

MIDLAND MAIL

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



President: Mr. W.J. Calladine

Chairman:
Richard Farman

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

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NUMBER 67, DECEMBER 1990

I must apologise to members for the fact that this issue is very late in appearing, but domestic circumstances have meant that postal history has had to take a back seat for some months. Unfortunately there are no back-seat drivers in this house. However I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas, and a New Year in which all those elusive covers turn up.

My thanks are due to John Calladine for the reports of the last two meetings and for preparing the update to the "Straight Line" book. However if you have further information on these marks John is still wanting to receive it.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Our annual get together at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent will take place on Saturday 15th December. From 11 a.m. static displays by members will be shown. Lunch will be at 12.45 p.m. - the cost is expected to be about £5.50. If you would like to join us could you please let Richard Farman know as soon as possible on 0283-66515. The meeting proper will begin at 2 p.m. when Vivien Sussex will display "Valuables in the Post".

The hoped-for joint meeting in January has not proved possible to arrange. However this is quite fortunate as there was not sufficient time at the November meeting for all the material on local posts to be shown. So our meeting on 12th January 1991 at Carrs Lane Church Centre, beginning at 1.30 p.m. will be devoted to Local Posts, so if you have any such material do bring it along.

Our Annual Competitions will be held on Saturday 2nd February at Carrs Lane Church Centre. This will also be the venue for our March meeting which you are urged to attend. The B.P.F. are sending two speakers - John Sussex who will display "Mail to Maderia from G.B.", and Robert Seaman with his display of "Essex Pre-stamp Postal History" as well as a talk on the work of the B.P.F. Since these two visitors are coming some distance, and the A.G.M. particularly requested this talk, we hope that you will book this date now.

Literature Awards at Autumn Stampex / BPE

The Society's two publications won awards at the Autumn Stampex/BPE. The "straight line" book was given a Bronze Medal and the UDC book a Bronze-Silver; perhaps a disappointment in view of the enormous improvements made since a similar award to an earlier edition four years ago. Harold Wilson's new book, which was produced in conjunction with the Derbyshire Postal History Society, won a richly deserved Small Silver-Gilt Medal to gild the lily of two Silver Medals for postal history entries.

The September Meeting

Our season began on 8th September at Dr Johnson House with the first of the meetings devoted to "Local Posts" - the theme of the Society's next publication. Naturally Harold Wilson's sheets were devoted to Derbyshire and included a 1767 letter from London to Wooton near Ashbourne showing an extra charge of 2d; two local letters sent within Alferton; and examples from the penny posts of Hathersage, Wirksworth and Glossop. Much of Harold's material was already with the BPE judges, so it is hoped there will be more on show at the January meeting. John Soer's display began with a look at the receiving offices under Atherstone and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. This was followed by an example of the scarce 'Leicester/Penny Post' used in 1839.

From the material that Derek Smeathers showed us, it would appear that the postmaster of Northampton ran an unofficial service the size of an empire. No wonder there was no official penny post there for the postmaster seemed to provide a service to every village near Northampton. However there were official Penny Posts under the other post towns in the county, and we were shown examples from these. Of note were the numeral handstamps of the Peterborough Penny Post, and the italic handstamps of the receiving offices under Daventry. Nottinghamshire apparently had little in the way of penny posts but Denis Humphries sent copies of examples from Tickhill, Newark and Worksop.

The two Warwickshire stalwarts Peter Sharp and "Ches" were next to display their material. Although Peter concentrated on the Leamington Penny Post, we were shown a letter sent from Hockley through Stratford. Ches too produced items from the Stratford Penny Post, in particular letters to and from Wellesbourne, as well as from Leamington (the No 1 handstamp) and Coventry.

After the tea-break we were treated to a treated to a account of the Birmingham Penny Post which included much rare material. Eric began by saying that the five receiving offices in the city closed within two years of the inauguration in 1793 of the Penny Post and no handstamps were known to have been used. Handstamps numbered from 6 to 15 were issued to receiving offices in the country. Of particular note amongst those we saw were the No 6 of Solihull (not recorded used after 1807); the No 13 (used at either Halesowen or Bilston - so far there is no proof as to which) and the No 14 of Castle Bromwich. Amongst the many other items were the paid and unpaid marks of Tipton. The former is very scarce; apparently the inhabitants of Tipton did not believe in paying for their letters. Elizabeth dealt with the later history. From 1830, a number of other villages were included in the Penny Post and these offices used straight line stamps. We saw examples of most of those including the only copy of Kings Norton recorded prior to 1840. An italic 'Smethwick/Py Post', a

'Hockley/Penny Post' sent through Birmingham, and the numeral handstamps issued to the town receiving offices opened in 1826 were also amongst Elizabeth's material.

The theme of Chris Beaver's sheets was mail from places in Staffs going into Birmingham. This included, amongst others, the paid and unpaid marks of West Bromwich, mail from Willenhall under Bilston, and more items from Tipton. Chris explained the apparent reluctance of the people there to pay on dispatch by saying that the post went out in the middle of the night. He ended the afternoon with a copy of the 1817 handstamp of Brierley Hill used after 1840.

The October Meeting

Twelve members attended the meeting in Birmingham on 6th October and there were apologies for absence from almost as many again. The subject of the day was "Registration". There must have been some fears that the members' displays would be repetitive. In the event, we saw a wide variety of material and it proved to be a most interesting afternoon.

Ted Coles showed letters from France with London registration marks and also Army mail, the latter including several examples of the official registered envelopes that troops could buy. Mike Young's contribution was of registered mail from Worcester. There was a seldom seen registered Book Post item and a jury summons. Harold Wilson said his display would be mainly from Derby but there was interesting general material including a compulsarily registered letter from Germany to Kent (because it was seen to include coins) and a batch of receipt forms from 1858. Peter Sharp's "mixed bag" had two items from small villages that had not been registered there but at the nearest towns, and also an intriguing letter with a "Warwick and Leamington" label but with the stamps cancelled at Stratford. David Hardwick's "hotchpot" (as opposed to "mixed bag") included a Scottish experimental label of 1973 and a range of Post Office registered baggage labels; the kind of items that don't fall into collectors' hands every day.

Ches began the second half with a registered letter from a sheriff's office which (surprise, surprise) had not been called for by the felon in question. He also had a most unusual item - a registered mourning cover. He was followed by Trevor Clewley and here your reporter must be careful because, in the past, reports of the Hon. Treasurer's displays have been followed by threats of legal action. (For the record, Mr Clewley doesn't really like "single circles" nor is he to be found searching waste paper baskets.) In a comprehensive (not to say extensive) display of registered items we saw, inter alia, a selection of the larger registered envelopes, a remarkable array of different labels (one, at least, including the postcode) and some particularly interesting material from the 1920 period when postage rates were temporarily increased. Not only was Chris Beaver's material all from Staffordshire but he set out to show all the different registered rates from 1841 until the Post Office began to increase them every five minutes. There was an orange registered handstamp of Burton (unusual outside London) and an example of a registered label applied in Belgium on a letter from England, before such labels were introduced here. It was left to our Chairman to complete the afternoon with a display of notable variety and scope embracing registered mail from Turkistan and Nicaragua, a Burton registered mark in purple rather than orange (or black, like sensible towns), regist-

ered airmail letters, a registered parcel label and some compulsarily registered items where the 2d. and 3d. registered charges had been doubled. The latter was correct practice and members are referred to James Mackay's comprehensive book "Registered Mail of the British Isles", not only for a detailed account of the principles of compulsory registration but for clarification and explanation of many other matters that arose during a fascinating afternoon.

THE NOVEMBER MEETING

The meeting on 3rd November was intended to be the second and last on the subject of local posts. It is now fortunate that unforeseen circumstances have made it necessary to re-programme the January meeting for, such was the quantity of material available for display by members, much was never seen and a third session can be enjoyed early next year. This should include Harold Wilson's award winning display of Derby local posts, Denis Salt's Shifnal and Ironbridge collections and the first sight of the many Gloucestershire penny posts.

If one discounts sundry lady spectators who arrived with bulging shopping bags, fifteen members were present at Carrs Lane and seven contributed displays. Roger Broomfield warned that penny post material from Herefordshire is scarce but we saw pre-1840 examples from the Hereford and Lea Penny Posts. He also had a selection of the elusive type 5 marks from the receiving houses of Hereford and Ross on Wye. A handstamp that caught the eye was 'Ledbury/Penny Post', one of several marks seen during the afternoon that may be unique examples. Mike Young began with the four different Bewdley Penny Post types and members will rarely have the opportunity to see those marks together. There was a previously unrecorded type 1 'Broomsgrove/Penny Post' and interesting material from the Dudley, Stourport, Malvern, Shipston and Stourbridge Penny Posts. He finished with a run of Worcester numbered receiving house marks of which only 'No. 4' seemed to have eluded him. Denis Salt gave us something different for he concentrated on the extensive unofficial local posts around Shrewsbury and Oswestry. Denis has some sixty examples of letters carried unofficially to and from Shrewsbury - it helps to have a family firm of solicitors conducting business in the area for a couple of hundred years! Only two of the Shrewsbury routes were ever converted to official penny posts. Denis made the point that, at Shrewsbury, letters with a General Post charge never show the extra 1d. for local delivery and are harder to recognise than the local letters with a manuscript '1'. We saw a ½d. unofficial charge from Oswestry to Knockin and two examples of letters carried in the Oswestry and Llanfyllin 5th Clause Post which ceased before distinctive 5th Clause handstamps appeared.

The Shropshire theme was maintained by Guy Bridges who had some lovely material from the official penny posts. A letter from Albrighton to Broseley had the marks of both Wolverhampton (in blue) and Ironbridge. There was a unique example of the short-lived 'Burwaston/Penny Post' and the corrected 'Burwarton/Penny Post' replacement, probably made locally. For the connoisseur, there were letters from the Whitchurch Penny Post (where Malpas wielded its distinctive handstamp) including one with a manuscript Handley Penny Post, the only known confirmation of that receiving house. Only half a dozen examples of the type 5 'Chester/Penny Post' are recorded but Guy showed three, two on a turned letter. A fitting and attractive finale was 'Whittington/Penny Post' cancelling both a Penny Black on cover and a Mulready. Eric Lewis popped up several times during the

afternoon to add significant material from several counties but none more significant than his extensive study (150 or more examples) of Shifnal Penny Post. He had assessed the frequency of use of the three 'Shifnal/ Penny Post' handstamps in different ink colours and one could revel in the pencil note written beside a strike of a type 2 in blue - "hundreds seen"! Of the rarer combinations shown, type 3 in yellow comes to mind.

The Staffordshire contributions came from Richard Farman and Chris Beaver. Richard had apparently spent much of the previous night sorting out his penny post and fifth clause material and, seeing the extent of it, probably several other nights as well. We saw the very scarce 'Burton/Penny Post', the equally scarce and distinctive 'Rugeley/Penny Post' and a unique 'Stone P Post' in manuscript. The script-type 'Sudbury-D' was there, in black and blue inks, and many of the numbered marks of the Newcastle 5th Clause Post. Add to that Walsall Penny Post, Wolverhampton Penny Post, the mis-spelt 'Trysall/Penny Post' and a string of items from the Warwickshire and Leicestershire borders and you would still fail to visualise how many sheets were spread around the room. Chris Beaver, who could have occupied the whole of the afternoon on the Newcastle 5th Clause Post, left that material at home to concentrate on the Staffordshire Penny Posts. He began, however, with some unofficial local delivery charges including 1d. at Lichfield. There was something to be learned from every sheet that followed. Lichfield used its penny post stamp on incoming mail, Wolverhampton had type 1 and type 5 handstamps but the reported type 2 must be suspect, Longdon and Alrewas had uncharacteristic italic stamps, 'Breewood' is unique in having a large initial letter, 'Walsall/Penny Post' marks are invariably badly struck, Bilston was not (contrary to popular belief) in either the Birmingham or Wolverhampton Penny Posts - one could go on and on. Chris' display provided a fitting climax to a fascinating afternoon and one can only relish the prospect of another dose of the same on 12th January.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Chris Beaver has written:

Dear John,

I have been looking at the "Problem Covers". As to the first I've no reason to expect any shorter route (via Warwick and Coventry) was available, nor would I expect it to have been stamped at Warwick or Coventry en route - not unless Southam were less than a post town. As to the second, a fairly typical 3 has been erased and the replacement 4 initialled probably by another hand (the postmaster at Leicester, correcting his clerk?) to authenticate it. Assuming no near cross post in 1780 and no London postmark I would expect it went via Derby and Lichfield so travelling over 80 miles. I do not know when the Northampton to Daventry post began, nor if it was a six-day service. It may depend on the day of the week which way this letter was sent. An interesting one this. The third is interesting too, but not I think a problem if you look at Haldane's "Three Centuries of Scottish Posts": "The rates fixed by the Act of 1857 had applied mainly to England except for a charge of 5d. for letters from London to Edinburgh..". Haldane shows the 1660 Act did not affect Scotland in practice, though intended to apply to the whole UK - "in postal as in other matters, Scotland still looked on herself as largely independent."

My thanks also to Mr Flamank who wrote and confirmed Chris' conclusions about the third cover.

Derek Smeathers has written:

Dear John,

I thought I would offer a few comments on articles in the two previous editions of Midland Mail:

MM66/6 "SOME PROBLEM COVERS". In 1819 there was a direct horse post between Daventry, Leamington and Southam, though not daily. Letters were charged a 'local' rate of 1d. and the Daventry Penny Post had a "No.1" handstamp applied to such letters arriving from Leamington via Southam. However, this arrangement does not seem to have lasted more than a couple of years. I can only think that because Southam was a post town, and the London - Birmingham mailcoach passed through it and Warwick, letters for Daventry, Towcester etc. were taken on that coach and transferred either at Warwick/Coventry as suggested, or more likely at Birmingham where they joined the Holyhead mailcoach going south. I have a letter from Leamington to Daventry in May 1839 charged at 7d. whereas the direct distance (17miles) should have been 5d. Going in the other direction a letter from Daventry to Henley-in-Arden was rated at 8d. which would have been 6d. in direct mileage.

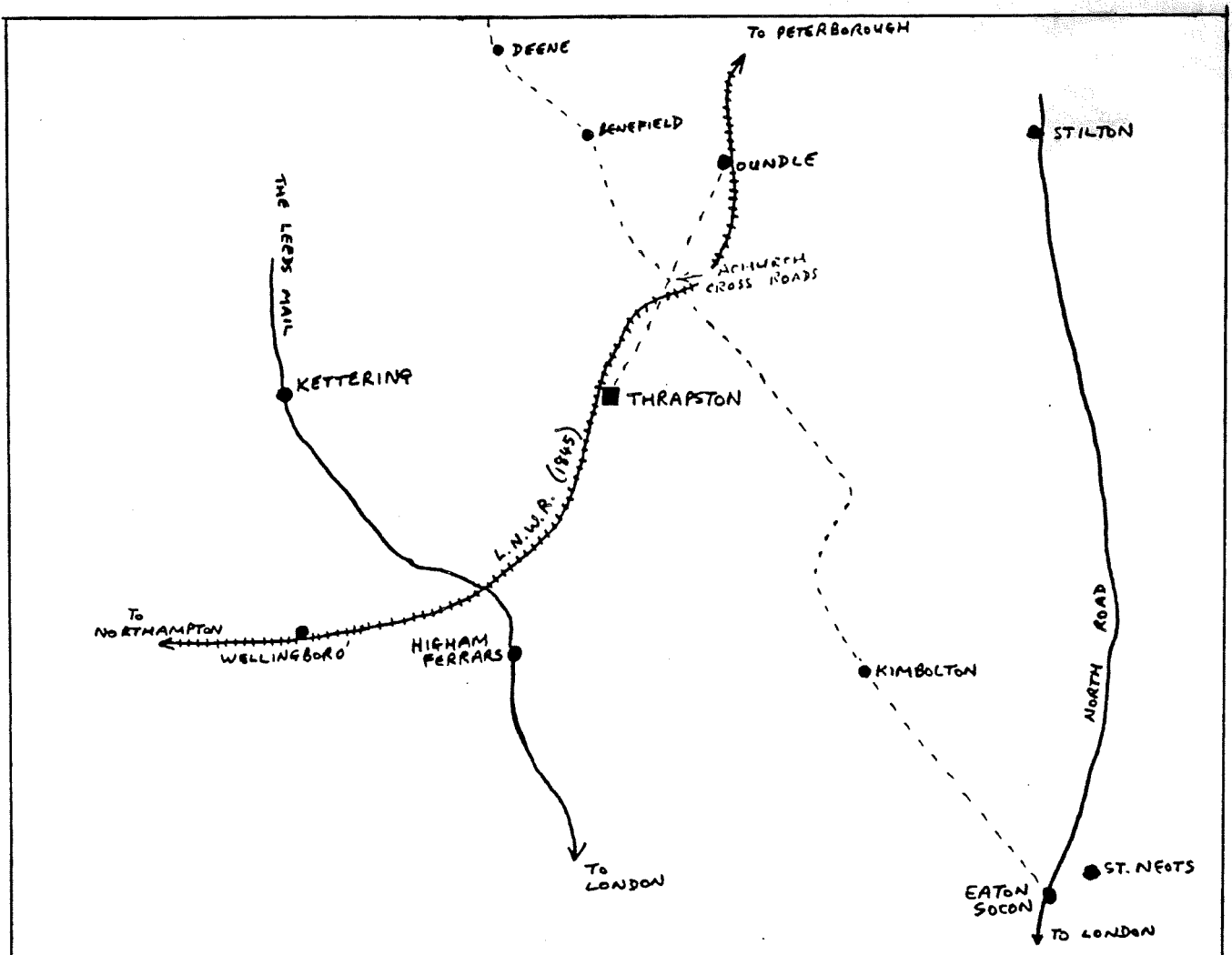
A general comment: routes and rates are often puzzling. I have two letters sent from Towcester to Ludlow. The first sent in July 1797 addressed to Ludlow, Shropshire was charged 8d. (over 150 miles) and carried through London (transit mark). The second addressed to Ludlow, Salop was charged 6d. (under 100 miles) and has no transit markings. Could this have gone via Wolverhampton?

Editor's Note: In the next issue I will show how the route and rate could depend on the time of day at which a letter was posted.

MM65/8 "MILEAGES IN THE 1830s". I must say I found this article fascinating, and had to read it several times to get hold of all the information packed into it. May I give a little background information on Thrapston(e) which Chris Beaver requested. It was (and still is) a busy little market town serving an entirely agricultural area well off the beaten track. Seventeenth and early eighteenth century post from London travelled via Eaton Socon from Caxton on the North Road, thence in a line (heading for Oakham) which took it mid-way between the towns of Oundle and Thrapston at the cross-roads at Achurch. Here the mails for the two towns were dropped off. By 1800 Stilton had become the junction for mails to Oundle and Thrapston. Thus Oundle's mileage was 84 whilst Thrapston was 92. Although Thrapston was much further south (nearer to London) the Post Office mileage placed it further away than Oundle.

In about 1811/12 Thrapston mail from London went via the Leeds mail to Higham Ferrars, so the mileage became 86. I have also been told that mail is known to have gone via the North Road and Kimbolton (presumably via Eaton Socon again) though I have nothing to show this.

In 1840 Stilton appears again, though not providing a service to London from Thrapston. But a mail cart travelled every day, leaving Stilton at 4 a.m. going through Oundle, Thrapston, Kettering and Wellingborough to arrive at Northampton at 9.45 p.m. The strange thing about this mail cart is that it continued until 1847 - even though the railway between Northampton, Wellingborough, Thrapston and Oundle was open in 1845. You would have thought that it would have hitched a lift, AT LEAST!



BOOK REVIEWSDERBY IN DETAIL

Harold Wilson's History of the Post in Derby 1635-1941 is the magnificent outcome of many years of patient research and careful organisation of the material unearthed. Whenever possible he lets the sources speak for themselves by reproducing them verbatim. Harold would be the first to acknowledge indebtedness to others, whether they have published their findings or belong to the several societies where his interests are shared. It could not have been as good a book a few years ago, nor I think without the benefits of modern technology.

However the achievement is his own and there is plenty of evidence that he has searched all the likely places in his efforts to fill the gaps, solve the problems and eliminate the discrepancies. If Post Office Archives, The Derby Mercury, directories and the works of fellow-students have not revealed answers, other avenues of enquiry have been pursued, such as the Public Record Office, local and even private archive deposits and Derby Post Office itself. So for example the varieties and useage of Derby's handstamps throughout the 18th century is likely to be practically complete now, whereas the first of the County Catalogues could only be the beginning of such a listing.

For those with no particular interest in Derby perhaps the most valuable feature of this book is the wealth of material reproduced from P.O. Archives which illustrates many aspects of the development of postal services nationally. Most such pages are to be found close to the appropriate places in the text. There is also an appendix of notices. As there is no list of illustrations and the index refers not to them but only to the text, it is not always easy to re-locate such things; there was room for one page of index and no more. Similarly there are many useful nuggets of information in the text which the reader needs to highlight according to his interests, since the largely chronological arrangement of quotations from sources which make up the greater part of several chapters, and no sub-headings, does make it difficult to find them again.

This of course is carping. The object of the book is to set down in full detail and make intelligible for the lay person with an interest in Derby itself all that Harold has discovered about the town's postal services, offices, postmasters and staff, and postmarks. That object is admirably achieved - up to 1941; it must have been tempting to make an exception of the T.P.O's and include the last fifty years of that story!

This is only the second volume to be published by the British Philatelic Trust, now able to give professional guidance to amateur authors. The printers fulfilled their role in exemplary fashion.

History of the Post in Derby 1635-1941, c300 A4 pages, soft backed, is available at £22 from the author at 17 Heath Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE3 6DJ.

C.M.B.

LEAMINGTON POST OFFICE

Peter Sharp's book is on a different scale from that of Harold, but nonetheless it is a highly commendable effort. It tells the story of Leamington's postal services from the introduction of an unofficial

receiving office in 1783 and includes the sub-offices. I particularly admired the quality of the reproductions of the postmarks; personal experience tells me that Peter spent much time on these. There are two small criticisms that I would make. The story of the postmarks is interspersed with the history of the office; my preference would have been to have dealt with them separately. Also as one who has only a slight knowledge of Leamington, I would have liked to have seen a map of the town included. Still I am sure that, as Peter hopes, this book will stimulate interest and encourage others to delve into the subject.

A Short History of the Leamington Post Office, 30 pages, spiral bound, is available at £2.50 from the author at 6 Burns Road, Leamington Spa CV32 7EL.

4d Charge Marks

This book deals in the first instance with the various rates in existence in the 36 days from 5 December 1839. Whilst much of the information is to be found elsewhere, it brings it all within one set of covers and does add new information. The use of the 4d handstamps is dealt with in separate chapters on England and Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. Also the use of these handstamps within the subsequent Penny Post is covered. Finally there are appendices on the use of hand-struck charge marks before the 1839/40 reforms. It is a booklet which most postal historians will welcome, even if some of the material is well beyond their pockets.

Charge Marks of the 4d Post 1838-1840 by P J Chadwick, 56 A5 pages is available at £5.50 (inc. p&p) from PHD, 146 Chapel Road, Oldham OL8 4QJ

FOR POSTAL HISTORY

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PENNY POST INSTRUCTIONS

An interesting pamphlet, reproduced by permission of P.O. Archives, which is intended to jog your memories if you have not yet responded to John Calladine's request for information on local posts.



GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

TO

Penny-Post and other Receivers.

ALL LETTERS to be stamped clearly in front, with the number stamp, with which you are supplied, care to be taken not to put the impression on the directions of the Letters; if you should be without a stamp, or the one in use is worn out, you will apply to me for a new one.

MIXTURE TO BE USED FOR STAMPING.

- 2 Lamp Black and Olive or Sweet Oil, in proportions of $\frac{1}{2}$ of an ounce of the former, to half a pint of the latter; a little common Ink would improve the mixture.—The ingredients should be incorporated over a slow fire, stirring them well during the time; the liquid will in consequence become dry quicker, and the impressions less liable to smear.

MATERIALS TO CONTAIN THE MIXTURE.

- 3 Three, four, or more pieces of Hat or Cloth, put into a ~~dish~~^{box} other dish, with a cover to prevent the dust collecting when not in use; the mixture should be well stirred, and applied to the under pieces—it will by pressure rise to the top; this should be done invariably many hours before the stamping commences.
- 4 If Letters are returned, proper reasons must be assigned, on the front of the Letters, in red ink, thus, "*refused*," "*dead*," "*cannot be found*," "*gone away*," "*not known where*," or as the case may be.
- 5 No improper communications to be made to one party of there being Letters for another.
- 6 Every effort to be used to deliver Letters to their proper owners, with all dispatch,—civility and attention to be shewn to the public.
- 7 The Letter-Box to be always kept carefully locked.
- 8 No person to be employed who has not taken the oath of office, or who is under sixteen years of age.
- 9 The Letters are on no account to be left loosely about a room, where other persons are allowed to enter, but are to be carefully locked up.

GEO. LOUIS,

Surveyor to the General Post-Office.

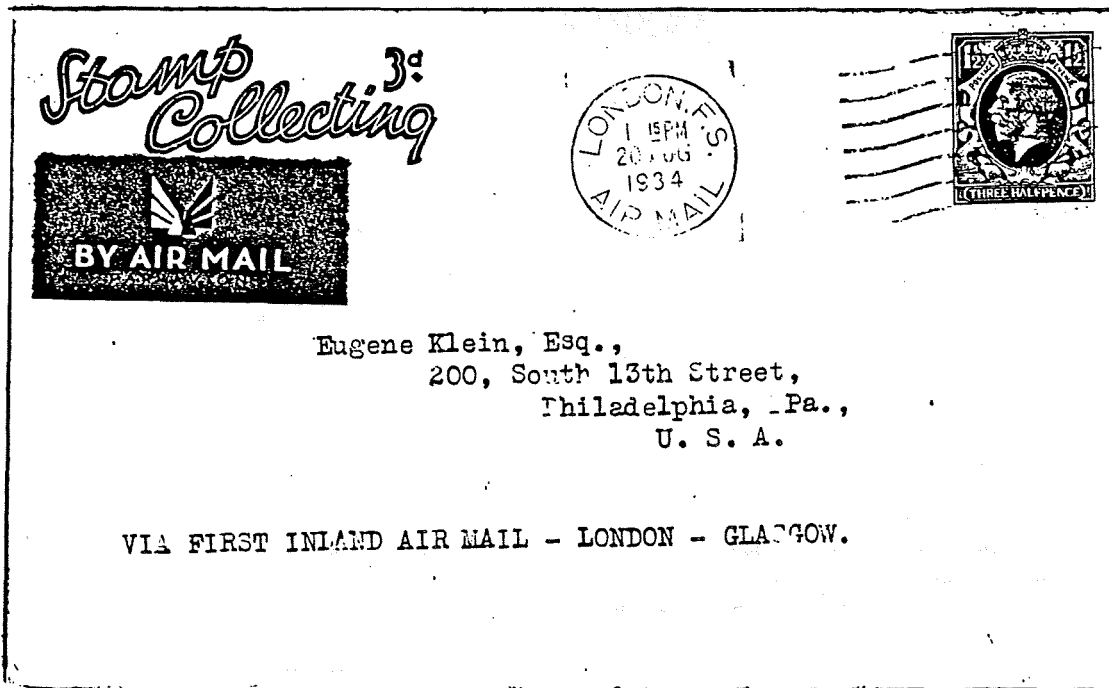
Printer, Printer, Yewell.

(1830)

67/11

INFORMATION WANTED

Mr D Gardiner wonders if anyone can provide information on the First Inland Air Mail Service - London - Glasgow, and the First United Kingdom Air Mail By Railway Air Services as illustrated on the covers below. I never cease to be amazed at the range of interests of members so I am sure full details of the above will appear in the next issue.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAIL GUARDS

Mr D Gardiner recently acquired a few volumes of the magazine St. Martins-le-Grand. He has very kindly sent some extracts of which the following is one. It is sometime since I read Vale's book on the mail coach men, but I do not recollect seeing this there or anywhere else.

[COPY]

G. R.

18



15.

GENERAL POST OFFICE.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAIL GUARDS.

The Guard is entrusted with the care of the Letter Bags, and he is to be answerable at his peril for the security, safe conduct and delivery, of them sealed. He is to obey the Surveyors, Superintendents, and Postmasters' orders, respecting the Bye Bags; he is not to quit, or desert the Mail, or bags of letters, or suffer any unnecessary loitering or stopping at public-houses, or other mis-spending of time upon the road, or neglect to give information of such misconduct on the part of the Coachman. If he does he will be liable to be taken before a Justice of the Peace, and committed to hard labour and imprisonment for one month, and he is subject to all the punishments and penalties, which the Law (has specified in the several Acts of Parliament relative to the Post Office) have hitherto inflicted on Post Riders, who have neglected their duty. If in Post Towns he collects or delivers letters, or packets, or does so upon the road except in some particular cases where the Postmaster of the district or superior officers authorize it, he will be liable to an information before a Justice of the Peace, and to the payment of ten shillings for every letter, agreeable to an Act of Parliament passed in the first year of his present Majesty, and will be dismissed the service.

The Guard is to behave with civility to passengers, to assist the Coachman on any occasions that are consistent with his situation as protector of the Mails, and which do not take him out of sight of the place where they are deposited. He is on no account whatever to give up his station to another person, he is to take care that his Fire Arms are kept in good and clean condition, and that they are always properly loaded and primed, when on duty, and on no account whatever to be wantonly discharging his blunderbuss or pistol as the Carriage is going along the road, or through a town. For every such offence he forfeits Two Guineas agreeable to a late Act of Parliament, also to draw the charge only as soon as he has ended his journey. He is to sound his horn as a signal for carriages to turn out of the way on the approach of the Mail Coach, also to warn Turnpike men of his coming, that no unnecessary delay may be occasioned, and likewise to prepare Postmasters against his arrival, and horsekeepers to bring out their horses at each of the changing-places, and he is to sound it always as a signal to passengers, when the time is expired, that is allowed in the Time Bill for every stopping to refresh, and to use his utmost exertions to prevent delay in all cases whatever.

It is the Guard's duty to see the Time Bill is justly dated and signed at every place, and where he cannot obtain the Postmaster's date and signature should put it correctly himself for which a space is provided, and to deliver it carefully to the Guard who succeeds him at the end of his journey, or to the Postmaster of the place where the route of the Mail Coach ends.

He must be very careful of the Timepiece and Time Bill, and if either should at any time be broken, torn, or lost, immediate notice must be given at this office, or the cause indicated to the Postmaster of the nearest place to which it happens that he may write up an account thereof, as it is resolved to show no favour to offenders in such cases.

Guards will be dismissed, suspended, or forfeits levied on those who neglect to deliver the Bye Bags properly, which, for want of attention have frequently been left at wrong offices, carried between their distances, and even brought to London. Drunkenness or disobedience of official orders will disqualify them for serving as Mail Guards upon any road in the Kingdom.

Only two outside passengers are allowed, and their station must be, one on the Box and one on the roof. The pretence of taking up a Caddie or helper will never be taken as an excuse for disregarding this order. If a Guard neglect to give immediate notice of any violation of this article with an account of the parties who are accessory to it will be considered as a very material breach of his duty, and he will be punished accordingly. It is a very necessary part of his duty to report the earliest intelligence of all accidents, delays, or obstructions, of inattention, or want of readiness in horsekeepers, of misconduct in any of the parties concerned in the performance of the duty, and of all occurrences whatever that have a tendency to impede the progress of the Mail Coach, or may in any respect be proper to be communicated. He will, if a Mail Coach breaks down, describe what part broke on his bill of the next day, or as soon as possible by letter giving information how it happened, and what damage was done. If the Mail Coach breaks down on its way to London, and it cannot be repaired in half an hour, or in such time that the Mail may arrive at the Post Office by its proper time, the Guard is to ride on with it by horse, or chaise, the Postmasters or Contractors have directions to furnish such chaise or horse which the Postmaster General will pay for the use of, or the Guard may pay for such Post horses, ostlers and drivers, and directly send the bills to the Surveyor, and Superintendent of Mails, who will order him to be repaid. If there are any more than two passengers, who are willing to go on without luggage, the Guard may bring them, provided they do not impede the expedition of the Mail.

The Guard must do all his duty at the different offices, and his road business, and take care that he performs his journey in the same time as if the Coach travel. If the Mail Coach should fail between stage and stage, the Guard is to press one of the Mail Coach horses, and ride on to the nearest stage with the Bags. If on travelling from London an accident happens, he is to use all possible expedition in repairing the Coach, and if it cannot be done in an hour and a half, as the circumstances of that particular road will allow, the Guard must take chaise to forward the Mail.

Guards are to permit Mail Coach Contractors or Postmasters to examine their Mail Bags, or see their Time Bill. It is a Guard's duty to report if horses are unfit for the service, if the harness and reins are bad. It is a Guard's duty to always have a bag of tools complete, and every week, when they come to receive their wages the Postmaster has orders to examine their Fire Arms to see if they are perfectly clean, barrel, lock, and every part, that they have a Blunderbuss and Case, a pair of pistols and powder horn, Bullet Mould, Screw Driver, Touch Hole, Picker and Lock for the Mail Box, likewise a Wrench, Cord Chain, and Wheel Clips, Shackle Perch Bolt, Drift Pin, Nails, Worms, and Screws, and also a double or long spreading Bar, and if they do not produce all and every the above articles, clean, and in the most perfect repair, they will not be paid, the Postmaster will report such negligence to this office.

In case of any accident that occasions the Coach to be stopped in its progress, it must be the Guard's duty to see that the Contractors provide horses for removing it to its proper place as soon as possible, or in case of the Contractor's refusal, the Guards are to get horses elsewhere, and send an immediate account of the same to this office. The Mail Box which in the Patent Coaches is calculated for the reception of Letter Bags, and such goods only as relate to the conveyance of the Mail, must be confined entirely to that use, and neither packets, parcels, luggage or any other description of thing whatever must be put therein, nor any sort of luggage or encumbrances of any kind be placed upon the roof, or carried on the outside of the Coach under any pretence or necessity whatever, nor must any person of any description whatever be suffered to ride with the Guard upon the Mail Box, unless in order to further some necessary business, pertaining to the

service; an authority to justify the same is issued from this office. It is likewise the Guard's duty constantly to examine the condition and state of the Mail Coaches, particularly of such spare coach or coaches as stand upon any part of the ground they work, and to see that they are properly cleaned and taken care of, and to report any deficiencies and imperfections in them, and each Guard is to be accountable for whatever damage the coaches may sustain that are in his care, and also for the loss of all Seats, Lamps, Blinds, Poles, Windows, or articles of any kind, and the Guards are in all cases to obey such orders relating to the said Carriages, as may at any time be given to them, by Mr. Vidler, or by any person he may appoint, or employ for the purpose, and to obey the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, or Assistants, in regulating every part of the duty. If at



From a print in Mr. W. V. Morten's collection.

"THE LAST STAGE, A WINK AND A DRINK."

any time the coaches are not provided with the best lamps and lights, the Guards must report the same. They must never leave the Mail Box unlocked when the Mail is therein, or take the Lock off when the Guards are changed, till the succeeding Guard has put his lock thereon.

By Hand of the Postmaster General,
JAMES HASKER,
 Surveyor and Superintendent of Mails.

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

THE UNDATED STRAIGHT LINE AND NUMBERED RECEIVING HOUSE MARKS
OF THE MIDLAND COUNTIES, 1840 - 1860

It would not be economic for the Society to print a second edition of this book at present. The following amendment list has therefore been prepared to enable members to bring their copy up to date. All the changes listed (and others that are subsequently notified) will eventually be incorporated into a new edition.

AMENDMENT LIST No.1 (October 1990)

DERBYSHIRE

MSL1 Add BL 4JUL56

After MSL6 (page 11), add:

Bakewell

82X 114 112

MSL7 B 20JAN40
(Apparent late irregular use of a mileage removed handstamp.)

Glossop

1944

MSL8 BL/G 4JUN51
(Possibly a mis-sort but used on a letter from Sheffield to Eyam.)

Shardlow

WARDLOW
109

MSL9 B Pre-40 - 8DEC40 UDC 31MAY44

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Amend the second paragraph of the introductory remarks:

DELETE " . . . and may have been manufactured locally from the old
'Lea/Penny Post' handstamp."

MSL10	Add	BL	26JUL49
		BL/B	17AUG49

MSL11 Add BL 16JUN51- 2AUG51

MSL24 Add BL 29JUL55

MSL25	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 8JAN43
	Add	R	31DEC40

MSL29 Amend BL 31MAY53-14NOV53

Gloucestershire (Cont'd)

MSL39	Amend	B	5FEB43- 6AUG43
MSL41	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 25JUL40

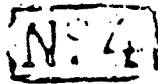
HEREFORDSHIRE

MSL58	Add	R	18JAN41
MSL61	Amend	R	22MAY41-11DEC42
MSL62	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 16SEP46

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

MSL83	Amend	B	18FEB40-11NOV47
MSL85	Add	R	14AUG40-11MAR41
MSL90	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 12DEC40

After MSL91 (page 26), add



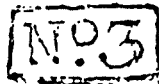
MSL92	B	Pre-40 -14AUG40	UDC 15MAR41
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(This numbered mark identified the Thorney office.)

SHROPSHIRE

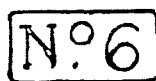
MSL100	Amend	GR	23APR55-27MAR57
MSL102	Amend	B	21JUN42-19OCT51
MSL104	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 51
MSL108	Amend	BL	24FEB57- 9SEP59

After MSL112 (page 31), add:



MSL113	Oswestry	R	Pre-40 - 8JUN42	UDC 13SEP42
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(This numbered mark identified Llanfyllin.)



(No authentic illustration yet available)

MSL115	Oswestry	B	Pre-40 - 42	UDC 13SEP42
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(This numbered mark identified Llanrhaiadr.)

Shropshire (Cont'd)

MSL116 Amend B Pre-40 -16JUL42

Amend the note below MSL116:

(This numbered mark identified Westbury in the Shrewsbury Penny Post and possibly also in the Welshpool Penny Post.)

STAFFORDSHIRE

MSL131 Amend B Pre-40 - 2FEB46

MSL137 Delete the existing note and substitute:

(This handstamp was almost certainly passed to the new Tipton Green office when a CDS was brought into use at Tipton (Horseley Heath) in 1839.

A Tipton Green UDC was issued on 25AUG46.)

WARWICKSHIRE

MSL147 Amend B 20APR55

[illegible]

MSL160 Amend BL 15JUN40-19APR41

MSL167 Amend R 4JUL40- 7JAN43

MSL170 Add R Pre-40

After MSL172 (page 42), add:

NO

MSL173 R 29JUN41

(This numbered mark identified Bidford on Avon.)

BIRMINGHAM

MSL182	Amend	B	9MAY55-27JUL57
		BL/GR	21DEC56-18JAN57

MSL184	Add	BL/GR	?JAN58
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Elmdon For Joseph Limberly read Josiah Limberly.

MSL197	Add	R/BR	4FEB43
	Amend	B	4SEP44-15MAR53

MSL199 Add GR 7AUG55

MSL200 Amend GR 16APR56-30NOV57

Hockley Hill For New John Street read New John Street West.

Birmingham (Cont'd)

MSL220	Amend	B	Pre-40 -23NOV53
MSL223	Amend	B	2AUG45-20MAR54
MSL234	Amend	B	Pre-40 - 19OCT43

Amend the note on page 53:

For 'Knowle and Solihull' read 'Knowle and Sutton Coldfield'.

WORCESTERSHIRE

MSL241	Amend	B	22APR44-26DEC44
MSL243	Amend	B	12AUG43-30OCT46

After MSL246 (page 57), add:

No.3

MSL <u>250</u>	Worcester	B	Pre-40 -10APR40
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Page 59

Against MSL7 add 'Bakewell'
 Against MSL8 add 'Glossop'
 Against MSL9 add 'Shardelow 109'

Page 60

Add MSL92 No.4 (Thorney)

Page 61

Against MSL113 add 'No.3 (Llanfyllin)'
 Against MSL115 add 'No.6 (Llanrhaiadr)'

Page 62

Against MSL173 add 'No.3 (Bidford on Avon)'

Page 63

Against MSL250 add 'No.3 (under Worcester)

Page 64

After 'Athenaeum, Upper Parade (Leamington)' add a new line:
 Bakewell MSL7

11

Amend the 'Glossop (499)' entry (5th line from bottom) so that 'MSL3' reads 'MSL3&8'

Page 65

After 'Sandpits (Birmingham)' add a new line:
Shardlow MSL9

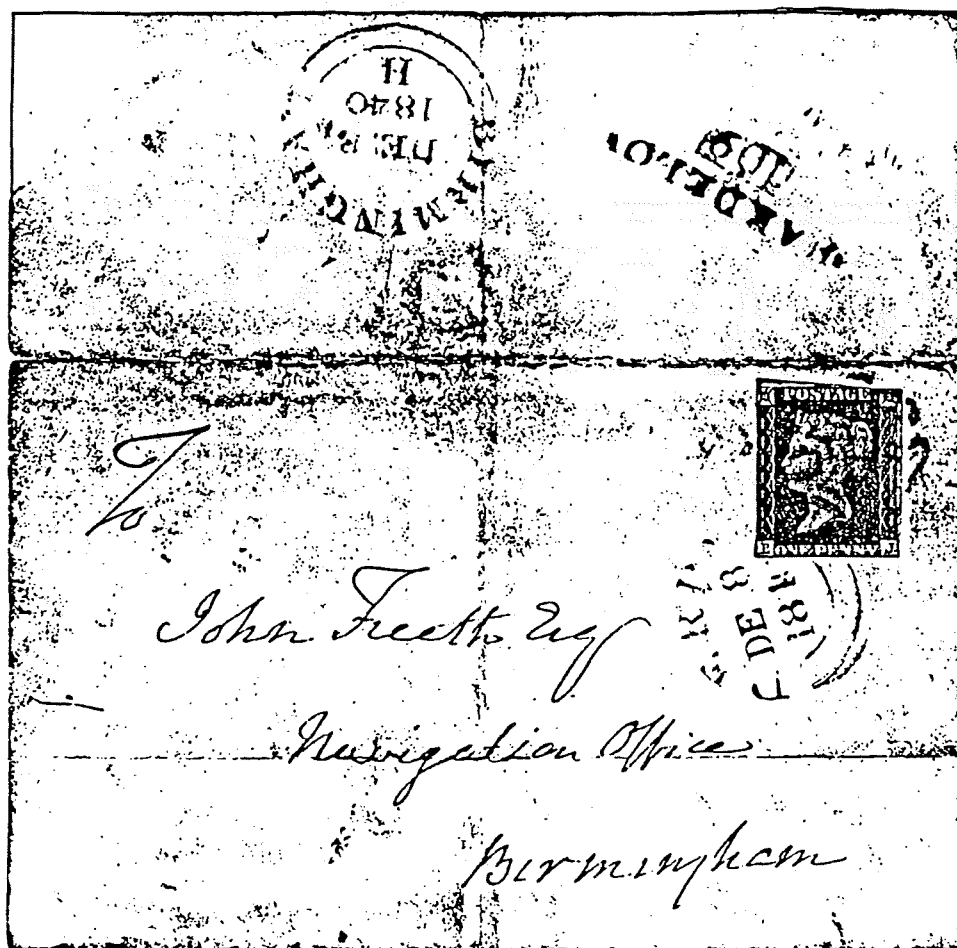
11

Page 66

To the numbered marks, add:

No.4 (Thorney)	MSL92	26
No.3 (Llanfyllin)	MSL113	31
No.6 (Llanrhaiadr)	MSL115	31
No.3 (Bidford on Avon)	MSL173	42
No.3 (under Worcester)	MSL250	57

* * * * *



The rare mileage mark of Shardlow - note the spelling - struck on 8th December 1840 on a cover to Birmingham. The Maltese Cross of Derby is in red ink, of course.

TAILPIECE

I am indebted to John Calladine for the following extract dated August 1820 from Post 42, which is a follow-up to my article in the last issue and shows an early move to get the Birmingham letter carriers to church on Sundays.

"As the principle Magistrates & Manufacturers of that great Town (Birmingham) are of the opinion that there should be no delivery of the Northern Letters received on Sunday afternoon till the Monday morning it appears to me that your Ldps will readily acquiesce so that the Letter Carriers may have a little rest on Sunday & be enabled to attend Divine Service in the afternoon of that day."

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

Recent months have taught me not to tempt providence but I do intend that the next issue will be with members by the end of January. That should guarantee a postal strike! I have some material in hand which includes something on Valentines, routes and rates, and mail coaches. Further material is always welcomed by:

John Soer, 51d Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG11 2RG.

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