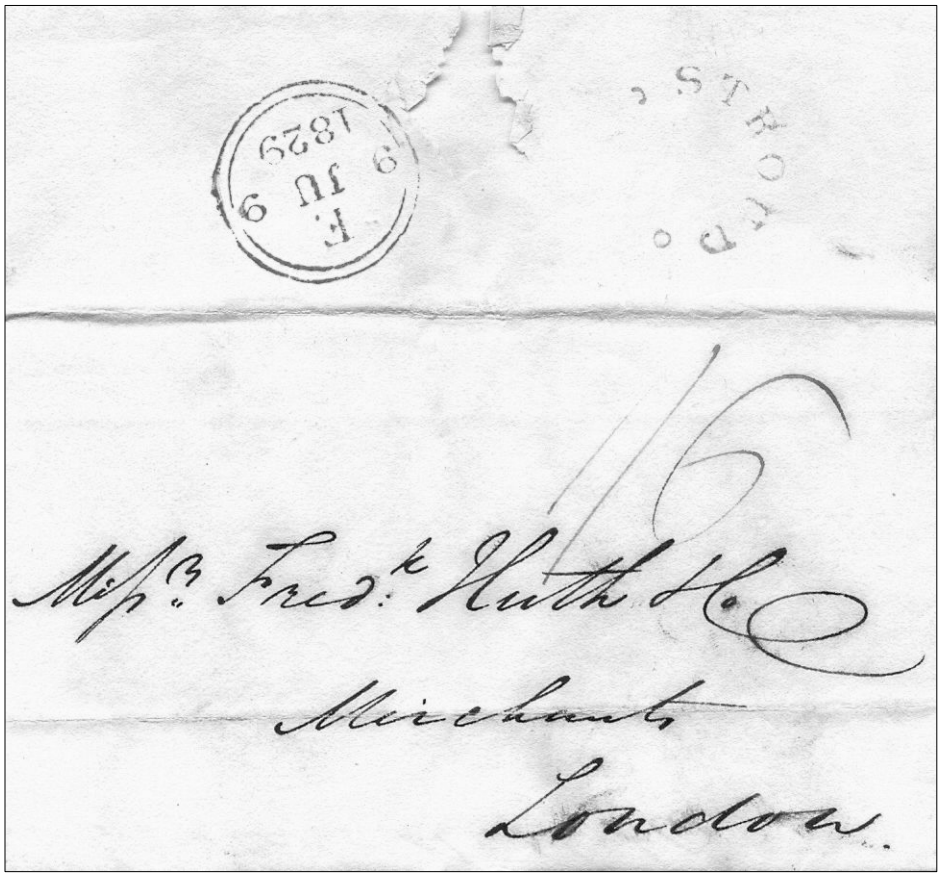


Fig 3, Circular mileage removed 1829 to London (GL730)

The circular date stamp with mileage removed is listed as GL730 and recorded used from 1 May 1829 to 2 June 1832. An example from 8 June 1829 is shown which is also addressed to London but charged 1/6 as a double rate letter. This too has the red London arrival mark of the next day.

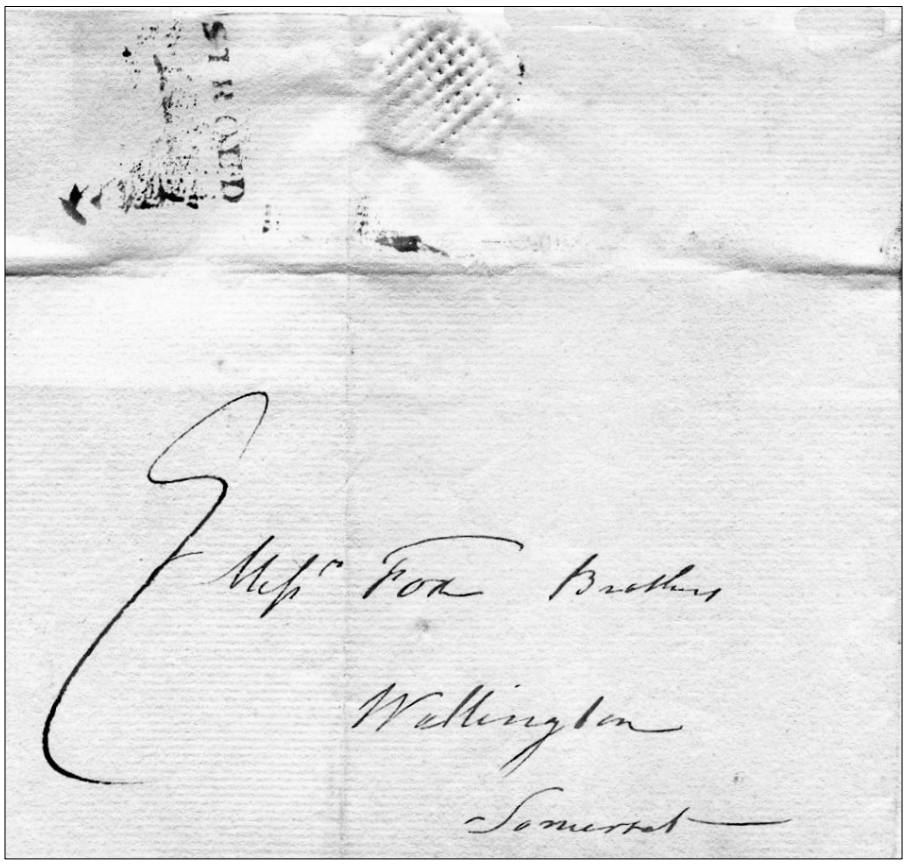


Fig 4, Two-line STROUD mileage removed on an entire to Wellington, Som

Until now the two line hand stamp has not been seen with mileage removed, but an example has now appeared on an entire dated in manuscript from Stanley Mills 7 April 1829 and addressed to Wellington, Somerset. This is charged 9d but does not have any transit or arrival date stamp. It has been accepted by John Hine as a new mark and given the number GL727 (Fig 4, left). This entire was bought recently through an internet auction from a seller in India, but how it came to be in India is a mystery.

THE RUGBY ADDITIONAL ½d ON LONDON LETTERS.

by Ian May

I have 3 letters, from what I suspect is a larger archive, from Cambridge to Rugby. They all concern the award funding to students at the University of Cambridge and are, I believe, all to staff at Rugby School. My interest in the covers is the charging of an additional ½d on letters from or through London by the postmistress of Rugby. Before discussing the three letters it is worth recapping what has been discovered. John Soer's report from MM 181/24[1] records that: 'In 1794 the then postmistress, Elizabeth Miller, claimed that, when the office was opened by her father, one penny was allowed on each letter carried between Rugby and Dunchurch, from where Rugby received its letters. This was reduced to one halfpenny in about 1789 when complaints were made after the tax on the London letters for Dunchurch was raised from 4d to 5d as it was found that Dunchurch was over 80 miles from London.'

There is more background in MM 61/9[2]. With reference to the additional ½d charge the point is made that when the office at Rugby was opened it should have no charge on the Revenue in order to preserve the Deputy's gratuity on the delivery of each letter. As mentioned above prior to 1794 this had been 1d a letter but from 1794 the Deputy, the postmistress Elizabeth Miller, received an annual payment of £10 provided that she only charged ½d per letter. I assume the condition of "no charge on the Revenue" applied from when the office was initially opened which would have been in 1715 or earlier as Rugby hand-stamps have been recorded from that date.[3] This does raise some doubt about the office being opened by Elizabeth's father as by 1794 it had been open for about 80 years. Interested readers are referred to MM 56/9[4], MM 61/9 and MM 181/24. Returning to the three letters, they all came to Rugby via London and Dunchurch.

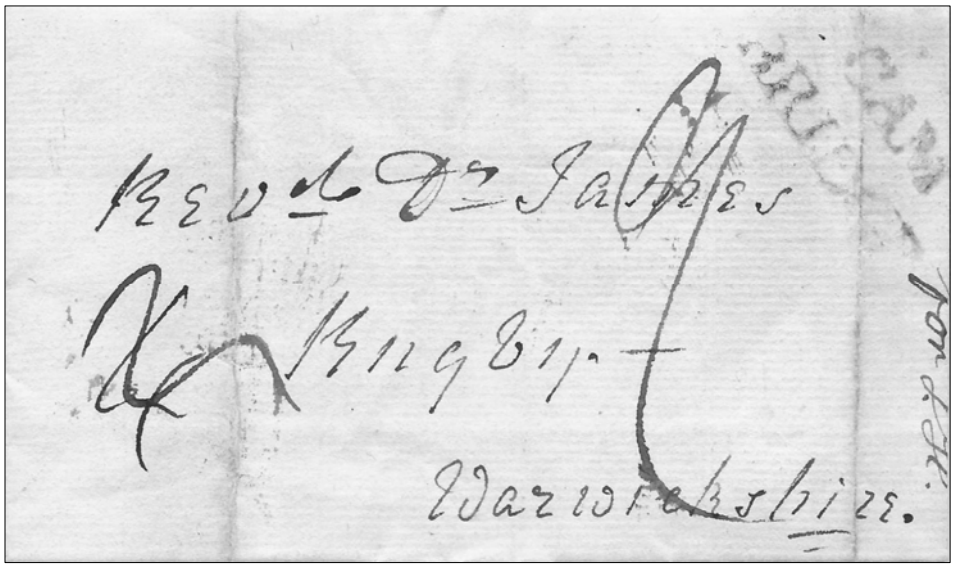


Fig 1, CAMBRIDGE to Rugby 11th May 1792

The cover at Fig 1, dated 11th May 1792, is rated 9d, 4d, for 30 - 60 miles, from Cambridge to London plus 5d, for 80 - 150 miles, from London to Rugby. Prior to 1797 country letters passing through London had to pay two separate charges[5]. Based on John Soer's comments it would appear that letters for Rugby were charged to Dunchurch, 81 miles from London. Rugby was a Post Town 84 miles from London, via Dunchurch. However, I also have a 1779 letter from Rugby to Morpeth, Northumberland, via London which was charged at a rate for up to 80 miles to London, for that part of its journey. So it is possible that letters to London from Rugby and vice-versa were only charged to or from Dunchurch, possibly the justification for the Deputy's gratuity. The first letter is addressed to the Reverend Dr James, headmaster at Rugby School[6]. On the reverse of the letter, Figure 2, are a series of what I assume to be charge marks for all the post to the School in that delivery. A transcription of the marks, with comments, is as follows:

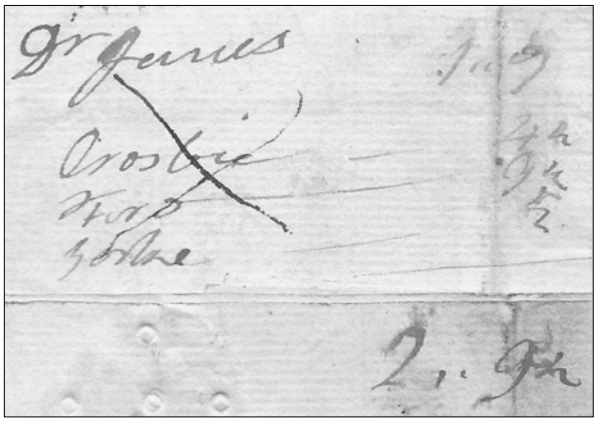


Fig 2, Part of the reverse of Fig 1

Dr James 1-7 (for 2 letters at 9½d each ie 9d plus the Rugby local charge of ½d).
Crosbie 4½
Ford 9½
Yorke ½ (charge for a local letter?)
(Total) **2-9½**

The second letter, Figure 3, is dated 17th May 1798 and is rated at 5d, for 30 - 60 miles, from Cambridge to London and then re-rated at 7d in London for 100 – 150 miles, from Cambridge to Rugby. Because this letter was sent after 1797 the charge was for the total mileage the letter was carried. There are no additional markings but if this letter was delivered with others the total charge for all the letters would only appear on one of them. The letter is addressed to Mr Thomas Harris. I have not been able to confirm that he was at the School, however a Thomas Harris was a pupil at the school[6] so there is a possibility his father, the addressee of the letter was a staff member of the school. This is supported by the contents of the letter about the funding of students at the University of Cambridge.

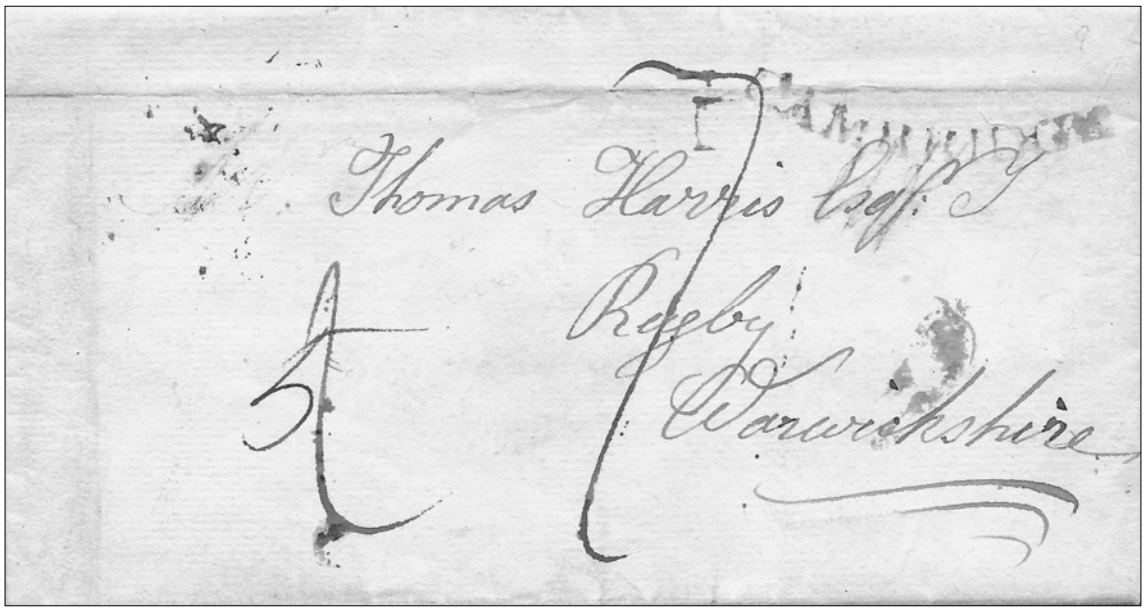


Fig 3, CAMBRIDGE to Rugby, 17th May 1798

The final letter, Figure 4 and also illustrated in MM 181/24, is dated 25th November 1800 and is addressed as the above letter to Mr Harris. The rates are the same as letter 2. It is endorsed on the front in manuscript "*postage to be charged 7½d*."

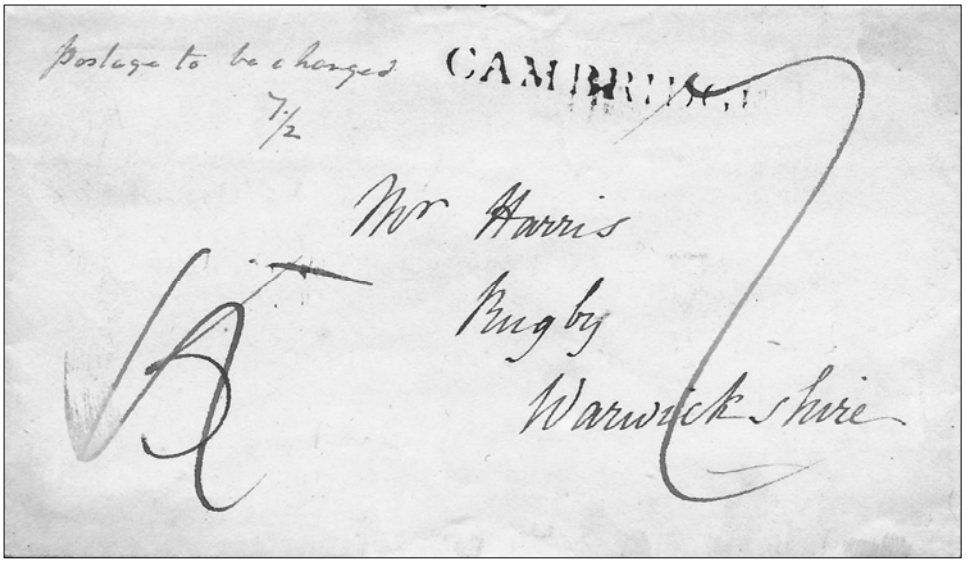


Fig 4, CAMBRIDGE to Rugby, 25th November 1800

To summarise, the above would offer further evidence of the Rugby ½d local charge for the delivery of letters sent through the Royal Mail. From the charges on the back of letter described above a charge of ½d may also have been levied on local letters delivered by the Rugby postmistress. There is evidence of other local charges in Rugby on letters that have not gone to or through London, which will be the subject of another short article.

In conclusion it would be useful to have further evidence of charges on letters to and through London to and from Rugby.

References:

1 Midland Mail, Bulletin of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society, No 181, February 2014, p. 24
2 Midland Mail, Bulletin of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society, No 61, August 1989, p. 9.
3 The British County catalogue of Postal History, Midlands Edition, The Midland (GB) Postal History Society, 2013
4 Midland Mail, Bulletin of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society, No 56, August 1988, p. 9.
5 David Robinson, For the Port and Carriage of Letters, 1990
6 John Calladine, Personal Communication.

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A RARE MODERN HANDSTAMP?

by Colin Fountain

Having some business to conduct in Gloucester recently I decided to visit the main post office in Kings Square with a certificate of posting. I rarely visit this office because of the difficulty parking anywhere near and the busy nature of the office since a large number of the town sub-offices were closed. This office now operates a numbered ticket system, so I acquired a ticket from the touch-screen machine and noted that I had number 171. Looking at the counters I noted that the highest number currently being served was 134, so settled in amongst the assembled crowd for a long wait.

After a while a female member of staff appeared wearing a multi-pocketed pouch around her waist like a mutant marsupial and asked if anyone just wanted to buy stamps with cash. Three customers took up her offer and I watched as she dispensed stamps, airmail labels and change from various pockets in her pouch. When there was a lull in her sales, I asked her if she had a date stamp to apply to my certificate of posting. After enquiring whether this was all I needed, she replied that she could get one, took my letter and certificate and threaded her way through the crowd to the other end of the concourse. I could see her then take a hand stamp out of a cupboard or drawer and proceed to change the date before applying it to my certificate.



On receipt of the certificate, I saw that the date stamp was inscribed **GLOUCESTER / 1 / POST & GO** (see adjacent figure)

Having posted, I turned to go when an elderly gentleman on a mobility scooter asked me where to obtain a ticket, so I happily gave him 171 and informed him that there were only about 18 people in front of him.

Being pleased with the new addition to my collection it occurred to me that although Post & Go postage stamps are currently very popular amongst many collectors, the POST & GO date stamps could be the rarities of the future as they presumably get very little use.

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COLLECTING RUTLAND POSTAL HISTORY: A BEGINNER'S JOURNEY

by Bill Gillham

I can't remember what got me started. I've lived in Rutland for forty years and have been a stamp collector, at one level or another, for much longer than that. I suppose I was ready for a new collecting interest and the idea just occurred to me.

My brother had given me a subscription to 'The Stamp Magazine' and a few dealers were listed in their Postal History section: Martin Townsend was my initial contact and he supplied the first three items to my collection. As it happens these included a couple of rarities, in particular an earlier-than-recorded entire with the UPPING / HAM 91 mileage mark which demonstrated that even a beginner can make discoveries. I joined the Rutland Philatelic Society and pestered members with my queries. Their helpfulness and kindness should be recorded.

I followed up every lead. I got in touch with John Calladine of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society and he had plenty to tell me. My next contact was John Soer who had sent me a copy of his book 'The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland' - an amazing work of scholarship and industry which I consult almost daily. John Calladine had told me of the forthcoming British County Catalogue of Postal History [Midlands Edition] and suggested I telephone Bob Viney, the doyen of Rutland Postal History, who was editor of that section, succeeding John Hine. Bob was tolerant of my naïve questions and I arranged to pick up a copy of the new book at Midpex in July 2013.

At this point I am getting ahead of myself: as my networking proliferated I had bought a copy of Bill Pipe's 'Collect British Postmarks' and found the advertisements of Bill Barrell and also Brian Purcell. Brian has since become the most continuously reliable supplier of items for my collection: I am greatly indebted to him. From Bill I bought a collection of some 25 items ranging from pre-stamp entires to postcards with village postmarks. However in July 2013 he telephoned to say he had acquired the John Hine collection of Rutland Postal History. Was I interested? Of course, but when he told me the price I said I couldn't afford it. However, one doesn't escape from Bill Barrell that easily. He told me I could have Time to Pay and my fate was sealed. What I didn't fully realise was that John Hine's collection was literally irreplaceable and formed the basis for a large part of what published listings exist.

At Midpex I encountered Stuart Harris who had some items for me then and has kept up the supply ever since, which leads me to comment that much of the pleasure of collecting postal history is that you never know what you're going to get. One stamp is very much like another (let's be clear, I like stamps); but even the more modest postal history items have something distinctive about them.

To continue: I had previously come across Chris Newbold, a postcard dealer at local antiques fairs (he lives at Belton-in-Rutland). He told me about the Leicester Postcard Fair which takes place twice a year at Wigston near Leicester; I go there religiously. I enjoy the friendly ethos and sorting through the Rutland postcards at each stall: mainly village marks of course. I never fail to come away with at least half-a-dozen useful items, often modestly priced. And then I happened on Michael Goodman's address. I rang his number and spoke to his widow---too late! He seemed to have been just what I needed .However, Mrs Goodman offered to go through his stock: which she did and sent me a dozen or so items. Encouraged by this I persisted, writing to John Hine who put me on to Martin Scroggs, one of the great scholars of our specialism, who also operates as a dealer, but keeps a low profile. He came up with almost 30 items including a couple of great rarities.

I can see this account is in danger of becoming a list of names, but they're all part of the story, so stay with me…
Roy Stephenson of the Rutland Philatelic Society turned out a lifetime accumulation on my behalf - amongst other things producing an 18th century letter to the Earl of Gainsborough, the head of the Noel family who are still living in the ancestral home no more than two miles from where I am writing.

The moral is: pursue every possibility, no matter how unlikely they seem. Adam Cooke of Argyll Etkin came up with a late 19th C. hand-drawn envelope - probably from a talented member of Uppingham School (I have another similar).

And finally, as an 80-year-old computer illiterate I have to rely on others to scan e-bay for me. My brother is expert at playing the auction game in that medium (waiting till the last few seconds to get a bid in). My younger son, George, has a flair for surveying the e-bay scene and turns up the occasional gem.

So where does all that take me? Apart from a steadily increasing collection, which I study continuously, and making some new friends and acquaintances, I have found myself exploring unfamiliar territory, moving from point to point,

with no fixed over-all plan of how to proceed. That has been a novel experience. For most of my career I have been a university-based academic pursuing research along conventional lines, postal history is different, a much more personal, even idiosyncratic business.

Over the past two hundred years or so scholarly research has become increasingly formalized and standardised in academic institutions. Before that it was, to a much greater extent, the preserve of private scholars pursuing their own interests. They corresponded with each other, wrote occasional papers and even more occasional books, and sometimes met in the context of learned societies or more *ad hoc* groupings. That style has carried over to those universities where unregulated academic independence is still valued, but it is not general. Yet it remains entirely characteristic of students of postal history.

I hope, in time, to be able to make an original contribution to my 'new' subject and to question some of its precepts. If I am able to do so it will have emerged from the early stages of the journey I have outlined above. Wait and see……..!

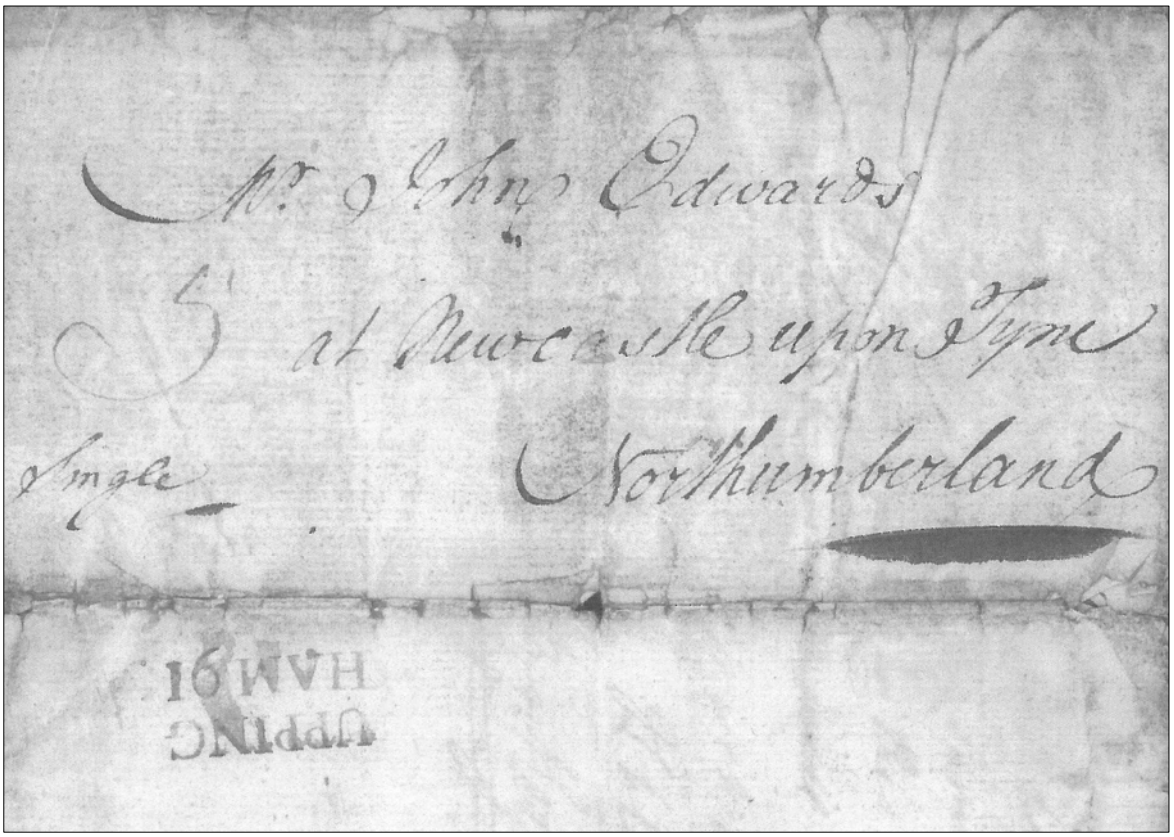


Fig 1, 31st Oct 1784 cover showing the UPPING / HAM 91 entire mentioned in the second paragraph

From your Editor – Dr Bill Gillham's article is very different from what I normally receive for Midland Mail and I was keen to include it for that very reason. It started me thinking of my own foray into collecting Shropshire postal history, which started by accident! By the late 1970s I was teaching in beautiful downtown Battersea (as we used to call it) and attended regular meetings of Heads of Biology for the good-old ILEA. Before one of the meetings in 1978 I found myself outside the Horticultural Hall, displaying a sign reading STAMPEX. By now I was married and had long-ago given up my childhood stamp collecting but my father had given me some 1960s FDCs, which I thought very boring (though I dare not tell him!). I wandered into the show and eventually met Michael Harris, who asked me what I collected and when I replied that I didn't collect anything he asked me where I came from, to which I, naturally, proudly replied Shropshire. He said 'Wait here' and came back a few minutes later with 5 or 6 Shropshire duplex covers (or now more correct, double-stamp covers) for a few pence each. Well, I was hooked! Next day I went back to Stampex with dad's FDCs, sold them and made my first 'major' purchases! Meeting Steph Stobbs (by accident at a later Stampex) followed and through Steph I met Denis Salt – the rest is history! For many years the collection was neglected for a variety of reasons but it is one of the best life-investments I have made!

Do you have a story to tell us? Don't be afraid to put pen to paper or fingertip to keyboard, we would love to know!!

ANOTHER FIND FROM FROGMILL

by Colin Fountain

Two different mileage marks are recorded from Frogmill, the "Single House Post Town" in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds. The Frogmill Inn provided a postal service from 1785 to 1826 but its postmarks are difficult to find. GL340 is a two line handstamp reading FROGMILL / 90 of which two examples are recorded, used on 7th August 1791 and 17th September 1793, the latter of which was the subject of my article in Midland Mail 173 / 10 (January 2012). GL343 is a two line boxed mileage stamp reading FROGMILL / 95 of which also two examples were recorded, used on 26th October 1815 and 12th January1816. These were recorded in the 1960s and until now no further examples have been seen, but after 50 years another example has surfaced and found its way into the Fountain collection.

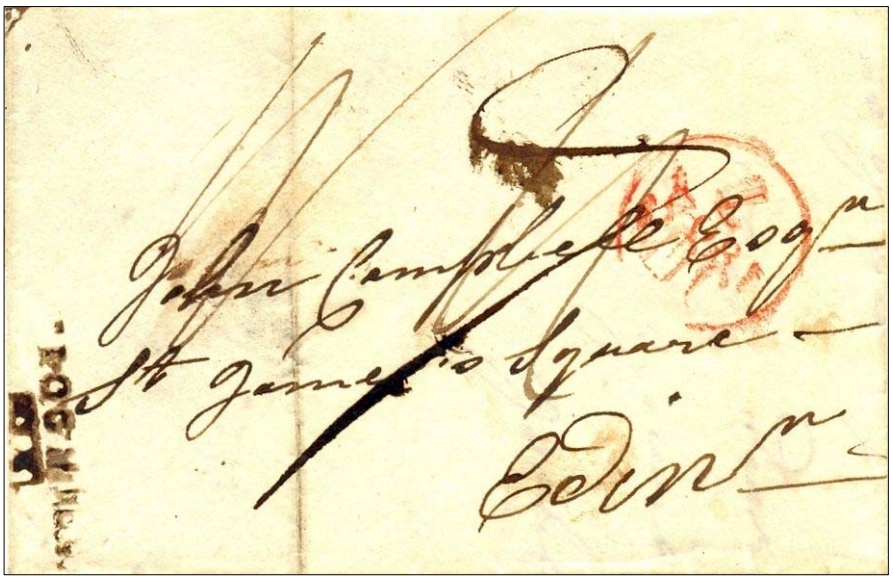


Fig 1, 1804 entire letter showing FROGMILL / 95

This new find is on an entire letter written at Cheltenham by Isabella Livington on 2nd June 1804 and addressed to John Campbell Esqr., St.James's Square, Edinr. On the reverse is a red London transit date stamp of 4 JUN 1804, so the letter was probably posted at Frogmill on 3rd June 1804 which is eleven years earlier than the previous earliest recorded date for this mark. Super imposed on the addressee's name is a red Edinburgh arrival date stamp of 7 JUN 1804. In the letter, Isabella is asking Mr. Campbell to send her the interest from her money after deducting the five guineas of which she is indebted on his account, but she does not mention travel at all so we can only conjecture why the letter was posted at Frogmill rather than Cheltenham. The two are about seven miles apart.

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