

MIDLAND MAIL

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



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NUMBER 61, AUGUST 1989

Someone in authority must be reading Midland Mail, for since the dispatch of the last issue our mail has arrived shortly after 6.30 a.m. on most mornings. However, the problem of mail from the Midlands, particularly that from Coventry, taking three or four days to arrive still exists. What a pity the practice of backstamping mail at intermediate offices no longer exists, as it might then be possible to identify the source of the delays. I suppose that I should not complain too much, for I recently received a letter from New Zealand four days after it was posted.

I wonder if the approach of the 150th anniversary of the introduction of the Penny Black, and Stamp World London 90 will stimulate any greater interest in philately and postal history during the coming season. The choice of the Alexandra Palace as the venue for the international exhibition is interesting. It appears to be a fair walk from the nearest tube station, but my Network SouthEast map shows that there is a train service from Kings Cross and Moorgate. For any masochists from the Midlands it is only a few miles from the end of the M1. Not a site, I imagine, which will attract the casual visitor. I hope that I am wrong, but BPE failed to attract sufficient customers to what, I felt, was a very pleasant and accessible venue at the Wembley Conference Centre. I suppose that it all depends on the publicity that is given to the events.

SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS * SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are now due, so before you forget, get out your cheque book and pen, and send a cheque for £5 to Trevor Clewley, 127 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B74 2AJ. That will ensure that you receive further issues of this outstanding journal. (Well, that is no worse than some of the claims I see made for various magazines.)

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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THIS SEASON'S PROGRAMME

SEPTEMBER 30TH. - at Carrs Lane Birmingham. County Military Mail - nine sheet displays by members. If you have nothing on this theme, please bring along nine sheets on some other subject.

October 17-22. Autumn Stampex (BPE).

OCTOBER 28th. A joint meeting at Shrewsbury with the Shropshire Postal History Society. James Grimwood-Taylor will give a display on the 1839 reforms. For further details please contact Sheila Hart at Westhope, Lyth Bank, Shrewsbury.

November 25th. Birmingham Philatelic Society Fair at the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

DECEMBER 16th. Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent. Victor Short will provide the entertainment.

JANUARY 13th. - Carrs Lane, Birmingham. Christmas Gifts or Recent Acquisitions - nine sheet displays by members.

FEBRUARY 3rd. - Worcester Guildhall. The Annual Competitions. This meeting will be held at the venue of the Three Counties Federation Annual Fair.

February 6-11. Spring Stampex.

MARCH 3rd. - Carrs Lane, Birmingham. Guest speaker, details to be announced later.

APRIL 28th. - Carrs Lane, Birmingham. A.G.M. and Auction.

All meetings commence at 1.30 p.m.

The September and January meetings will be preceded by a Committee Meeting at 12.30 p.m. There will be a committee meeting in the morning before the AGM at a time to be announced.



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CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. de Rousset-Hall writes:

"Your editorial in the May Bulletin asserts that the change in status of the Post Office at Ashby-de-la-Zouch will result in longer queues.

This change is part of a national programme and the Post Office Users National Council and, locally, the Leicestershire Post Office Advisory Committee have been in discussion with the management of Post Office Counters Ltd with the objective of ensuring that this does not happen. Indeed the office at Ashby along with the other Leicestershire office involved - Lutterworth - was monitored during a POUNC survey earlier this year so that a 'before and after' comparison could be made.

Though the office will be relocated in the future, it remains meantime in its present location but the principal change is that it will cease to close at lunchtime. Lunchtime closure of smaller Crown Offices has long been a matter of dissatisfaction, and the POUNC survey also highlighted the fact that queues formed outside the Ashby office before it reopened after lunch and that the subsequent rush of business caused an unacceptable length of queuing within the office when it did reopen. The Lutterworth office will also remain open at lunchtime in future.

Maybe, contrary to the anxieties expressed in the Bulletin, the Freeling spirit is not dead.

Yours....."

Mr. de Rousset-Hall also says that he understands that an extension is being built to the newsagent's shop and that the new counter will have at least four positions plus a parcels hatch. He also writes, concerning an item on the last page of the last issue:

"The delightful photograph is of Symond's Yat Rock (Coleford, Glos) as opposed to Symonds Yat (Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire). The difference is probably 1000ft. vertically! I think that the office is actually in Glos but cannot be many yards from the county boundary. I am not at all sure that Symonds Yat P.O. is still open. S.Y. Rock has a nice pre-war single circle date stamp."

John Calladine confirms all this and adds that he was only testing the detailed geographical knowledge of the readership!!

Harold Wilson writes:

"Having read about RSOs in the latest edition of the UDC book, I enclose a short extract from my book on TPOs Pt2 which will probably be of interest to our Gloucestershire readers."

GLOUCESTERSHIRE and the MIDLAND TPO

In January 1886 a sorter from Cheltenham began travelling from Burton-on-Trent to Cheltenham to sort Cheltenham mail into sub-office bags in order to speed up delivery at Cheltenham. He received a trip allowance of 3s 0d. The northern starting point was soon altered to Tamworth and a sorter from Gloucester was added to perform a similar service for Gloucester mail. In April 1890 the two provincial sorters were replaced by an additional sorter on the TPO on a permanent basis and the sub-offices at Andoversford, Hasleton, Northleach, Prestbury, Winchcombe and Longhope became RSOs.

With regard to the article on Rates of Postage (MM59/13ff), Denis Salt points out that there is an error in the paragraph numbered "1", the last line of which should read:

"above 1 ounce each additional quarter ounce is charged as a Single Letter."

(Editor's Note: I was not trying to test anyone's knowledge.)

Mr. Fieldhouse writes:

"I was interested in the query in Midland Mail 60, from Derek Woodhall regarding the origin of the humble stamp pad, and I enclose a photocopy of a letter dated 29th. November 1705 from the Joint Postmasters General of the U.K. which was sent to each of the postmasters of the six British possessions in the West Indies along with name stamps for their islands.

The instructions for constructing the "stamp pads" are quite specific - very much a DIY job for the postmasters. Whether similar instructions were issued to postmasters in the U.K. and elsewhere, I do not know. The letter is shown in a booklet "The early Postal History of the British West Indies & North America" by H.C. Westley, which was published by the Postal History Society in 1957. The original source was the Falmouth Packet Letter Book, Vol. 1 (Post 48).

Perhaps this throws just a little light on the matter.

Yours....."

29th November, 1705.

It being for Her Majesty's Service in this Branch of the Revenue, that all Letters to be sent for London be stamped with the name of the place where they will be first put in. We have caused Stamps for each place to be made and do, by this Mail send you two Stamps for your Island, with which you are to Stamp all Letters which shall be put in at your Office.

The best method of making use of them will be by nailing a piece of Felt or Hat to a board and wet the same with ink, not too thin, whereby the Stamp being moistened, will readily give an Impression to the Letters. We are

*Your affectionate Friends,
Joint Postmasters General Sir Robert Cotton
Sir Thomas Frankland*

*To
Mr. Thos. Wood at Jamaica
Mr. Alex. Sheen at Barbados
Mr. Richard Buckeridge at Antego
Col. Anty. Hodges at Montserat
Mr. Willm. Burt at Nevis
Mr. John Hilding at Xtopher*

MORE ON RUBBER HANDSTAMPS

As Chris Beaver mentioned in the last edition, these handstamps were susceptible to damage if the incorrect ink was used. This is borne out by the following extract from the Post Office Circular of 16th. July 1889.

India Rubber Stamps—Misuse of.

Many india rubber stamps have lately been sent for repairs which would not have been needed if the stamps had been properly used. The stamps especially referred to are:—

(1.) The Parcel Post Obliterating Stamp (see Circular 541), (2), the Postal Order Stamp used at certain Sub Offices which sell Postal Orders, but do not transact Money Order business (see Circular 496), and (3), the Stamp used at Head Offices for marking undelivered letters and other postal packets returned direct to the senders (see Circular 345).

With the first stamp a special obliterating fluid is supplied, with the second and third stamps a violet coloured ink, and with all three stamps a special pad covered with brown silk.

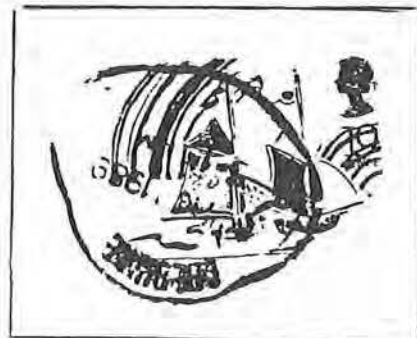
Instead, however, of using the proper fluid and the proper pad with these rubber stamps, the Officers in charge of them have frequently used the ordinary stamping composition, and the ordinary green baize pad supplied for use with the metal date stamp only. The result has been that the rubber is softened, and the die of the stamp destroyed.

In future, care must be taken to use the proper fluid and the proper pad in these rubber stamps, or it will be necessary to charge the Officers in fault with the cost of repairs due to their carelessness.

The supplies of the proper fluids and pads are obtainable on application to the Controller of Postal Stores in London, and the Storkeepers in Edinburgh and Dublin.

It also shows that, whatever their subsequent uses, originally the intended use of the 'village rubbers' was the cancellation of Postal Orders. Circular 496, which was published in 1885, announced the intention of selling Postal Orders at a number of offices which did not transact Money Order business. A list of these offices was appended. During subsequent months they were all issued with a rubber handstamp.

The lefthand figure below shows the distortion that could occur. I think it is the rubber of Thringstone; it was applied in black ink! The other, from Cheshire, shows that the problem is still with us. Though since virtually all the marks produced from modern rubbers are in black ink, it seems unlikely that the ink caused the deterioration of this particular stamp. Incidentally, am I the only person who is irritated by these so called generic postmarks e.g. Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire? The place of posting could be anywhere in an area of several hundred square miles.



MORE ON "STAMPS AND BRASSES"

It is strange how one discovery is followed by another of a similar nature. A few days after the dispatch of the last Midland Mail, I was starting to delve into Post 103 (Receiver General: Entry Books), hoping to find an answer to a problem in my Leicestershire research, when I came upon a page similar to that shown in the article by Chris Beaver in MM60. It was headed "An Account of the Incidents expended at the Post Office in One quarter ended at Ladyday 1703.", and is shown opposite.

Several of the trades mentioned in the list reproduced in MM60/7 were to be found here also. However there were additional entries. I wonder how much beer Mr. Manley supplied for £30? Very much more than it would buy in London today.

What did Mr. Wilson, the Scavenger, do for his £3.06.00. p.a.? More poorly paid was Mr. Hester, the Ratcatcher. And then on the next line was:

To Mr Fra: Lambe his bill for Brasses and Stamps delvd 1 July 5.10.00

Further investigation revealed similar payments to Mr. Lambe beginning with that for the Michaelmas quarter in 1700, and ending with that for Christmas 1713. From 1703 to 1708 there were two entries each year, for the quarters ending on Lady Day and Michaelmas. In 1710 and 1711, Mr. Lambe presented a bill during every quarter apart from that ending at Christmas 1711. Thereafter they were presented during the Midsummer and Christmas quarters. The bill for Michaelmas 1707 was for wooden stamps only; all the others were for 'brasses and stamps'. In some instances the date on which the goods were supplied is given. Often there was a delay of several months between delivery of the stamps and submission of the bill. This makes it difficult, apart from a few instances, to ascertain when the work was done for a particular payment. However the payments, to the nearest pound, for each year on the present calendar were:

1700 £6, 1701 £8, 1702 £7, 1703 £13, 1704 £11, 1705 £14, 1706 £15,
1707 £16, 1708 £15, 1709 £28, 1710 £15, 1711 £14, 1712 £13, 1713 £32.

The reasons for the increased payments in 1709 and 1713 can only be a matter for conjecture. The cost of the stamps and brasses supplied by Mr. Lambe in the period 24th. April - 29th. September was £20.09.00. Willcocks states that from 1713, the Inland Office reversed the months and date on the Bishopmarks. Did Mr. Lambe supply the new stamps? I could not find any further entries of a similar nature in adjacent volumes in this Post Number, but I am sure that this is not the last word in this particular series.

Finally, what is probably a silly question, but can anyone tell me if the date on the Bishopmarks, used before 1787, was moveable, or was there a different handstamp for each day of the year?

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

A 8

An Account of the Incidents expended at the Post Office in One quarter ended at Lady day 1703

Febry 17	To M ^r Isa. Manley for 1/2 a years allowance for Beer at Christmas 30. 00. 00	
1702	17 To M ^r Anna. Benson her bill for leatheren bags for X ^{mas} quarter 31. 17. 00	
	To M ^r Jas. Thompson Glasier his bill for 1/2 a year at Christmas 13. 02. 00	
	To M ^r In. Broome Coll ^r for Christmas quarters Parish Dues 4 11 06	
	To M ^r John Rag. Plainer her bill 8. 12. 00	
	To the Garrecon as a New Years Gift 10. 15. 00	
	To M ^r In. Broome Coll ^r for the Poore for a year at Lady day 14 19. 00	
	To M ^r Jas. Collinson & phildson his bill for a year at X ^{mas} 1702 7. 13. 00	
	To M ^r Geo. Scarle for his journey to Gravesend 3. 00. 00	
	To M ^r Mich ^l Wilson Scavenger for a year at Christmas 1702 3 06. 00	
	To M ^r Edw ^d Harmer of Oxford for his journey over a Rudge 1. 05. 06	
	To M ^r Tho. May for two Hags for the Scale Boats 14. 00	
	To M ^r W ^m Neser & Ratcatcher 1/2 a years allowance at Christmas 10. 00	
	To M ^r Geo. Lamb his bill for Brasses and Stamp deliv ^d July 5. 10. 00	
	To M ^r Edw ^d Basse Turner from the 11 of March 1701 to 8 th July 1702 6. 02. 00	
	To M ^r W ^m Thompson Painter for worke done in June 1702 17. 14. 00	
	To M ^r Rich ^d Sare Stationer his bill for one quarter at X ^{mas} 1702 41. 19. 00	
	To M ^r Tho. Wells for discovering of Carries about Letters 10. 00. 00	
	To M ^r W ^m Colley for a Duty in the Trayed Bands 07. 00	
26	Paid for 7116 Ship Letters at a penny per Letter 29. 13. 00	
	To M ^r R ^t . Greshwell Tallow Chandler for a quarter at X ^{mas} 1702 158. 07. 00	
March 25	To M ^r Rich ^d . Barnaby 52 Weekes Wages ending 23 March 1703 being employed as usual looking after Carries 52. 00. 00	
25	To M ^r W ^m Symonds a Lett ^r . Rec ^d . at Fleet with a year Salary 5. 00. 00	
	To M ^r Rich ^d . Swift Attorney his bill with 100 paid upon a acct ^t and 43 paid him by the Sheriff of Kent for a year at Lady day 82. 02. 00	
	To M ^r W ^m . Breese his bill for Box money given to Post Boys at Christmas 1702 and for other things 12. 00. 00	
	To M ^r Stephen Lillie his bill of Disbur ^s for carriage of money for the Exch ^g and for allies and other expences in passing of acct ^t money car at Lady Day 1703 63. 05. 00	
	To M ^r In. Field Coll ^r for one years W ^m nd ^d tax at Lady day 2 02. 00	
	To M ^r In. Bayly Smith for 1/2 a year at Christmas 1702 5 08. 00	
	To M ^r M ^r Baker Mason for 1/2 of a year at Christmas 1702 2. 09. 00	

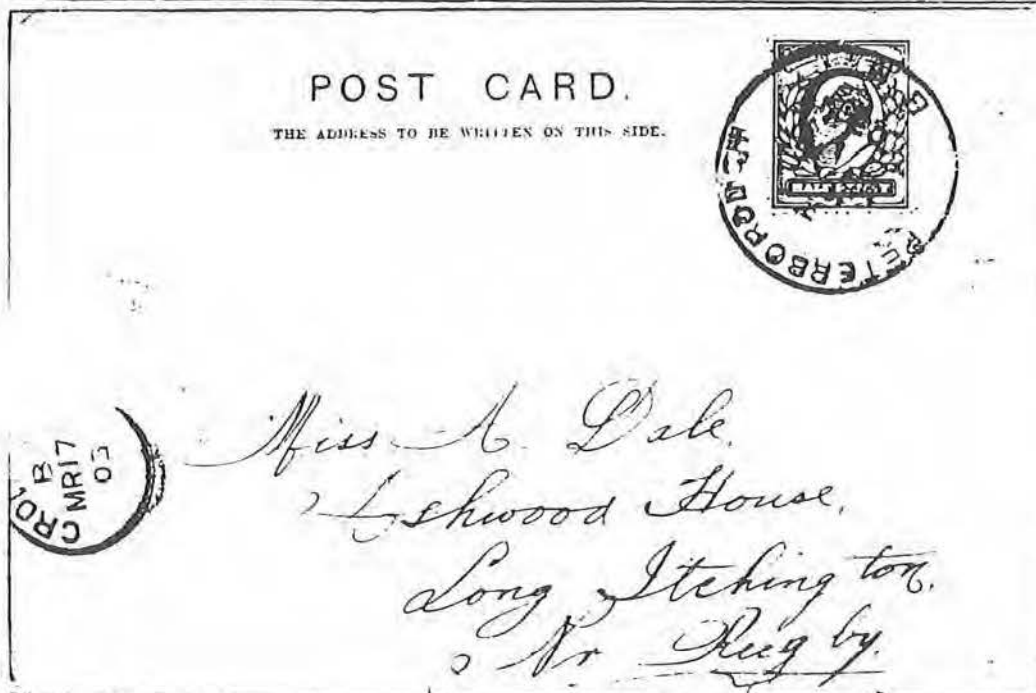
624. 10. 00

PETERBOROUGH "SKELETONS"

by Ted Coles

Illustrated below are copies of two "skeletons" which I have found. Both were used in March 1903, the first, which is 30 mm in diameter with the letters AK at the foot, on the 10th., and the second, which is 32 mm in diameter with the letters BM, on the 17th. Both are to the same addressee and appear to have originated at Crowland. I have a 1911 P.O. Guide which lists a number of offices in Peterborough but none which fit those initials, although there is no reason why the cards would have gone to a sub-office. Could it be that the letters were to identify the two different datestamps in use at the same time? On page 47 of "English and Welsh Postmarks since 1840", Mackay illustrates a Peterborough "skeleton", dated 4 December 1899, with the letters AE at the foot which he states were inserted erroneously. Surely three such instances indicates that the insertion was deliberate policy.

Perhaps our Northamptonshire members already have the answer.



THE CASE OF THE MOVING MILESTONE

Further details concerning the extra halfpenny charged on letters at Rugby, previously mentioned in MM56/9, are to be found in a report of 1794 (Post 40/33C/1794). According to Elizabeth Miller, the then postmistress, when the office was opened by her father, one penny was allowed on each letter and newspaper carried between Rugby and Dunchurch. However sometime previously the extra penny charged on letters had been reduced to one halfpenny by an order of Mr. Saverland, the surveyor. Since newspapers were not mentioned in that order the extra penny had continued to be levied on them, but the inhabitants had now refused to pay that charge. She estimated that these extra charges, for which she sent to Dunchurch twice a day, raised between £20 and £30 p.a. But she expected it to get less as "the school is of late a great deal less than it was and is still decreasing." It should be remembered that at that time conditions in the public schools were often anarchic. At Rugby in 1797, the boys blew up the door of the headmaster's study with gunpowder. Soldiers had to be called and the riot act was read.

Mr. Saverland reported that Mrs. Miller's account was nearly correct, except that she still took one penny on the "Cross-Road Letters". The reason for the extra charge on letters being reduced to a halfpenny was that he had discovered that it was more than 80 miles from London to Dunchurch. Thus Mr. Palmer had ordered that the London letters should be taxed 5d. instead of 4d. In about 1789 the inhabitants of Rugby had complained that, with the extra penny, they had to pay 6d. for their London letters. Consequently Palmer had asked him to go to Rugby to see a Mr. Caldecote who was the chief complainant. Mr. Caldecote had denied that it was 80 miles from London to the inn at Dunchurch where the bag was dropped, as the 80 milestone stood on the Coventry side of the inn. However Mr. Saverland had happened to be passing that way when he came across some labourers removing, by Mr. Caldecote's directions, the stone from the London side of the inn. When Mr. Caldecote was informed that the distance was not measured from the Post Office (I believe it was from Hicks Hall in Smithfield), he withdrew his objection to the legality of the 5d. rate. However he declared that he was not prepared to pay the extra penny, but he eventually agreed to pay one halfpenny.

Freeling recommended that the postmistress be paid an allowance of £10 p.a. for sending twice a day to Dunchurch provided that she stopped charging 1d. on newspapers. He also commented that when the office was opened at Rugby it had been agreed that it should not be any expense to the Revenue, "which was done with the view of preserving to the Deputy a gratuity upon the delivery of each letter which under other circumstances a litigious person might have contested."

Sixteen years later, the postmistress still received the allowance of £10 p.a. and charged an extra halfpenny on each letter. However, in 1810, four bags were made up at Rugby for Northampton, Daventry, Coventry and London. This information is contained in a report (Post 40/76S/1810) concerned with Dunchurch becoming a post-town.

A mailcoach from London passed through Dunchurch, but since it was not a post-town it did not receive its letters from Daventry and Coventry until the day after they had arrived at those towns. The only solution was to make Dunchurch a post-town "with London & Bye Bags". Although its revenue of £80 - £90 p.a. did not justify this, that of Rugby was in the region of £600 p.a., and it was not possible to provide a better service to that place unless a "principal office" was established at Dunchurch. The bye bags from Rugby were replaced by one to Dunchurch. A salary of £20 p.a. was recommended for the postmaster at Dunchurch, but there was to be no addition to the £10 paid to the postmistress at Rugby "unless the inhabitants refuse a halfpenny upon each letter as at present."

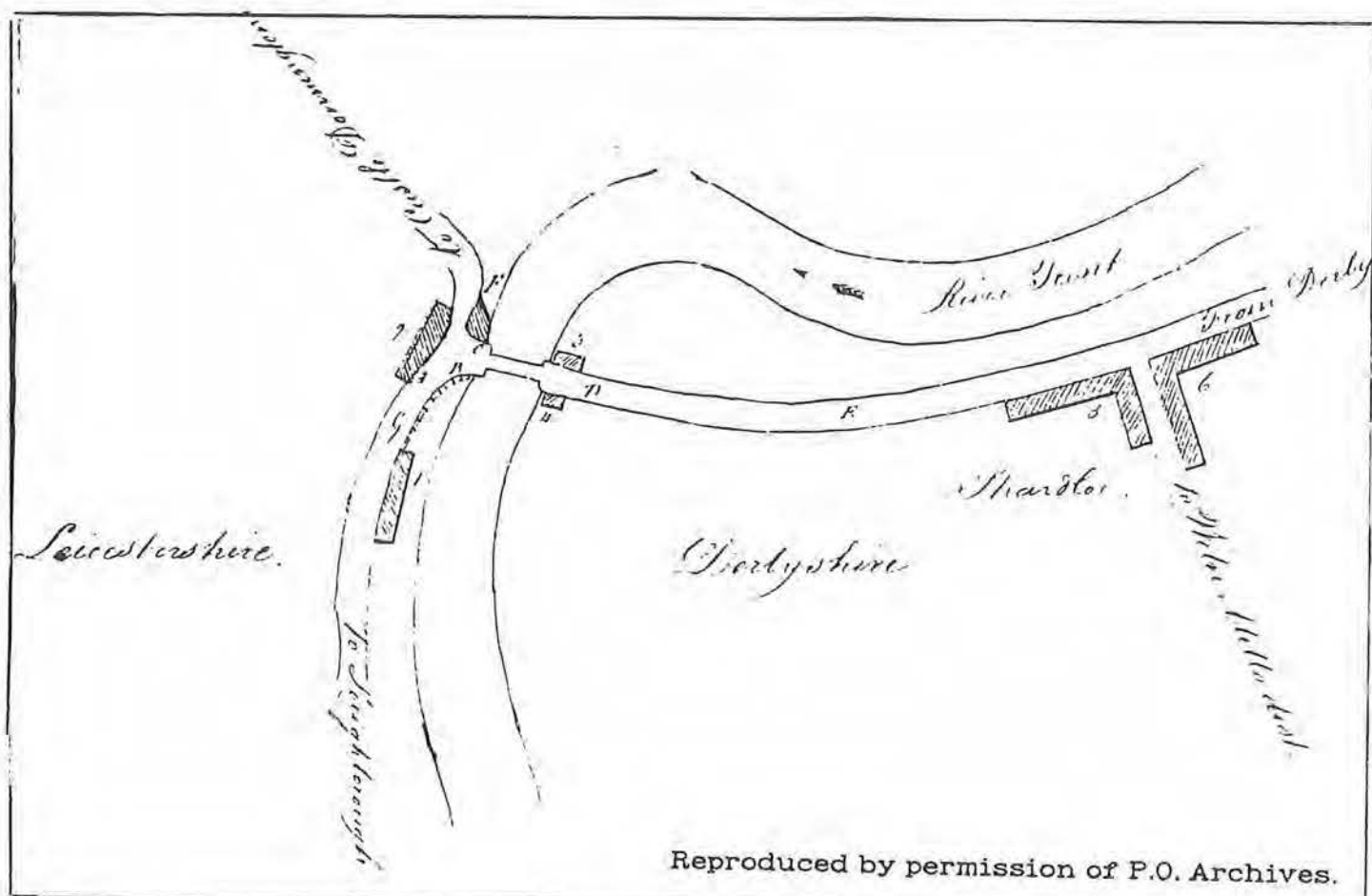
THE CASE OF THE MISSING MAIL BAG

It was dark and stormy at about 6 p.m. on the evening of 7th. November 1825 as James Daken, the guard on the Manchester to London mailcoach, sounded his horn to warn Mr. Smith, the receiver at Cavendish Bridge, of the approach of the coach. He saw Mr. Smith coming out of his house with the Loughborough bag, and then threw down the bag, which had been made up at Derby, near Mr. Smith's door.

However the coach was travelling so fast that Mr. Smith was forced to run with it for about sixty yards before he could deliver his bag to the guard. It was no more than a minute or so before Mr. Smith was back at the point where the bag had been thrown down, but he could not find it. He called for lights but a thorough search revealed no trace of the bag. It was several days before the bag, apparently intact, was handed to a Mr. Clarke at Shardlow. It is not clear if he was the receiver there. Eventually two men, Thomas Stevenson and Samuel Kirk, were charged with and found guilty of secreting and detaining a mail bag.

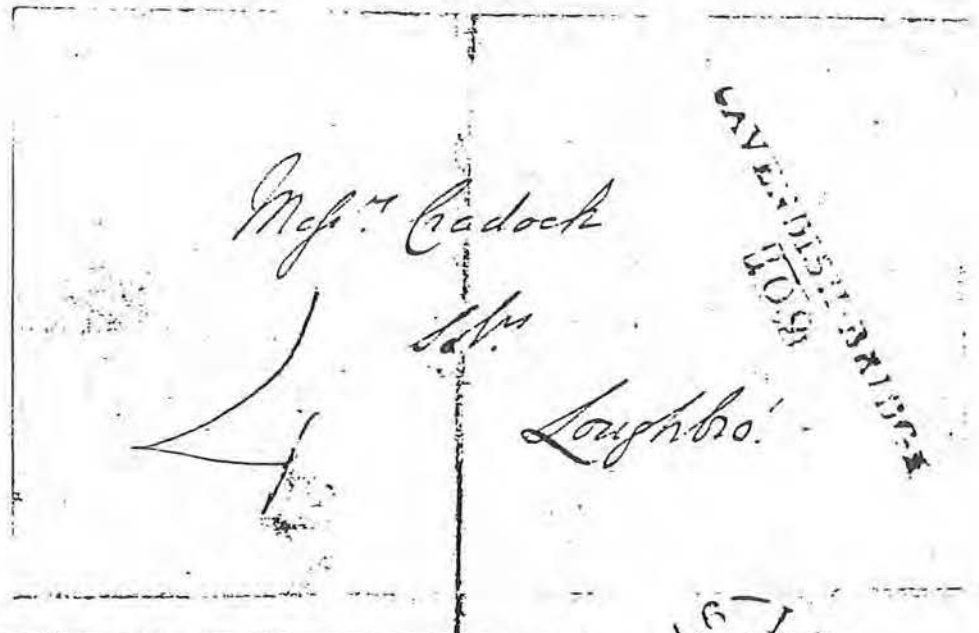
Their story was that on that evening they had been drinking in the Crown public house. After leaving there they had crossed Cavendish Bridge where they had found a mail bag. Thereafter their story becomes rather tortuous, and in fact changed after their initial examination. For those who are interested in the evidence of the accused and the other witnesses, their statements are to be found in the prosecution brief which is contained in an additional listing to Post 74 at P.O. Archives.

There is one brief glimpse of life before the introduction of the electric telegraph. A large discrepancy in the time as told by the guard and other witnesses was explained by the statement that the clock at the Crown did not keep the same time as those in Derby. However for me the main interest of the brief is that it contains a map which gives the location of the receiver's house. The chief points on the map are: A The Crown; C the spot where the bag was thrown down; F Mr. Smith's house.



LOST*From the Mail on Monday Evening,***THE CAVENDISH BRIDGE LETTER POUCH.****Whoever will bring the same to the Post Office, Derby, or Cavendish Bridge, shall be rewarded.**

I am indebted to Harold Wilson not only for the cutting from the Derby Mercury of 9th. November 1825 shown above, but also for permission to reproduce the two covers shown below. The interest of the first lies in the 4d. rate and the Leicester mark. Presumably it was sent to Leicester and then back to Loughborough. Both Harold and I have other covers, although of a slightly later date, sent from Cavendish Bridge to Loughborough which were charged 1d., and apparently not sent to Leicester. The second, which is dated June 1828, shows the use of the "No 2" stamp intended for use at Belper on penny post mail but used at Derby on unofficial twopenny post mail from c. 1813.



THE LOUGHBOROUGH TO NUNEATON MAILCOACH

The time-bill shown on MM60/16 was inserted at the last moment. My intention had been to include a small addendum to Chris Beaver's article on rubbers. But at the last minute, I found that I had mislaid a cutting from the Post Office Circular, so I used the time-bill in desperation. The small piece on rubbers appears in this issue.

To my knowledge there was never a mail coach operating between Nuneaton and Loughborough. In August 1840, shortly after the completion of the Midland Counties Railway and the North Midland Railway, mail was carried for the first time between London and Leeds by rail. The mail was transferred from the London to Birmingham line at Rugby. Then in the summer of 1845, a R.P.O. was introduced between Rugby and Leeds. By 1852 the Post Office considered that it would be possible to dispense with this train between Rugby and Derby. At Derby this train joined with the mail train from Bristol. However in addition to this junction at Derby, there was a junction at Tamworth between the train from Bristol and the train from London. So it was proposed to transfer the T.P.O. from the line between Rugby and Derby to that between Derby and Tamworth, and to serve Leicester and Loughborough by a mailcoach from Nuneaton.

In the event the latter did not happen for at this point the Midland Railway suggested to the Post Office a contract by which the G.P.O. would have use of any of their trains. The contract of 1853 specified the provision of "letter bag carriage" on the 12.05. a.m. train from Rugby to Derby.

EARLY DAYS ON THE RAILS

This summer sees the 150th. anniversaries of the opening of the line between Derby and Nottingham of the Midland Counties Railway, and that between Derby and Hampton of the Birmingham and Derby Junction Railway. To celebrate the former, I am publishing part of a letter, sent from Duffield in June 1839, which has been contributed by Harold Wilson.

"Dear Brother,

We arrived at Euston Square and met Robert there in good time, and had very fair weather the whole of the journey. The carriage in the train in which we were, held eight, one gentleman was with us, and the travelling was very pleasant. The train took us as far as Blisworth Station (about three miles from Northampton) where we got upon the Nottingham coach about ¼ after two, and reached Nottingham between 10 & 11. ...A black silk bag with things that were wanted for immediate use, was left in the train at Blisworth & only remembered just after it had started for Coventry. However by leaving a memorandum at Blisworth, where it was to be sent we received it at Nottingham on Thursday morning in time to take with us by the 11 o'clock train to Derby."

The journey from Nottingham to Derby is described in an addition to the letter written by the nephew of the addressee:

"-only one line of RlRd between Nottm & Derby ia at present laid down but it is not such smooth travelling as the L&B railway."

As for the Birmingham and Derby Junction Railway, the best that I can do is the time-bill opposite which is reproduced by permission of P.O. Archives.



GENERAL POST-OFFICE.

WILLIAM EARL OF LONSDALE, Her Majesty's Postmaster-General.

Birmingham and Derby Railway TIME BILL.

Contractors.

M.	P.	Yds.	Time allowed. H. M.	Despatched from the Post-Office, Birmingham, the	of	
				184 , at	12.15	by Time-Piece
				, at	11.58	by Clock
					{ With a Time-Piece safe	
					{ No. to	
				10 Arrived at the Railway Station, at	12.25	
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		Off at 12.5
8.0.	120			22 Arrived at Forge Mills, for Coleshill, at	12.52	12.27
9.2.	15			26 Arrived at Tamworth, at	1.18	12.53
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
12.7.	50			27 Arrived at Burton, at	1.50	1.25
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
10.6.	75			20 Arrived at Derby Railway Station, at	1.15	1.00
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
41.0.	40	2	5	Bags delivered in Sorting-Office, the	of	
				184 , at	2.20	by Time-Piece
						by Clock
					{ Delivered the Time-Piece safe	
					{ No. to	

Birmingham & Derby
Railway Company.

RETURN.

M.	P.	Yds.	Time allowed. H. M.	Despatched from Sorting Office, Derby Station, the	of	
				184 , at	10.55	by Time-Piece
				at		by Clock
					{ Delivered the Time-Piece safe	
					{ No. to	
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
				Train off from Station, at	11.	
10.6.	75			23 Arrived at Burton, at	11.23	
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
12.7.	50			32 Arrived at Tamworth, at	12.	
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
9.2.	15			20 Arrived at Forge Mills, for Coleshill, at	1.25	
8.0.	120			20 Arrived at the Railway Station, Birmingham, the	12.45	of
				5 Five Minutes allowed.		
				10 Arrived at the Post-Office, Birmingham, the	of	
				184 , at	1.20	by Time-Piece
41.0.	40	2	5	, at		by Clock
					{ Delivered the Time-Piece safe	
					{ No. to	

By Command of the Postmaster-General,

GEORGE STOW,

Surveyor and Superintendent.

400 — April, 1845.

AN OFFICIAL POST AT UPTON-ON-SEVERN

The above town was mentioned in Mr. Woodcock's Journal for 15th. - 31st. August 1792 (see MM49/16ff) where it was stated that the inhabitants used their own messenger to carry letters to and from Worcester. Two years later the inhabitants petitioned the Postmasters General for an official postal service. It was said that some people employed one messenger and others a different messenger; all of which was "attended with great inconvenience and no small risk." There appears to have been a common extra charge of 1d. on each letter in either direction.

One of the messengers William Jakeman, who worked a mail chaise daily in summer and three times a week in winter to Worcester, was willing to act 'under the Sanction of the General Post Office' for a small consideration and the freedom from turnpike charges. He was also willing to act as the sub-deputy. The surveyor, Mr. Woodcock, recommended that these requests should be granted. He did express concern about the bag being carried in a mail chaise without a guard since the letter bags were often thrown loose into the seat of the carriage where they were "open to observation and too much in the power of the passengers who may not always be persons of a respectable description." He asked that a more safe place be found.

The official post from Upton to Worcester began on 26th. July 1794, with Mr. Jakeman carrying the mails and acting as sub-deputy. The postmistress at Worcester was ordered to tax letters between Worcester and Upton 2d. and to account for them in her Short Letter Voucher (this suggests the possibility of a standard short letter rate of 2d. c.f. MM49/16 para 4.). She was also directed to "advance 1d. in the tax of letters from Upton to Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Alcester, Stourbridge, Kidderminster, Bewdley, Ludlow, Tenbury, Leominster, Bromyard, Hereford, Ledbury, Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Evesham and Pershore." The postmasters at those towns were ordered to treat letters for Upton in a similar manner. In his report to the Postmasters General, Freeling remarked that these charges were quite legal. Can anyone explain this? Did Upton become, as a result of its official post more than two post stages from each of these towns? It seems that, in financial terms, the townspeople of Upton gained less from their new post than they might have expected. (Ref. 40/234B/1794)

GREAT BRITAIN 1580-1901

Elizabethan to Victorian

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CRIME-WATCH

Reproduced below are three extracts from the Post Office Circular. The first, which is from the issue of 10th. January 1893, suggests a degree of organisation and mobility we associate with modern criminals rather than those of the Victorian era. The other two, from 1884, show a different attitude to juvenile crime from that of today.

Postal Orders stolen from Groby Sub-Office, Leicester.

The Postal Orders, the numbers of which are given below, were stolen from the Groby Sub-Office, Leicester, on the evening of the 30th December last. On the following day the date stamp of the Knott Mill Town Sub-Office, Manchester, was stolen, and certain of the Orders have been put into negotiation impressed with this date stamp.

Any Officer paying Postal Orders should refer to the list given below, and if any person presents any one of these Orders (especially if it be impressed with the Knott Mill date stamp) he should act upon the standing instructions of the 10th March, 1891—that is, he should detain the person presenting them, unless known or able to give a satisfactory explanation of his possession of them, and should telegraph immediately to the Director, Confidential Enquiry Branch, General Post Office, for instructions. (Abbreviated address—Philips, G.P.O.)

A 145353 to 145370 1s. 0d.	F 368550 3s. 6d.	K 573131 to 573140 7s. 6d.
A 419711 to 419720 1s. 0d.	F 546361 to 546370 3s. 6d.	L 931015 to 931020 10s. 0d.
B 848500 to 848510 1s. 6d.	G 663108 to 663110 4s. 0d.	N 242492 to 242500 10s. 6d.
C 682789 to 682790 2s. 0d.	O 151971 to 151980 4s. 0d.	N 622651 to 622660 10s. 6d.
C 16981 to 16990 2s. 0d.	H 568597 to 568600 4s. 6d.	N 826712 to 826720 15s. 0d.
C 514601 to 514610 2s. 0d.	H 736731 to 736740 4s. 6d.	O 428465 to 428470 20s. 0d.
D 574942 to 574950 2s. 6d.	I 112223 to 112240 5s. 0d.	O 88871 to 88880 20s. 0d.
E 690708 to 690810 3s. 0d.	K 837710 7s. 6d.	
K 184821 to 184830 3s. 0d.	K 33331 to 33340 7s. 6d.	

Conviction of Boys charged with dropping Lighted Matches into a Letter Box.

Four boys having been convicted of the above offence, which is a misdemeanour under the Post Office (Protection) Act, 47 and 48 Vic., Ch. 76, Sec. 3, punishable by fine or imprisonment with hard labour, were sentenced, one to a fine of 60s., or one month's imprisonment, and each of the other three to a fine of 20s., or fourteen days' imprisonment.

Conviction under Post Office (Protection) Act.

A boy having been convicted of attempting to open a Pillar Letter Box, thereby doing an act likely to injure it, has been sentenced to three days' imprisonment, the judge taking into consideration that the boy had already been a fortnight in prison.

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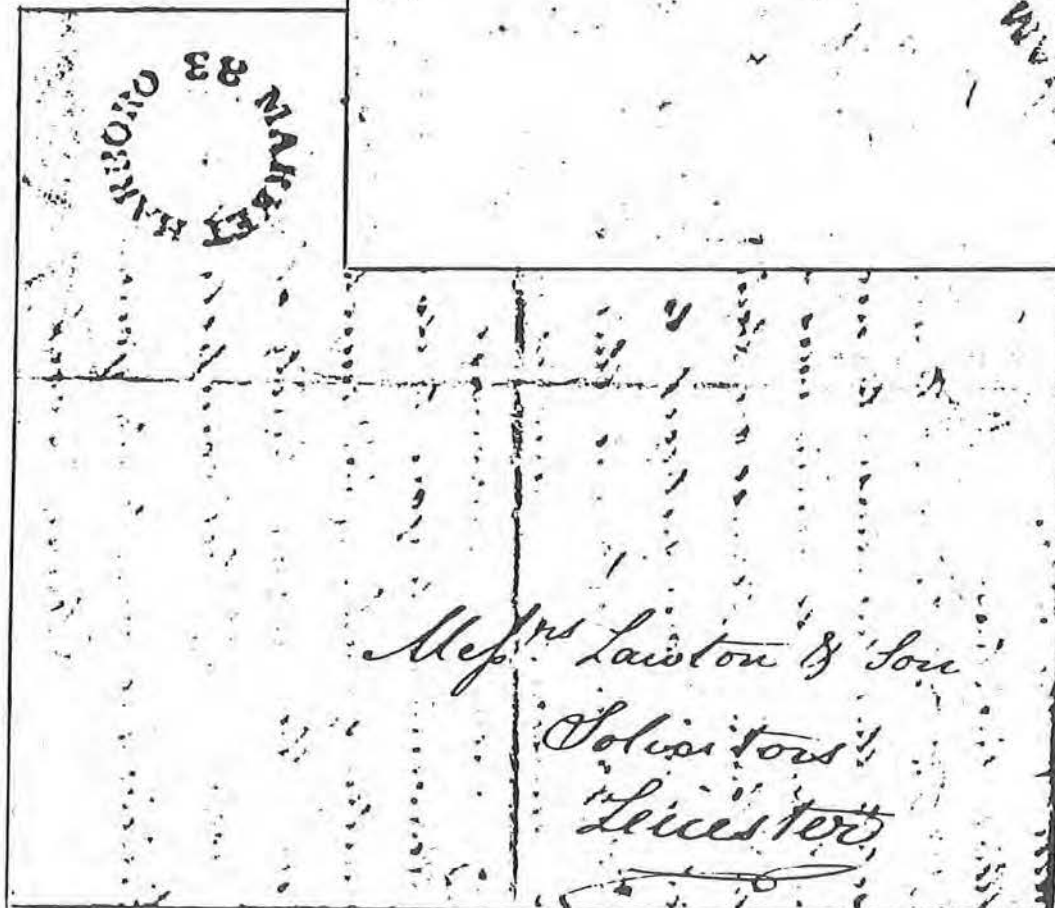
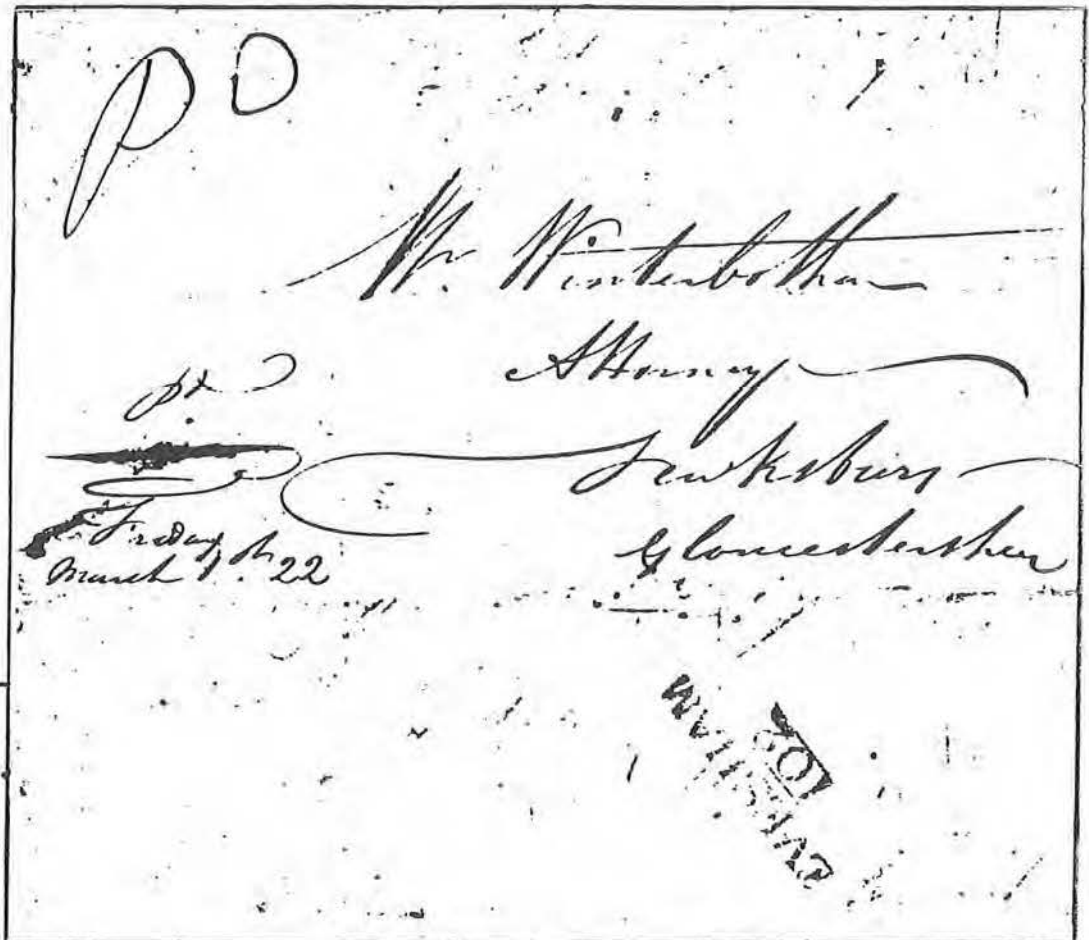
STOP PRESS

I have just received a press release from the British Library stating that they have acquired the philatelic collection of the late H G Fletcher. This consists of 300 volumes ranging from Dockwra marks, early Bishopmarks, Fifth Clause Post markings, Uniform Fourpenny and Penny Post items including a number used on the first day of the services, through vast ranges of stamps right up to the 1960s. It certainly sounds as though it is worth a visit.

COMPETITION

Each issue of Midland Mail this season will contain copies of a number of covers from which the charges have been obliterated. Your task is to work out the charge(s) on each cover. However no entries should be submitted until the competition is complete. The valuable prize will be awarded to the member who, in the Editor's opinion, submits the most correct entry.

The covers are from the Editor's collection (Yes, it is amazing the rubbish that some people collect), and have not (I hope) been shown at any meeting of the Society. Some are easy, but a few are not quite so straightforward as they might appear.



B

Sent in 1825.

C

Mr Pritchett

Solicitor

Brosely

Salop

Paid

LEIGHNEUZZART

55

Mr Jas. King

Surveyor

Ministow

Buckinghamshire

601
182
68
MAY 10 1812
BIRMINGHAM

D

Sent on
10 September 1812.

E

B 1/4 B

William Mitchell Esquire

Royal Oak

Bain

1822
BIRMINGHAM
MAY 10 1812

1822
BIRMINGHAM
MAY 10 1812

EARLY SIX-DAY POSTS

This brief article was prompted when I came across in Post 103 copies of some of the contracts of Ralph Allen with the Post Office. These contain one or two details which are not mentioned in Appendix No. 2 of "Ralph Allen's Own Narrative".

Robinson states, in "Britain's Post Office, p.35, that by 1673 there was a daily service on the Dover Road and on the Yarmouth Road as far as Colchester from where the letters for Holland were carried to Harwich. However it was not until the time of Allen that there was any significant addition to these. In the contract of 1741, Allen was charged with setting up six-day posts to:

- i) Royston, Cambridge, Newmarket, Bury, Thetford and Lynn, and from Thetford to Norwich.
- ii) Ipswich, Saxmundham, Beccles, Lowestoft and Yarmouth.
- iii) Abingdon, Faringdon, Cirencester and Gloucester, and from Cirencester to Bath and Bristol.

These three posts were to go via Hertford, Colchester and Oxford respectively. It was stated that to each of these three towns "a post is already erected that goes and comes Six days in every week to & from London." This is the first indication that I have come across of six-day posts to Oxford and Hertford. Can anyone tell me when they came into being? It should be noted that on the post-nights (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday), the route to Bristol was via Reading, Newbury and Marlborough.

Further six-day posts were listed in the 1748 contract. They were to:

- i) Wells, Bridgewater, Taunton, Wellington, Tiverton and Exeter through Bristol.
- ii) Chipping Norton, Campden, Evesham, Worcester, Droitwich, Bromsgrove and Birmingham through Oxford.

The only difference between the list of six-day posts in the 1755 contract and that in "Allen's Narrative" is that the contract states that by that time Wolverhampton had a six-day post. See MM51/7. For those without copies of the "Narrative", the posts were:

- i) Derby and Nottingham through Hertford, Woburn, Newport Pagnell, Northampton, Leicester and Loughborough. (A post between Loughborough and Nottingham was introduced in 1754.)
- ii) Manchester and Liverpool through Wolverhampton, Stafford, Stone, Nantwich, Middlewich, Northwich and Warrington.
- iii) Shrewsbury through Wolverhampton.
- iv) Chester through Nantwich.

I believe that in his excellent article in Postal History No. 228, Denis Salt may have made a very small error in stating that the road to Newport Pagnell etc. had a daily service in 1756. That was certainly true of places north of Newport Pagnell but the post-night route went through St. Albans and Dunstable which were not on the 1755 list (MM56/17). From i) above it seems likely that until 1761 a route through Hertford and Ampthill to Woburn was used.

Since I could not find a copy of the 1761 contract, I do not propose to comment on it other than to say it provided for a six-day post to Daventry and Coventry "through Northampton on the three Additional Post Days." Also I am intrigued as to how Mansfield, Chesterfield, Sheffield obtained their daily posts. Through Nottingham? Or was it Newark. I am sure that a perusal of the press of the time would provide much new information. (If only I had the time!)

Finally should anyone doubt that some towns received, after 1768, their mail by a different route on the post-nights from that on the bye-nights, as has been so ably expounded by Chris Beaver, the following extract from a letter written in April 1771 by Anthony Todd should convince them.

"...the Mails (to Manchester) being forwarded on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays through Litchfield to Stone, and on the Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, through Oxford, Birmingham and Wolverhampton to Stone, and from Stone through Knutsford to Manchester all Days alike."

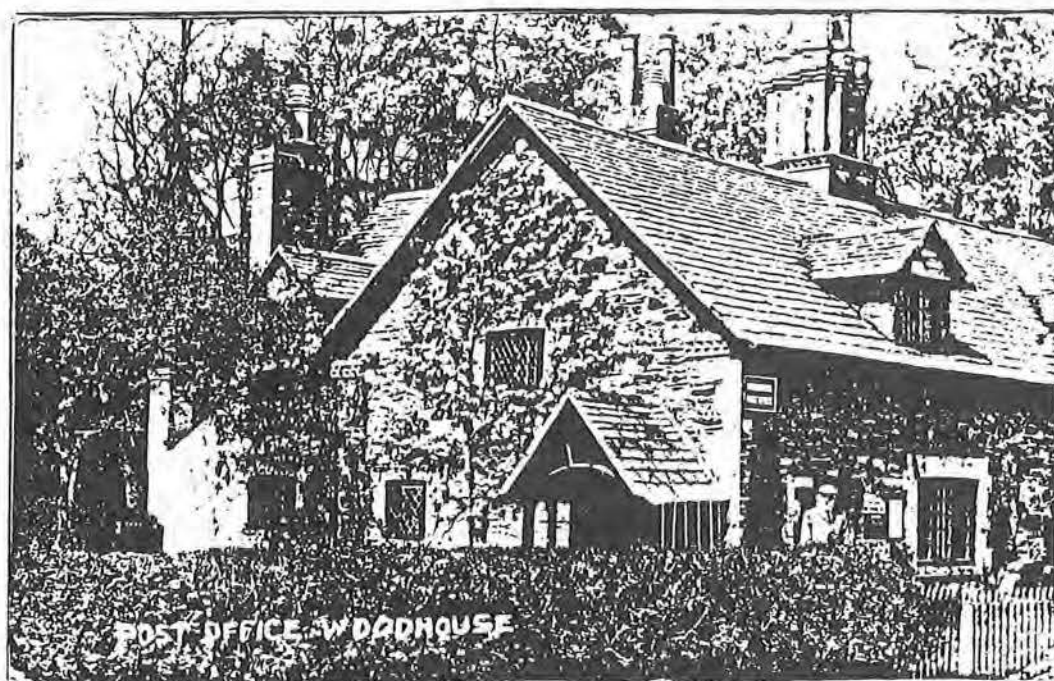
I am very much indebted to Harold Wilson for sending a photocopy of the original which is in the Derbyshire Record Office.

56/17
57/14
57/15
58/9
47/17 and 60/13

From any Post-Office in Great-Britain or Ireland to any Place not exceeding one Stage from such Office	1
Between any Post-Office in England, and any Place above one, and not exceeding two Stages from such Office, and not passing through London	2
Between any Post-Office and any Place not exceeding the Distance of 80 English Miles, and not passing through London	3
Between any Post-Office and any Place above the Distance of 80 English Miles, and not passing through London	4
Between London and Edinburgh, Dumfries, or Cockburn	6
Between any Post-Office in Scotland and any Place in the same Kingdom, above the Distance of one Stage, and not exceeding 50 English Miles, and not passing through Edinburgh	3
Between any Post-Office in Scotland and any Place in the same Kingdom above 50, and not exceeding 80 English Miles, and not passing through Edinburgh	3
Between any Post-Office in Scotland and any Place in the same Kingdom above the Distance of 80 English Miles, and not passing through Edinburgh	4
Between Post Patrick in Scotland and Donaghadee in Ireland, by Packet Boats, over and above all other Rates	13
Between London and Dublin, by way of Holyhead	6

ANOTHER POST OFFICE

Since I seem to have run out of suitable items for the 'tailpiece', this postcard, postally used in 1909, of the post office at Woodhouse, near Loughborough will have to suffice.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

This will contain information about the early surveyors. Also I hope to be able to complete the map of mailcoach routes which was promised for this issue. It should appear in late October, but in the meantime articles, however short or long, should be sent to:

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

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