

MIDLAND MAIL



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



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Eric Lewis

Number 114, April 2000

I must apologise for the late appearance of this issue which has been caused in part by a visit from the minions of a certain Mr Woodhead and in part by the aggravation of an old back injury. As a result this issue is rather shorter than I would like but will have to suffice if it is to stand any chance of appearing in April as promised.

Our Secretary has initiated a policy of asking members other than the county editors to give displays on their area of interest. This has been a great success bringing out material that we would otherwise not have seen as well as increasing the attendance at meetings. It would be very much appreciated by your Editor if this policy could be extended to contributions to Midland Mail. There are I am sure that most members have in their collections at least one interesting cover about which they could write a few lines. A series entitled 'My Favourite Cover' would add enormously to the interest of Midland Mail. The next issue will certainly contain a major article by a new contributor. I hope that it will be the first of many.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND AUCTION

These will be held on Saturday 29th April at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham. By now members should have received their auction catalogues with full details of the day. If that is not the case please contact Eric Lewis. This is to remind you that there will be a committee meeting at 10.45 a.m. There will be an opportunity to view the auction lots from 11.45 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. when the Annual General Meeting will take place. The auction will start promptly at 1.45 p.m.

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THE JANUARY MEETING

Our meeting on 15th January was a double-bill presented by Gerald Marriner and Bryan Jones and attracted a good sized audience. Gerald was the first on stage with a display on 'Solihull & Knowle'. This started with material from the Birmingham Penny Post, Solihull using the number 6 mark and Knowle the 7. Of a later date was the straight-line 'SOLIHULL' used in 1827 on a letter to Bewdley. From the late 1830s came copies of the UDC and dated circles. Then, from the 1840s we saw a Mulready sent from Solihull, the 719 numeral obliterator, a manuscript "Missent to" used in 1846 in conjunction with the cds and a traveller of 1849.

Among a selection of parcel post labels was one for 'Solihull Lodge' with the latter word crossed out. Gerald then showed us seven different skeletons covering the period 1886 to 1967. In a section devoted to registered mail, we saw the different styles of registration label used in the 1920s. Our visit to Solihull ended with a look at the town sub-offices.

The first two items from Knowle were the PP7 paid mark from 1815 and the PP7 unpaid mark used in 1828. The straight-line 'KNOWLE' was shown on a letter to Warwick which was rated at 1d. We saw both types of UDC used at Knowle, the later one having the name across the diameter. A letter sent in 1890 from Hull to Knowle was sent to various other places of the same name before finally arriving in Warwickshire. Again we were shown various styles of parcel post label. A skeleton from 1919 was hitherto unrecorded. Gerald then turned his attention to Dorridge. The first post office which opened in 1885 was known as Knowle Station as it was situated in Station Road, Dorridge, and we saw the cds of Knowle Station used in 1899. The railway theme continued with covers carrying the GWR 2d letter stamp. We then saw more parcel post labels, this time from 1904, 1905 and 1913.

After the break for refreshments, Bryan Jones took centre stage and began by showing some of the early marks of Stratford - from the period 1744 to the 1790s, including the first-type mileage mark which showed a distance of 95 miles. Two different 'STRATFORD/ON AVON' marks from 1793 were followed by a wide variety of mileage marks showing a distance of either 97 or 99 miles. There were seven different Stratford Penny Post marks and Bryan showed us all of these. In fact one cover had two penny post marks - those of Stratford and Warwick. These were followed by examples of the oval 'MISSENT/TO/STRATFORD AVON' and then the paid mark with an 'A' in the middle. Letters sent from Stratford to Alcester and from Stratford to Warwick illustrated the of twopence between posttowns no more than eight miles apart which was introduced in January 1838. We also saw a two-line missent mark, duplexes, various surcharge marks and covers with railway stamps. A skeleton from October 1920 read 'STRAFORD ON AVON' but this was soon corrected. Finally, Bryan produced a much redirected cover of 1905 which passed through no fewer than seven Midland towns before ending up at its starting point.

It was a most enjoyable afternoon which had showed how much good material is to be found in members' collections.

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THE FEBRUARY MEETING

The turn-out at Worcester on 19th February was one of the best for a long time. The attraction was another double-bill with Frank Bennett showing 'Hay-on-Wye' and Sadie Cole displaying 'Radnorshire'.

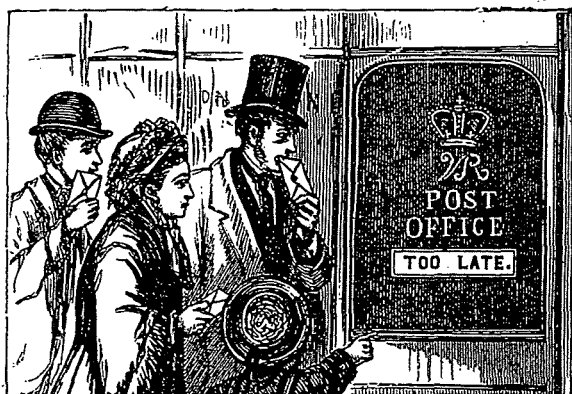
Frank began by saying that only a small amount of correspondence from Hay had survived. However, Frank was able to produce two sheets of on early letters and follow these with a range of straight-line marks dating from 1731 to 1788. The last of these was one of the largest postmarks to be found in GB postal history measuring 35x13 mm. We then saw mileage marks, UDCs, the 347 numeral cancellation, a variety of duplexes and skeletons. Many of Frank's covers were notable for their social history content such as that sent from Hay to York seeking money for a mentally retarded person. Several receipts for registered letters formed an interesting section. Frank rounded off his display by telling the story of the life of Charles Spencer of Hay through letters sent by him. These started with a hat bill which had not been paid for three years. He was later to be found staying in Carey Street, London and was being chased by his creditors. In September 1848, he was writing from Hereford gaol where he still was at the time of the 1851 census, his occupation being given as 'debtor'. He died in Hereford gaol in 1851.

Sadie started by saying that Radnorshire which had 'four and a bit' posttowns was the smallest county in Wales and the population had not changed since 1850. She then went on to look at the county-town, Presteigne. The earliest known mark from there is of 1704, but Sadie's earliest was from 1719. We then saw a variety of Presteigne material including horseshoes, mileage marks (on which the distance was always 156 miles) and a circular mileage removed mark. Also of note were a letter sent from Presteigne in the fourpenny post period and a cover carrying a penny black. A letter sent from Presteigne to Hay was endorsed "Turn at Hereford".

From Rhayader we saw two-line marks from the period 1786 to 1795 as well as a horseshoe of 1798. A mileage mark showing a distance of 182 miles was the only mileage mark of Rhayader ever seen. From Rhayader we went on to New Radnor and the receiving houses at Pen-y-Bont and Radnor, the former having a two-line 'PENY/BONT'. The first mark of Knighton was a horseshoe type and the mileage mark showed a distance of 165 miles. The 'and a bit' posttown was Glasbury which at times was in Radnorshire but at other times in Breconshire. Sadie ended her display with an account of a mailcoach which was caught in a snowstorm and remained buried in snow for a week.

Again, it had been a most enjoyable afternoon and it is obvious that these meetings in which two members give a display are proving to be very popular.

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DOUBLE-STAMPED

by Alan Marshall

I have not been able to find any reference to a requirement that certain items of pre-adhesive mail should be stamped twice at the town of posting. However, since seven such covers have been located (two by John Soer, one by Dennis Humphreys and three by the writer), and these have certain features in common, it is hoped that this article will encourage others to report any similar items they have in their collections in order to shed more light on the reason for this practice.

The details of the items found so far are:

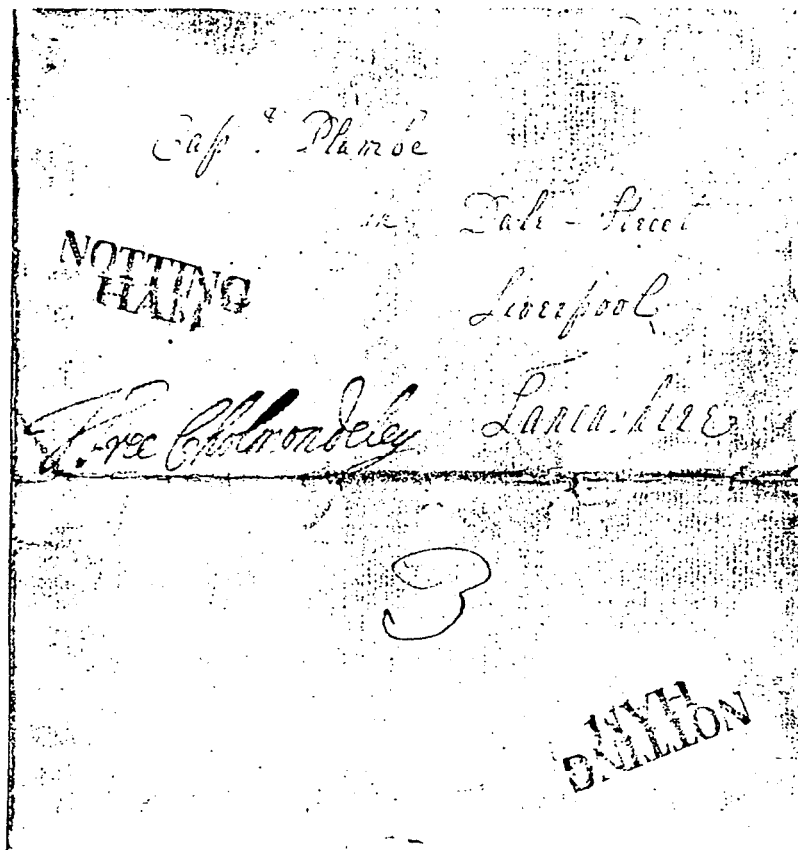
- | | | | | |
|----|----------------|-------|--------|--|
| 1. | Nottingham | NG132 | 1760-5 | Free + MS 3 (Cholmondeley) to Capt Plumbe, Liverpool; |
| 2. | Nottingham | NG132 | 1760-5 | Free (Lascelles) to Capt Plumbe, near Preston, Lancashire; |
| 3. | Nottingham | NG132 | 1760-5 | Free (Meredith) to Capt Plumbe, Liverpool; |
| 4. | Nottingham | NG132 | 1760-5 | Free (Gilmour) to Capt Plumbe, Liverpool; |
| 5. | Loughborough | LC91 | 1792-8 | MS 5 To Rev Barker, Master Christ's College, Cambridge; |
| 6. | Loughborough | LC83 | 1775 | Free (G. Brudenell) to Mr Bray, London; |
| 7. | Melton Mowbray | LC150 | 1798 | Free (Lord Harbro' ?) to H. Wyndham, Salisbury. |

Six of the seven examples are 'Free' items which does not immediately provide an obvious reason for their being stamped twice. However the four Nottingham items do warrant a closer inspection. All three are from the same correspondence - from a lady to a Capt Plumbe at Liverpool. Before she became Mrs Plumbe, this lady neither signed nor dated her letters, merely initialling them 'E.T.' Her writing is very distinctive and easily recognised which may have some bearing on the matter. Even as a single woman she hardly needed the 'Free' facility as in one letter she mentions having inherited £15,000 per year. In the same letter she also states that she has used up all her 'Franks' but expects more by 7th June. Clearly a number of influential people enabled her to make fraudulent use of the system.

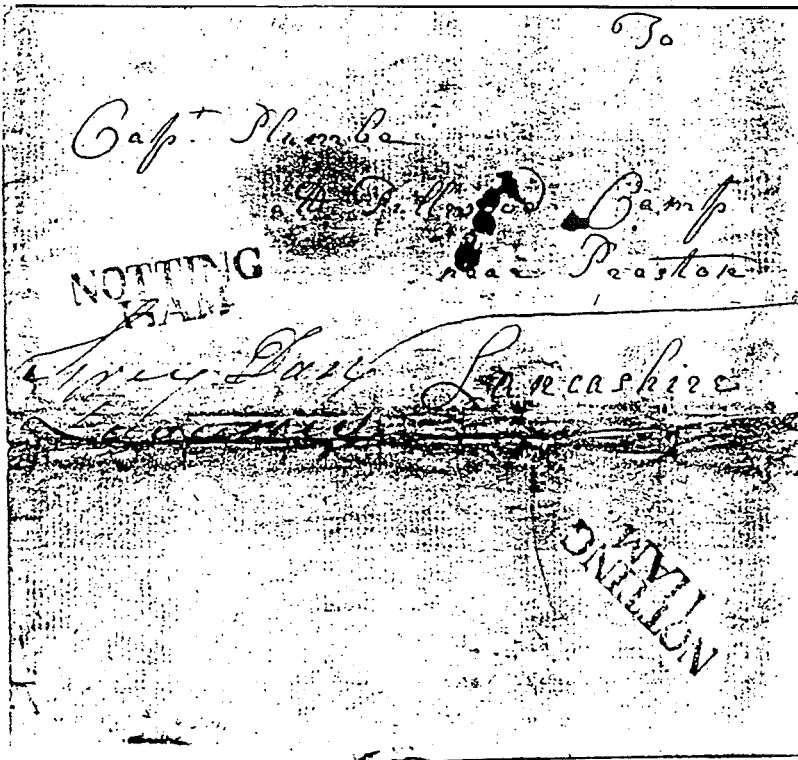
Could it be therefore, that the clerk having stamped the letter and recognising the handwriting passed the letter to the postmaster to sanction it passing free of charge. It should be noted that in 1764 that it became mandatory for the person signing the frank to write the entire address in his own hand (1). It is unfortunate that we do not know the exact date of these letters.

In the case of the 'Cholmondeley free' which is a wrapper a charge of '3' has been written on the reverse. If the wrapper and enclosure weighed more than two ounces, surely any charge would have been written on the front.

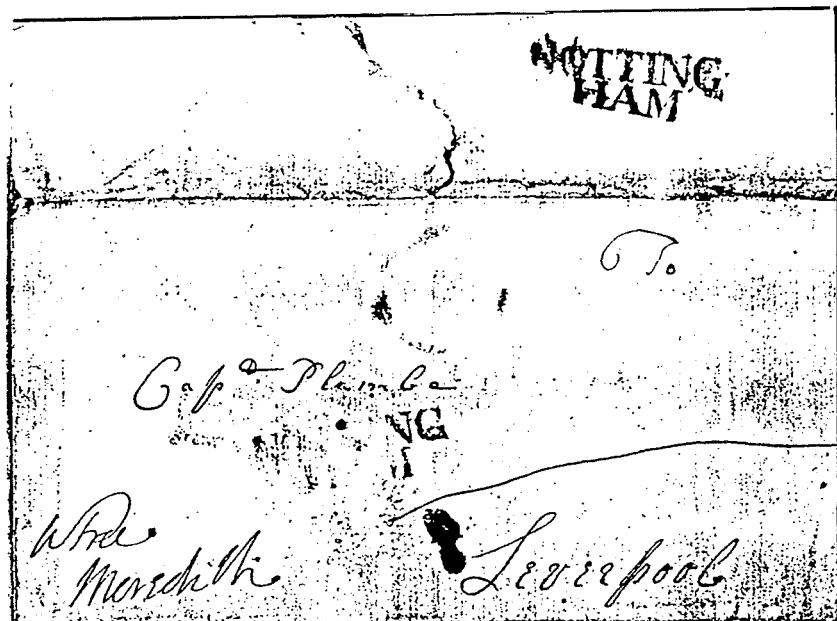
Item 1



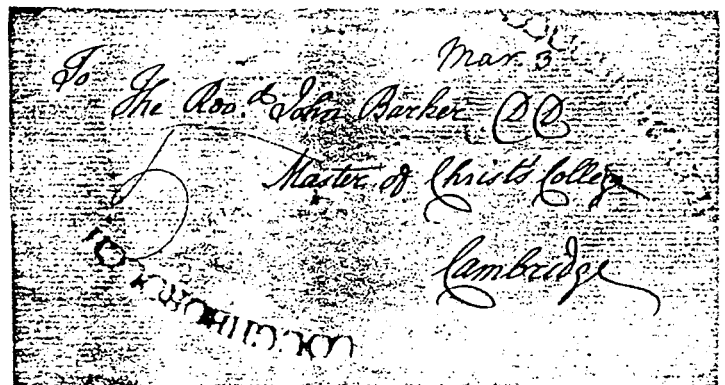
Item 2



Item 3



The first of the Loughborough items gives every indication of being a wrapper, yet up to January 1797, five-pence was the single rate to Cambridge. Does the second strike denote an endorsement by the postmaster of the item going at the single rate because it was not clear if it did in fact contain two sheets? And is there any significance of the date which appears near the top right-hand corner? Another item which is almost identical from the same writer to the same addressee, and with the same rate displays only a single strike of the Loughborough stamp. But not all outers with an enclosure would be obviously such.



Item 5

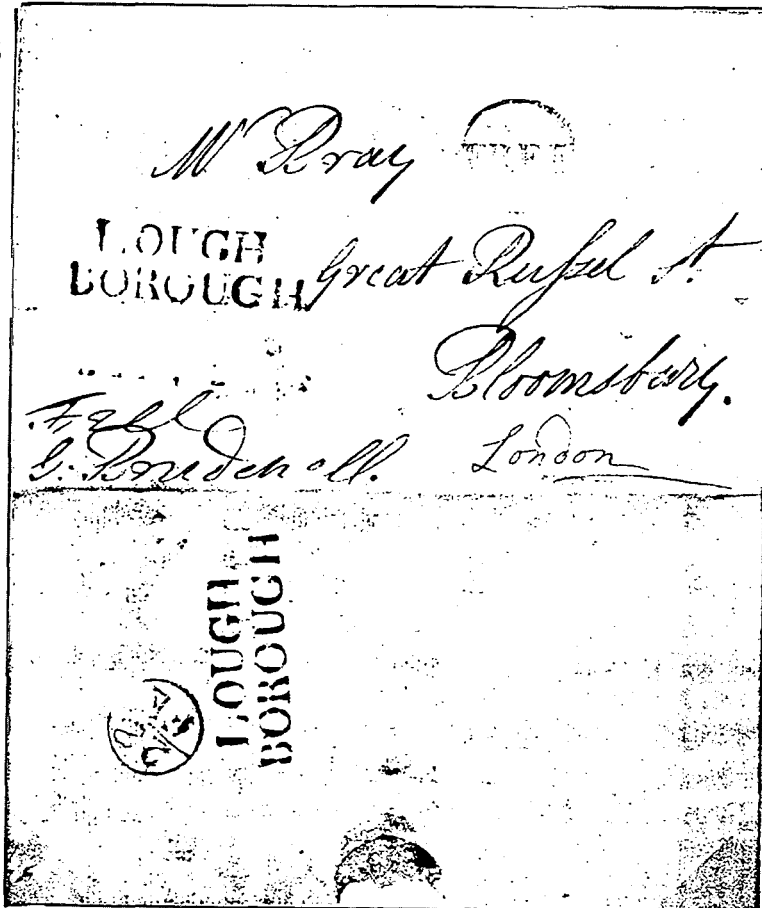
The second Loughborough item is also a wrapper, a note on the inside stating that there was an enclosure. The signature appears to match the script of the address so does the second strike indicate that the packet was considered to weigh under two ounces?

The Melton Mowbray 'Free' is also a wrapper but in this case it is addressed to a Member of Parliament. Again does the second strike denote that the item falls within the regulations?

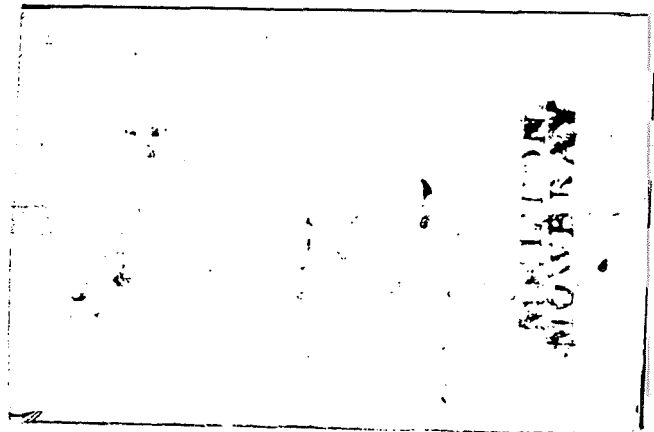
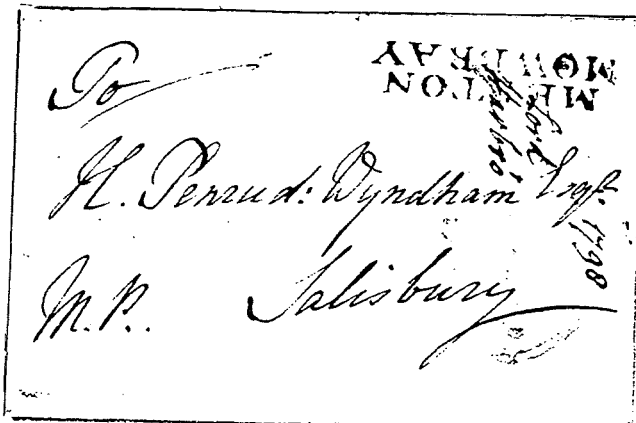
One feature that arguably gives credence to the 'approval' theory is that the second strike is on the front instead of the reverse as was normal. In the case of LC91 both are on the front. [Editor's Note: From the examples in my collection, it appears to have been the practice to strike LC91 on the front of a letter.]

(1) R.M. Willcocks, England's Postal History, p56.

Item 6



Item 7



POSTSCRIPT

Since I wrote this article further research has confirmed the origin of the 'Free Franks' in the Plumbe correspondence.

The young lady who signed herself E.T. was in fact Elizabeth Tempest of the parish of St Peter, Nottingham who married Capt. Thomas Plumbe (Royal Lancashire Militia) of the parish of St Nicholas, Liverpool, by licence at St Peters, Nottingham on 28th September 1763. At the time he was aged 24 and she 21. It is probable that she inherited the £15,000 on reaching the age of twenty-one so the letter (not a 'Free') can be dated as 1763. She was the daughter of J. Tempest, an attorney, of Nottingham, and it is likely that he was obtaining the 'Franks' for his daughter from his contacts and clients. A brother of Elizabeth was a Major and he would have provided the information that the Sherwood Foresters were marching in to Liverpool.

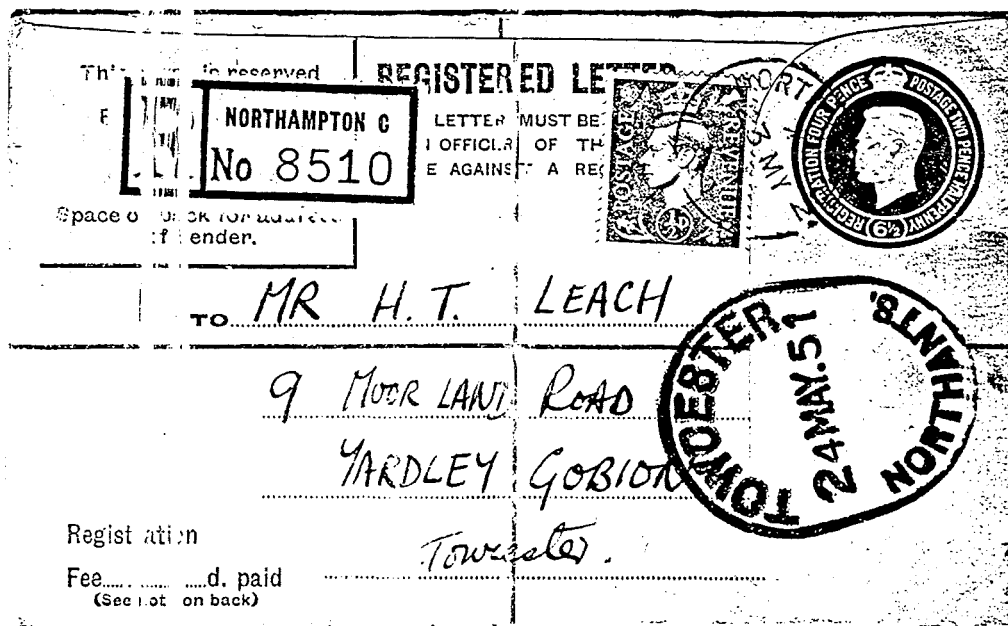
The eldest daughter of the marriage, Miss Tempest Plumbe, died aged 18 on 31st March 1789.

It is possible that John Simes the Nottingham postmaster from 1756 to 1772 knew Mr Tempest (the population of Nottingham was only 13,500) and allowed the fraudulent exercise to operate which gives credence to the theory of endorsement suggested earlier in this article.

AN 'ELONGATED' POSTMARK

By Derek Smeathers

The registered envelope illustrated below shows an unusually clear impression of the rubber datestamp used as a transit mark at Towcester. Rubber stamps were often short-lived either through being used with an oily ink or because of heavy treatment. They regularly had damaged rims, broken lettering or distorted appearance. This particular example is not one of those; it is of the distinctive shape which James Mackay calls "elongated" - sometimes mistaken for distorted circles. They can be found on any kind of "abnormal" mail, and although Mackay suggests they were used in the 1920s, their use continued for at least two or three decades. Look for them on Express Mail and parcel labels as well as registered letters.



FOUR TOWNSTAMPS ON ONE GREAT CROSSPOST LETTER

by John Hine

Although it is now rather dirty and ragged this undated free-franked entire gathered the exceptional number of four different townstamps on its journey from Staffordshire to Wiltshire. The approximate date of posting of c. 1761 has been estimated by a combination of an analysis of dates recorded in the County Catalogues for the four handstamps, plus the parliamentary history of the sender. The resulting data offers sound support to the "1761" date pencilled on the reverse. Unfortunately neither sender's name nor address has survived. The letter was put into the post at (or near) Uttoxeter and probably travelled south via Birmingham before joining the Great Crosspost at Kidderminster. Although sent to Coleerne in Wiltshire, it was addressed via Marshfield, Gloucestershire, which perhaps explains the Gloucester stamp. From there the letter was forwarded to Bristol and then along the Chippenham road to its final destination at Coleerne. The use of the "B RIS TOL" handstamp has previously been noted as a possible indication of missorting or delay on Crosspost letters. The lack of a London Bishopmark confirms the Crosspost route.

Date analysis:

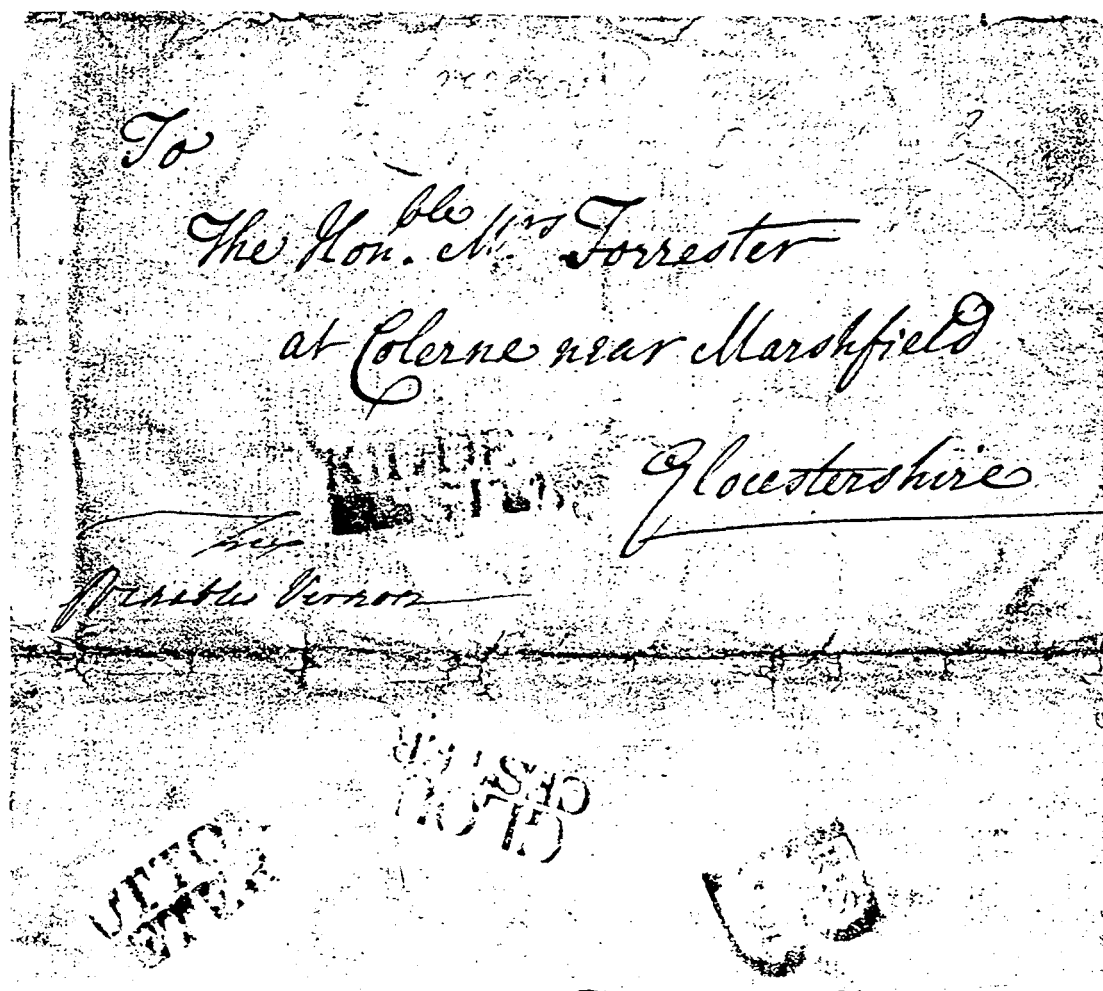
ST757	UTTOX/ETER	26x12	1754-89
WO397	KIDDER/MINSTER	31x11	1750-51
GL354	GLOU/CESTER	28x12	1761 only (c. 1758-62)
BS18	B RIS TOL	18x18	1755-75

Franked by:

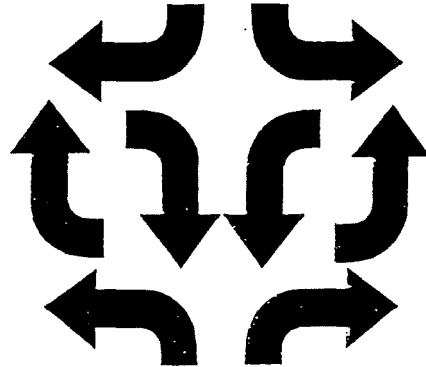
Either G. Venables-Vernon. George 1708-80, 1st Bn. Vernon, MP for Lichfield 1731-47 and Derby Borough 1754-62.

Or his son G. Venables-Vernon. George 1735-1813, 2nd Bn Vernon, MP for Weobley 1757-61, Bramber (Sussex) 1762-68 and Glamorgan 1768-80.

Fellow members are invited to submit details of any other 18th century letters with multiple townstamps, especially if related to the Great Crosspost.



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21

THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 40)

The first day of 1831 found Mr Rideout at Worcester and Malvern as the rider between the two places had been obstructed and consequently had missed the mail at Worcester. A little later in the month he went to Stourbridge as the contractor of the ride from Kidderminster to Wolverhampton had been accused of carrying passengers.

On the 9th February, Mr Rideout went to Ross as the mailcoach from Milford had not arrived because floods had made the road between Ross and Monmouth impassable. Investigations into the loss of a letter containing £10 sent from Cardiff to Dudley, and the abstraction of a sovereign from a letter sent from Rhayder to Carmarthen took up a great deal of Mr Rideout's time for over two months. However, he did find time towards the end of March to report on the possibility of opening a penny post in the area of Monmouth and Coleford.

Mr Rideout took charge of the Dursley office in mid-May as the deputy had been suspended. Eventually a Mr John Owen was appointed.

The journals for the next three months are missing.

At the start of September, Mr Rideout was in charge of the Cheltenham office. After he had instructed the new postmaster, a Mr Lucy, he went to Hereford to make the necessary arrangements for the introduction of a mailcoach from Bristol to Liverpool. Towards the end of the month, Mr Rideout looked into the possibility of free deliveries at Glasbury, Bruntless and Kington. Finally, he went to Ludlow to prepare for the new mailcoach.

Mr Karstadt was not in the Midlands in January 1831 but towards the end of February he went to Nottingham to resolve the matter of the office there which resulted in the dismissal of Mrs Rayner towards the end of March. While in Nottingham Mr Karstadt managed to visit Derby to investigate the possibility of accelerating the ride to Nottingham, and Bingham with the intention of introducing an official delivery. [I cannot find any report on this, so there was probably no change in the unofficial arrangement.]

The journal for April is missing but on 1st May we find Mr Karstadt in Nottingham completing the instruction of the new postmaster. He spent the rest of the month dealing with various penny posts in Lincolnshire.

As with the other surveyors, the journals for June, July and August are missing. The only mentions of any business in the Midlands during September were an inspection of the penny post between Dronfield and Sheffield, and the withdrawal of the extra charge at Delph.

Mr Churchill did not transact any business in the Midlands during January 1831, but one entry is of general interest, "12 to 15th Engaged in making the necessary arrangements for opening a daily communication between Warrington, Liverpool and Manchester via the Railroad by putting on a Horse Post to and from Newton Bridge to meet the Steam Carriages." Towards the end of February he spent a week in Rugeley installing a new postmaster. He went straight on to Lichfield as a complaint had been made against the postmaster for insolence and irregularities in the delivery. Mr Churchill's next call was at Cheadle to arrange for that place to be made a posttown.

In May, Mr Churchill visited Uttoxeter and Burton-on-Trent to set up a penny post to Repton, but he was ordered not to proceed further with this. Next, came inspections of the offices at Rugeley, Penkridge, Wolverhampton, Shifnal and Shrewsbury.

We find Mr Churchill at the start of September in Liverpool preparing for the new mailcoach to Bristol. From Liverpool he went on to Shrewsbury where he introduced, among other things, a second daily delivery. Apart from a short visit to Ellesmere, Mr Churchill spent the rest of the month in North Wales.

The journals for September 1831 appear to be the last that are to be found in Post 40. There is a reference to the journals a few months later but in 1833 Freeling talks of the quarterly journals from the surveyors. So, I think this series can now be considered as concluded.

ADDENDA

IMPERFECT STAMPING

Freeling wrote to the P.M.G. in January 1831, drawing attention to a letter in the *Morning Herald*, complaining about the "negligent manner in which the official stamps are affixed to letters." As a result of this letter, he had asked the President of the Inland Office to examine letters from all the posttowns. Out of 580 there were only 47 from where the letters appeared to be imperfectly stamped. Freeling asked permission that whenever he had reason to admonish a postmaster, the letter should be charged with the rate of postage.

The towns from the Midlands in the list were: Ollerton, Leek, Ashbourne, Rugeley, Bicester, Wheatley, Woodstock, Buxton, Chipping Norton, Shifnal, Lutterworth, Leicester, Kettering and Newcastle-under-Lyne.

[Ref: Post 40/41/1831]

THE LIVERPOOL TO BRISTOL MAILCOACH

In a report dated 1st September 1831, Mr Churchill detailed the changes made necessary in his district by the introduction of a mailcoach from Liverpool to Bristol on 12th September.

Both Shrewsbury and Ellesmere would receive their mail from the North earlier in the day and ample time to send a reply by the return mail. Shrewsbury was particularly favoured in that there would be two posts a day to Chester, Liverpool and Manchester.

The London letters for Ellesmere and Wrexham had been carried to and from Shrewsbury by the Chester and Hereford mailcoach which was to be withdrawn. Mr Churchill proposed therefore to serve those two places from Oswestry by extending the Oswestry and Ellesmere ride on to Wrexham which was considerably cheaper than providing a ride from Shrewsbury. The ride was to leave Oswestry immediately after the arrival of the London mail and so reach Ellesmere at 4 p.m. - about an hour later than previously. A consequence of sending the London bag for Ellesmere via Oswestry was that the distance was increased from 169 to 179 miles with the result that the postage became elevenpence instead of tenpence.

Church Stretton was placed in a worse situation in regard to its London letters which arrived at Shrewsbury and had been forwarded immediately by the mailcoach going to Hereford. Now, they would have to wait at Shrewsbury until midnight before they could be forwarded.

Mr Rideout did not submit a report until 15th October, over a month after the introduction of the coach. He said that Ludlow, Leominster and Hereford would benefit as regards their mail in both directions as the two mailcoaches arrived in the night, allowing the letters to be delivered in the morning and giving the whole day for a reply. At Ludlow and Leominster no additional delivery was necessary but at Hereford the pattern of deliveries was altered to such an extent as to make it impossible for the letter carrier to have any other employment. Consequently, the allowance for the letter carrier was raised from £30 p.a. to £36.8.0 p.a. Before the introduction of the new mailcoach the first delivery, which consisted of the letters brought by the London mail, had been at 1 p.m. The second delivery at 5 p.m. was of the letters brought by the ride from Ross and the last at 7 p.m. was for the Chester mailcoach. But now, the letters brought by the mailcoaches from Liverpool and Bristol were delivered at 8 a.m. The second and third deliveries were at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. respectively.

[Refs: Post 40/638/1831, 40/736/1831]

GREAT MALVERN MADE A POSTTOWN

On 24th November 1831, a Mr Carter wrote from "P.P. Office, Malvern Wells" stating that on 24th of that month he would have held that office for fourteen years and that he wished to resign on that date.

Mr Rideout in his report to Freeling said that Mr Carter's object was probably to get an increased salary as it was unlikely that they could find another receiver in that place. As far as Mr Rideout could recollect Malvern Wells consisted of the Wells House, Mr Carter's and "a very indifferent & low public house" in addition to the private houses. Also, the post office had, previous to Mr Carter's appointment, been at the Wells House and was given up by the present proprietor.

All of this drew Mr Rideout's attention to Great Malvern and he wondered, given the better facilities at the new General Post Office in London, if it would not be possible to make Great Malvern a posttown. On the last Bill to Great Malvern the penny post had produced 5s/11d. There were twelve Worcester letters sent to Malvern and three from Malvern addressed to Worcester and fifteen letters at fourpence each would produce 5/-. No loss could be incurred on the London letters for though Worcester was 115 miles from London (rate 9d), adding the eight miles to Malvern would give a distance of 123 miles (rate 10d). This was the same as the sum already paid - 9d to Worcester plus 1d for the penny post.

Mr Rideout went on to say that if Great Malvern were made a posttown, the Wells could be supplied by a penny post messenger.

[Ref: Post 40/798/1831]

IMPROVEMENTS AT DERBY AND BAKEWELL

Mr Karstadt wrote from Bakewell in November 1831, reminding Freeling that in September of the previous year Sir Thomas Denman had asked for an improvement in the post from Derby to Bakewell and Stoney Middleton. Although it had not been possible to grant Sir Thomas' request, he had been satisfied with the explanation given. However, while in Bakewell he, Mr Karstadt, had given the matter further consideration.

The main complaint was about the loss in time incurred by the London correspondence. The mailcoach from London reached Derby at 9.45 a.m. but the post to Bakewell was not dispatched until 11.30 a.m. as it waited for the letters brought by the Birmingham and Sheffield mailcoaches. The mailcoach to London left Derby shortly after 4 p.m. but the post left Bakewell at 4 a.m. so as to be at Derby in time for the mails to Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham and Nottingham. In fact, the post was arranged to suit the bye correspondence as that comprised three quarters of the whole correspondence..

Mr Karstadt then went on to explain how the mail could be made to arrive at Bakewell about one hour earlier. The mailcoaches which had been the main cause of the delay were those from Birmingham and Sheffield. The former now arrived somewhat earlier than it had done - 10.20 a.m., but the latter still arrived at 11 a.m. However it was possible to bring those letters round by Nottingham from where there was a horsepost which arrived in Derby even before the coach from London. As the coach from Birmingham arrived at 10.20 a.m., it should be possible to dispatch the Bakewell ride by 10.45 a.m., giving an arrival soon after 3 instead of 4 p.m.

There was one drawback to this arrangement in that the postage from a number of towns would increase as shown in the table below.

To Wirksworth from:	Sheffield & Derby	By Nottingham
Chesterfield	37 miles 7d	56 miles 8d
Sheffield	50 miles 7d	69 miles 8d
Barnsley	63 miles 8d	82 miles 9d
Wakefield	74 miles 8d	93 miles 9d
Leeds	83 miles 9d	102 miles 9d
To Bakewell from:	Sheffield & Derby	By Nottingham
Chesterfield	50 miles 8d	69 miles 8d
Sheffield	63 miles 7d	82 miles 8d
Barnsley	76 miles 8d	95 miles 9d
Wakefield	87 miles 8d	106 miles 9d
Leeds	96 miles 9d	115 miles 9d

Mr Karstadt pointed out that the route was already very circuitous, Bakewell being but 17 miles from Sheffield.

As regards the return post from Bakewell, Mr Karstadt pointed out that a departure at noon would suffice to meet the London mailcoach at Derby and would give Belper two hours in which to answer their London letters. However, the inhabitants of Wirksworth as well as Peter Arkwright of Cromford objected as they preferred the connection with the bye mails, so Mr Karstadt abandoned that proposal.

In a further letter written on the same day Mr Karstadt elaborated on the rerouting of some of the bags and showed how this would benefit Derby itself. He said that the bags for Derby from Leeds, Wakefield and Barnsley were brought up in the night as far as Sheffield by the mailcoach to London via Nottingham. They remained in Sheffield until 6.30 a.m. when they were forwarded by the mailcoach direct to Derby which also took the Sheffield and Alfreton bags and arrived in Derby at 11 a.m. It was possible for the Nottingham coach, which left Sheffield at 1 a.m., to take all of these bags, apart from that of Alfreton, to Nottingham where it arrived at 5.45 a.m. From there a ride to Derby left at 6.30 a.m., allowing the bags to be delivered at Derby by 9 a.m., two hours earlier than by the direct route. So, by the time the mailcoach from Birmingham arrived at 10.20 a.m., the letters from Sheffield etc. and those brought by the London mailcoach at 9.45 a.m. would be sorted and the delivery could start shortly after 10.30 a.m., an hour earlier which would allow the outlying parts of the town to reply to their London letters by return of post.

Again, the drawback was that the postage on letters from Chesterfield, Sheffield, Barnsley and Leeds would increase by one penny; there would be no change in the rate from Wakefield. Mr Karstadt pointed out that in the case of Market Deeping where the bags were carried an extra sixteen miles, "for official convenience", and no extra postage charged, and he wondered if Derby could be treated in the same way.

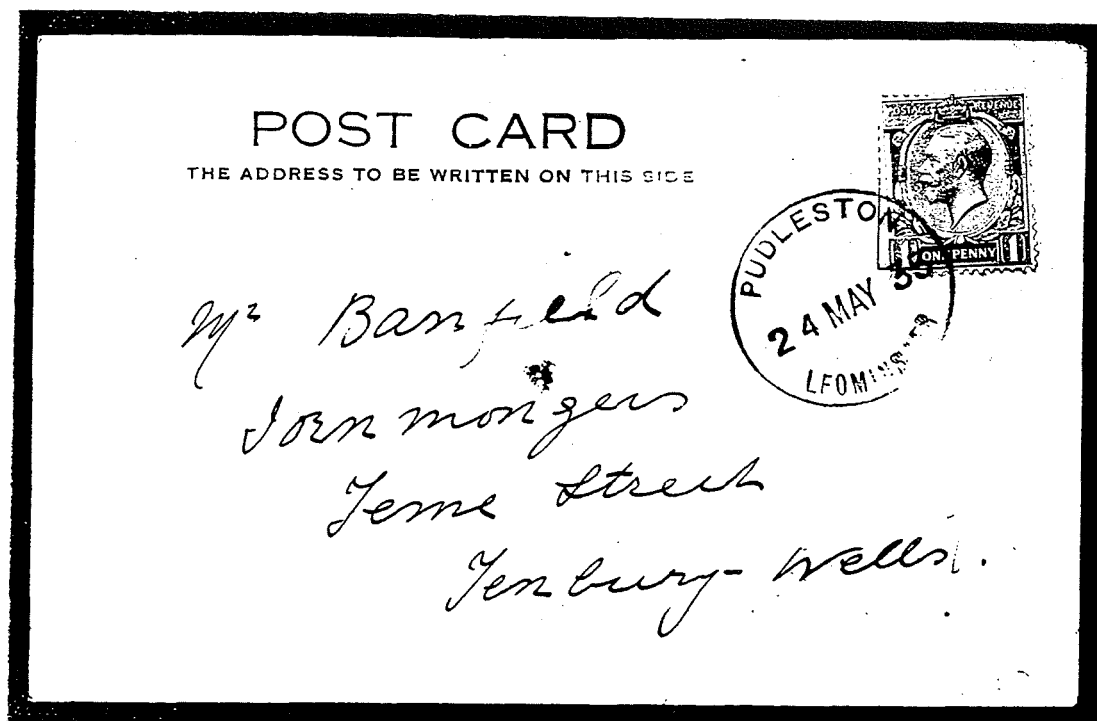
Freeling reported to the P.M.G. that they were clearly obliged by law to levy the postage according to the distance the letters travelled, and it had always been their principle to forward letters by the route, whether direct or circuitous, by which they would soonest reach their destination, so his Grace would be justified in adopting the plan and charging the postage according to the law.

Do any of our Derbyshire members have covers which illustrate the increased rates of postage?

[Ref: Post 40/847/1831]

AN UNRECORDED RUBBER

Roger Broomfield has kindly sent a copy of a postcard sent from Leysters, situated between Tenbury Wells and Leominster, bearing an adhesive cancelled by a rubber handstamp of Pudleston/Leominster. The office opened in 1931 and closed in 1979. This rubber is not recorded by Mackay and is the first ever seen by Roger. It is struck in a dark greenish-black ink.



THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

I hope to be able to produce this by the middle of June. Apart from one major article, the content as yet is undecided so please send articles to:

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



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