

# MIDLAND MAIL



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



President: Elizabeth Lewis

Chairman:  
Derek Smeathers

Treasurer:  
Elizabeth Lewis

Secretary:  
Eric Lewis

Number 120, June 2001

I would like to thank the Midland Philatelic Federation for honouring me with a Certificate of Recognition. It is something that I shall always treasure. I do also regard it as a measure of the esteem in which this Society is held for the quality of its research and its publications.

I was very fortunate to be able to visit the international philatelic exhibition 'Belgica 2001' which commemorated "500 years of European Posts". While one may question what appears in the inverted commas, there is no doubt that the Belgians arranged a superb exhibition in which postal history featured strongly. There were a number of very high quality exhibits but for me the "star of the show" was James Grimwood-Taylor's "British Postal Reforms and Their Origins - 1458-1864". If this is what James is going to show us at Burton later in the year, then we are in for a real treat. Be sure that you do not miss it.

What really did strike me about 'Belgica 2001' was the fact that the environment was so much more pleasant for the visitor than most exhibitions in this country. There seemed to be so much more space and this was because the exhibition was housed in three large halls of the Heysel Convention Centre. We do have a comparable facility in this country. Although it is not in the capital city it is near two motorways (M6 & M42), and is served by a railway station as well as an international airport. What more could one want?

### NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

Derek Bowstead whose postal history interests are Lichfield and Gloucestershire. He also collects railway postmarks.

David Scott whose postal interest is in the London Receiving Houses and Chief Office handstamps.

Ken Tonkin who collects Shropshire postal history.

### MR J.W. WOODINGS

We regret to announce the death of Mr John Woodings of Barton-under-Needwood. The Society extends its sympathy to Mr Woodings' family.

### THE SOCIETY WINS A TROPHY IN THE MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION COMPETITIONS

We are pleased to announce that Harold Wilson's entry won the Postal History section at this year's event held on 7th May at Sutton Coldfield. Our thanks and congratulations are extended to Harold for representing the Society and coming first out of no fewer than ten entries in the postal history section. His display was entitled 'Early Machine Cancellations'.

### A NOTE FROM THE MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION

At the close of the society delegates' meeting at Sutton Coldfield on 7th May, JOHN SOER was invited into the meeting to be presented with a M.P.F. framed Certificate of Recognition for his efforts in editing our journal - MIDLAND MAIL. These certificates are a recent innovation for dedicated society work over many years and are limited to a maximum of three per year to nominees from any of the forty or so societies in the M.P.F.

Congratulations John, keep up the good work of which your Society is proud.

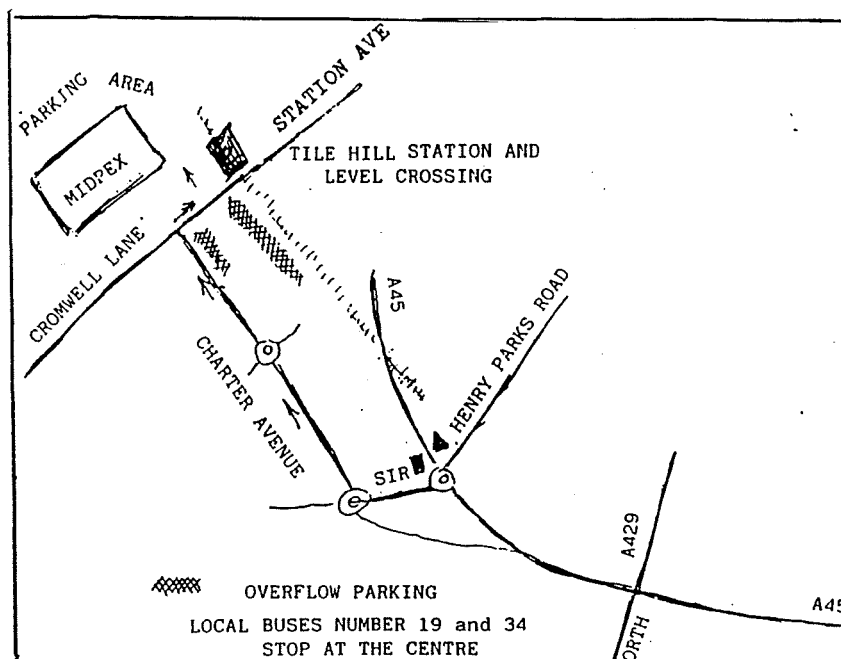
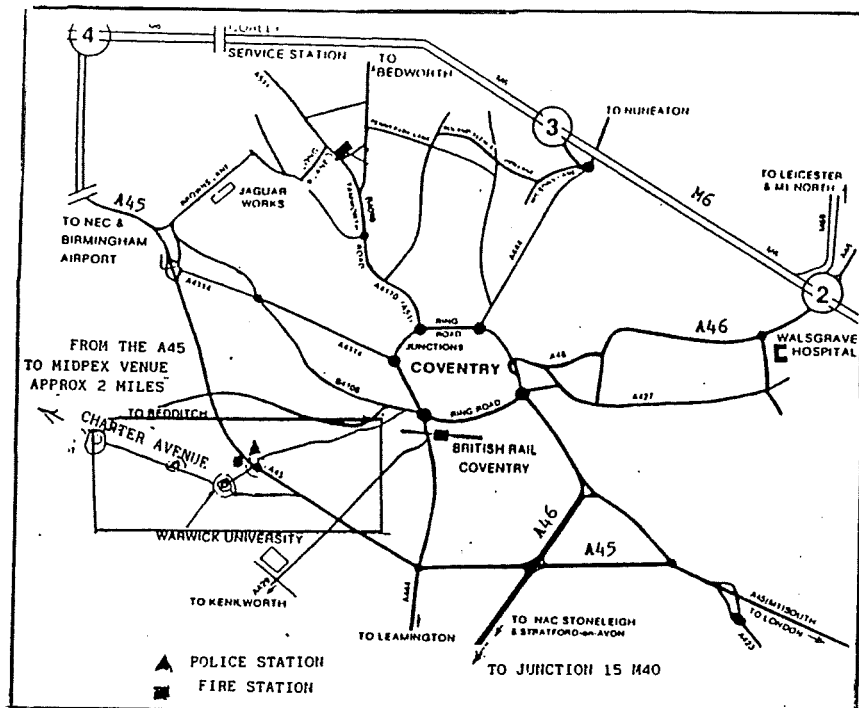
## MIDPEX

Visit our stand at Midpex which will be held at The Midlands Sport Centre for the Disabled in Tile Hill, Coventry on **Saturday 30th June, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** With over forty dealers and sixty specialist societies in attendance, can you afford not to visit this important event organised by the Midland Philatelic Federation in conjunction with the A.B.P.S. Previous events have been outstanding successes as you will know if you have attended in the past. If you have not been before, now is your chance to have a thoroughly enjoyable day out which is as much social as philatelic.

The venue is adjacent to Tile Hill railway station which is served by local trains from Birmingham New Street, Birmingham International or Coventry. Trains run half-hourly throughout the day:

|                     |      |       |           |      |      |
|---------------------|------|-------|-----------|------|------|
| Birmingham N Street | 9.18 | 9.48  | Coventry  | 9.03 | 9.33 |
| Birmingham Inter    | 9.35 | 10.05 | Tile Hill | 9.09 | 9.39 |
| Tile Hill           | 9.45 | 10.15 |           |      |      |

If you are coming by car, one of the best approaches to the area is by way of the A45 and Charter Avenue even if travelling from the Birmingham end of the A45. At the roundabout at Sir Henry Parks Road in the Canley area (look for the fire station), turn off the ring-road towards the west (away from Coventry) and you will find Charter Avenue leading westwards from the next roundabout. At the end of this long road, turn right and the venue is almost immediately on the left.



## THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It is possible (probable?) that it was the annual auction that attracted people to Carr's Lane on 21st April, but, whatever the reason, the room was full for our AGM.

After the usual preliminaries of apologies and the minutes had been dealt with Chris Jackson, who was coming to the end of his three years in the chair, gave his report. He outlined the events of the past year of which the highlight, without doubt, was John Bohn's display at Burton-on-Trent. Also of note were Eric Lewis's display of Social Philately and the appearance of the postmaster of Stourbridge at the October meeting. Chris commented that although the Society has about one hundred members of whom about sixty live in the Midlands, he has only met about one third of the membership. Your committee would welcome advice on what is needed to get more members to attend. Chris thanked the other officers of the Society for their efforts and finished by saying that he had thoroughly enjoyed being our Chairman for three years.

Our Treasurer, Elizabeth Lewis, reported that our income for the year had increased because of greater income from subscriptions and the auction commission. The latter was not likely to be repeated since last year's auction had contained a considerable number of higher value items. The cost of room hire had increased as the charges at Carr's Lane had gone up and the committee had decided to use a larger room at Burton-on-Trent. This had proved so popular that the decision had been taken, if possible, to hire the same room in future years. However, there was an excess of income over expenditure of £471. The accounts were accepted by the meeting. Elizabeth then proposed that in view of the healthy state of the finances the subscription should remain unchanged. This was accepted without dissent.

Eric Lewis, our Secretary, outlined the intended programme for next season. The dates following are provisional with the exception of those in September and December: 15th September - joint meeting with the Lancs & Cheshire Society at Burton-on-Trent; 20th October - Derbyshire Postal History; 17th November - members' display at Warwick; 8th December - 'British Postal Reforms' displayed by James Grimwood-Taylor at Burton-on-Trent; 12th January 2002 - Northants Postal History; 9th February members' displays; 9th March Shropshire Postal History; 20th April - AGM and Auction.

The editor of Midland Mail said that, as usual, five editions had been produced in the past year which had seen the series on the Surveyors' Journals come to an end. So, he was in urgent need of material as he had not been able to get to Archives as often as he would like to do the necessary research for articles he has in mind. He thanked Eric and Elizabeth for getting Midland Mail printed and posted. It is a time consuming task putting nearly one hundred copies into envelopes. Finally, he thanked all those who had contributed to Midland Mail in any way and announced that the winner of the Jon Baker trophy was Bryan Jones.

The Co-ordinating Editor, John Calladine, reported that it had been a quiet year. Virtually all the 'Local Posts' books had been sold; only three copies of the 1770 map were left and there were very few of the other publications in stock.

Tom Poynton outlined the activities of the MPF and the ABPS. The Autumn Convention of the former will be held at Redditch. Next year, the conventions will be held at Loughborough and Solihull. Tom then drew attention to Chester 2002 and mentioned the international competition which had been held at Spring Stampex. [I thoroughly enjoyed the considerable time that I spent looking at the various exhibits. What a pity, though, that did were not placed on the 'Village Green' instead of being located upstairs where you had to go out of your way to find them.]

We then came to the election of a new chairman. Derek Smeathers was proposed by Chris Beaver, seconded by John Calladine, and duly elected. Derek thanked the members and then said what an excellent job Chris Jackson had done over the past three years. The warmth of the applause showed that those present agreed with this.

All of the other officers and county editors were re-elected en bloc, though the editor of Midland Mail did say that if anyone wanted the post he would be willing to stand aside. There were no takers for this very generous offer! David Hardwick was re-elected as Accounts Examiner.

John Calladine then gave an account of progress on our latest project on mail routes and mileage marks. Although it had originally been intended that this should cover the period in which mileage marks were used, it had extended to a discussion of the mail routes to London in the period 1784 - 1840. The scripts for the majority of the counties are well advanced. However, John appealed for information on any mileage marks that members have in their collections. In particular he asked for copies of good strikes as many of those available so far, if at all, were poor. No date of publication has yet been fixed. [So if you have not yet notified John or the appropriate County Editor of any mileage marks in your possession please do so as soon as possible. Let us all do our best to make this publication one of which the Society can be proud.]

The only other business was a mention of a possible location for a joint meeting with the Somerset & Dorset Society in September 2002.

## THE ANNUAL AUCTION

A list of realisations is given below.

|     |        |     |       |     |       |     |       |     |       |
|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| A   | 2.00   | B   | 4.00  | C   | 6.50  | D   | 5.50  | E   | 5.25  |
| F   | 8.00   | G   | 22.00 | H   | 14.00 | J   | 2.50  | K   | -     |
| L   | 5.00   | M   | 2.00  | N   | -     | O   | 7.00  | P   | -     |
| Q   | -      | R   | -     | S   | -     | T   | 7.00  | U   | 1.00  |
| V   | 1.00   | W   | 1.00  | X   | 1.00  | Y   | 1.00  | Z   | 1.00  |
| 1   | 3.25   | 2   | 32.00 | 3   | 34.00 | 4   | -     | 5   | -     |
| 6   | 4.00   | 7   | -     | 8   | 3.50  | 9   | 5.50  | 10  | 4.00  |
| 11  | 7.00   | 12  | 9.00  | 13  | 8.00  | 14  | 6.50  | 15  | 7.50  |
| 16  | 18.00  | 17  | -     | 18  | 1.25  | 19  | 3.50  | 20  | 6.00  |
| 21  | -      | 22  | 2.00  | 23  | 5.50  | 24  | 11.00 | 25  | -     |
| 26  | 7.00   | 27  | -     | 28  | 2.50  | 29  | 20.00 | 30  | -     |
| 31  | 5.50   | 32  | 13.00 | 33  | 12.00 | 34  | 7.00  | 35  | 6.00  |
| 36  | 17.00  | 37  | 6.50  | 38  | 3.50  | 39  | 19.00 | 40  | 16.00 |
| 41  | 11.00  | 42  | 4.00  | 43  | 8.00  | 44  | 6.50  | 45  | 10.00 |
| 46  | 2.25   | 47  | 2.75  | 48  | 2.00  | 49  | 5.500 | 50  | 2.75  |
| 51  | 2.75   | 52  | 1.00  | 53  | 1.25  | 54  | 4.50  | 55  | 3.75  |
| 56  | 5.50   | 57  | 7.50  | 58  | 12.00 | 59  | 2.00  | 60  | 11.00 |
| 61  | 20.00  | 62  | 10.00 | 63  | 2.00  | 64  | 2.00  | 65  | 14.00 |
| 66  | 6.00   | 67  | 5.00  | 68  | 14.00 | 69  | 19.00 | 70  | 14.00 |
| 71  | 3.00   | 72  | 4.75  | 73  | -     | 74  | -     | 75  | -     |
| 76  | 14.00  | 77  | 7.00  | 78  | 9.00  | 79  | 5.50  | 80  | 13.00 |
| 81  | 5.00   | 82  | 11.00 | 83  | 9.00  | 84  | 3.75  | 85  | 28.00 |
| 86  | -      | 87  | 1.75  | 88  | 11.00 | 89  | 15.00 | 90  | 7.00  |
| 91  | 5.50   | 92  | 12.00 | 93  | 9.00  | 94  | 24.00 | 95  | 1.00  |
| 96  | 18.00  | 97  | 19.00 | 98  | 9.00  | 99  | 4.50  | 100 | 11.00 |
| 101 | 11.00  | 102 | 6.50  | 103 | 9.50  | 104 | 1.75  | 105 | 4.50  |
| 106 | 1.25   | 107 | 20.00 | 108 | 15.00 | 109 | 32.00 | 110 | 3.75  |
| 111 | 3.75   | 112 | -     | 113 | 3.75  | 114 | 19.00 | 115 | 9.00  |
| 116 | 9.00   | 117 | -     | 118 | -     | 119 | 9.50  | 120 | 6.00  |
| 121 | 9.50   | 122 | -     | 123 | -     | 124 | 6.50  | 125 | 10.00 |
| 126 | -      | 127 | 7.50  | 128 | 14.00 | 129 | 19.00 | 130 | 5.00  |
| 131 | -      | 132 | 5.00  | 133 | 7.50  | 134 | 5.00  | 135 | 6.50  |
| 136 | 160.00 | 137 | 24.00 | 138 | 2.75  | 139 | 5.00  | 140 | 7.00  |
| 141 | 14.00  | 142 | 16.00 | 143 | 13.00 | 144 | 7.00  | 145 | 12.00 |
| 146 | 44.00  | 147 | 30.00 | 148 | 15.00 | 149 | 19.00 | 150 | 5.50  |
| 151 | 16.00  | 152 | 4.50  | 153 | -     | 154 | 28.00 | 155 | 9.00  |
| 156 | 7.50   | 157 | 7.50  | 158 | 4.25  | 159 | 22.00 | 160 | 6.50  |
| 161 | -      | 162 | 8.00  | 163 | 4.75  | 164 | 3.75  | 165 | -     |
| 166 | 16.00  | 167 | 7.50  | 168 | 32.00 | 169 | 9.00  | 170 | 11.00 |
| 171 | 11.00  | 172 | 7.50  | 173 | 38.00 | 174 | 14.00 | 175 | 12.00 |
| 176 | 10.00  | 177 | 9.50  | 178 | 13.00 | 179 | 14.00 | 180 | 3.75  |
| 181 | 12.00  | 182 | -     | 183 | 1.75  | 184 | -     | 185 | 3.25  |
| 186 | 2.50   | 187 | 4.00  | 188 | 1.75  | 189 | 16.00 | 190 | 7.50  |
| 191 | 22.00  | 192 | -     | 193 | 1.50  | 194 | 3.25  | 195 | 70.00 |
| 196 | 115.00 | 197 | 30.00 | 198 | 17.00 | 199 | 6.50  | 200 | 17.00 |
| 201 | 7.50   | 202 | 22.00 | 203 | 8.50  | 204 | 52.00 | 205 | 6.00  |
| 206 | 3.75   | 207 | 11.00 | 208 | 11.00 | 209 | 11.00 | 210 | 10.00 |
| 211 | 13.00  | 212 | 26.00 | 213 | 11.00 | 214 | 17.00 | 215 | -     |
| 216 | 3.25   | 217 | 36.00 | 218 | -     | 219 | 3.50  | 220 | 14.00 |
| 221 | 3.75   | 222 | 12.00 | 223 | 5.50  | 224 | 60.00 | 225 | 20.00 |

Our thanks are due to Chris Jackson, Elizabeth Lewis and Eric Lewis for handling the auction in such an exemplary and efficient manner. Also, thanks to Sharon for the good humoured way in which the lots were distributed to those in the room. We have a team here that is the equal of anything to be found in the major auction houses. Finally, the work that Elizabeth and Eric put into producing and distributing such a good catalogue must be acknowledged. Lot H should have been in the main part of the auction not amongst the lots sold for the funds of the Society.

## SOCIETY OF THE MONTH

Our Society was featured in the January edition of the Stamp Magazine as 'Society of the Month'. Unfortunately some of our members missed this and have expressed a wish to see the item. So, it is reproduced below but enlarged slightly.

### SOCIETY OF THE MONTH

#### Midland (GB) Postal History Society

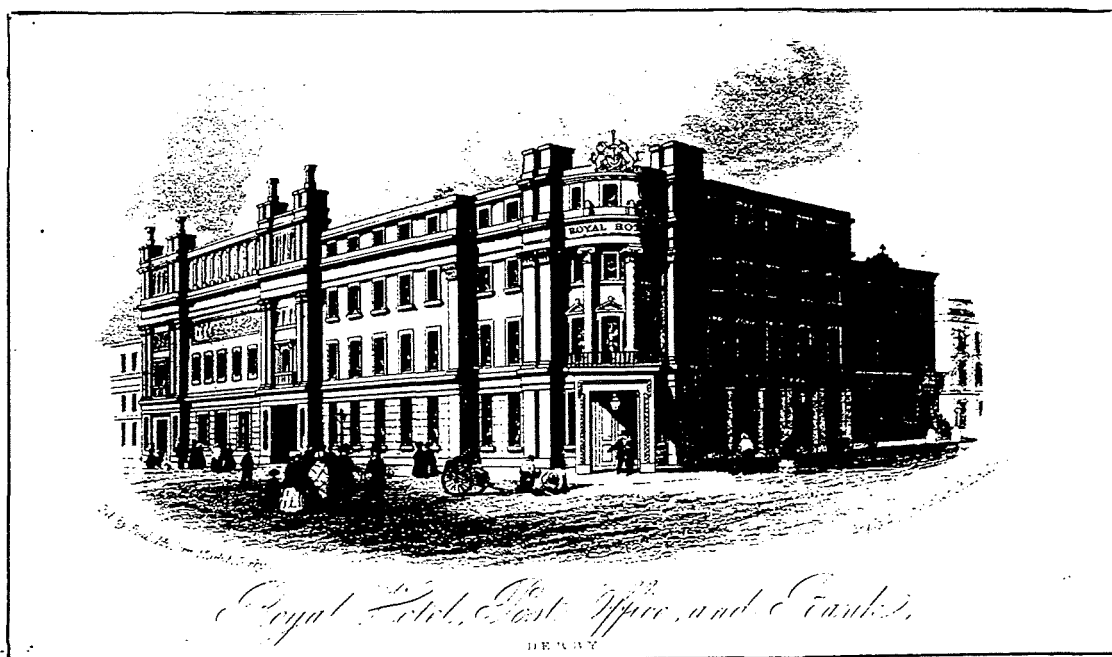
This society has just held a special lunch to celebrate its 25th anniversary. It was originally set up in 1975 and its prime motivation is to promote the study of British postal history. However it has quite a local slant and concentrates on the counties of Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the city of Birmingham. It also cunningly manages to arrange its December meetings at the Bass Museum in Burton-on-Trent (I wonder why!). Usually it meets monthly between September and April, mainly in Birmingham.

Five times a year it publishes the journal Midland Mail which features plenty of articles on GB postal history. The society has also published four books — including Local Posts of the Midland Counties, The Undated Circular Marks of the Midland Counties and The Royal Mail in Leicestershire and Rutland — some of which have won awards at Stampex. In fact back in 1996 the society won the prestigious Rowland Hill Award for research. The AGM is in April every year and it is held in conjunction with a popular annual auction through which members can buy and sell material. If you fancy finding out more contact Secretary Eric Lewis on 0121 429 1222.

#### MIDLAND (G.B.) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

### MORE ILLUSTRATED NOTEPAPER

I am very much indebted to Harold Wilson for sending the piece of illustrated notepaper which shows the Royal Hotel, Post Office and Bank at Derby. The Post Office opened on 30th November 1839 and was replaced by a new office which opened on 1st December 1870.



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## TROUBLED TIMES IN THE BIRMINGHAM POST OFFICE

A number of reports in Post 40 in Post Archives show that the years 1828 and 1829 saw a number of unfortunate incidents in the Birmingham Post Office. There appears to have been a certain amount of dissatisfaction felt with the way the office was run, though it is probable that much of this was stirred up by disgruntled ex-clerks.

Towards the end of 1828, the chief clerk, a Mr Husts, was dismissed for opening and reading a letter addressed to a Mr Horden, a former clerk in the office. In his appeal against the sacking Mr Husts said that he had worked for the Post Office for over forty-four years, having been brought to this country from his native Alsace by his uncle, the late postmaster, Mr Gottwaltz. Mr Husts claimed that the seal had already been broken. But, Mr Churchill pointed out that he had still had to unfold the letter to read it. Mr Husts also said that Mr Horden had not made any complaint but the matter had been reported by another of the clerks, Mr Bird, in order to get him dismissed so that he (Mr Bird) could have the position of chief clerk.

Mr Churchill was not prepared to accept this and mentioned Mr Husts' "determined opposition" to the orders which he had introduced for the benefit of the public, and which by his example he had encouraged in the other clerks. Mr Husts continued to agitate and in November 1829 Freeling commented that attempts being made "to dispossess the respectable postmistress of her Office" could be attributed to "the evil spirit of this very man and another Clerk who was dismissed from the office at the same time..."

Then, at the very start of 1829 a letter sent from Dublin to Birmingham and containing £581 disappeared. Its loss was never explained but considerable suspicion fell on the Birmingham office, especially as although the letter had been posted in Dublin on 4th January, one of the bills was negotiated in Dover four days later.

More trouble soon followed for on 16th January the postmistress, Miss Gottwaltz, wrote to Freeling:

*"I should not thus intrude upon your time had I not been informed that a complaint is to be laid before you respecting my having dismissed my junior clerk for his insolence in the office & other impropriety of conduct, the true particulars of which I beg you will permit me to lay before you, for I believe they must have been misrepresented by the young man to his friends, or they would not have deemed it necessary to apply to you on the subject.*

*"The young man, Heathcote, who is very respectably connected, his uncle being Member for Coventry, was taken into my Office about six months ago, & certainly during the whole time he has been with me I have had reason to be extremely dissatisfied with his conduct which has been such that I have, more than once, been obliged to threaten him with suspension, or dismissal, either for being out all night when an inmate of my house, - for being absent without leave, - negligence in the Office, or for insolence to the Senior Clerk. Such conduct, you must be well aware, could not be permitted with impunity in an Office where there has been already so much irregularity & insubordination among the Clerks. The young man appeared to have remained in the Office entirely against his inclination, his friends preventing him resigning, his uncle having declared, that if he did so, he would not interest himself for him. This feeling of dissatisfaction in the young man may, in some measure, account for his bad conduct. Indeed, he has lately been heard to declare openly that he would not remain in his situation a month longer, which, in fact, may have been the cause of the unwillingness which he evinced to obey orders & of the insolence of his manner & language to the Senior Clerk, upon which I have thought it highly necessary to dismiss him ..."*

Heathcote was not the only clerk to be dismissed. In March 1829, Freeling wrote that so much suspicion was attached to the office in Birmingham that all the clerks but one (Mr Bird) had been dismissed. As can be imagined the inexperience of the replacements caused problems despite Mr Churchill being engaged there "Night and Morning" for many days. On 27th February, the postmaster of Bristol reported that in the bag from Birmingham received that morning were 1200 to 1400 letters and newspapers of which 204 were missent items, being addressed to the North of England, Scotland and the North of Ireland. Among the Irish items were many that had been sent from Bath and Bristol on 24th. Also, the bag instead of being tied close to the letters to prevent the bundles becoming loose was tied close to the mouth and was half open. The letters, with the exception of three bundles, were "all in a mess". Mr Churchill explained that a large bundle for Manchester had been put into the Bristol bag "by accident". He added that the work of the office had been carried with only half the usual complement of clerks and of necessity some of the important parts of the duty had been carried out by young and inexperienced employees. However, a full number was now employed and from "a steady and anxious desire on their part" he was sure matters would improve.

His rebuttal of a complaint, made at about the same time, about the lateness of the deliveries in the Mount Street area shows how the collecting of postage slowed down a letter carrier. Before the letter carrier reached Mount Street he had to deliver the letters in twelve streets, a task which took about two hours.

Finally, Mr Churchill commented that while many errors had been made in the Birmingham office, some of the complaints originated from prejudicial comments made by one of the sacked clerks.

Despite Mr Churchill's optimism, a Mr Homer of 30 Colemore Row, complained about a number of matters in March. Mr Homer said that while he did not want to report anything which might imply mismanagement on the part of Miss Gottwaltz his thirty-three years in business and the opinions of his travellers indicated that Birmingham "is deemed to be the worst conducted large office in England." He enclosed a report from his clerk:

*"I was at the post office this morning at five minutes past eight o'clock when I rapped repeatedly at the window knocker but was not answered. Several other persons were there also and not a letter was given out from the time of my arriving there until I left at twenty five minutes past eight... A man was waiting with a letter for the Excise office Walsall and though he shewed it to the clerk at the large window whilst I remained it was not received into the office. Mr Cooper was there waiting with papers ... and not being able to wait longer he consigned them to the care of the Sutton postman to give in when the window was open for receiving. They were directed for Tipton, Stourbridge etc.*

*"At Forty minutes past Eight ... I proceeded immediately to the office and waited until five minutes past nine and I could not before that time obtain the letters, nor any other person that was there waiting."*

Mr Churchill commented that not only was this positively contradicted by the two window clerks, but it was the practice to deliver letters until 8.20 a.m., which was within ten minutes of the dispatch of the Holyhead mail, immediately after which the mails for Stourport and Walsall as well as the footposts to Oldbury and Halesowen were made up. Then the London letters were sorted for the town delivery so it was impossible for the window to be opened again for general delivery until 8.50 a.m.

He added that the office opened at 7.30 a.m. for the delivery of the letters brought by the mailcoaches from Bristol (5.30 a.m.) and Liverpool (6.30 a.m.) and remained open until 8.20 p.m. - twenty minutes after the arrival of the London mail. Consequently, many people calling at the office between 8 and 8.20 supposed that the London letters were being delivered when in fact they were not even sorted.

Therefore, Mr Churchill said, it was imperative that on the arrival of the London mail at 8.03 a.m. the window must be closed for delivery during the sorting of the London letters and the making up and dispatching the mails and footposts at 8.35 and 8.40. It would then open again at 8.50 a.m., so preventing any delays to the sorting. He proposed to fix to the office window a notice detailing the arrivals and deliveries. [This is shown on the next page.]

Mr Woodcock ended:

*"I must however observe that from the exertions which are now making by some few individuals to prejudice the Public against the Birmingham Post Office, it is very probable complaints may be made against the closing of the delivery window at 8 a.m. ..."*

The problems with the clerks continued for in June Freeling received a letter which was highly critical of the Birmingham office. Mr Churchill said that the letter was certainly from Thomas Walker, the junior clerk at Birmingham, and was written with the aim of embarrassing the postmistress as he had received notice to leave his job. Mr Churchill added that not only had Walker become friendly with a number of soldiers quartered in the town and more than once had come to the office in "an intoxicated state", he had been insubordinate. Besides this, Walker was "so excessively stupid" that Mr Churchill felt that it was his duty to tell the postmistress to dismiss him.

The report ended with details of the staff in the office. There were six clerks and twelve letter carriers. Eleven of the latter delivered throughout their districts twice a day. The services of the twelfth were said to be indispensable as he was "fully employed in the office assisting in stamping the letters, delivering any which came late and generally making himself useful."

In September 1829, an incident took place which Freeling described as "one of the most serious mistakes which I can remember to have occurred in our business." Mr Bird, the chief clerk at Birmingham, reported to Freeling on 20th September that on dispatching the Holyhead and Stourport mails at 8.35 a.m., the Stourbridge bag (including those for Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport) had been given to the Holyhead guard while the Birmingham & Dublin bag had been given to the Stourport guard. The error had remained undetected until the return of the bag from Stourbridge. While the letters to Dublin were delayed only one day, those to Stourbridge were delayed four days. There is a tone of weary resignation in Mr Churchill's accompanying report. Does anyone have a letter of 1829 addressed to Dublin but endorsed "Missent to Stourbridge"

[Refs: Post 40/870/1828, 40/947/1828 both in 40/908/1829, 40/992/1828, 40/74/1829, 40/234/1829, 40/286/1829, 40/786/1829]

# Post Office Delivery Lane.

| Arrival of Mails.          | Delivered.                                                                                                          |                                             |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Bristol<br>5.30 AM         | at Post Office Window<br>from 7 till 8 AM.                                                                          | First Delivery by Letter Carriers at 9 AM.  |
| Liverpool<br>6.30 AM       |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| London<br>8.3 AM           |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| London (City)<br>8.15 AM   |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Manchester<br>9. - AM      | Letters by these mails<br>are ready for delivery<br>at the P.O. Window, 15 min.<br>after their respective arrivals. | Second Delivery by Letter Carriers at 6 PM. |
| Warwick<br>10.27 AM        |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Stratford Hill<br>11. - AM |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Sheffield<br>11.10 PM      |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Holyhead<br>11.57 PM       | Window-opens for<br>delivery at 6 PM.<br>and continues<br>open until 9 PM.                                          | Window-delivery 7.30 PM.                    |
| Harrogate<br>5. -          |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Walsall<br>5.20 -          |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Stourport<br>5.26 -        |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Oldbury & Walsby<br>5.15 - |                                                                                                                     | Window-delivery 7.30 PM.                    |
| Hales Owen<br>5.15 -       |                                                                                                                     |                                             |
| Manchester<br>7.10 -       |                                                                                                                     |                                             |

## MORE ON JOHN STRONG, POSTMASTER OF BINGHAM

When Mr Karstadt proposed in 1836 that Bingham should be put "under official regulation", he reported to Colonel Maberly that "we have no Establishment there, the person who has charge of the letters being merely a private Receiver". Consequently, Maberly thought that all that was required was to fix a suitable salary and an allowance for a letter carrier, and that the party concerned would be fortunate to obtain the official appointment on those terms.

However, when Mr Strong wrote, in a letter reproduced below, claiming that he had been appointed as sub-deputy thirty years before, a search of the books in London revealed that not only was this so but he had been appointed again in 1816 when a vacancy had been expected.

Bingham, Nov<sup>r</sup> 12 1836. 50

My Lords,

I hope your Lordship will not think it presumption in me addressing you, upon the alteration that is about to take place, in the conducting of the Post-Office, now under my superintendence; from the interview which I have had with Mr. H. the Surveyor of the district, I am apprehensive it will be attended with a very serious disadvantage to myself. Something of the kind was contemplated in the year 1823, and I doubt not would have been adopted but for the explanation and petition from myself to the Post-Master-General, a Regulation then took place, which has given universal satisfaction to the neighbouring Gentlemen and public, with one exception only, which took place last week; a litigious character of the name of Wilson, a common bricklayer, who had lately opened a Beer-shop at the outskirts of the Town, and who is held in very low estimation, has taken upon himself to make a complaint to the General Office respecting the charge of a penny made by me, for the delivery of his Newspaper, according to my regulations; which received the sanction of the Post-Master-General and Sir Francis Trevelyan, and last week were forwarded for the inspection of Lord Al. From the success of my former petition I am induced to appeal to your Lordship upon the subject. It is now more than thirty years since I received the appointment, and I trust my conduct has met with the approbation of the Public. I have had a family of thirteen children which I have brought up, and they are now all married except three, and are now in a creditable situation in life; I formerly was a Plumber, Spirit, and Glover Merchant, businesses which I relinquished in favour of my children trusting to the emoluments derived from the Post Office, together with what I obtained from the tuition of a few Boys placed under my charge, and have hitherto from these sources had sufficient to maintain my wife and one daughter in a respectable manner. The emoluments of the Office are upon an average about £70 p annum, my School about £30 - should the alteration take place, it will be attended with very great distress to myself, being nearly 72 years of age, it is presumed my time cannot be here long. Such being a true statement of facts, which the Surveyor Mr. H. is well acquainted with, and I flatter myself will be corroborated by some other Gentlemen who have very kindly promised me their assistance I hope will induce your Lordship's kind interference in my favour, to prevent my grey hairs sinking into the grave in distress; which will ensure my everlasting gratitude.

I am, Your Lordship's,  
most obedient servant,

John Strong

Incidentally, the letter carried a good strike of the unusual date stamp used at Bingham.



Then, in a letter dated 29th December it appears that Mr Strong sought the support of William IV or some other member of the Royal Family for the letter is headed "Your Royal Highness". In the letter Mr Strong said that a number of the local nobility had written to Colonel Maberly and Lord Lichfield on his behalf but to no effect. He went on to say "I am an Old Mason and have had the honour of holding all the Offices belonging to the Institution and am at this time in compliment to my age being 72 holding the Office of P.G.J.W. for Nottinghamshire as a reward for my past services ..."

This obviously had some effect for on 17th January, Mr Strong wrote a letter headed "Hon<sup>d</sup> Sir & Brother" (presumably to a secretary to the King) in which he sent his thanks for a letter received that morning saying that H.R.H had interceded on his behalf and enclosing a communication from Lord Lichfield. The letter went on:

*"I apprehend from the letter of the private Secretary of His Lordship the Postmaster General that there must have been some misapprehension respecting my 'obtaining the Letters from the Post Town without the intervention of the Office' and my not being recognized by the Department and received no Salary. Lord Lichfield considering this to be a very irregular management directed that Bingham should be made a Sub Office to Newark, Nottingham and Grantham having official bags with each place. Then afterwards it says 'Mr Strong was formerly remunerated by 2<sup>d</sup> each letter he delivered.' I am afraid this mistake has operated against me as Col. Maberly having only received his appointment recently may not be properly acquainted with the circumstance of my having regularly received the appointment of Sub Deputy from the General Office thirty years ago, bags having come regularly from Newark and Nottingham all the time and from Grantham since the alteration took place. I never rec<sup>d</sup> more than 1<sup>d</sup> each letter for the delivery tho' it is stated 2<sup>d</sup> in Mr Stephen's letter. I have taken the liberty of sending you a card of the regulations that were entered into in 1823 [See Local Posts Book p 210.] with the consent and approbation of G Karstadt Esq. the Surveyor of the District who was present with the Magistrates, and have had regularly Weekly Bills and a Monthly Voucher to sign. ..."*

In his report to the P.M.G., Colonel Maberly said that Mr Strong had never received a salary, but had been paid for his services by a charge for the delivery of the letters. This Mr Karstadt had confirmed raised over £70 p.a. Maberly felt that Mr Strong had, like other sub-deputies in a similar situation, a right to compensation for the loss he would sustain by the establishment of an official post at Bingham. The salary and allowance for a letter carrier amounted to a little over £39 p.a., resulting in a loss to Mr Strong of about £30 p.a. Thus, Maberly felt that it was right to give as compensation £20 p.a. while Mr Strong continued in office.

[Ref: Post 40/45/1827]

## **SHAW'S BUNTINGFORD AUCTION**

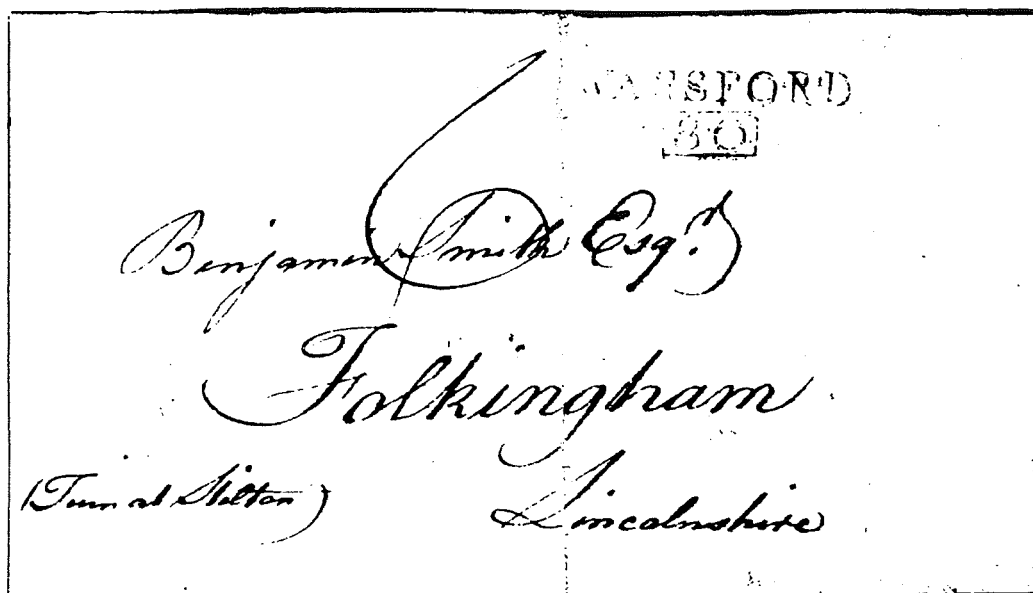
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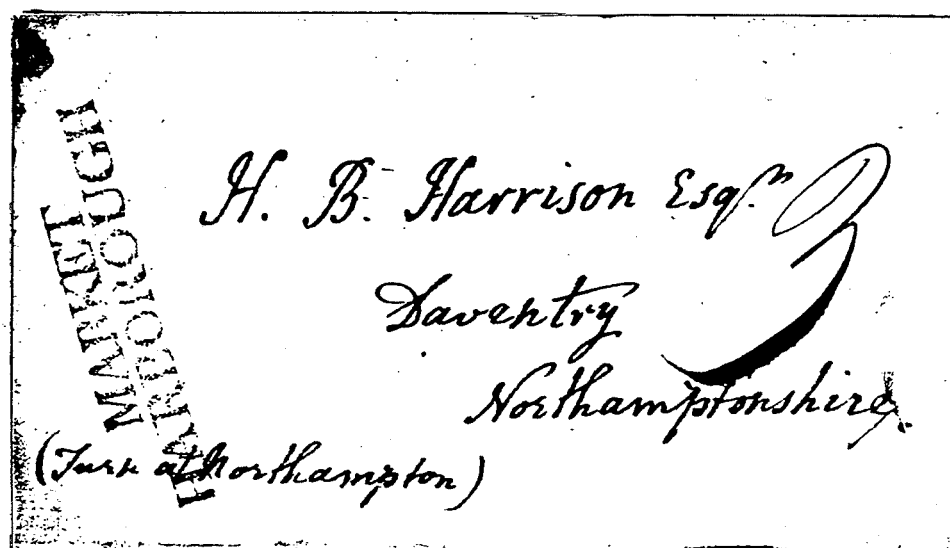
## TURN AT

My thanks to Derek Smeathers for sending a copy of a letters sent from Wansford to Folkingham on 1st February 1805 and is marked "Turn at Stilton". Whether the letter was carried to Stilton by the Edinburgh mailcoach is not certain, but at Stilton it would join the Barton-upon-Humber mailcoach for carriage to Folkingham.



At the date of this letter, the 6d charge was for over 50 up to 80 miles, but the distance from Wansford to Folkingham via Stilton was 43 miles. In March, the new rate of 6d would be for over 30 up to 50 miles. Did the Wansford post office 'jump the gun' on this letter?

A letter from my collection sent in September 1791 from Market Harborough to Daventry was endorsed "Turn at Northampton". The threepenny charge was for two post stages.



## MISSENT TO DAVENTRY

The document reproduced on the opposite page, by kind permission of Post Office Archives, shows the form that had to be filled in by a postmaster when he found missent letters in his bag. On the date shown the postmaster of Daventry had to fill in three such forms as the Inland Office had sent twelve letters in error to Daventry.

**POST-OFFICE.**

*The*

Day of

182

38

A LIST of *London* Missent Letters and Newspapers received here this Day, and forwarded by Cross-Post.

| London Post Mark |        | State whether Unpaid, Paid, or Franks. | To whom and where directed,<br>(The full direction to be inserted in this column) | To what Office they should have been sent; or if this cannot be ascertained, "not known" to be inserted, with the post town to which they were forwarded. |
|------------------|--------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 24          | Unpaid |                                        | Colin Taylor<br>Bell Inn, Brackley<br>Northamptonshire                            |                                                                                                                                                           |
| June 28          | Unpaid |                                        | Mrs Hulke<br>Falcon House, Ramsey<br>Sole of Ham                                  | Northampton<br>County                                                                                                                                     |
| June 28          | Unpaid |                                        | Mr B South<br>Barnett<br>Herts                                                    | Northampton<br>County                                                                                                                                     |
| June 28          | Paid   |                                        | Messrs Shaw and Co<br>Liverpool                                                   | Northampton<br>County                                                                                                                                     |
| June 28          | Paid   |                                        | Mrs Bailey, 10 South<br>London                                                    | Northampton<br>County                                                                                                                                     |
| June 28          | Franks |                                        | Messrs Bailey, 10 South<br>London                                                 | Northampton<br>County                                                                                                                                     |

## NEWSPAPERS.

NEWSPAPERS.

The above letters were sent in the London bag to Dancetry this morning, and were marked with the London Stamps exactly as stated in the columns for the dates thereof. —

(Signed)

N.B. Any Deputy neglecting to make these Returns regularly, *will be reported to the*  
Postmaster-General, and when he is out of Forms he must write to the Secretary for a supply.

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