

MIDLAND MAIL



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



President: John Soer

Chairman:
Chris Jackson

Treasurer:
Elizabeth Lewis

Secretary:
Eric Lewis

Number 105, June 1998

I imagine that most members have a part, if not the whole, of their collection devoted to the postal history of the county of either their birth, or upbringing, or residence. And I suppose the reason that we do this is that it enables us to form a collection reflecting the postal history of this country but based on a smaller geographical area to which we feel some attachment. However, the Post Office has often ignored county boundaries when fixing the circulation of mail for a particular area with the result that the postal address of a village ends with the name of a neighbouring county. What does a postal historian do? Ignore those places that lie outside the boundaries of the county one collects, or look for any material relating to the delivery of the posttowns even if some of that originates from adjacent counties?

For many years the inhabitants of those villages in Leicestershire which come in the "CV" postcode area have campaigned unsuccessfully for those places to be given an "LE" postcode. So, if the Post Office cannot change its methods of circulation to fit county boundaries, I suggest that the county boundaries be changed to fit the postcodes. A study of the map on page 13 will show that this would have some interesting consequences such as Shropshire extending as far as Cardigan Bay.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members whose postal history interests are summarised below:

Colin Fountain	Postmarks of Gloucestershire;
Norman Higson	English pre-adhesive in general with an emphasis on Salisbury, Wilts;
Terry Hopper	Dorset, WWI and Christmas Mail;
Martin Taylor	Leicestershire and G.B. Exhibitions;
Bill Toye	Wales and adjoining counties;
Jim Weston	Nottingham & Nottinghamshire, 1840 to the present day.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Members who have joined the Society in the past year or so may not be aware of the books that the Society has published and which are available to our members at a special price. Those available from the Co-ordinating Editor, John Calladine, 21 Abbotsbury Road, London W14 8EJ are as follows:

1. The Undated Circular Marks of the Midland Counties (4th edition). Members' price is £7 plus £2 post & packing if you would like it mailed to you.
2. The Undated Straight Line and Receiving House Marks of the Midland Counties, 1840-1860. Members' price is £4 with p&p as above.
3. The Local Posts of the Midland Counties to 1840. Members' price £13 with £4 p&p if required.

All the above books are spiral bound with card covers. Only the first includes the county of Oxfordshire. The Co-ordinating Editor also has a very few copies of the British Library's c1770 Map of the Post Roads of England and Wales. These cost £25 plus £3 p&p.

Now available from the Editor is the Society's latest book of which he is the author:

4. The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland. Members' price is £15 plus £4 p&p.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Roger Broomfield began by saying that his time in the chair had sped past at an enormous rate and that he must express his thanks to all the Officers and especially Eric and Elizabeth for their untiring work in organising the Society and keeping it in order. He mentioned that we had had another splendid season with some wonderful displays of which it was difficult to pick out any for a special mention, but at Burton (thanks again to Richard Farman for organising this annual pilgrimage) we saw an incredible display of early postal history material. Lastly, he thanked all the members, for without them the Society could not survive. He asked that members should let the committee know if there is any subject they would like covered at one of the meetings.

Our Treasurer, Elizabeth Lewis, then took the meeting through the annual accounts. When exceptional items are taken out of the balance sheet, it can be seen that the basic running costs of the Society are just covered by the income.

The Editor said that although the number of pages in Midland Mail had decreased as a result in the change of typeface, there had been no reduction in the amount of information it contained. The increased cost of producing Midland Mail was caused by the 'bumper edition' of MM100, and the fact that more copies were printed because of the surge in membership. He promised to continue the series on the Surveyors' Journals to their end somewhere in the mid-1830s. [However, since the AGM, an excursion into Post 40 suggests that the end may be sooner than he had anticipated.]

John Calladine reported on the publications still in stock - of the first three very few remain.

Our M.P.F. and A.B.P.S. representative, Tom Poynton gave an account of the activities of those two bodies and mentioned that Midpex 1999 will be on 3rd July of that year.

We then proceeded to the election of a new Chairman and a new Secretary, Roger Broomfield's and Eric Lewis' terms of office having come to an end. Chris Jackson was elected to succeed Roger, and Eric was re-elected for another five years. The rest of the Officers were re-elected en-bloc. David Hardwick was reappointed not as Auditor but as Accounts Examiner. [No doubt, there is a fine distinction between the two, but I strongly suspect that this is yet another idiocy to emanate from the nincompoops in Brussels.]

The next matter on the agenda was the subscription for 1998-99. As has been mentioned above, our income in the past year was only a little more than the expenditure. So, to avoid the situation deplored by Mr Micawber, it was felt prudent to raise the annual subscription to £8. All those present were in favour.

John Calladine then mentioned the 'Mail Routes and Mileage Marks' project. He again appealed to members to send details of the mileage marks in their collections either to him or the appropriate County Editor.

Eric Lewis then gave details of the programme for 1998-9. This will be sent out with the next Midland Mail but in the meantime, please note the following dates of meetings: 19th September (Northampton), 24th October, 21st November and 12th December (Burton-on-Trent).

The meeting ended with the presentation of the trophies to the winners of our annual competitions. These were:

pre-1840 competition	Chris Jackson
post-1840 competition	Roger Broomfield
post-1940 competition	Alan Godfrey
Jon Baker Rose Bowl	Chris Beaver

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THE ANNUAL AUCTION

This was one of our most successful auctions with only twenty two lots unsold. The vendor of lot 105 was particularly pleased as our describers lotted this card to sell separately out of a few mixed items which had been sent to them to include in the sale with a total reserve of £2.

Total sales amounted to over £2000, nearly twice last year's total, plus £53.50 for sale of lots donated for Society funds.

A list of realisations is given below.

A	2.50	B	8.00	C	6.00	D	5.50	E	4.00
F	1.00	G	-	H	12.00	J	3.00	K	3.50
L	-	M	5.00	N	2.00	O	1.00		
1	8.50	2	7.50	3	9.00	4	4.50	5	22.00
6	8.00	7	7.00	8	7.00	9	13.00	10	-
11	-	12	14.00	13	9.00	14	5.50	15	10.00
16	10.00	17	7.00	18	6.50	19	2.50	20	7.50
21	5.50	22	4.50	23	2.00	24	-	25	8.00
26	7.00	27	4.00	28	34.00	29	11.00	30	2.00
31	5.50	32	5.50	33	2.00	34	5.00	35	6.00
36	7.50	37	13.00	38	3.00	39	28.00	40	2.00
41	260.00	42	250.00	43	-	44	8.00	45	-
46	0.80	47	7.00	48	6.00	49	5.00	50	4.50
51	0.80	52	1.80	53	14.00	54	44.00	55	3.50
56	-	57	4.25	58	5.50	59	4.00	60	7.50
61	3.50	62	3.00	63	4.00	64	10.50	65	5.00
66	-	67	-	68	11.00	69	11.00	70	7.00
71	7.50	72	5.00	73	4.00	74	4.00	75	4.50
76	5.00	77	5.00	78	6.50	79	4.00	80	2.50
81	4.00	82	7.00	83	18.00	84	10.00	85	5.00
86	1.00	87	-	88	2.00	89	-	90	-
91	3.50	92	-	93	1.50	94	18.00	95	10.00
96	8.00	97	-	98	-	99	-	100	6.50
101	7.50	102	7.50	103	-	104	11.00	105	20.00
106	9.00	107	4.00	108	5.00	109	1.00	110	22.00
111	11.00	112	-	113	32.00	114	7.50	115	-
116	0.80	117	3.75	118	12.00	119	4.00	120	15.00
121	40.00	122	13.50	123	4.50	124	11.00	125	4.50
126	9.50	127	8.00	128	22.00	129	5.50	130	26.00
131	2.50	132	-	133	-	134	9.50	135	12.00
136	12.50	137	4.00	138	7.50	139	5.50	140	32.00
141	13.50	142	19.00	143	43.00	144	31.00	145	7.50
146	15.00	147	0.80	148	20.00	149	22.00	150	32.00
151	7.50	152	11.00	153	9.50	154	7.00	155	4.00
156	4.00	157	4.00	158	1.00	159	1.00	160	12.00
161	16.50	162	9.00	163	4.50	164	2.00	165	8.00
166	8.50	167	6.00	168	5.00	169	6.00	170	6.00
171	5.50	172	4.50	173	3.50	174	3.50	175	2.25
176	33.00	177	8.00	178	51.00	179	2.50	180	31.00

Once again we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Elizabeth and Eric for their hard work, not only on the day but but even more so for preparing and distributing such a well presented catalogue. Thanks are also due to Richard Farman and Chris Jackson for their excellent work on the 'rostrum'.

SIXDAY POSTS 1741-1782

by Christopher Beaver

The Editor has promised a summary of information previously published in Midland Mail concerning the development of sixday posts between London and Midland towns prior to the mailcoach era. I take the opportunity of including additional evidence discovered meanwhile.

Eleven different lists rather than seven can now be tabulated, and the actual dates when fresh regulations became operative can be given for the first nine of them:

1741, 24th June (MM63/8):

1748, 25th December;

1755, 10th October (MM56/117):

1758, 5th January (see below):

1761, 6th July (MM57/14) - this gives additional sixday arrangements but not which towns were already sixday;

1763, 28th February from London, 1st March from Hereford (MM57/15);

1765, 10th October;

1768, 6th July (MM58/9);

1770, 5th July;

1775, 5th April (MM60/13).

For the last two there is no precise date. '1777' is from a directory of that year and may date from about 1772; 1782 is so dated in a 1785 roadbook (MM61/19).

As indicated in MM61/18, one town with a sixday post prior to 1741 was Oxford. It was such long before Ralph Allen's first contract of 1720. As early as 21st March 1680/81 we find in the London Gazette: "These are to give notice that there goes and comes a Post every day from Oxford.", with no indication of duration found. What does appear to have continued without variation from March 1695/6 as announced on the 19th is: "That from and after the 25th instant a Post will go every day (except Sundays) from the General Post Office in London to the City of Oxford and likewise return from Oxford to London." That it went via Uxbridge, Beaconsfield and Wycombe on both Post-Nights and Bye-Nights is apparent from the details of several robbery notices.

The January 1758 alterations to the bye-night posts between London and Birmingham etc. are detailed in a notice which states that instead of passing through Evesham, Worcester and Bromsgrove, the route would be through Shipston-on-Stour, Stratford-upon-Avon and Henley-in-Arden, with a new branch connection from Stratford to Worcester through Alcester and Droitwich; Evesham as well as Bromsgrove would cease to have bye-night bags, but Worcester would by this means retain sixday communication with London. It does appear that Chipping Campden remained sixday too.

Many improvements to the crossposts were included in Ralph Allen's last contract of 1761. It also provided sixday posts with London to the northern counties of England via the Great North Road. Comparatively, the following twenty years saw minor refinements to his legacy, as the following table illustrates.

These lists, interpreted with the assistance of the c1770 map this Society has reproduced from the original in the British Library, are an excellent means of appreciating Ralph Allen's contribution to the circulation of Royal Mail. On the other hand, as was shown long ago by Denis Salt in his 'Mail Routes in England in 1756' published in Postal History No. 228, the still frequently referred to map in Howard Robinson's and Alan Robertson's otherwise valuable books is better ignored. The evidence adduced in MM48/8ff and MM54/8f has been fully vindicated since.

The lists below contain only those towns in the Midlands and on the roads between there and London.

[illegible]

PLACE	1741	1748	1755	1761	1763	1765	1768	1770	1775	'1777'	1782
Woburn			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Newport Pagnell			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Northampton			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Market Harborough			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Leicester			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Loughborough			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Derby			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Burton-on-Trent								*	*	*	*
Nottingham			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mansfield				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Worksop				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chesterfield				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sheffield				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stamford				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Grantham				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Newark				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tuxford				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Retford							*	*	*	*	*
Uxbridge	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Beaconsfield	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
High Wycombe	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tetsworth								*	*	*	*
Thame	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bicester				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Oxford	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Banbury						*	*	*	*	*	*
Woodstock						*	*	*	*	*	*
Enstone							*	*	*	*	*
Chipping Norton		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Shipston-on-Stour				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stratford-on-Avon				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Warwick					*	*	*	*	*	*	
Henley-in-Arden					*						
Chipping Campden		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	
Evesham		*	*								
Worcester	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bromsgrove			*								
Droitwich					*						
Bromyard											*
Maidenhead								*	*	*	*
Henley-on-Thames									*		*
Nettlebed									*		*
Marlow										*	
Wallingford									*		*
Abingdon	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Faringdon	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lechlade									*		*
Fairford							*	*	*	*	*
Cirencester	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Minchinhampton						*	*	*	*	*	
Stroud						*	*	*	*	*	*
Tetbury						*	*	*	*	*	
Gloucester	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Ross								*	*	*	*
Ledbury					*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hereford					*	*	*	*	*	*	*

THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 31)

In 1822, Mr Woodcock did not send up any journals, just copies of the Riding Work forms. However, he was still able to produce reports as late as August. The first journal that I can find produced by Mr Churchill, Mr Woodcock's successor, is that for October 1822. As will be seen, Mr Churchill spent the whole of the last three months of the year away from home on official business.

For the first eleven days of October, Mr Churchill was in Ludlow, Leominster and Hereford arranging the introduction of the Shrewsbury and Hereford mailcoach. He then went on to Anglesey for the opening of a "new line of road" for the mailcoaches. His next calls were at Birmingham, Dudley, Stourbridge and Kidderminster for the introduction of the mailcoach between Birmingham and Kidderminster, and to look into the riding work in that area. A memorial from Droitwich asking for a change in the route of the London letters then took him to that place as well as Bromsgrove and Worcester.

From Worcestershire, Mr Churchill went on to Shropshire and Cheshire for two weeks to prepare for the new mailcoach between Shrewsbury and Chester. No sooner was that task completed he was on his way to Oxford to make the alterations rendered necessary by the acceleration of the Gloucester and Worcester mailcoaches. A further week was spent in Oxford arranging the introduction of a new mailcoach between there and Birmingham. This involved taking off the horseposts between Oxford and Towcester, and Birmingham and Stratford, as well as starting a daily footpost to and from Henley-in-Arden. The last two days of November saw him in Banbury investigating complaints against the deputy there.

Mr Churchill began December by inspecting the offices at Daventry, Coventry and Warwick. Next, a week was spent at Dudley, that place having been made a posttown. Then it was to Shrewsbury to establish a penny post to Chirk which involved discontinuing the footpost from Oswestry, the bag being carried by the Holyhead mailcoach. Mr Churchill finished the year by setting up a penny post from Walsall to Bloxwich, Wyresley and Cannock.

Mr Godby's first business of 1822 in the Midlands took him to Solihull on 15th January for two days to investigate "some serious charges against the Receiver." In mid-February, Mr Godby arrived in Stratford as the mailcoach between there and Warwick was being withdrawn and put onto the road between Stratford and Banbury. Consequently a horsepost had to be provided between Warwick and Stratford. Then he went on to Leamington and Banbury to open a penny post account between those places.

Mr Godby then travelled to London to discuss with Freeling his succeeding Mr Kerr at Edinburgh. Reading various papers connected with the Post Office in Scotland occupied him until mid-March when he returned to his home in Shifnal. His last journal, that for April, indicates that he was employed at home for the whole month, "no circumstances" requiring his attention in any other part of his district.

Mr Karstadt spent the first week of 1822 establishing a penny post between Tickhill and Bawtry and making some alterations in the vouchers on the Great North Road. In February there was a brief visit to Newark to accelerate the dispatch of the ride to Nottingham. This was followed by trips to Tuxford to investigate a complaint made by the Duke of Newcastle, and Ollerton to look into a petition from Cuckney respecting the private messenger from Tuxford. After an abortive journey to Lincoln he arrived in Gainsborough to abolish the Bawtry ride and accelerate that from Retford.

For the whole of March, Mr Karstadt was in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. He spent most of April in the latter county but did meet Mr Johnson in Peterborough to discuss the introduction of the mailcoach from Yarmouth. He also met Mr Johnson in May, this time in Manchester on the business of the new mailcoach between Sheffield and Manchester (via Glossop).

The measures connected with the introduction of the Leicester and Yarmouth occupied Mr Karstadt for the first half of June during which time he visited Peterborough, Oakham, Uppingham, Melton Mowbray and Leicester. Then, in July, he arrived in Manchester to "carry into effect various regulations ordered by the Board in the communications between Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham etc." Unfortunately we are not told what these regulations were.

Mr Karstadt's only other business in the Midlands during 1822 was a visit to Bakewell, Matlock and Wirksworth to alter the ride from Derby so as to allow the mail to arrive three hours earlier.

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ADDENDA

THE RETFORD TO GAINSBOROUGH RIDE

In February 1822, Mr Karstadt wrote from Gainsborough that he had given notice to quit to the contractors for the rides to Bawtry, which carried the letters to the North, and Retford, in the hope that one of them could be made to answer the purposes of both. He went on to say that this had been achieved by accelerating the Retford ride so that it covered the eleven miles from Retford in about ninety minutes, and hastening the dispatch from Retford. As a result the post arrived in Gainsborough before 3 p.m. which reduced the previous difference of arrival between the two rides to about thirty minutes so that the Bawtry ride would not be missed.

The contractor was willing to perform the ride at the increased speed if the payment was increased from £77 p.a. to £82.10.0. [Ref: Post 40/95/1822]

WEEDON BARRACKS

A Major Kenney of Weedon Barracks, about five miles from Daventry on the road to Towcester, asked in March 1822 that a receiving house be opened in the village of Weedon.

Mr Godby reported that the letters were carried daily from Daventry by a man, employed by the Ordnance Officers, who also took any letters or newspapers for "Regiments of the Line" stationed at the barracks as well as those for the village. On the former he did not make any extra charge, but on each for the latter he received one penny. In the three months to 24th December 1821, the number of letters to and from the village and barracks amounted to 3806, excluding those for private soldiers but including all the official letters for the officers.

As no time could be allowed to the mailcoach for office business at any town between London and Birmingham, any official service to Weedon would have to be by a penny post foot messenger. If the barracks were always full such a penny post would produce a revenue of about £63 p.a. to be set against costs of £50 p.a. However, it frequently happened in times of peace that the barracks were nearly empty for weeks on end. As the number of letters for the village was less than half that for the barracks, a penny post would at those times make a considerable loss.

Mr Godby went on to say that regiments stationed at the barracks always had people about them who could be sent daily to the post office in Daventry at little or no expense to the officers who would be individually subject to the extra tax on any letters carried in a penny post. Therefore it seemed that it was not possible to provide improved accommodation to the barracks. [Ref: Post 40/114/1822]

CHELTENHAM'S DELIVERY

When, in August 1822, the "Commissioners of Cheltenham" applied for a better delivery there, Mr Woodcock sent an assistant to spend a day in Cheltenham to see if the complaints were justified. He found that the mailcoaches from London and Gloucester arrived within a few minutes of each other at about 9 a.m. The letters were ready for delivery at the office at 10.15, and the letter carriers set out at 10.30 with about £12 worth of letters between them. Although both were active men it was 4 p.m. before the delivery in the town and vicinity was completed. This long time was due to the fact that Cheltenham was not built in a "regular manner", but many houses lay a considerable distance from the main street and each other. Mr Woodcock could not see how the situation could be remedied other than by employing another letter carrier, at least during the Season from May to November, at a cost of 10/6 a week.

Freeling added that a similar case occurred at Buxton where an express ride to Leek was provided at considerable expense during "the resort", and, still more to the point, at Bath where for many years an extra letter carrier had been employed during the Season. He had been discontinued on the appointment of a further permanent letter carrier.

[Ref: Post 40/329/1822]

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THE DERBY TO BAKEWELL POST

The agent of the Duke of Devonshire and a number of other people living in the vicinity complained to Mr Karstadt in September 1822 that they had not benefited from the acceleration of the Manchester mailcoach. In fact, their letters arrived later than ever - at 8 p.m. The reason for this was that although the down mailcoach arrived at Derby some hours earlier, the up mail, for which the branch post waited, did not arrive until considerably later, having left Manchester at 8 a.m.

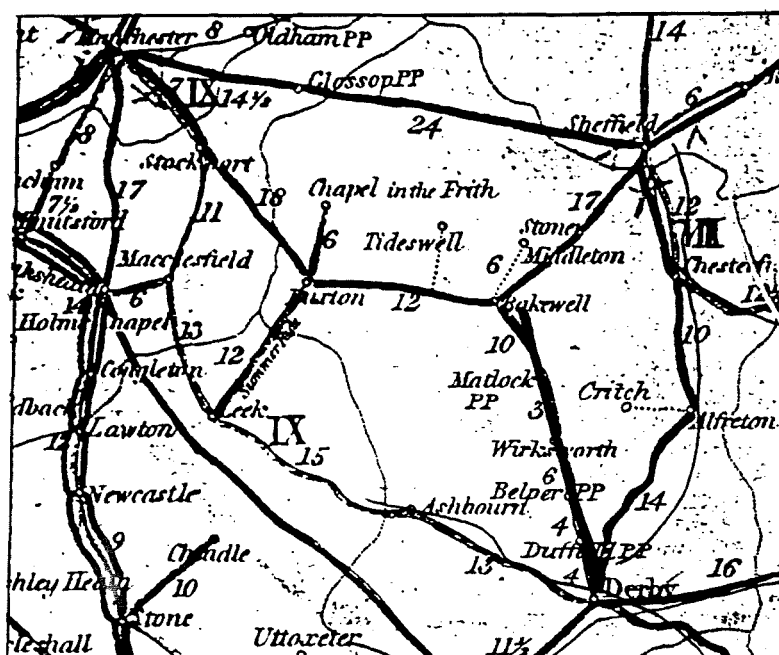
Bakewell gained nothing from this waiting at Derby for the up mailcoach as it received its Manchester letters directly (See MM101/14).

However, the situation was rather different at Wirksworth and other places on the branch. Because of the connections of a cotton works and a bank with Manchester, nearly a quarter of the bye letters originated from that town. Nevertheless, Mr Karstadt asked the people of Wirksworth etc. if an acceleration of their London letters and three-quarters of their bye letters would compensate for a change in their communication with Manchester. They readily acquiesced to his proposal that their Manchester letters should come by way of Bakewell instead of Derby. This would mean that instead of reaching Wirksworth at 6.30 p.m., they would arrive at 7.30 a.m. the next day. There was one advantage to this in that the letters would leave Manchester at 10 a.m. instead of 8 a.m., and most of those being sent out at 8 a.m. had been put in overnight.

Mr Karstadt gave the times of arrival at Derby of the various mails:

Nottingham 10 a.m., London 11 a.m., Sheffield 11.10 a.m., Birmingham 12 noon, Manchester 3 p.m.

As there was a considerable number of letters arriving on the mailcoach from Birmingham, Mr Karstadt suggested that the ride to Bakewell be dispatched as soon as possible after the arrival of the mail from Birmingham, giving an arrival in Bakewell at 5 p.m. instead of 8 p.m. [Ref: Post 40/368/1822]



BIRMINGHAM TO HALESOWEN

In October 1822, Mr Churchill reported that as a consequence of the introduction of the mailcoach from Birmingham to Kidderminster through Dudley and Stourbridge, it was necessary to find a method of serving "the populous village of Halesowen" with its letters which were "both important and numerous." He suggested that a foot messenger should be employed to carry daily the letters between Birmingham and Halesowen, which would give to Halesowen the "convenience it had long enjoyed" of replying to the London letters the same day. Halesowen kept a Short Letter account with Birmingham from which it was eight miles distant.

It seems likely that Freeling queried this means of serving Halesowen, for ten days later Mr Karstadt wrote that Dudley would have been a nearer point from which to have served Halesowen, but would not afford the accommodation that the proposed route was intended to do. The messenger from Birmingham to Halesowen would have to take a bag for part of the parish of Edgbaston besides delivering many letters on the first three or four miles of the road, making it much more desirable to serve Halesowen from Birmingham or "this populous part would be unprovided for."

[Ref: Post 40/407/1822]

DUDLEY MADE A POSTTOWN

Several of the inhabitants of Dudley called on Freeling in October 1822 with a copy of the resolutions of a meeting held there as well as a legal opinion given by a Mr Denman of Lincoln's Inn. The former reads:

"The Town of Dudley containing a population of about 15,000 persons is situated in a detached part of the County of Worcester, but is entirely surrounded by the principal Mining Districts and Iron Works of Staffordshire, and is a place of considerable manufacture & trade."

"It is about 4 miles out of the Holyhead Road between Birmingham and W. Hampton, and consequently the Letters directed to it are brought by the Holyhead Mail no further than Birmingham; but are forwarded from the Post Office at that place, to the one at Dudley, by a regular Mail running between the two places, called the "Dudley and Birmingham Mail", returning to the latter place again in time to meet the Holyhead Mail going up."

"N.B. This Mail is now about to be changed for one to run from Birmingham through Dudley & Stourbridge to Kidderminster with the Letters for all those places, also to return in time to meet the Holyhead Mail to London at Birmingham."

"The establishment of the Post Office at Dudley is upon the same footing as at all other Towns, except that the Deputy Postmaster there, instead of receiving a Salary for his Office, charges (beyond the postage) a halfpenny upon and for the delivery of every letter in the Town, and this charge is made whether the Party fetches his letters from the Post Office (as is the case with several of the principal Inhabitants who have boxes provided for them by the Postmaster at an annual charge of half a Guinea) or whether the letters are delivered by the Postman in the regular course."

"Several complaints have from time to time been made to Mr Freeling of this extra charge, and the reply he gives is that Dudley is not a regular Post Town and that the charge is sanctioned by long established custom, and obtains at other places similarly situated, but promises an alteration when (opus desperandum) the New General Post Office is built."

"The meaning of Dudley not being a regular Post Town is, that, to suit the arrangements and management of the Genl. Post Office, the letters directed to it, instead of being put into a separate bag on purpose for the Town of Dudley, are forwarded in the Birmingham Bags, and there sorted to be sent on by the Dudley Mail."

"You will please however to advise, whether the Postmaster of Dudley is not bound to deliver all letters directed to persons residing within the Town upon payment of the legal rate of postage only, without any extra charge for such delivery, and that if he should refuse to do so, what would be the proper remedy against him."

There then followed references to several legal actions.

Mr Denman stated that he was of the opinion that Dudley was a posttown and that the deputy postmaster was bound to deliver, without any charge beyond the legal rate of postage, letters within the usual limits of delivery. It seemed that every charge beyond such rate was clearly illegal, whether the letters were delivered or sent for to the office. He went on to say that a remedy could be obtained either by action for money "had & received" or for not delivering a letter, "(supposing any to be withheld for refusal to pay the extra demand)", and cited actual cases. He recommended that, if action were taken, it should be by someone who did not keep a box at the office.

Freeling began his report to the P.M.G. by saying that it would take up a great deal of their Lordships' time if he detailed the many communications he had had over the years with the town of Dudley asking for an established post office there. It would be sufficient to mention that five years before he had pledged their Lordships to institute a bag for Dudley when a new Post Office opened, and that all applications to make up additional bags had been refused, "in the present confined state of our Working Office where the confusion is already too great to allow us to indulge the hope that the business can be done with accuracy...".

Freeling then turned to the matter of the gratuity of a halfpenny which had been paid "from time immemorial". He had referred Mr Denman's opinion that this charge was illegal to the Solicitor who agreed that the demand could not be maintained. This caused a dilemma for Freeling as there were "many places in the Kingdom not regular Post Towns" where an extra charge was levied, and if the charge were withdrawn at Dudley, these places would probably demand the same treatment, involving the Post Office in a large expense of salaries for sub-deputies and letter carriers. Consequently, Freeling submitted that it would be prudent to make up a bag at once for Dudley, "notwithstanding any inconvenience that may arise in the Inland Office." Dudley would then become "in our own appreciation" a posttown, and the Post Office would have complied with the request of Dudley, "as a natural consequence of our own arrangements."

The report ended: "As a Board of the Revenue we are interested in not disturbing the Gratuities sanctioned by usage & custom, for they all ease our expenditure, but when objected to, it always entails upon us the expense of salary & allowance." We shall return to the subject of extra charges in the next issue.

A little later in the year, Mr Churchill proposed a salary of £80 p.a. for the postmaster of Dudley as the revenue was estimated to be between £2000 and £3000 p.a. The letter carrier was to be allowed 16/- a week as there were two deliveries a day.

[Refs: Post 40/424/1822, Post 42/468/1822]

THE PENNY POSTS OF THE MALVERNS

During the last two months of 1822, a Mr J.P. Neale visited Malvern at least three times in what appears to have been the capacity of a probationary surveyor, filling the gap left by Mr Woodcock. The reason for Mr Neale's visits was that he had heard of many complaints about frequent delays of letters to Great and Little Malvern. The letters are interesting for the way in which they show an inexperienced surveyor being guided by Freeling.

In his first report, Mr Neale outlined the situation as it then stood. Penny post bags were made up at Worcester for Great Malvern and Little Malvern and were forwarded by the mailcoach to Hereford. Malvern Wells was in the delivery of Little Malvern, but there was a place called the Wells in the delivery of Great Malvern and letters for there were frequently missent to Little Malvern. Although the places were only two miles apart, such letters were delayed three days as they were held at Little Malvern until the return of the mailcoach the following day, and returned to Worcester where they were detained for another day. Mr Neale pointed out that this could be avoided if the sorting were done by someone who knew the locality - the Great Malvern receiver.

He proposed that the penny post to Great Malvern be abolished and letters for Little Malvern be charged at Worcester on Great Malvern. The letters for Little Malvern could be sorted at Great Malvern while the horses on the coach were changed. This would have considerable advantages for the Revenue as the letters from Worcester to Great Malvern would now be charged as Short Letters at 4d. Also, the postage from a number of towns to Little Malvern would be increased by a penny as Great Malvern was eight miles from Worcester. (Gloucester 26 miles from Worcester, Bath 73, Tewkesbury 15, Pershore 10, Evesham 16, Broadway 22, Morton 29, Woodstock 49, Bromyard 14, Leominster 26, Bromsgrove 13, Birmingham 26, Leamington and Warwick 48) What Freeling thought of this is not recorded.

About three weeks later, Mr Neale returned to Great Malvern to find a way of preventing delay to missent letters and provide a direct communication with the "Western Counties." He now proposed that Short Letter Account be opened between Great and Little Malvern, and Great Malvern and Ledbury.

Freeling quickly pointed out the inconsistencies in that suggestion. Letters between the two Malverns would be charged 4d, while those from Worcester to Malvern would be charged only 1d. The same argument applied to Ledbury which was nearer to Malvern than Worcester. He suggested to Mr Neale that a messenger could travel between the Great Malvern and Little Malvern with 1d being charged on each letter, so in effect creating a penny post. There was also to be a penny post between Ledbury and Malvern, the bag being carried by the mailcoach.

Mr Neale's response was to thank Freeling for his assistance in pointing out "certain particulars that my inexperience had overlooked." He reported that in the winter a bag could be carried between Great Malvern and Little Malvern by the mailcoach, but during the "Fashionable Months" (1st May to 1st November) a foot messenger would be employed at a cost of about £10 p.a.

[Ref: Post 40/452/1822]

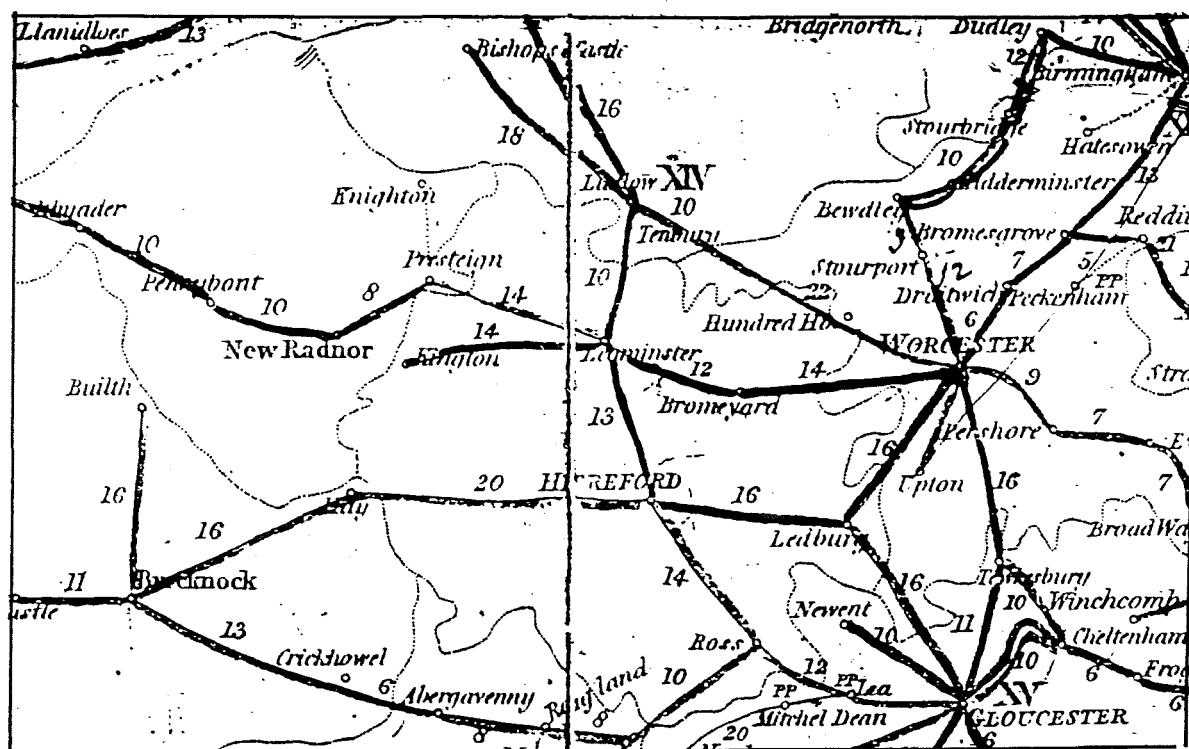
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In his report Freeling said that there had been a three-day post between Ledbury and Gloucester, but the inhabitants of Ledbury had asked to receive their London mail through Worcester so this post had been discontinued. [The Ledbury - Gloucester post started in 1813/14 - see MM96/13 and 98/15 - but I have missed any mention, if it exists, of its withdrawal. Mr Woodcock had it listed in his riding work in 1818, but he was so inconsistent in his manuscript additions that its absence thereafter does not necessarily mean that the ride had ceased to run.] Freeling added that a letter posted at Ledbury before 10 a.m. reached Gloucester the following morning, and a letter from Gloucester arrived at Ledbury early in the afternoon of the next day. Under the circumstances, as the expense of the ride would be considerable and Ledbury was such a small place, a daily mailcoach communication with Worcester was quite sufficient. [Ref: Post 40/482/1822]

The only riding work which could be withdrawn on the introduction of the mailcoach was the horsepost between Leominster and Kington. [Ref: Post 40/491/1822]



SORTING BY POSTCODE

A pamphlet explaining the introduction of the sorting of residual mail based on postcodes is reproduced on this and the next page, and I hope members will find this of interest. It makes a nice addition to a collection of modern postal history. The pamphlet was produced in colour so the reproduction is not all that one would like.

Post Code	Area	Post Code	Area
AB	Aberdeen	LN	Lincoln
AL	St Albans	LS	Leeds
B	Birmingham	LU	Luton
BA	Bath	M	Manchester
BB	Blackburn	ME	Maidstone
BD	Bradford	MK	Milton Keynes
BH	Bournemouth	ML	Motherwell
BL	Bolton	N	London N
BN	Brighton	NE	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
BR	Bromley	NG	Nottingham
BS	Bristol	NN	Northampton
BT	Belfast	NP	Newport
CA	Cardiff	NR	Norwich
CB	Cambridge	NW	London NW
CF	Cardiff	OL	Oldham
CH	Chester	OX	Oxford
CM	Chelmsford	PA	Paisley
CO	Colchester	PE	Peterborough
CR	Croydon	PH	Perth
CT	Canterbury	PL	Plymouth
CV	Coventry	PO	Portsmouth
CW	Crewe	PR	Preston
DA	Dartford	RG	Reading
DD	Dundee	RH	Redhill
DE	Derby	RM	Romford
DG	Dumfries	S	Sheffield
DH	Durham	SA	Swansea
DL	Darlington	SE	London SE
DN	Doncaster	SG	Stevenage
DT	Dorchester	SK	Stockport
DY	Dudley	SL	Slough
E	London E	SM	Sutton
EC	London EC	SN	Swindon
EH	Edinburgh	SO	Southampton
EN	Enfield	SP	Salisbury
EX	Exeter	SR	Sunderland
FK	Falkirk	SS	Southend-on-Sea
FY	Blackpool	ST	Stoke-on-Trent
G	Glasgow	SW	London SW
GL	Gloucester	SY	Shrewsbury
GU	Guildford	TA	Taunton
HA	Harrow	TD	Taunton
HD	Huddersfield	TF	Telford
HG	Hartogate	TN	Tonbridge
HP	Hemel Hempstead	TQ	Torquay
HR	Hereford	TR	Truro
HU	Hull	TS	Middlesbrough
HX	Halifax	TW	Twickenham
IG	Ilford	UB	Southall
IP	Ipswich	W	London W
IV	Inverness	WA	Warrington
KA	Kilmarnock	WC	London WC
KT	Kingston-upon-Thames	WD	Watford
KW	Kirkwall	WF	Wakefield
KY	Kirkcaldy	WN	Wigan
L	Liverpool	WR	Worcester
LA	Lancaster	WS	Walsall
LD	Llandrindod Wells	WV	Wolverhampton
LE	Leicester	YO	York
LL	Llandudno	ZE	Lerwick

Defined Circulation

WHAT IS POSTCODE DEFINED CIRCULATION AND WHY IS IT BEING INTRODUCED?

A key element of the Royal Mail Automation Strategy is to ensure that the maximum amount of mail circulates to offices in which automation is available to process such mail. To achieve this, it is necessary to change the way in which residue mail items are currently circulated. This is achieved through the implementation of Postcode Defined Circulation.

Currently where offices have insufficient mail to warrant a direct despatch to a post-town, that mail is directed to a residue selection based upon counties.

This mail circulates to the appropriate county distribution office and is sorted either manually or by machine as far as an individual post-town selection.

Because the machineable element only receives a sortation to post-town level, this does not gain the full benefits of inward walk sortation available to such mail at the local APC.

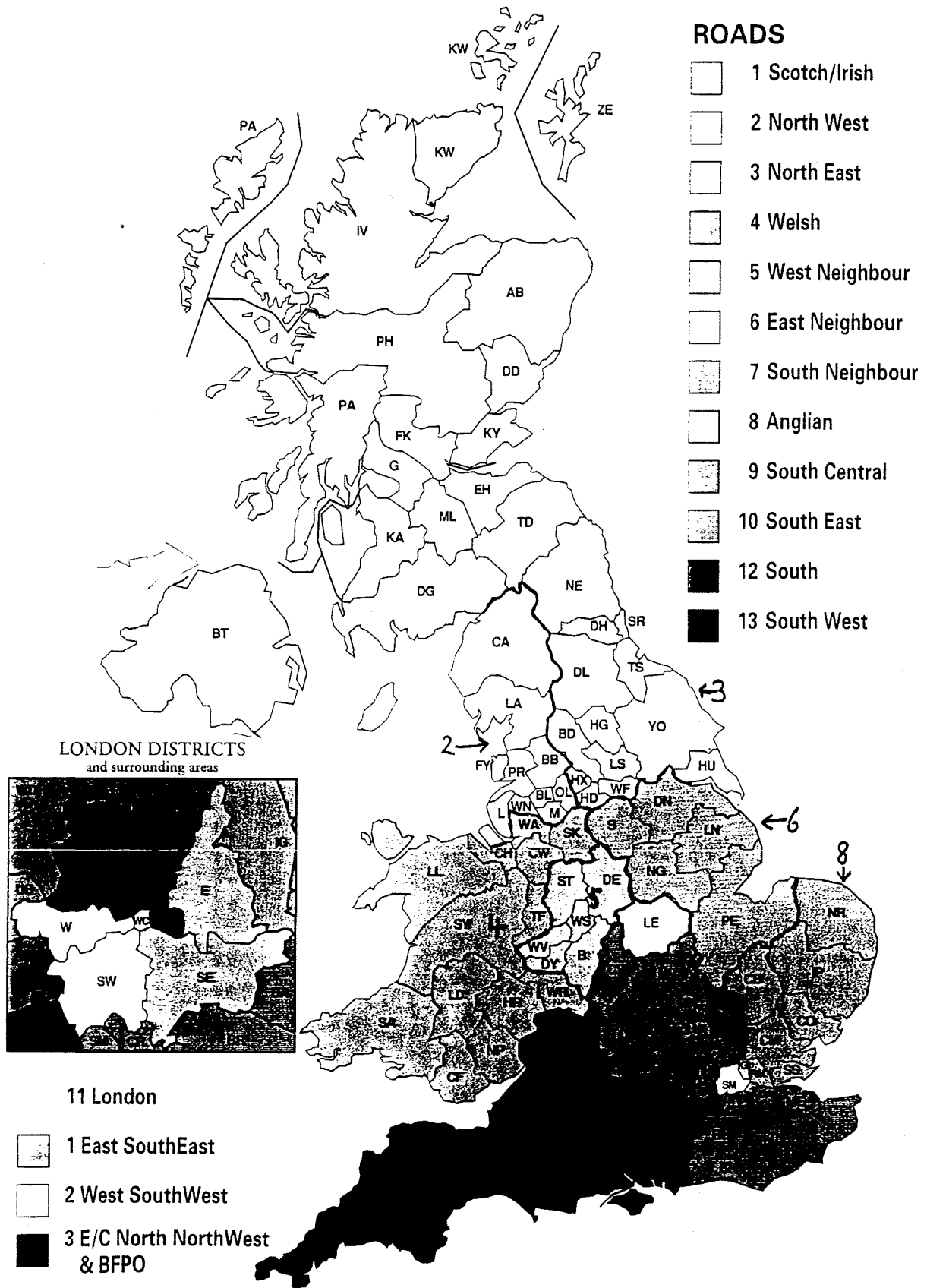
Postcode Defined Circulation addresses this problem by changing the way in which residues are sorted and circulated. Thus residues are sorted to postcode rather than county selections and are circulated to the inward APC serving each postcode area. This mail then becomes available for full inward walk sortation in accordance with the automation strategy.

Postcode Defined Circulation is being introduced to all offices between May 1993 and March 1994.

Defined Circulation



Leicester MLO - Primary Sortation Plan



POST OFFICES IN RURAL DISTRICTS, 1843

The Nottingham Review of 4th August 1843 contains a copy of a letter sent to Robert Wallace by a Mr Smith-Fowler who described himself as being engaged in "the retail and wholesale business of grocer and tea-dealer". Mr Smith-Fowler began his letter by saying that the part Wallace had played in advancing penny postage encouraged him to approach Wallace on the subject of the establishment of post offices in rural districts.

Mr Smith-Fowler complained that there was no reliable and speedy means of sending letters to the villages, with which he had considerable dealings, between Nottingham and the adjacent posttowns, and asked for daily posts to those villages within a fifteen miles radius of Nottingham. He then appended a list of villages with their distance from Nottingham and the cost of sending a letter there, it is to be presumed by a local carrier.

Robert Wallace in his reply stated that the Postmaster General has ordered that any place in the country could have a post office provided that one hundred letters a week reached that place. In fact, a post was set up where there were one hundred letters for places in the walk of the postman, not just one village.

TURNPIKE OR OTHER DIRECT PUBLIC CARRIAGE ROADS FROM NOTTINGHAM TO THE FOLLOWING POST TOWNS.

Turnpike and late Mail-road to Melton, 19½ Miles.

	Census 1831 Populat.	Dis- tance Miles.	Left of the Road Miles.	Right of the Road Miles.	Payments for Rural Delivery. d.
West Bridgford ..	388	1½	½	..	1
Edwalton ..	130	3½	..	..	1
Tollerton ..	140	6½	..	..	2
Plumtree ..	606	6	..	..	2
Clipstone ..	82	6	1½	..	2
Normanton ..	185	6½	..	..	2
Keyworth ..	552	7	..	1	1
Owlthorpe ..	144	7	2½	..	2
Stanton-on-the-Wolds ..	125	8	..	1½	2
Widmerpool ..	180	9	..	1½	2
Kinoulton ..	389	9	1½	..	2
Colston Bassett ..	387	9	3½	..	2
Willoughby ..	465	11	..	2	2
Hickling ..	520	..	1½	..	2
Over Broughton ..	344	13	..	..	2
Nether Broughton ..	415	14	..	..	2
Old Dalby ..	303	..	..	2	2
Long Clawson ..	778	..	2	..	2
Hose ..	385	..	3½	..	2
Harby ..	488	..	5	..	2
Sutherland ..	481	..	6	..	2
Ab-Kettleby ..	200	10½	..	..	2
Wathaby ..	85	..	..	1	2
Grimston ..	185	..	..	2½	2
Holwell ..	131	..	..	2	2
Scalford ..	467	..	2½	..	2
Saxelby ..	105	..	..	2	2
Melton Mowbray ..	..	19½	..	..	2

Turnpike-road to Loughborough, 15 Miles.

Ruddington ..	1428	4½	..	..	1½
Bradmore ..	300	6	..	..	1½
Bunay ..	371	7	..	..	2
Cordisstock ..	412	9	..	..	2
East Leake ..	975	..	..	1½	2
Wysall ..	271	..	2	..	2
Repton ..	398	10	..	..	2
Wimeswold ..	1276	..	2	..	2
Hoton ..	401	12	..	..	2
Prestwold ..	62	..	..	1½	2
Burton-on-Wolds ..	411	..	1	..	2
Cotes ..	68	13½	..	..	1½
Stanford ..	229	..	..	1	2
Loughborough ..	10800	15	..	..	2

Public Carriage-road to Kegworth, 11 Miles.

Wilford ..	602	2½	..	..	1
Clifton ..	405	4	..	..	1
Barton ..	379	6	..	1	1
Gotham ..	748	7	..	..	1
Thrumpton ..	132	..	..	2	1
Kingston ..	175	9½	..	..	1½
Ratcliffe-on-Soar ..	203	..	2	..	1
West Leake ..	1749	11	..	..	1

Public Carriage-road to Castle Donington, 12 Miles.

Beeston ..	2580	4	..	..	2
Chilwell ..	1094	6½	..	..	2
Attenborough ..	..	..	1	..	2
Toton ..	..	6½	..	..	3
Long Eaton ..	750	7½	..	..	2
Sawley ..	1000	9	..	..	2
Castle Donington ..	3182	12	..	..	2

Turnpike-road to Alfreton.

Radford ..	9803	..	..	..	1
Basford ..	6325	2	..	..	2
Nuttall ..	609	4½	..	..	2
Strelley ..	426	..	1	..	1
Bulwell ..	2611	..	..	1	1
Kimberley ..	..	..	1	..	2
Watnall ..	..	6	..	..	2
Hucknall ..	2200	..	..	3	1d. or 2d.
Greasley ..	4583	7	..	..	2
Brinsley, in Greasley ..	..	9	1	..	1
Selton ..	1580	12	..	..	2
Pinxton ..	368	..	..	1	2
Kirkby ..	2032	..	..	2	..
Alfreton ..	..	16	..	..	..

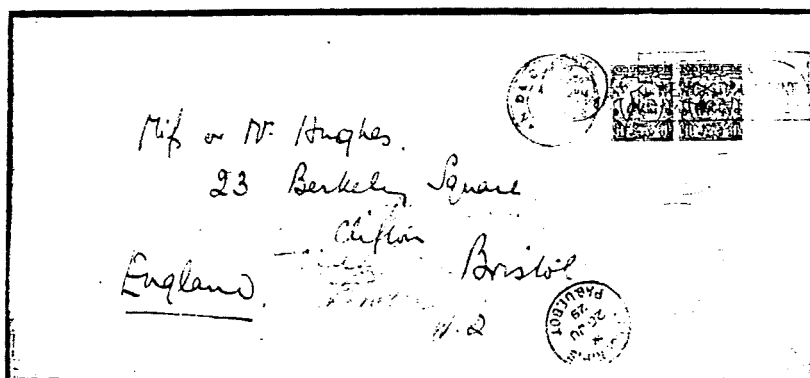
Public Carriage-road to Southwell.

Snenton ..	3005	3½	..	..	1
Carlton ..	1704	8	..	..	1½
Gedling ..	468	8½	..	..	1½
Stoke ..	181	..	..	1½	1
Burton Joyce ..	584	6½	..	..	1
Lambley ..	824	..	1½	..	1
Bulcote ..	142	6½	..	..	1
Lowdham ..	791	8	..	..	2
Caythorpe ..	289	..	..	1	2
Gunthorpe ..	383	..	..	1½	2
Epperstone ..	518	..	2	..	2
Gonalston ..	107	9	..	..	1
Hoveringham ..	347	..	..	1½	2
Thurgarton ..	329	11	..	..	2
Gourton ..	..	..	..	1	2
Bleasby ..	824	..	..	2	2
Morton ..	166	..	..	3	2
Halloughton ..	103	12½	..	..	2
Southwell ..	3384	14	..	..	2

ANCIENT ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦



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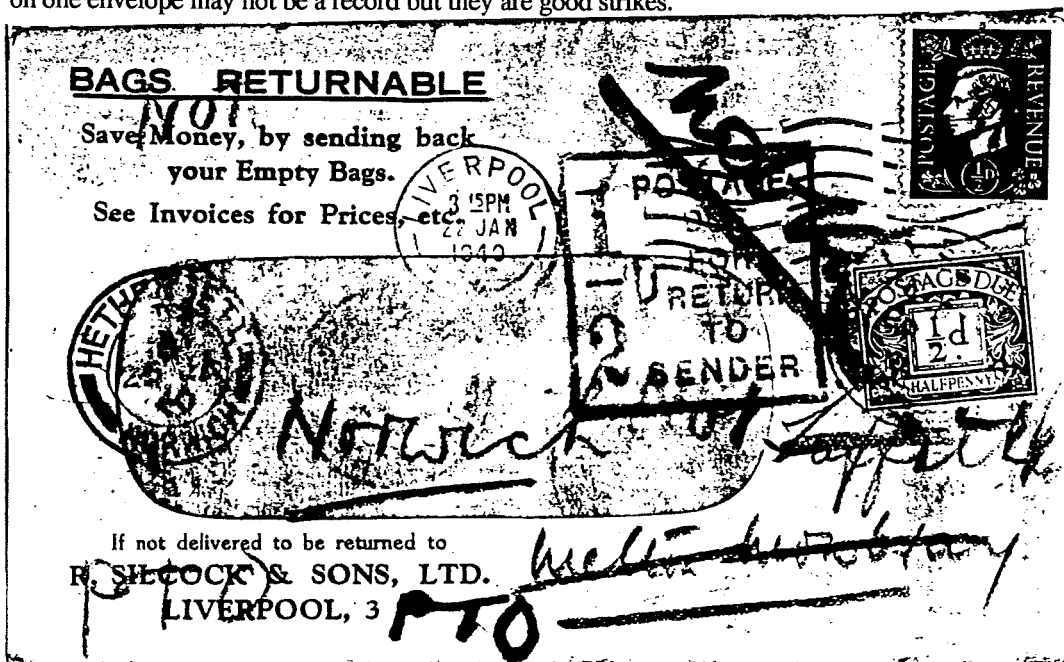
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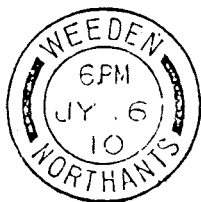
A PLETHORA OF DOUBLE CIRCLES

If I were asked to choose my favourite type of postmark, I think that I would probably plump for the double circle. I am not sure what it is about their design that appeals. However, I was delighted to pick up the cover shown below despite the fact that it is a window envelope so one does not know to where it was addressed. Four different types of double circle on one envelope may not be a record but they are good strikes.



A WEEDEN DOUBLE CIRCLE

Can anyone tell me if the double circle shown in Volume 49 of the Steel Impression Books was ever used?



THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This should appear towards the end of August. The contents will depend upon what is sent to:
John Soer, 51d Barkham Road, Wokingham RG41 2RG.