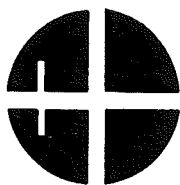


MIDLAND MAIL



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



President: Rev. C.M. Beaver

Chairman:
Roger Broomfield

Treasurer:
Elizabeth Lewis

Secretary:
Eric Lewis

Number 93, January 1996

There are two main reasons for the change of style of Midland Mail. The first is to save time as my inkjet printer can produce with little noise the script of an edition in about the same time that the daisywheel printer turns out one page and deafens anyone in the same room. The second is that the use of a proportionally-spaced font gives a more professional appearance and enables the same amount of information to be carried in fewer pages so cutting costs. I would welcome comments from members.

NEW MEMBER

We extend a warm welcome to Philip Lindley who is interested in most aspects of G.B. Postal History and in particular the development of provincial postal systems using Windsor and District in Berkshire as a base.

IVOR ROBERTS

We regret to announce the death in mid-January of Ivor Roberts who besides being a member of this Society was also the editor of the Shropshire Post, the journal of the Shropshire Postal History Society.

1996 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham on 27th April at 1 p.m. It will be preceded by a committee meeting at 11 a.m.

NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT

Chris Beaver retires from his position as President in April when he will have completed his term of office of three years. Nominations are therefore required for the election of a new President at the A.G.M. Please send these, first having obtained the consent of the member, with the names of two proposers to the Secretary, Eric Lewis at:

27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands B67 5JG.

MATERIAL FOR THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL AUCTION

In order that catalogues can be sent to our overseas members in good time for them to submit bids it is necessary to have auction lots in by 9th March at the latest. It would however be appreciated if you could submit lots prior to this date. For the past few years, a number of members have given material to sell for the funds of the Society and such gifts are as welcome as ever. Perhaps you would like to contribute in this way to help keep subscriptions as low as possible. Please hand lots to Mrs E. Lewis or post them to her at 27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands B67 5JG.

Please include brief but full descriptions, together with estimated market values and your reserve prices or state 'no reserve'. If you wish, the lots can be brought along on the day of the auction but in this case please indicate the condition of the item based on 'Poor', 'Good', 'Fine', or 'Superb' and also state the number of items in each lot.

THE JON BAKER TROPHY

Would you please let the editor know by 9th March which article in your opinion was the best to appear in Midland Mail in 1995.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

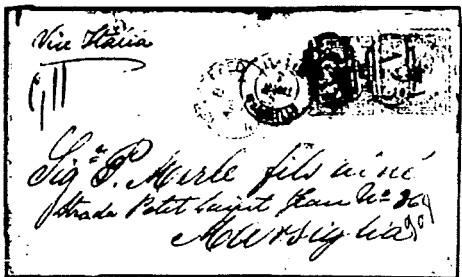
On 17th February our meeting will be held at the Guildhall in Worcester in conjunction with the Worcester Society Fair which opens at 10.30 a.m. At 2 p.m. Mel Matthews will give a display - 'Pillar Boxes through the Ages'.

Our Annual Competition Day is on 9th March at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham, starting at 1.30 p.m. The three groups are for material from: pre-1840, pre-1939, and 1939 onwards.

THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

The following publications, many from the estate of Mike Young and all of which are available to members on loan, have been added to the library.

The British Post Office (Robinson)	Royal Mail (George Kay 1951)	UK Letter Rates 1657-1900 (Tabcart)
Postmarks of GB and Ireland (Alcocks and Holland 1940) plus several supplements		
Postmarks of the British Isles 1840-1876 (Hendy) (Bound in two volumes)		
The Postal History of Great Britain and Ireland (Willcocks)		
The British County Catalogue of Postal History (Willcocks and Jay) Volumes 1 to 5.		
The Spoon Experiment (Willcocks and Bentley)	Squared Circle Postmarks (Stitt Dibden)	
The Local Posts of London (Brumell)	British Post Office Numbers (Brumell)	
Postal Cancellations of London 1840-1890	The English Provincial Local Posts (Oxley)	
Registered Mail (Mackay)	English Provincial Klags (Mackay)	
Bristol 5th Clause and Penny Post (Warn)	St Martins Magazine 1892-97 (hardbound)	
The Sideways Duplex Cancellations (Traill and Holland)	Pigot's Worcestershire 1828-29	
Kelly's Directory of Worcestershire 1937	Kelly's Directory of Worcestershire 1940	
Post Office Directory of Birmingham, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire 1872		
The Posts and Herefordshire (Trout)		
Hereford the Hub (Stitt Dibden)	Ringbound in one binder	
Postmasters of Hereford		

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THE NOVEMBER MEETING

The subject of 'Matched Pairs' for the nine-sheet displays always seemed likely to attract unusual and varied contributions and so it proved when a dozen members assembled at Carrs Lane. It is a pity that the monthly meetings don't attract a larger audience, for they are invariably enjoyed by those who do come, but the membership has pronounced itself well satisfied both with the programme offered and the choice of venues.

Chris Beaver's matched pairs were handstamps from towns with the same name, one of each in Staffordshire. There are the two Newcastles, of course, ('under Lyme' and 'on Tyne') but an early Stoke namestamp of 1785 was not from Stoke on Trent - which didn't use a stamp until the 1840s - but from Stoke Ferry in Norfolk. The two Cheadles (Ches and Staffs) are quite close and there is a Longdon in both Staffordshire and Worcestershire. The Madeleys (Salop and Staffs) were nicely dealt with by means of a missent item that went to both and we were reminded that, while 'Burton' means Burton on Trent to us, there is a Burton in Westmoreland that was once postally significant.

Denis Salt was able to pluck nine pages out of his extensive collection showing not one but two nice examples of Shropshire marks. These included Shifnal Penny Post, the straight line mileage mark of Shifnal and the circular one of Shrewsbury and early 'Shrewsbury' and 'Salop' marks. The undated namestamps featured the three 'W's - Wellington, Wem and Whitchurch - those of Wem being particularly interesting.

Dave Tarry would have us believe that 'matched pairs' required us to match pairs of pairs and his attractive Mauritius display undoubtedly followed that convoluted line of thought. There were Foreign Letter handstamps of the 1850s in red and black, double-oval packet stamps with identical dates (a pair), also struck in red and black (a pair of pairs), boxed 'packet' stamps of the same period in red and black - what else? - and finally two letters with the same adhesives, the same transit marks but with differing Mauritius stamps - probably a quartet of pairs, or worse.

It was a relief to return to England and earth with Guy Bridges who strayed from his customary beloved Shropshire to show 'traveller' stamps from across the Midlands. Mind you, he also included a quartet - 'travellers' of Cheltenham from 1839, 1841, 1843 and 1848 in different colours and with different codes. There was a pair from Nottingham, one of which had an inverted '2' as well as a '7', and another pair from Rugby, all of 1847. A Shipstone of 1845 was matched with a Shipston of 1851 and a pair of Worcester travellers rounded it all off.

Derek Smeather's display nearly failed to get a mention in this report when the notes were inadvertently mangled. However, one does remember that he showed us splendid pairings of postmarks of various Northamptonshire villages and picture postcards illustrating the post office. Among these were Buckby Wharf, Earls Barton and Bozeat. In similar vein, a letter from Wellington to Singapore carried on the ship 'Patroclus' was paired with a picture of the said boat. There were parcel stamps used on the Northampton omnibuses (plus appropriate illustration) and the first card in what was called the "Penny Post Series" of ppcs sold in aid of the Rowland Hill Benevolent Fund and produced at the Post Office, Northampton. If anyone knows the whereabouts of a complete set of twelve (see Picton), you will guess who would like to hear of it.

Alan Godfrey began with UDCs of Church Street and Wellesbourne and the rubber of Haselor, each from Warwickshire and each struck in two colours. A very oily red straight-line stamp of Studley of 1835 was paired with a pristine red example struck six years later. There were a pair of free fronts separated by twenty-one years (1796 and 1817) from the Second Marquis of Hertford, a pair of letters from relatives of the Rector of Kinwarton and, finally, a trio of Alcester mileage marks said to prove that they are all virtually illegible.

Chris Jackson produced pairs of everything you like to mention - as long as they originated in Worcestershire. There were pairs of Worcester and Studley barred numerals and of Redditch and Worcester duplexes. Pairs of the large skeleton stamps of Headless Cross and Bromyard were followed by a pair of Droitwich squared circles and pairs of Earls Croome, Stockton and Spetchley rubbers. Interestingly, a pair of Dudley Penny Post entires had the scarce 'No.1' of Kingswinford. The final flourish included three envelopes with two UDCs on each.

Eric Lewis' contribution was both varied and subtle. A reference in a manuscript to a 3d delivery charge to Moseley was paired with an example of that same charge. Another reference to lineside apparatus on the London & Birmingham Railway was paired with a postcard which included a view of the stretch of railway line previously mentioned. There were unintentionally humorous postmarks of 1966 from an International Wind Conference, allegedly transposed for the wind to blow in the opposite direction. Eric explained why a ppc was stamped to indicate that it could not be used as such 'under Purchase Tax regulations' and another had 'cancelled' struck across 'Postcard' for the same reason.

Elizabeth Lewis took up the theme with a letter about the 1839 Chartist riots in Birmingham and an envelope addressed to a soldier keeping order at those same riots. She had a pair of Birmingham 'ship letters' and a 1739 pair of London and Edinburgh Bishopmarks, one struck so accurately on top of the other that it couldn't have been deliberate. There were pairs of postcards with bisected stamps and a fiendish envelope with the adhesives 'improved' by cutting out and transposing sections of them. A 'flowers with care' label matched the instructions for sending flowers by post - only in a wooden or metal box, please. Finally Elizabeth pointed out how an early commercial card bore the firm's Birmingham telephone number, 7, while more modern commerce now requires eleven digits.

John Calladine's selection came from the 'dross' in an unwanted auction lot. There were London Bishop marks of 1674 and 1787, the former with the scarce reversed 'N' in the November date and the latter used just thirty-three days before the London Bishop marks were withdrawn. There were letters with a French Connection (including a 'Franches mark') and a Norfolk connection, one of which had a two-line Yarmouth handstamp of 1740 in red ink. He managed to involve such disparate matters as the Battle of Blenheim (an informer's letter) and the founding of Barclays Bank (a letter to the Gurneys from Cork with the Dublin 'Country' stamp). He wound up with two letters having local content, one referring to "great floods" near Pershore in 1730 and the other to the perceived insecurity of sending a package from Cirencester to London by mailcoach in 1787 "because the vehicle is changed at Oxford".

As is usual, our chairman Roger Broomfield left his contribution to the end. He probably took the day's honours with two letters bearing the scarce Kentchurch Penny Post mark, Hereford and London marks sent on 24th and 26th October respectively. Since one proved to be the reply to the other, they were the ultimate matched pair. Giving us another glimpse of his delectable UDCs, we saw pairs of Bartestree, Lionshall, Glasbury, Berrow, Kingsland and Wigmore struck in two colours and The Trumpet, for good measure, in three colours. Just to outdo Chris Jackson, he had three covers with two UDCs on each - Diddlebury and, guess what, BROOMFIELD. His piece de resistance was a freshly laundered shirt complete with pairs of reproduction postage stamp cuff links. One pair was of the intended twopenny blue but the other pair were not the intended penny black. Just Roger's luck to have the 'error of diestamp' 1d blue! When Roger thanked all who had contributed and provided such fine entertainment, one hopes he included himself.

THE DECEMBER MEETING

Dennis Humphreys had the unenviable task of providing the entertainment after a convivial lunch at the Bass Museum on 16th January, but he rose to the challenge with a fascinating and comprehensive talk on Nottinghamshire postal history which consisted of the convential display of covers augmented by transparencies projected by his wife, Jean.

Dennis began by showing a range of maps of the county, amongst which were one of c1819 showing the postal routes including the penny posts and a surveyor's map of 1823 showing the armed rides on which Tuxford and Worksop were transposed. After that, we travelled down the Great North Road, starting at Newark. Dennis dealt with the early postmasters and, by means of maps, prints, postcards and photographs, the various sites of the post office. Amongst the Newark marks we were shown were a 1766 'NEWARK' and later straight-line marks, the boxed mileage stamp 'NEWARK/121' used in 1804, the 'NEWARK/Penny Post' of 1819 and the 'Newark/Penny Post' used in 1838. Our next stop was at Tuxford where in 1640 the post office was at the Crown Inn, later the Red Lion and then the Newcastle Arms. Notable among the postmarks we were shown were two-line handstamps of 1755 and 1763, a straight-line 'TUXFORD' of 1773, and a unusual mileage mark 'TUXFORD/137' with no lines above or below the '137'. Our final halt on this road was at Retford from where Dennis showed a range of marks from a 1744 'RET/FORD' to skeletons of this century.

It was then across to Ollerton that Dennis took us and told us about the early postmasters and the site of the office as well as showing a range of marks which included a 1795 'OLLERTON'. The highlights of our visit to Worksop were surely a 'WORK/SOP' of 1732, a 'WORKSOP/Penny Post' of 1813, and a convex 'WORKSOP' of 1798. The first part of our journey through Nottinghamshire ended at Southwell where a post office opened in July 1795. In 1803, a straight-line 'SOUTHWELL' was in use.

After a break for tea we came to Nottingham itself. Dennis began by outlining the significant dates in the history of the post office in Nottingham, from 1637 when it was stated that there was a footpost to London every second Thursday, through 1690 when the London Gazette announced that the post for Nottingham was to be sent via Kettering and Melton Mowbray, and up to 1972. Prints and postcards illustrated a number of the sites occupied by the post office in Albert Street, Victoria Street and Queen Street. Of the wide range of covers we were shown two in particular caught your editor's eye - a letter sent from Nottingham to London in 1671 and one sent in 1838 from Chesham to Loughborough showing a superb 'MISSENT TO/NOTTINGHAM'.

Dennis then showed maps of the roads from Nottingham to Loughborough and Melton Mowbray, and went on to illustrate this with UDCs from villages on those two routes. A letter sent in 1846 from East Leake to Hoton showed the handstamps of both villages. (Would this item not be better placed in a collection of Leicestershire?)

Bingham, to the east of Nottingham, is notable for its extensive unofficial post and the unusual straight-line datestamp used there between 1835 and 1840. We were shown a pamphlet advertising the former and examples of the latter. A report stated that at Mansfield, John Gregory, a rural letter carrier, retired in 1828 at the age of 83. There could be no doubt as to the highlight of the display of Mansfield postal history - a 'MANS/FIELD' used in 1749 when the post office was at The Swan. On a journey to Sutton-in-Ashfield we saw the UDCs used at the villages on the road. A 'Sutton in Ashfield/Penny Post' used in May 1838 rounded off our visit there. Finally, Dennis looked at the various methods of carrying the mail in the Nottingham Rural Posts of the 1850s before going on to describe how he became interested in postal history. It had been a fascinating and extensive display which given the scarcity of good Nottinghamshire material must have taken a lot of time and patience to put together. Our thanks are due to Dennis and Jean for a most interesting afternoon, and to Richard Farman for arranging yet another enjoyable day in Burton-on-Trent.

THE JANUARY MEETING

Our meeting on 13th January saw the best attendance, other than at Burton, for some time with over twenty members present. This was the second meeting of the season devoted to UDCs preparatory to the publication of the next edition of the book on that topic. Eric Lewis started the proceedings with the marks of the inner Birmingham receiving offices illustrated with contemporary material. We saw the mark 'ASTON NEWTON' which was issued to Aston New Town and the only two recorded copies of the small handstamp of Summer Lane. Elizabeth continued this theme and showed amongst others the mark 'THE LOZELLS' with the 'Z' out of line, showing that it had been produced from the issued stamp 'THE LOYELLS', and a Cresswell handstamp from Moseley.

Northamptonshire was represented by Derek Smeathers who started with the marks of Daventry and Thrapstone, then showed a cover with the UDCs of Mears Ashby and Wilby before going on to a UDC used to cancel a stamp, and ended up at Farthingstone which had a most unusual mark of 1856 - small letters with serifs. Martin Scroggs had no difficulty in producing marks not yet recorded in our UDC book for his county is Oxfordshire. We saw the early marks of Enstone, the Benson dated circle used with the date slugs removed as well as a range of Oxford sub-offices. I have not managed to work out what Guy Bridges' first item had to do with UDCs for it was a letter sent in 1839 from Leintwardine to Ludlow showing the 2d rate between towns less than eight miles apart. However it was a nice item. Guy then produced a number of UDCs beginning with the letter 'L' from sub-offices of Shropshire posttowns. These were obviously in Wales for they all began with 'LL', and your editor can neither spell nor pronounce their names.

Back in civilised parts, Alan Godfrey took us to Warwickshire with the Alcester UDC in red on a Mulready and a cover with the UDCs of Bubbenhall (C1) and Emscote (D4). Tom Poynton told us how he had proved that an entire with a 'PENNS' mark originated from Sutton Coldfield and not Wolverhampton. Our new editor for Worcestershire, Chris Jackson, after producing a Shipston on Stour mark of 1833 went through the county from A to Z (actually W). By some devious means, Roger Broomfield got into the Worcestershire section with stamps from places such as Bosbury (in Herefordshire apparently) but under Great Malvern, Cradley represented by a letter sent there in April 1852 and turned in the August so showing the UDC used as a receipt and dispatch mark.

It was very pleasing to see Frank Peach making his debut at Carrs Lane. He described the use of a UDC at Youlgreave which is the subject of an article later in this issue. He then produced some UDCs from Scotland; it is an understatement to say that the strike of the Rhynie mark is superb. The Derbyshire theme was continued first by Richard Farman with two covers each showing two UDCs - Kingston and Kegworth (Leics), Castle Donington (Leics) and Melbourne, and Youlgreave in three colours, and then Harold Wison with the Bakewell stamp in red and black, and more Youlgreave items.

Chris Beaver showed the Staffordshire offices which came under posttowns in other counties such as Ashbourne. His title was sufficiently elastic to encompass Stafford St under Edinburgh. Roy Summers also showed Staffordshire items - Chapel Ash, Pennfields, Penn and Stafford Street all under Wolverhampton. John Bradnock returned to our starting point - Birmingham with the Cresswell mark of Washwood Heath and the small 'FIVE-WAYS R.O.'.

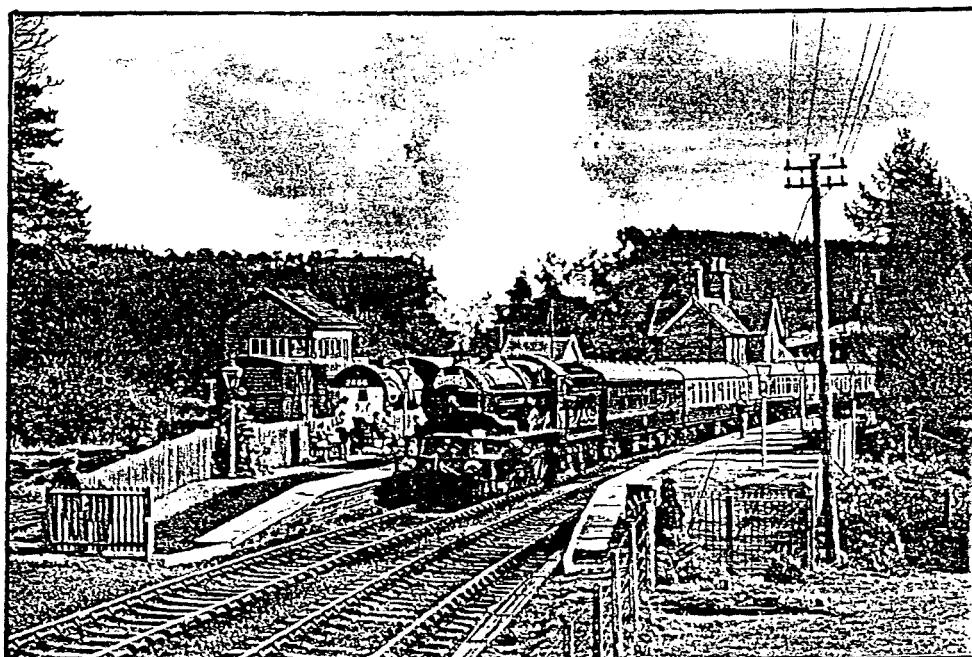
It had been a very enjoyable afternoon with a range of material on view and it is to be hoped that an attendance of over twenty will continue to be the norm rather than the exception.

SUMMER IN THE SEVERN VALLEY

A report by John Calladine

There can have been few more pleasant places to spend summer's sultry days than at Arley. The village hides in a green valley beside the River Severn. Across the river - now by footbridge as the ferry has gone - a lane winds up the hill to a stone hump-backed bridge and there, below you and to the right, nestles the beautifully restored GWR station. Steam trains of the Severn Valley Railway arrive at forty minute intervals and simmer in the sunshine, awaiting the arrival of another from the opposite direction, for it is at Arley that they pass each other on what is (and always was) a single track line. Well-tended gardens, smart fire buckets, silver milk churns and enamel signs advertising such as Oxo or Bovril make this a timeless scene. Timeless, that is, if you overlook the rather-too-modern 'Royal Mail Letters' painted on the faded red TPO sorting carriage 80307 standing in one of the two sidings.

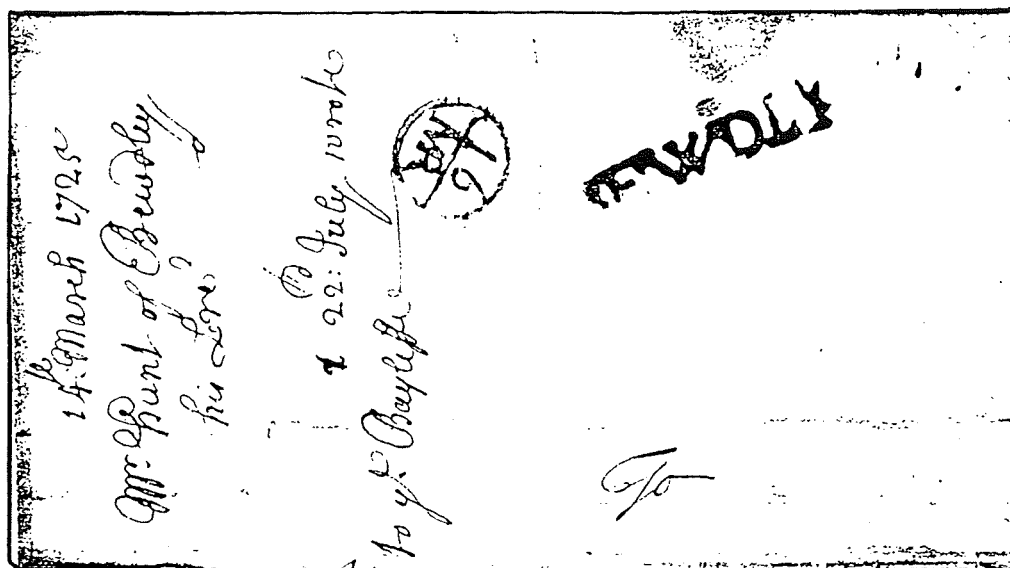
The sorting carriage arrived on the SVR in 1990 following the 150th anniversary celebrations at Kidderminster for the good deeds of a certain Mr Rowland Hill. Kidderminster is the eastern terminus of the railway but rather better known to us as the birthplace of the famous man. When the Railway considered how best they might use the sorting carriage, other than as a repository for children's presents during the annual 'Santa Specials' season, the Society intervened to suggest that the vehicle was best employed as an attraction in its own right. A problem with this kind of helpful suggestion is that any preserved railway, and especially one twelve miles long, has a myriad of tasks awaiting its volunteer labour force and opening a TPO to the public at weekends requires yet more volunteers. The solution, as many will know, has been to use the sorting carriage for two purposes at the same time. With the Committee's blessing, Eric Lewis purpose-built three handsome closed display frames last year that can be mounted inside the vehicle and which display a total of 30 sheets in two rows of 15. Then, when the Society is providing a display, the public also has access to the sorting carriage, someone to answer their questions and a father-figure to encourage the children to try their hand at letter sorting. In this way, the Society is able to present itself to a wide audience and the SVR has a TPO attraction without the need to divert its own hard-pressed volunteers



A train leaves Arley station in April 1994
(from the Severn Valley Railway News)

We had a first stab at the venture during the Summer Bank Holiday weekend of 1994 but the project really got into its stride during the past summer. From the weekend of 29/30th July through to the SVR's Autumn Steam Gala on 23rd/24th September, the TPO was manned on one or more days each weekend and on Bank Holiday Monday. During that period we used six different displays, some of local postal history and others of railway interest. It mattered little when they were repeated for they were seen by an entirely new audience on each occasion. It all proved a considerable attraction and it was not unusual to have several hundred visitors to the TPO on the busiest days.

Bewdley is one of the major SVR stations and, with Jan's kind permission, we were able to make use of thirty sheets of Mike Young's 'Postal History of Bewdley'. (It had always been Mike's intention to display it in the TPO.) The display began with the earliest recorded 'BEWDLY' handstamp of 1725, continued with all the recorded straight-line, mileage and penny post markings and culminated in a fine penny black cover from Bewdley to Bristol. To this were added a selection of later cancels and early postcards of the post office at Arley, a sub-office under Bewdley.



The earliest recorded Bewdley mark of 1725

Since Stourbridge is the next significant mainline station beyond Kidderminster and provides a considerable number of visitors to the SVR, your scribe felt justified in giving a display of its postal history more than one airing. Again, it consisted largely of pre-1840 material enlivened with the occasional map and unusual letter. It was evident that many visitors, unfamiliar with early letters, were intrigued both by the handwriting and by the brevity of the addresses.

On the weekend of the Summer Bank Holiday, David Hardwick and Derek Smeathers were in charge. Without doubt the highlight of the summer was the Sunday with the innovative and most appropriate displays of David Hardwick which began with 'Rugby and the Up Special TPO' using mailbag labels to and from the TPO. His second display, again using mailbag labels, was of the last night of operation (14th May 1993) of the TPOs operating between London and Shrewsbury and was of more general interest - especially the label for mail put on to the Shrewsbury bound TPO by mistake and put out at Rugby to be transferred to the Shrewsbury-London TPO. Finally, there were a number of postcards and covers illustrating the operation of a TPO. Derek's display featured Mail Services and the Railways in southern Northamptonshire between 1880 and 1925. It also illustrated how the GPO and the railways were able to combine their efforts to provide the super-speed RAILEX service for the delivery of letters.

Richard Farman held the fort on the first weekend in September. Again, his wide-ranging display had much railway relevance as it included a selection of railway postmarks for station offices, sorting carriages, TPO fees and mis-sorted letters. Then, appreciating the likely audience, Richard used postcards of railway steamers, railway hotels, stations, GWR named trains and Black Country industries to provide something of interest to all.

On 23rd September, Harold Wilson brought along a feast of railway material. With the title of 'Railways and the Mail', Harold touched on unusual aspects of that subject with the notable exception of TPOs which are to feature in the Society's 'permanent' display. He illustrated the development of the Railway Letter Service from the sending of letters by Railway Parcel Post to the official service of 1891-1982. There was a wide-ranging selection of letters carried by air under the Railway Letter agreement including those flown by the GWR in 1933, by the 1934 Railway Air Service set up by the four railway companies and by Scottish Airways (40% owned by the LMS).

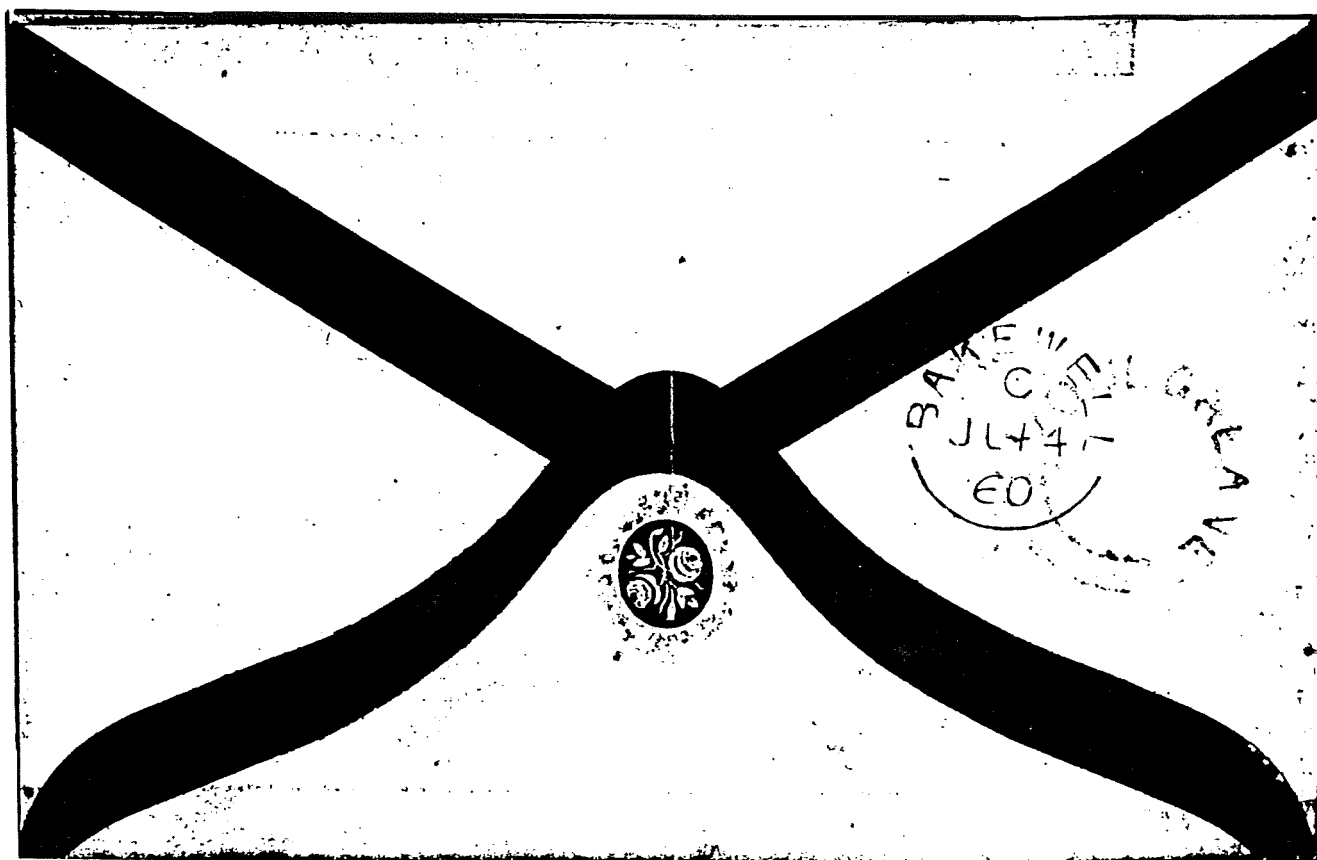
Everyone involved last summer found it a most rewarding experience and is keen to repeat it. There were small problems; it was sometimes very hot, the TPO was not always positioned just where we wanted it and the batteries were usually too flat to allow use of the fluorescent lighting. These problems have been well aired and will be addressed by the SVR before we re-enter the fray. Harold Wilson has been putting the finishing touches to a fine display of 'Railways and the Mail' which uses photographs and coloured photocopies of valuable covers to tell its story. This new 'permanent' display has the advantage that any of our members, willing to spend a day on 'TPO duty' next summer but unable to assemble their own 30 sheet exhibit, can come along unencumbered and join in the fun. A briefing sheet will be provided and you can be sure of a warm welcome from the many volunteers who help to make the SVR Britain's finest preserved steam railway. The best railway and the best postal history society - what a combination.

THE YOULGREANE UDC OF 1857

by Frank Peach

On 10th July 1857, the post office in Bakewell received an undated circular handstamp with sans-serif letters for YOULGREANE and as far as was known this was never used since it should have read YOULGRAVE, or possibly YOULGREAVE. Quite recently, however, an example of this handstamp has been discovered in which the left leg of the 'N' has been removed (probably with a file) to make it read 'YOULGREAVE', one of the variant spellings of this village name.

As can be seen on the enlarged photocopy below, the Youlgreave UDC has been overstruck with the datestamp of the head office at Bakewell on 14th July 1860, and this would appear to be the latest known date for the use of a sans-serifred UDC in the third edition of our UDC book.



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THE SURVEYORS' JOURNALS (Part 19)

On 23rd January 1810, Mr Saverland left his home at Claybrooke for Coventry as the postmaster there was in poor health and had been ordered by his doctors to go to Bath. He was anxious that in his absence the post office should be run properly and money sent regularly to London. Mr Saverland provided an additional clerk and had him sworn in, supervised the running of the office himself, and after being satisfied that the office was in good hands returned home four days later.

His next official journey was not until 2nd March when he set out for Lichfield, Birmingham where he spent four days inspecting the office, and Bilstone where he attended a meeting of the inhabitants concerning the delivery of letters there. On 16th March he travelled to London to attend a meeting of a Committee of the House of Commons on the state of the Roads to Holyhead, taking with him "all Maps & Papers" in his possession concerning those roads. This business took up ten days. Mr Saverland was back in London on 14th April for four days consulting Freeling about his journey to Falmouth. Mr Saverland's journal then goes on to describe his journey to Falmouth during which he looked into affairs at some post offices in Cornwall. After he had been in Falmouth for three weeks dealing with various matters relating to the packets he returned home by way of London.

However, on 22nd June, Mr Saverland left Claybrooke for the last time. On his way to Falmouth he called upon Freeling to receive instructions, and then on his journey westward dealt with the matter of a letter stolen in the Shaftesbury Penny Post. On 24th July, Freeling wrote a covering letter to the Postmaster General:

"I have the honor to enclose Mr Saverland's last Journal & Report on Riding Work as a Riding Surveyor. The Journal finishes with his arrival at Falmouth where on the 6th inst. he took upon himself the Office of Agent to the Packets."

Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate the first journals of Mr Saverland's successor, Augustus Godby.

Mr Scott was absent on leave for the first two weeks of 1810, after which he was in London conferring with Freeling until 4th February when he set off for Higham Ferrers where he spent ten days installing a new postmaster. Although he left for Melton Mowbray on 16th February, he did not arrive there until the next day, "the Mail being full and no horses to be procured at Kettering." The rest of the month was taken up in instructing the new postmistress at Melton.

The matter of the delivery of the letters at Nottingham occupied Mr Scott for the first four days of March. He then went on to Newark to take charge of the office as the postmaster had died, and then install Mrs Guthrie as the postmistress. It was the 23rd March before he was able to go to Bedford to instruct a new postmaster, and then to Hitchin to establish a Penny Post to Shefford.

On 8th April, Mr Scott arrived in London where he was employed, "in corresponding with the Deputies of my Old and New Districts and in the performance of other duties until 15th when I repaired to Arundel ..."

Gratian Hart's journal for April 1810, like those that followed was brief: "From the period of my Appointment, the fifth day of April, attended daily at the General Post Office, for Orders; and in qualifying myself for the performance of my new Duties."

We then find Mr Hart writing from Folkestone to say that the summer ride from Leek to Buxton would start on 23rd May and that the former contractor had agreed upon the same terms as before. His journal for May shows that from 7th to 20th of the month Mr Hart was indeed in Folkestone instructing a new deputy. Then, six days later, he was in Wirksworth performing the same task. There is no indication as to what he was doing in the five intervening days.

The journal for June is missing but the 6th July found Mr Hart leaving Sheffield for Lancashire after establishing a mailcoach from Sheffield to Huddersfield and Halifax. Like that of June, the journals for the next two months are missing. From 10th to 21st October, Mr Hart was in Leicester establishing a mailcoach to Coventry. From Leicester he went to Hinckley where investigating the possibility of introducing a penny post to Nuneaton took up a week. Then, it was on to Dunchurch for two weeks to install a new deputy. Mr Hart spent eight days away from home in December - at the General Post Office in London.

In early January, Mr Woodcock was five days on the road between Cirencester, Kingscote, Wotton-under-Edge and Dursley trying to arrange "the timely arrival of the Post at those places." The same amount of time was spent in mid-February on the line of road between Worcester, Bewdley and Stourbridge inspecting the riding work and "expediting the Mail to Dudley & Wolverhampton."

Mr Woodcock was in South Wales for the whole of March and April. In May, the only official business that took him away from home was eighteen days at Oxford instructing a new deputy. Extending the limits of the free delivery at

Cheltenham as a consequence of the great increase in buildings there took up two days in early June. Unfortunately, I cannot find any details of this. Later in the month, he was again in the area of Stroud, Cirencester and Kingscote dealing with the post to Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge.

Putting in a new postmaster at Bishops Castle occupied Mr Woodcock for the first two weeks of July. He then spent ten days investigating the possibility of establishing a daily post from Leominster to Presteigne, Kington and Knighton. From 20th August to 8th September, Mr Woodcock was instructing Miss Mary Oliver who had been appointed as the deputy at Stourbridge on the resignation of Mrs Savage. Then four days were spent at Dudley and Birmingham settling the rides and inspecting the offices.

Towards the end of September, Mr Woodcock returned to Kington with the aim of "establishing a Post Office there" (I presume that Mr Woodcock meant that Kington was to be made a posttown.) as well as re-arranging the posts in the area he had visited in July. After he had dealt with these matters, he visited the offices at Hay and Hereford before going on to Worcester at the end of October to discuss with a Mr Fieldhouse the subject of a mailcoach between Worcester and Hereford. Nothing was decided. For the rest of the year, Mr Woodcock was in South Wales.

ADDENDA

THREE DELIVERIES

In January 1810, Mr Western wrote that when he had last been in **Worcester** the inhabitants had complained that as only one letter carrier was employed to deliver the letters they found it impossible, despite the early arrival of the mail, to answer a London letter by return of post. These complaints had been repeated in a letter from a Mr St. John (the postmaster?). Mr Western said that he felt that one letter carrier was not sufficient to serve a city such as Worcester which was increasing "very fast in Trade & Population", and where the amount of business at the office made it necessary to employ a clerk. The Postmaster General had recently acceded to a similar request from Gloucester, where the revenue was £1000 p.a. less than at Worcester. It was decided to grant the postmaster a further allowance of £20 p.a. for another letter carrier.

Mr Scott wrote to Freeling on 15th March 1810 about the result of his enquiry into the delivery of the letters at **Nottingham**. He reported that a great proportion of those arriving on the mailcoach from London were not delivered until the following day. The late arrival of the London mail and the great increase in the number of buildings at Nottingham made it impossible for one man with an assistant to make such a delivery. He therefore proposed an allowance of 12/- a week for another letter carrier.

It is possible that Freeling asked for more details since a week later Mr Scott wrote at greater length:

"I beg to acquaint you that the Leeds Mail upwards with Bags from Leeds, Wakefield, Barnsley, Sheffield, Chesterfield and Mansfield arrives at 9 am, and the first delivery commences at 10. The London Mail down, with the London Bag, and those from Kettering, Uppingham, Oakham and Melton Mowbray should be at Nottingham by 3 pm (but in Winter from the bad state of the Road it is frequently an Hour later). The Loughborough Rider with the Bags from Northampton, Harborough, Leicester & Loughborough comes in a quarter of an hour before it, and the second delivery takes place generally at 4 o'clock. The Birmingham Mail arrives with Bags from Birmingham, Burton, Litchfield and Derby at 6pm and the Newark Horse Mail Guard with a Bag from Newark half an hour after. The third delivery commences at 7 o'clock. It appears that the Number of London letters detained until the following morning amount to 50 on average. Mrs Rayner states to me that they are chiefly for the outskirts of the Town, and addressed to the lower Order of People. With respect to the Birmingham and Newark Mails very few of them are delivered, the amount of those taken out by the Letter Carriers at Night and in the Morning is from Four to Five pounds but the principal Tradesmen send for theirs to the Office...."

I am of the opinion that for the better accommodation of the Town, and for the sake of the Revenue, the whole of the London Letters should be delivered the same day, and a very great proportion of those brought by the Birmingham and Newark Mails if not the whole, and I think if three active Letter Carriers were employed, the duty might be easily performed, in which case many letters now illegally conveyed by means of Coaches and Carriers that are leaving Nottingham during the day would find their way to the Office..."

An allowance of a further 12/- a week was granted to enable the employment of a third person.

In June 1810, Mr Saverland forwarded an application from the postmaster of **Coventry** requesting the the wages of his letter carrier be increased from 14/- to 21/- a week. Mr Saverland described Coventry as "a large populous ill built Town covering a greater space of Ground, in length particularly, than any Town of equal population in the Kingdom & is much intermixed with large Gardens & Fields; the consequence is that the Letter Carrier has a greater extent of walk than he is able to perform, & successive Letter Carriers after trying it for a shorter, or longer time, have all given it up."

Mr Saverland went on to report that the delivery commenced in the summer at 7 a.m. with those letters which could not be delivered the previous night and which had arrived at 6 p.m. on the mailcoach from Birmingham. The second delivery - of letters brought by the London mail - began at 9 a.m. and was not completed before 3 p.m. The third delivery - of letters brought by the mailcoaches from Birmingham and Liverpool - began between 6 and 7 p.m. However, Mr Saverland felt that it would be better to employ an assistant letter carrier at 7/- a week and allow the letter carrier if he wished to find that assistant in his family rather than increase the wages to 21/-.

I wonder how long these deliveries would have taken had the letter carrier not had to collect the postage on the majority of letters. [Refs. Post 40/16Q/1810 40/89Q/1810 40/80R/1810]

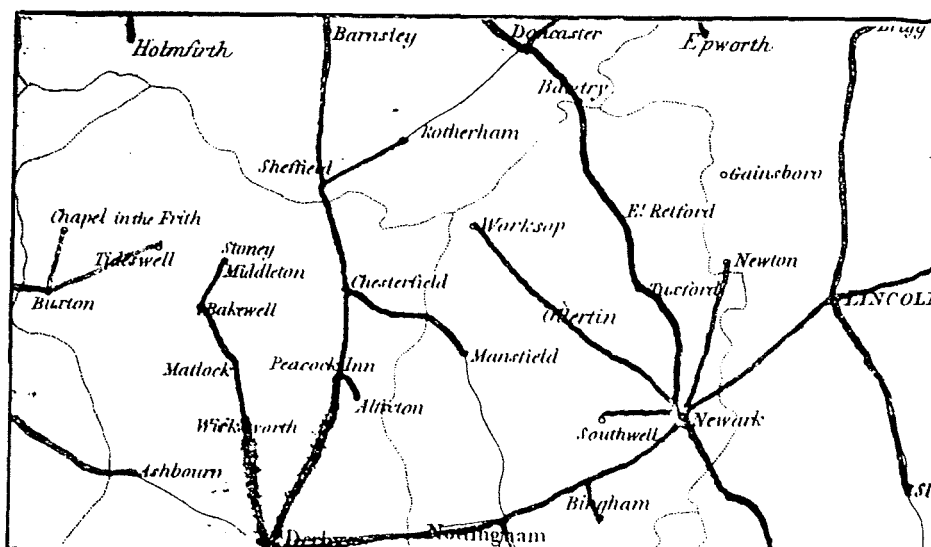
DUNCHURCH

Mr Hodgson reported in September 1810 on the correspondence of Dunchurch and Rugby. Although Dunchurch was on a mailcoach route it had never been made a posttown. Consequently, it had to obtain its letters from Daventry and Coventry the day after their arrival at those towns. Rugby had a London bag and three bye bags (Northampton, Daventry and Coventry) but had no salary, the deputy being paid by the halfpence charged on delivery. The only expense to the Revenue was the £10 p.a. paid for carrying the Rugby bags to and from the mailcoach at Dunchurch. Although the revenue from Dunchurch was only about £85 a year compared with £800 a year at Rugby, the only way of preventing the delays was to make Dunchurch a posttown with a salary of £20 p.a. The bye-bags of Rugby were to be withdrawn and one from Dunchurch substituted. [Ref. Post 40/76S/1810]

A MAILCOACH TO WORKSOP AND OLLERTON

In 1809, the inhabitants of Worksop petitioned the Postmaster General that they be served by a mailcoach. The main points in their memorial were:

- all their letters were received by way of Ollerton from Newark, twenty two miles south of Worksop. As the bye-post also served the villages of Cuckney and Norton the letters were carried a further three miles;
- letters from Worksop to Doncaster, a distance of sixteen miles, took a day longer than they would if there was a direct communication;
- the post from London arrived at Worksop several hours later than at Retford, though the distance was shorter. It seldom arrived in winter before 7 p.m. and frequently after 8 p.m. which prevented the gentlemen living in the area answering by return of post as it left Worksop at 10 p.m.;
- their letters were carried to Newark in the "dead of night" by a boy on horseback without any guard though the property entrusted to his care was often of considerable amount for the duty upon malt probably averaged £40,000 a year (malting was said to be the main trade of the town);
- the road from Newark to Doncaster by way of Ollerton and Worksop was wholly turnpiked and was one mile shorter than that through Retford. Also, two mailcoaches, the Edinburgh and the Glasgow, passed through Retford within a few minutes of each other;
- if one of these mailcoaches was diverted to run through Ollerton and Worksop it would remove the inconveniences mentioned above and there were people in Worksop willing to work a mailcoach from Newark to Doncaster.



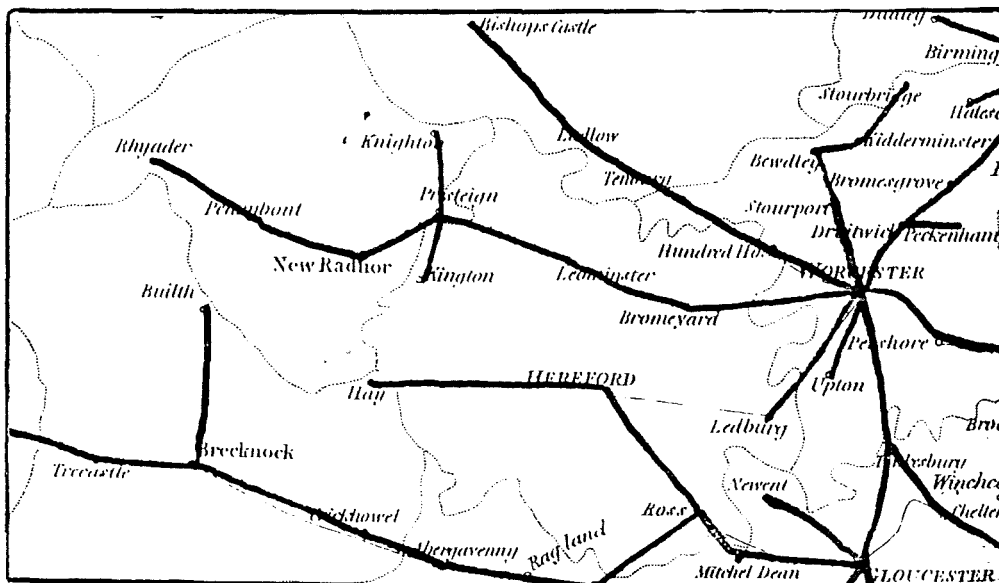
Then, in May of that year, Freeling reported that a survey by one of Hasker's deputies had shown that the road through Worksop needed to be improved considerably if a mailcoach was to travel on it in the same time as on the Retford road. He proposed that any change in route be abandoned for that year but on 5th April 1810, a coach should be ordered, as an experiment, to travel from Newark to Doncaster by way of Ollerton and Worksop. He emphasised that such a coach should not take any longer, "for the loss of five minutes would be felt by the great cities of the North, and give rise to serious remonstrances."

However, in March 1810, Freeling stated that there were obstacles to a mailcoach travelling on the Worksop road as early as 5th April but it should be possible to do so by the middle of the following quarter. I cannot find any report that shows when the change was actually made. [Refs. Post 40/32N/1809 Post 42/71Q/1810]

KINGTON, PRESTEIGNE AND KNIGHTON

The inhabitants of the above three towns sent to the Postmaster General in 1810 a petition which had three objects:
 (a) to obtain a six-day post to and from London; (b) for Kington to have a London bag independent of any other office;
 (c) that Kington receive its mail through Shobden rather than Presteigne.

In a report which he made in June 1810, Mr Woodcock said that there was a four-day post between Leominster and Presteigne, and between Presteigne and Kington. Between Presteigne and Knighton the post went on three days a week. The letters for Kington did lie overnight at Presteigne but there would have been no point in their arriving in the middle of the night. As it was, they were sent from Presteigne at 6 a.m., arriving an hour later. The return was at about 5 p.m., giving plenty of time to reply. If the letters were sent through Shobden they would seldom arrive in time to be delivered that night for the postman had many letters to deliver at Kingsland and Mortimer Cross. He estimated that an extra expense of nearly £100 would be involved if the requests were granted. He asked that a decision be held back until he had visited that part of his district.



When Mr Woodcock reported in the August, he said that the extra cost would in fact be £142 but £107 if the idea of a post from Shobden to Kington were dropped. He felt that the Presteigne to Kington post had to be retained so as to preserve a "regular correspondence" for Kington with not only Presteigne and Knighton but also Radnor, Rhayader and Aberystwyth. So he recommended the introduction of daily posts from Leominster to Presteigne, Kington and Knighton. He also recommended a "regular office" at Kington as that town, which was described as a thriving place, contributed £400 to the total revenue of £750 p.a. from the three places. [Ref. Post 40/25S/1810]



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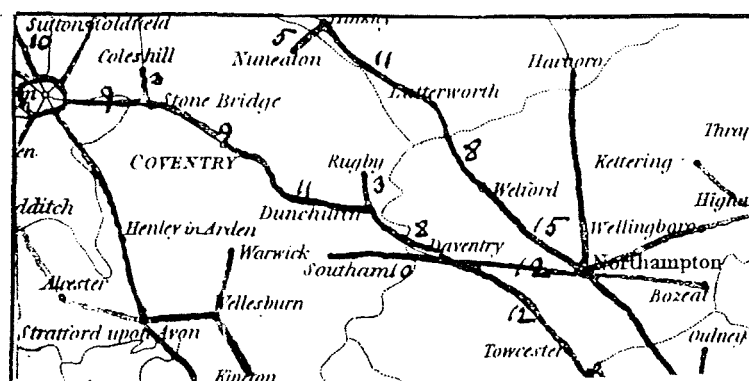
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THE COVENTRY TO WARWICK MAILCOACH

Thomas Hasker reported in August 1810 that Messrs Waterhouse and Barton had agreed to operate a mailcoach between Coventry and Warwick which was to leave Coventry as soon as possible after the arrival there of the London to Liverpool mailcoach, and arrive in Warwick at about 10.30 a.m. It was to return from Warwick at 1.30 p.m. so as to be in time at Coventry for the mailcoach from Liverpool. However, so as to give more time to answer, Warwick was to send its letters to London by Stratford on Avon as that post left at 4 p.m. Mr Woodcock in his report said that in the previous month the arrival at Warwick from Stratford had been between 10.30 and 11 a.m., generally the latter so some time would be gained by sending the London bag for Warwick via Coventry. He agreed that the return must be by Stratford.

Hasker added that the introduction of this coach would give a saving to the Revenue as the coach would cost a little over £30 p.a. compared with the £60 paid for the ride. He finished his report, "It being entirely in the day, the Driver taking the Oath of Office will suffice for the safety without a Guard, but to encourage him to good conduct, I propose he may have a suit of Uniform." [Ref. Post 40/29S/1810]



FOLESHILL YET AGAIN!

by Ian May

The Society's 'Local Posts of the Midland Counties' details an unofficial post to Hinckley from Coventry in the 1780s for which the charge was 2d. Interestingly covers from Coventry to Hinckley show no charge marks but do have the relevant Coventry handstamp, figs. 1 & 2. I also have in my collection late 18th century covers to Nuneaton, figs. 3 & 4, from London which would indicate that the unofficial post also operated to Nuneaton. It is therefore possible (likely?) that a similar service would have operated to Bedworth and Foleshill as both are on the route to Hinckley via Nuneaton, see the map on page 289 of the Local Posts book.

Oxley gives the date of opening of the penny post receiving office at Nuneaton as 1810, that at Bedworth as 1825 and Foleshill as 1830.

I assume that the cover illustrated in Barrie Wildblood's article in MM92, which he dates as being after the opening of the Nuneaton office but before that at Foleshill, will have been carried by the penny post messenger going to Nuneaton, so the charge of 2d, twice the cost had it been carried to Nuneaton for one third of the distance along the route, seems opportunistic. I believe that messengers were permitted (required?) to pick up and deliver, see p. 21 of the Local Posts book, items along their route, for which the charge was 1d, the same as for items taken to or received from a penny post office. Could it be that the cover to Foleshill demonstrates a continuation of the unofficial post albeit possibly against Post Office regulations? Unfortunately I have no covers to Foleshill of the period 1800-40 - it is always more difficult to find mail into one's chosen area of interest - to assist in ascertaining what the practice was.

However I do have one cover to Foleshill that puzzles me, fig. 5. The cover was sent in 1841 from Nuneaton, where the boxed No 1 was applied. It then went to the main office in Coventry where a red dated circle was applied. There is also a red Coventry Penny Post mark, which I assume was applied at the main office - my query is what function did the penny post mark perform?

Whilst I have the opportunity I have a further query. Fig. 6 shows a cover sent from Shifnal to Dunchurch in 1813. It was, I assume, sent by mistake to Coventry where the mileage mark was applied in red. My question is what is the manuscript inscription? I have interpreted the first few letters as 'miss'.

Fig. 1
Sent in 1785

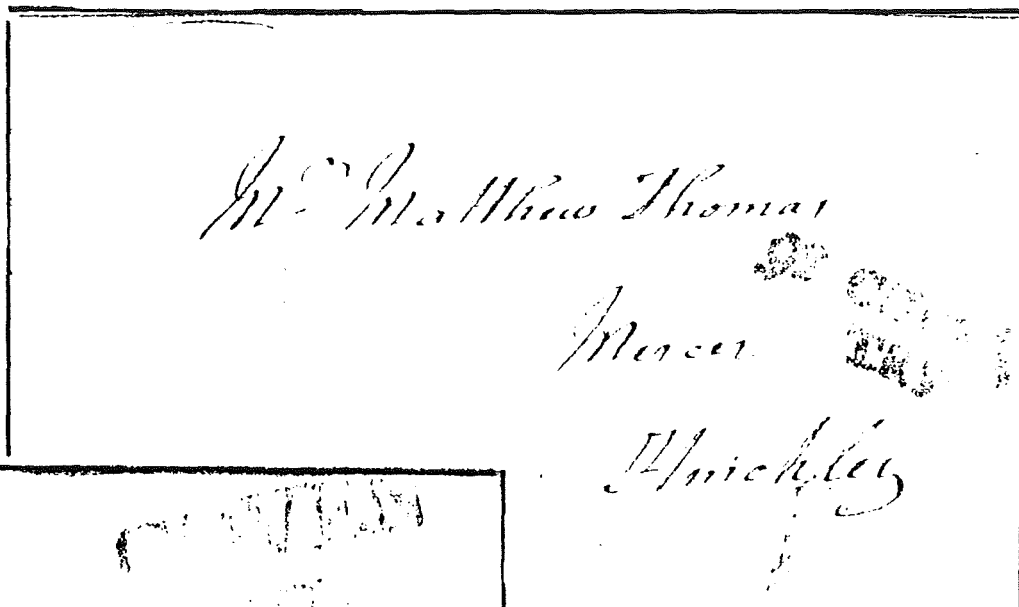


Fig. 2
Sent in 1787

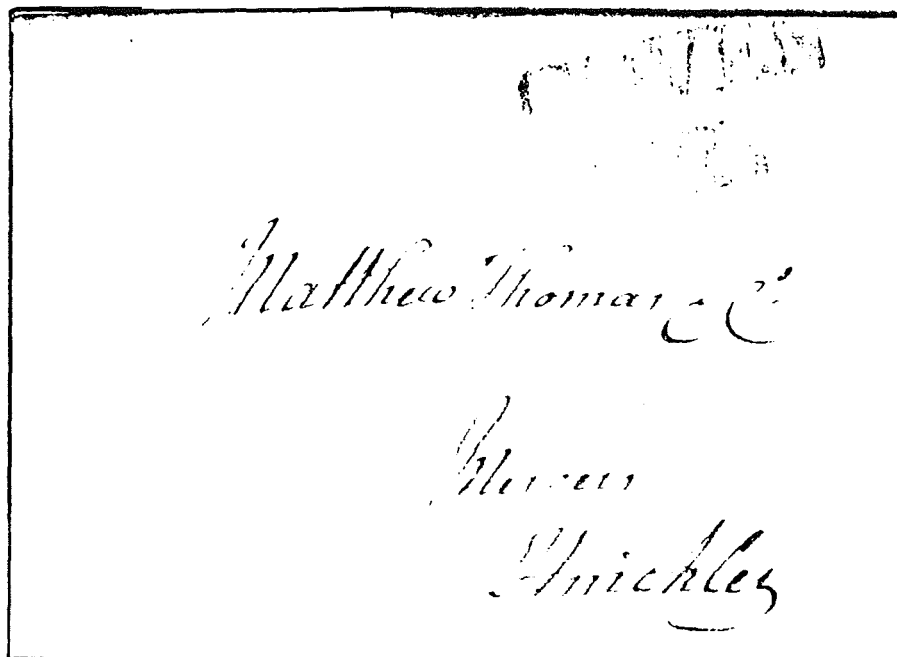


Fig. 3
Sent in 1779

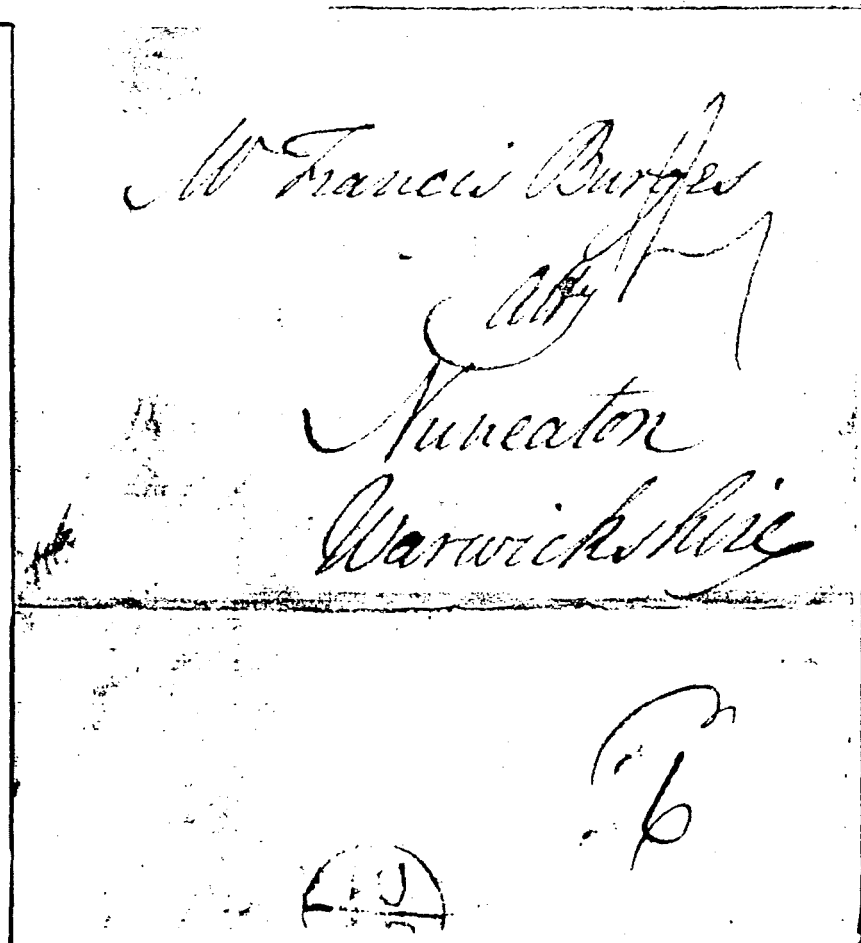


Fig. 4
Sent in 1780

For
Mr Francis Byles
M^r at Law
Rimington
near Coventry

Fig. 5

Mr Lewis
Attorney
Solihull

Fig. 6

COVENTRY
No 1
For Mr Lewis
Attorney
Solihull

CORRESPONDENCE

Barrie Wildblood has written to expand upon the information that he gave in the last issue on the Chester to Whitehurst post. The purpose of that link was to bring the Mail for Ireland from Liverpool and Manchester to join the Holyhead coach at Whitehurst and the places he mentioned were only incidental to this main aim. As the packet left upon the arrival of the coach from London via Shrewsbury, which was four to five hours before the coach from Chester, the Liverpool and Manchester mail would otherwise have suffered a delay of twenty-four hours.

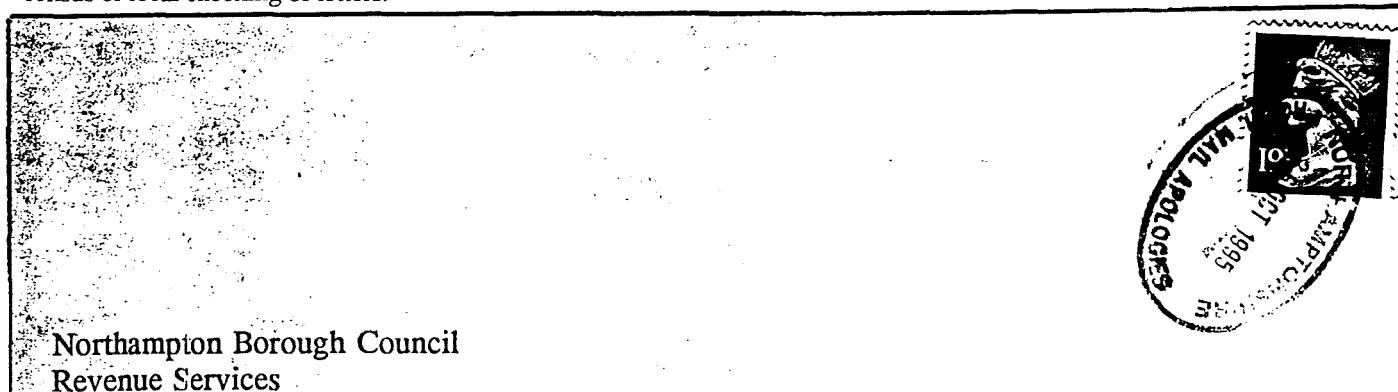
The route via Shrewsbury could have been accelerated easily if it had not been for the importance of the Liverpool mail. For example, in 1815 the coach stopped for one hour in Shrewsbury plus forty minutes in Oswestry for supper before proceeding to Whitehurst. A coach from Chester via Whitehurst was also tried for about a year, but nothing really satisfied the merchants of Liverpool and Manchester until packets were used directly from Liverpool in 1826.

Prior to 1826, a Liverpool merchant would have to post his letters for Ireland by 2 p.m., then could leave Liverpool by ferry after the closing of the Exchange at 6 o'clock and still be in Dublin before the delivery of the mail.

Frank Peach has written about a piece which appeared in MM47 about the Rocket Mail tried out by Von Braun about 1934 from Scarp to Hushinish on the Isle of Harris. Unfortunately Scarp appeared as Scalpay. Frank apologises for not writing before and adds that it was something he always intended to do.

APOLOGIES

David Hardwick has sent the copy of the handstamp shown below of which he has seen several copies recently. He comments that it may possibly be used where there has been a delay caused deliberately rather than accidentally - e.g. in a census or local checking of letters.



A BYE-LETTER FORM

No sooner had I written in the last issue about the introduction in 1809 of an amended layout of these forms than one from the Midlands turned up. [Post 40/160/1828]

P. O. NEWARK the 15th Dec 1827

Amount sent		Amount received	
Unpaid £	£	£	£
Paid.. £	£	£	£

Letters for *Manfield* Money Letters, No. {

Additional Postage on Letters examined and charged. £

Edw Postmaster.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

It is hoped that this will be published in early April. There will be more from the Surveyors' Journals and another article from Brian Atkins on a Shropshire posttown. In the meantime all articles please to:

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