

MIDLAND MAIL



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



President: Rev. C.M. Beaver

Chairman:
Roger Broomfield

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

Secretary:
Eric Lewis

Number 90, June 1995

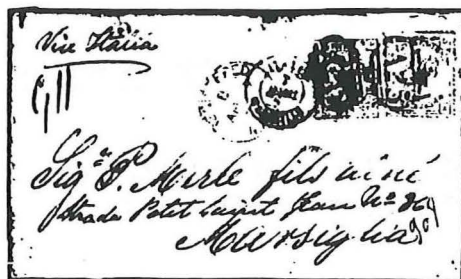
As the role of Chairman passes to Roger Broomfield, I would like to pay a small tribute to Mike Young. For the past four years, he has served the Society well although he has not been in the best of health for much of that time. He has guided the committee in a quiet but firm manner, bringing us back to the business in hand when we have started to stray into irrelevances. Behind the scenes he did much to ensure the successful launch of the local posts book. The Society has been greatly strengthened by his leadership over the past four years.

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN

It was a great honour to be asked if I would be prepared to stand for the position of Chairman of the Society and I was pleased to accept although, at the time, I did explain that it might not be possible for me to attend all the meetings. I shall, of course, attend as many meetings as possible. Mike's act will be a hard one to follow!

The Society is its members and without the cooperation and participation of the members it cannot function. Please let me or any committee member know of any ideas you may have which you feel would benefit the Society. Equally, let us know if you have any moans.

Roger Broomfield.



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THE SHROPSHIRE MEETING

A joint meeting with the Shropshire Postal History Society was held at the Shrewsbury Hotel on Saturday 1st April. Our principal speaker for the day was Derek Lang who opened the proceedings with his two-part display 'Bottom Righthand Corner of Clwyd' (or Wrexham and District Postal History), the first section of which comprised Wrexham and area. Worthy of special note were two local letters of 1626 and 1656, followed by items from the early 1700's through to the 1850's. The display included a Penny Black on cover used in 1840, a Mulready of 1841, an 1848 Wrexham skeleton, Wrexham penny post in red, blue and black, followed by an elusive 'Missent to Wrexham' mark and use of the handstruck '2' in 1843 and 1851. Later marks included the Wrexham spoon and sideways duplex. After a break for viewing, Derek continued with examples of the Chirk P.P. handstamp, the boxed Chirk used in 1833, a straight line Corwen of 1817, a missent to Corwen of 1833, and an Oswestry skeleton of 1844 used as a receiving mark. In all, it was a truly memorable display which attracted much interest and discussion.

After lunch, Derek Lang gave a short display of material that he had prepared for inclusion in the Llangollen Postal History Museum on which he has been working for the last eighteen months.

The remainder of the day was devoted to short displays by individual members first of whom was Roger Broomfield with a lovely showing of village post offices of Herefordshire on picture postcards. Derek Smeathers gave a fascinating display and talk on the postal history of Castle Ashby, with its rise and fall paralleling those of Lord Northampton. This was followed by Denis Salt's display on the Bristol to Chester Crosspost. Elizabeth and Eric Lewis each gave a miscellany of Birmingham material which included amongst some Birmingham Ship Letters the only example known used on a letter from a naval ship, this being the cover illustrated in Robertson's Ship Letter publication. Envelopes that conveyed a message by way of illustrations were shown by Chris Beaver. Last but not least, Guy Bridges gave a display of the postal history of Church Stretton, from its earliest marks to the 1960s.

We are indebted to Jim Ball of the Shropshire Society for preparing the above report.

THE LLANGOLLEN POSTAL HISTORY MUSEUM

As mentioned in the above report, Derek Lang has done much to get this project underway and Jim Ball who visited the museum at Easter comments that he can honestly say that it was well worth going miles out of his way to see, Derek having created a truly marvellous display. Why not pay a visit if you are ever in the vicinity.

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

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THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND AUCTION

There was a good turnout for our Annual General Meeting on 29th April at Carrs Lane, Birmingham. After the apologies had been noted and the minutes of the previous AGM taken as read, the Officers of the Society gave their reports.

Mike Young, our retiring Chairman, said that it had been a good year because of the strength of the membership. He reviewed the year's programme, beginning with the meeting at Cranham with the Somerset and Dorset Society. He then went on to thank the other officers for their various contributions, and Sharon for the excellent cups of tea.

Trevor Clewley took the members through the balance sheet. The apparent drop in subscriptions was due to a number of people having paid in advance. He was able to report an excess of income over expenditure and so recommended that the subscription should be unchanged at £6.

The Editor gave a brief review and commented that he felt that John Calladine's article, 'Five over Severn' was one of the best ever to have appeared in Midland Mail. Although he had considered terminating the Surveyors' Journals series, in view of the comments made by some members, it would continue for at least another year. He made his usual plea for articles of any length.

John Calladine reported that of 250 copies of the local posts book printed only 16 were left. Also of the 210 surveyors' maps printed he had sold 212 and had only 6 miscellaneous items left. (No, our Co-ordinating Editor is not innumerate; he had what seemed at the time to be a very plausible reason for these figures but which now eludes me.)

Our M.P.F. representative asked as many members as possible to attend Midpex. Our A.B.P.S. representative said that the Year Book was now in existence.

As Mike Young had come to the end of his term of office, it was necessary to elect a new Chairman. Roger Broomfield was duly elected. All of the other Officers and Committee members were re-elected en bloc.

In a report on the Severn Valley Railway Project, John Calladine said that the display boards had been placed in the T.P.O. and had been used for the first time at the August Bank Holiday. It is hoped eventually to arrange a permanent display of less valuable items. Anyone who is able to spend time at a weekend in the summer manning a display, and explaining the function of a T.P.O., should contact John.

Eric reported that moves were afoot to form a library for the Society. It is hoped that there will be more information on this in one of the next two issues of Midland Mail.

John Calladine stated that at present there are no copies of the third edition of the UDC book available. However, it is not proposed to order a reprint as the fourth edition will be available next year. This will contain a listing for Oxfordshire and information on Money Order Offices.

The programme for next season was outlined by Eric Lewis. Full details of this will be included with the next Midland Mail but please book 16th September now.

In A.O.B. an amendment to the constitution was passed to allow any member to attend any committee meeting, on a non-voting basis.

Finally, the trophies were presented. That for the pre-1840 competition went to Denis Salt; the post-1840 trophy was won by Chris Jackson; and the post-1939 went to David Hardwick. The Jon Baker trophy for the best article in Midland Mail was won by John Calladine.

For the auction we had an expert on loan from Cavendish, in the form of Richard Farman, on the rostrum. He was ably assisted by the bookkeeping team of Trevor (taking the cash), Elizabeth and Eric.

The realisations were:

A	5.25	B	1.50	C	1.00	D	1.00	E	4.25
F	4.00	G	4.25	H	3.40	J	2.00	K	0.25
M	1.10	N	1.80	O	2.20	Q	2.20	R	3.00
S	2.00	T	10.00	U	5.50	V	5.00	W	1.10
X	1.00	Y	3.00	Z	5.00	AA	1.00	BB	1.80
CC	1.00	DD	2.20	EE	1.50				
1	50.00	3	9.00	4	1.80	5	3.20	6	1.80
8	0.90	9	4.50	10	19.00	11	30.00	12	28.00
13	13.00	14	10.00	15	17.00	17	7.50	18	5.00
19	7.50	20	16.00	21	3.00	22	1.50	23	2.00
24	1.75	25	2.00	26	4.50	28	1.75	29	4.50
30	4.00	31	1.25	32	15.00	33	4.00	34	2.75
35	11.00	36	6.00	38	3.20	39	21.00	41	5.50
42	0.70	43	2.60	44	3.00	45	2.70	46	8.00
47	5.75	49	9.00	50	2.20	51	2.80	52	1.60
53	11.00	54	3.35	55	1.75	57	1.50	58	45.00
60	1.80	61	15.50	62	13.00	64	30.00	65	14.50
66	1.00	68	3.75	72	2.25	73	8.50	74	3.75
75	4.25	76	8.00	77	26.00	78	10.00	79	5.50
80	12.00	81	1.80	82	15.00	83	6.50	84	0.80
85	0.80	89	8.50	90	6.50	91	6.50	92	4.25
93	4.75	94	17.00	95	1.00	96	9.50	97	4.50
98	9.50	101	31.00	104	4.40	105	8.50	106	1.80
107	2.40	108	20.00	109	6.75	111	22.00	112	22.00
114	7.50	115	11.00	116	9.50	117	11.00	118	40.00
119	28.00	120	22.00	121	3.00	122	13.00	123	18.00
124	17.00	125	4.60	126	10.00	127	3.75	128	2.75
129	9.00	130	7.00	131	7.50	132	4.50	133	2.75
135	6.50	136	3.25	137	1.75	138	14.00	140	4.00
141	1.00	142	3.20	143	3.40	144	6.00	145	1.00
146	1.00	147	2.60	148	1.25	149	1.25	150	1.00
151	1.25	152	3.00	153	2.80	154	4.20	155	3.75
156	10.50	157	4.60	158	1.75	166	1.50	168	3.00
169	5.00	170	26.00	171	6.50	172	1.00	173	2.40
174	1.50	175	1.00	178	1.25	179	2.75	180	2.20
181	3.00	182	1.00	183	1.00	184	1.25	185	1.00
186	1.00	187	2.40	188	1.25	190	1.00	191	3.20
192	1.00	193	1.60	194	1.00	195	1.75	196	1.00
197	1.80	198	2.50	199	1.20	201	1.00	202	1.00
203	1.25	204	1.00	207	4.00	208	1.75	209	1.00
210	4.75	211	3.50	212	1.50	213	1.70		



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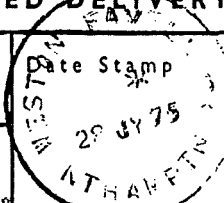
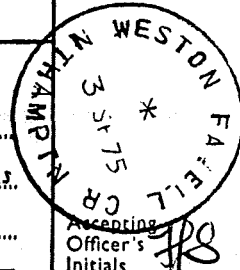
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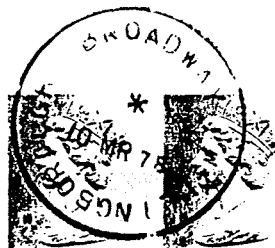
Derek Smeathers has written about the article on skeletons in the last issue:

"...WESTON FAVELL CR/NTHAMPTON was first used on 28th July 1975 - when the new post office opened. This was in the new shopping centre and the post office was in Tesco Supermarket. I enclose a copy of the first day postmark - which is two days before the "Date of Issue" in your article. [Editor's note: I will check the volume again at the earliest opportunity.] As a matter of interest, the new steel datestamp arrived in Early August, but was found to be faulty; I do not know if it was actually used on mail, but it was returned quite quickly and the skeleton continued in use, certainly into September as the attached copy shows. I do not know when it was finally replaced by the new steel cds.

Regarding the two 'illegible' ones noted at the bottom of your list, the first (sent on 14FEB74) was probably THORPLANDS NORTHAMPTON. This was a new Town Sub-Office, but I regret I have no specimen. The second which you suggest was BROADWAY.. is BROADWAY WELLINGBOROUGH, and I enclose an example. This is another Town Sub-Office."

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P 2297 B FINAL DECIMAL G 806775 Note. MONEY must not be sent by RECORDED DELIVERY. See over for Conditions of Acceptance and Instructions. Enter below in ink the name and address as written on the letter or packet. Name <u>D. SMEATHERS</u> Address <u>TOWN & COUNTY INS. BROKERS</u> <u>329 WELLINGBOROUGH RD</u> <u>NORTHAMPTON</u> GP. 1867 2.P. LTD. 1/71		Date Stamp  Accepting Officer's Initials <i>JS</i>	

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LESS THAN THE LEGAL RATE ACCORDING TO THE DISTANCE

by Rev. Christopher Beaver

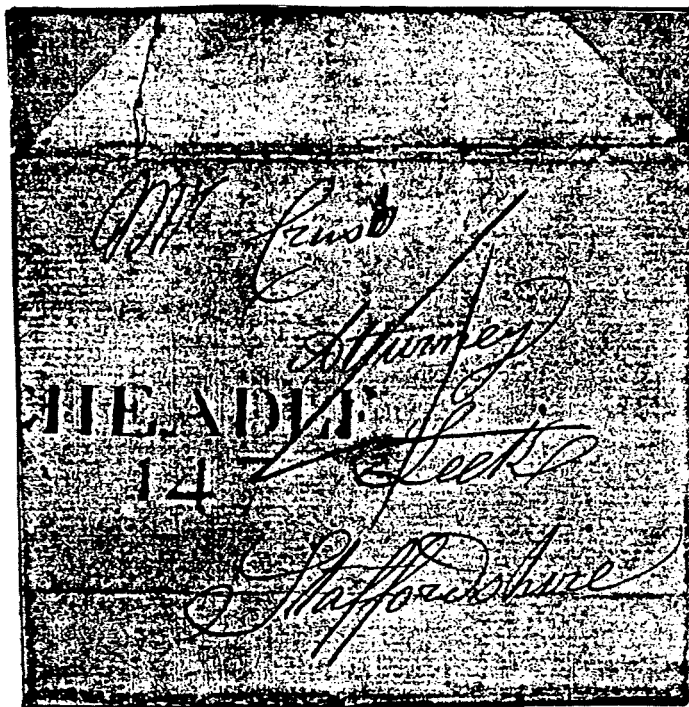
It was most interesting to discover that there were known and sanctioned instances where the postal charge levied was less than was legally payable and to find a surveyor recommending another (MM88/17).

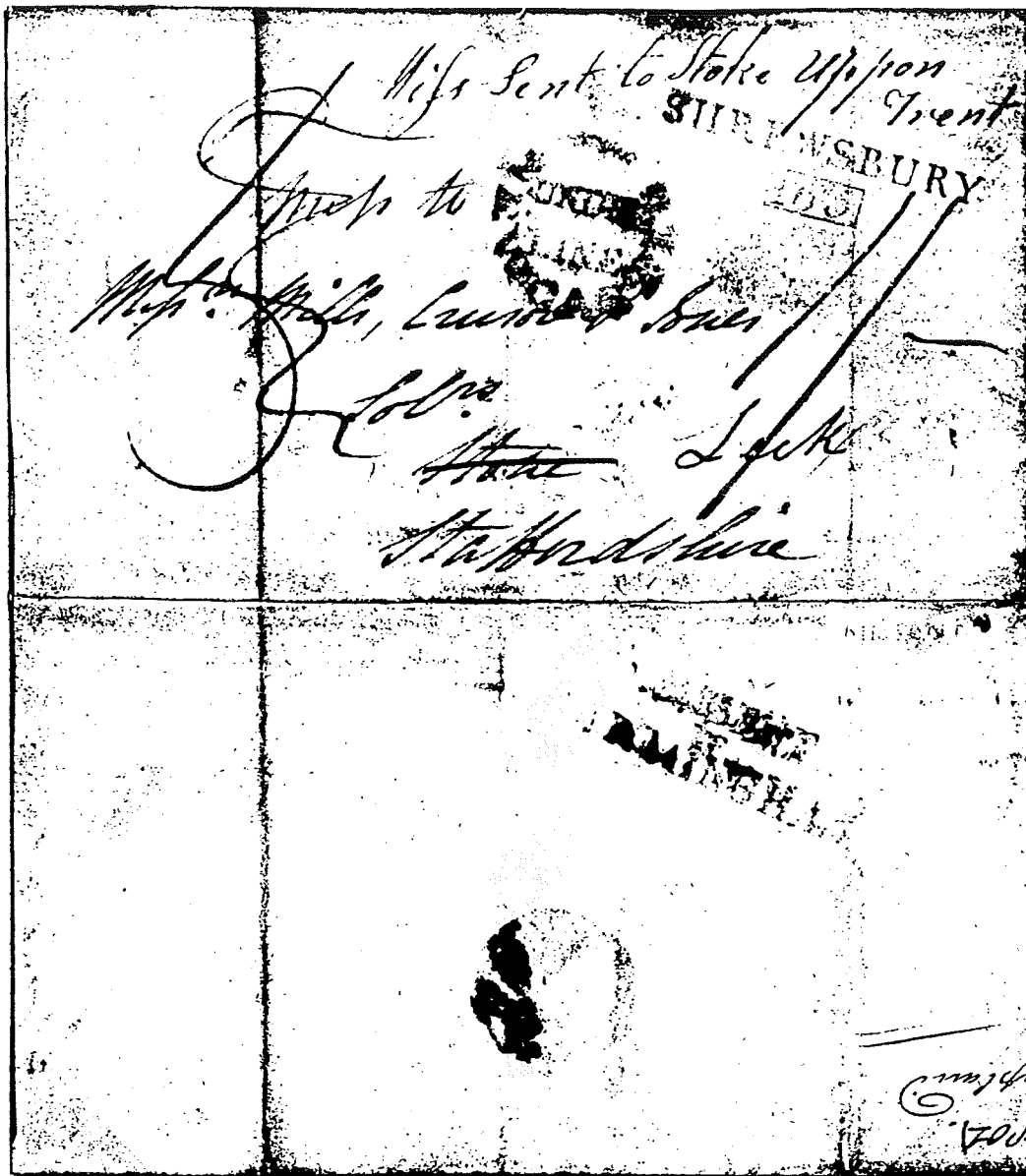
The cover illustrated below would seem to be an example of this practice. Dated 29th October 1787, this letter is the earliest recorded with a Cheadle stamp (a first type mileage 147, and that eliminates any possibility of use at the Cheshire rather than the Staffordshire Cheadle). It is addressed to Leek and clearly taxed 4 in black.

Cheadle and Leek are adjacent towns, eight or nine miles across the hills by the nearest carriage road. Earlier in the century both had been served by a bye mail ride or rides from Stone; Cheadle continued to be. Leek was on the route of the London to Manchester mailcoach from 1785 to 1837, and as a result postally isolated from the rest of Staffordshire. From the south of the county the nearest link was via Lichfield and Derby, and from north Staffordshire via Manchester. (After June 1805, the Monksheath to Macclesfield ride could be utilised - MM88/16-17.) In 1787 either way from Cheadle to Leek had to be 85 miles and more, and the proper rate over 80 miles should have been 5d.

I also have a letter of 1804 (shown opposite), readdressed to Leek from Stone. It was charged for that (shorter) journey 7d., the rate then appropriate for over 80 miles. It is therefore most unlikely that Cheadle to Leek was charged less than the legal rate by that date.

Editor's Note - It is possible that as a result of difficulties experienced with the contractor for the ride between Macclesfield and Monksheath, the ride was sent to Knutsford. I have not had time to trace a report but on the circulation map of May 1807, the ride is shown as going to Knutsford.





A letter written on 27th February 1807 at Shrewsbury. Sent, addressed to Stone, Staffordshire, and showing a variety of marks: Shrewsbury (boxed 165 mileage mark), Missent to Birmingham (three-line stamp), Miss to (in manuscript) Newcastle-under-Line (circular undated handstamp) endorsing Miss sent to Stoke upon Trent from where it is to be presumed it was sent to Stone. It was redirected and sent from Stone via Manchester to Leek. The postage was originally 5d. for 30 to 50 miles, but this was deleted and reassessed as 1/- i.e. 7d. for 80 to 120 miles plus the original 5d. The letter should have been turned at Wolverhampton for the Birmingham to Manchester mailcoach to Stone. It is possible that Stone was mis-read as Stoke at both Birmingham and Newcastle, though that would correctly have been Stoke-upon-Trent near Newcastle Staffordshire.

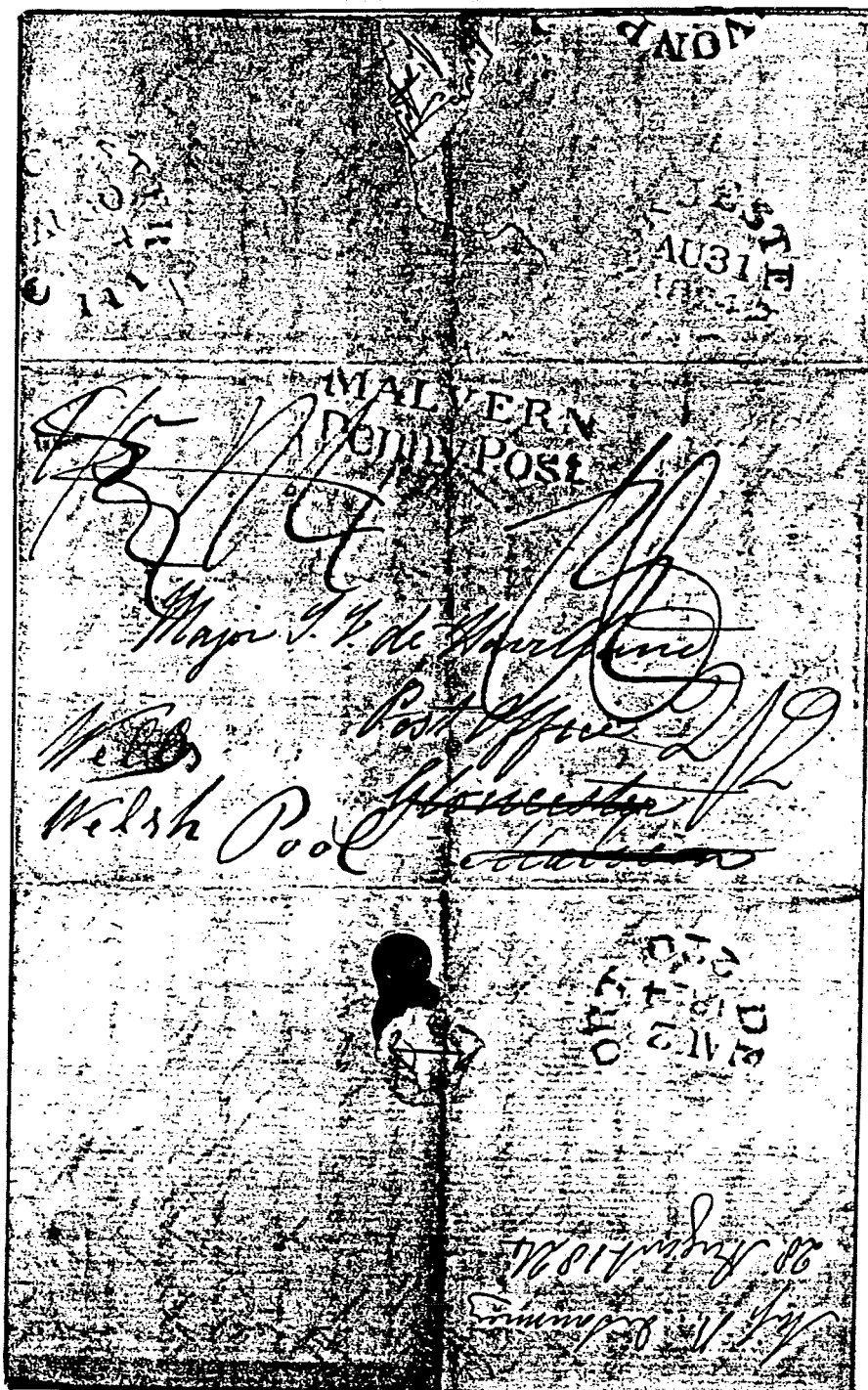
A WELL-TRAVELLED MALVERN PENNY POST ITEM

by Roger Broomfield

I show, courtesy of Mr Roger Hall-Jones of Malvern, a 'Malvern Penny Post' item of 1824. The letter was written from 'Admiralty House, Devonport' and addressed to 'Post Office, Gloucester, Malvern.', and carries a strike of the dated mileage mark of Devonport for 28th August 1824. It appears to have been rated at 1/6.

'Gloucester' has been deleted as is the 1/6 charge. The letter was re-rated at 1/4 and carries a strike of the Worcester mileage mark for 30th August, as well as a strike of the 'MALVERN/Penny Post' handstamp. The charge for this part of the journey has been changed to 1/5.

The letter was then forwarded to Welsh Pool (the word 'Wells' has been crossed through and appears to be a mis-spelling of the first part of Welshpool). The charge was changed yet again, this time to 2/2.



THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 16)

In January 1807, Mr Saverland was still being troubled by the "severe Indisposition" which had confined him to his bed the previous month, and it was mid-February before he was able to travel on official business. His first trip of the year took him to Buckingham to find a fit person to act as a horse-mail guard on the post between there and Stony Stratford. The person appointed carried the mail for the first time on Monday, 16th February after Mr Saverland had instructed him and made sure that he was properly "cloathed & armed."

From Buckingham, Mr Saverland went to Cheshire and Lancashire before arriving in Oswestry on 3rd March to discuss terms with the proprietors of the Holyhead stage-coach for carrying mail between Shrewsbury and Corwen. The terms he agreed were obviously acceptable to the authorities in London for he returned to Shropshire on the 28th to have the contract signed by the coach proprietors and to give the necessary instructions for the starting of the Shrewsbury and Corwen mailcoach on 6th April. The deputy at Oswestry was told to make up daily bags for Chirk, Llangollen, Corwen and Bala, and on three days a week for Dolgelly. The postmistress at Ellesmere was told to stop sending the footmessenger to Oswestry on three days a week.

On 1st April, Mr Saverland set off on the road to Corwen, Bala, where he gave directions for a post to meet the mailcoach at Corwen, and Dolgelly where he installed a new postmaster and arranged daily posts to Bala and Barmouth. From Dolgelly he went on to look at the road between Machynlleth and Welshpool and to consult the innkeepers about a possible mailcoach between Welshpool and Aberystwyth. He returned to the Midlands by way of Shrewsbury and on arrival in Birmingham he found it necessary to go to Dudley and Oldbury as the inhabitants of the latter place had petitioned for a post office to be opened there.

Mr Saverland then spent a week at home, followed by a week in London consulting Freeling on a number of matters including the circulation of bye-letters. Then after four days at home, he set out on 11th May for Carlisle to meet "Messrs Hodgson, Western, Hasker & the two Scotch Surveyors, respecting the establishment of Mail Coaches from Liverpool & Manchester to arrive at Carlisle, in time for the Coaches proceeding further northward, the correspondence from those Towns laying a day at Carlisle."

On 2nd June, Mr Saverland arrived in Walsall to enquire about the deputy's health as it had been necessary to send a clerk from the Birmingham to run the office during the deputy's illness. From Walsall he went to Wolverhampton, Shifnal, Shrewsbury and Welshpool where he remained for two days until 6th June arranging the introduction of the Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth mailcoach. He made the return journey to Aberystwyth, arriving back in Shrewsbury on 18th June.

Daventry was Mr Saverland's destination on 3rd August. There he gave notice to William Clarke, the contractor for the ride to Southam, to quit on 3rd November. On his way home he called at the offices in Southam, Warwick and Coventry.

A week later, he met Mr Western in Liverpool and from there went with him to Preston to arrange matters for the new mailcoaches from Liverpool and Manchester to Carlisle and Edinburgh, and from Carlisle to Newcastle. On this same business, he returned on the 19th to Liverpool where he took the opportunity to prepare lists of the rates of postage from all parts of his district to the posttowns in Scotland.

Mr Saverland called at Bilstone on his way home to put the office in new hands as the receiver was "incapable from the infirmities of Age to conduct the business of her Office." It was the general wish of the inhabitants that William Deane should be the new receiver. So Mr Saverland gave him the necessary instructions so that he could take over on Monday, 7th September.

The circulation of letters between East Anglia and Mr Saverland's district was the reason for his meeting Mr Bartlett in Welford for two days in mid-September.

The first week of October was taken up by an investigation into missing letters sent from Walsall and addressed to Coventry. As a result, he went to Coventry on the 16th to get "the Letter Carrier apprehended on strong suspicion of stealing Letters, containing Property from Walsall & other parts."

From 29th October to 5th November, Mr Saverland supervised the introduction of the mailcoach from Daventry to Warwick which started on 4th November.

A week later, he went to Leicester to find and obtain the evidence of William Parnall, an itinerant journeyman saddler who had sent from Welford, to his wife at Coventry, two letters containing money, which not being received he went to Coventry in search of, and obtained them from the letter carrier who had detained them for a considerable time and stolen the money out of one of them.

Mr Saverland did not make any official visits in December.

Mr Western began 1807 by going to Matlock to "'fix the receiving house, and put in a new Sub-deputy." At the end of January, he went to Newark to establish a bag from there to Carlisle with the letters for Scotland.

There is nothing in the February journal pertaining to the Midlands other than a visit to Southwell to prepare for a new deputy whom he eventually installed on 3rd April.

The first week in May was spent at the G.P.O. in London from where he travelled through Northampton, Kettering, Melton Mowbray and Nottingham so as to prepare a report on the state of road and the possibility of sending the Leeds mailcoach by that route. As we have already seen, mid-May found Mr Western in Carlisle.

On 1st June, Mr Western went to Alfreton, Peacock Inn, Crich and Higham to arrange for the mailcoach from Birmingham to go through Alfreton instead of the Peacock Inn. After four days on that business, he went to Nottingham on the matter of the alteration of the route of the Leeds mail. He travelled up the road to Kettering, where he met Mr Bartlett, and then on to Bedford, Ampthill, Hitchin, Barnet and London. After discussions with, amongst others Messrs Freeling and Aust, he went on 25th June, "down the Bedford Road to Leicester to prepare for taking off the Coach from that Road & so to Derby to give directions for sending the Birmingham Mail Coach through Alfreton & from thence immediately to Nottingham & Loughboro' to propose for the establishment of that Ride & then to Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Uppingham, Rockingham to Kettering - Giving directions for the new Post both personally & in writing & continued on that Duty at Kettering."

Mr Western wrote about July:

"The whole of this month was taken up by the very extensive arrangements of the sending a mail coach thro' Bedford to Nottingham, and opening a direct communication from Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire with Huntingdonshire, and in abolishing old rides on the establishment of new."

Mr Western went on to say that it might be necessary to open a receiving house at "Foss Inn halfway between Melton Mowbray & Nottingham". I have not come across any other reference to such a receiving house, so I assume that it did not come into being.

The journal for August has not survived. On 24th September, on his way back from Yorkshire, Mr Western called at Chesterfield to transfer the office to the widow of the late postmaster. All Mr Western's official journeys in October were outside the Midlands.

On 11th November, Mr Western went to Alfreton to establish a London bag and put in a new deputy, to Chesterfield about a bill, sent from there to London, which had been stolen out of a letter from Stockton to Manchester, and finally to Crich to arrange the footpost to Alfreton. He went to Northampton on the 24th to make a new agreement for the ride from there to Higham Ferrers. He returned home by way of Nottingham where he inquired about a complaint of overcharging for taking in "Too Late" letters when the office had closed.

In mid-December, Mr Western went to Newark, Ollerton and Worksop to agree terms for the rides from Ollerton to Newark and from Ollerton to Worksop. There is a puzzling comment in his report on the riding work in December where he states that on the Mondays the bags from Loughborough had arrived too late Nottingham to be sent on. This had been caused by the late arrival of the coach at Loughborough on Mondays there being no mail from London. I would have expected the coach to be early not late if it had no mail from London to carry.

Mr Woodcock's first official journey of 1807 was to Leominster to instruct a new deputy, the previous postmaster, Mr Powell, having died. He visited the offices at Hereford and Hay on his way to Brecon where he took charge of the office.

Much of March was spent on a survey in Wiltshire and Berkshire, preparatory to alterations to a number of the posts.

The posts at Droitwich, Redditch and Alcester were the subject of an inspection in early April. As a result some additions were made to the Alcester riding allowances. Mr Woodcock then visited Painswick, Stroud, Cheltenham and the neighbourhood as a consequence of an application from Mr Howell of Prinknash Park to alter the route of the post to and from Painswick. [Unfortunately, I have not had time to locate the details of this.]

Then, on 25th and 26th April Mr Woodcock was with Mr Western, consulting him on the "new Circulation Maps." As Mr Western did not mention this in his journal, it is possible that the meeting took place in Derby.

Six days were spent at the beginning of May at Ross, Monmouth, Hereford and Ledbury on unspecified "Official business." Mr Woodcock was at Bishops Castle for ten days from 19th May in charge of the office. However, as enquiries elicited many comments favourable to the previous postmaster, and Lord Powis interceded on his behalf, he was reinstated.

The offices at Worcester, Evesham, Pershore and Broadway were visited at the start of June in order to find the best way of preventing delays, at Evesham, to the Worcester mailcoach. Mr Woodcock returned to this matter a month later and made some alterations to the voucher accounts at these offices. Two days were spent in mid-June at Ross, Monmouth and Abergavenny "trying to fix the continuance of the Gloster & Carmarthen Mail Coach or to provide for the rides."

The only official visit in August which was in the Midlands was to the offices at Worcester, Upton on Severn and Malvern. At the last place he made some regulations to accommodate the company there.

Mr Woodcock spent much of September in South Wales, but from 20th September to 3rd October, he inspected the offices between Gloucester and Oxford and at the latter place attended the night duty so as to find ways of preventing delays to the bye-letters forwarded through that office.

October was spent at home engaged on official business. There is no journal for the November. The whole of December was spent in South Wales.

ADDENDATHE LEEDS MAILCOACH

The poor running of the Leeds mailcoach was the subject of comment a number of times from the late 1790's onwards. South of Loughborough, it ran over the same road as the Manchester mailcoach, and it appears that in 1799 it was made subject to the regulations imposed by the Post Office only on the section between Leicester and Leeds. South of Leicester the mail was carried by the Manchester coach. However, it is not clear if that arrangement still operated in 1807.

The performance of the duty had become so poor that in 1807 it was decided to replace it by a coach running over a different route, through Bedford, Kettering, Oakham, Melton Mowbray and Nottingham where the old route was joined. This change necessitated a number of alterations in the riding work.

Although it was possible for the mail from Loughborough and southwards for the North and East of England to circulate as well through Derby as through Nottingham, the correspondence from Nottingham to the Leicester line of road amounted to £870 p.a. So it was felt necessary to provide a ride between Nottingham and Loughborough.

The rides from Leicester to Melton Mowbray, Stamford and Uppingham, and Oundle are Uppingham were no longer needed and so were abolished.

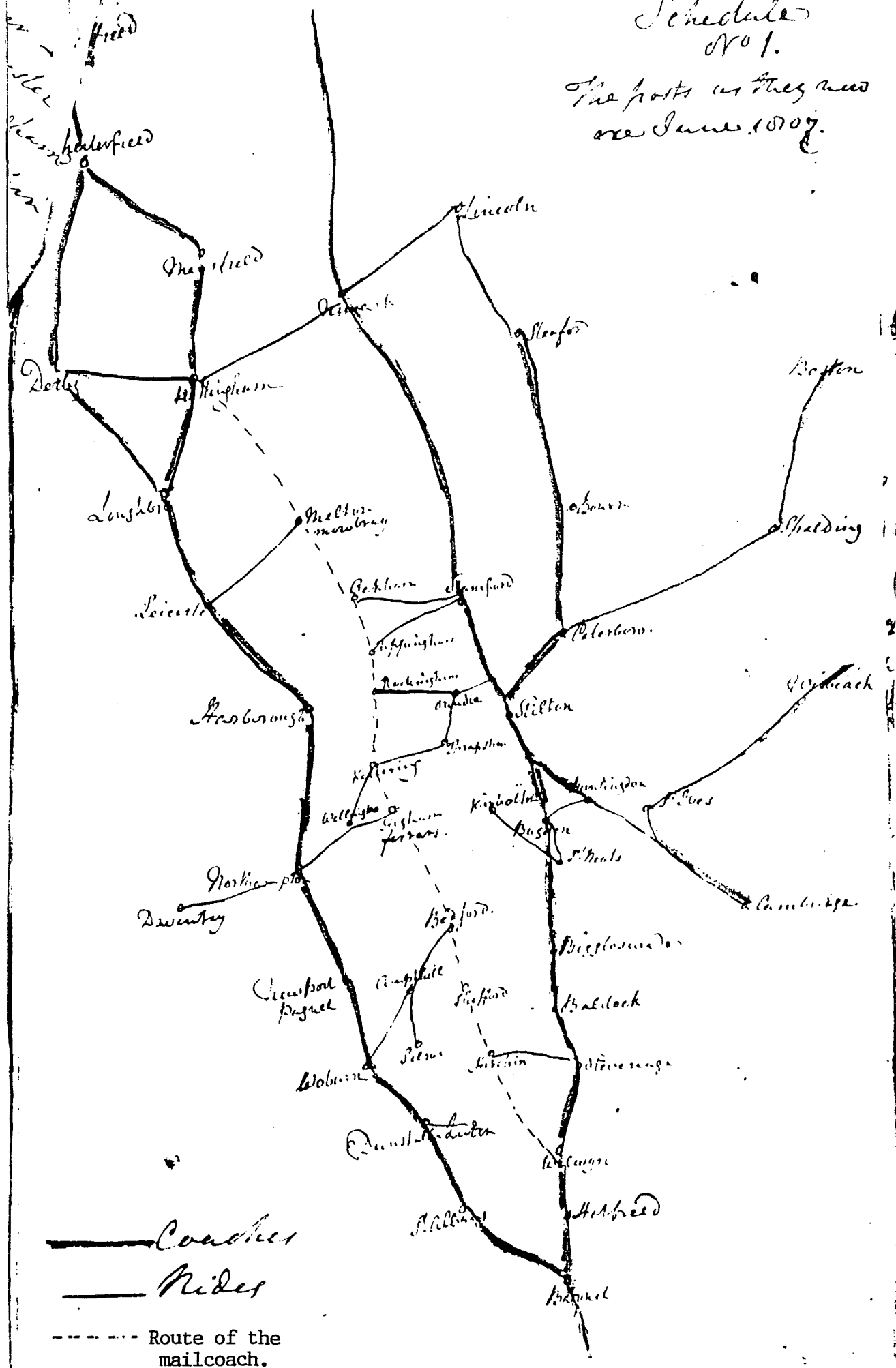
The times of arrival of the coach at Higham Ferrers and Kettering made it appropriate to alter the rides in that area. Instead of the post leaving Northampton early in the morning with the London letters for Wellingborough and Higham Ferrers and returning in the evening, it was retimed to leave Higham Ferrers in the morning, on the arrival of the coach, and go to Wellingborough with the London letters and then on to Northampton with letters from Bedford, Huntingdon etc. The return from Northampton was at 4 p.m. so as to be at Higham Ferrers in time for the southbound coach. The ride from Wellingborough to Kettering was withdrawn.

The ride from Kettering through Thrapstone to Oundle was also retimed. The withdrawal of the ride between Wellingborough and Kettering made it possible for the rider to leave Kettering on the arrival of the coach from London at about 7.30 a.m., be at Thrapstone by about 9 a.m., and at Oundle by 10.30 a.m. The return from Oundle was at 3 p.m., reaching Kettering by 6 p.m. in time for the coach to London. This arrangement had the advantage of meeting the wishes of Lord Sackville and other gentlemen living in the vicinity of Thrapstone who had applied several times in the previous ten years for improved posts.

Messrs Western and Bartlett said that the most important arrangement made possible by the new coach was not only the opening of a direct communication from Bedford to Huntingdon, two county towns about twenty miles apart, but between which mail was sent 116 miles, but also to Stilton, Peterborough, Lincolnshire and all of the North as far as "the end of Scotland." This was achieved by the introduction of a ride between Shefford and Biggleswade. As mailcoaches from the north passed through both places at about 11 p.m., and from London at about 2 a.m., and a rider could leave Shefford at 11 p.m. for Biggleswade and return by 2 a.m., it was possible connect the two roads.

The two surveyors mentioned one possible objection that might be raised. Since the post for Wellingborough would leave Northampton at 4 p.m. instead of in the morning, letters from Dunstable, Daventry and Leicester for Higham Ferrers, Wellingborough, Kettering, Thrapstone and Oundle would be detained for a day as they arrived in Northampton at 7 p.m. and 6 a.m.

The mailcoach ran for the first time on 6th July but some of the changes described above did not come into effect until after that date.

Schedule
No 1.The posts as they were
on June 1807.

THE DAVENTRY AND WARWICK MAILCOACH

As can be seen from the pamphlet reproduced on the next page, the matter of a mailcoach to serve Warwick had been raised before 1807.

In April 1807, Mr Saverland stated in a letter to Freeling that when he was at Daventry in the February he had been told that the coach from London to Rugby had proved to be unprofitable, and he had been asked if it could be run from Daventry to Warwick as a mailcoach.

He went on to say that he agreed with Mr Hasker in that a mailcoach to Warwick, in order to "answer the purposes of correspondence", should go from London, by way of Watford, Tring, Buckingham and Banbury, but part of that road was bad, and when a mailcoach had run on that road to Banbury it "did not answer."

Also against a mailcoach from Daventry to Warwick was the fact that the road from Daventry to Southam was "very indifferent in Summer, & dreadfully bad in Winter." Mr Saverland went on to say that Warwick was already very well served by a post to Stratford which was only eight miles away and on the route of the Shrewsbury mailcoach, and by a three day post to Coventry which also served Kenilworth on six days a week.

The matter did not rest there for, on 12th June, Mr Saverland wrote again to Freeling. He said that he had little to add to his previous report. He did not know the precise time of arrival of the mail from Stratford at Warwick as those towns were in Mr Woodcock's district, but he imagined that it could not be later than 10 a.m. As the Liverpool mailcoach arrived at Daventry at 6 a.m., the proposed coach could leave Daventry at 6.30 a.m. and arrive in Warwick, twenty-one miles away, at about 10 a.m. The coach would need to leave Warwick two hours before the post to Stratford so as to be in Daventry by 6 p.m. in time for the coach to London. So the people of Warwick would gain nothing and have two hours less in which to answer their letters.

He felt that the proposed coach, having failed as a London to Rugby venture, was being turned to Warwick in the hope that, with the aid of the Post Office allowance and exemption from tolls, it would be more successful. But, even with those aids, he did not think it could succeed. If Freeling was of a different opinion, it should be borne in mind that the contractor for the Southam ride would need three months' notice or a payment of £50.

The two letters from Mr Saverland were obviously sent on to Mr Woodcock who wrote to Freeling on 19th June, returning the letters. He said that he was in agreement Mr Saverland although he was mistaken about the times of the Shrewsbury mailcoach and the ride from Stratford. The mailcoach rarely reached Stratford before 9 a.m. and the horsepost arrived in Warwick at 11 a.m. The return from Stratford was at 3.45 p.m., giving adequate time to answer the letters on the same day if required. So, although the letters would be received an hour earlier, there was little to be gained by the proposed measure.

Freeling yielded to the objections of the Surveyors, and expressed his own doubts as to whether the Revenue would be increased by the proposed mailcoach. But then, Mr Charles Mills M.P. offered to indemnify the Post Office against the additional expense of £27.16.4 if the mailcoach was introduced on a trial basis. As the Post Office had nothing to lose, permission was given and the mailcoach ran for the first time on 4th November. It was to be a short-lived affair as we shall see in the next issue.

References: Post 40/100E/1807
40/9F/1807

AT a general Meeting of the *Inhabitants of Warwick*, held pursuant to public Advertizement at the *Court-House*, 5th August, 1805.

Tho. W. Weston, Esq.

MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR.

RESOLVED,

THAT a more safe and direct conveyance of the *MAILS*, to and from this Town and Neighbourhood to the *Metropolis* is much wanted; and that the Public Service as well as the trading Interest and general convenience of this part of the County, would be greatly promoted by establishing a *MAIL COACH* for that Purpose.

RESOLVED,

THAT the *Lord Lieutenant* of the County, and *Members for the Borough*, be applied to, and requested to give their Support to an Application to his Majesty's Post Masters General, for the Establishment of a *MAIL COACH*.

RESOLVED,

THAT the *Mayor, Charles Gregory Wade, Esq. Colonel Packwood, Mr. Woodhouse Crompton, and Mr. John Tones*, are appointed a Committee to conduct this Application on behalf of the Borough, and that they be requested to make such Arrangements with other Towns and Places as shall appear most conducive to carry the object of this Meeting into speedy effect.

RESOLVED,

THAT the Mayor be requested to sign these Resolutions, and transmit Copies thereof to the *Lord Lieutenant* and the *Members for the Borough*.

THO. W. WESTON,

Mayor.

RESOLVED,

THAT the Thanks of the Borough are due to the *Worshipful the Mayor*, for his readiness in calling and presiding at this Meeting.

Sharpe, Printer, Warwick.

OSWESTRY TO BALA

In late 1806, the inhabitants of Oswestry petitioned that the mail to and from Shrewsbury should be carried by a Shrewsbury to Holyhead stagecoach. At first, Mr Saverland was against the idea as the arrival in Oswestry would have been later and so would have interfered with the post to Bala. He admitted that he had often tried to get that ride better performed, but had always been told that it could not be done for the allowance from the Post Office if the riders were not allowed to collect and deliver letters and parcels on the road. Also there had always been an objection against increasing the allowances of the Welsh riders as they all were carriers.

Freeling sent a number of questions to Mr Saverland. It is the answers to these and some other comments which are set out below.

The mail from Oswestry to Bala was carried on horseback, the riders taking up and delivering letters and parcels on the road as well as calling at some of the houses out of the road. All this delayed the mail but if it were not for the parcels etc. the mail could not be carried for double the allowance of 30/- per mile per annum.

The post left Oswestry one hour after the arrival of the mail from Shrewsbury which was between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m., and arrived in Bala at about 3 p.m. The return from Bala was at 5 a.m. The rider met the one from Oswestry at the half-way point where they exchanged mails, parcels and letters before returning. The Oswestry rider delivered the letters at Chirk and Llangollen, and on his return collected the answers.

Mr Saverland was also of the opinion that the proposed change would inconvenience the town of Ellesmere. This was disputed by the petitioners who said that Ellesmere had a direct post from Shrewsbury three days a week, and on the other four days the mail was carried from Oswestry by a foot messenger who left Oswestry at 5 a.m., arriving in Ellesmere at about 9 a.m., and returning at about 2 p.m. If indeed that was the case, it is difficult to understand why, in his journal, Mr Saverland said that the postmistress of Ellesmere was to stop sending the footpost to Oswestry on three days a week. Inspection of the 1807 Circulation Map suggests that the post to Shrewsbury was withdrawn.

However, Mr Saverland completely changed his mind when the petitioners said that the coach could leave Shrewsbury at 4 a.m. to be in Oswestry by 7 a.m., and a guard would be found, all for £54.12.0 p.a. He also recommended that the coach should carry the Bala letters as far as Corwen. [Reference: Post 40/7D/1807]

G.B. COVERS

Do you see my lists of GB cover material? If you don't and are a member of The Midland (GB) Postal History Society, you should! They contain a wide selection of interesting and unusual items - county material, difficult values and rates- from 1840 to date. Send for a copy of my latest list today. All 'Wants Lists' for specific items or county material will receive my personal attention.

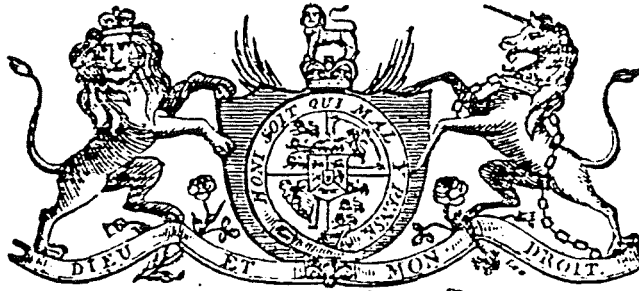
ROGER HUDSON



P.O. Box 172,
COVENTRY CV6 6NF

Phone: 0203 686613

¹²²For his Majesty's Special Service.



Shrewsbury (per Oswestry) to Bala

TIME-BILL.

Miles.	Time allowed.	
	H. M.	
		Despatched the Mail from Shrewsbury, the 9 Day of Nov 1806 at 11 o'Clock at Night.
		<i>Evans</i> Postmr.
18	3	Arrived at Oswestry, at 2 o'Clock, and despatched to Bala, at 3
	1	One hour allowed for sorting and despatching the Mail from Oswestry, and one hour allowed for delivering the Letters at Chester and Llangollen.
	1	<i>Evans</i> - Postmr.
34	5 40	<i>Oswestry Post arrived at here from 12 o'clock</i> Arrived at Bala, at 12 o'clock 3 hours 40 minutes <i>Roberts</i> Postmr.
52	10 40	

RETURNED.

		Despatched the Mail from Bala, the 13 Day of Dec 1806 at 5 o'Clock in the Morning.
	1	One hour allowed for collecting Letters on the Road.
		<i>Roberts</i> Postmr.
34	5 40	Arrived at Oswestry, at 4 o'Clock, and despatched to Shrewsbury, at 6 o'Clock in the Evening, the 13 Day of Dec 1806.
		<i>Evans</i> Postmr.
18	3	Arrived at Shrewsbury, at 1/2 4 o'Clock at Night.
		<i>Evans</i> Postmr.

Send these TIME-BILLS to me, Weekly, at CLAYBROOK, near HINCKLEY.

By Command of the Postmaster General.

C. SAVERLAND.

THE MAILCOACH TO RUN THROUGH ALFRETON

In 1807, the Postmasters General received a memorial from some of the inhabitants of the towns of Alfreton, Shirland, Pinxton, Normanton, Swanwick, Ripley, Denby, Horsley, Kilburn, Coxbench, Little Eaton and Breadsall stating that a new turnpike had recently been made at great expense over level ground from the "old Chesterfield Road" at Higham through Alfreton to Derby. That route had been chosen so as to avoid the range of hills over which the previous route from Chesterfield to Drby had run. They asked that the mailcoach from Birmingham to Sheffield should be diverted to run on this new road through Alfreton instead of through the Peacock Inn from where Alfreton was served by a footpost.

Their petition continued:

"That great complaints have been made in consequence of the late delivery of Letters in the Town and Neighbourhood of Alfreton, owing to the present Birmingham and Sheffield Mail Coach often leaving Derby before the London Mail Coach arrives there, and consequently without bringing the mail Bag, in order to arrive at Chesterfield at a stated hour. And on these occasions the Mail Bag is first sent by a Horse Post to Belper, and thence by a Boy hired for the purpose to the Peacock Inn, within one Mile of Alfreton, whence the Foot Post conveys them to Alfreton, and frequently in the winter time at the late hour of Eleven at Night, whereas the Mail Coach upon the new road would, even in winter, with ease be passing through the town of Alfreton soon after % o'Clock and thereby afford at all times an opportunity of answering letters by the returning Post."

It was also stated that on the old road from Higham to Derby there were only two villages, Heage and Duffield, which were of "little moment in a commercial point of view." On the other hand, on the new road there were, besides Alfreton, a number of towns and villages as well as the ironworks at Butterley and Alfreton. Also the road crossed the Cromford Canal, which had many wharves, at Butterley ironworks.

Thomas Hasker confirmed that the road from Derby through Heage to the Peacock Inn was very bad and said that he had no objection to the change in route.

In a letter dated 6th June, Mr Western said that he had been over the whole of the new road, and it was fixed that the mailcoach should travel over it from 6th July. He added that it was necessary that there should be a London bag for Alfreton. The reason for this was that, as described above, if the coach from London arrived late at Derby, then the coach to Sheffield went on without the Alfreton letters which were then sent on to Belper with the Wirksworth rider. As the coach would no longer go to the Peacock Inn, the only way of forwarding the letters to Alfreton would be by means of an Express which would be expensive. If Alfreton had a London bag the letters could be sent on even if the coach from London arrived only one minute before the departure of the coach to Sheffield.

Mr Western proposed to increase the salary of the sub-deputy at Alfreton from £6 to £14. With regard to Crich he wrote:

"There is at present a Sub office at the Peacock Inn - £6 & messenger to Alfreton at 7/- a week. This I propose to transfer to Crich - this will efficiently accomodate the Country & give general satisfaction, the Crich letters are about £40 a year now, badly served as it is, by a 3 days Messenger arriving by a carrier the Evening following their arrival at the Peacock Inn. I propose to make this a Six days Messenger. I took some pains to find if a 5th Clause would not have answered, but prefer the removing the present Messenger, and having an open receiving house at Crich - and one penny a letter or at most 1½d a letter to be charged on delivery - the Messenger to go round by the factories & houses to Crich. All letters to be taken back free to Alfreton. I am in hope a very short trial will shew 1d a letter will be sufficient and propose to begin with that charge if practicable to cover the expence at that price." [Reference: Post 40/76E/1807]

PHILIP *Earl of* CHESTERFIELD,
and GEORGE *Earl of* LEICESTER,
His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

TO ALL PEOPLE to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting,
KNOW YE, That we the said PHILIP Earl of CHESTERFIELD,
and GEORGE Earl of LEICESTER, having received good Testimony of
the Fidelity and Loyalty to His Majesty of *Mr. Joseph* —

Holiday

and reposing great Trust
and Confidence in the Knowledge, Care and Ability of the said

Jos^r. Holiday

to execute the Office and Duties required of a Deputy Postmaster,
have deputed, constituted, authorized and appointed, and by
these Presents do depute, constitute, authorize and appoint *him*
our lawful and sufficient Deputy, to execute the Office of Deputy
Postmaster of the Stage of *Wheatley* —

in the County of *Oxford* — To have, hold, use,
exercise and enjoy, the said Office of Deputy Postmaster of the
Stage aforesaid, with all and every the Rights, Privileges, Benefits
and Advantages to the same belonging for and during our Pleasure,
and subject to such Conditions, Covenants, Proviso's, Payments,
Orders and Instructions, to be faithfully observed, performed, and
done by the said Deputy, and Servants, as *he* or they shall,
from Time to Time, receive from Us, or by our Order. Given
at the General Post-Office, *London*, under our Hands and Seal of
the said Office, this *Thirtieth* Day of *June* 1797
in the *Thirtysixth* — Year of His Majesty's Reign.

By Command

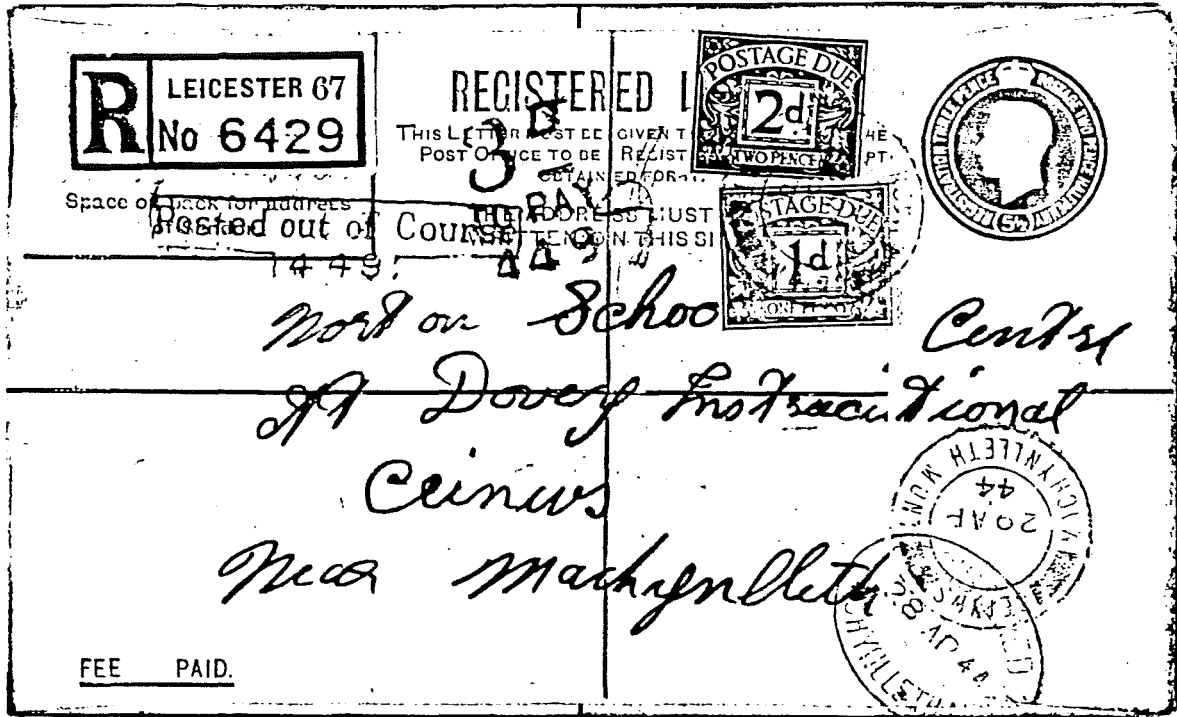
Joseph Holiday

Joseph Holiday

Chesterfield
Leicester

POSTED OUT OF COURSE

Shown below is a registered letter which was probably put into a letter box. Such letters were treated as "Out of Course", regarded as not having paid the registration fee and surcharged. The designation number 67 was, I presume that of the Leicester Sorting Office. This is to serve as a reminder to respond to Ray Woodward-Clarke's article in the last issue, if you have not already done so.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

It is hoped that this will appear in August. It will contain the piece on T.P.Os held over from this issue as well as something of interest to Shropshire members. All articles, long or short, should be sent to:

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

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