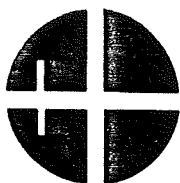


MIDLAND MAIL



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



President: Rev. C.M. Beaver

Chairman:
Roger Broomfield

Treasurer:
Elizabeth Lewis

Secretary:
Eric Lewis

Number 92, November 1995

NEW APPOINTMENTS

As a consequence of the sad deaths of Mike Young and Trevor Clewley, the following appointments were made at the September committee meeting:-

Treasurer - Elizabeth Lewis;
Birmingham Editors - Eric and Elizabeth Lewis;
Worcestershire Editor - Chris Jackson.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

On 11th November the meeting will take place at Carrs Lane Church Centre starting at 1.30 p.m. Members are invited to bring nine sheets on 'Matched Pairs'.

Our annual visit to the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent will take place on 16th December. Members are invited to gather from 10.30 a.m. and bring along standing displays. If you wish to join us for lunch which will be at 12.30 p.m., please contact Richard Farman (tel. 01283-566515) by 9th December. In the afternoon, starting at 2 p.m., Dennis Humphreys will show "Nottinghamshire".

The meeting on 13th January 1996, starting at 1.30 p.m. at Carrs Lane, will be devoted to displays of the undated circular marks of Birmingham, Derbyshire, Northants, Oxfordshire, Salop, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. There will be a committee meeting at 12.30 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to Streetly Philatelic Society who have joined us as associate members.

DISPLAY AT THE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCE

Earlier in the year, our Society received an invitation to display at the morning session on 30th September of the above conference, and the following gave displays:-

Derek Smeathers - Brackley and Byfield;
Chris Beaver - Black Country Postal History;
Richard Farman - Staffordshire Postal History, 1583 onwards;
Eric Lewis - Undeliverable and Redirected Mail in the Birmingham area.

Judging by the interest shown by the seventy or so people attending the conference, the displays proved very acceptable and our Society was thanked for entertaining their members.

M I D L A N D (G.B.) P O S T A L H I S T O R Y S O C I E T Y
L I B R A R Y R U L E S

1. VIEWING. Any item in the Society's library can be viewed by prior arrangement with the librarian.

2. BOOKS ON LOAN. Any member may borrow books for personal study for a period to be agreed with the librarian, normally up to three months. An exception to this being the Society's own publications.

On request, and if convenient to the librarian, books will be taken to meetings for members to collect. Books may be returned in a similar way.

Books may also be borrowed and or returned by post, cost of postage each way to be paid by the borrower.

Recorded delivery or registered post will be used depending on the value of the books. This can prove expensive and should be taken into account when requesting books in the post.

Upon receipt of books in the post, the borrower must immediately return the advice slip together with remittance for postage. Should the books be damaged in any way the librarian must be immediately informed in order that a claim can be made against Royal Mail. The wrapping must be retained to substantiate the claim.

Any books lost or damaged whilst in a members possession must be paid for by the member.

Books returned in the post must have adequate packing to prevent damage, any damage caused by failure to comply with this rule to be made good by the borrower, including the cost of replacing a damaged book should this prove necessary. Recorded delivery or registered post must be used as instructed by the librarian.

3. MIDLAND MAIL. A full set of the Society's journals are held in the Society's library. These are not available on loan but can be viewed by arrangement with the librarian.

4. THE SOCIETY'S OTHER PUBLICATIONS. One copy of the latest edition of each Society publication is held in the library. These are not available on loan but can be viewed by arrangement with the librarian.

5. PHOTOCOPIES. Photocopies of any article in Midland Mail or any other publication in the Society's library can be supplied by the librarian.

Exceptions to the above are photocopies from bound books which will not flatten without damage and from books produced by the Society. I.e. County sections as it is to be expected that members will purchase complete Society publications.

Rates of charges for photocopies based on each sheet photocopied irrespective of the amount required on the sheet, will be published from time to time in Midland Mail.

In order to comply with the Copyright Act it is essential that any photocopies supplied by the Society are for the members personal study and will not be reproduced in any way or passed on to any other person without the permission of the author of the book or article. Acceptance of photocopies to be on this understanding.

THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

Books may now be loaned from the Society library and a list of publications held, together with the library rules, appear below. Photostats from Midland Mail and from most books, provided they will fold back for printing, are also available at a cost of 4p per A4 page or part page plus postage if posted to you. There is no charge for the loan of books other than postage if posted. But bear in mind postage can be quite high on an heavy publication.

Apply to Eric Lewis, 27, Rathbone Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands. B67 5JG. Telephone No.0121.429.1222, for loan of books or supply of photostats.

PUBLICATIONS HELD

Postmarks of England and Wales	James A. Mackay
Post Offices in the United Kingdom,	A Post Office Publication (October 1961)
Collect British Postmarks, Fifth edition	Dr. J.T. Whitney
Special Event Postmarks of the United Kingdom	George R. Pearson (1984)
British Postmarks,	Alcock & Holland (1977)
Machine Cancellation of Wales, 1905-1985	Paul Reynolds
History of the Post Office of Worcester 1685-1985	M.H. Young
The Royal Mail in Bedworth, 1825-1925	Gay Parker and Robert Hunt
Mechanised Sorting of Mail	H. Dagnall
Short History of the Leamington Post Office	Peter Sharp
Postal History of Bromsgrove and District	M.H. Young
Story of Hinckley's Postal Service	Paul Hill
London Date Stamp Codes	W.G. Stitt Dibden
Sideways Duplex Cancellations of England and Wales	R.G. Traill and F.C. Holland
'Herewith My Frank' (second edition)	J.W. Lovegrove
England's Postal History.	R.M. Willcocks
British Postal Stationery	A.K. Huggins
Slogan Postmarks of the United Kingdom, 1917-1969	C.R.H. Parsons, C.G. Peachey and G.R. Pearson
Slogan Postmarks of the United Kingdom, 1970-1973	C.R.H. Parsons, C.G. Peachey and G.R. Pearson
Local Publicity Slogan Postmarks, 1963-1969	C.R.H. Parsons, C.G. Peachery and G.R. Pearson
Books and Documents, Dating, Permanence and Preservation	Julius Grant.

A detailed index of Midland Mail from number 1 will be distributed with Midland Mail when composed but please bear with us for a while on this as a comprehensive index will take some time to compile. It will show number of pages for each article.

It is the intention to add to the library from time to time with midland postal history and good quality general G.B. postal history publications. Books outside this category and magazines will not be held.

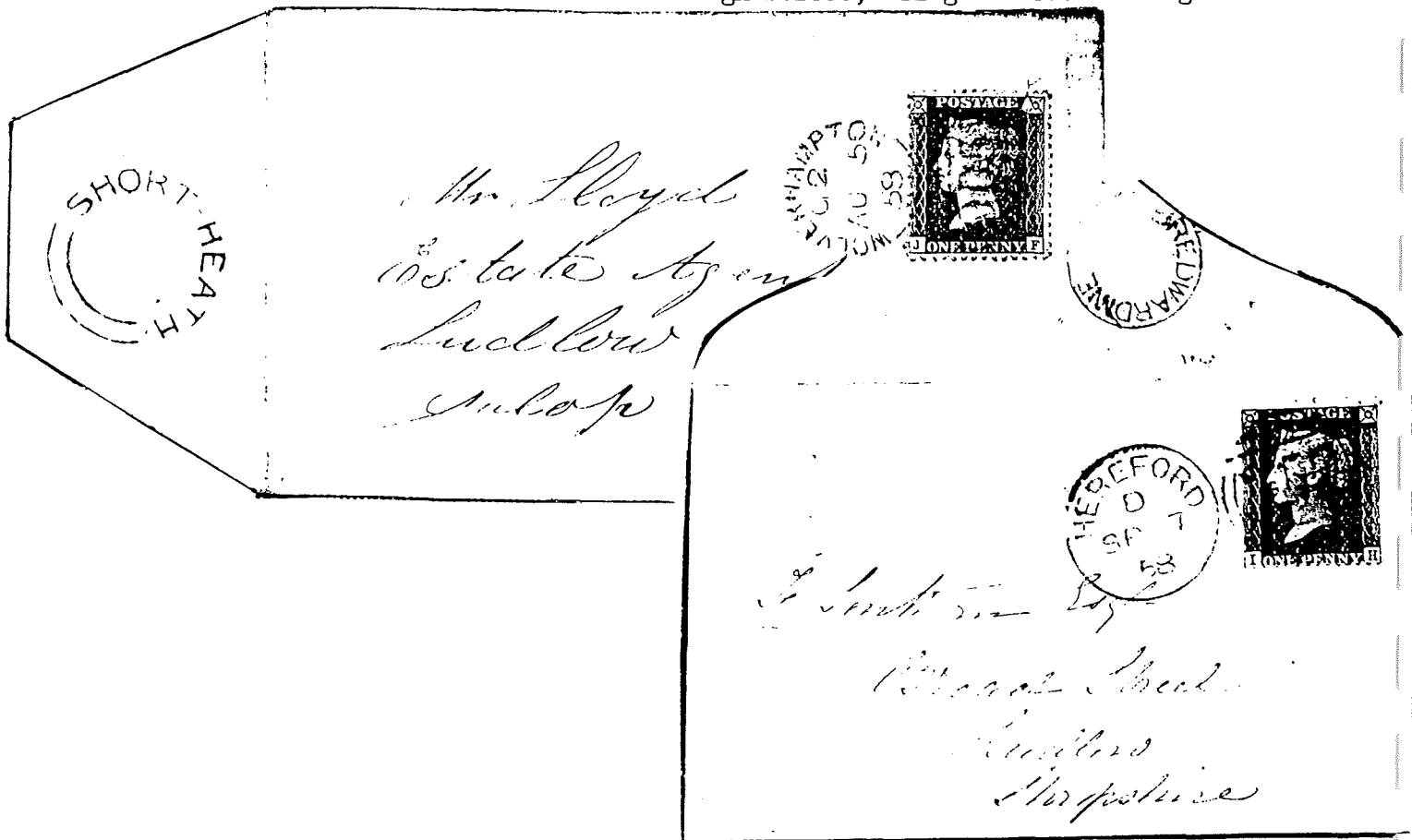
THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

The undated circular marks of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire formed the greater part of the displays at our first meeting of the season on 16th September.

Our President, Chris Beaver kicked off with a miscellany from Staffordshire, beginning with three items showing the conversion of the LeeK mileage mark to a UDC. Other items shown by Chris included the Wetley Rocks handstamp clearly changed from 'WHITLEY ROCKS' and a cover with the UDC of Walton-on-Trent as well as that of South Parade, Leamington. Undated circles from Bridgenorth, Ellesmere, Ironbridge and Newport - Salop were produced by Denis Salt. Guy Bridges started on the borders of Shropshire, producing an example from September 1839 of the UDC issued to Albrighton a receiving office under Wolverhampton. After a few other calls in Salop Guy took us to Leintwardine (Herefordshire but under Ludlow), Alcester (Worcs) and ended up in Northants with a lovely UDC in red of Guilsborough along with a Weedon skeleton.

John Calladine showed ten sheets of Gloucestershire UDCs, each said to be a "little different". Among them was a letter of 1853 from Hawkesbury Upton (UDC in blue ink) addressed to Berkeley, about eight miles to the north-west, which passed through Old Sodbury (UDC in yellow ink) on its way to the posttown of Chippenham which was twelve miles to the south-west and in another county. I believe that it was at this point your Editor produced some sheets of Leicestershire UDCs, which included that of Wymondham (under Oakham) and those of Harby and Waltham on the same cover.

After the tea interval Eric Lewis started with "Counties we don't collect". (I think that there is something illogical in that statement, but is there anything that Eric does not collect?) He started with a letter of 1841, showing the UDC of Thornbury (Glos), in which the writer, a schoolboy, mentioned sending two or three stamps to his sister. Was she an early stamp collector? Some other items from Eric's display are illustrated below. Elizabeth concentrated on Herefordshire with, among others, marks of Bromyard (1834 in green), Canon Pyon and The Trumpet. Roger Broomfield rounded off an interesting afternoon with Herefordshire material which included the UDCs of the Hereford TSOs - Eign Street, Bridge Street and High Town.



THE OCTOBER MEETING

On 7th October we gathered for our first ever meeting at Penkridge in Staffordshire. There were a number of standing displays to entertain us in the morning. Then in the afternoon, we came to the main business of the day, a talk by our President, Chris Beaver, on the subject of "Mailcoach Routes".

Chris started with copies of advertisements from newspapers of about 1785 which gave details of the route of each new mailcoach as well as details of those already running. He then went on to look at the 1789 list of contractors and the allowances they received. This was followed by a discussion of the timebills of 1790/1 and then those of 1797. Amongst the latter was that for the London to Weymouth mailcoach which was put on when the King was in Weymouth and which left London at the unusual time of 3 p.m. The first half of the talk closed with a look at a list of the mailcoaches running in 1836.

The second half consisted entirely of a showing of slides of some of the timebills in a set dating from 1827. We were shown virtually all of those relevant to the Midlands and a very interesting discussion ensued. It is hoped that it may be possible at a later date to give full details of these timebills in Midland Mail. Chris is to be thanked for arranging a fascinating day in Penkridge; I hope it will not be the last.

THREE UNRECORDED SURPRISES

by Rev. Christopher Beaver

At our meeting in October there were shown three Staffordshire items which at first glance looked to have no exceptional interest - a mileage mark, an undated circle, and a mileage removed, albeit each of them hitherto unrecorded.

There was already one first type mileage stamp for the county town in the British County Catalogue, ST571. This is 136 STAF/FORD, known in 1785-6, both before and after the introduction of mail coaches, that is the London and Liverpool on 25th July 1785 and the London, Chester and Holyhead on 10th October. For the first 2½ years these coaches were on the same route for 126 miles from London, through Daventry, Coventry and Lichfield as far as Wolseley Bridge. There the Chester mail (which previously had continued with the Liverpool as far as Stone) made for Stafford instead of crossing the Trent. (For as announced in 1785 it went via Stafford as well as Stone; but, accepting Christopher Saverland's recollections as correct, by the time he became surveyor it was running with the Liverpool for 140 miles, that is direct to Stone, cf MM81/6 and 82/14.)

Arthur Lloyd showed an example of this 136 mileage dated 1st May 1785 - pre-mail coaches. The surprise was that he also showed an equally clear 126 STAF/FORD dated 13th January 1785. Could the two stamps then have been intended for use on different days of the week on letters sent Londonwards by different routes? If the figure were 146 such might be the explanation! Unfortunately 126 cannot have been the correct mileage to London by any roads. So the stamp was altered to 136 sometime in the following weeks; it looks improbable a new stamp was issued.

126 STAF/FORD

136 STAF/FORD



C. Grativich

Nov 17

126 STAF/FORD



136 STAF/FORD

*Edmund Chalmers Esq.
North Church Court
Middle Temple
London*

J

G.B. POSTAL HISTORY

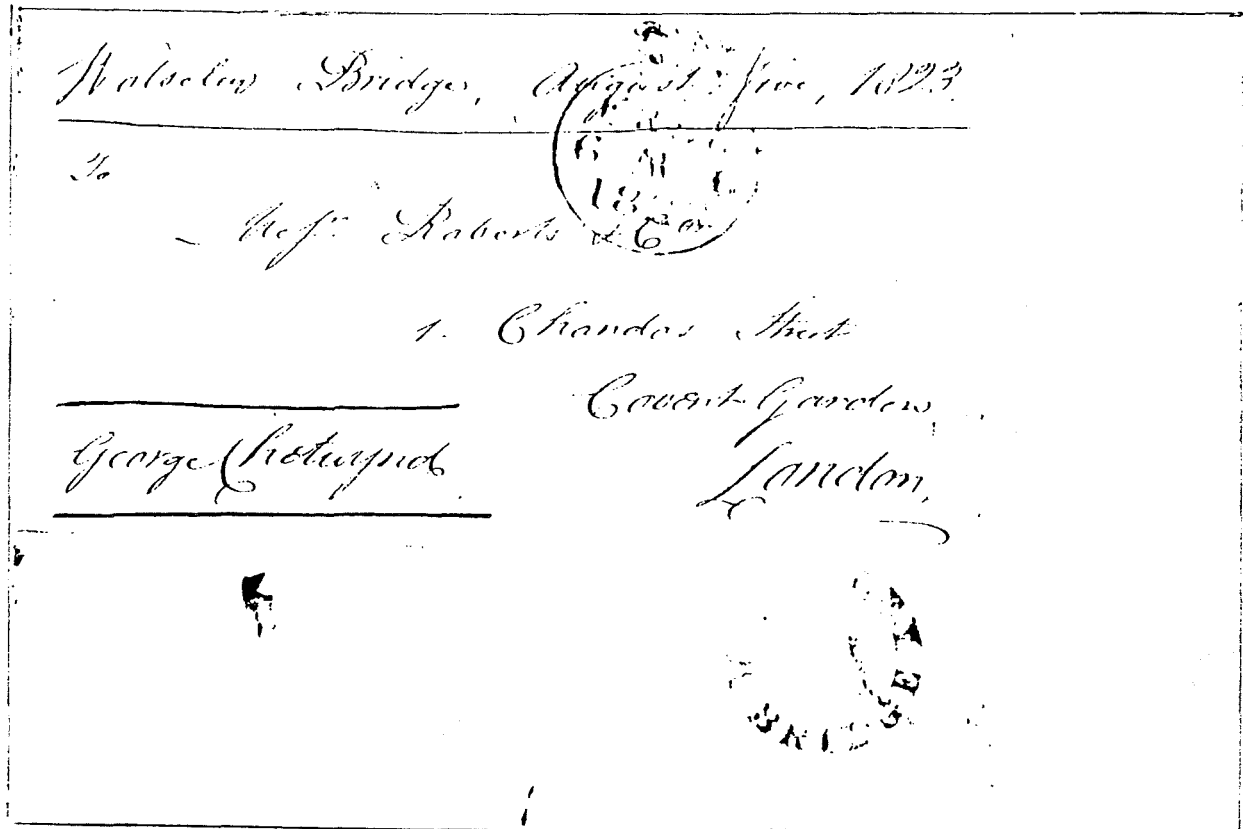
ALSO: Some Foreign, Ephemera, Post Boxes - etc.

Wants Lists - for specific items or for general
interests - will receive my personal attention

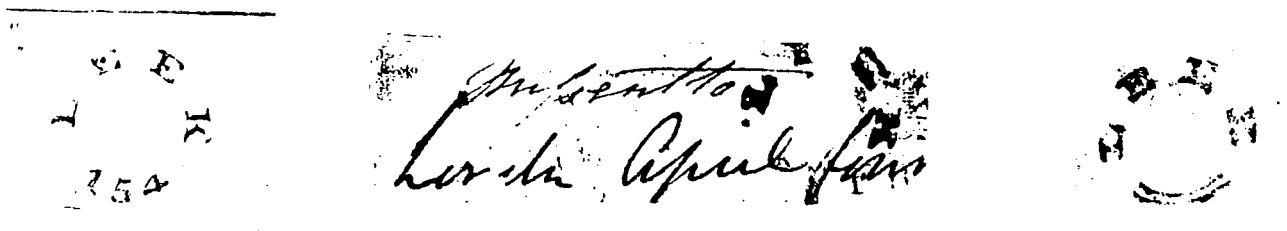
JIM HAMMOND

5 Staverton Rd, Daventry
Northants. NN11 4HL.
Tel. Daventry (0327) 71842

Arthur also showed the undated circle. Though less than a perfect strike it is clear enough to show the wording is not arranged continuously round the circle, but in two segments and without any arc, dash or dot. Place and date of writing are clear: Wolsley Bridge, August five 1823, the year confirmed by a London free stamp. There has been no previous record of a Midlands UDC used earlier than 1825. Apparently issued shortly before then are the 'fleurons', our type C3C of Bilston and Woore, not in the steel impression books which commenced in January 1825, and we did not include in our book the much earlier so-called 'horseshoe' and 'inverted horseshoe' types. It would appear that the new find if complete would read WOLSLEY/BRIDGE, no E between S and L. The two-line ST881 is also so spelt despite what was printed in the County Catalogue and the preference of George Chetwynd (M.P. for Stafford). There were to be three later undated circles all having the additional E, a type C3 issued in 1829, a C2 in 1841 and a C1 in 1857, of which the last has yet to be recorded in use. How will the latest find be classified, perhaps an additional category C3D?



The third discovery is an undated circle which will not find its way into our UDC book, because we exclude mileage erased as well as mileage stamps. The direction to excise mileage figures was issued in February 1829, and here is the 21 mm stamp of LEEK used in April 1829 with 154 removed - struck on a missent letter meant for Leith. It now becomes plain that the same stamp was in fact altered a second time by inserting arcs in the gap. In all three conditions the stamp is an undated circle, but only in the last does it qualify for the UDC book. The sequence is obvious now we have seen the the stamp with neither mileage nor arcs, so it ought not to have been a surprise it has turned up thus.



RESPONSES TO MM/91

Barrie Wildblood has confirmed that the ride from Chester (MM91/15) connected with the Holyhead coach at Whitehurst which is about 1½ miles north of Chirk, at the junction to Wrexham. The ride was necessary because the coach from Holyhead would not arrive in Wolverhampton in time for the mail to be taken to Stafford in order to catch the coach to Chester. This ride took the letters from Shifnal, Shrewsbury, Welshpool and mid-Wales etc to Chester in order to save at least twenty-four hours. It also carried the letters for the North Wales coast, so it had to arrive by about 1 a.m. to catch the Chester-Holyhead coach.

David Hardwick has sent his collection of Mid North TPO mailbag labels of which some are reproduced below.

T	COVENTRY	SSUX 2200
	MID NORTH TPO (PK15)	
	DIU 4	
E	NORTH HUMBERSIDE	5
	P3793CX CON 111119	

T	COVENTRY	2200 SA
	MID NORTH TPO	
E	DIV 2 (STN YORKS)	
	IN AT 2141	CON132776/067 9/89AS P3793C

T	STRATFORD ON AVON	2000 SX
	MID-NORTH TPO	
	(DIV 2) (STN YORKSHIRE)	
E	VIA COVENTRY OFFICE & BIRMINGHAM NEW ST	5
	CON 132776/85 1/90 AS P3793C	

T	STRATFORD ON AVON	2000 SX
	MID-NORTH TPO	
	(DIV 3) (WEST YORKSHIRE)	
E	VIA COVENTRY OFFICE & BIRMINGHAM NEW ST	5
	CON132776/067 9/89AS P3793C	

NOTES ON THE POSTAL HISTORY AND HANDSTAMPS
ELLESMERE TO c.1920

by Brian Atkins

- Most of 18th Century - Served through Oswestry. I have a letter dated 20 JUN 1746 to London from Ellesmere, but with SH408 OSWES/TRY handstamp.
- 1785 First known handstamp, a first type mileage, dated 26 NOV 1785, suggests an established office as it is using an official handstamp
- 1787 P.O. Account Books show Samuel Lowe as postmaster (1).
- 1789 Samuel Lowe confirmed as postmaster in the Universal British Directory. The entries for Ellesmere and Oswestry suggest they received their mail from London separately.
- 1800 Separate mails from London appear to be confirmed by Freeling in December 1800. An application made for a daily post by dispatching mails to the two towns on alternate days and opening a daily post between them (3).
- 1801 The above plan started on 13th/14th February (4). This may not have been the first time that the two towns were connected on a regular basis as a daily footpost linked them between July 1791 and October 1793 (5). The early postal arrangements for Ellesmere appear to be closely linked with Oswestry, more research is needed here.
- 1804 In December 1804, Saverland was in Ellesmere to run the office as the deputy had been dismissed for being in arrears (6).
- 1822 Pigot's Directory shows Thomas Lowe, of High Street, as the postmaster. Letters to Hereford on the Cross Post Mailcoach at 8.50 a.m. and to Chester at 3.40 p.m. Horsepost to Oswestry at 9.00 a.m., arriving back at 3.30 p.m.
- 1831 Cross Post Mail Coach extended north to Liverpool and south to Bristol on 3rd September 1831 (5).
- 1837 Grand Junction Railway opened July 1837. Soon after this Ellesmere receives its London mail on a cart from Whitmore Station (7).
- 1849 Above confirmed by a minute dated December 1849. Proposal to stop the cart from Whitmore and to open a ride from Wem to bring London mails to Ellesmere through Shrewsbury, giving an arrival at Ellesmere one hour earlier (7).
- 1851 Bagshaw's Directory shows Andrew Bickley, postmaster, in Scotland Street.
- 1853 Ellesmere demoted to a sub-office under Shrewsbury on 6th August. Cockshutt, a sub-office under Ellesmere, opened on 8th November 1850, would have gone too.
- 1855 Registered letter receipt signed A. Bickley on 13th October.
- 1868 Registered letter receipt signed E.K. Bickley.
- 1908 Mail carried on Cambrian Railway. The up mail arrived at Ellesmere (which had a late posting facility) at 10.00 p.m. (9).
- 1926 Kelly's Directory gives Capt. G. Vickery, sub-postmaster, Scotland Street.

References:- 1. Shropshire Post 25/4. 2. Shropshire Post 39/7
 3. Shropshire Post 35/6 4. MM84/10 5. Shropshire Post 32/5 6. MM87/6
 7. Shropshire Post 22/7 8. UDC book 3rd ed. p 92. 9. Shropshire Post 33/6/.

EL3 (SH130).

179 ELLES
MERE

Size: 35x12mm.

Recorded dates: 26 NOV 1785 - 19 FEB 1789

Colour: Black.

EL5 (SH132).

ELLESMERE

Size: 49x5mm.

Recorded dates: 18 DEC 1795 - 2 MAY 1799

Colour: Black.

EL7 (SH134)

ELLESMERE

181

Size: 45x11mm.

Recorded dates:

1803 - 18 JAN 1807

Colour: Black.

EL9 (SH136)

ELLESMERE

181

Size: 40x11mm.

Recorded dates: 24 OCT 1807 - 21 JUL 1824

Colours: Black, Yellow.

EL11 (SH139)

ELLESMERE
170

Diameter: 26mm.

Recorded dates: 22 APR 1825 -

1829

Colours: Black, Yellow.

EL13 (SH141)

ELLESMERE

Diameter: 26mm.

Recorded dates: 30 JUL 1829 - 5 JUN 1833

Colour: Black.

EL15 (SH144)

ELLESMERE

Diameter: 29mm.

Date of Issue: 8 MAR 1837 (SIB 2/37)

Recorded dates: 4 JUL 1837 - 27 NOV 1839

Colour: Black.

EL17 (SH146)

ELLESMERE
DE23
1839

Diameter: 28mm.

Date of Issue: 24 DEC 1839 (SIB 4/37)

Recorded dates: 9 JAN 1840 - 25 JUN 1853

Colours: Black, Blue, Green.

EL19 (SH148)

Too Late.

Size: 16x3mm.

Recorded dates:

1851 -

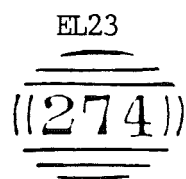
1853

Colours: Blue, Green.

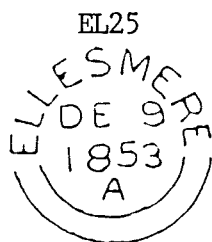
There is no record of this in the Steel Impression Books. Was it locally made?
If any readers have the actual dates of use, please send details.



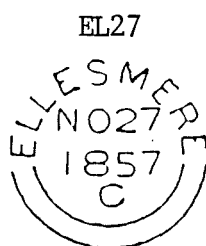
Size: 23x19mm.
 Date of Issue: APR/MAY 1844
 Recorded dates: 21 JUN 1844 - 12 JUL 1868
 Colour: Black.



Size: 22x18mm.
 Date of Issue: 27 JAN 1858 (14A/130)
 Recorded Dates: 24 AUG 1864 - 5 MAY 1869
 Colour: Black.



Diameter: 25mm.
 Date of Issue: 9 DEC 1853 (12/8)
 Recorded Dates: 10 JAN 1854 - 15 JUL 1858
 Colours: Green, Blue/Green, Blue.
 Codes: A & C (A commonest).



Diameter: 24½mm.
 Date of Issue: 27 NOV 1857 (14A/89)
 Recorded Dates: 20 JUN 1858 - 27 AUG 1859
 Colour: Blue
 Code: C



Diameter: 20mm.
 Date of Issue: 7 NOV 1857 (14A/72)
 Recorded Dates: 25 APR 1858 - 11 JAN 1865
 Colour: Black, Blue, Green.
 Codes: A, A inverted.



Diameter: 20mm.
 Date of Issue: 16 JAN 1866 (25/60)
 Recorded Dates: 1 SEP 1867 - 23 AUG 1871
 Colour: Black.
 Code: A



Diameter: 23mm
 Date of Issue: 24 APR 1877
 Recorded Dates: 12 JUN 1877 - 5 NOV 1877
 Colour: Black.
 Code: A.



Diameter: 19mm.
 Date of Issue: 15 OCT 1887 (45/362)
 Recorded Date: 18 JAN 1900
 Colour: Black.
 Code: C.

EL37



Diameter: 23½mm.

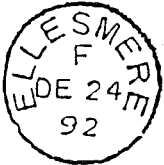
Date of Issue: 18 JAN 1910 (49/164)

Recorded Dates: 30 APR 1913 - 20 MAR 1922

Colour: Black.

Times: 11.15AM, 2.15PM, 6.30PM, 9PM.

EL40



Diameter: 21mm.

Date of Issue: Not known.

Recorded Date: 24 DEC 1892

Colour: Black.

Code: F.

EL43



Diameter: 19½mm.

Date of Issue: Not known.

Recorded Dates: 24 SEP 1900 - 10 FEB 1912

Colour: Black.

Code: *

EL46



Diameter: 21½mm.

Date of Issue: Not known.

Recorded Date: 2 JUL 1901

Colour: Black.

Time: 7PM.

EL49



Size: 20mm diameter & 27x20mm.

Date of Issue: 20 OCT 1880 (38/204)

Recorded Dates: 12 APR 1881 - 27 MAY 1881

Colour: Black.

Code: B.

EL52



Size: 20mm diameter & 28x19½mm.

Date of Issue: 15 OCT 1887 (45/362)

Recorded Dates: 27 MAR 1888 - 8 SEP 1889

Colour: Black.

Codes: A, B and C.

EL55



Size: 20½mm diameter & 27x19mm.

Date of Issue: Not known.

Recorded dates: 22 SEP 1900 - 20 DEC 1904

Colour: Black

Times: 11.45AM, 6.30PM, 9.30PM.

EL58



Diameter: 20mm.

Date of Issue: Not known.

Recorded Dates: 2 AUG 1904 - 1 JAN 1909

Colour: Black

Times: 3AM, 2.30PM, 7.30PM, 8.30PM, 9.30PM.

EL60



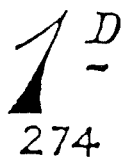
Diameter: 26mm.
 Date of Issue: Not known.
 Recorded Dates: 23 MAY 1905 - 3 JUN 1920
 Colour: Black.
 Times: 11.15AM, 11.30AM, 1.45PM, 7.15PM, 9PM,
 9.30PM.

EL64



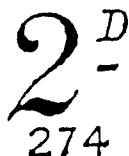
Diameter: 26mm.
 Date of Issue: Not known.
 Recorded Date: 17 JUN 1924
 Colour: Black.
 Time: 9.15PM.

EL66



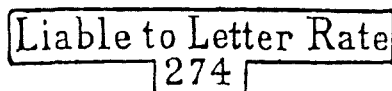
Size: 15x19mm.
 Date of Issue: 20 DEC 1909 (49/154)
 Recorded Date: 2 SEP 1912
 Colour: Black.

EL68



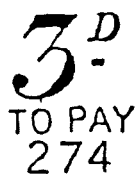
Size: 16x19mm.
 Date of Issue: 20 DEC 1909 (49/154)
 Recorded Dates: 3 JUN 1920 - 25 FEB 1948
 Colour: Black.

EL70



Size: 51x11mm.
 Date of Issue: 5 JAN 1910 (49/159)
 Recorded Date: 3 JUN 1920
 Colour: Black.

EL72



Size: 14x21mm.
 Date of Issue: 13 MAR 1919 (57/226).
 No recorded examples.

Handstamps are photocopies of original examples wherever possible or, from about 1835, courtesy of P.O. Archives.

If readers have any Ellesmere postmark material, I would be grateful if they could send information to me concerning: date, colour and code, if applicable. Photocopies would be particularly welcome.

Brian Atkins, Box 959, Lake Cowichan, British Columbia, Canada, V0R 2G0.

THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 18)

For virtually the whole of January 1809, Mr Saverland was in Oswestry instructing a new deputy and his assistant. On his way to Shrewsbury he called at Welshpool and then Llanfair where he opened a receiving house. After he had spent two days inspecting the Shrewsbury office, Mr Saverland went on to Shifnal to look into an allegation that the deputy had sent false returns to London; he reported that he felt that the postmaster was innocent.

On 24th March, Mr Saverland went to Rugby to investigate a complaint against the postmistress, and then, on the following day, to Braunston where the inhabitants had asked for "a regular Post Office". The suggestion that the village be served by a penny post from Daventry met with general approval. Whilst he was visiting the offices at Southam and Warwick, Mr Saverland was summoned to London where he spent ten days inspecting the accounts of the Harwich packet boats before going on to stay in that port for a week, "examining the Captains, Officers & Seamen as to the prices of Wages, victualling & general expence of keeping in good order & maintaining the several Packets on that station." This was followed by ten days in London consulting Freeling on a number of issues including better methods of checking the accounts of the postmasters.

Mr Saverland arrived at another packet station, Holyhead, on 22nd May. He gave directions for "two Packets to be constantly kept afloat at their Moorings, & when one had left her Moorings & put to Sea with a Mail or Express, for another Packet to supply her place at the next high Water." He visited the lanthorn at "our Light House upon Salt Island" which had been reported to be in a state of disrepair. He found that the heat of the lamp had decomposed the putty between the frame and the plate glass so letting in water. He ordered the removal of the old putty, the painting of the frame, the insertion of new putty, and a second painting.

In the following three months, Mr Saverland's duties took him outside the Midlands for most of the time. From 6th to 18th June, he was instructing the new postmaster at Market Drayton. He went to Llanrwst in July to open a communication with the Shrewsbury Road at Bettws y Coed.

The first four days of September found Mr Saverland visiting the offices at Hinckley, Atherstone and Tamworth to instruct the deputies about the new bye and short letter forms which were to be introduced on 6th October. Towards the end of September he accompanied Mr Scott to Manchester to prepare for the introduction on 6th October of the mailcoach from Chester to Manchester.

After that business had been completed he carried out a survey in Central Wales where, amongst other things, he attended a meeting of the proprietors of the Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth mailcoach. Later in the month he visited Shifnal and Newport; at the latter place he arranged the arrest of Joseph Bailey, formerly an assistant in the post office there, on suspicion of having stolen a £5 banknote out of a letter.

On 28th October, Mr Saverland was asked by Freeling to leave Claybrook for London so as to attend to the affairs of the packet office in Falmouth. After he had spent a week in the capital examining the books and papers he travelled down to Falmouth where he remained for over a month. [A few months later, Saverland was to take charge of the packet office at Falmouth and was involved with the mutiny there in 1810 which is described in a series of articles in Postal History, nos 215 - 217.] On his way back to London he looked into a request from the inhabitants of St Mawes for a better postal service and inspected the office at Plymouth Dock.

Apart from three days at Newark trying to overcome the delays caused by heavy falls of snow, Mr Western was in Lincolnshire for the whole of January 1809. In his report on riding work for that month he described the weather as having been in turn: snow, a sudden thaw, frost with repeated heavy falls of snow, a thaw accompanied by heavy rain.

His only official journey in February was to Wirksworth and then Tideswell where he installed a new deputy. On 22nd March, Mr Western set off for London, "on various matters respecting the district & removing to that lately occupied by Mr Lott - on 4th April set off for Bristol."

Mr Scott, who succeeded Mr Western left London on 6th April and called at St Albans on his way to Northampton where he spent three days. He found that letters for Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and part of Suffolk posted after 3 p.m. were delayed by being sent on the following day to Stilton instead of being sent up to London at night. He explained to the postmaster the overseas rates of postage as well as the treatment of redirected crosspost letters.

At Market Harborough, Leicester and Loughborough he inspected the office and gave each deputy "such information as he stood in need of", a phrase that crops up a number of times in subsequent journals. He arrived in Derby, which was to be his home-base, on 23rd April and stayed there for three days, "revising the duties & making myself acquainted with the internal arrangement of the Office and the manner of disposing of the letters within the delivery." The new broom then proceeded to sweep through Ashbourne, Leek, Macclesfield and Stockport on his way to Manchester.

On 13th May, Mr Scott arrived in Buxton to put on an express ride to Leek for the season; for the rest of the month and much of following three months he was occupied in Lancashire and Yorkshire. However, towards the end of July he appeared in Leek to investigate a complaint against the postmaster and then went on to Nottingham to inspect the office there. In August, while in Manchester he altered the circulation of letters to "Uxbridge, Beaconsfield, High Wycombe, Tetsworth, Wheatley, Thame, Missenden etc from all the Towns above Manchester in my District, sent them by the Cross Post to Manchester and from thence to Birmingham, by which means they will save a day, and be delivered seven times a week instead of six."

The offices at Nottingham and Newark received a visit in September. At the latter place he said that letters for Suffolk were to be sent by the crosspost rather than via London. Shortly before he went to Manchester with Mr Saverland, he went to Alfreton to make that a bye-letter office.

In October, Mr Scott dispensed information at Wirksworth, Nottingham, Bingham, Newark, Grantham, Stamford, Oakham, Uppingham and Kettering. At the last four he gave the same instruction regarding the letters for Suffolk that he had given at Newark. The last two days of the month found him in Northampton. He altered the rates of postage on letters to Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and part of Suffolk and directed the postmaster to send such mail to Woburn by the night mail rather than London so as to make use of the recently opened post between Bedford and Huntingdon.

After he had left Northampton, Mr Scott spent three days in both Higham Ferrers and Wellingborough to make them bye-letter offices. His travels then took him through Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, Mansfield, Chesterfield and on to Sheffield where he found it necessary to make out a new circulation, "the List of Post Towns being so defaced and obliterated that neither the Taxes, nor the Towns to which the Letters were to be forwarded could be discerned."

Offices which were inspected in December included those at Bawtry, Retford, Thrapstone and Higham Ferrers. At Wellingborough Mr Scott was assured by the deputy "in the most positive terms" that no one was ever admitted into his office as had been alleged. Mr Scott was on leave in Gloucestershire for the final week of the year but was still "employed in the correspondence of my District."

The start of 1809 found Mr Woodcock in Abergavenny installing a new deputy. No other journeys are recorded in his journal for that month. This was probably caused by the very bad weather which he described as making it "impossible for the Mails to be conveyed either by coach or horse with the dispatch and regularity that might be wished."

For a fortnight, starting on 27th March, Mr Woodcock was in Tenby to instruct a new deputy. In his report on the riding work for March he wrote that the postmaster of Banbury had expressed a wish to carry the bags from Woodstock himself. As the allowance was paid to the postmaster, Mr Woodcock could see no reason why the postmaster should not undertake the contract instead of the proprietor of a coach running between Oxford and Banbury via Woodstock. He added that complaints had been made about the late arrival at Banbury and that the carriage had none of "the requisites of a mailcoach." Yet on 27th April he set out for Banbury to take charge of the office as the postmaster had been dismissed. No new deputy had been appointed by 10th May when he left for Oxford to find a new contractor for the ride to Abingdon and Wantage.

In his report on the riding work for April he commented that in the ride between Birmingham and Bewdley, the arrival at Dudley from Stourbridge had sometimes been later than it should have been. Although the contractor had been reprimanded, ten minutes was needed at Stourbridge to sort the Dudley letters and fifteen minutes at Kidderminster for the Stourport letters.

It was the opening of a "regular Post Office" at Stourport that took up three weeks in June prior to Mr Woodcock going to Oxford to prepare for the introduction of a mailcoach to Stroud. Visiting the various towns on the route of the coach occupied him for the whole of July.

A fortnight at the beginning of September was spent in charge of the Leominster as the postmaster, Mr Harris, had been declared bankrupt. The new deputy was a Mr Nicholas. For the rest of the month, Mr Woodcock was at home preparing instructions and distributing the new forms for the short and bye-letter accounts to the deputies and sub-deputies.

The only other business involving the Midlands in the remainder of the year was a three day visit to Worcester on "very particular official business." I have not been able to find the details of that business.

ADDENDA

THE STROUD MAILCOACH

In April 1809, Thomas Hasker wrote to the Postmasters General:

"I have the honour to state to your Lordships that Mr Wathen of the Cloathing County of Stroud Water, Minchinhampton, Uley, Dursley, Berkley etc called here being deputed by the Principal Inhabitants to report their request for a Mail Coach and being in company with Mr Willan who wants to get rid of an opposition which the Inhabitants have promised to drop if He and Company will undertake such a Mail Coach.

I must observe that your Lordships have not so great an object to establish this Coach as many great Roads and all the Towns except Abingdon and the Cloathing district are served with their Mail by the Oxford & Bristol and Bath Mail Coach which besides carrying the General Letters circulates a very valuable bye correspondence between Oxford and Bath and Bristol, yet the Boro of Abingdon and the Cloathing district is of considerable moment and so good an opportunity may not occur again.

And I beg leave to state should it be consented to by your Lordships that it appears to me the best manner of carrying the Mail will be by an Auxiliary Mail Coach that is to leave London without the Mail about 6 p.m. to reach Benson before the Mail ... which would be brought by the Worcester and then to proceed thro Abingdon, Faringdon, Fairford, Lechlade, Cirencester, Minchinhampton to Stroudwater which place they would reach about half past eleven [a.m.] in summer and later in winter, to return from Stroud at half past two, and be at Benson about Twelve midnight in time for the Worcester Mail Coach to bring the Bags to London.

...Your Lordships will see another branch from Cirencester to Tetbury and Kingscote to which place the Contractors want to carry the Mail by Coach and also do the Rides to Ulay, Dursley, Buckley and Wootton under edge."

Hasker went on to say that the considerable increase in expence had to be weighed against the value of the correspondence of the Stroud area and the number of requests that had been received for a mailcoach.

Their Lordships declined to establish the coach on account of the cost. But, in the June, Hasker reported that the contractors were willing to carry the mail for a price of a halfpenny a mile, giving a cost of £106.09.02 p.a. for the journey between Dorchester and Stroud, and the branch to Kingscote. In addition £99 was needed for three guards plus a small increase of salary at the Dorchester sub-office where the bags from the two lines of road were exchanged. A saving of £77 resulted from the withdrawal of the ride from Cirencester through Minchinhampton to Stroud, leaving an overall increase of about £128.

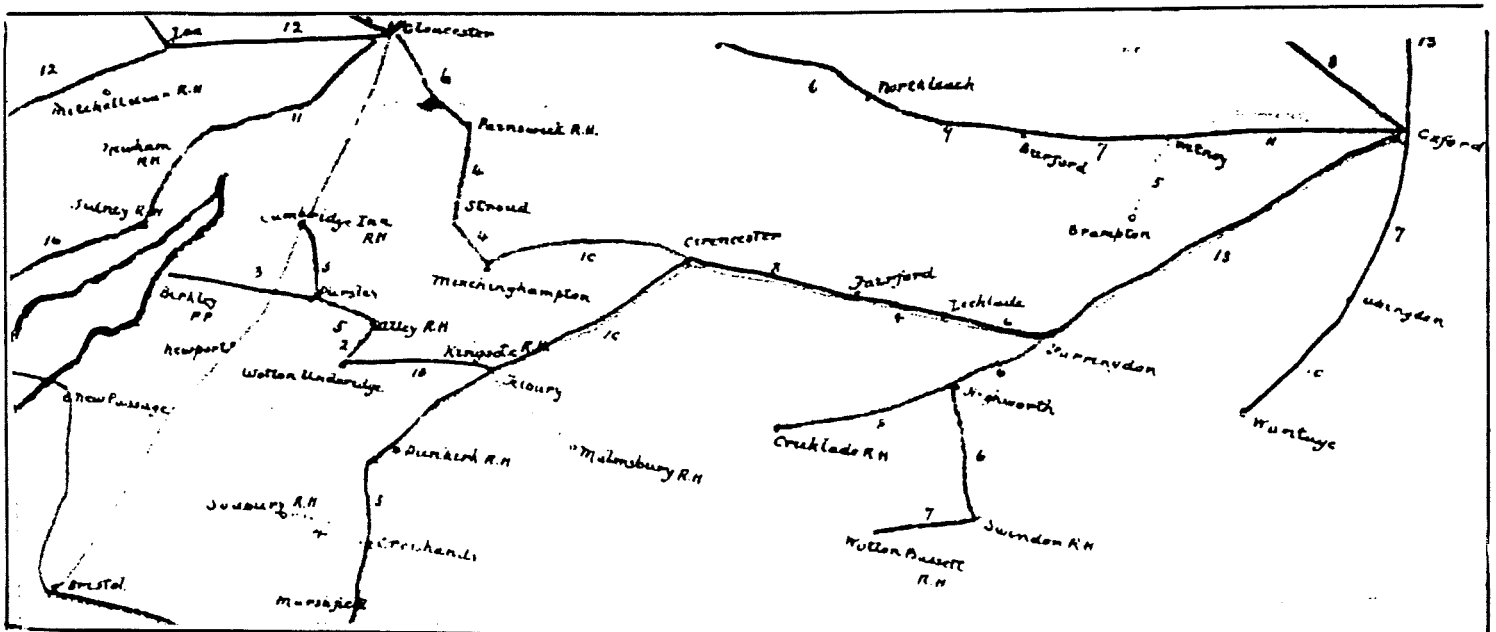
However, in the July, Mr Woodcock reported that to give the district beyond Cirencester the full benefit of the new arrangement it would be necessary to alter some of the posts in the area. A footpost was provided from Stroud to Painswick to take on the London letters, and the Gloucester, Painswick and Stroud ride was extended to Minchinhampton. A Mr Kirkby of Hunters Hall (Kingscote) was paid to take the letters to and from Wotton-under-Edge and also to and from Uley and Dursley.

These last posts were the subject of reports in June and July 1810. In the former month, Mr Woodcock proposed that the carriage of the bags between Kingscote, Wotton-under-Edge and Dursley should revert to the scheme used prior to the introduction of the mailcoach, in which the messenger was sent to Kingscote with the up letters to meet the post from London and take the London bags instead of attempting "for the most part ineffectually" to set off with the bags from Kingscote on the arrival of the coach and to return with the answers the same day.

However, in July, Mr Woodcock said that the clothiers had held a meeting and had decided to persevere with the current arrangements. They were willing, if the Post Office increased Mr Kirkby's pay by £10 to £60 p.a., to make it up by subscription to £80 p.a. Their Lordships assented to this further payment.

References: Post 40/53N/1809 40/160/1809 40/83R/1810

The map below is part of that showing Mr Woodcock's district in January 1814 which was after the withdrawal of the coach but it does show most of the places mentioned above.



BYE-LETTER ACCOUNTS

Freeling stated in 1809 that there had been no alteration for many years in the forms kept by the postmasters for the bye and cross road accounts, though it had often been suggested that some improvement was needed. He went on to outline what was then the current practice. A postmaster enclosed in every bag dispatched a bill (fig. 1) in which he had inserted the amount of paid and unpaid postage.

Post-Office in <i>Bristol</i>	the	of	180	at	l.	s.	d.
Letters for <i>Leicester</i>				unpaid	2	10	
N ^o of forward Letters				paid		3	
Postm ^r .							

fig. 1

The receiving postmaster totalled up the letters and if he found that he agreed with the figures in the bill he entered them for the appropriate date in the monthly account (fig. 2). If he disagreed with the totals, he still entered them in the monthly account but entered the difference in one of the last two columns, depending on whether it was an overcharge or an undercharge. (A similar form was filled in by the dispatching postmaster.) The postmasters then sent their monthly accounts to London where they were compared and the postmasters debited accordingly. Unless the postmasters deliberately undercharged one another, a practice that would soon have been detected, this method of accounting made it difficult, if not impossible, for the postmasters to defraud the Revenue.

Although it was certainly true, said Freeling, that the postmasters did not and could not always total accurately the amounts of the bags, the columns for overcharged and undercharged letters in the monthly form were rarely used. Thus some other method of making the postmasters pay more attention to the totalling of the charges and balancing accounts was needed. It was decided to introduce a different bill (fig. 3) to be sent in the letter bags. This differed from its predecessor in that the receiving postmaster had to insert the appropriate totals, at the time of telling, and where these did not agree with those of the sending postmaster, the bill was to be submitted with his monthly account. Also his totals were to be entered in the monthly account.

The other alteration was that a space was marked "Additional Postage on Letters examined and Re-charged" to encourage the postmasters to correct errors in charging when they were detected. Freeling added that postmasters had long been expected to make surcharges on bye as well as London letters but that the lack of an appropriate space on the bye-letter form had led to many postmasters never making surcharges.

The form for the monthly accounts was changed slightly in that the last two columns were omitted. (For such a form completed at Leicester see MM51/15.)

Post-Office,	180	247	
Letters for	Amount sent.	Amount received.	
	Unpaid...£	£	Additional Postage on Letters examined and Re-charged...£
	Paid...£	£	
N ^o of Money Letters	Postmaster.		Postmaster.

fig. 3

fig. 2

[illegible]

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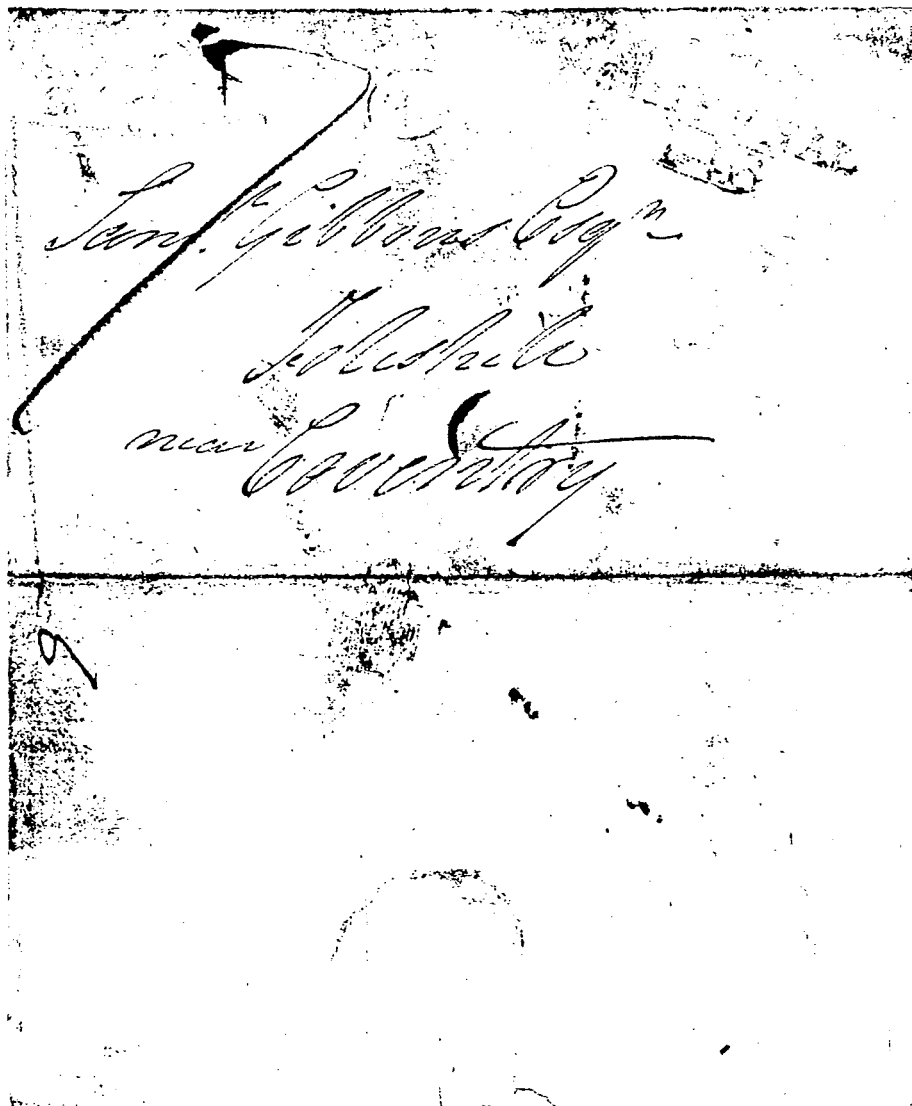
FOLESHILL REVISITED

by Barrie Wildblood

In MM88 a letter from Foleshill was shown with an extra 2d. charge. Shown here is a letter to Foleshill, again with an additional 2d. being charged. There is, of course, no connection between the two, other than the Foleshill one.

The letter was sent from Shifnal, their mileage mark being struck in reddish-brown, which unfortunately does not show up well in reproduction. No date, but luckily the paper is watermarked, this being 1812, so presumably was used around 1813/14. The 7d. originally charged would be correct for the route via Wolverhampton Birmingham and Stourbridge.

The 9 is probably for an unofficial post from Coventry, although the Society's "Local Posts" does not mention any such service, except for that in the late 18th Century between Hinckley and Coventry. The extra 2d. for a distance of only three miles seems rather steep to me, unless they paid for incoming letters only, outgoing letters passing free. If anyone has any information I'd be most grateful to hear of it.



THE HANLEY BOXED '5' HANDSTAMP

by Dr Malcolm Nixon

When the Rev. Newland wrote to the Rev. Fairbrother at Dereham, Norfolk, on 26th November 1816, the ill-fated Leicester to Liverpool mailcoach had already been running for thirteen months and for a similar period the receiving houses in the Potteries had used numbered handstamps. The letter was initially charged one penny which was subsequently deleted and the full charge of one shilling substituted (i.e. 11d. G.P. and 1d. P.P.) Interestingly, the Hanley receiving house applied their boxed '5' handstamp in red/brown. Southbound letters did not pass through Newcastle at this time, instead travelling to Uttoxeter where the postmaster applied the first type Penny Post handstamp in red.

'Local Posts' records the earliest use of the Hanley boxed '5' as 26th March 1827, so this letter pushes this back to the earliest days of the Potteries receiving house handstamps - although still some way after the first recorded uses for Lane Delph and Lane End.

Ref: Local Posts of the Midland Counties, pp. 270-1, 278. MLP 839; MLP 874.



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MINCHINHAMPTON PRIVATE DELIVERIES

In a letter to Freeling dated 4th November 1801, Mr Woodcock outlined the details provided by the postmaster of Minchinhampton of the number of letters and newspapers carried by the private messengers.

The messenger to Nailsworth and Horseley who went daily took out in one week 172 letters and 24 papers and brought in 124 letters. For this he was paid one penny on every letter for Nailsworth, the principal delivery, and two pence on those for Horsley. In addition he was paid three or four shillings a year for carrying the papers, and was given a Christmas box by "the Clothiers" for taking their letters to the office.

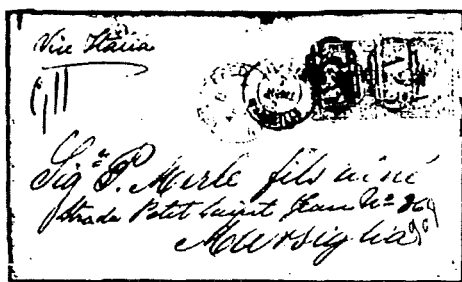
The Chalford and Bisley messenger took out weekly 110 letters and brought in 40. He was paid on the same "footing" as the Nailsworth postman. This private delivery was small as the Woodchester clothiers sent for their own letters. Thus, Mr Woodcock felt that only the Nailsworth area justified some form of official post and he said that it might be possible to find a messenger at 1/6 a week. However, their Lordships refused to disturb the unofficial services.

[Ref. Post 40/19G/1801]

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

It is hoped that this will appear towards the end of January. I have no idea what it will contain apart from the next instalment from the Surveyors' Journals. So all articles please to:

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