

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Number 168, January 2011

First of all, I must apologise for the late appearance of this issue. On 7th December my computer broke down and I did not get it back until nearly six weeks later. The weather, bank holidays and flu were apparently to blame, though had someone not entered the incorrect job number onto a sheet you would have been reading this over two weeks ago.

If our recent mail is a reliable guide, Royal Mail has almost given up cancelling the stamps. One possible reason is that if there is no date on the envelope it can sometimes be difficult to tell how long a letter has been in the post. One example was a letter, bearing a first class stamp that arrived on 5th January, and which I later found out was posted on 20th December. I wonder what Sir Francis Freeling would have said.

EDITOR OF MIDLAND MAIL

At the AGM in 2009 I said that I would resign as Editor of Midland Mail in 2011. With the production of MM170, I will have held the post for twenty-five years so possibly the time has come for someone with fresh ideas to take over. If you are interested in doing so please contact the Chairman or Secretary.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

On 12th February we visit the Black Country Museum, Dudley DY1 4SQ when, starting at 1.30pm, members are invited to show one board displays on '*Items relating to our Industrial Past*'.

We make our annual visit to the Collingwood Centre, Great Barr on 5th March for a meeting held in conjunction with the Streetly Society Fair. The meeting which begins at 1.30pm is devoted to member's displays on '*Postal Stationery Postcards or Postcards*'. Please note that there will be a Committee Meeting at 11am.

On 16th April we will hold a meeting in conjunction with the Midland Federation Fair at Wombourne Community Centre WV5 9EZ. Members are asked to bring one board displays on the theme '*Recent Acquisitions*'.

THE AGM AND ANNUAL AUCTION

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 7th May at St Germain's Church Hall, Portland Road B4 7SX, beginning at 1pm. It will be followed by our Annual Auction at 1.30pm. Lots will be available for viewing from 11am. Full details will be given in the auction catalogue.

AUCTION LOTS

There should still be time to submit lots for inclusion in the auction if you have not already done so. For full details please see the notice in the last issue, MM167/18. Lots should be sent to Eric Lewis at 27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick B67 5JG by 12th February.

THE NOVEMBER MEETING

When we met at the premises of Warwick & Warwick on 13th November, the morning was taken up by displays of 'Large or Unusual Items'. Some of the material produced fitted under both descriptions being both large and unusual.

Martin Evans started the proceedings with a number of Post Office Circulation Maps for England and Wales – those for 1882, 1885, 1888 and 1904. They showed clearly how quickly the circulation of mail changed in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Next came Peter Elms with an album of postcards all showing aspects of the royal visit to Birmingham on 7th July 1907. This was accompanied by a serviette from the tea party given for the children.

A wide range of booklets produced by the Post Office for training purposes in the 1960s and early 70s was Mick Gills contribution. One of these booklets was written by Mick.

A demonstration of the use of a stagecoach horn heralded Alan Godfrey's items. The horn was engraved with the words 'George & Dragon Inn/ Warwick/ G Eyre Landlord/January 1853'. Alan also showed us a timebill of 1793 for the London to Leeds mailcoach, a postcard of 1903 advertising Cadbury's Cocoa and a copy of the 'Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser' for 21st September 1867.

Chris Jackson began with Cary's map of 1796 followed by some wrapping paper of 1872 from Malvern Link Post Office. A copy of the 'Worcester Journal' for 3rd March 1763 contained the following Post Office notice 'The Bye-Night mail which now stops at Worcester is to be continued from thence to Ledbury and Hereford'. A calendar for 250 years would certainly be economical.

We can always rely on Eric Lewis to provide material that is unusual and entertaining. This time he brought a number of song sheets, although some appeared to be books rather than sheets. The first from Manchester – "Lewis' Beautiful Tea" consisted of eight pages and cost one penny, yet one from Birmingham "Lewis' Popular Waltz" cost four shillings. The remainder had a postal theme – the Penny Post, postmen's uniform and finally 'The Postman's Knock Quadrille'.

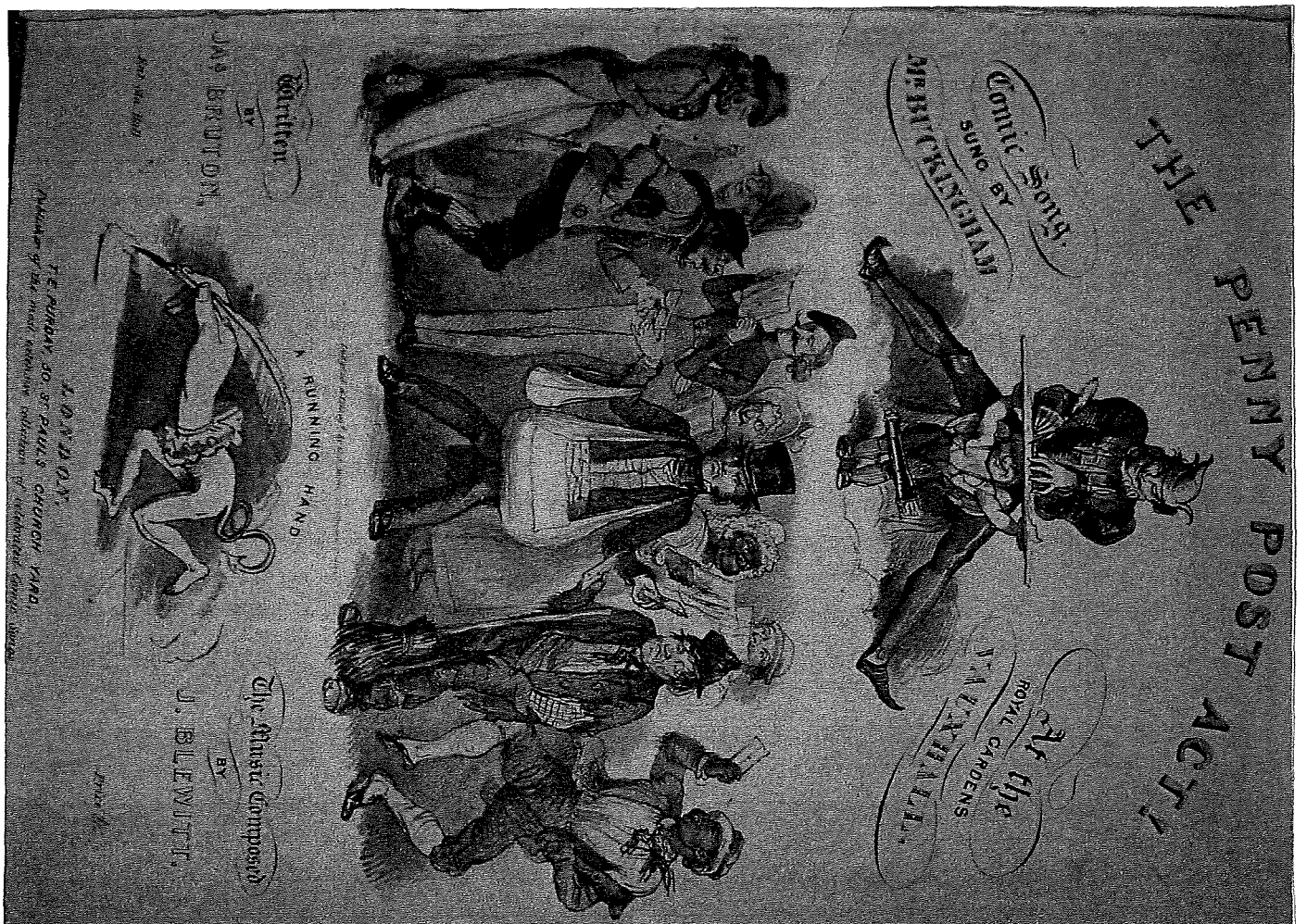
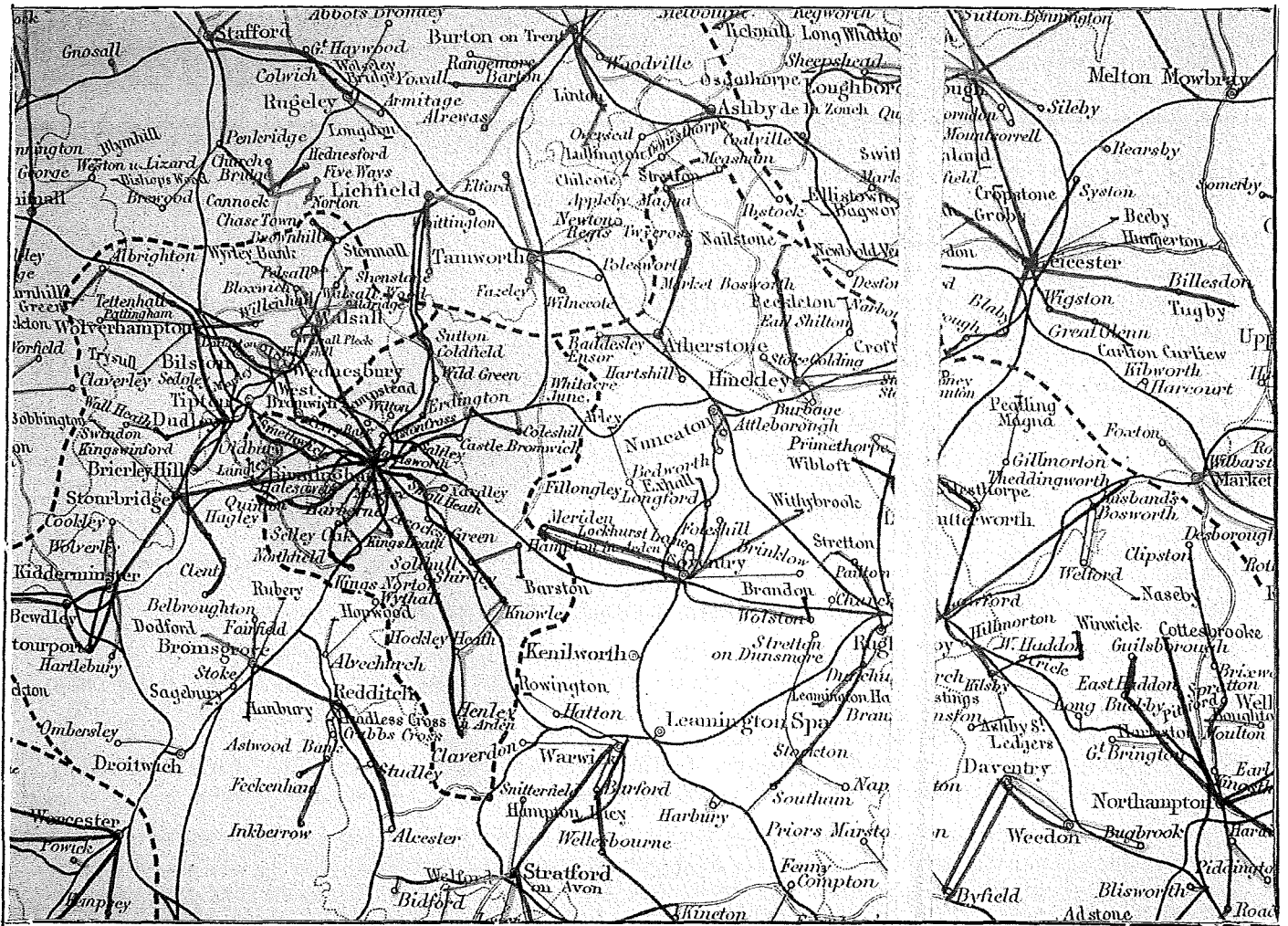
Derek Smeathers began with two maps of railway interest - a map of Northamptonshire of c1900 showing the railways and one of the LMS lines in England and Wales. A piece of card several feet in height and in the shape of a mailbag label constituted 'A Small Reminder/of our Bag/ Labelling Procedures.'

A list of posttowns which went with the 'English Atlas' of 1787 followed by 'A South View of Nottingham' were Alan Marshall's first two items. However, of particular note, was a Mulready with an additional penny black sent on 20th May 1841 from Nottingham to Bunny (Alan's home village). Alan also showed an illustration of St Peters Church and Nottingham Post Office.

Guy Bridges began with material relating to the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, particularly the festival organised by the employees in the post office at Wolverhampton. A letter from June 1845 showed two skeletons – those of Welshpool and Shrewsbury. Of particular note was a hand-painted envelope showing the Market Place, Wokingham in 1800 and which was sent from Kennington to Reading in 1909.

Mel Matthews showed a wallchart of 'The Great British Pillar Box'. This was followed by photographs of a wide range of letter boxes, including an early one from Baldock which showed the crest of William IV on one side and that of Victoria on another. It had been reversed and then reused. Mel ended with photographs of letter boxes on trams.

The illustration at the top of the next page shows part of the Post Office Circulation Map of 1882 – one of the items in Martin Evans display. The lower item shows the front (reduced in size) of one of the song sheets shown by Eric Lewis.



In the afternoon we were superbly entertained by Tom Slemons from the USA the first part of whose display was titled '*Suffolk – the Mulready and Mulready Advertisements*'. Tom began by outlining the social aspects that lead to the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage. He then described the stages leading to the introduction of the Mulready in the form of wrappers and envelopes. In the production twelve stereotypes were combined into a forme which was used to print a sheet. Four different forms were used to print the envelopes while six were needed to print the letter sheets. Tom explained that each stereotype was numbered, the number being prefixed by an 'A' for the 1d version or an 'a' for the 2d.

The penny envelopes were sold in sheets of twelve for 15d while the letter sheets were sold individually for 1¼d. Stationers and booksellers were allowed to sell them at whatever price they chose, but many stationers saw a threat to their income as the government was in effect selling writing paper. Within days of their being issued, the elaborate design of the Mulreadys generated considerable ridicule and within two months the Post Office was considering withdrawing them. An envelope sent on 5th May contained the words: '*I am so sorry that you had 2d to pay for so very ugly an Envelope ...*'.

In the next section, Tom looked at the use of Mulreadys for advertising. We saw those produced by J.M. Burton of Ipswich – The East Anglia Envelope Advertiser. He produced two types and we saw the only known copy of the second, sent from Colchester to Edinburgh. We also saw examples produced by Shalders (in black and green), Gilling of 193, Strand London, and Hallett's Postage Advertiser.

A number of companies used Mulreadys for their own individual advertising. One of these was John Dallenger of Wickham Market and Woodbridge who was '*Auctioneer, appraiser, Estate Agent and Accountant*'. A Mr T. Fenn of Hooper & Sons, Wine Merchants of Queenhithe handed out preaddressed envelopes for orders to be sent in.

Insurance companies and banks made extensive use of the Mulreadys. Among the former was the Clerical, Medical and General Life Assurance Company one of whose letters made mention of 200 large leeches. Suffolk seems to have had more companies than most places that used Mulreadys as a means of advertising. This was particularly true of the banks. We saw examples from Barnett, Hoare & Co of Ipswich, East of England Bank, and Oakes, Bevan & Co of Stowmarket whose manager was also the postmaster. This last bank used both envelopes and letter sheets one of which was the scarce A135. An envelope of the East of England Bank showed a strike of a Stowmarket skeleton.

It would be impossible in the space available to describe all the Mulready letters and envelopes shown by Tom. However, among those that caught my eye was one used as a wrapper and was surcharged 1d as the item was over ½oz. A twopenny Mulready was marked with the handstamp of the Southwold Penny Post. Among the early items were: an envelope sent from Mildenhall to Norwich on 8th May 1840; a letter sheet from Bury St Edmunds on 13th May; a pair sent from Melton to Bromley on 13th and 19th May 1840. An envelope of August 1840 carried a strike of the Maltese Cross of Mildenhall in blood red ink. The Maltese Cross of Hadleigh was struck in red on 8th February 1841, while that of Woodbridge was struck in black on 10th March 1841.

As mentioned above, the Post Office was considering withdrawing the Mulreadys within two months of their issue. At first, the distributors were told to retain those stamped covers they had in hand. Then, in September 1841, the Post Office said that they were at liberty to return them to the GPO. Finally, in November 1842, the distributors were told to return all those Mulreadys they had. A machine had been constructed to destroy them by punching out the postage and Britannia. The Inland Revenue then sold the mutilated items to the paper manufacturers. However, Tom was able to show Mulreadys from Woodbridge – 1846, Sudbury -1845, Southwold – 1846 and Boxford – 1862. The last of these was cancelled by a duplex.

Tom began the second half of his display, which was called '*Brought to Life*', by saying that this was a challenge for us to bring postal history to life. In this he discussed the stories and personalities behind the covers. Each of the four sections would be worthy of an extensive article, but what follows are a few very brief notes.

A cover with a penny black was sent on 15th May 1840 to John Thorogood, a shoemaker of Chelmsford, while he was in the County Gaol in Chelmsford.

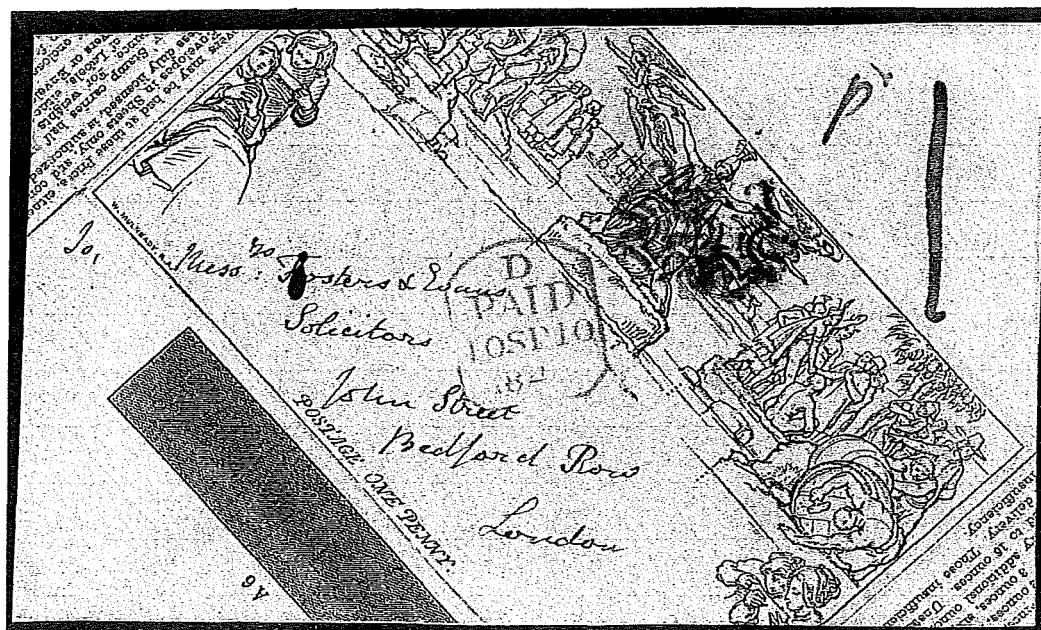
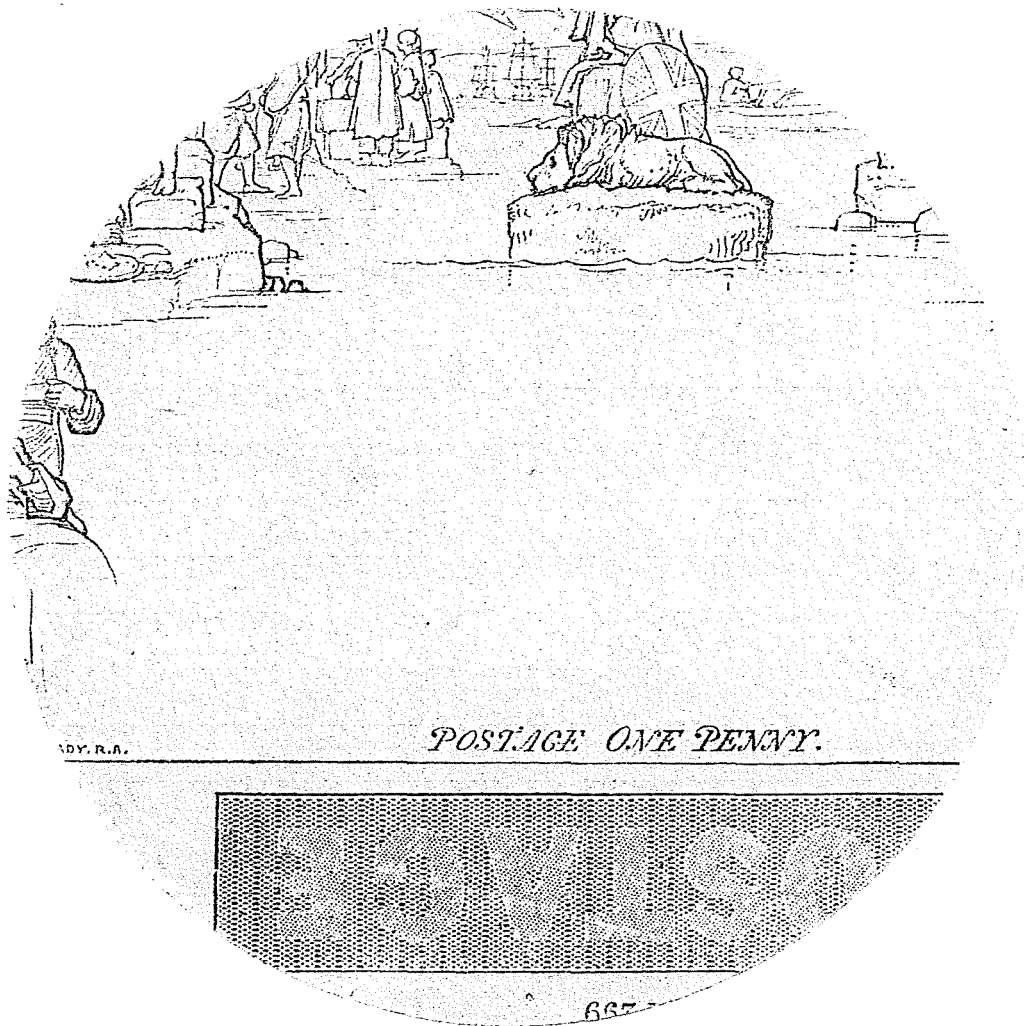
Hanmer Bunbury was a midshipman at the age of 13; at the age of 14 he lost his right arm in a battle at sea. He eventually became the captain of several different ships. We saw letters that he sent to his father in England.

The Alexander family of Ipswich were prominent bankers and Quakers. Tom showed us a number of letters sent to America. One carried seven twopenny blues; another two carried a mere six of those stamps.

Joseph Gurney from Earlham in Norfolk was another wealthy Quaker banker. One of the letters, sent on 2nd July 1840 from Southwold to Halesworth, was franked with four penny blacks as well as showing the handstamp of the Southwold Penny Post. Another penny black cover sent from Melton to Bungay carried a strike in red of the Melton Penny Post handstamp.

The warmth of the applause after a vote of thanks from our President showed that we had been truly privileged to see a stunning display of postal history.

A piece punched out of a Mulready to remove the postage and Britannia.



A Mulready which was originally folded round a large enclosure.
Extra postage was required and paid as indicated by the manuscript red 1d.



A letter sheet sent from Sudbury to Halstead, 20th November 1840.
One of three recorded Mulreadys with a Penny Black from Suffolk.

A letter of 1844 which was begun in Worcester which was franked with seven twopenny blues.

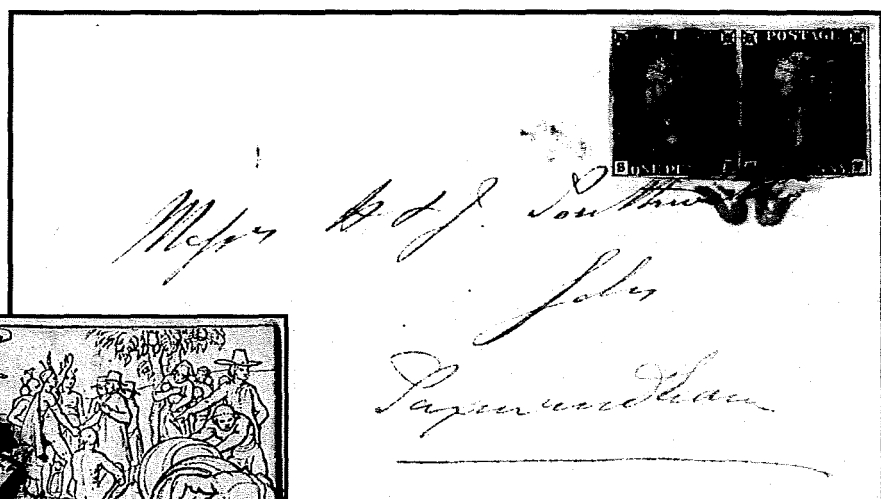
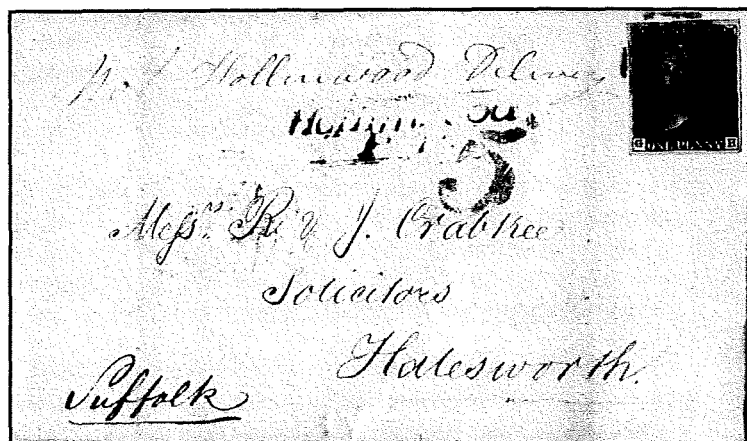


Cavendish's 9/10 March auctions..

Featuring over 200 lots of 1d Black covers and Mulreadies from the 'Bentwaters' Collection, plus other fine GB postal history, including Derbyshire, Devon, Warwickshire, etc.

Have you duplicates or 'hidden corners' in your Collection lying idle? Now is the time to consign for our June Auction—please call Ken Baker, Ian Kellock, John Paulson or James Grimwood-Taylor for professional advice.

Catalogues available early February and on line at www.cavendish-auctions.com



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THE DECEMBER MEETING

After an absence of three years, during the temporary closure of what was once the Bass Brewing Museum and then the Coors Visitor Centre, the Society's annual Christmas lunch and Burton on Trent meeting made a welcome return to what is now the National Brewery Centre on 4th December. The early winter weather was unusually harsh but 21 brave souls made their way to the event and were not disappointed. The standing displays in the morning were of a high standard but your scribe, making the longest journey and arriving last, was only able to give them a cursory examination before the familiar bar demanded re-acquaintance. The lunch was as good as it has ever been, perhaps even better.

was exactly what the event demands, a combination of high quality and entertainment. Many of us have a Mulready caricature. The afternoon display of some 90 sheets of Victorian Pictorial Stationery by our long-standing member Eric Grimshaw or an illustrated envelope in our collections but Eric provided us with an opportunity to see a collection of some of the most elusive caricatures, not only as Deraedamaeker reprints but in their original form. However, he did make the point that some Deraedamaeker reprints surpass the quality of the original.

The Mulready envelopes and letter sheets were issued on 6th May 1840, at the same time as the Penny Black adhesive, and were immediately ridiculed by the press. It is important to note that it was the press who reviled the design because it was, in fact, totally in accord with the demanded specification. The Mulreadys were therefore replaced by embossed envelopes within a month of their issue. The caricatures of William Mulready's design provided us with the first illustrated envelopes. They are hard to find postally used and some are difficult to find even in unused condition. The Deraedamaeker reprints were made in Belgium in both 1870 and 1890 and Eric described the 1890 reprints as looking "well used", even in their unused condition.

The Mulready penny envelopes and letter sheets were printed, in two series, from a total of six "Formes", each containing 12 "stereos". The scarce twopenny envelopes and letter sheets were each printed from one forme. Eric showed us a penny envelope from stereo A179 and a twopenny envelope from stereo a196. The first of his caricatures was an original print of Fores No.1 with an additional penny black adhesive, because these envelopes obviously had no inherent postal value. The Deraedamaeker reprints of Fores No.1 are in two sizes, with a number of design differences between them. They were created by John Leech and, although they have his imprint in the lower left corner, they also, at the bottom centre, have an easily overlooked illustration of a leech in a bottle! There was a Deraedamaeker reprint of Southgate Nos. 1 and 2, an original print of Southgate No.3 and a Deraedamaeker reprint in yellow. We then saw Southgate No.4 and both the original and Deraedamaeker reprints of Nos. 5 and 6. The humour of the caricatures is often difficult for us to appreciate without some knowledge of the politics of the day. However, Southgate No.5, for example, is based on Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* and features what looks like a letter being fed to the lion and a miserable (or perhaps inebriated) Britannia seated above it.

Other political caricature envelopes followed the early Mulready caricatures. In 1844, the magazine *Punch* commissioned Leech to produce an 'Anti-Graham' envelope and we were shown a letter sheet reprint in blue. Sir James Graham, the target of the design, was the Home Secretary responsible for the 'secret office', where the Post Office intercepted and opened suspect correspondence before forwarding it to the addressee. (Anti-Graham wafer seals were also popular at the time.) We saw an unusual Menzies political caricature envelope, produced in Edinburgh and again based on the Mulready, with illustrations on both the front and back, including an ingenious 'Man of Letters' (literally). Fores, who had produced the early Mulready caricature, now followed with a series of ten envelopes on a number of themes including Hunting and Christmas. While based on the Mulready, their designs were more for entertainment than settling political scores and are probably of more immediate appeal to our generation.

Eric moved on to illustrated envelopes, produced principally for propaganda. A number extolled the potential advantage of Ocean Penny Postage. We were shown the first type and a number of subsequent designs in different shades and with different imprints. Eric's sheets throughout the display succinctly provided key information about the design, the production method and the publisher of each item. A Deraedamaeker reprint of an Anti-Slavery envelope included a misprint of "op one blood" rather than "of one blood" and this was later corrected. Another Peace envelope has "arbitration" spelt both correctly and incorrectly, the latter being much scarcer than the former. We were told only seven have been seen.

Your reporter was intrigued by a cut down version of an envelope by Valentine, printed in red and quite possibly a proof. As such, it must be unique. In mentioning the colour, Eric pointed out that envelopes such as 'Intemperance is the Bane of Society', quite a well-known design and shown to us as an original, exists in eight different variants and that the colour of the paper can change. A Sunday Observance envelope by Mitchell of London proved its credentials by adding "Answer – no letter delivered on Sunday".

The familiar Lord Holland facsimile is not a "forgery", as it is so often described, but has an internal imprint making its status clear. It was produced for Queen Victoria's Jubilee as was an 1890 Kensington Exhibition envelope. When Elliot produced a caricature envelope, the Post Office took action against him. They were being sold for 1d each and the judgment required him to withdraw all that were unsold, probably a majority.

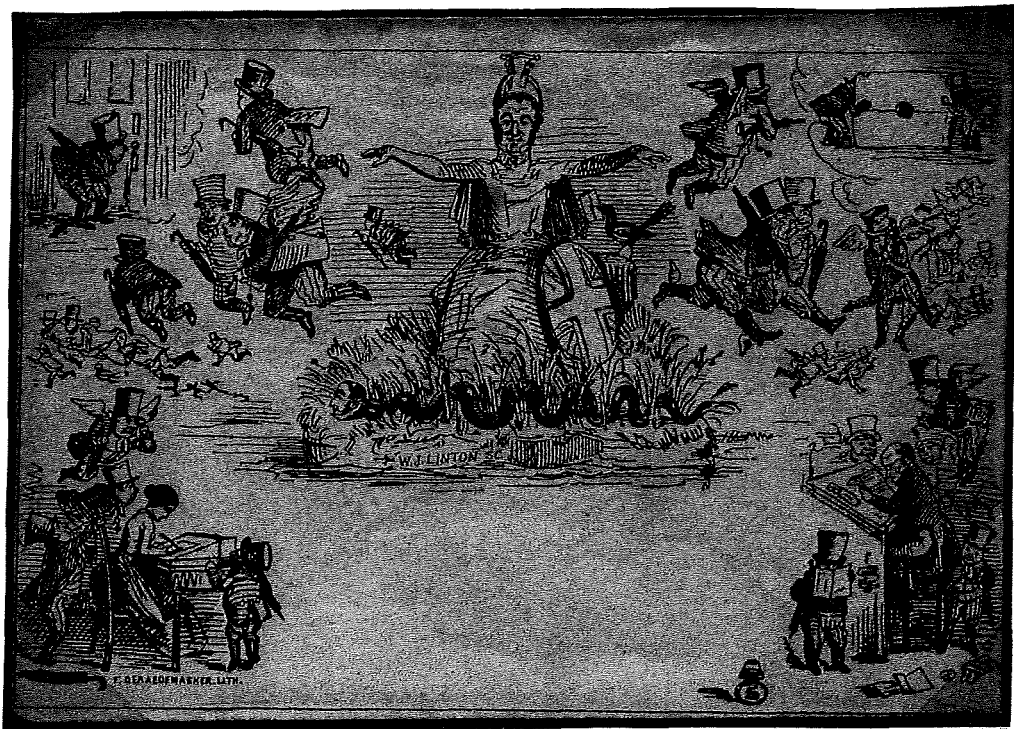
Eric advised us that it is extremely difficult to find advertising envelopes (other than the Mulready advertising letter sheets and the scarcer envelopes) before the reign of Edward VII. Among the envelopes shown to us were advertisements for Norwich Union Insurance, Stephens Ink, Johnston's Cornflour and Well-Matured Cigars. There was an unfamiliar 'prescription envelope' from B. Cartwright and Son, chemists. Quite irrelevant to most present, the cornflour envelope had a Sutton Benger (Wiltshire) backstamp – find me another!

Advertising was found on Victorian (and Edwardian) postcards, covering diverse commodities such as ventilators, wheelbarrows and hoists. Eventually, advertising was permitted on the address side of cards, provided there was space for the recipient's name and address to be added. Some cards with pictures on the back, had messages written around them. 'Court' sized postcards were allowed from 1895.

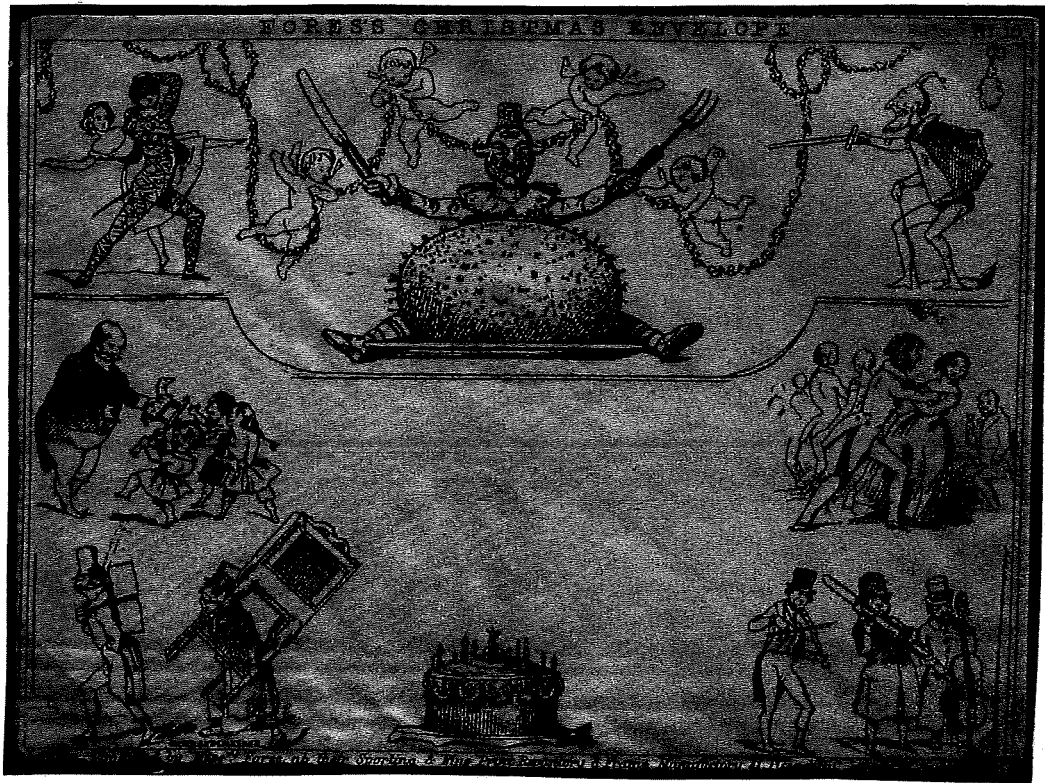
One felt we had covered the whole field of pictorial stationery very thoroughly and Eric was thanked most sincerely by our chairman, who also presented him with the Society's Certificate of Appreciation. Mel thanked Richard Farman for organizing another highly successful event at Burton.

ANTI-GRAHAM ENVELOPE

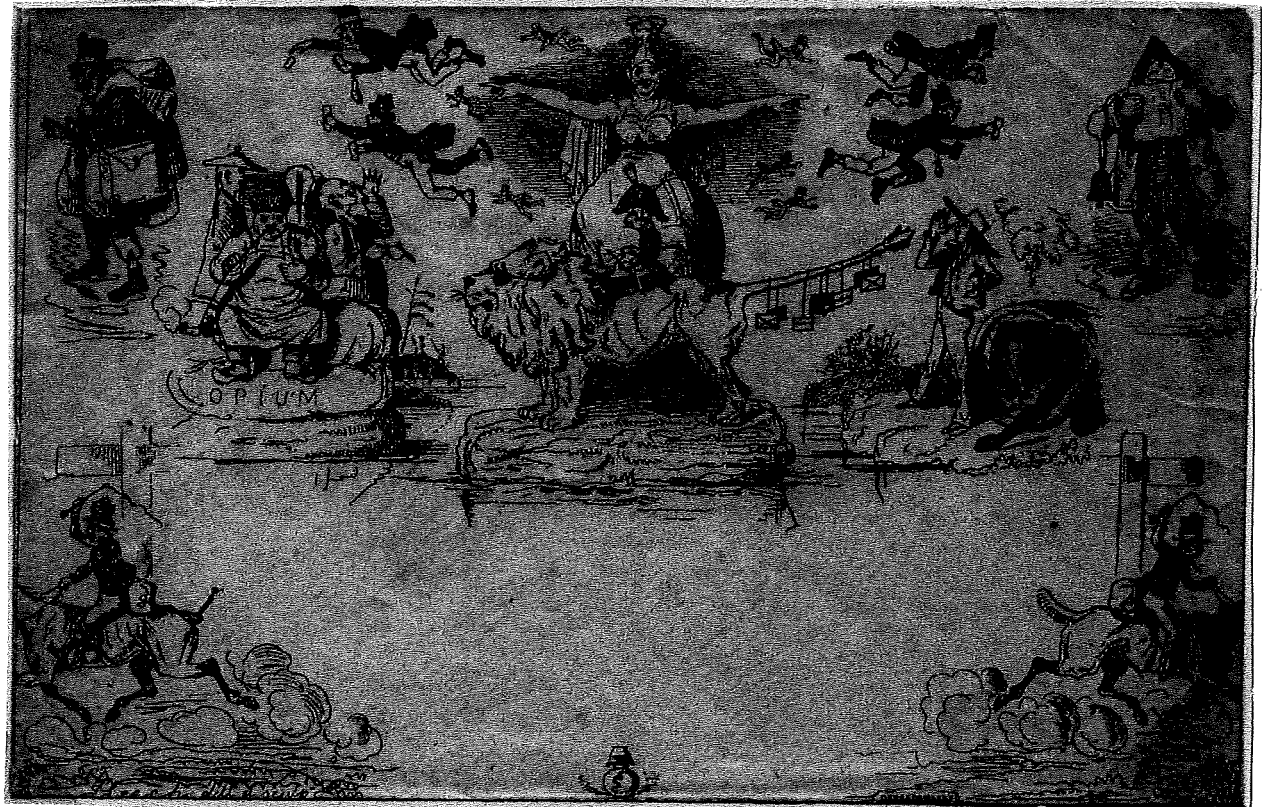
In July 1844, this second caricature by John Leech was commissioned by *Punch* for an attack on the Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, in the fight against the practice of letters written by or addressed to suspect persons being opened and examined in transit. Sir James is shown in place of Britannia and the snake in the grass also bears his head, while a magpie perched at his side offers a letter. Numerous figures of Paul Pry are being dispatched in all directions, peeping through keyholes, peering into letters and looking over the shoulders of the merchant in his office and the young lady at her desk.



FORES' SERIES (NO. 10) – CHRISTMAS



FORES'S COMIC ENVELOPE No. 1
This early caricature was designed by John Leech.



THE JANUARY MEETING

On 8th January seventeen members met at Carr's Lane Church Centre for our first meeting of the year. Members were invited to choose their own topic for display. John Soer began the proceedings with a study of the rates charged on mail sent from Great Britain to Russia in the period 1847-1875. For some years the rate included a halfpenny but as there was no halfpenny stamp the Post Office rounded the charge upwards to the nearest penny. One envelope was so small that the writer had difficulty in finding room for five penny reds.

Roy Summers brought along errors in machine cancellations such as the slogan and c.d.s. being transposed, an inverted c.d.s., the slugs in the wrong order and combinations of these. We saw an incomplete impression on an item of metered mail. Finally, Roy produced two different 'Found Open and Damaged' labels from Wolverhampton.

Next came Guy Bridges with a superb selection of skeleton postmarks, beginning with one from Cheltenham used on 7th April 1839. Of particular note was the Leicester skeleton of 1841 with the 'R' inverted and reversed but struck in red ink. (Someone in the room had not seen it in that colour before and will have to alter his County Catalogue update.) We also saw unrecorded marks from Woodstock (5JUL1901) and Shipstone (29MAR1845).

Stuart Geddes showed postal history from Wales but with some Midlands interest. This included a number of missent items – a letter of 1785 to Daventry went to Holywell, one sent in 1852 from Liverpool to Bungay (Suffolk) was sent to Bangor, and one addressed to Bangor, North Wales went to Bangor, Maine.

As Derek Smeathers had been prevented from attending the Burton meeting, he brought along the illustrated covers he had intended to show there. These included the envelopes produced to celebrate the jubilee of the Penny Post and a number of caricatures of those envelopes. We saw two items carried in the first aerial post in the UK – that from London to Windsor. One was addressed to East Haddon, the other to Brackley. Of particular note was a hand-painted envelope produced to celebrate the opening of a new post office in the village of Hackleton.

Northamptonshire postal history from the 17th and 18th centuries was Paul Bradshaw's chosen topic. Among a number of superb items were the marks of Brackley (in two lines and framed of 1720 & 1723), Towcester (TOCE/STER – 1742 and TOW/CESTER – 1748) and Northampton (N/HAMPTON – 1739 and NORTH/HAMPTON – 1749).

Richard Farman chose to display 'Money Letters'. We saw a wide variety of rate starting with the introduction of the Money Letter System in October 1792. Of particular note was an item sent from Birmingham to Moira Colliery at a cost of 1/2½, the halfpenny being a local delivery charge. A 'Free' was endorsed 'Money Letter', while another attracted a double rate plus a penny post charge. Richard ended with a Money letter sent on the first day of the Uniform Fourpenny Post.

Worthy of particular note among a miscellany of material shown by Mick Gill were some Railway Letters showing the stamps of the Great Northern Railway and the Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Railway. Two items of the latter company were sent from Chesterfield, at a cost of twopence, some weeks apart. Yet there was only a difference of three in the numbers shown on the stamps, showing how few were used. Mick ended with a copy of the 'London Chronicle' containing a Post Office notice.

Alan Marshall displayed material relating to the Parker family that originated in Ruddington and formed part of the company 'Sisson & Parker' – retailers of books and educational stationery. The first item was a postcard in which the machine mark had only three wavy lines. Much of the material consisted of letters to Nottingham from abroad: Ceylon (1918), Rhodesia (1919), British Honduras (1933) and Sweden (1936).

Eric Lewis' first item was a letter of 1792 to Ludlow concerning an overpayment to the 39th Regiment. I have attended many meetings in the thirty years or so in which I have been a member of this Society and I am sure that I have never before seen hymn books displayed. Eric produced a notice about the celebrations of the Coronation of 1838. This contained the National Anthem the second verse of which contained words not seen today. He traced how the words of the National Anthem have changed through various hymn books. Eric also showed an account of 1832 from the Clerk of the Road to the postmaster of Bridgnorth, and ended with a letter from Humberstone, near Leicester which contained the words: *'I do not like the auction sales on account of the great expense that is incurrd ...'*.

There was time for 'seconds' during which Guy Bridges showed material from a POW camp in Shrewsbury, Derek Smeathers produced some superb Mulready from Northamptonshire, Richard Farman covered Parliamentary Notices while Alan Marshall displayed Christmas cards sent by various branches of the Post Office in Nottinghamshire.

The wide variety of material shown by members never ceases to amaze, and certainly makes for entertaining meetings. Our Chairman thanked all those who had attended, especially those who had brought along material.

TWO MONEY LETTERS FROM RICHARD FARMAN'S DISPLAY

A Money Letter sent from Boston to Grantham on 25th March 1835. Prepaid 2/- i.e. treble the rate of 8d for a distance of 50 - 80 miles. The letter is endorsed '1oz' and '8^d More to Pay'. As a 1oz letter rate was 2s-8d, the letter was apparently eightpence underpaid. However, since it was a Money Letter it should have been charged three times 2/8, that is 8/-, giving a saving of 5s-4d.

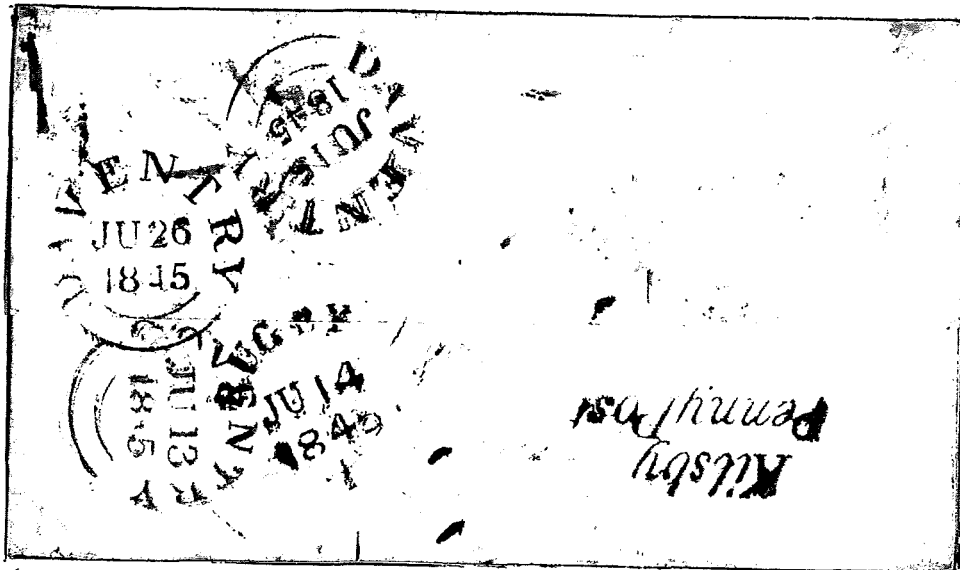


A Money Letter sent from Dudley to Shifnal on 22nd August 1838 and charged 1s-3d i.e. treble the basic charge of 5d. The letter states '£200 in notes enclosed ...'. In fact the Money Letter system was intended for coins and valuables, not banknotes.

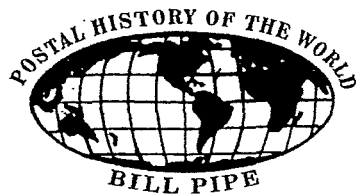
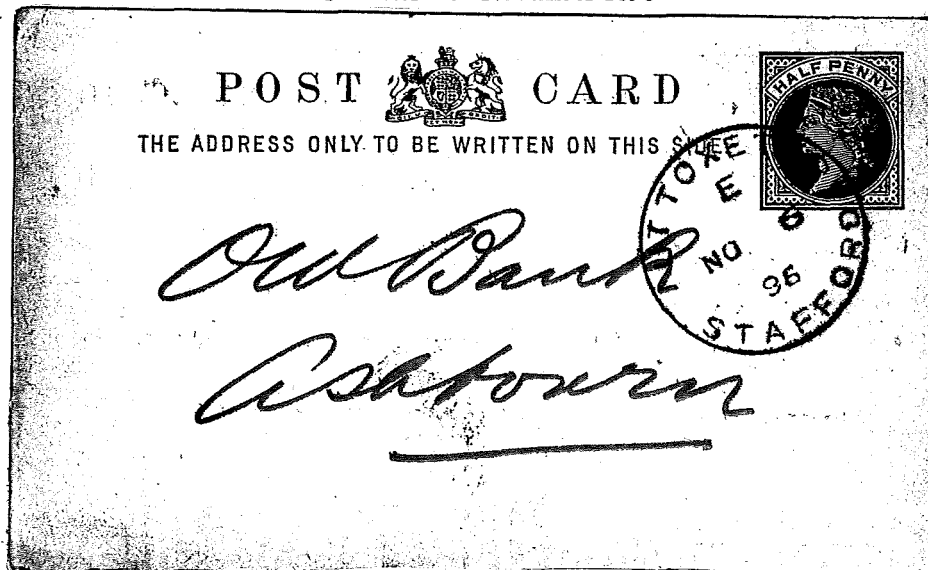


TWO SKELETONS FROM GUY BRIDGE'S DISPLAY.

A letter sent on 13th June 1845 from Coventry to Barby near Rugby. The Rugby skeleton was applied the following day. The letter was redirected to Daventry and so taken to Kilsby where the penny post handstamp was struck. The letter was refused and eventually sent to the Dead Letter Office on 26th June.



Uttoxeter – 6th November 1896



THE MAGPIE

POSTAL AUCTIONS & LISTS
POSTCARDS & EPHEMERA
PAPER COLLECTABLES
POSTAL HISTORY

W.T. PIPE
7 Richard Close
Upton, Poole
Dorset
BH16 5PY

Tel: 01202 623300
Fax: 01202 631149
Web: www.magpiebillpipe.com
Email: magpiebillpipe@free.uk.com

MIDLAND POST OFFICES OPENED OR CLOSED IN 2010

Compiled by Ken Smith

BIRMINGHAM

Villa Road, 9

reopened 16/9/2010

Had closed 21/12/2009

DERBYSHIRE

Blackwell, Alfreton

Elton, Matlock

Grindleford, Hope Valley

Hulland Ward, Ashbourne

Sudbury, Ashbourne

reopened 2/2/2010

closed 17/7/2010

reopened 19/8/2010

reopened 2/9/2010

Community Centre. S. Normanton Outreach
Hosted Outreach due to commence.

Formerly under Sheffield.

(Closed 16/12/2009.) Was under Derby

(Closed 30/10/2009.) Was under Derby

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Avening, Tetbury

Berry Hill, Coleford

Brimscomb, Stroud

closed 12/2/2010

reopened 25/3/2010

reopened 14/6/2010

PO Essentials/PO Local. Had closed 4/3/2009

PO Essentials. Originally closed 23/12/2009,

reopened 15/2/2010, closed 11/6/2010.

Hosted Outreach, Mon/Wed am.

Dymock

Huntley, Gloucester

Kempsford, Fairford

Quedgeley, Gloucester

Whitminster, Gloucester

reopened 15/11/2010

closed 21/9/2010

Castle Eaton Outreach ceased 22/7/2010

closed 21/7/2010

reopened 22/2/2010

PO Essentials, Garden Centre.

HEREFORDSHIRE

Garway, Hereford

Chilton Square (TSO), Hereford

Mordiford, Hereford

Preston Wynne, Hereford

Putley

Upper Sapey, Worcester

closed 23/2/2010

closed 21/4/2010

closed --/7/2010

closed 20/5/2010

closed 15/6/2009

Hosted Outreach ceased 31/8/2010

Hosted Outreach to commence soon.

Hosted Outreach to commence soon.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Newton Burgoland, Coalville

Hosted Outreach, Chapel, commenced 25/10/2010

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Barnwell, Peterborough

Hackleton, Northampton

Wappenham, Towcester

Warmington, Peterborough

Hosted Outreach replaced by PO Essentials 11/6/2010

closed 17/8/2010

Still on PO website so may have reopened.

closed 30/11/2010

reopened 10/12/2010

PO Essential/PO Local. (Closed 6/4/2010.)

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Eakring, Newark

Gringley-on-the-Hill, Doncaster

Rampton, Retford

Sutton-on-Trent, Newark

Warsop, Mansfield

closed 8/1/2010

closed 21/7/2010

reopened 4/8/2010

closed 25/9/2010

closed 11/6/2010

Hosted Outreach. (Closed 13/11/2009.)

OXFORDSHIRE

Benson, Oxford

Benson RAF Station, Oxford

Stanton Harcourt, Witney

closed 18/8/2010

closed 14/7/2010

Hosted Outreach, Harcourt Arms, commenced 5/5/2010.

Hosted Outreach in Parish Hall 7/11/2010.

RUTLAND

Market Overton, Oakham

closed 31/3/2010

SHROPSHIRE

Dorrington, Shrewsbury	reopened 4/1/2010	(Closed 11/11/2009.)
Maesbury Marsh, Oswestry	closed 19/1/2010	Canal Centre
Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury	closed 16/2/2009	
Newcastle, Craven Arms	closed 17/5/2010	
Greenfields (TSO), Shrewsbury	reopened 28/10/2010	PO Essentials/PO Local. (Closed 29/9/2009.)
Worfield, Bridgnorth	closed 11/8/2010	Still on PO website so may have reopened.
Wroxeter, Shrewsbury	Hosted Outreach ceased 7/9/2010	
Yockleton, Shrewsbury	closed 17/2/2010	

STAFFORDSHIRE

Abbots Bromley, Rugeley	reopened 26/8/2010	PO Essentials/PO Local. (Closed 19/6/2010.)
Alton, Stoke-on-Trent	reopened by 19/4/2010	(Closed 22/10/2009.)
Market St, Hednesford, Cannock	closed 1/2/2010	See below
Hednesford, Cannock	opened 4/2/2010	Co-op Store.
Harriseahead, Stoke-on-Trent	closed 17/7/2010	
Northwood (TSO), Stoke-on-Trent	reopened 6/9/2010	(Closed 15/6/2009.)
Weston, Stafford	closed 23/4/2010	

WARWICKSHIRE

WEST MIDLANDS

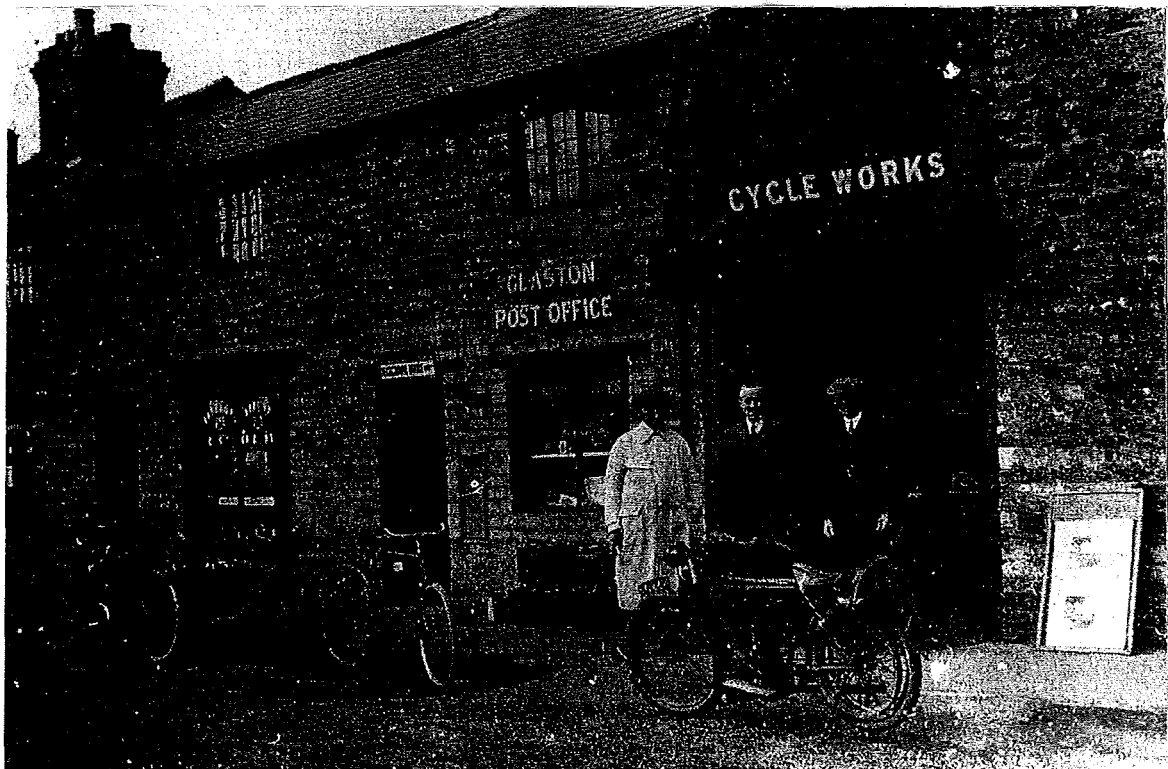
Fillongley, Coventry	closed 2/10/2010
Granville Drive (TSO), Brierley Hill	closed 21/4/2010
Sedgley (TSO), Dudley	closed 17/8/2010

WORCESTERSHIRE

Lower Moor, Pershore	closed 8/9/2010
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SOME RUTLAND POST OFFICES

I had intended that these should appear in the last issue after the report of Bob Viney's superb display of Rutland postal history but they were squeezed out by the inclusion of other material. So, rather than waste the scans they appear here.





SHROPSHIRE X MARKS AND THE GREAT CROSS POST

by Brian Atkins

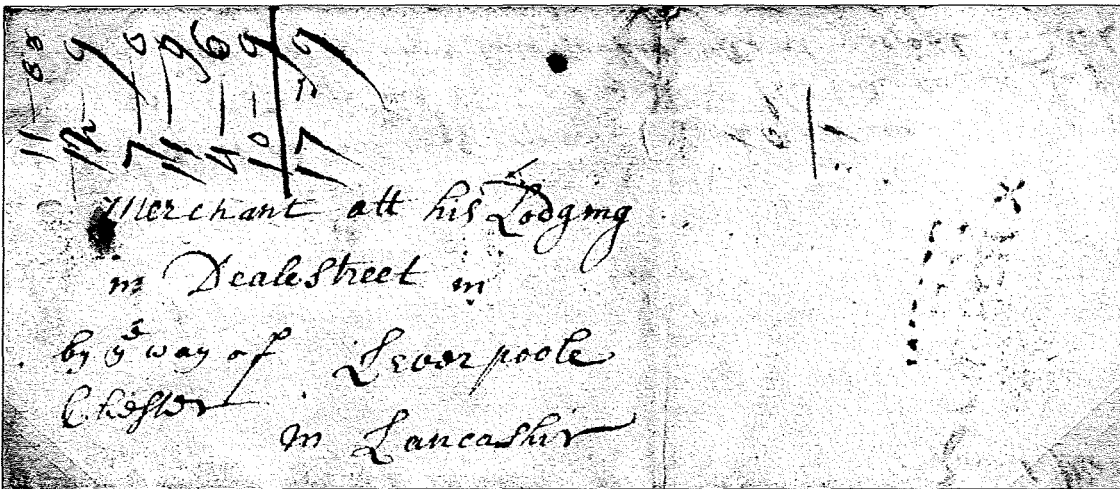
I have to admit to being envious of those members who were able to attend the meeting in September when Malcolm Ray-Smith produced what must have been a wonderful display of early British postal history. Mr. Ray-Smith's excellent notes reproduced by John Soer in MM167 were tantalizing in that they gave snippets of information without the whole picture. I refer specifically to the X marks, of which it was written in the last paragraph of page 5, "Eleven posttowns had variations of their town mark incorporating an X, of which two are found only in archives" and later "I show a list of the known and 'missing' marks with six actual marks". For those of us not fortunate enough to be present, the complete lists were not provided, though four towns on the Great Cross Post were mentioned on page 2, including a SHREWS/BURY X, a tracing of which is illustrated below.

SHREWS
BURY X

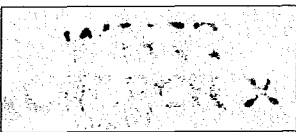
When I was editing the Shropshire post marks book, I was sent the tracing shown left; I have not been privileged to see an original (two examples were reported, one in 1711 and the other in what is thought to be 1720, though the latter date is a little contentious), so I do not know how the tracing compares to the original. The mark is SH569 in the British County Catalogue (BCC) and SB18 in the Shropshire post mark book. According to the

British Museum map, c1770, there are two main Shropshire towns, besides Shrewsbury, on the Great Cross Post, Bridgnorth and Whitchurch being the others. Wem is also shown on the cross road but it was a receiving house at that time and has only ever been a sub-office of Shrewsbury. As far as I am aware, no X mark has been reported from Bridgnorth, or Bridgenorth as it may have been spelled at that time, so I assume (dangerous, I know) that it is one of the 'missing' ones. Can anyone confirm or refute this assumption?

However a correspondence came on the market some years ago which produced two WHIT/CHURCH X marks, dated 13th October 1713 and 24th November 1714, both to the same address. The 1714 entire letter is illustrated below, unfortunately the top has been excised but the mark, though lightly struck, is clear.



The letter is dated from (Market) Drayton, addressed to John Brown, Deale Street (now Dale Street), Liverpool, and endorsed 'by way of Chester'. It is surmised that the letter was taken to Whitchurch and put into the cross post to Chester as a similar letter to the same address dated from (Market) Drayton on 14th November 1713, has the only recorded example of the earliest DRAYTON mark (SH290, MD3).



Did Mr. Ray-Smith's display include the WHIT/CHURCH X or was it one of the 'missing' ones, or one of those found in archives only? For purposes of the record, it would be helpful to know. The Whitchurch X mark is catalogued as SH750 (BCC) and WC4 (Shropshire book). I have reproduced an upright copy for ease of reading. The October 1713 copy, illustrated in the Shropshire book, is clearer. Members might be interested to know that

correspondence of the same era addressed to Mr. Brown shows some of the earliest known correspondence written from Atlantic Canada.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS AND MAP STILL AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

Publication number	Title and Availability	Price to Members
No.1 (4 th edition) 1996	The Undated Circular Marks of the Midland Counties (Out of print but updated usage information published in 'Midland Mail' Nos. 140 – 151) 5 th Edition 2012?	N/A
No.2 (2 nd edition) 2011	The Undated Straight Line and Numbered Receiving House Marks of the Midland Counties, 1840 – 1860 (Immediate availability)	£8-00 (+£3-75 p&p)
No.3 1993	The Local Posts of the Midland Counties to 1840 (Out of print but see below)	N/A
2011	The Oxfordshire Local Posts (Supplement to publication No.3) (Limited availability)	£5-00 (+ £2-00 p&p)
No.4 1997	The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland (Available from the author, John Soer)	£17-50 (+£5-75 p&p)
No.5 2005	The Midland Counties Mileage Marks and Mail Routes To London, 1784-1840 (Immediate availability)	£29-50 (+ £8-00 p&p)
Limited edition of 100	A Map of the Post Roads of England and Wales (c1770) (Original held in the British Library – a reprint may be possible if there were a demand for 25 or more)	N/A
Limited edition of 100	The "Holkham" map of the Several Post Roads of England and Wales (c1735) (Fewer than 10 copies remain)	£21-50 (+ £4-20 p&p)

CONGRATULATIONS

Four of our members, though not representing this Society, achieved considerable success at the MPF Convention in October. Congratulations to Brian Purcell and Chris Jackson who were awarded Gold in the Postal History Class for their respective entries '*Bristol B handstamps*' and '*Postal history of Tenbury to 1900*', and to Rani Dhaliwal who won the Open Class, and was awarded a Silver-Gilt, with his entry '*Expressions of Sorrow*' – a study of how mourning was expressed using letters, envelopes and ephemera from undertakers. Also in the Open Class Alan Godfrey who received a Bronze for his entry '*Found Open and Officially Sealed*'.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

I anticipate that this will appear by the middle of April, though I do have one article in hand there is a need for much more so please send articles, long or short, to:

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