

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.midlandphs.org.uk



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The Post Office monopoly did not extend to the carriage of newspaper packets and the railways were able to undercut Royal Mail charges. This example of a Railway Newspaper Parcel Stamp (c 1890) is on unsold newspapers being returned to Birmingham by the sub-postmaster of the Brettell Lane, under Stourbridge, office.

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FROM OUR NEW CHAIRMAN – Thank you for electing me as your Chairman for the next three years, I was very pleased to be asked to take on the role. I would like to thank Malcolm Allinson for his previous steady hand; under his stewardship the society has published *The Parcel Post Labels of the Midland Counties* and the new folded format of *Midland Mail* gives it the professional look that its content deserves. Our President, Chris Jackson, should be thanked for his support and hard work over many years and John Calladine not only brings advice but injects energy into our meetings. The society has a lot to be proud of, with its contributions to the wider postal history world through its regular publication of books and the journal; all of which adds to the depth of knowledge of postal history of the British Isles and beyond. We can rightly regard ourselves as being one of the top postal history societies in Great Britain. Taking on board all thirteen of the midland counties gives a breadth to our collecting interests that can contribute significantly to the understanding of how letters and parcels were transported around the country. With a new publication on the horizon the county editors will be kept busy researching their area. I look forward over the next three years to working with such a dedicated group of officers and county editors who are always willing to offer advice and their knowledge to any queries that may crop up. I also look forward to meeting members at society events. For those members living abroad remember next year is London 2020, let us know if you are attending, we might be able to meet up there. I am sure that in the coming year we will all enjoy a series of entertaining and interesting meetings during which we can chat with members and expand our knowledge. The annual auctions are good opportunities to buy new items or dispose of duplicates.

Postal history must be the ultimate in “green” pastimes, recycling material time and time again but always adding to the fascination of our hobby.

Gordon Hardy

JON BAKER TROPHY 2018 – And the winner, announced at the AGM, is (fanfare), **Ian May** for his article *The Use of Computed Miles by the British Post Office* with 58% of the votes cast. Runners up were John Calladine and John Soer. 20% of members voted, similar to last year. Email voting is working better than the old, written, system!

NEW MEMBERS – Ian Dowling of Northfield, Birmingham, whose postal history interests are ‘various’ joins us as do Gerald and Sally Griffin of Penkridge, Staffordshire. Gerald collects postmarks, especially the numbers in English and Welsh counties and Sally collects Staffordshire. Also joining is Clive Murray, Tipton. Welcome all four!

ERIC LEWIS CAVENDISH SALE – It has been confirmed that Eric Lewis’ collection, will be sold by Cavendish Philatelic Auctions in London on 17 September and there will be viewing of the auction items at Stampex from 11 to 14 September. Included in their September auction is a large number of Midland postcards, which will also be in the 17 September sale but it is not yet confirmed whether they will be available to view at Stampex.

MORE CAVENDISH NEWS – A member has pointed out that Cavendish Auctions have a system for alerting potential buyers by e-mail of auctions that include their interests and asks is this well known? The information went out last year to those who had a catalogue subscription. This alert list is only available if specific permission has been given for them to contact you electronically with an explicit request to be included on such a list.

MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION, Spring 2019 Inter-Societies Competition – Three members won excellent awards at the convention; **Brian Atkins** won a GOLD (85 points, second overall) with a nine-page exhibit of *The Postal History of Madeley Wood / Ironbridge, 1811 to 1840*, **Alan Godfrey** gained two SILVER-GILT awards with *WM Baptist Churches* (Postcards and 83 points) and *Leamington Spa Sub-Offices 1840 – 1860* (81 points) and **Pete Elms** also gained a SILVER-GILT with *Errors and Varieties* (80 points). Well done to all three.

ERRATUM – John Soer wishes to apologise for the small error he made in his article on page 18 of *Midland Mail* 201. In paragraph two he stated the date of the cover at Fig 1 was 6th June 1903, when it should have been stated as 12th June 1903.



BRYAN JONES – reports one of his main collecting interests is Pacific Islands. He has edited their quarterly magazine (*Pacifica*) for the last 30+ years, also publishing 6 books, ranging from 20 page monographs to 300 page hard backs, the latest being – *Fiji- The Postage Stamps of the King George VI Period*. This is a 225 page full colour publication for which he received a Large Vermeil at Stampex 2019. A copy was on the Pacific Islands Study Circle stand at Midpex. The photograph shows Laurence Kimpton, currently Chairman of PISC, presenting him with the medal at a recent Solihull P.S. meeting.

MINUTES of the 2019 AGM and AUCTION REPORT

The Friend's Meeting House, Cotteridge was the new venue for the Annual General Meeting on 25 May 2019, with 26 members and three visitors present. Apologies were received from Alan Marshall, Gavin Lattaur, Ian Baker, John Soer, Stuart Geddes, John Chapman, Richard Capon, Frank Bennett and Ian Royal. The minutes of the AGM 2018, as published in Midland Mail No 199, were accepted as a correct record. Acceptance was proposed by Pete Elms, seconded by Roy Summers and agreed by members. There were no matters arising.

The Chairman said that the past year began with the launch of the Society's latest publication, The Parcel Post Labels of the Midland Counties. The event, at the Botanical Gardens, Birmingham, was attended by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mrs Anne Underwood, who had taken a keen interest in the displays of material provided by members. He thanked John Calladine, most sincerely, for his work in masterminding yet another successful book launch. Sales of the book had steadied off but publication costs had been covered.

Sadly, on 1 May 2018, a few days after the book launch, Eric Lewis, one of the founder members of the Society, passed away. A full appreciation of Eric's life by John Calladine had appeared in Midland Mail No 200 to which he, as chairman, was unable to add more. Following Eric's passing the Society had made his daughter, Sharon, an Honorary Member in gratitude not only of her own contribution to the Society but also that of her parents, Eric and Elizabeth. In December the Society also lost Robin Jarman, a long-time Redditch Philatelic Society member but a fairly new MPHS member. Robin was a quiet man with a super sense of humour, an enquiring mind and a very good collection of Chilean Airmails, which graced many an exhibition and regularly gained gold medals.

Since the completion of the Parcel Post Labels book some County Editors were looking for another book project. A subject had not yet been decided but he was sure that it would not be too long before publication number 8 hit the bookshelves. Individual County Editors continue to work behind the scenes and have the thankless task of constantly having to rewrite records as new material is found or 'suddenly reappears from a long lost collection' immediately a new book is published.

With Midland Mail, the public view of the Society, he thanked the Editor, Brian Atkins for his work in ensuring each edition was a worthy journal, specially the 200th edition in September 2019. He had yet to see another journal from a similar society which provided the membership with such diverse and informative articles, beautifully clear illustrations and consistent quality. As much depended on the contributions from members he asked that Brian's pleas for articles and summaries of displays at meetings might be heeded.

The season had seen 'out of this world' displays from two excellent speakers, Tom Slemons with Suffolk postal history in September, now the content of Tom's book, and Max Smith with the Indian Mutiny in December, not only the postal history but also the array of illustrations and portraits to bring the whole story to life. The remainder of the meetings had showcased the talent within the Society with members sharing their collections in ever increasing numbers. It was fascinating to see what other members have and their willingness to display was an indication of the friendliness of the society. The November meeting was a particular pleasure with John Soer, Alan Godfrey and Richard Farman covering the Penny Posts of Warwickshire and Leicestershire. As these spanned both counties, and also Staffordshire, there was the potential for collector rivalry but nothing materialised on the day. As Chairman, he wished to record his thanks to all members who had shared their collections with the Society.

He accepted that there had been some comment as to the ratio of guest speakers to members' displays at meetings but reminded members that there had been twice as many guest speakers as the previous year. It was good to be able to attract 'top notch' collections that, without the backing of the Society, members would not have the opportunity to see. Also, he liked to encourage members to display their material rather than simply tuck it away in a dark cupboard. His thanks went to Richard Farman for putting together a super programme once again and for being in a position to be able to secure visits from eminent collectors and devising a plentiful array of intriguing subjects for members' displays. Unfortunately, despite his request for members to propose possible local venues for meetings he had had no feedback. He still considered that local meetings rather than Birmingham-centric meetings, would be a benefit and would encourage members to come to those closer to their home.

To judge from the postal bids received the auction following the meeting promised to be a very worthwhile event and, perhaps, a fitting tribute to Eric Lewis who over many years did so much to make the event so enjoyable for all.

His ultimate thanks went to the secretary, Mick Gill, who kept everything in order as regards the general administration of the Society, day to day matters and preparation for meetings. This work is largely unseen but essential for the smooth running of the Society. Finally he wished to thank members for their support of the Society and asked that they come to meetings wherever they were held.

The Treasurer distributed copies of the balance sheet (see page 6), which had been examined by Gordon Hardy. Income was £4,751.64 against expenditure of £5,008.61 a deficit of £256.97, mainly a result of additional costs for room hire (up £50), production and distribution of Midland Mail (up £150) and general administrative costs (up £93). Printing of the Parcel Post Label book had been covered by sales and advertisement income. Overall, with membership fairly steady and a healthy balance of £4,714.99, it had been a successful year. In consequence he proposed the subscription remained at £10 per person. On behalf of members, Richard Farman asked that thanks be recorded to the Treasurer for his continued stewardship of the Society's finances.

The Editor said that advertisers for Midland Mail were stable and he had now secured a new source should one of the current ones drop out. The 200th edition of Midland Mail had been a success as had the 'Saved from a Goat' small items subject. However, he was in desperate need of articles, especially long ones, and asked that members put pen to paper or fingers to key board.

The Society's Publication Editor said that 76 copies of the Parcel Post Labels book had been sold and 8 donated or presented for free. The Committee had discussed a further book project, subjects proposed included rubber date stamps and instructional marks. However the current thought was a book comprising all marks from 1840 to 1860 to bring together information at present scattered throughout numerous publications. A decision would be taken at the next committee meeting but, if members had any other ideas, he asked they contact their county editor. As Publicity Manager's role remained vacant, there was no report.

Alan Godfrey said that member Steve Harrison was now ABPS Vice-Chairman and that Gerald Marriner had been awarded the ABPS Congress Medal for 2019. There had been no Award of Merit. Planning for London 2020 (2 – 9 May) was at an advanced stage. Future Congresses would be held at Market Harborough (2019), Harrogate (2020) and somewhere in the Birmingham area (2021). Small grants were available from the ABPS to help societies fund specific projects. There had been a good response to the Speakers List which was now available on the website. Regarding the recent Spring Convention at Rugby, Steve Harrison, the MPF Chairman, reported a successful year with 35 affiliated societies. Non-member societies were to be approached in the hope of them joining. The Inter-Society competition had had 24 entries across 6 classes from 6 different societies. The Federation planned to take part in the Inter-Federation competition at Stampex in the Autumn. Whilst the unexamined accounts showed a deficit, this was exclusively the result of spending on new trophies, refurbishing old ones and engraving. Trophies were now available for all inter-society nine-sheet competitions and all but a thematic trophy for all individual 16-sheet competitions. Plans for MIDPEX were going well with more dealers and specialist society stands filling up. However volunteers were still needed on Friday to set up tables etc and on Saturday to man the door.

Regarding the elections, the Secretary reported he had a proposal from John Calladine, seconded by Richard Farman, that Gordon Hardy be elected Chairman. Gordon has confirmed his acceptance and his election was formally agreed by members. As there was no volunteer for the vacant Auction Officer and Publicity Manager posts, the Chairman proposed both be held in abeyance until someone could be co-opted. The election of Officers, Managers, Representatives and County Editors were all formally proposed, seconded and agreed by members. The Chairman did not consider that the election of Gordon Hardy as the new Chairman would preclude him from continuing to act as Examiner of Accounts. However, to avoid any conflict of interest, it was agreed that a replacement Examiner should be appointed. With no nomination forthcoming it was agreed the appointment be held over to the next Committee meeting.

The Programme Secretary said that many organisations had moved from traditional diaries to computer versions and these were generally not updated until the autumn, he had had great difficulty in arranging bookings into 2020. Accordingly, he proposed future programmes be agreed to run from January to December. The outline programme for 2019 / 20 was currently:

14 or 21 Sep	Possibly Friends Meeting House, Fiveways, Birmingham
26 Oct	Friends meeting House, Cotteridge, Birmingham
9 Nov	MPF Banbury Fair or Warwick & Warwick
7 Dec	Christmas Lunch, Burton-on-Trent
11 Jan	Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge, Birmingham
8 Feb	Still to be decided
14 Mar	National Arboretum, Alrewas or Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge, Birmingham,
11 Apr	The Ladybird Inn, Bromsgrove
23 or 30 May	AGM / Auction, Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge, Birmingham.

He had recently looked through the subjects of past members' meetings and had now drawn up some 40 different possible titles / subjects for future meetings. He expected to complete the programme for the next season in the next fortnight and he would take this up to December 2020.

Finally, the Chairman announced Ian May the clear winner of the Jon Baker Trophy for his article '*The Use of Computed Miles by the British Post Office*'. The runners up were John Calladine and John Soer.

As there was no other business the meeting closed at 1.35pm, and after a short break, the annual auction commenced.

Prices Realised for the Auction held on 25th May 2019

Items provided for Society funds: (Top row auction lot, second row selling price)

Lot	A	B	C
Bid £	10	10	22

Auction items: if a number is not present, then that item failed to sell:

Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £
1	6	30	50	55	5	76	8	96	19	131	3	172	3	207	20	243	30
2	10	32	48	56	5	77	5.5	97	42	133	4	173	8.5	208	38	245	40
6	22	33	6	57	5	78	5	99	3	142	10	174	5	209	50	246	30
7	10	34	20	58	5	79	5	101	8	143	17	176	5	212	30	248	42
8	12	35	8.5	59	3	80	10	103	4	144	16	177	3	218	52	251	20
9	10	36	5	60	5	81	5	104	11	147	3	183	4.5	221	34	254	18
14	7	37	20	61	6	82	3	108	20	151	180	187	4	223	190	258	15
15	3	38	8	62	10	83	4	109	7	153	40	190	5	224	120	260	20
16	8.5	39	4	63	10	84	3	114	5	154	55	191	10	225	260	265	5
17	8.5	40	4	64	3	85	5	115	3	155	5	194	20	227	70	269	7
18	4	41	10	65	3	86	3	116	4	156	6	196	40	228	10	270	7.5
19	8	43	40	66	15	87	3	117	3	157	13	197	35	229	25	272	8
20	24	46	7	67	5.5	88	4	119	5.5	159	6	198	32	232	10	273	12
21	3	47	65	68	5	89	4	120	3	160	4	199	40	233	10	276	9
22	16	49	32	69	5	90	5	122	10	162	7.5	201	160	235	30	278	5.5
24	30	50	3	70	5	91	12	125	3	163	28	202	15	237	20	279	5
25	5	51	3	72	9.5	92	11	126	3	165	10	203	32	239	30	280	7
26	16	52	6	73	7.5	93	5	127	3	167	7.5	204	20	240	100	281	7
27	6.5	53	5	74	10	94	16	128	3	170	13	205	85	241	20	282	7
28	7.5	54	5	75	7.5	95	5	129	5	171	8.5	206	20	242	30	283	40

286	10	311	3	333	10	354	26
288	15	312	3	334	30	355	20
290	14	313	3	335	50	356	30
291	10	314	3	336	48	357	25
292	46	315	4	337	20	358	20
293	8	316	3	338	42	360	40
295	3	317	3	339	95	361	100
296	3	318	3	340	42		
297	3	320	70	341	14		
298	28	321	60	342	40		
299	5	322	50	343	40		
300	3	323	20	344	80		
301	6.5	325	30	345	30		
302	8.5	326	40	346	120		
305	7.5	327	15	347	50		
306	3	328	75	348	42		
307	3	329	36	349	10		
308	3	330	38	350	34		
309	3	331	19	352	42		
310	3	332	85	353	90		

Alan Godfrey reported total sales of £5,430.50 (68.4% of lots sold); 34 successful bidders (25 room, 9 postal) and 16 vendors. Commission to the society (including lotting fees) was £610.45 with 3 lots sold for society funds realising £42.00. Many thanks to all those who attended the AGM and auction, donated club lots and bought or sold. Much time and effort goes in to producing an efficient, successful auction.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE and BALANCE SHEET ENDING 31ST MARCH 2019

Provided for those members who were not able to attend the AGM / Auction

MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2019

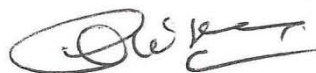
INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
2018 £		2019 £	2018 £		2019 £
943.99	Subscriptions including those received in advance	930.36	350.90	Hire of Rooms & Refreshments	407.90
495.00	Adverts in 'Midland Mail'	532.50	1,176.08	Production and Distribution of 'Midland Mail'	1,321.43
300.07	Society's commission on Annual Auction	270.56	55.92	Auction Expenses	81.99
144.00	Gifts to the Society, sold in Annual Auction	66.00	64.90	Speakers Expenses	-
89.00	Sales of BCC - Midland Edition	-	142.58	Printing, Stationery, Postage and Telephone	235.54
-	Sales of Parcel Post Label Book	2,079.99	-	Printing of Parcel Post Label Book	2,808.00
-	Advertising - PPL Book	850.00	25.00	MPF Affiliation Fee	25.00
10.35	Donations Received	13.23	106.25	ABPS Affiliation Fee	103.75
15.00	Sale of Pin Badges	9.00	-	MIDPEX 2018 Stand Cost	25.00
			50.00	Website Expenses	-
			25.78	Surplus/ (Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	(256.97)
<u>1,997.41</u>		<u>£ 4,751.64</u>	<u>1,997.41</u>		<u>£ 4,751.64</u>

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st MARCH 2019

	£		£
Accumulated Fund:		Represented by:	
Balance brought forward 1st April 2018	5,929.46	Co-op Bank Current Account	5,081.01
Deficit of Expenditure over Income for the year	(256.97)	Less Uncleared Cheque Payments	(366.02)
Prepayment 2017/8 - Advertising in PPL Book	(850.00)	Cash in Hand	0.00
Accrued Income 2018/9 - Adverts & Subs	(107.50)		
	<u>£ 4,714.99</u>		<u>£ 4,714.99</u>

I have examined the Account Books shown to me and received all information that I have requested from the Treasurer.
I confirm that in my opinion these figures show the true financial position of the Society at 31st March 2019.

Signed:



Date: 12/04/2019

G Hardy
Accounts Examiner

MAIL ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY AND ITS CONSTITUENTS, 1840-1875, PART 7

By John Soer

LINCOLN AND TAMWORTH SORTING TENDER¹

The aim of Mr Milliken when he suggested, in June 1866, attaching a sorting tender in both directions to the Lincoln and Tamworth mail train was to relieve the N.W.R.P.O. of the sorting of the correspondence between *'the principal towns in Notts and Lincs'* and the *'North Western Counties'*. The fourteen bags received by the NWRPO at Tamworth would be replaced by one. It would also relieve the London and Holyhead R.P.O. of five bags (Lincoln, Newark, Nottingham, Grantham and Mansfield) thrown into it by the apparatus at Tamworth, while another nine towns would be given a direct communication with the night mail to Ireland, rather than sending their letters through London.

Three months later Mr Page informed Mr Allport that two Post Office carriages fitted up for sorting would be required in the night mail train between Lincoln and Tamworth as soon as they could be provided. He added that the vans now used for the service were too low in the roof to be used as sorting carriages.

Mr Willeday, the Inspector of Mails, reported that two stowage tenders - numbers 13 and 17, one of which was kept in reserve at Derby, were good serviceable carriages but rather low in the roof. He gave the dimensions as: length 15ft 4in, width 6ft 1in, and height 5ft 10in (2in higher between the roof timbers). Mr Slade of the Midland reported that there would be no difficulty in raising the roof but it would be necessary to adapt the carriages in other ways so as to insert the fittings for the sorting of letters. It would be much better to build new shells.

A sorter on the day mail R.P.O. between Derby and Newcastle, a Mr Howard, wrote about an incident on 22nd August 1866 when he had narrowly escaped being crushed by another train. The carriage on that day had only one door which did not open onto the platforms at a number of stations on the N.E.R., so the sorters had to exit the carriage by stepping down onto the rails. Also, the sorters had difficulty in lifting the bags to the window, particularly at York and Milford Junction. He suggested the Company should build for the Derby & Newcastle day mail two new carriages similar to those used on the Bristol & Newcastle night mail which had a door on both sides. The RPOs used on the day mail could then be modified for the Lincoln & Tamworth duty.

On 22nd April 1867, it was reported that the first of the two new carriages had been placed on the day mail train and that the carriage displaced would shortly be sent to Lincoln. It was sent to Lincoln on 7th May and ran from Lincoln for the first time on 26th May 1867.

GLOUCESTER STATION POST OFFICE

In January 1866 the 'Stationary Mail Guard' at Gloucester station wrote about the state of the post office there to Mr Page who forwarded the letter to Mr Allport.² He wrote: *'As complaints may be made respecting the wet state of the mail bags received or despatched at Gloster, I beg to inform you that in wet weather a pool of water forms in the station post office doorway. Consequently, the bags get very wet taking them in and out of the office.'*

A little over two months later, Mr West, Inspector General of Mails, wrote to Mr Allport: *'...great complaints still continue to be made of the "very insufficient accommodation" in the Sorting Office at Gloucester Station. The building is made of wood and the rain not only penetrates through the roof, but also the sides of the room. Its close proximity to a number of urinals etc renders it necessary to keep closed as much as possible some windows which are placed high in the wall for ventilation. A convenient site has been pointed out for another and more suitable building, which I trust the Company will have no objection to build for the use of the Post Office as the defects mentioned are seriously detrimental to the health and comfort of those who are employed in the office.'*

Although it appears nothing had been done by the following October, it was reported in January 1868 that the new sorting office at Gloucester station was complete apart from the water supply to the lavatory.³

REDDITCH DAY MAILS

A letter of January 1867 stated that from 1st February 1867 bags from Redditch for Birmingham and London would go on the 9.55 a.m. train due at Barnt Green at 10.10 a.m. and Birmingham at 10.55 a.m. Bags from London and Birmingham would leave Birmingham at 1 p.m. and reach Redditch at 1.55 p.m. There would also be a bag from Worcester, sent by the 11.52 a.m. train which arrived in Barnt Green at 12.34 p.m. This bag was to remain in the care of the station staff until the arrival of the train from Birmingham at 1.35 p.m. by which it was to be sent on to

Redditch.⁴ It is possible that some of this did not immediately happen for a letter of October 1867 states that from 1st November 1867 a bag from Redditch would arrive in Birmingham at 10.55 a.m.⁵ There was further mention of day mail bags from Redditch when the Midland was informed that on and from 20th January 1868 bags from Droitwich, Redditch and Bromsgrove would arrive in Birmingham at 9.10 a.m. for the down NWRPO.⁶ The same train was used to carry further bags from 2nd September 1869: from Bromsgrove and Redditch for Birmingham and London; from Droitwich for Birmingham, London and Dudley; from Worcester for Stafford and the NWRPO; from Malvern for Birmingham and NWRPO.⁷

WEST INDIA MAILS

Mr Allport received in October 1867 details of the arrangements that were to be made for the West India mails due to arrive for the first time in Plymouth on the morning of 14th October. The times of trains by which the mails were to be forwarded to London and the North depended on the time of arrival of the packet in Plymouth. Unfortunately, a timetable mentioned in the letter is not with the copy of the letter. It was pointed out that if the packet arrived within certain specified times, a special train was to be provided over the Midland line from Bristol *‘as far as may be necessary towards Birmingham for the purpose of overtaking the ordinary North Mail train.’* The stationmaster at Bristol was to receive a telegram from the Plymouth stationmaster to say when and whether by ordinary or special train the mail would leave Plymouth. The West India mails were due to arrive in Plymouth on 13th, 14th, 20th and 29th of every month.⁸

In November 1867 as a result of the death of the post office sorter from yellow fever during one voyage, the mails arrived at Plymouth unsorted. In the hiatus that followed a message was sent, not by a postal official so it was claimed, to Bristol asking for a special train which, in the event, was not needed. However, the Post Office did reimburse the Midland for preparing the train⁹. There was a need for a special train in both March and April 1869. An earlier minute had stated that the cost of such a train would be about 3s 6d a mile which was the sum claimed by the South Devon and the Bristol & Exeter companies. However, the Midland had claimed only 1s 8½d per mile - for the single journey, omitting the cost of the return. A rate of 3s 5d per mile was to be allowed for all future services.

THE LONDON EXTENSION

The line from Bedford to St Paul’s Road Junction and from there to Kings Cross Junction with the Metropolitan Railway opened to passengers on 13th July 1868.¹⁰ It was not until the 1st October 1868 that passenger trains reached the Midland Station at St Pancras. The first mention of trains carrying mail over the extension that I can find is in a letter of 28th August 1868 which states that the Post Office proposed to use the Midland’s new line for the conveyance of mail bags between London and Luton. The trains to be used were: from London to Luton – the 9.12 a.m. and 4.18 p.m. from Aldersgate Street; and from Luton – the 11.3 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. arrivals at Aldersgate Street.

A number of authors have written that the first train to arrive in St Pancras was the up mail from Leeds which arrived at 4.15 a.m. on 1st October 1868. The train which arrived in St Pancras in the early hours on the date started its journey in Leicester (See MM 198/16). Certainly, the working timetable shows a connection at Leicester between the train from Derby to Rugby and that to St Pancras, but I have not been able to find any evidence that any Post Office vehicles were transferred. In the Letter Copy Books between 1868 and 1871 there are a number of references to the “Up Night Mail train from Leicester”. In the voluminous correspondence related to the 1874 contract among the trains listed as “*not under notice but bound by agreement to run*” are 8.35 p.m. London to Leicester and the 1.45 a.m. Leicester to London. In a letter to be found in the same file Mr Benthall writes that should the night mail correspondence for places on the Midland Railway be sent via Bedford instead of Rugby, the Midland mail tender which worked to and from Euston would work to and from St Pancras. As would be expected, the Post Office quickly moved a number of mails to the new terminus. Although not of relevance to the Midlands, one particular mail is of note. From the 1st December 1868 the bag from London to Luton, which had until then gone by 10.25 a.m. train, was sent by a train at 9.10 a.m.¹¹ On the withdrawal of that train in June 1869 a train at 9 a.m. which slipped a carriage at Luton was used.¹² By August 1870, it appears that this train left St Pancras a little earlier for a letter of 30th August states that there was no objection on the part of the Post Office to the London bag for Luton being dropped by the guard of the 8.45 a.m. train when a slip carriage was not needed.¹³

Another instance of mail being carried in a slip carriage is to be found in a letter of 27th June 1867: “*When there are no passengers for Wellingborough and Kettering the slip carriage will not be attached to the 9.10 a.m. train from Kings Cross. In that event the bags for Kettering and Ashby-de-la-Zouch will go in the 11 a.m. train...*”¹⁴

Matters did not always proceed as well as the authorities might have wished. On 6th April 1869 it was reported that because of the failure of the engine twice on the London-Leicester night mail it arrived in Leicester 56 minutes late,

at 12.10 a.m.¹⁵ Worse followed a few days later for on 10th April the up mail from Leicester did not arrive at St Pancras until 6.14 a.m., 114 minutes late, the engine having failed between Bedford and London.¹⁶

MAIL FOR MARKET HARBOROUGH AND KETTERING

Lord Ingestone who lived near Market Harborough complained in a letter sent in January 1867 about the late delivery of the letters from the north and west which were forwarded from Leicester at 3.5 a.m. by a goods train. This train was frequently late as the train was worked from Leicester by the engine of a goods train from London. The suggested remedy appeared to be to use a separate engine for the service or one that had arrived earlier in Leicester than that used. It is probable that these letters were those bought by the train from Birmingham and Nuneaton by the train mentioned in Part 6, and which arrived in Leicester at 2.55 a.m. A letter of 12th April 1869¹⁷ informed Mr Allport that the Post Office was considering an alteration in the night mail services to Market Harborough and Kettering which would make these stops on the night mail from Leicester to St Pancras unnecessary for postal purposes. Then, on 12th July it was stated that the up night mail train need not stop at the two towns for postal purposes after the 13th.¹⁸ A letter sent on the same day said that mail bags for Market Harborough and Kettering would be sent by the goods train leaving Leicester at 3.10 a.m. on and from 14th July.¹⁹ It is probable that these bags were those brought by the Derby to Rugby mail train in addition to those from Nuneaton mentioned above.

In April 1871 the Midland proposed to stop the up-mail train from Leicester at Kentish Town and to arrive in St Pancras five minutes later at 4.20 a.m. Mr Benthall wrote to Allport that this train was under notice and should run at hours fixed by the P.M.G.²⁰ [I am not sure that statement was correct for that train appeared in Schedule Two of the 1864 contract, so the times of the train were open to negotiation.] He went on to say that the arrival of the train in London at the earliest possible moment was of great importance to the postal service. However, as instructions had probably been issued, the Post Office would not object to the change on 1st May, provided that the time of arrival at St Pancras of 4.15 a.m. was reverted to on 1st June. The details of Mr Allport's reply are not given, but in a further letter of 12th May²¹ Mr Benthall wrote that while it was true that the train had previously arrived at St Pancras at 4.20 p.m., the principal object of the Post Office in proposing the abolition of the stops at Market Harborough and Kettering had been to give an earlier arrival in London so as to expedite the morning delivery of letters. This had been achieved at the cost of considerable inconvenience at Market Harborough and Kettering. [That, surely, is an exaggeration as the letters from the northwest were already being carried on the goods train from Leicester.] He added that the Post Office was reluctant to give up the arrival in St Pancras at 4.15 a.m. By 1st May 1872 the train did arrive at that time but there was a stop at Kentish Town engine shed!



St Pancras Station c. 1875

WITHDRAWAL OF MIDLAND DISTRICT SORTING CARRIAGE

In a letter,²² dated 12th June 1869, to Mr Allport it was stated that the Post Office had decided to amalgamate the two kinds of sorting duty on the railways, namely those performed in the Travelling Post Offices and those in the District Sorting Carriages. This would enable the Post Office to reduce considerably the number of travelling sorters and dispense with some of the vehicles used. On and from Monday, 14th June the Midland District Sorting Carriage which ran over the Midland Railway between Rugby and Normanton in both directions would no longer be needed. The final sentence of the letter reads, "No doubt you will fully appreciate the advantage in reducing the weight of this important train." That, I suppose, was meant to justify the very short notice and the fact that vehicles provided by the railway companies were now redundant. At the same time a letter was sent to the LNWR saying that it would no longer be necessary to carry the Midland District Sorting Carriage in the Limited Mail over their line between Rugby and London.

CONTRACT OF 1874²³

In September 1871 the Midland Railway gave formal notice of its intention to terminate its contract with the Post Office on 30th September 1872. It was not until 1874 that a new contract was signed, the delay being caused to some extent by Mr Allport going to America towards the end of 1872. Even so, after a draft contract had been approved in 1873, resolving a number of points took up several more months. A very large file is the result, and the following, I hope, covers the more important parts of that file. Mr Benthall, Assistant Secretary and Inspector General of Mails with respect to the Midland Railway, wrote to the surveyor, Mr Milliken, in April 1872 about reducing the services performed under legal notice by the Midland Railway, before the start of negotiations about a new contract. He suggested that it might be possible to dispense with the night mail trains between Rugby & Derby and Leicester & London, the down day mail train from Rugby to Derby and Leeds and the up day-mail south of Derby. Mr Milliken's reply was unequivocal:-

"I very much question the practicability and still more the advisability of interfering with the present arrangements of the Night Mail Services on the Midland Railway south of Derby. They were fitted to their present combination and connections not so long ago with much care and thought. ... I do not think it will be found possible to dispense with the trains of the Company to the extent suggested."

He went on to say that withdrawal of the London mail (to which all railway companies attached "great consideration") would be regarded by the Midland as an act of "downright hostility", and prejudice the Post Office's good understanding with them. The suggested changes would adversely affect the main towns, of which Leicester and Loughborough would be most disadvantaged, served by those trains. At Leicester 426 letters a day for the North on average would need to be posted one hour earlier, while 490 letters a day for the South would need to be posted three hours earlier. At Loughborough, "also a large manufacturing town, and with a large and influential rural district", about 240 letters a day would need to be posted two hours earlier. It is clear that Mr Benthall took note of Mr Milliken's comments for on 23rd April he produced a rather different plan. He commented that the Midland would probably be glad to be relieved of running night mail trains between Rugby and Leicester in connection with the Limited Night Mail trains on the LNWR which carried no passengers for the Midland line. If the London bags for the Midland line were sent by the Midland train to Leicester, the LNWR train would be relieved of one carriage between London and Rugby and much shunting avoided, as the Midland mail carriage would run to and from St Pancras instead of Euston. Mail from towns on the line between London and Rugby for towns on the Midland line (except Leicester and Loughborough) could be sent through Tamworth. The two Leicestershire towns could be served through Nuneaton. Mr Milliken agreed with this as well as the withdrawal of the down day mail from Rugby to Leeds and running the up day mail from Leeds only as far as Derby, despite the fact that the latter would have been 'an injury' to Leicester as the train carried not only the day mail from the Newcastle line, but also the letters from the Eastern Counties (in total about 420 letters a day on average) in time for the first delivery. The other surveyors whose districts were affected agreed with the proposed measures.

On 10th May 1872, Mr Benthall wrote to the relevant surveyors saying that it was desirable to ascertain the amount of mail bags carried in ordinary trains of the Midland Railway. This could be obtained from the riding work reports at the GPO, but these needed to be updated. A list was produced but while it does show the times of the trains and the distances covered, it does not show the number of mail bags carried in each train. The 235 weekday trains and 28 Sunday trains covered between them over 2 million miles a year. According to Mr Allport the number of bags carried was on average about 1100 each day. The cost of sending these bags at parcel rates was calculated to be nearly £14,000 pa. (£5000 was the sum allowed in the 1864 contract for carriage by ordinary trains, the Midland making a nominal charge of 6d a bag.). To rectify the above omission, it was decided to obtain a return of the number of mail bags carried over the Midland line by goods and passenger trains in charge of Midland guards on Saturday 25th May and Sunday 26th May 1872. The results, excluding those for places north of Sheffield, for the

Saturday are shown in Appendix C. There are more than the apparent 261 trains to be found in the full list for some entries add the distance of a branch line, e.g. the 9 a.m. from Birmingham to Bristol has the distance from Coaley to Dursley added. In a document marked 'Private and Confidential' and undated, but probably produced in 1873, an attempt was made to obtain an estimate of the cost of carrying mail on the Midland Railway. The average earnings of Midland passenger trains for the year ending December 1872 was 3s/11d per train mile, while the average over those proposed under the new contract was more than 2s/11d less than that. However, more favourable to the Post Office was the use of the cost of working passenger trains per train mile. For the Midland Railway this came to 2s/7½d per train mile (excluding interest on capital invested in rolling stock). If this sum was used to fix the price the Post Office should pay for the trains, plus the cost of 430,000 mail bags at 6d each and a payment for the carriage of a ton of mail in the 1 a.m. train from Derby to London, then a total cost of over £53,000 p.a. was the result. (The Post Office had offered 47,500 p.a. while the Midland had reduced their demand to £50,000 p.a.) The total cost was reduced to about £49,400, if the Leicester – Nuneaton mail trains (The trains actually ran between Leicester and Birmingham) and the Peterborough – Leicester night mail train, both of which had been introduced since the date of the previous contract were regarded as ordinary trains, payments of £600 and £250 p.a. respectively being made for the two services. It is surprising then that Mr Allport eventually acquiesced in these services, particularly the Leicester and Nuneaton service, being regarded as ordinary trains, as their introduction had been requested by the Post Office. The number of passengers carried was probably very small as can be seen from a report, in 'The Standard' newspaper of 31st October 1873 about an accident at Elmesthorpe (See MM52/12) involving the train from Leicester, which contains the sentence: '*Fortunately the train did not contain a single passenger, as is very often the case, it being principally run for the conveyance of the Leicester and Birmingham mails.*' The return from Birmingham at 1.25 a.m. and Nuneaton at 2.10 a.m. was even less likely to attract any custom than a 10 p.m. departure from Leicester. From the correspondence between the Secretary and the Postmaster General, it is clear that both were anxious to avoid arbitration of which, '*the results are so uncertain*', so an improved offer of £48,500 p.a., was made to Mr Allport. Although this offer was accepted in April 1873, it was not until 1st April 1874 that the new contract was signed as there was argument about the wording of a number of the clauses.

The main differences between this and the contract of 1864 were:

- The contract was to take effect from 1st October 1872 and remain in force until 30th September 1875, after which it might be terminated by twelve months' notice;
- The Payment was to be £48,500 p.a., exclusive of the use of the line between Settle and Carlisle. If the Post Office needed to use that line, then the payment would be £50,000 p.a.
- The trains under notice were to be the same as under the old contract except: the down day-mail from Rugby to Leeds; the up day-mail from Derby to Rugby; the night mail in both directions between Derby and Rugby; and night mail in both directions between Leeds and Skipton.
- In Schedule 2 the train between Leicester and Hitchin was replaced by a night mail train in both directions between St Pancras and Derby.
- Clause 13 was to read 'The Night Mail Train from Tamworth to Derby [instead of Rugby to Derby] is to leave after the arrival of the Down Limited Scotch Mail on the London & North Western Railway.'
- In Clause 21 the sum allotted to the use of ordinary trains was to be £8,500 instead of £5,000.

With regard to the second point, the surveyors were told that this must not use the Settle and Carlisle without seeking permission from London beforehand.

I will end this series of articles with part of a minute sent to the Postmaster General in July 1872:

'...The Midland Railway System is as you are aware, one of the largest in the Kingdom, extending from London in the South beyond Lancaster in the North, and from Bristol in the West to Lincoln, Lynn and Cambridge in the East. The Mail Service upon it is of course very considerable, not so much as might perhaps be supposed for London Correspondence but on account of its forming the main artery of Communication between the West of England and South Wales at Bristol and Gloucester respectively and the Midland, Northern and North Eastern part of the Kingdom by the route of Worcester, Birmingham, Tamworth, Derby, Sheffield, Normanton and Leeds. Besides a large number of Trains daily under notice, there is an enormous amount of service by ordinary Trains, no less than 270 Trains being used on weekdays in addition to the regular Mail Trains.

APPENDIX A. Trains under notice in the 1874 contract.

Service	Depart	Arrive	Accommodation to be provided by the Contractors
Leeds to Derby Day Mail (SuX)	Leeds 2.40 a.m.	Derby 5.15 a.m.	The Contractors guards to take charge of the mails forwarded by this dispatch.
Sundays only	Leeds 3 a.m.	Derby 5.50 a.m.	

Tamworth and Normanton Night Mail	Tamworth 11.56 p.m.	Normanton 2.33 a.m.	A sufficient number of separate or Post Office carriages fitted up as the Postmaster General shall require. Also a letter-bag carriage or van.
	Normanton 10.38 p.m.	Tamworth 1.19 a.m.	
Normanton and Leeds Night Mail	Normanton 2.42 a.m.	Leeds 3.0 a.m.	The Contractors guards to take charge of the mails forwarded by this dispatch
	Leeds 10.5 p.m.	Normanton 10.25 p.m.	
Tamworth and Bristol Night Mail	Tamworth 1.24 a.m.	Bristol 5.55 a.m.	A sufficient number of separate or Post Office carriages fitted up as the Postmaster General shall require. Also a letter-bag carriage or van.
	Bristol 7.0 p.m.	Tamworth 11.51 p.m.	
Tamworth and Lincoln Night Mail	Derby 2.20 a.m.	Lincoln 4.55 a.m.	A letter-bag carriage or van with each of these dispatches fitted up as the Postmaster General shall require.
	Lincoln 8.30 p.m.	Derby 10.45 p.m.	
Bristol and Gloucester Night Mail	Bristol 12.45 a.m.	Gloucester 2.0 a.m.	A letter-bag carriage or van with each of these dispatches fitted up as the Postmaster General shall require.
	Gloucester 11.15 p.m.	Bristol 12.20 a.m.	
	Skipton 7.10 p.m.	Leeds 8.35 p.m.	

APPENDIX B. Trains listed in Schedule 2 of 1874 contract. (Only to be altered on giving one month's notice.)

Service	Depart	Arrive	Accommodation to be provided by the Company
Leicester to Peterborough Goods Train	Leicester 3.00 a.m.		The Contractor's Guards to take charge of the bags.
Peterborough to Syston Goods Train	Peterborough 2.10 a.m.	Syston 4.45 a.m.	Ditto
St Pancras to Derby	St Pancras 8.50 p.m.	Derby 12.33 a.m.	One or more sorting carriages or vans fitted up in such a manner as the Postmaster General shall require.
Derby to St Pancras	Derby 1 a.m.	St Pancras 4.30 a.m.	
Derby to Normanton	Derby 11.30 a.m.	Normanton 1.30 p.m.	

APPENDIX C. Return of mail bags conveyed over the Midland line by goods and passenger trains on Saturday 25th May in charge of Midland Guards.

To save space, I have omitted from this table the trains outside the midland counties – mainly those which ran north of Sheffield. If anyone would like a copy of the full table, please contact me.

Superscript ^g indicates goods train.

No of Bags	Train	From	To	No of Miles	Remarks
4	5.40 a.m.	Leeds	Derby	7 ³ / ₄	Bag Leeds to Methley [4 S.Os.]
5	8.0 a.m.	Leeds	Derby	23 ³ / ₄	Bag Chesterfield to Derby.
11	10.30 a.m.	Leeds	Derby	51	Bag Sandal & Walton to Derby?
10	12.40 p.m.	Leeds	Derby	75 ³ / ₄	
5	1.15 p.m.	Leeds	Derby	52	Bag Leeds to Chesterfield
2	2.45 p.m.	Leeds	Derby	52	Bag Leeds to Chesterfield
2	4.30 p.m.	Sheffield	Chesterfield	7 ¹ / ₄	Bag Sheffield to Dronfield
1	4.46 p.m.	Leeds	Derby	5 ¹ / ₂	Bag Masboro to Sheffield
6	5.20 p.m.	Leeds	Derby	31 ¹ / ₄	Swinton to Sheffield & Chesterfield to Derby.
1	7.45 p.m.	Leeds	Sheffield	22 ³ / ₄	Bag Barnsley to Sheffield
2	10.20 a.m.	Derby	Leeds	7 ¹ / ₄	Bag Dronfield to Chesterfield

3	1.10 p.m.	Derby	Leeds	$75\frac{3}{4}$	
4	1.30 p.m.	Derby	Leeds	$31\frac{3}{4}$	Derby to Wingfield & Swinton to Normanton
14	3.0 p.m.	Derby	Leeds	$75\frac{3}{4}$	
9	8.30 p.m.	Derby	Leeds	$75\frac{3}{4}$	
5	8.38 p.m.	Chesterfield	Leeds	52	
5	11.50 a.m.	Trent	Leeds	52	Distance Chesterfield to Leeds
2	1.45 p.m.	Doncaster	Sheffield	19	
6	12.20 p.m.	Sheffield	Doncaster	19	
3	7.30 p.m.	Masboro'	Chesterfield	$6\frac{1}{4}$	Distance Eckington to Chesterfield
1	2.43 p.m.	Chesterfield	Masboro'	$3\frac{1}{2}$	Bag Chesterfield to Staveley
11	12.20 p.m.	Derby	Manchester	$69\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Derby to Manchester & Millers Dale to [Illegible]
2	1.20 p.m.	Derby	Manchester	$60\frac{1}{2}$	
2	3.40 p.m.	Derby	Manchester	$5\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Millers Dale to Buxton
1	6.55 p.m.	Derby	Buxton	12	Distance Bakewell to Buxton
2	7.0 a.m.	Manchester	Derby	$5\frac{1}{2}$	Bags Buxton to Millers Dale
3	9.50 a.m.	Manchester	Derby	37	Distance Buxton to Derby
11	1.0 p.m.	Manchester	Derby	65	Distance Manchester to Derby & Buxton to Millers Dale
6	9.50 p.m.	Manchester	Derby	$60\frac{1}{2}$	
1	9.10 a.m.	Ripley	Derby	10	
5	8.0 p.m.	Ripley	Derby	10	
7	5.15 a.m. ^g	Derby	Ripley	10	
1	1.35 p.m.	Derby	Ripley	10	
1	1.40 p.m.	Derby	Melbourne	7	
1	3.50 a.m. ^g	Tamworth	Burton	$12\frac{3}{4}$	
7	7.55 a.m.	Birmingham	Derby	$42\frac{1}{4}$	Also at 9.40 (2), 11.30 a.m. (7), 1.20 p.m. (4) and 6.40 p.m. (1).
1	4.5 p.m.	Birmingham	Derby	$9\frac{1}{4}$	Bag Birmingham to Forge Mills
1	4.55 p.m.	Birmingham	Derby	$18\frac{1}{2}$	Bag Birmingham to Tamworth
2	7.0 a.m.	Derby	Birmingham	$42\frac{1}{4}$	Also at 1.10 (2), 1.30 (4), 3.40 (3) & 5.15 p.m. (1)
4	10.20 a.m.	Derby	Birmingham	$31\frac{1}{4}$	Distance Burton to Birmingham
8	2.15 a.m. ^g	Gloucester	Birmingham	$56\frac{1}{2}$	
2	2.30 a.m. ^g	Gloucester	Birmingham	$28\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Gloucester to Worcester
4	6.0 a.m.	Gloucester	Birmingham	$27\frac{3}{4}$	Distance Worcester to Birmingham
7	6.20 a.m.	Gloucester	Birmingham	$27\frac{3}{4}$	Distance Worcester to Birmingham
9	8.0 a.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	$42\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Ashchurch to Birmingham
25	11.0 a.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	$87\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Mangotsfield to Birmingham
3	11.31 a.m.	Barnt Green	Birmingham	12	
4	1.20 p.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	$17\frac{1}{4}$	Distance Bristol to Charfield
2	3.25 p.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	$71\frac{1}{4}$	Bristol to Cheltenham & Worcester to B'ham
1	4.45 p.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	37	Bag Bristol to Gloucester
2	7.45 p.m.	Bristol	Birmingham	$27\frac{1}{2}$	Distance Bristol to Dursley

1	8.40 p.m.	Barnt Green	Birmingham	7	Bag King's Norton to Birmingham
2	9.0 p.m. ^g	Bristol	Birmingham	53½	Bags Gloucester to Birmingham
2	10.0 p.m. ^g	Bristol	Birmingham	37	Distance Bristol to Gloucester
5	6.50 a.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	93¼	Also at 9.5 a.m. (10) and 2.20 p.m. (9)
26	10.0 a.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	95½	Birmingham to Bristol & Coaley to Dursley
8	12.40 p.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	27¾	Distance Birmingham to Worcester
2	1.0 p.m.	Birmingham	King's Norton	7	
3	3.35 p.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	56¼	Bags Birmingham to Gloucester
2	4.50 p.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	28½	Bags Worcester to Gloucester
2	5.25 p.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	10½	Bags Yate to Bristol
2	8.20 p.m. ^g	Birmingham	Bristol	53½	Bags Birmingham (Camp Hill) to Gloucester
19	8.25 p.m.	Birmingham	Bristol	56¼	Under legal notice from Gloucester to Bristol
2	7.10 a.m.	Evesham	Barnt Green	5	Bags Redditch to Birmingham
4	9.50 a.m.	Ashchurch	Birmingham	12½	Distance Alcester to Barnt Green
1	8.15 p.m.	Redditch	Barnt Green	5	
1	9.35 a.m.	Birmingham	Ashchurch	5	Bag Barnt Green to Redditch
3	1.15 p.m.	Barnt Green	Redditch	5	
2	1.55 p.m. ^g	Redditch	Evesham	17	
5	8.30 a.m.	Gt Malvern	Ashchurch	7¼	Distance Upton-on-Severn to Ashchurch
4	11.5 a.m.	Gt Malvern	Ashchurch	14	
4	3.58 p.m.	Ashchurch	Gt Malvern	7¼	Distance Ashchurch to Upton-on-Severn
6	8.35 p.m.	Tewkesbury	Ashchurch	1¾	
2	12.4 p.m.	Ashchurch	Tewkesbury	1¾	Also at 1.25 p.m. (2)
2	9.50 a.m.	Nailsworth	Stonehouse	3	Distance Nailsworth to Dudbridge
2	3.30 p.m.	Stonehouse	Nailsworth	3	Distance Dudbridge to Nailsworth
3	10.50 a.m.	Bath	Mangotsfield	10½	Also at 6.35 p.m. (1)
1	5.35 p.m.	Mangotsfield	Bath	10½	
7	6.50 a.m.	Derby	Trent	7	Distance Derby to Sawley
3	11.35 a.m.	Derby	Leicester	29½	Also at 12.35(18), 3.10 (15) and 6.40 p.m. (5)
2	1.7 p.m.	Derby	Nottingham	8¾	Distance Derby to Trent
3	9.50 a.m.	Leicester	Rugby	7¾	Bags Ullesthorpe to Rugby
1	12.15 p.m.	Leicester	Rugby	20	
2	7.45 p.m.	Leicester	Rugby	14¼	Bags Countesthorpe to Rugby
2	10.10 a.m.	Rugby	Leicester	20	
1	3.50 a.m. ^g	Leicester	Trent	12½	Bag Leicester to Loughborough
1	4.30 a.m. ^g	Leicester	Toton	12½	Bag Leicester to Loughborough
2	6.30 a.m.	Leicester	Derby	29½	Also at 11.12 a.m. (9), 11.25 a.m. (3), 12.21 p.m. (2), 2.27 p.m. (10), 7.21 p.m. (8)
3	8.22 p.m.	Leicester	Derby	17	Bag Loughborough to Derby
3	12.27 p.m.	Trent	Derby	8¾	
3	6.37 p.m.	Trent	Derby	7	Bag Sawley to Derby
4	6.48 p.m.	Trent	Derby	6¼	Bag Draycott to Derby

5	12.30 a.m.	Nottingham	Trent	6 ³ / ₄	Also at 10.20 a.m. (6), 11.35 a.m. (3), 12.15 p.m. (3), 3.15 (2), 6.40 (1) and 11.30 p.m. (5)
1	6.5 a.m.	Nottingham	Trent	3 ¹ / ₄	Bag Nottingham to Beeston
1	5.50 a.m.	Trent	Nottingham	6 ³ / ₄	Also at 7.23 (1), 10.50 a.m. (9), 12.32 p.m. (1), 1.30 (3), 3.0 (2), 3.36 (3), and 7.56 p.m. (1)
1	10.30 a.m.	Mansfield	Nottingham	17	Also at 7.5 p.m. (1)
1	11.35 a.m.	Mansfield	Nottingham	4	Bag Basford to Nottingham
3	5.25 p.m.	Mansfield	Nottingham	9 ¹ / ₄	Distance Linby to Nottingham
1	3.50 p.m. ^g	Mansfield	Sutton	2 ¹ / ₄	
4	7.10 a.m.	Nottingham	Mansfield	9 ¹ / ₄	Bags Nottingham to Linby
3	2.0 p.m.	Nottingham	Mansfield	17	
5	7.0 a.m.	Lincoln	Nottingham	8 ¹ / ₄	Distance Lincoln to Swinderby
7	10.5 a.m.	Lincoln	Nottingham	33	
1	1.15 p.m.	Lincoln	Nottingham	17	Bag Newark to Nottingham
3	3.55 p.m.	Lincoln	Nottingham	7 ¹ / ₂	Distance Lowdham to Nottingham
4	8.0 a.m.	Nottingham	Lincoln	17	Bags Newark to Nottingham
4	11.15 a.m.	Nottingham	Lincoln	33	Also 4.10 p.m. (2)
5	1.57 p.m.	Nottingham	Lincoln	35 ¹ / ₂	Distance Rolleston Junction to Southwell added
3	9.5 a.m.	Chesterfield	Nottingham	16 ¹ / ₂	Distance Langley Mill to Nottingham. Also 5.15 p.m. (5) & 8.45 p.m. (6)
6	2.44 p.m.	Chesterfield	Nottingham	26 ¹ / ₄	Distance Trent to N'ham is in 3.36 p.m. ex Trent
1	6.45 p.m.	Chesterfield	Nottingham	3 ¹ / ₄	Bag Beeston to Nottingham
1	6.15 p.m.	Chesterfield	Trent	26 ¹ / ₄	
4	4.10 a.m. ^g	Nottingham	Langley Mill	16 ¹ / ₂	
3	7.5 a.m.	Nottingham	Chesterfield	9 ¹ / ₂	Bags Nottingham to Sandiacre
4	3.20 p.m.	Nottingham	Chesterfield	16 ¹ / ₂	Distance Nottingham to Langley Mill
6	3.10 p.m.	Trent	Chesterfield	26 ¹ / ₄	Also at 7.59 p.m. (6) & 11.50 a.m. (5)
7	6.25 a.m.	Peterborough	Leicester	22 ³ / ₄	Distance Stamford to Luffenham, Oakham to Whissendine & Frisby to Leicester
9	10.25 a.m.	Peterborough	Leicester	53	
1	12.30 p.m.	Peterborough	Leicester	30 ¹ / ₄	Bag Manton to Leicester
6	4.15 p.m.	Peterborough	Leicester	9 ¹ / ₄	Distance Brooksby to Leicester
8	6.20 a.m.	Leicester	Peterborough	53	Also at 12.50 p.m. (12) & 8.37 p.m. (18)
9	5.50 p.m.	Lynn	Peterborough	39 ¹ / ₂	
3	8.45 a.m.	Peterborough	Lynn	39 ¹ / ₂	
5	11.10 a.m.	Burton-on-Trent	Leicester	30 ¹ / ₂	Also at 6.5 p.m. (5)
4	6.0 a.m.	Leicester	Burton-on-Trent	17 ¹ / ₄	Bags Leicester to Swannington
7	2.22 p.m.?	Leicester	Burton-on-Trent	30 ¹ / ₂	No such train in WTT. Should it be 12.24 p.m.?
1	2.50 p.m.	Leicester	Burton-on-Trent	16	Bag Leicester to Coalville
1	7.22 p.m.	Leicester	Burton-on-Trent	14 ¹ / ₂	Bag Coalville to Burton-on-Trent
16	1.25 a.m.	Birmingham	Nuneaton	20 ¹ / ₂	Night Mail Service between Nuneaton and Leicester paid for specially.
4	10.38 p.m.	Nuneaton	Birmingham		
3	11.20 a.m.	Birmingham	Leicester	40	

3	12.35 p.m.	Leicester	Birmingham	40	Also at 2.55 p.m. (1)
1	2.10 a.m. ^g	Leicester	Kettering	27	
5	3.15 a.m. ^g	Leicester	Wellingborough	34	
9	6.35 a.m.	Leicester	St Pancras	99¼	Also at 12.29 p.m. (9), 1.45 p.m. (15), 4.9 p.m. (9), and 7.34 p.m. (5)
8	9.40 a.m.	Leicester	St Pancras	84¼	Distance Kettering to St. Pancras with Wellingborough to Northampton added.
4	1.50 p.m.	Leicester	St Pancras	95 ³ / ₄	Distance Bedford to St Pancras with Leicester to Northampton added.
1	8.10 p.m.	Leicester	St Pancras	30¼	Bag Luton to St Pancras
9	5.0 p.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	99¼	
1	6.15 a.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	16	Bag Market Harborough to Leicester
5	10.20 a.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	83 ³ / ₄	Distance St Pancras to Market Harborough
10	11.45 a.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	46	Distance Northampton to Leicester
7	3.20 p.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	60	Distance St Pancras to Bedford and Kibworth to Leicester added.
3	5.30 p.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	58¼	Distance St Pancras to Bedford with Sharnbrook to Wellingborough added
8	5.45 p.m.	St Pancras	Leicester	42½	Distance Sharnbrook to Leicester
1	4.14 a.m. ^g	Kettering	Cambridge	9¼	Bag Kettering to Thrapstone
2	7.10 p.m.	Kettering	Cambridge	47 ³ / ₄	
3	6.5 p.m.	Cambridge	Kettering	28¼	Distance Huntingdon to Kettering
1	7.8 p.m.	Bedford	Hitchin	15½	
1	9.55 a.m.	Hitchin	Bedford	6½	Distance Hitchin to Shefford
1	2.50 p.m.	Hitchin	Bedford	9	Distance Shefford to Bedford

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3. POST 11/125 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 625
4. POST 11/122 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 324
5. POST 11/124 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 184
6. POST 11/125 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 555
7. POST 11/124 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 148
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9. POST 11/125 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 3
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13. POST 11/131 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 225
14. POST 11/123 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 552
15. POST 11/128 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 606
16. Ibid. p. 631.
17. Ibid p. 625.
18. POST 11/129 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 262
19. Ibid p. 263.
20. POST 11/13 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 359
21. Ibid p. 388
22. POST 11/129 Railway Letter Copy Books, p. 180
23. POST 30/252 Midland Railway Contract, 1874



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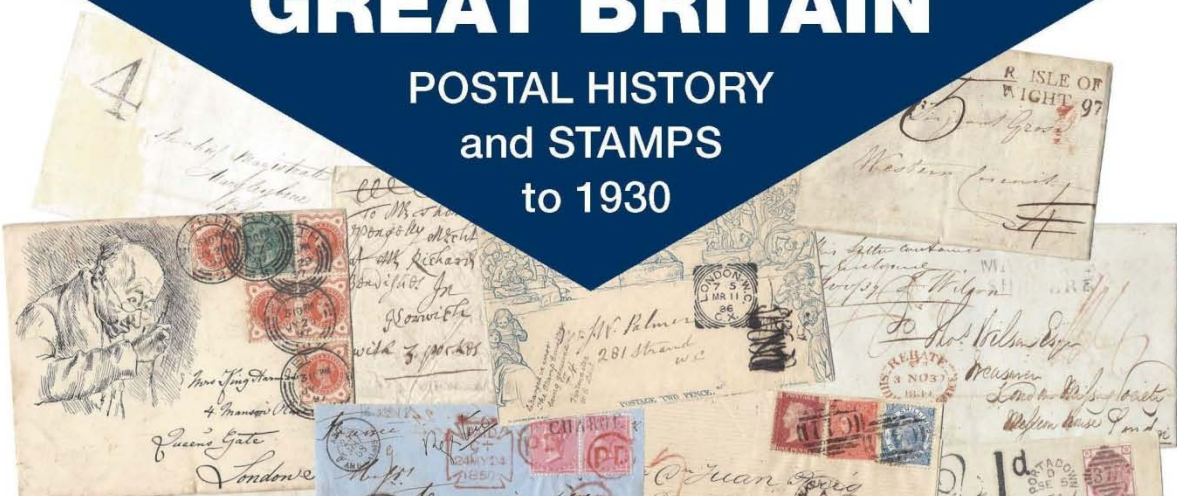


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IS IT GOBBALDS or COBBALDS or GOBALDS or GOBBALDS or GUBBALLS?

by Brian Atkins

As you travel north from Shrewsbury on the A528 towards Wem, just after Albrighton Hall you come to a sharp left turn as the main road turns equally sharply to the right towards Wem. This left turn leads immediately to the small village of Preston Gubbals, note the spelling because this article is all about spelling. In January 1854 an undated circle was issued as PRESTON GOBBALDS or COBBALDS, as you can see from Fig 1 taken from page 20 of



Fig 1

volume 12 of the steel impression books (SIB from now), it is not easy to decide exactly what spelling was used. It looks like COBBALDS but there is a pen mark from the base of the first letter making it difficult to determine whether it is a G or a C. The undated C1 measures 25mm diameter and has not been recorded used. The society's *Undated Circle Marks of the Midland Counties* suggests it may have been returned to the Post Office for recutting as a PRESTON GUBBALLS is recorded in green from 25 JUL 1854 to 10 AUG 1857 and in black on 25 SEP 1855. The 10 AUG 1857 date is contentious as we shall see. The 25 JUL 1854 date, illustrated below, is in my collection and a date of 3 JUN 1856 is in the collection of Guy Bridges, both in green. I do not know who owns the 25 SEP 1855 date. Although the examples are not pristine

there is no doubt that they use the spelling GUBBALLS (Fig 2). The issue of an undated PRESTON GUBBALLS does not appear in the proof books.

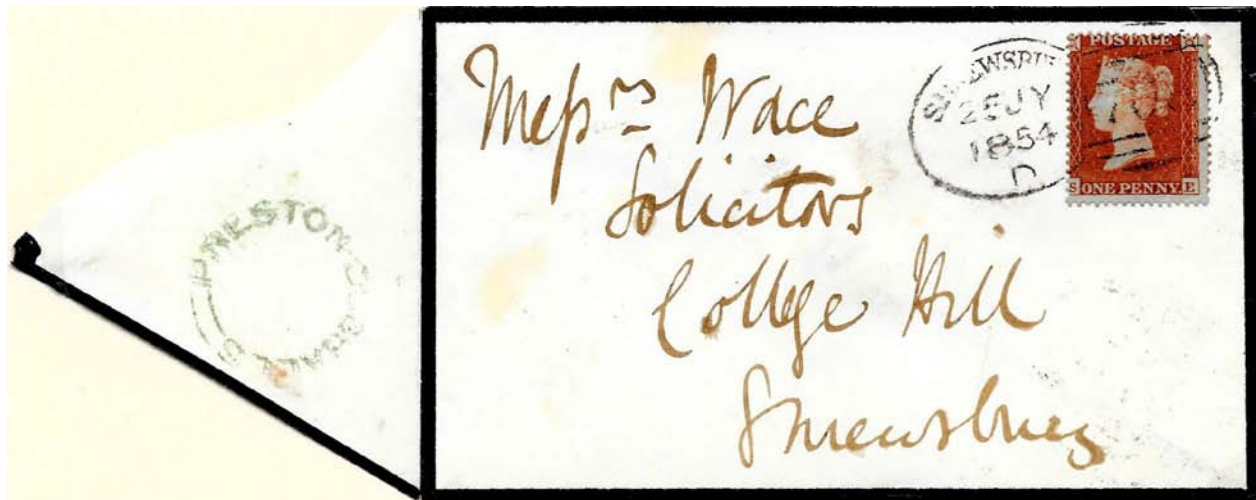


Fig 2, 25 JUL 1854 cover to Shrewsbury showing the PRESTON GUBBALLS in green

As if this wasn't enough, the whole saga gets repeated for a C1* 22mm PRESTON GOBALDS was issued through Shrewsbury on 23 APR 1857 (SIB Vol 13 / Page 216). Once again the society's book suggests it was 'Probably not used'. Wrong (see below), there is a clear GOBALDS (in green-black but not picked up by my scanner) on the

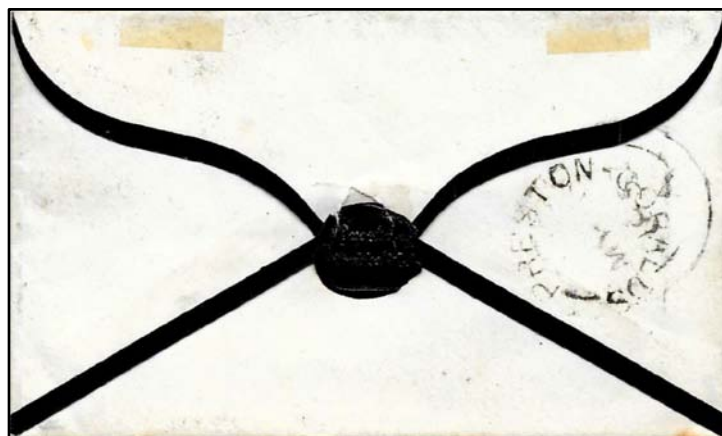


Fig 3, 8 MAY 1857 cover to Rugby showing PRESTON GOBALDS

reverse of this 8 MAY 1857 cover to Rugby; Guy Bridges has an example dated 10 AUG 1857 in green. But the society's book shows a C1* PRESTON GUBBALLS used from 10 AUG 1857 to 1858. The 1858 example may be a PRESTON GUBBALLS (I don't know who has it) but the 10 AUG 1857 certainly isn't. If you recall, the latest date of Fig 1 was also 10 AUG 1857 – different udcs used on the same day? I think not and, considering the above, I'm sure that it is the Fig 1 date that is incorrect. A C1* PRESTON GUBBALLS does not appear in the proof books and may not exist, unless it is the 1858 record. You might think this is the end of the tale. It isn't!

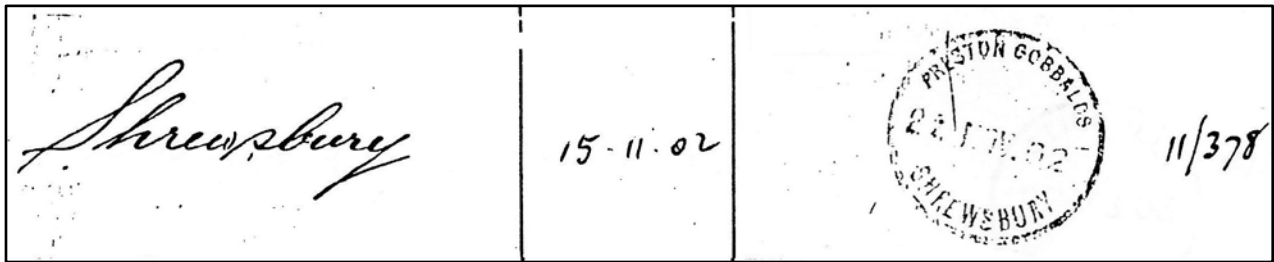


Fig 4, Rubber Impression Book, Volume 11 Page 378

As you see from the above entry in the Rubber Impression Book, a circular rubber date stamp was issued through Shrewsbury as PRESTON GOBBALDS on 15 November 1902. It has not been recorded used but a similar rubber date stamp has been recorded on postcards, as per Fig 5, dated 24 December 1911. A slightly clearer example is also known used on the same day to the same address. All the letters are larger than the 1902 issue, especially the SHREWSBURY but would the 1902 issue spread that much? It is probably a new stamp and GOBBALDS is still the spelling of choice!

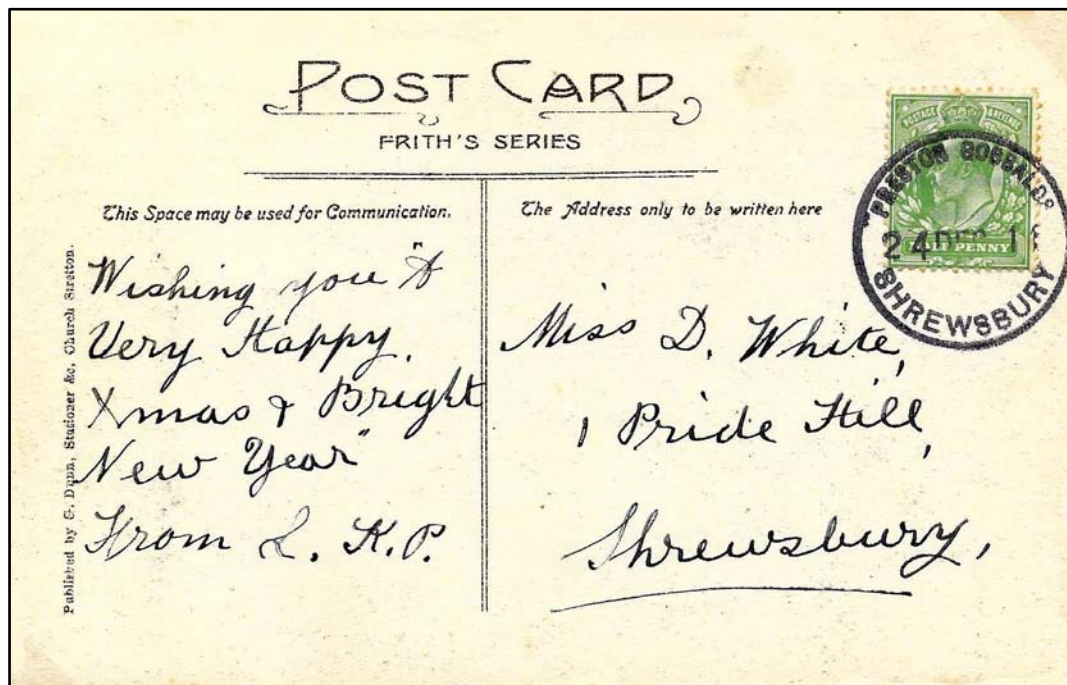


Fig 5, Postcard to Shrewsbury showing the PRESTON GOBBALDS rubber date stamp

Another rubber exists, dated 20 October 1923, with a smaller SHREWSBURY than above but a larger PRESTON, yes you've guessed it, with GOBBALDS. Who knows whether the Post Office was informed of this spelling, but, whether they were or were not, it doesn't appear the spelling was changed during the rubber date stamp era. Perhaps the story has another twist, because a small counter stamp, such as those used on registered postal stationery has not been found. Who would bet against yet another different spelling?

Even Bagshaw in his 1851 Directory of Shropshire isn't sure as he has the heading for the relevant section as PRESTON GUBBALS or GOBALDS. He lists no sub-postmaster or receiver suggesting there was no office there until the arrival of the first undated mark in January 1854. But what of later years? Ken Smith gets in the act by reporting that the Preston Gobbalds (his spelling!) office closed in 1924 and never reopened. Bartholomews Gazetteer of the British Isles, 9th Edition 1943 (thank you Ian Baker) and my 1971 edition of Ordinance Survey sheet 126 both show PRESTON GUBBALS, so let's let the matter rest there!

For Ken Smith's very useful website go to <https://sites.google.com/site/ukpostofficesbycounty/> and follow the links to the listing of county offices.

COVENTRY COURIER SERVICES

by Ian M May

Duncan Campbell-Smith, in his excellent book *Masters of the Post*^[1], gives the title '*Thwarted Ambitions 1987-2002*' to the period to which this article will refer. It would be difficult to do justice to the Post Office's problems prior to and during this period in this short article so interested readers are recommended to consult reference 1. This article will concentrate on one aspect that was causing some concern to the management of the Royal Mail. After the election of the Conservatives led by Thatcher in May 1979 privatisation of many of the nationalised industries had taken place. The Royal Mail had been considered for privatisation in 1984 following the flotation of British Telecom but in view of the public's concern Thatcher vetoed the idea in 1987^[1]. However, Dearing, who was Chairman of the Post Office had "*foreseen in one of his final papers in 1987 that any decision not to go ahead with privatisation 'makes action to reduce the monopoly highly probable'*"^[1]. Following this warning the Government did indeed reduce the letters monopoly to items posted for less than 50p from £1. However, it was not until 31st December 2005 that the letter monopoly was finally abolished.

It was against this background that a number of companies attempted to break the monopoly. One of these companies, Coventry Courier Services, was of enough concern that a paper^[2], dated November 1987, was prepared and presented to the Chairman's Executive Committee of the Post Office. Coventry Courier Services was offering next day delivery in the Coventry area for 10p, the Post Office first and second class rates at that time were 18p and 13p respectively. Coventry Courier Services' customers included the University of Warwick, the Area Health Authority and some large local businesses. Coventry Council had also taken a decision in principle to use the service for 200,000 items per annum. Other companies were also offering a similar service in Coventry and elsewhere.

It would appear that the objectives of the paper were how to deal with the then current problem and in the longer term whether to accept and negotiate changes to the monopoly. The paper lists the main choices to deal with the problem as being:

- To continue with the current policy of scaring off the "predators".
- To protect the monopoly by all means.
- To accept that the monopoly would cease relatively soon and prepare for it.

It was also noted that in the case of Coventry Council possible use of Coventry Courier Services pressure was being put on the Labour-run Council by the Union of Communication Workers not to use them. Coventry Courier Services continued to operate until at least the middle of 1988 as shown by the illustrations below. It can be seen that the "cancellation" is very similar to that used by the Royal Mail. Although there is no obvious indication of the origin of the two items, each envelope has a code, 26-27 and 26-164 respectively on the reverse.

References

- 1 Duncan Campbell-Smith, *Masters of the Post*, the Authorized History of the Royal Mail, Allen Lane. London, 2011
- 2 CEC 66(87), Implications for the Letter Monopoly, November 1987, Post 69/389.



Both cancels are on unaddressed 'window' envelopes, which have been reduced to show only the cancels (Ed)

A COVENTRY "RIOT LETTER"

by Ian M May

The cover shown below would on first sight probably be of little interest to most Postal Historians. Sent from Nuneaton to London, and dated November 8th 1831 the only postal markings are the London receiving hand-stamp of November 9th 1831 and a rate marked of 10d, which I assume is made up of 1d penny post charge for Nuneaton to Coventry and 9d general post charge from Coventry to London but as there are no Nuneaton or Coventry marks it is only an assumption. However, it is the contents that make this an interesting item. It is written by M Flood and addressed to Mr Jacox. A transcript is given below:



Nuneaton Nov 8th 1831

Dear Mr Jacox

I expect when you receive this you will have heard of the disturbance at Coventry and they are today at Nuneaton and expect them to come every minute and set fire to Thomas house and ours and several others they say on account of us buying French goods which they say they are purchasing instead of Making and starving the poor should be glad if you would let Mr Hood know as soon as possible hope you are all well with kind respect from

yours truly M Hood

An excellent full description of the Weavers' Riot of 1831, to which the letter refers to, is given in reference 1, references 2 and 3 give some information, albeit with some slight differences. Coventry, Nuneaton and the surrounding area were reliant on the silk weaving trade. With the end of the Napoleonic wars there was a flood of demobilised labour and the reduction of tariffs had led to an influx of cheaper imported goods from the Continent. In addition there was the start of the replacement of hand looms by steam looms with the associated reduction in the use of skilled labour. Piece rates had not increased for some time and some owners were paying less than the piece rates and using cheap labour for some of the tasks. This had led to significant dissatisfaction and impoverishment of the weavers. Seven hundred weavers met in Coventry on November 7th 1831 to hear speeches about the state of the industry, following which a small delegation was sent to discuss with the owners the re-introduction of the piece rates. This was unsuccessful. The weavers were incensed and then proceeded to Joseph Beck's factory where they destroyed the steam looms and the factory. The Riot Act was read and 14th Light Dragoons and the 7th Hussars stationed in the Coventry Barracks dispersed the crowds. Subsequently seven local men were arrested and tried. Four were dismissed due to lack of evidence. The other three were sentenced to hanging, which was later commuted to deportation. However, it was suspected that the true ring leaders were from out of town.

The manufacturers were concerned about possible future attacks so agreed to the demands of the weavers regarding payment and did not install steam looms, which led to the demise of the weaving trade in Coventry as their competitors embraced automation. As weaving declined industries like watchmaking increased and the weavers found work elsewhere. The riot described above is the event that the letter refers to. As far as I am aware there was no trouble in Nuneaton so Mr Hood's concern that there could be trouble was ill-founded.

- References: 1 <https://www.historiccoventry.co.uk/articles/content.php?pg=1831-riot> consulted 3rd March 2019.
 2 <https://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/article/riots-ribbons-part-1> consulted 3rd March 2019.
 3 McGrory, D., A History of Coventry, Phillimore, 2003.

TWO 10/- LMS PARCEL STAMPS USED AT RUSHDEN

There is no room in this edition for your favourite SAVED FROM A GOAT but in that section on page 23 of MM 202, Chris Jackson provided a copy of a correctly used LMS 10/- parcel stamp on a cover addressed to Liverpool. In response to that piece **Derek Smeathers** has sent a copy of no less than two such 10/- stamps correctly used at Rushden station. Derek writes that he agrees with Chris that the 10/- LMS railway stamp is difficult to find correctly used and he enclosed a copy of the two stamps, which he purchased many years ago used on an old travelling trunk (see illustration below).



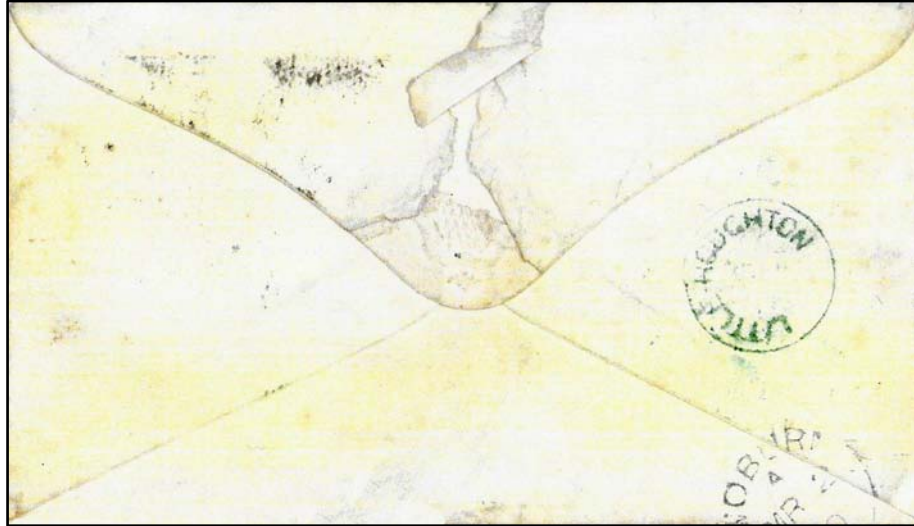
The illustration shows a piece of the wooden trunk, which would have been sent on ahead of a travelling passenger at a charge of £1.1.4d paid by the parcel stamps. The date would be in the late 1920s as there were several other companies' stamps on the trunk from that period, including some used at Irthlingborough (Northants).

Derek writes further that most of the trunk was infected with live woodworm and could not be salvaged but he was able to rescue a piece with the stamps as it was free of worms, so out came the saw and the rest was burnt!

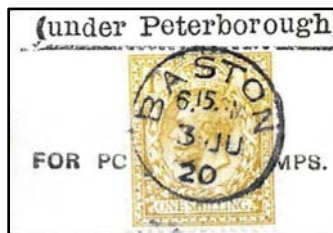
Unfortunately the copy Derek sent had to be 'cut down' to fit the page space, so the above doesn't show the rough edges that Derek's carpentry had left – good job that no little slithery thing had wormed its way into this piece!

SOME NEW FINDS REPORTED BY GWYN HUGHES

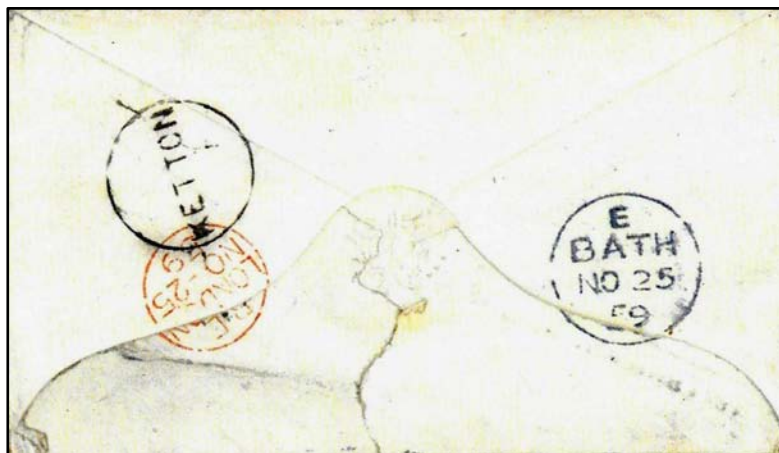
Beginning in Northamptonshire, Gwyn has discovered a previously unrecorded undated D1 of LITTLE HAUGHTON (under Northampton) on a cover dated 2 March 1860. The Little Houghton was issued on 31 March 1858, Steel Impression Book reference 14 / 183. I'm afraid the scan of the photocopy doesn't do the mark any service at all as it is bright green (see scan below).



Continuing with Northamptonshire, Gwyn reports a 3 June 1920 BASTON (under Peterborough) date stamp on a cut down (I would not be allowed to give you Gwyn's scathing comment related to people and scissors) parcel post label. Apparently Baston is in Lincolnshire on the A15 between Market Deeping and Bourne, see copy below.



And finally from Rutland, Gwyn has found a previously unrecorded undated KETTON (under Stamford) on a 25 November 1859 cover to Bath, through London. KETTON was issued as a D4 on 3 June 1859 (SIB 18 / 52); it is a village and civil parish in Rutland, about 8 miles east of Oakham and 3 miles west of Stamford, Lincolnshire.



Gwyn stated that he paid £1.50 for the Ketton cover at a local Northants fair – bargain, enough said!

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