

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.midlandphs.org.uk



President: Chris Jackson

Chairman:
Gordon Hardy
(01773 856765)

Secretary:
Mick Gill
(01636 672868)

Treasurer:
Alan Godfrey
(01789 765385)

Programme Secretary:
Richard Farman
(01283 566515)

Editor Midland Mail:
Brian Atkins
(01948 258918)
sniktab@gmail.com

Number 206, April 2020



1931, Warwick Royal Show, from Alan Godfrey's display at the February meeting on 'Skeletons' - see pages 3 & 23

CONTENTS

Page

- 2 – **STOP PRESS**, J B Trophy, Feedback, Bob Viney, etc
- 6 – The March Meeting at Birmingham
- 12 – Registration Labels with Designation Numbers
- 19 – KINETON straight-line, 1875 - a Very Late Usage
- 21 – Two Unclaimed Covers in Melbourne, Australia
- 23 – Saved from a Goat & February Meeting continued

Page

- 3 & 22 – The February Meeting at Birmingham
- 8 – The Wotton-under-Edge 'Asterix' Date Stamps
- 17 – Birmingham 1919 'By Aeroplane' strike mail cover
- 20 – Worcester Penny Post Update
- 22 – Help Wanted & A New Staffordshire Parcel Post label

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STOP PRESS: From Gordon Hardy, Chairman, by email, reproduced here as confirmation and for those not on-line who may not be aware of the date changes for 2020 – ‘You will be aware of world-wide developments in relation to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and their effect on travel and people gatherings. This Society is following UK Government guidance and specifically to advice issued by the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) in relation to philatelic activities.

We have agreed to **cancel all meetings before August**. The next proposed meeting, subject to the advice available, is September. The auction will be rescheduled for the 24 October.

The new programme is:-

19 September 2020	Cotteridge – 1.30pm, Subject to be agreed
24 October 2020	Cotteridge – 1.30pm, Auction
7 November 2020	Warwick and Warwick - 10:30 Committee meeting, AGM 12:00 and Display 1:30pm
5 December 2020	Christmas meeting and Lunch

9 January, 6 February, 13 March, April, 23 May 2021 are to be confirmed.’

JON BAKER TROPHY 2019 – An apology! In the previous edition of Midland Mail I stated Ian May had won the trophy for 2019, it should have been 2018, of course. As far as 2019 is concerned members might like to consider the following as worthy of the award:

Four 19 th Century Covers between Shropshire & Southern Africa	Brian Atkins	MM201 / 12-13
Contrary to Regulations / Not Contrary to Regulations	John Soer	MM201 / 18-19
The Jack Barlow Collection – An Unexpected Find	Marion Turner	MM202 / 11-13
Coventry Cathedral Consecration Covers	Ian May	MM202 / 14-17
Mail on the Midland Railway & its Constituents 1840 – 1875, Part 7	John Soer	MM203 / 7-16
Is it Gobbalds or Cobbalds or Gobalds or Gobbalds or Gubballs	Brian Atkins	MM203 / 18-19
A 1942 Express from Maryport to Manchester ending in Oklahoma	Malcolm Allinson	MM204 / 14-15
More on Coventry’s Couriers	Alan Godfrey	MM204 / 16-17

You need not limit yourself to the above articles, they are suggestions. Choose a different article if you think it worthy of your vote. The presentation will be at the AGM now at Warwick on 7th November (we hope), so message the editor at sniktab@gmail.com or call to 01948 258918 or drop a line in the mail (there’s a novel idea, considering we are a postal history society!) if you are not on-line, in time to register your vote. Let’s see if we can get over 20% of members voting this year.

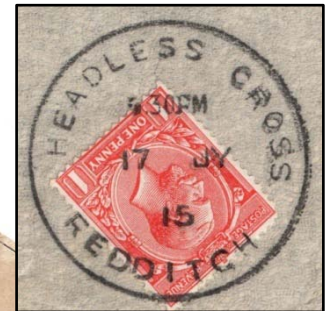
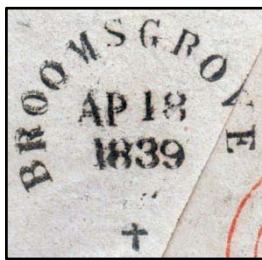
It is with great sadness that we report the passing of **Bob Viney**, the society’s County Editor for Rutland. Bob had been in failing health for some time, his funeral was at Shrewsbury Crematorium on 5 March.

FEEDBACK – **Jim Hammond** writes ‘With the picture of Oundle Post Office on the front page (MM 205) is a comment, ‘*The lad in the centre looks a little off adulthood*’. The Post Office employed boys for the delivery of telegrams; they were called ‘Telegraph Boys’ and could be employed after leaving school. The school leaving age was raised in 1900 from 12 to 14, so this lad could have been 14 years of age. It is also noteworthy that when the telephones were undergoing development and expansion (a mixture of private companies and Post Office provision, late C19 and early C20) boys were also initially employed to man the exchanges. It was found that they were not reliable in this role and before long the exchanges were staffed almost exclusively by girls. In a leaflet sent with the Post Office Circular of the 7th June 1907 to Surveyors and Postmasters, the policy of the Post Office towards the employment of telegraph messengers is elaborated. Boys were employed as messengers until they reached the age of 16 years. It was felt that at that age they were more likely to obtain suitable permanent employment elsewhere than if there were older. Some went on to fill positions in the Post Office as Postmen or Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists, but there were nothing like enough vacancies for these posts for all available suitable boys. This circular and the accompanying leaflet are directing offices to actively engage with local employers, to help suitable boys of good character find employment at the age of 16 when their time as a messenger came to an end.

From the Editor – I am grateful to those who have produced articles in such good time that it has allowed me to get Midland Mail to you earlier than usual. I hope it carries a little more interesting reading than that currently available! Please get writing. If you have an article in mind send it to me and I will attempt to get the July edition out earlier but there will be no AGM to report, so I’ll need plenty of articles for a 20-page edition and even more for 24 pages!

THE 8 FEBRUARY MEETING at COTTERIDGE, BIRMINGHAM began at the appointed hour of 1.30pm with 16 members and guests present and apologies received from Richard Farman, Clive Jones, Alan Marshall and Tom George. With the subject being 'skeletons' we might have hoped for some skulduggery and we were not to be disappointed – read on.

Chris Jackson began by stating that skeletons were first noted in 1838, though items that early were scarce. Nevertheless he showed the only one known from Dudley dated June 1838, followed by Pershore and Bromsgrove both 1839 and a 20 May 1840 DROITWICH on a 1d Mulready. He also brought a January 1841 1d black with WORCESTER skeleton and Powick boxed No2, plus a stunning 1851 cover with Chipping Norton and Shipston-on-Stour skeletons on the same cover. Later examples included Headless Cross (1915) and Tenbury Wells (1921).

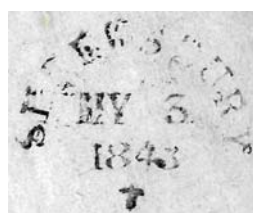


John Calladine brought 6 sheets of Stourbridge to show the history of its date stamps with three travellers. To correspond with John Hine's article (see page 8) he showed two of the Wotton-under-Edge 'postmaster concocted date stamps' described as early types of skeletons and a WOTTEN*G.

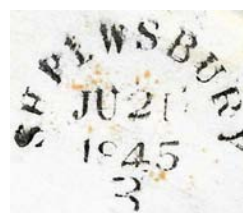
Brian Atkins started with Shrewsbury skeletons, the first dated 17 Dec and a piece dated 21 Dec 1841 mis-spelt as SHREWSBURY, together with examples of 1843, 1845 and 1847 (in green). He continued with Bishops Castle (1845), Ludlow (1844, 1846, 1849 and 1852, the latter two relatively common) and Oswestry (1844 and 1848).



Used 17 Dec to 24 Dec 1841



1 May to 9 May 1843



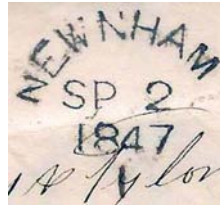
10 Jun to 23 Jun 1845



23 Mar to 26 Mar 1847

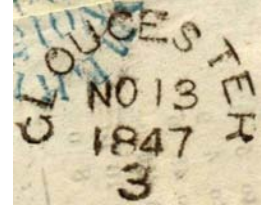
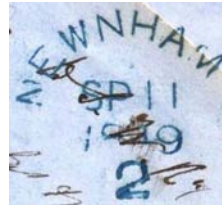
Alan Godfrey produced a SHIPSTONE skeleton of 1845 (with E added, see page 23 for illustration), Leamington Spa 1841, Rugby 1845 in blue, an 1849 of Stratford-on-Avon (see page 23), apparently used during the increase in mail during the Shakespeare celebrations and more modern skeletons of Sutton Coldfield (1946), NORTHEND / LEAMINGTON SPA (1966, see page 23) and ARDENS GRAFTON / ALCESTER (1972).

It was **Stuart Geddes** who provided the skeletal skulduggery by producing a card with a skull on a cover from Latvia! He soon got onto Ross (on-Wye from 1950s) with skeletons from 1844 (below), 1845, 1847, 1848, 1853 as well as skeletons of NEWNHAM / 1 dated 1847 (below) and 1849 (blue).



Stuart Geddes
left

Colin Fountain
right



Mick Gill displayed Nottinghamshire travellers of OLLERTON (seriffed, green, 20 July 1840, the earliest skeleton in the county), RETFORD / 3, 15 Sep 1847 sans-serif in blue and rimmed examples of WORKSOP (black 25 Jan 1853, green 11 May 1853). A 1906 postcard had a light RETFORD / ½ / PAID (red, only such example from Nottingham). He finished with privately produced certificates of posting of ELMBRIDGE / NOTTINGHAM (1969), a continuous NOTTINGHAM ROAD NOTTINGHAM (1973) and HAWKSWORTH / NOTTINGHAM (1969).

Colin Fountain displayed Gloucestershire skeletons starting with GLOUCESTER (1847, above), CHELTENHAM (1848), NEWNHAM / 2 (1849, above) and an 1899 CIRENCESTER on a stationery letter card. All five rubber / skeletons that Colin had found in 25 years of searching were shown of BIRTSMORTON / TEWKSBURY (1913 and in Worcestershire) BROCKWORTH / GLOUCESTER (1913), CRANHAM / STROUD / GLOS (1906, violet), FIVE ACRES / COLEFORD / GLOS (1914) and WITHINGTON / ANDOVERSFORD / GLOS (1913).

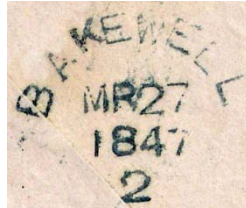
Derek Smeathers showed us examples from Daventry (1842), three from Northampton, an Army P.O. skeleton, Brackley, Blisworth (only RSO hand stamp), Oundle (1913), Oxendon, Peakirk and Rothersthorpe.

Brian Purcell ended the first session by exhibiting Cannock skeletons CANNOCK / STAFFORD (25 Oct 1903 and only example recorded) and CANNOCK / STAFFS (23 Dec 1912, on piece and also the only record of use).



Chris Jackson began the second part by showing 20th century skeletons of Malvern (1908), Astwood Bank (1908), Cradley (1904), Droitwich (1906, 1910, 1916), Bromyard (1913), Headless Cross (1915, see previous page), Alvechurch (1920) and Tenbury Wells (1921, see above, note the inverted 2 at the base of the circle. Reason for it?)

Gordon Hardy took two frames to show Derbyshire skeletons from, amongst others, Ashbourne (known 6 Aug – 29 Aug 1848), Buxton on a misdirected cover and the only known copy, Bakewell (1844 & 1847 see below) of the early types with later examples from Ilkeston (1908 & 1910, 1914, 1926, see below and next page), Long Eaton (1905 x 2, 1910), Chatsworth of 1904, not cancelling the stamps and only used during Royal visits and three postcards from Ironville, all the stamps cancelled with a 'cork' cancel, two with small date stamps alongside and one with a 1904 skeleton (see below). The 'cork' cancel has only been seen on mail posted and delivered within Ironville.





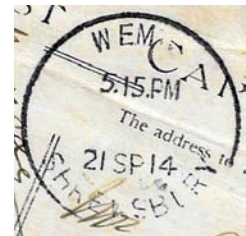
31mm



36mm

28mm
Date in two lines
Wide spaced letters28mm
Date in one line
Narrow spaced letters

For his second attempt **Brian Atkins** began by showing the progression of date stamps of the village of Dorrington, 6 miles south of Shrewsbury on the Ludlow road, from the undated circle issued in 1844 to the skeletons of 1905 (4 records) and 1910 (also 4 records). The only known example from Peplow (1908, see previous page), a tiny village under Market Drayton and just east of the Whitchurch to Wellington road, was followed by a 1909 Ludlow to Western Australia and 1906 Bucknell to London, Ontario. The only rubber / skeleton in his collection and, in fact, the only known postmark from the village of Edstaston was, unfortunately, very poor and undated. As Edstaston was only 2 miles north of Wem, he finished with WEM skeletons of 1904, 1908, 1910 and 1914 (see below).

29mm – 13 records
7 different letter codes29mm – 7 records
3 letter codes31mm – 4 records,
4 different time codes29mm – 9 records
4 time codes

For his second effort **Alan Godfrey** displayed ALCESTER skeletons dated 1901 (the 1901 mark had KG at the base, Alan wondered what the KG represented – see page 23), a small 1907 with SO and a larger skeleton dated 1912 (also see page 23). Early 20th century included Southam (1906, see page 23), 1908 Shotton, 1913 Stoudley, 1914 Henly, 1916 Nuneaton and 1931 ROYAL SHOW, perhaps surprisingly, the only Royal Show skeletons on display all day (see front page).

Mick Gill's second display comprised a BULWELL skeleton (1918 with both the year and 2 of the time reversed and inverted), LONG EATON / NOTTINGHAM (1913 with the G of Nottingham missing) and a KIMBERLEY / NOTTINGHAM (1918 on a plain registered envelope). Postcards of 1904 had examples of RETFORD skeletons with both spaced and closed lettering, showing two date stamps used simultaneously, they were also found on postcards cancelled at CLAYWORTH. A skeleton from FARNSFIELD NEWARK / NOTTS (1963 with an unusual AB code) was followed by the earliest and latest dates of use of BEESTON / NOTTINGHAM (1910 – 1911).

For his second display **Colin Fountain** showed examples of early 20th century skeletons for which only one date is recorded. These were AMBERLEY / STROUD GLOS (5 JUL 1915), BERKELEY / GLOUCESTER (13 MAR 1916), BREDON / TEWKESBURY (27 NOV 1948, just over the border in Worcestershire), CAINSCROSS (26 JUN 1907 used on a postcard to Spilsby, Lincs which also had a GREAT NORTHERN S.C. / DOWN DAY MAIL date), CLEEVE HILL / GLOS (25 AUG 1922), COLEFORD / GLOS (1 JAN 1923), LEIGHTERTON / TETBURY (31 DEC 1907), MICKLETON / GLOS (25 SEP 1906) and NEWENT / GLOS (21 SEP 1923).

Derek Smeathers finished proceedings with an array of Peterborough skeletons which had either one or two code letters. Derek stated he had 38 in his collection!

Gordon Hardy brought an excellent day to a close thanking all those who had displayed. He ended by saying the next meeting was to be on 14 March at the same venue (Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge, B30 1JB) when **Derek Smeathers** will give a display of Northamptonshire postal history – see page 6.

Continued on page 23, where you will find illustrations of many of Alan Godfrey's first and second displays

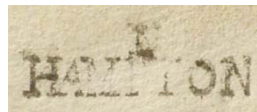
THE 14 MARCH MEETING at COTTERIDGE, BIRMINGHAM took place with 15 brave souls in true British spirit (foolhardiness?) defied the Covid-19 viral onslaught to attend a wonderful display of Northamptonshire postal history given by **Derek Smeathers**. I should add it was good to see a recovering **Paul Bradshaw** in attendance too.



As with so many other county displays of postal history, Derek began with 17th century items, his earliest being a 12 Sept 1644 Civil War letter from Northampton to the Treasurer of the Eastern Association, signed by three of the committee which ran Northamptonshire for Parliament. A 2 Nov 1654 letter, charged 3d from Baron Montague to London mentions the 'Lord Protector'. Sir James Langham of Cottesbrooke Hall sent a 27 Sept 1675 letter to London asking his banker to send him £200 'by the carrier' in a hamper with other things, 'for the better concealment thereof'!

There were other entire 17th century letters in similar vein but venturing into the 18th century Derek began with a January 1709 letter addressed to *Mr Tho Shotbolt / at his house In / Hitchen In / Hertford Shear by / ye way of London*, which had the earliest known WEL.N.BOROUGH mark (NN 271 known from January to April 1709, see left). The letter was pre-paid 2d amended to 4d because of an enclosure.

An 18th century letter which caught the eye was dated 19 Dec 1712 addressed to the Earl of Northampton '*per Ashby Bagg*' and charged 3d which was deleted and initialled by John Crane the postmaster at Northampton. Also a 7 May 1719 letter from London to Harrowden by '*ye Wellingborough Bagg*' and a 24



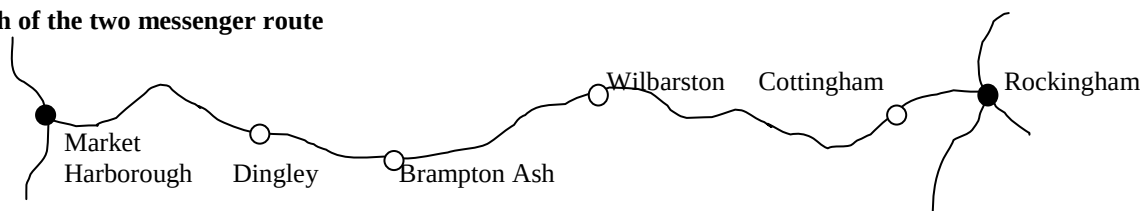
May 1739 entire with the second N / HAMPTON (NN 119 known March 1736 to December 1737 in black and later in green, see immediately left).

The earliest CASTLE / ASHBY (NN 29 known used till June 1774) was on a free letter dated 12 Oct 1731. A 15 June 1736 entire letter to London with the mis-spelt WELLING / BUROUGH (NN 273 recorded February 1721 to 1742) was charged 3d for up to 80 miles. A letter from Oundle predated its first postmark by three years. There were two-line marks from KETTER / ING, TOW / CESTER and WELLING / BOROUGH as well as the first HIGHAM / FERRIS mark of January 1743 (NN 61, note spelling)

Boards 6 to 8 showed examples of the extensive Northampton local 1d post organised by the Birdswell family, as well as the penny posts of Daventry, Peterborough, Thrapston, Rockingham, Kettering and Brackley. A Daventry Penny Post cover also had the receiving house mark of Weedon (NN 257 recorded Dec 1836 to Apr 1838). Derek explained that the penny post at Rockingham had two messengers, brought about by a request to have better communication with London and establish a service

to villages between Rockingham and Market Harborough. The solution being a penny post between the two towns using the two messengers, one from Rockingham to Wilbarston (4 miles) twice a day and one from Market Harborough to Wilbarston (6 miles) once a day. The second walk from Rockingham to Wilbarston would carry their London evening mails for the messenger at Wilbarston to take to Market Harborough and the mailcoach to London.

Sketch of the two messenger route



With this arrangement several villages were served, which previously had no post and Rockingham's mail to London left later to give time for replies. No Rockingham penny post mark has been found and no villages have early marks. For the last part of his first display Derek put up a board of railway covers and documents from the seven railway companies which served parts of Northamptonshire. These companies included the London & North Western, the Midland, the Great Northern, the Northampton & Banbury Junction, the Stratford & Midland Junction (two 'Wilson covers' handed in at Towcester, posted on arrival at Stratford-on-Avon were shown) and even the Great Western.

Derek began the second part of his display illustrating the Uniform Penny Post. A March 1841 entire showing the most individual of the six paid hand stamps with prominent dots after the P and under the D (NN 151 recorded Jan to Oct 1841, see below). Derek described how the paper for the 1d black and 2d blue was made at the Rush Mills at Northampton in 1839. There were several letters from the company, Stacey Wise, to Perkins, Bacon & Petch.



Frames then followed showing mainly Victorian registered mail to or from Northants, including the 'Shield' hand stamp peculiar to Northampton. After registration there were three frames of items relating to mail in Northants from / to various forces during both world wars, including a letter from Queen Elizabeth, later the Queen Mother. The second to last frame had overseas mail including an 1841 Peterborough to Paris at 10d, an 1850 8d ship letter from Cottesbrook to Sydney, an 1855 Crimea cover and 1879 Northampton to New York at 2½d (see below)



The final frame relating to postal and non-postal boot & shoe items had a Sept 1841 Mulready from a Daventry shoemaker who wrote he could make men's best shoes at 3sh 4d per pair! A wonderful display!

THE WOTTON UNDER EDGE 'ASTERISK DATE STAMPS' 1805-1806

by John Hine

In the June 1997 issue of Midland Mail (MM 100 / 6-8), John Calladine wrote an article entitled 'Loose in Wotton', which described GL917 the WOTTON *G name stamp recorded in 1810 and GL941 a series of unusual date stamps used at Wotton under Edge during eighteen months in 1805 and 1806. John commented that both stamps appeared to be made up from loose type and he pointed out that the resultant irregular lettering could justify their classification as early forms of 'skeleton' hand stamps.

These notes are an update to John's article and provide illustrations and more information on all date stamps recorded until now. Since 1997 no further examples of the WOTTON *G name stamp have been reported leaving the total number recorded in use at one dated and one undated letter. When the BCC Midlands edition was published in 2013 the recorded use of the Wotton under Edge 'Asterisk Datestamp' had risen from four to six and since then one more has been reported. The new example is dated JU^Y*15 in 1806 thus the period of use as detailed in the BCC remains unchanged (February 1805 to August 1806).

The illustrations below show the WOTTON *G name stamp and the six items in the BCC plus the new one for JU^Y*15.



Fig 1, GL917

WOTTON *G

black

02 MAR 1810

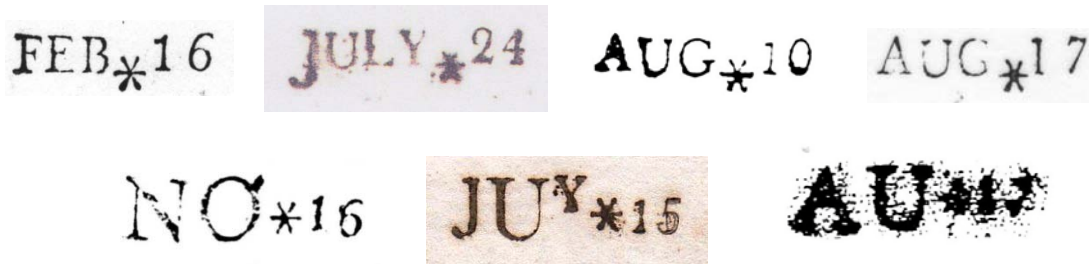


Fig 2, GL941 Skeleton Date stamps made up from loose type

black

16FEB1805 to 17AUG1806

Further details on these 'skeleton' stamps:

GL941 'Asterisk Date stamp' is made up from loose letters with a month (mostly abbreviated) followed by an asterisk and the day in figures. The J's of JULY*24 (1805) and JU^Y*15 (1806) appear to be identical as do the G's in AUG*10, AUG*17 and the G in WOTTON *G.

All numbers appear to be from the same typeset. The asterisk appears to be identical in the 7 date stamps with a smaller version in use for GL917. All of the recorded GL941 asterisk date stamps are struck on the reverse of letters. All records with GL941 also bear strikes of GL919 (boxed mileage WOTTONUNDEREDGE /114) on the front.

With the evidence now available GL941 can be described as a very early form of skeleton date stamp.

In a letter dated 1989 Martin Willcocks reported that he had an 1807 Wotton letter to London bearing only a GL919 mileage mark on the front without a GL941 date stamp on the reverse. He suggested that it seemed possible that the date stamp was used exclusively on Cross Post letters (ie. non-London letters). None of the 7 recorded examples is addressed towards London; five have addresses in Wales, one to the Bristol area and one to Rugby. Martin Willcock's prediction made thirty years ago still seems correct.

The reason why the Wotton Postmaster introduced these date stamps is unclear but all letters to and through London would have received date stamps on arrival there whereas his Cross Post letters bore no date stamp. Nearby Bristol had used date stamps from 1799 onwards and this may have stimulated the Wotton postmaster to introduce his own date stamp in 1805. It seems likely that the GPO in London became aware of this 'postmaster's date stamp' and took measures to have it withdrawn in 1806. Wotton had to wait until 1839 before its first official date stamp was issued. My thanks are due to John Calladine for his assistance in this article and the provision of a scan. Illustrations follow of all seven recorded letters bearing examples of GL941 skeleton date stamps:

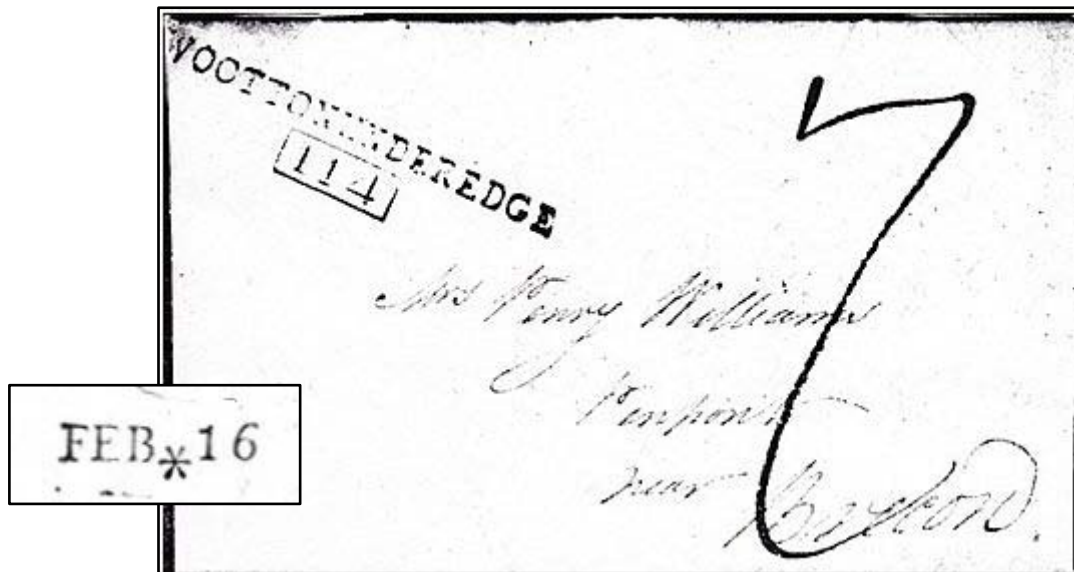


Fig 3, FEB *16 (1805) To Penypont near Brecon charged 7d (correct rate for 80 to 120 miles, Act 1801)

Provenance: Offered in a Spink auction c.2003, John Calladine collection

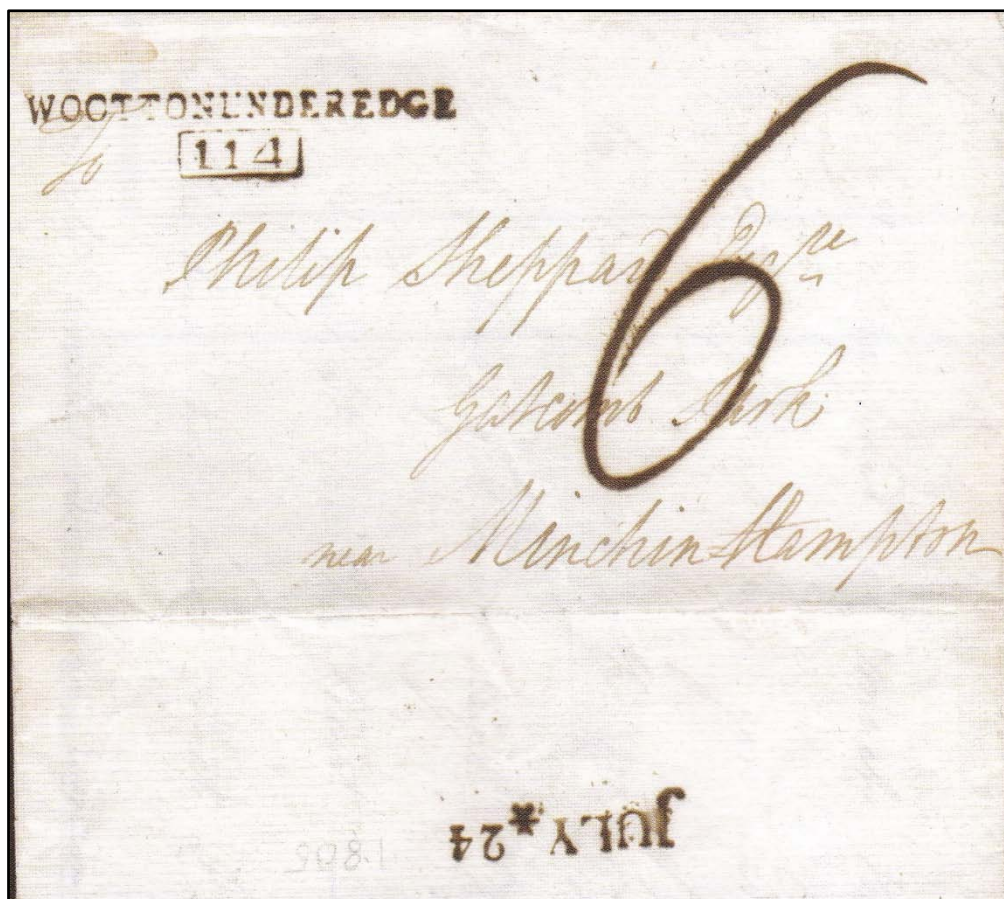


Fig 4, JULY *24 (1805) To Gatcomb Park near Minchinhampton charged 6d (30 to 50 miles)

Provenance:

08.09.2010	Gilbert Wheat sale Cavendish lot 1000, estimate £150, realised £500
11.06.2019	Cavendish sale lot 1517, estimate £300, unsold
17.09.2019	Cavendish sale lot 799, estimate £200, realised £220

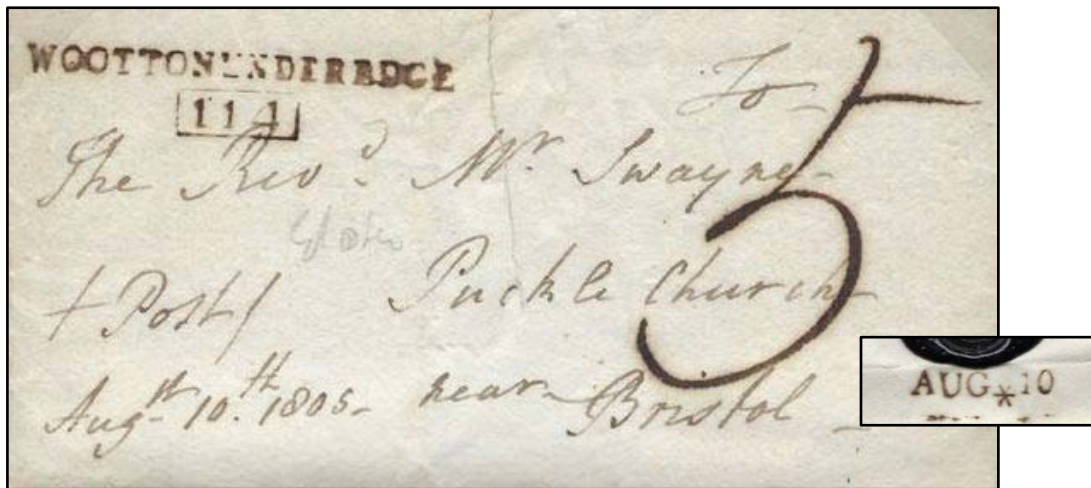


Fig 5, AUG*10 (1805) To Puckle Church, near Bristol charged 5d (20 to 30 miles, Act 1805), endorsed X Post

Provenance: 12.1987 Photocopy supplied by Martin Willcocks (reverse only)
12.2019 John Calladine collection

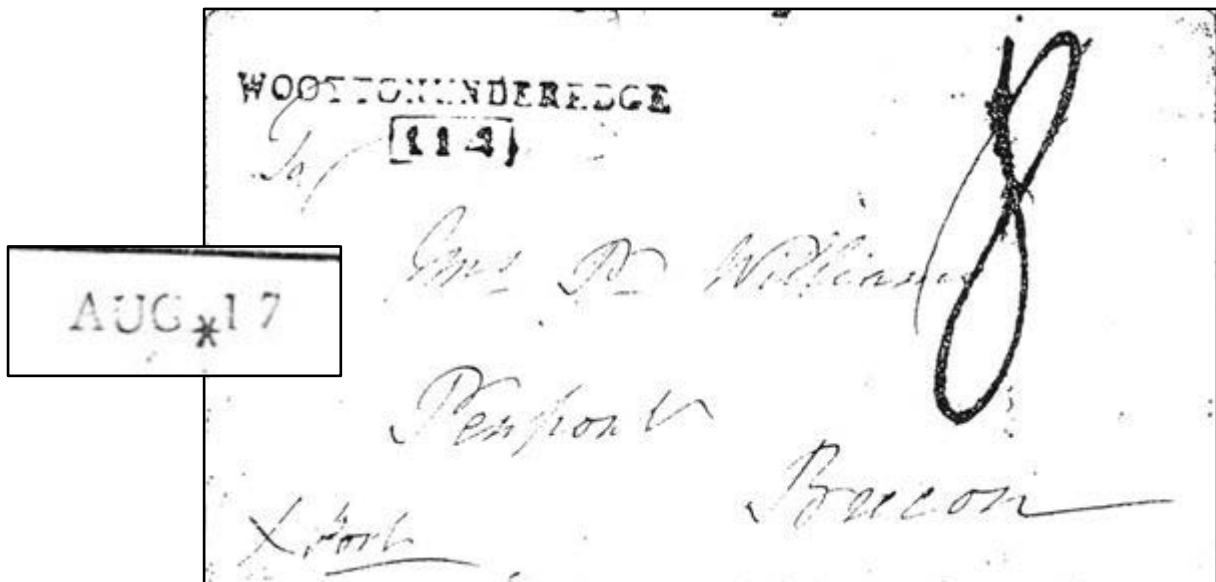


Fig 6, AUG*17 (1805) To Penypont, Brecon endorsed 'X Post'. Charged 8d (80 to 120 miles, Act 1805)

Provenance: 1994 Stampex, reported MM 100 / 8 (June 1997) by John Calladine in his article 'Loose in Wotton'

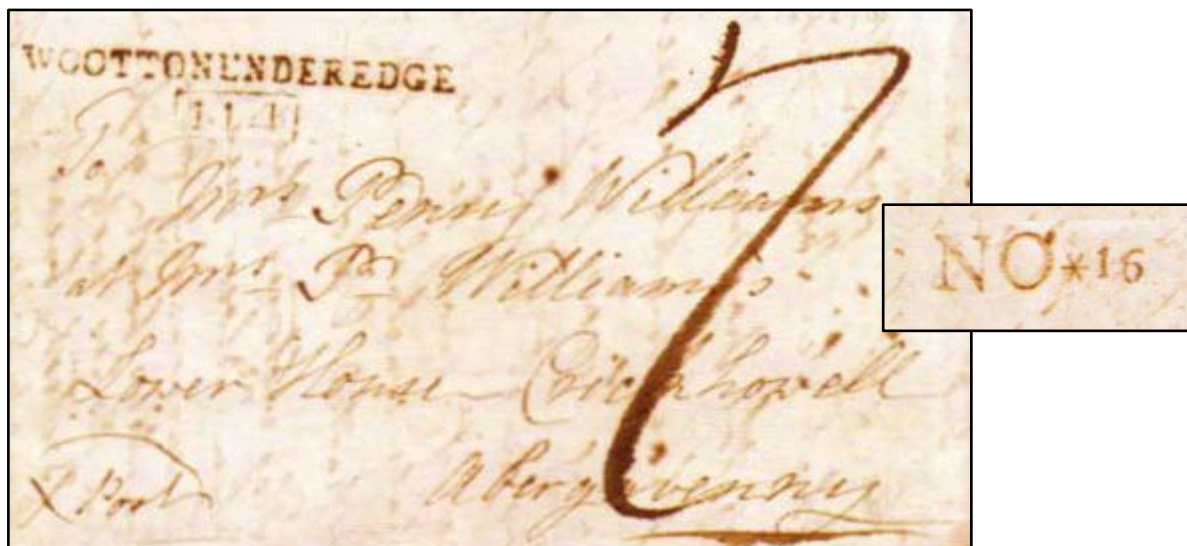


Fig 7, NO*16 (1805) To Crickhowell, Abergavenny charged 7d (50 to 80 miles, Act 1805)

Provenance:

13.03.1984	RLPHA lot 370, estimate £150, realisation and purchaser not known
08.09.2010	Cavendish lot 1001, estimate £160, realisation £240 (sold with 5 other WuE items)
11.06.2019	Cavendish lot 1518, estimate £200, realisation £220 (sold with 5 other WuE items)
17.09.2019	Cavendish lot 800, estimate £200, realisation £220 (sold with 5 other WuE items)
12.2019	Dealer Martin Townsend On offer at £450

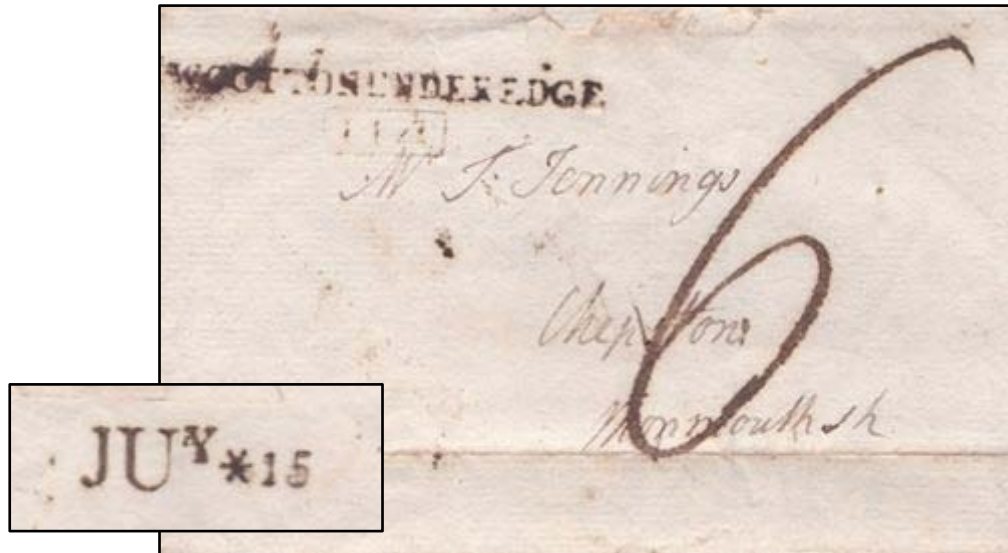


Fig 7, JU^Y*15 (1806) To Chepstow charged 6d (30 to 50 miles, Act 1805)

Provenance: 10.2014 Sold to John Hine

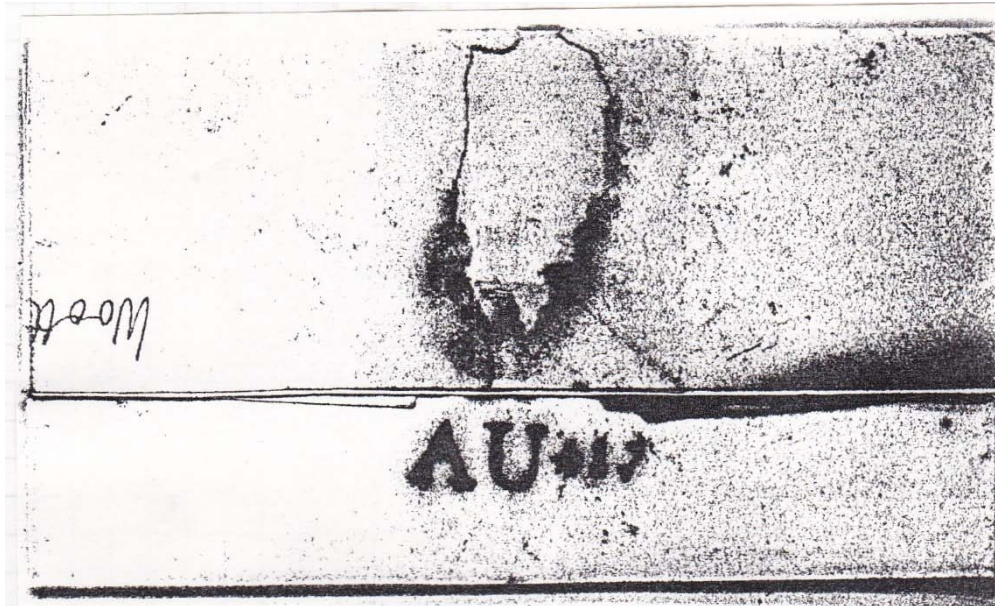


Fig 8, AU*17 (1806) To Rugby, via the Great Cross Post and not London, charged 8d (80 to 120 miles, Act 1805)
{Charge via London for 197 miles (114 + 83) would have been 10d}

Provenance:

04.1970	Robson Lowe PHA lot 344, estimate not known, realisation not known
12.1987	Photocopy supplied by Martin Willcocks (reverse only)

REGISTRATION LABELS WITH DESIGNATION NUMBERS

by Ian M May

In Midland Mail 87 there is an article by Ray Woodward-Clarke entitled 'Designation numbers on registration labels'^[1]. It initially discusses the introduction of registration labels and follows this with details of how Branch Offices and Town Sub-Offices had labels which were printed with the Head Office and a number to designate the Office, see for example Fig 1. The article mentioned that the designation numbers of about 8200 offices had been identified and also advised that county lists of these offices could be made available. In Midland Mail number 116 John Soer listed designation numbers on registration labels for the Town Sub-Offices of Leicestershire^[2] to which a few additional entries were given in Midland Mail number 117^[3].

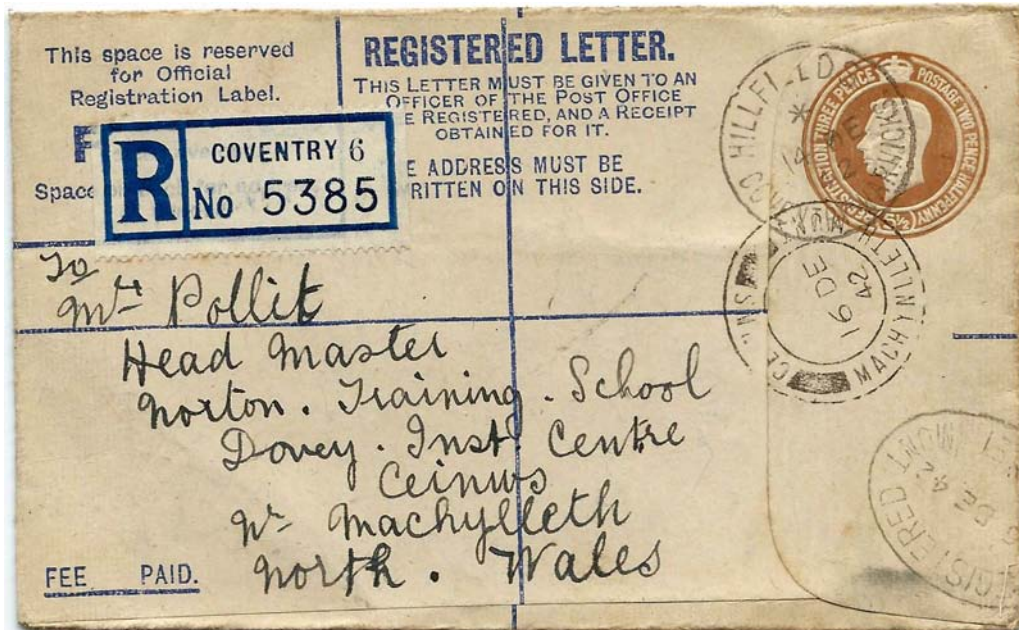


Fig 1, December 1942 registered cover from Hillfields, Coventry to Ceinws, North Wales showing a 'B' label.

I have a copy of the original list for Warwickshire which was relatively comprehensive and over the years I have been able to add a number of Branch Offices and Town Sub-Offices within Warwickshire. However, recently I obtained a further two registered envelopes which were from Town Sub-Offices of Coventry and were not included in the list. I also have in my collection of Dunfermline some unusual registration labels from a trial held in Scotland which led to the demise of designation numbers in the British Isles. It was for the above that prompted me to write this article on designation numbers on registration labels.

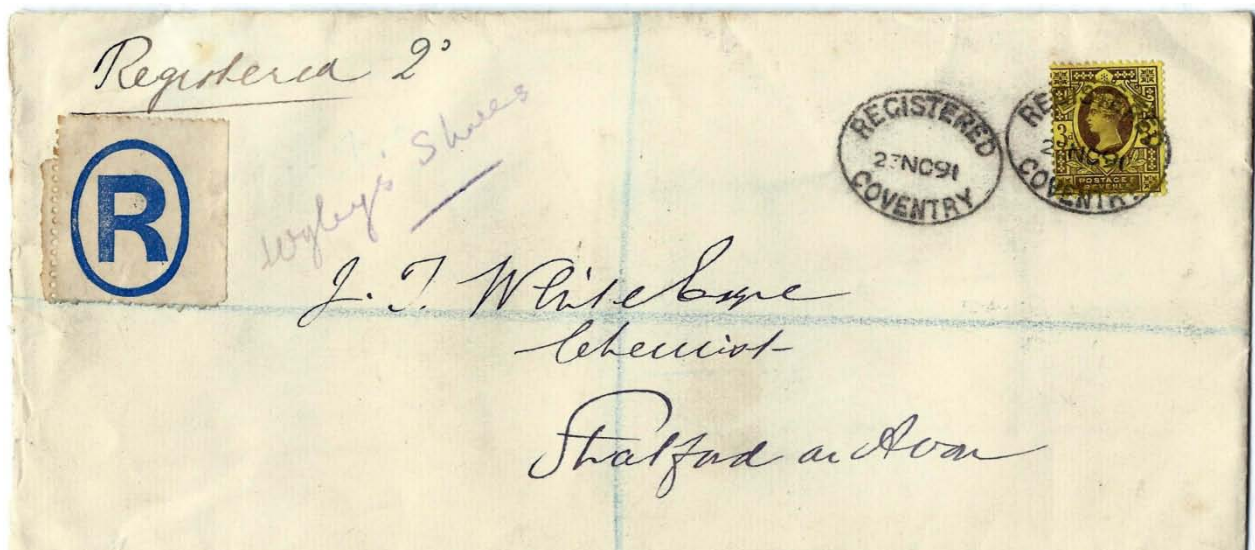


Fig 2, 'R' in oval attached with a first type label

As the original item was written some time ago it is necessary to recap on the introduction of registration labels. One of the most useful references for the subject of registration of mail is Mackay^[4] and extensive use of this will be made for what follows together with Ray Woodward-Clarke's article. A further article^[5] also written by Ray Woodward-Clarke, which is in two parts has also been used.

The use of registration labels commenced in 1891 with a label with an R in an oval, Fig. 2, which was to be attached to the top left-hand corner if registered envelopes were not used. Alternatively a hand-stamp, which had been in use in some Offices since 1881, could be used to apply the R, Fig. 3. There were various forms of the label with some including the inscription 'Fee Paid'. From 18th February 1907 the international system of labelling came into force and 4 types of label were adopted which are described briefly below, further details are given in references 1 and 4.



Fig 3, 'R' in oval hand-stamp

'A' labels for Head Offices and offices which registered 3000 or more items a year. These labels had the name of the office on them, Fig. 4.



Fig 4, 'A' label showing COVENTRY Head Office

'B' labels for Branch Offices and Town Sub-Offices which registered 3000 or more items a year. These labels had the name of the town and a number on them to indicate the office, Fig. 1.



Fig 5, 'C' label, Lower Ford Street, Coventry, on a registered cover to Redditch.

'C' labels for Branch Offices and Town Sub-Offices and other offices which registered less than 3000 items a year had the name of the town and a line following. The number of the office was to be added on the line, Fig. 5.



Fig 6, 1907, Registered letter with undated CUBBINGTON on registration 'D' label.

'D' labels for use in some offices and villages which registered less than 3000 items a year. These labels were somewhat larger, did not have the office name printed, but had to be stamped with the office stamp with the date slugs removed, Fig. 6.

The following was provided by Ray Woodward-Clark to describe the subsequent development of registration labels:

'Labels were printed in sheets from 1907 to early 1931 when the Post Office decided to change to printing in roll form. With the advent of labels issued in rolls 'C' labels were discontinued and 'D' labels were for emergency use only. The Post Office Circular of 25th March 1931 gives the revised arrangements:-

'A' labels (printed with name of Office) are used at Head Offices and at Country Sub-Offices.

'B' labels (printed with name of Office followed by a designation number) are used at all other Offices, including Town Sub-Offices in towns or villages where there is a Country Sub-Office, and also by firms supplied with Registration Labels.

'D' labels (no printed name of Office) are used in cases of emergency only.'

The format of the labels and the paper used varied considerably over the years, details are given in Mackay^[4].

In this article it is B labels that are of primary concern and in particular and why, during the early 1970s, the office numbers disappeared. To answer this one has to take an excursion to Scotland.

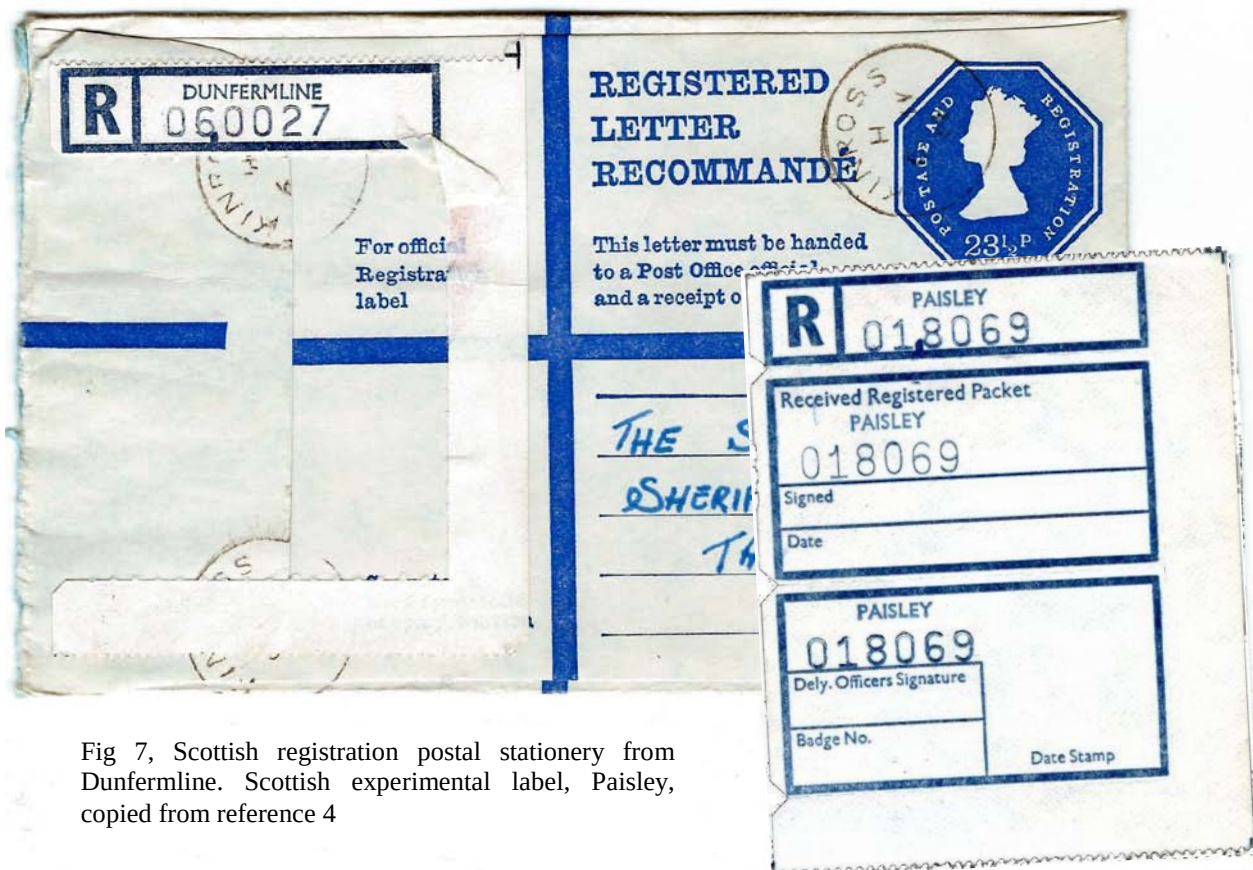


Fig 7, Scottish registration postal stationery from Dunfermline. Scottish experimental label, Paisley, copied from reference 4

In 1972 Scotland was chosen for the use of an experimental registration label^{[4],[5]}, Fig. 7, initially for a period of six months, but later extended to November 1974. The label contained 3 sections namely, the registration number, the receiving office and date and the delivery office and date. The 'R' label and the right-hand and bottom margins were gummed leaving the remaining two portions un-gummed so they could be detached by staff of the Post Office during the delivery process^[5]. The intention was that the labels would be used only in Scotland, any registered mail due for delivery outside Scotland was to have all but the part containing the registration number removed. However, many items were received outside Scotland with the complete label and Post Office officials were required to remove all but the part containing the registration number and to treat it as waste. The label was not liked by counter staff as it involved licking a much larger area than the traditional label!

When the labels were produced only the Head Office name was included, even though labels were available at all offices. Following the trial it was concluded that future labels should only include the name of the Head Office and should not include Branch Offices and Town Sub-Offices designation numbers or the names of offices other than the Head Office. Therefore from July 1973 the labels throughout Britain were printed with only the Head Office designation. This reduced the number of different labels to be printed from about 23,000 to 200. The only price to pay was that the new labels with Head Office designations had six figures, Fig 8, which then had to be written in the receipts and lists, a small price to pay for the reduced printing costs.

As an aside, at about the same time a further trial occurred in Scotland with introduction of registered envelopes with the flap on the left-hand side rather than the normal right-hand side flap^[6], Fig. 7. In common with envelopes for the rest of Britain the scrim lining was replaced with a blue manilla lining, just about visible in Figure 7. There were four issues, all size G, namely 23p in 1972, 23½p in 1973, 29½p in 1974 and, finally 42p, in 1975. The changes in value were to account for changes in first class postage and registration fee.



Fig 8, 1991 registered cover from Coventry showing the label with six figures.

In conclusion it would appear that the B labels were used from 18th February 1907, and in July 1973, as a result of the Scottish trial of an alternative registration label, new labels were printed with only the Head Office designation and a six figure registration number. However, the old labels continued to be used beyond this date in order to use up existing stocks.

References:

- 1) Woodward-Clarke, R., Designation numbers on registration labels, Midland Mail, No. 87, 1995, pp. 7-8.
- 2) Soer, J., The Town Sub-Office designation numbers on registration labels of Leicestershire, Midland Mail, No. 116, 2000, pp. 12-13.
- 3) Soer, J., de Rousset-Hall, Addendum to The Town Sub-Office designation numbers on registration labels of Leicestershire, Midland Mail, No. 117, p. 3
- 4) Mackay, J., Registered mail of the British Isles, Privately published, Dumfries, 1982
- 5) Woodward-Clark, R., British Registration labels – the Head Office series, Part one – The Scottish experiment, Part two - The general issue. Unpublished reports
- 6) Huggins, A., and Baker, C., Collect British postal stationery, GB Philatelic Society, London, 2007.

Addendum.

Ray Woodward-Clarke is still interested in receiving information about the designation numbers applied to Branch Offices, Town Sub-Offices and Companies. He has now identified nearly 8500 offices. The data-base is written in Microsoft Access, which not many collectors will have the facility to read, so he can supply printed copies for a county or town. He can be contacted at ray.wc3@gmail.com.

BIRMINGHAM 1919 'BY AEROPLANE' STRIKE MAIL COVER

by Ian Baker FRPSL

The 1919 railway strike pitted one of the strongest trade unions in Britain following the First World War, the National Union of Railwaymen, against an employer of overwhelming authority, the British Government. When the strike took place from 27 September to 6 October 1919, it severely affected the post as a high proportion of mail was carried by rail. On the 28 September parcel post was suspended except for local deliveries, and an official air mail service was introduced from 1st to 6th October between London and five Great Britain cities. These routes were London to / from Bristol, Birmingham, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Manchester and Glasgow. It is noted by Proud¹ that the aircraft of Aircraft Transport & Travel Ltd (A.T & T) and Handley Page were used for this operation and the daily uplifts (probably in pounds, weight) are recorded by direction for each route. This was the first time an 'air fee' was charged but at 2/- per oz it was expensive, so relatively little mail was carried, said to be 2007 letters carried to London and 1289 from London to the other cities². Other covers seen have an endorsement of 'Per Aeropost', as endorsed on the Newcastle cover on the GBPS website, or 'By Aeroplane Post' or 'By Aeroplane' or similar.

After nine days of strike action, the government agreed to maintain wages for another year. Subsequent negotiations resulted in the standardisation of wages across the railway companies and the introduction of a maximum eight hour day. Figure 1 shows an example from the Birmingham to London service.



Figure 1 – An envelope addressed to the London office of the Birmingham Gazette, with 1½d (SG 362) for the then current letter rate, which had been increased from 1d on 3 June 1918 and two 1/- stamps (SG 396) to pay for the air fee. Each stamp is cancelled by a Birmingham double circle hand stamp, with stamper number 15 between single arcs and is dated 2 October 1919. On the reverse is a three-line LONDON E.C. / 8 30PM / OCT 2 19C arrival mark.

References:

- 1) The Postal History of British Air Mails by Edward B. Proud – Available from the shop of the Royal Philatelic Society London (www.rpsl.org.uk).
- 2) <http://www.gbps.org.uk/information/rates/inland/internal-airmail.php#rail-strike>



Bill Pipe

THE MAGPIE

*Buying and Selling Postal History
and Postcards of the World*

7 Richard Close · Upton · Poole · Dorset · BH16 5PY

Tel: 01202 623300 · Fax: 01202 631149

email: magpiebillpipe@freeuk.com

web: www.magpiebillpipe.com



Great Britain
1839-1951

Fine quality GB with emphasis on the unusual;
including proofs, essays, imprimaturs, specialised
shades and postal history.

Lists: Regular colour lists sent free upon request.

Buying: I would like to purchase fine single items
and specialised collections.

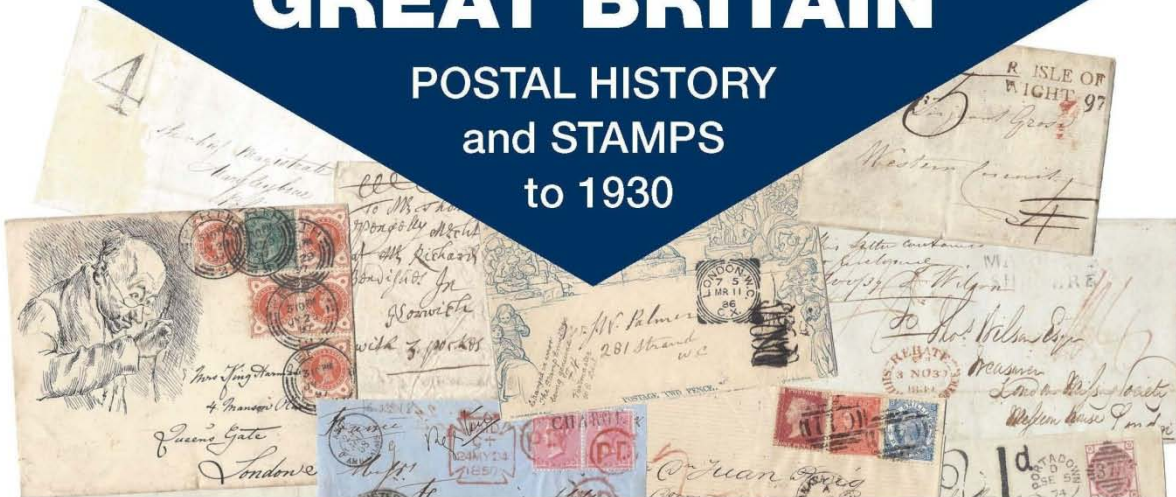
Visit our website to view
hundreds of fine GB items:
www.andrewglajer.co.uk

Andrew G Lajer Ltd
sales@andrewglajer.co.uk
T: 01189 344151



GREAT BRITAIN

POSTAL HISTORY
and STAMPS
to 1930



Postal History from 1300 and Fine Stamps from Queen Victoria to King George V

YOUR WANTS LIST IS WELCOME!

BUYING Collections and single items of Postal History and Fine Stamps



Martin Townsend



Established over 40 years - clients may rely on our reputation and expertise

PO BOX 10, HITCHIN, HERTS, SG4 9PE, UK

TEL/FAX: (01462) 420678 E-mail: Martin@martintownsend.com

www.martintownsend.com

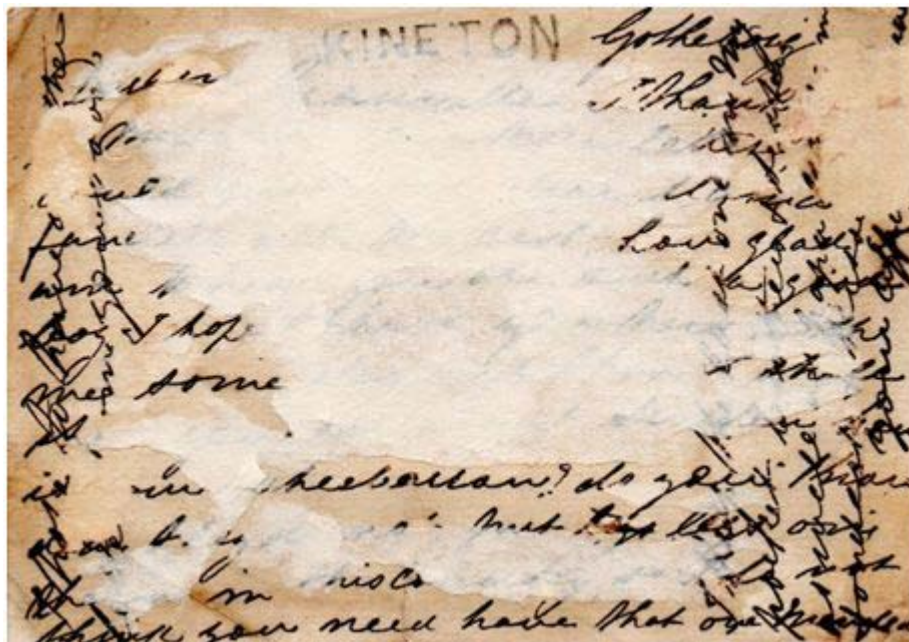
KINETON STRAIGHT LINE, 1875 – A VERY LATE USAGE

by Alan Godfrey

Thanks to Ian Baker I acquired this most unusual item, a postal stationery postcard sent from Gothenburg, Sweden on 26th July 1875. What makes this different is the straight-line arrival hand stamp KINETON (30 x 4 mm) in black on the face, but also struck on the reverse. The previous owner of this card annotated the album page with: '*Unusual late use of name stamp withdrawn officially March 1860*'. Kineton has a long postal history with the first straight line hand stamp recorded in 1764 (WA 182) and the final straight-line hand stamp (a mileage removed mark) last used in 1839 (WA 194). All these marks spelled the village name as KEINTON. The modern spelling first appeared in a circular date stamp in 1838.

The card is addressed to Master Granville Elmslie, c/o Rev Henry Roe at Kineton, Warwick. Prebendary Henry Roe had been tutor and government lecturer in mathematics at the Metropolitan Training Institute in Highbury for twelve years until being ordained. He combined the headship of Kineton Middle School with a local curacy from 1865 to 1876 and subsequently was Assistant Diocesan Inspector of Schools for the Diocese of Bath & Wells for seven years (*Crockfords Clerical Directory*).

I should be interested to know if anyone else has come across this or similar straight-line marks.



WORCESTER PENNY POST UPDATE

by Chris Jackson



Wrapper from Kempsey to Bewdley 21 July 1834, prepaid 6d, 5d for the General Post up to 20 miles and 1d for the Worcester Penny Post. Framed Worcester/Penny Post and a manuscript N°5 of Kempsey Receiving House.

Three major new finds have come to light which extend our knowledge of the penny post which ran from Worcester. It was always known that in 1834 penny posts to Kempsey (R H No 5) and to Broadwas were approved. However, until recently no examples of the Broadwas receiving house had come to light. The new finds consist of a boxed R H No 6 for Broadwas in December 1836 together with manuscript marks for both receiving houses in March and July 1834, presumably during the period between approval being granted and the receipt of hand stamps.

Right:

Entire letter sent from Broadwas to Bewdley dated 8 December 1836, charged 6d, 5d for the General Post rate up to 20 miles and 1d for the Worcester Penny Post and stamped with the framed Worcester/Penny Post in black and the boxed N°6 of the Broadwas Receiving House.



The revised listing for the Worcester Penny Post is shown with the additions and changes to the B.C.C. in red.

BCC No	MP No	Type	Mark	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date
WO 902	1030	42	WORCESTER/ Penny Post	B	Nov 22, 1813	Sep 10, 22
				G	May 2, 13	Aug 13, 22
WO 904	1031	44	Worcester/ Penny Post	R	Mar 25, 29	Aug 27, 29
				B	Nov 27, 32	Sep 19, 39
				GR	Jun 3, 36	Dec 2, 36
WO 507	1033	53	No.2	B	Jan 25, 19	Sep 10, 22
WO 568	1034	53	No.2	B	Nov 27, 32	Dec 15, 39
WO 523	1035	53	No.3	O	Mar 25, 29	Aug 27, 29
WO 931	1036	53	No.3	B	Oct 25, 33	Oct 1, 39
WO 933	1037	53	No.4	B	Nov 18, 32	Jan 10, 39
WO 378	Not Listed	mss	No.5	B	Jul 21, 34	
WO 380	1038	53	No.5	B	Feb 7, 35	Jun 27, 39
WO 96	Not Listed	mss	No.6	B	Mar 11, 34	
WO 98	Not Listed	53	No.6	B	Dec 8, 1836	

TWO COVERS TO MELBOURNE THAT ENDED IN THE DEAD LETTER BRANCH

by Brian Atkins

Communication nowadays is rapid, wherever you are, and focused but in the 1870s communication with foreign parts was a mite slower and people couldn't always be found: they may not want to be found, especially if they had 'emigrated' to Australia! The cover from Ironbridge (6d grey cancelled 406) dated 11 Jan 1875 arrived at Melbourne on 6 March carried by the P&O *Cathay* from Southampton via the Suez Canal to Galle and from there the P&O *Ceylon* to Melbourne. Try as they might, the recipient couldn't be found and after bouncing around the Melbourne suburbs of St Kilda and Prahan, the letter ended up in the Dead Letter Branch (DLB) on 7th October 1875 (date stamp right).



Enhanced image of the green DLB date stamp just visible bottom centre of the cover

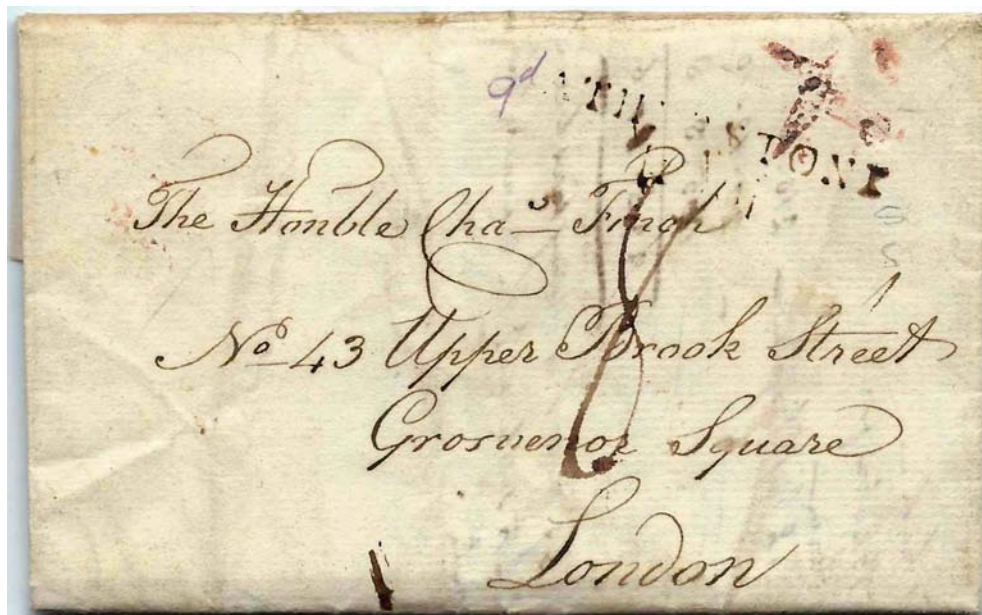
The 7 Nov 1878 cover (below) from Market Drayton to Melbourne, sent via the P&O *Khiva* from Brindisi to Alexandria, the *Poonah* from Suez to Galle and then the *Tanjore* to Melbourne arrived on 3

January 1879 but by 9 July it was also sent to the DLB. The 1/4 double rate via Brindisi is paid by two QV 8d orange, plate 13.

Herbert is synonymous with the Herberts and Clives of Styche Hall, Market Drayton. The obvious candidate to receive the letter is George, an Anglican priest in the Deanery of Hereford in 1867 and the son of Edward Herbert, 2nd Earl of Powis, but I cannot establish that he was ever in Australia!



HELP WANTED! Ian May writes that he has two covers from Atherstone dated 1806 and 1807 (see below) to same addressee and both correctly rated 8d at Atherstone. An inspector's star and a small manuscript 9^d have been added to each cover. One inspector's star is partly filled, whereas the other, of a similar size, is not. Ian suggests that the 9d looks like a local delivery charge (*but is it – Ed?*), but why an inspector's star? Ian would be grateful for any help the membership can give him about the apparent extra charge.



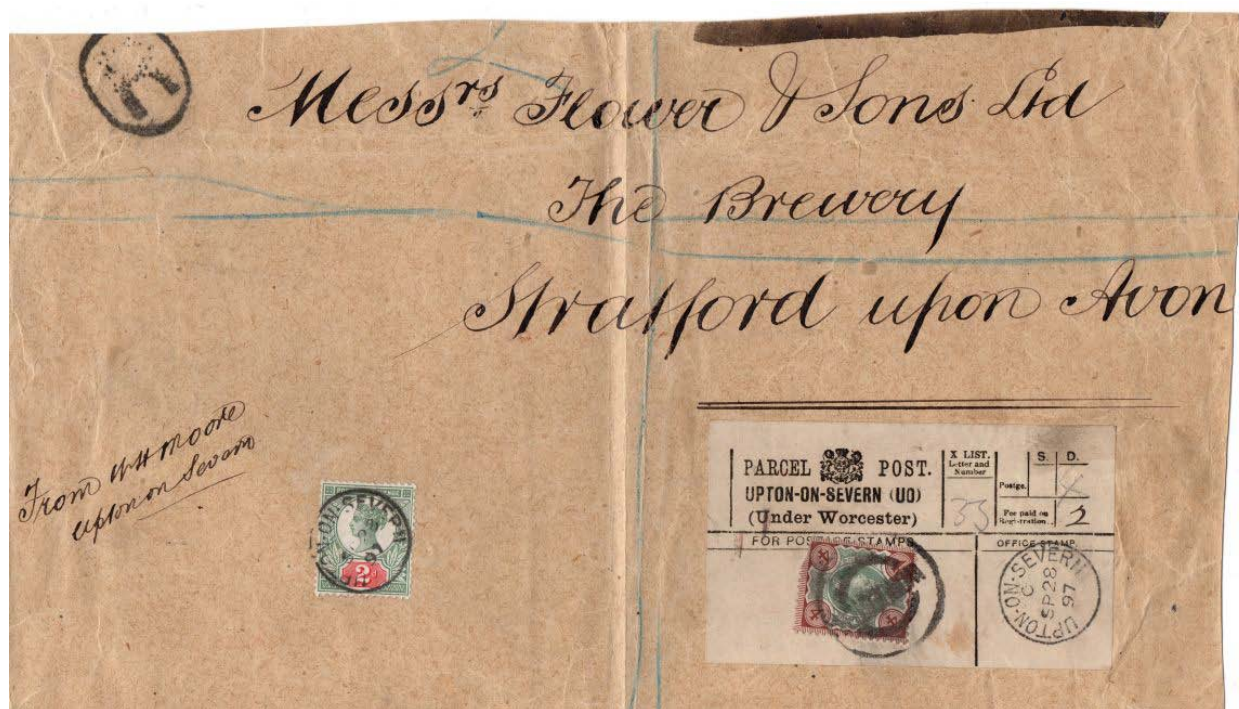
PARCEL POST.  Stoke-on-Trent Basford		X LIST Letter and Number.	POSTAGE. S. D.	
		Insurance, Registration or Express Fee.	[] []	
FOR POSTAGE STAMPS.		DATE STAMP. JUL 11 1916 BASFORD		
		[] []		

A NEW STAFFORDSHIRE PARCEL POST LABEL

A 11 July 1916 parcel post label cancelled BASFORD / STOKE ON TRENT is reported by Brian Purcell, who states that no parcel post label is listed for Basford in the society's book, **The Parcel Post Labels of the Midland Counties**.

Google reveals that Basford is half-way between Etruria and Newcastle under Lyme and that H. G. Wells stayed in Victoria Street, Basford in 1888; the ironworks in Etruria Valley being the inspiration for one of his short stories called 'The Cone'.

SAVED FROM A GOAT from Chris Jackson (scan reduced)



Part of a Registered Parcel wrapper sent on 28th September 1897 from W. H. Moore, solicitors of Upton on Severn to Flower & Sons, Brewers, Stratford upon Avon. Registration was paid by the 2d stamp on the left and Postage by the 4d stamp on the Parcel Post label, the rate for a parcel over 1lb but less than 2lb. A note on the reverse states that the parcel contained 'Deeds relating to the Kings Head Inn at Upton upon Severn'. This is the first Worcestershire Parcel Post label I have found with the 'X LIST' number filled in, number 33.

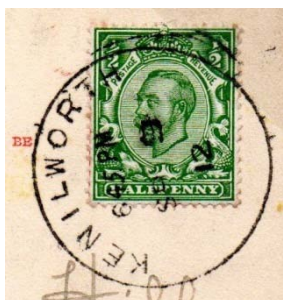
February Meeting Continued from page 3: The best thing I can do is to fill up this space with a few items from Alan Godfrey's display. Of particular note are three ALCESTER skeletons, 1901 having the letters KG at the base.



STRATFORD ON AVON / 7



SOUTHAM 1906

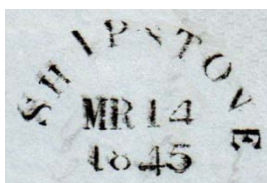


KENILWORTH 1912

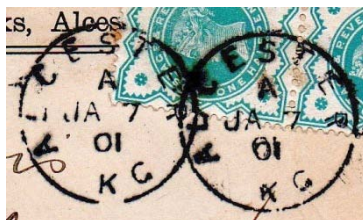


postage stamp or stamps to the

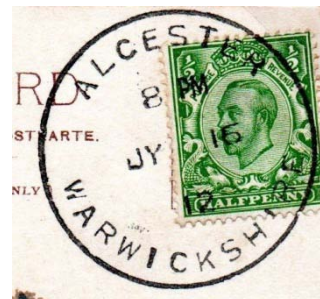
Note E ↓



SHIPSTONE rather than
SHIPSTON



What does KG stand for?



DERBY OFFICE

Cavendish House
153-157 London Road
Derby
DE1 2SY

**LONDON OFFICE**

Suite G06
Dowgate Hill House
14-16 Dowgate Hill
London, EC4R 2SU

Over 65 years' Service to Philately

May 12th 2020 - Hong Kong auction

Featuring the **Russel Muir & Peter Ball** collections, plus stamps and postal history from QV-WW2.

May 13th 2020 - The 'Coxon' Collection auction

With superb line-engraved, embossed, and surface-printed issues including imprimaturs, abnormals, imperforate errors, etc.

June 3rd 2020 - Great Britain & Worldwide auction

Featuring the **John Sussex RDP** collection of East Sussex postal history and part 2 of a collection of fine Mulreadies and 1d blacks. Also including a worldwide airmail collection and large collections of Lancashire and Yorkshire postal history, as well as our usual offerings of fine GB and World stamps and postal history.



Search our
catalogues on
philasearch.com and
stampauctionnetwork.com

LIVE ONLINE BIDDING in association with easyLiveAuction.com -
If you REGISTER TO BID for these auctions,
Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd. will pay the £3 + VAT flat fee.

www.cavendish-auctions.com

stamps@cavendish-auctions.com

Derby -Phone (44) 01332 250 970

Fax - (44) 01332 294 440

London - Phone (44)020 8785 7750