

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.midlandphs.org.uk



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A prepaid first day cover of Uniform 4d Post from Oswestry to Welshpool with a pen struck red 4 to denote payment
See page 11 for more of Brian Purcell's items displayed at the January Meeting at Cotteridge.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS, Jon Baker Trophy 2020 – Congratulations are due to **Ian Baker** who was announced the winner of the trophy at the AGM held on 30 October 2021 for his article *Birmingham – The Experimental Receiving Handstamps 1857-1866* in MM208 / 12. This leads nicely to the 2021 version of the trophy, the winner of which will be announced at the AGM in May 2022, assuming that event takes place. Please send your votes to the editor. Ian Baker, our last winner, was elected on an overall total of 17 votes out of a membership of over 90; can we do better than that this time? Selected member's articles you might like to vote for are listed below, but as ever you may like to select an article not listed here.

Higham Ferrers, Postal History of the Pre Stamp Era	Richard Capon	MM210 / 12
Reduced Inland Rates for Packet Letters 1814-1839	Ian May	MM210 / 16
Higham Ferrers Postal History Part 2 1840-1921	Richard Capon	MM211 / 12
Some Background to Rubber Date Stamps	Ian May	MM211 / 18
Late Use of the Sideways Duplex Cancel	John Calladine	MM212 / 13
Messenger & Co. of Loughborough	Marion Turner	MM212 / 17
WW2 Mail to Sweden & The Ball Bearing Run	Ian May	MM213 / 10
The Leamington Maltese Cross	Toby Mottram	MM213 / 16

Dates of Meetings; There have been so many difficulties booking meeting places and confirming dates that I am hesitant to provide any information, especially as there were so many errors in the previous two editions of Midland Mail. However, below, you will find the present state of events but I do recommend you check before setting out for a face-to-face meeting, there are phone numbers of committee members on the front page as well as one email address.

Face-to-Face Meetings;

19 Feb 2022	Cotteridge, 11am Committee Meeting, 1pm meeting, Subject <i>Registered Mail and Money Letters</i>
19 March 2022	Cavendish, Derby 11am Joint meeting with the Postal History Society, A short display by Richard Farman plus Displays of Members Choice
30 April 2022	Cotteridge 11am Displays of Member's Choice
? May 2022	Cotteridge (date to be confirmed) 11am AGM, 1.30pm meeting, County Editors to Display <i>Early Town cancels 1700 to 1784</i>

Zoom Meetings; Log on to zoom from 7.15pm

19 January 2022,	Member's Displays, <i>Railway Letters & Parcels</i>
16 February 2022,	A talk by John Soer <i>Postal History of Loughborough</i>
16 March 2022,	Member's Displays <i>Lockdown Write-ups</i>
20 April 2022,	To be confirmed
18 May 2022,	Member's Displays, <i>20th century Instructional & Advisory marks</i>
15 June 2022,	A talk by Alan Godfrey <i>The Blind Postmaster and the Suffragist</i>
20 July 2022,	Member's Displays <i>Latest Acquisitions</i>

The Editorial Suggestion of having 'Themes' for articles in Midland Mail didn't go down too well with one member at great pains to say how much he enjoyed the variety of articles and a number of other members suggesting we keep the status quo, so that suggestion has been scrapped! Fair enough. At this point I would like to thank those members who have taken the time to contact me to say how much they have enjoyed Midland Mail; there have been a few negative observations but I printed those and put them through the shredder, very cathartic.

One thing is certain, for the first time in a very long time I am short of articles, so, unless you want a whole slew of articles related to the 'largest inland county' (come on – guess!), please consider putting pen to paper, or fingers to the key-board, all articles are very welcome, long or short, and can be sent by email or regular mail if you are not technologically accomplished. Actually, there is no great secret to being 'technologically accomplished', it's like anything else that's new, it just takes practice. Watch the kids, they go at it hammer and tongues, if something doesn't work they try something else. Problem with that is as one's hair becomes greyer it is almost impossible to remember precisely how one arrived at a particular point – I used to jot down whatever worked. Trouble is I can't remember now where I put the pen!

Encouraging news: The sale of Guy Bridges' Shropshire collection at Cavendish Auctions in Derby was, by all accounts, very successful. Your editor, not liking his lack of 'technological accomplishment' of bidding remotely, attended in the sale room to witness some keen bidding, particularly for Ludlow lots. A 1662 letter from the village of Bucknell but probably mailed at Ludlow was estimated at £400 but ended up at £1,200 (plus buyer's premium), sadly not to me! After a very *nasty* experience bidding on-line at an Australian auction some years ago I decided never to use that system again.

THE SOCIETY'S NEW PROJECT

From John Calladine:

The Society's new collaborative project was launched at the November Committee Meeting at Warwick; as before we hope for active participation by all our members. The purpose is to follow-up The British County Catalogue of Postal History, Midlands Edition, which listed the usage of all known Midland postal markings up to 1840 or thereabouts, with a second Volume 2 covering the period 6 May 1840 to 31 December 1860. In fact, the 'Midlands BCC' is unlikely to be updated in its present form but will be replaced by a new 'Volume 1' covering the period from 1705-1840, and with a different title. The differences between the Midlands BCC and a new Volume 1 need not concern us at this moment but will be explained in detail in a later Midland Mail.

The content of Volume 2 will involve updating information already published, such as in our books of Undated Circular Marks, but also previously unrecorded information on such as Dated Circular marks and Sideways Duplex cancels. The final objective, as with previous collaborative projects, is to produce a new book in The Midland Postal History Society series; the bulk of the workload will fall on the County Editors. However, the wider membership will need to provide the information from which they compile the lists they then provide to the Coordinating Editor. His task is to ensure uniformity across the board and to produce the publication.

Some key points that members should try to remember are:

1. Usage must be between 6th May 1840 and the end of 1860. If you are aware of additional usage of one of your marks, either before the beginning date or after the end date of the list, your County Editor needs to know of it. They will appear as either <1840 or >1860.
2. For the purpose of this project, do not record codes used in some handstamps.
3. A list of standard colour abbreviations will be available but beware of blue-green colours and only list them as BL or G if they are truly distinct. Otherwise use BL/G.
4. If the mark is believed to be other than a standard type, please send your County Editor a scan or photocopy. A list of standard types will be published in a subsequent Midland Mail.
5. Usage of known re-cut stamps is to be separately identified.
6. Postmarks from offices outside your county (and perhaps outside the Midlands) should be included if the office is under one of your post towns but ensure the County Editor is aware of its status.
7. Although some marks use no text, notably the Maltese Cross, they will be listed. Please note, as best you can, when the Maltese Cross colour changes from red to black at your offices.

We propose to begin membership participation in the project by asking members to update the usage of Undated Circular Marks, starting immediately. Please be aware that the latest listings are NOT those in the 4th edition of the Society's UDC book. Since that was published update lists appeared in various numbers of Midland Mail, listed below (if you do not have a copy, please ask John Calladine (john.calladine@mac.com, 01249-758148) to send you one.)

Birmingham MM 149/19, Derbyshire MM151/13, Gloucestershire MM 147/12, Herefordshire MM 141/14, Leicestershire MM145/15, Northamptonshire MM 140/17, Nottinghamshire MM143/16, Oxfordshire MM 146/18, Rutland (No update since 4th Edn UDC book), Shropshire MM144/15, Staffordshire MM 142/16, Warwickshire MM 150/16, Worcestershire MM148/14

The names of the County Editors appear in our publications but **Frank Bennett** has taken over as Herefordshire County Editor, **Marc Oxley** as Rutland County Editor, **Brian Atkins** as Shropshire County Editor; the Northamptonshire position is temporarily vacant. If you need postal or e-mail addresses, please ask John Calladine and please send Northamptonshire UDC information direct to Martin Scroggs, our Coordinating Editor (martinscroggs@gmail.com).

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Below you will find the final part of Mick Gill's account of his recent display at Cotteridge. It reminded me so much of my own secondary schooling that I thought others might recognise those times. At school we had 4 'houses' and to this day I do not know who they were named after! I'm sure we were told but they had no lasting impact.

**From Mick Gill** - A 2d letter sheet to Sir Edward French Bromhead at Thurlby Hall brought memories of his nephew Gonville Bromhead who would win the VC at the Battle of Rorke's Drift in 1879 and be portrayed by Michael Caine in the film Zulu. It also reminded Mick of his time at school when he was in Bromhead House but was never told the story of Gonville, an old boy!

### **The MINUTES of the AGM, 30 OCTOBER 2021**

The first Annual General Meeting since the onset of Covid was held at the Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge on 30 October 2021, with 25 members present. Apologies were received from Alan Marshall, Roy Summers, John Paulson, Paul Bradshaw, Michael Poxton, John Calladine and Gerald Griffin. The minutes of the AGM of 25 May 2019, published in Midland Mail No 203, were accepted as a correct record. Acceptance was proposed by Richard Farman, seconded by Pete Elms, and agreed by members. There were no matters arising.

The Chairman said that the past two years had been a strange time with only six meetings of the 2019-20 season held before lockdown. Although it was claimed the tide of Covid could be turned in twelve weeks this proved not to be the case. However, postal history was a great hobby and members had been able to continue to pursue their interests. It was also an 'environmentally friendly' hobby as it involved the recycling of bits of paper – something very appropriate given the coming COP26 meeting! Sadly, the Society had lost three members since the last AGM. Guy Bridges, Roger Broomfield and Bob Viney had all passed away and he asked members to reflect on their passing for two minutes.

In August last year the Society held its first Zoom meeting with some 26 members participating. There have been a further 25 such meetings covering a very wide range of subjects. The meetings were good for those members who would not normally attend ordinary meetings. He wished to thank Marc Oxley in particular for his help in setting up and running the meetings. Ordinary meetings had started again in September.

Also, it had been a time of challenges. Midland Mail continued to be a high quality publication with an additional edition in 2020 and he wished to record thanks to the Editor, Brian Atkins, for all his hard work. He also thanked both Chris Jackson and Richard Farman for their help and advice and all members for their contributions both to meetings and the Society.

The Treasurer distributed copies of the balance sheets for 2019-20 and 2020-21, both of which had been examined by Paul Veal, a retired accountant. He explained that 2019-20 had been a fairly normal year which had resulted in a small loss of £76.66. The loss of £727.54 for 2020-21 was attributable to the cost of an additional edition of Midland Mail and loss of commission from an auction. The response to the request for payment of subscriptions had been good with no complaints about value for money. He proposed the subscription remain at £10 for the present and be reviewed at the next AGM. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Richard Farman, seconded by Brian Atkins and agreed by members. On behalf of members present, Richard asked that thanks be recorded to Alan for his bookkeeping.

The Editor thanked members for their contributions to Midland Mail and comments both positive and, occasionally, negative. The printer continued to do an excellent job and, only this week, had pushed through the printing of the latest Midland Mail for him to bring for distribution at today's meeting. He proposed to send the printer an e-mail expressing the Society's thanks. This was agreed by members. He also advised members that the collection of the late Guy Bridges was to be auctioned by Cavendish on 1-2 December.

The Chairman explained that John Calladine had planned to attend the meeting and give a report from the Society's Publications Manager, Martin Scroggs, but an emergency had arisen which had precluded him from attending. Martin would announce the launch of the Society's new book project at the Committee meeting in November and deal with queries from County Editors'. Book sales were currently quiet. Apart from the sale of Parcel Post Label (PPL) books at MIDPEX, only about six books of varied titles had been sold along with one of the scanned maps (from which the Society has a small commission). Although the PPL book was in profit this was due to advertising rather than sales. With the cooperation of Nick Wraith, two articles were being prepared for Royal Mail's Philatelic Bulletin that are intended to provide "subtle advertising" for both the Society's PPL book and Nick's own Parcel Post book.

Alan Godfrey said that although it had been a quiet time the ABPS was continuing to work with Societies. He hoped that the appointment of Steven Harris as Chairman would herald a new approach and see things moving forward. The MPF had not charged a subscription for the last year. MIDPEX had been a success and thanks were due to Clive Jones, a member of the Society, for his work as Chairman of the MIDPEX Committee.

As to the elections, the Chairman explained that as Chris Jackson had completed his time as President members needed to appoint a replacement. He wished to record his thanks to Chris for his support and advice over a difficult period. He had received a proposal from John Calladine that Alan Godfrey be elected President. The proposal was seconded by Richard Farman and the election agreed by members. The current holders of the other Officer, Manager and Representative posts and the County Editors were all willing to serve for another year. However, the post of Auction Officer remained vacant along with that of the Publicity Manager. The role of Auction Officer had been undertaken by Chris Jackson as Auctioneer and, as there was no volunteer, Chris considered the post might be amalgamated with that of Auctioneer. Members thought this appropriate. Three new County Editors were proposed: Frank Bennett

(Herefordshire); Marc Oxley (Rutland); and, Brian Atkins (Shropshire). The election of the Officers, Managers, Representatives and County Editors were all formally proposed, seconded and agreed by members.

The Treasurer explained that Paul Veal was willing to continue to act as Examiner of Accounts. In recognition of his work he proposed the Society make a small donation to Paul and asked if £20 might be appropriate. Agreement was proposed by Andy Thompson, seconded by Richard Farman and agreed by members.

The Chairman explained that to clarify the Chairmanship of both Committee meetings and the AGM, and to reduce the number of Officers required to attend the AGM to a more practical number, the Committee proposed three amendments to the Society constitution. The amendments were set out with the agenda. Acceptance of the amendments was proposed by Richard Farman, seconded by Pete Elms and agreed by members. It was agreed the amendments would be published in Midland Mail. (Details of the agreed amendments are set out in this edition.)

The Programme Secretary said that it had been agreed that morning that future meetings, during covid, could be held in the ‘Main Hall’ at the Meeting House. Accordingly the dates published in Midland Mail No 213 for the January and February meetings next year would change. Hopefully there would now be four meetings a year at the venue. In view of the need to keep members safe it had been decided the Ladybird Inn, Bromsgrove was too restricted. He had secured a speaker for the Christmas meeting at Burton on Trent – Tony Stamford would give the afternoon presentation on the British Levant. A booking form for the meeting would be sent out by e-mail shortly. Finally, he thanked members for their forbearance during the past months.

The Editor said that only 17 votes had been received for the Jon Baker Trophy. The winner was Ian Baker for his article on the Experimental Small Birmingham Receiving Handstamps 1857-66 published in Midland Mail No 208.

As to other business, the following points were raised:

- Jim Hammond wished to records thanks to Gordon Hardy and Marc Oxley for their input to Zoom meetings. Gordon said that it was proposed to continue with third Wednesday monthly meetings to benefit distance members;
  - Alan Godfrey explained that the website would be updated when the future programme of meetings was known; and;
  - Marc Oxley asked if Midland Mails were on the Society website. Gordon said that older editions were but that there had been a delay in adding more. The work of adding Midland Mails had been done by the Royal which had a subject index feature which linked to Midland Mails. The Society’s website would need to be updated and the Royal notified. Additionally, the Society’s Midland Mail Index was last published in July 2016. Alan and Gordon agreed to liaise with Frank Walton and Mark Bailey at the Royal and also John Soer as regards updating the Midland Mail Index.
- With no further business, the meeting closed at 1.45pm and, after a short break, the Annual Auction commenced.

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AMENDMENTS TO THE SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

At the AGM on 25 October 2021 members approved amendments to The Society Constitution to clarify the Chairmanship of both the Committee meetings and the AGM, and to reduce the number of Officers required to attend the AGM. Please amend your Constitution as follows:

para 3 insert new sub para (i)

“The Chairman shall take the chair at Committee Meetings; if the Chairman is not present the President shall take the chair; if neither is present the members in attendance shall appoint an Officer of the Society as Chairman for the meeting.”

renumber existing sub paras (i) to (l) as (j) to (m)

para 6 amend sub para (d) to read

“.....at least **four** of whom shall be Officers of The Society.”

insert new sub para (e)

“The Chairman shall take the chair at the AGM; if the Chairman is not present the President shall take the chair; if neither is present the membership in attendance shall appoint an Officer of ThebSociety as Chairman for the meeting.”

renumber existing sub paras (e) to (h) as (f) to (i)

PRICES REALISED FOR THE AUCTION HELD at COTTERIDGE on 30 OCTOBER 2021

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

Lot	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	M	N	O
Bid £	13	6	12	2	2	2	11	11	4	6	6	30	5	6
Lot	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y				
Bid £	14	14	4	5	8	7.5	20	32	22	20				

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

Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £
2	10	32	4	60	9	83	22	116	3	143	32	176	16	211	70	235	13
5	27	33	6	61	4	84	42	117	15	144	7	183	5	212	40	236	60
9	6	34	6	62	3	85	7	118	8	146	12	185	5	214	75	237	14
10	10	36	6	63	6	86	9	119	8	147	3	186	6	215	40	239	10
11	5	37	6	64	32	87	9	120	5	149	5	188	55	216	10	240	145
12	5	38	6	65	80	90	3	121	8	150	6	189	5	218	16	245	10
15	44	39	6	66	13	91	5	122	9	151	15	192	10	219	40	247	5
16	6	40	5	67	9	92	3	124	7	156	30	193	20	220	50	248	6.5
17	18	42	15	68	7	93	3	125	5	157	35	196	120	221	22	249	10
18	38	43	6	69	7	94	14	126	26	158	15	197	150	222	22	250	28
19	32	44	13	70	8	95	5	129	25	161	28	200	6	223	24	251	30
20	18	45	5	71	7	96	5	130	10	162	20	201	10	224	40	252	240
21	20	46	3	72	8	101	7	132	20	163	5	203	5	226	17	253	32
22	18	47	3	73	22	102	10	133	28	167	6	204	16	227	50	254	15
23	4	48	4	74	14	105	8	134	5	168	4	205	15	228	75	255	100
27	26	53	3	77	13	106	8	135	12	169	3	206	12	229	15	256	65
28	15	54	4	78	12	107	3	137	18	171	3	207	5	231	32	257	26
29	8	56	3	79	3	108	25	138	12	172	14	208	16	232	10	258	65
30	10	57	3	80	8	111	8	139	24	174	15	209	15	233	5	259	32
31	7	58	3	82	9	113	10	140	16	175	10	210	80	234	32	260	10

Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £	Lot	Bid £
261	44	299	6	325	8
262	30	300	4	326	5
264	4.5	301	4	327	7
265	15	302	7	328	4
266	4	303	5		
267	3	305	7		
269	19	307	18		
270	10	308	8		
272	28	309	5		
273	19	310	6		
274	20	311	16		
276	5	313	7		
277	10	314	6		
278	7	315	7		
280	12	318	16		
281	9	320	5		
282	16	321	5		
286	5	322	5		
293	14	323	22		
295	10	324	13		

Alan Godfrey reported total sales of £4359.50 (68.3% of lots sold); 38 successful bidders (24 room, 14 postal) and 13 vendors. Commission to the society (including lotting fees) was £475.10 with 24 lots sold for society funds realising £292.50. The average successful bid was 38% over reserve. Many thanks to all those who attended the AGM and auction, donated club lots and bought or sold.

Much time and effort goes in to producing an efficient, successful auction. Start collecting lots to sell in the next auction now!

Editor's Comment: Alan is correct in that 'much time and effort goes in to producing an efficient, successful auction'. Both he and Chris Jackson should be congratulated for the work they have done on behalf of the society – well done gentlemen and thank you!

The 13 November Meeting at Warwick & Warwick, when the subject was *Large Items, including 3 dimensional items, maps, documents, etc.* There were 19 members present for a fascinating day of postal ephemera.

John Soer began proceedings with a photograph of Newark Station which included a postman, together with a 'Waiting for Mails' postcard. Books included *The Telegraph Stations of the Midland Railway* (1912), *Royal Mail TPO Schedule of Services* (c1991) and a 1993 map of the TPO network.

Pete Elms produced an 1897 edition of the *Post Office Handbook*, a highly useful reference book.

Mick Gill showed a marvellous display of London Gazettes and a London Chronicle (1784). The Gazettes included the 1683 appointment of Thomas Rawson as Deputy Postmaster at East Retford, 1690/91 reference to a direct post between London & Sheffield, 1761 referred to a 6-day post from London to Newark, Tuxford and Worksop, 1774 stated that letters to Lords and MPs to pass free from 20 Oct 1774 for 40 days before the new Parliament, 1784 stated the increased postage from 31 August 1784 as well as details of addressing franks with the addition that counterfeiting handwriting to be a felony punishable by transportation for 7 years. An extremely rare 2021 item was a free gift from a dealer!!!

Chris Jackson began with Number 43 in the series of London Street Views which showed King William Street, the London premises of John English the needlemaker from Feckenham. A London to Aberystwyth road map (*Gentlemen's Magazine*, 1765) was followed by the auction sale documents and maps of Beoley Hall (1895 & 1948) and of the Skilts Estate also 1948. An original Cary folded map of the whole country in its original sleeve and a framed Bowen map of Worcestershire, which some members recognised hanging behind Chris at zoom meetings, followed. He finished with a copy of the 1971 full sized black and white reprint of Ogilby's Road Maps of England and Wales together with the Duckham's Oil reduced and coloured reprint of 1939, but distributed in 1941 due to war damage of the warehouse.

Clive Jones illustrated a number of items including a parcel wrapper from London to Gloucester (1854)

Malcolm Allinson regaled us with road maps including an 1698 Ogilby strip map of Hereford to Leicester from the first road atlas of England & Wales, the first mapped at one inch to the mile using the Statute mile of 1760 yards. Thomas Gardner's *A Pocket Guide to the English Traveller* (1719), was a smaller but accurate copy of the Ogilby originals. Other Midlands road maps were followed by a 1676 'Diagrammatic table of road distances.....' from London to Holyhead by John Speed, a printed version of the sketch of 'the Chester Road' (*Midland Mail* 212/11). His second display included the scarcer 1616 second edition of John Speed's 'WORCESTERSHIRE DESCRIBED'.

Richard Farman produced his usual array of goodies, including an 1808 Mail Coach Notice of the Worcester to London coach, allowing 4 outside and 6 inside as well as a coach ticket! A notice about stolen bank notes of the Bridgnorth Bank, A letter from London to the postmaster at Ludlow informed him of an increase to his salary from Oct 1785, the letter dated 1791!!! Fascinating was a packet of Certificates of Posting carried by a rural postman (1942)

Joe Cottriall brought the first session to an end, explaining that Warwick & Warwick had hoped to produce a display cabinet in the foyer which might include Instructions to Postmasters informing about the changes on 10 Jan 1840 as well as information about the Falmouth packet boats. There were also Airgraph Service Forms from Birmingham PO and the plates they were printed from, a PO rules book, and old PMG briefcase but most remarkable of all were hand stamps from Brighton (**Liable to Letter Rate / 132**), Preston (**Δ / 628**, telegraph stamp) and Lytham St Annes.

For the second session, **Alan Godfrey** began with Midland Red (bus) items, a Parcel Delivery Service poster, a 1940 calendar and two covers to Stourbridge County Express 1940s / 1950s with newspaper stamps and sent by Midland Red Parcels Express. These were followed by items related to the Agricultural Show at Warwick, items related to Frederick Jackson, the Arctic explorer and 1998 Christmas Stamps poster and 4 pages of FDCs of these stamps with a railway theme. Finally he showed 6 large sheets of modern covers showing 'Advisory Labels on Overseas Mail'

Garrie Naden presented a single large item, which he explained was a gift from his father in Macclesfield who had rescued it from a neighbour's clear out; he had cleaned and polished it up to reveal a characterful (ie battered) coaching horn, which he claimed had fallen from the last London-Manchester mail coach in July 1837 between Leek and Macclesfield. It was found by a boy who played with



it for years before it was passed down the generations, but he presented no evidence to support this. The horn remains in fine working order but the operator's attempt to herald in the Chairman who was speaking next was rather pathetic!

Paul Bradshaw and **Gordon Hardy** also showed items but I had to leave before they began their displays.

The 17 November Zoom Meeting when the subject was '*Items relating to Mail Coaches*' with 22 members present.

Alan Godfrey's topic was The Bull & Mouth Coaching Inn with illustrations of paintings, engravings, tickets and a picture of a blue plaque stating 'The Site of the Bull & Mouth Inn, Demolished 1888. Two FDCs followed each with a red circular CARRIED BY MAIL COACH (1979, 1981). Alan also had a mail coach horn from 1853.

Frank Walton began with a 1690 London Gazette, a 1787 Directory of Sheffield showed coaches from the Tontine Inn and the Angel Inn. A picture, a 1785 advertising card and 1788 (x2), 1792 and 1832 named invoices of the Tontine Inn followed. A c.1827 Sheffield Mail Coach possibly outside the Angel Inn with an 1824 invoice and finally an 1821 item relating to The Commercial Inn, Haymarket, Sheffield

John Soer also showed invoices from the Three Crowns Hotel, Leicester. A 17 March 1827 report from the Leicester Journal described an accident to a mail coach which seems to have occurred when it was trying to pass another coach! The Leicester Chronicle (1842) had an advert for times of the Yarmouth to Leicester mail coach showing connection to trains – changing times to a faster service.

Marc Oxley produced an 1811 letter from Calcutta to Dover by the Worcester mail!! It was carried by favour from India and put into the mails in England. Sent from the Foley Arms Hotel, Tarrington, it was forwarded to Ledbury and Dover. An 1802 to Ludlow entire indicated that someone was 'Waiting for the Ludlow mail coach at the Star & Garter Inn at Worcester.

Gordon Hardy described Hired Horse Duty and Post Horse Duty. The Post Office had to use horses and pay for them as they were the fastest for of travel, so there were certain routes along which horses were available; a horse could travel about 20 miles before needing to be changed. On 5 July 1779 the Post office monopoly ended which meant anyone could apply for a licence to supply horses at 5/- per year. Known as Post Horse Duty (1779 to 1802) and as Hired Horse Duty from 1802. He illustrated a number of remarkable STAMP OFFICE related tickets with one showing 2 horses hired for the day at 3/6! The stamps had to be handed to a turnpike keeper and had no value unless handed to him / her! There was quite a lot more but a fascinating display of items quite new to this reporter!

Richard Farman displayed two tickets from the Bull & Mouth Inn, London (1812), a trade card for Trentham Inn, near Stoke-on-Trent, The Boat House, Wednesbury and Thomas Venables' Castle Hotel (1851). There were also Bill Heads from Burton-on-Trent, (1850), Fletchers' George Family Hotel, Walsall (1837), the George Hotel, Lichfield (1845), whose proprietor was Richard Sharp, postmaster of Lichfield 1836 to 1855.

Richard Capon showed an 1843 cover with a WELDON-NORTHTn UDC (under Wansford); he wondered how such a small place was given the number **841** for an 1844-type cancel. Nobody had a definitive answer!

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**The 4 December Meeting at Burton-on-Trent** began with standing displays from:

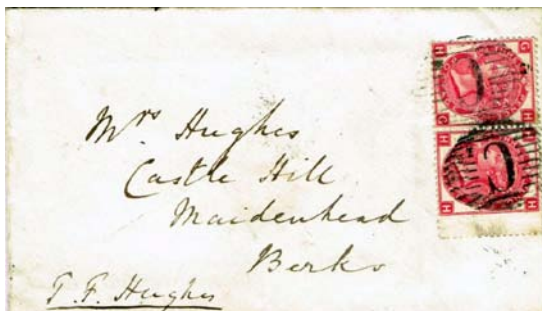
|                         |                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Clive Jones</b>      | 2 frames of North Western TPO                                                      |
| <b>Richard Farman</b>   | Parcel labels, Customs Duty labels & Parcel post from Europe & Commonwealth        |
| <b>Gordon Hardy</b>     | Derby postal history                                                               |
| <b>Andy Thomson</b>     | Modern Burton-on-Trent postal history                                              |
| <b>Terry Harrison</b>   | Ship letters from St. Vincent to ports in the British Isles (an excellent display) |
| <b>Malcolm Allinson</b> | Cumberland postal history, largely Penrith & Carlisle and to overseas              |
| <b>Richard Capon</b>    | Wansford postal history                                                            |
| <b>Steve Ellis</b>      | Railway related cancels on Cross-Channel mail (also an excellent display)          |
| <b>Alan Godfrey</b>     | A variety of Warwickshire items                                                    |

After the Christmas lunch 13 members and 5 guests gathered to hear a talk by Tony Stanford entitled *British Levant*, I am indebted to Tony for providing a synopsis of his talk. All images reduced in order to fit in as many as possible.

The display began with Crimean War covers followed by a postal history of all the offices with prominence to the use of postal stationery. A British Army Post Office was established in Crimea in June 1854 but with a large volume of mail offices were also opened in Constantinople, Balaclava, Varna and Scutari but closed in early 1857, except for the Constantinople office which was reopened in September 1857 using British stamps and its own hand stamps.



Like patience on a monument they sit and smile while waiting for the show to begin!



1872 Constantinople to Maidenhead, two 3d rose, plate 6 cancelled by C in lined oval



1899 Constantinople to Mexico, 2½d pse forged 40 Paras, QV 2½d correct 40 Paras overprint paying registration.



1887 Constantinople Stamboul sub-office to New York, QV 2½d lilac overprinted 40 Paras, cancelled S of Stamboul sub-office

Frame 1 had mail from and to the Crimea and continued with mail into Constantinople before the opening of the British PO and then early mail to and from the British PO.

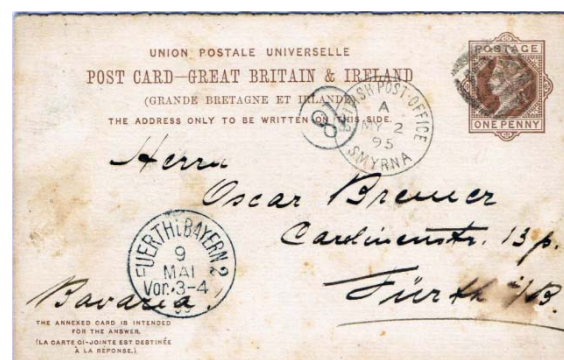
The falling value of the Turkish piastre and the fear that speculators might purchase stamps in piastres and sell them back for sterling encouraged the British Government to sell stamps in the British post offices from 1st August 1885 surcharged in Turkish piastres.

The display continued with frames featuring the other offices. The Smyrna post office opened in October 1872 in the British Consulate and was allocated the code F87, the office closed on 30 September 1914. The Beyrout post office opened in 1873, the Stamboul office opened in April 1885 and closed on 25 August 1896 because of anti-Armenian riots. All the Offices were closed at the outbreak of the First World War. Covers or postcards were shown from all these offices.

For the second part Tony displayed covers and cards from the reigns of KEDVII and KGV. Non-overprinted stamps continued to be sold in the British post offices, low values for use on postcards, etc and higher values for packets and parcels but were superseded by the KEVII definitives printed and overprinted 'LEVANT' by De La Rue. On 1 January 1911 Harrison & Sons took over the printing contract from De La Rue and in February 1912 the British post offices in the Levant were supplied with the ½d value printed by Harrison & Sons and overprinted 'LEVANT' at Somerset House using the De la Rue plates. Harrison & Somerset House

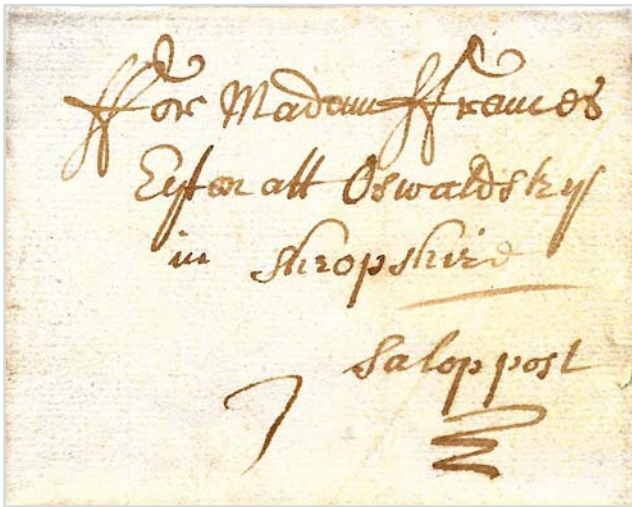
continued to jointly provide the overprinted stamps until the KGV issues became available, the use of which continued up to the start of WWI, when all the BPO's in the Levant were closed.

On 30th October 1918 the cease-fire between the Western Powers and Turkey was signed on board HMS Argamemnon in Mudros Bay by the Island of Lemnos, which provided for the occupation of Constantinople and Smyrna by allied troops and the re-opening of those two Levant Post Offices. On 4th February 1919 the Army Post Office in Constantinople was opened for civilian use, using non-overprinted British stamps and applying the APO-SX3 and APO-Y hand stamps that were being used for military mail. On 29th July 1920 the Army post office was closed and the British post office in Constantinople was re-opened and from August 1921 using surcharged GB stamps until it closed in September 1923. On 1st March 1919 the British Post Office in Smyrna was re-opened, initially using a stock of overprinted British stamps retained in the Consulate General from 1914 and then non-overprinted stamps as stocks arrived from Britain.



1895 1d pse reply card from Smyrna to Fürth, Bavaria, cancelled F87 barred oval of Smyrna

**15 December Zoom Meeting**, a talk by Brian Atkins entitled *The Postal History of Oswestry, Shropshire 1694 – 1960s*



11 December 1694 from London

The first Oswestry postmaster was Isaac Moses who was officially paid a salary in 1698 / 99. It is likely he was in office as an 'unofficial receiver' when the December 1694 entire (see left) arrived in the office from London – note the spelling of Oswestry as Oswaldstrey. A similar spelling occurred on an August 1710 entire to the same address and as a town mark on a c.1725 entire (see below).

The first two Oswestry town marks have the hallmark of uncertainty of spelling:



Jan 1706 to Jan 1710  
3 examples known

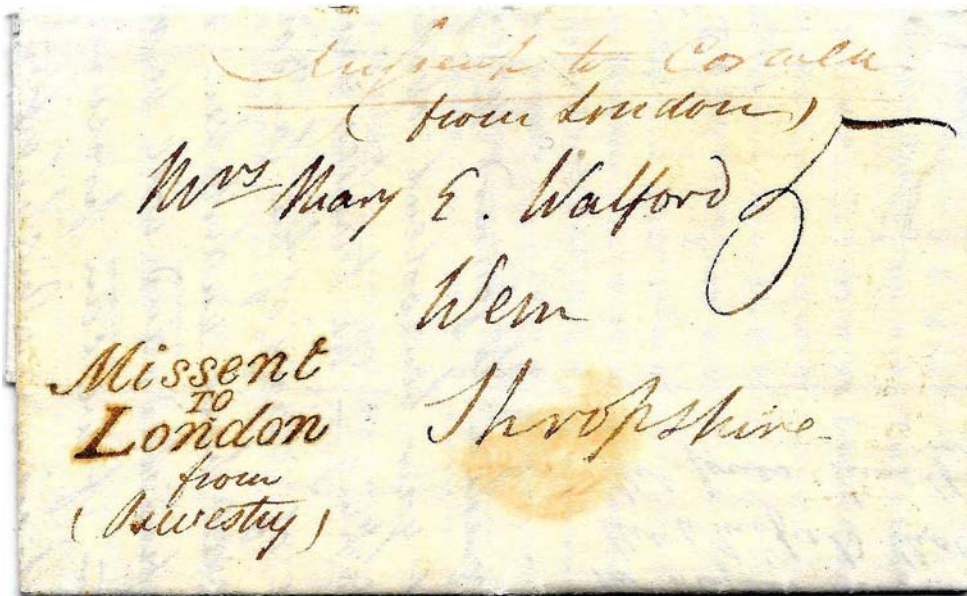


24 December c1725  
Only known example

The first known two-line serif OSWES / TRY town mark does not appear until 9 March 1734, to be followed by 4 others until the advent of the single-line town mark in October 1779. The easiest way of distinguishing the two-line marks is to note the shape of the letter W, some occur with a central flat top, others with a central pointed top and one with 'overlapping Vs', all except the first are illustrated on page 128 of the Midland Edition of the County Catalogue!

There are four known single-line town marks with the first and fourth being quite common but the middle two have single day uses. The unusual OSWESTRY / 173 first-type mileage, unusual in that the mileage figure comes after the town name, appears between 1786 and March 1789. A November 1815 entire from Chirk, via the Oswestry penny post,

to Belfast caused two of our members to question the stated 1/- rate, finally deciding it should be 1/9, clearly to be seen, if only the speaker had gone to Spec.....!!



In 1837 the postal rate from Oswestry to Wem was 6d (under 30 miles, 1812 Act) but a January 1838 entire managed to find its way via London and Corwen (illustrated), at least one assumes it was delivered. To cap it all, it was only charged 5d – a rushed day in the Oswestry office? 5d was also the rate on a June

1838 cover taken 18½ miles from the mining village of Rhosllanerchrugog to Oswestry via Ruabon and Chirk.

A veritable cornucopia of items followed illustrating the Uniform Fourpenny and Penny Posts, including five of the known <sup>d</sup>1 hand stamps, two of which were on letters originating in villages and the other three on forwarded covers, none have appeared on mail originating in the town. There were also two 1845 covers with startling wafer seals, the only known **More to Pay** (February 1846) and two registered items (December 1849 with the 6d fee paid in cash and an 1876 cover with the 4d fee and 1d postage all paid by five 1d rose-reds from plate 179). The two MISSENT stamps and the three different TOO LATE hand stamps were followed by covers to and from a number of countries including a few related to the Sandbach family, especially one from Kashmir to the little Welsh village of Bwlch-y-Cibau, a sub-office of Oswestry. A fun evening was rounded off by a selection of postal items from the small office at the Orthopaedic Hospital situated between Oswestry and Gobowen. It closed in March 2018, only to reopen a month later as a PO Local attached to the hospital shop (thanks to Ken Smith for this).

**The 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022 Meeting at Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge, Birmingham** was underway by the time your scribe arrived at 11.30am to find 11 members listening to a presentation from **Richard Farman** on the chosen topic of '*Uniform 4d Post and Uniform 1d Post*'. Notable from Richard's presentation were a first day uniform 4d post entire from West Bromwich to Bilston with the charge of 2d unchanged, why so was the question which received no explanatory reply. A first day uniform 4d post Money Letter was a definite highlight as was a 9 Dec 1839 *prepaid* uniform 4d post from West Bromwich to Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

**Alan Godfrey** concentrated on uniform 1d post and produced a Leamington to Norfolk 2d postage due and a Leamington hand struck 2 on another postage due entire. A similar item from Coventry had the 2d paid in cash. A March 1840 entire to Worcester had the Warwick P1 in red. A Christmas Day 1839 entire from France was charged 10decimes in Paris plus 10d UK making a total of 1/8 to be collected.

**Garrie Naden** began with pre-uniform 4d items from Congleton to London at 10d followed by a uniform 4d post item mailed at 6d less and a two further examples in the uniform 1d post period charged 1d, Garrie emphasised the reduction from 10d to a 1d over a short period! His next 5 sheets showed covers from Congleton to Macclesfield, a distance of 8 miles. An 1835 pre-uniform 4d post was charged 4d, with a 6 January 1838 example reduced to 2d for less than 8 miles. He finished by showing a Macclesfield to Betley Hall, Staffs at 4d in the uniform 4d post era, previously 6d or 7d.

**Clive Jones** showed first day U4dP usages from Doncaster and Edinburgh, the latter with a hand struck 4. An 11 December 1839 entire from Birmingham to Derby, prepaid 4d, was redirected to Duffield at 1d for the penny post. A first day U1dP from London to Ludlow had 4d changed to 2d correcting the new unpaid rate. A rare 5 February 1840 redirected cover charged at the short-lived 2d rate was shown on an item from Masham. In the second half, further UPP marks were shown including one from Northampton to Settle on 21 February 1847 but missent to the **Rugby and Newcastle RWPO**. Noticeable were a pair of 2d adhesives on a cover from Birmingham to Bewdley (29 May 1840).

To close the first half **Chris Jackson's** display included a 15 December 1839 hand struck 4 of Worcester, followed by pre-paid 4d letters from Dudley to Bewdley and Worcester to Hereford. An entire from Studley to Henley in Arden was an example of a 2d rate item in the U4dP period when lower rate letters were carried at the previous rate. A 'Free' from Worcester to Bewdley on 27 December was another quirk of the Uniform 4d period. A Dudley to Welshpool letter of Christmas Day to a solicitor requested '*a reply by return of post*! 9 January, the last day of the 4d rate was covered by letters from Droitwich to Cleobury Mortimer and Studley to London. A first day of the Uniform 1d rate item was a Free Front from Worcester to Matlock with a P1 in red. Chris's display finished with a 20 May 1840 Mulready from Droitwich to Darlington with a skeleton cancel and a 1d Black from Bromsgrove to Tottenham 3 June 1840.

**Gordon Hardy** showed Derbyshire and produced a 28 Sept 1838 from Matlock Bath to Lichfield charged 1/5, a rate which couldn't be reconciled. First day covers of U4dP from Matlock Bath and U1dP from Cavendish Bridge were highlights as was a 6 December U4dP double rate 8d cover from Ashbourne to Bakewell, charged for being over ½oz.

**Brian Atkins** began with a 4 December 1839 letter from Oswestry to London, charged 1/10 with an enclosure. That old habits die hard was illustrated by a 9 December 1839 cover, also from Oswestry, first charged single rate 11d as of old, changed to 4d! The Whitchurch hand struck 4 was displayed as well as a last day U4dP cover from Ellesmere. A feature was a postage due first day of U1dP from Wenlock. A 2d blue of 7 Jan 1841 produced interest as did the 5 known examples of the <sup>d</sup>1 of Oswestry, two on letters from villages and 3 on forwarded mail.

**Mick Gill's** first frame began with the earliest of the eleven recorded Nottingham hand struck 4s (9 and 10 Dec 1839), followed by six examples of the P<sup>d</sup>.1<sup>d</sup>. mark (11 Jan to 19 Mar 1839), without the dots (29 Feb 1839) and two examples of the earliest Nottingham hand struck 2 (4 & 25 Mar 1839). Frame two had a 4d post item to Newark from Oxford (11 Dec 1839), a 5 January 1840 letter from Thorney to Newark at a 1d with a *Newark / Penny Post* and two free fronts with an OLLERTON udc (12 Dec 1839 and 2 Jan 1840). A first day U1dP from Mansfield had a manuscript P1. The final frame showed Mulready 1d envelopes and letter sheets, one with a MISSENT TO / NEWARK, one uprated with a 1d black and the only recorded Newark Mulready with an advert for the Crown Life Assurance Agent, J Fiddamen, accompanied by a London Porter bottle from his shop with his name on it. The last item was a Forres Shooting front, uprated with a 1d black, to Mrs Fowler, Southwell, a prolific free front collector (see also bottom of page 3).

**Brian Purcell** began with a *first day prepaid* U4dP with red ms 4 from Oswestry (see front page), followed by a 14 Dec 1839 example from Shrewsbury with ms black 4. A 20 December 1839 from Edinburgh to Hamilton had a fine hand struck 4. The U1dP was represented with a 2 March 1840 entire, followed by a variety of hand struck 1s and PAID 1 hand stamps used after May 1840. He concluded with 1d stamps from the 1d black to 1½d rate change of 3 June 1840.

**Richard Farman** bookended the day with U1dP hand stamps beginning with a 21 January 1840 Newcastle-under-Lyme P<sup>d</sup>.1<sup>d</sup>, a 23 January 1840 from Wolverhampton to London with 1d erased and a 'curly' red 2 instead. A 15 Dec 1842 cover from Wolverhampton had a superb 2, plus ms 'To Pay' and 2 penny reds. Also noticeable were two

different Paid / 1d of Wolverhampton dated 27 January 1846 and 16 July 1847. Another distinctive 'curly' 2 of Lichfield was visible on two letters of 17 July 1848 and 23 Dec 1867.

An excellent day with some wonderful items on display, a pity there were only 12 members present to appreciate it.

**The 19 January Zoom Meeting** was a member's display of *Railway Letters & Parcels*, with 25 members on-line. The report of this meeting will be short as much space has been taken up in this issue with the AGM minutes, auction etc.

**Julian Tweed** showed railway express covers to illustrate the three methods by which such items could be delivered from the arrival station. These were: the letter was placed in the nearest box to be delivered by express messenger when reaching the express office nearest to the addressee (default option); by instructing that the letter was to be extracted at the first express office reached (rarely seen); or by instructing that the letter was to be delivered direct from the station (requiring a telegram to the destination PO for a messenger waiting for the train – more costly but the most effective).

**Richard Farman** produced a very early railway letter dated 2 April 1840 from Newcastle-under-Lyme to Stafford with one envelope inside another, followed by a Grand Junction Railway timetable for October 1838. Two 'string' letters of 1851 & 1866 were followed by a 'Salmon Letter' from Cambus O'May to Ireland with a 2d LNWR stamp and a 5 Feb 1968 card with an Explosives label from Penrhyndeudraeth Dynamite Factory!

**Brian Atkins** showed a 29 March 1853 'parcel letter' from Oswestry to Shrewsbury with envelope and letter intact, Railway letters from the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, the GWR and a February 1886 letter from Dinas Mawddwy to Dugod Bach (2 miles) which had gone to Shrewsbury and back (64 miles). Covers of the Shrewsbury & Tamworth RPO, TPO and Sorting Carriage and the Shrewsbury & Aberyswyth SC were seen. He finished with a 1911 postcard with a CARDINGTON / CHURCH STRETTON RSO and a manuscript *Missent to Cardington Salop*.

**John Soer** also showed various railway letters including a 26 July 1915 Midland Railway cover from Edale Station to West Didsbury and an August 1916 cover from Buxton to Bristol. Two items went overseas one with a 2d Midland Railway stamp and 1d postage on a 12 June 1903 cover from Rushton Hall to South Africa and a 17 Oct 1913 cover with a LSWR 2d stamp and 1d postage from Sunningdale to India.

**Ian May** began with a GWR 2d green stamp and 1½d postage on a letter from Henley-in-Arden to Stratford. Also to Stratford was a 'Wilson' cover of the Stratford-on-Avon & Midland Junction railway. Two KNOWLE STATION date stamps of 17 Oct 1895 (code A) and 4 May 1899 (code B) were, I think, the only station date stamps shown apart from GLOUCESTER STATION (see below) and STAFFORD STATION. The Railway letter service began on 1 Feb 1891 with Ian showing a second day usage with a 2d green LNWR stamp with the cover having a COVENTRY square circle date stamp for 2 FEB 1891.

**Garrie Naden** gave a short talk on the first railway between Liverpool and Manchester, which opened on 15 September 1830 and carried mail from 10th November 1830, the corresponding mail coach ceased on 15 November. Early examples of mail carried by train included an 1832 letter from Manchester to Liverpool charged 7d for 30-50 miles. Up to 6 services each way were used for mail carriage, with numeral handstamps 2 to 6 used on the top letter of each bundle to match the intended service, 1 being deemed unnecessary. An example of numeral 2 was shown on an 1836 letter from Bombay to Saddleworth which after docking at Liverpool travelled on the second service to Manchester.

**Alan Godfrey** first displayed a 5 November 1908 East & West Junction Railway 2d red stamp on a cover from Kineton to London with a similar 1 May 1908 cover from Stratford-on-Avon to Simla, India. Other covers had a Stratford-on-Avon Railway 3d red overprinted 4d, a 5 May 1913 cover had two 3d LNWR parcel stamps and finally Alan presented a GWR 2d green stamp with two George V ½d stamps paying the postage on a 6 September 1911 cover from Danzey Station to London.

**Marc Oxley** produced a 25 May 1846 letter from Henley-in-Arden to Leominster which had what appears to have been the earliest known date for the GLOUCESTER STATION dda.

**Gordon Hardy** produced two examples of a 1d postal stationery envelope used as 1d postage on a railway letter, the first together with a Midland Railway 2d green paying railway carriage locally in Derby. The Midland Railway 2d green was also seen on a 5 November 1897 cover from Calke Abbey (Melbourne Station) to East Cowes, Isle of Wight, the postage paid by a 1d lilac. The other postal stationery envelope was cancelled by an oval CHESTERFIELD L.D. & ECR (Lancashire Derbyshire & East Coast Railway) but with the railway stamp removed.

**MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2020**

| INCOME          |                                                   |                   | EXPENDITURE     |                                               |                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2019<br>£       |                                                   | 2020<br>£         | 2019<br>£       |                                               | 2020<br>£         |
| 930.36          | Subscriptions including those received in advance | 890.00            | 407.90          | Hire of Rooms & Refreshments                  | 516.45            |
| 532.50          | Adverts in 'Midland Mail'                         | 420.00            | 1,321.43        | Production and Distribution of 'Midland Mail' | 1,558.59          |
| 270.56          | Society's commission on Annual Auction            | 656.15            | 81.99           | Auction Expenses                              | 52.49             |
| 66.00           | Gifts to the Society, sold in Annual Auction      | 42.00             | -               | Speakers Expenses                             | -                 |
| -               | Sales of Various Publications                     | 174.50            | 235.54          | Printing, Stationery, Postage and Telephone   | 98.17             |
| 2,079.99        | Sales of Parcel Post Label Book                   | 183.18            | 2,808.00        | Publications Expenses                         | 77.50             |
| 850.00          | Advertising - PPL Book                            | -                 | 25.00           | MPF Affiliation Fee                           | 25.00             |
| 13.23           | Donations Received                                | 27.60             | 103.75          | ABPS Affiliation Fee                          | 126.00            |
| 9.00            | Sale of Pin Badges                                | -                 | 25.00           | MIDPEX 2019 Stand Cost                        | -                 |
|                 |                                                   |                   | -               | Website Expenses                              | 15.89             |
|                 |                                                   |                   | (256.97)        | Surplus/ (Deficit) of Income over Expenditure | (76.66)           |
| <u>4,751.64</u> |                                                   | <u>£ 2,393.43</u> | <u>4,751.64</u> |                                               | <u>£ 2,393.43</u> |

**BALANCE SHEET as at 31st MARCH 2020**

|                                                 | £                 |                                       | £                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Accumulated Fund:                               |                   | Represented by:                       |                   |
| Balance brought forward 1st April 2019          | 4,714.99          | Co-op Bank Current Account            | 5,037.18          |
| Reverse Acc Income 2018/9 - Adverts & Subs      | 107.50            | <u>Less</u> Uncleared Cheque Payments | (291.35)          |
| Deficit of Expenditure over Income for the year | (76.66)           | Cash in Hand                          | 0.00              |
|                                                 | <u>£ 4,745.83</u> |                                       | <u>£ 4,745.83</u> |

I have examined the Account Books shown to me and received all information that I have requested from the Treasurer.  
I confirm that in my opinion these figures show the true financial position of the Society at 31st March 2020.

Signed:



Date:

27. 10. 20

Paul Veal  
Accounts Examiner



# Bill Pipe

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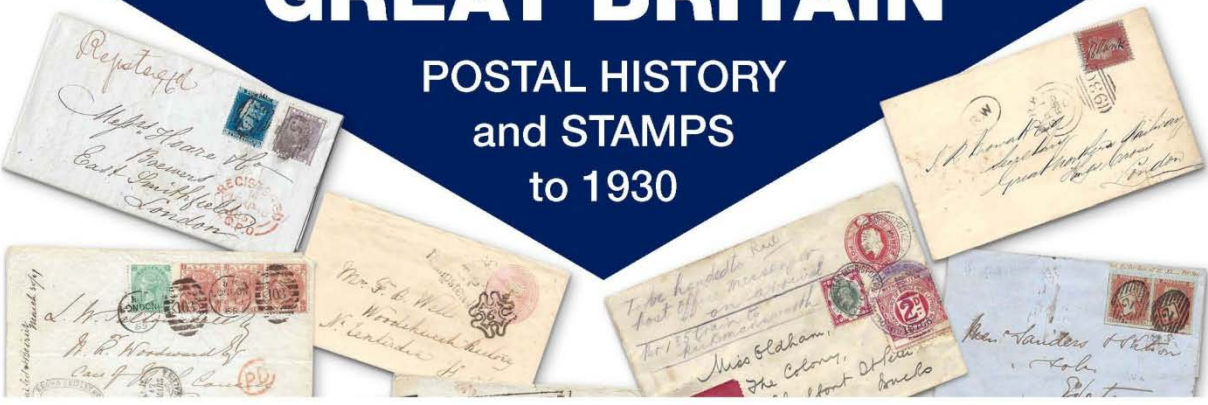


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# GREAT BRITAIN

## POSTAL HISTORY and STAMPS to 1930



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## RATES FOR LOCAL LETTERS IN PENNY POSTS

by Ian M. May

### Introduction

The Society's publication, *The Local Posts of the Midland Counties to 1840*<sup>[1]</sup>, describes the background to and the setting up of the Penny Posts. Therefore only a brief review will be given here. The Postage Act 1765<sup>[2]</sup> allowed the Postmaster General to set up provincial Penny Posts similar to those in "*London and Westminster and the Borough of Southwark and parts adjacent*". The charges within a Penny Post were also given, Table 1. The Penny Post Act of 1794<sup>[3]</sup> updated the charges, Table 1, and although mentioning only the London Penny and Two Penny Post was taken to apply to the provincial Penny Posts. There was a weight limit of 4 ounces and no multiple charges within a Penny Post. General Post letters carried within a penny post were charged a 1d in addition to the General Post charge. Local letters, that is letters which did not enter the General Post were charged either a 1d or 2d. Following a legal opinion in December 1836 that 2d charges within a provincial Penny Post were illegal, the 2d charge was removed from early 1837. Table 1 which summarises the charges within a Penny Post is taken from Robinson<sup>[4]</sup>. The charges were applied in addition to the General Post charge and also applied to mail carried just within the Penny Post.

|                      |                         |                                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| October 1765, ref 2. | Town area               | 1d per item – to be prepaid                   |
|                      | District area           | 1d per item– to be prepaid and 1d on delivery |
| March 1794, ref 3,   | Town area               | 1d per item – prepayment optional             |
|                      | District area           | 2d per item – prepayment optional             |
| Early 1837, ref 1.   | Town and district areas | 1d per item – prepayment optional             |

Table 1, Rates for provincial penny posts<sup>[4]</sup>.

This article considers the charges applied to local letters. The method of charging local letters within the Penny Posts of Warwick and Coventry, which differed, is illustrated. Also briefly discussed is the effect of charging mail from Leamington to Warwick when Leamington becomes a Post Town and was, therefore no longer a Receiving Office within the Warwick Penny Post.

### Warwick Penny Post

Leamington became a Receiving Office in the Warwick Penny Post in August 1811<sup>[1]</sup>. Fig. 1 shows a cover from Leamington to Olney passing through the Warwick Penny post correctly charged a 1d for carriage in the Penny Post. In addition it was charged the then current rate of 7d, for 50 to 80 miles<sup>[4]</sup> in the General Post for a total charge of 8d. As mentioned above it was possible for mail to travel only within the Penny Post from Leamington to Warwick and one would expect a charge of 1d, the same as the cover shown in Fig.1. Fig. 2 shows a cover sent in 1828 from Leamington to Warwick within the Penny Post. Based on the charge for the Penny Post on the item shown in Fig. 1 it could be expected that the charge would be 1d however, it was charged 2d. 1828 is the earliest that the writer has seen a cover sent locally within the Warwick Penny Post but it is likely that the 2d charge was used prior to 1828. Fig. 3 illustrates an undated cover from Leamington to Warwick, but the Leamington undated circle is recorded in 1828 and 1829, which was initially rated at a 1d but it is assumed that when it was noted that it was only to be carried in the penny post it was re-rated at 2d. Fig 4 shows an item sent in 1831 from Kenilworth, which was also a Receiving Office within the Warwick Penny Post, to Warwick.

In 1830, because of its increasing importance, Leamington became a post town. Mail from Leamington to Warwick now passed through the General Post and the charge was 4d. Leamington also had a Penny Post, which had been established in 1832<sup>[1]</sup>. The cover shown in Fig. 5 was charged 4d General Post, plus an additional 1d as it had been put into the mail in the Upper Parade Receiving Office of the Penny Post, to give a total charge of 5d.

There had been since about 1801 an unofficial arrangement where local postmasters started to charge 2d for mail between post towns that were only a short distance apart. Robinson states that from 1833 to 1835 these were officially authorised. Leamington and Warwick did not enter into this arrangement. However, in November 1837 a General Post rate for mail carried less than 8 miles of 2d was introduced, so mail from Leamington to Warwick was again charged 2d, Fig. 6.

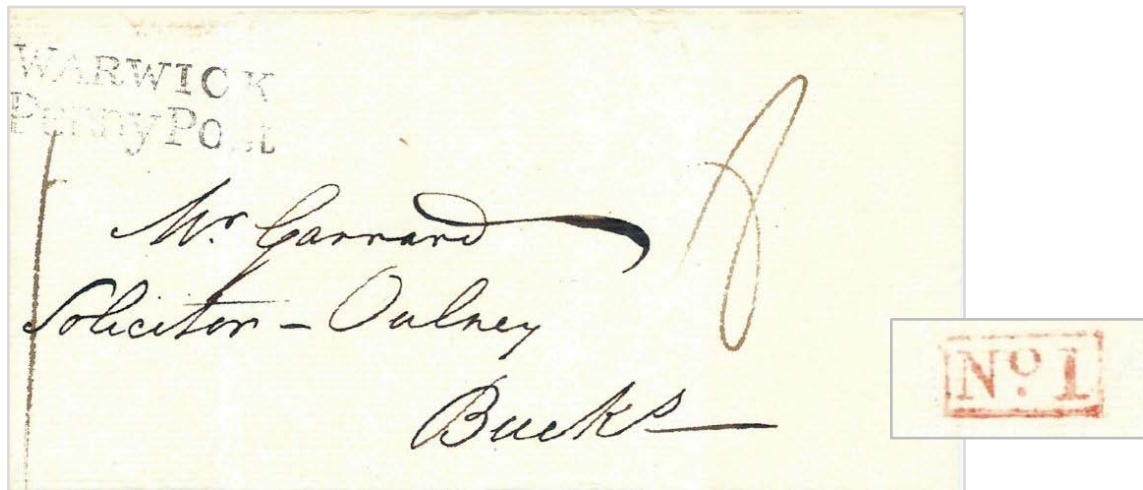


Fig 1, 12 May 1812, Leamington (boxed No1) to Olney, charged 8d.

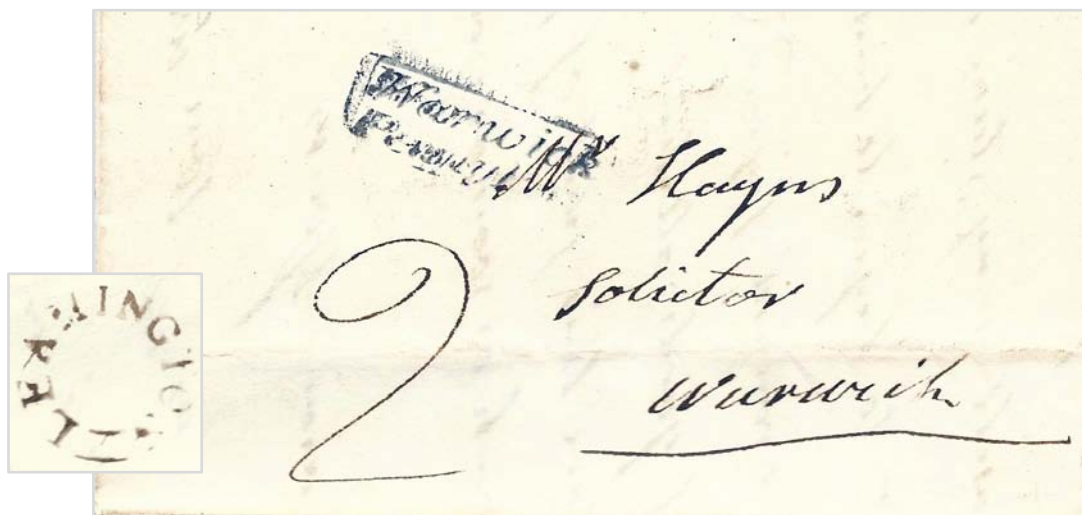


Fig 2, 9 February 1828, Leamington to Warwick, charged 2d

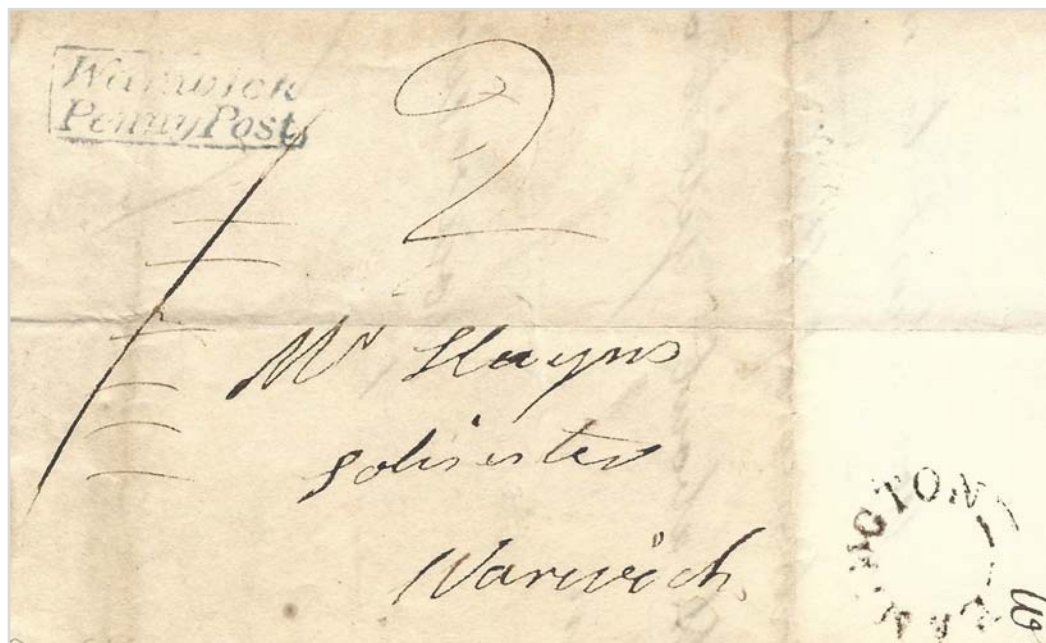


Fig 3, circa 1829 / 30, Leamington to Warwick, charged 2d



Fig 4, 13 March 1831 Kenilworth to Warwick, charged 2d

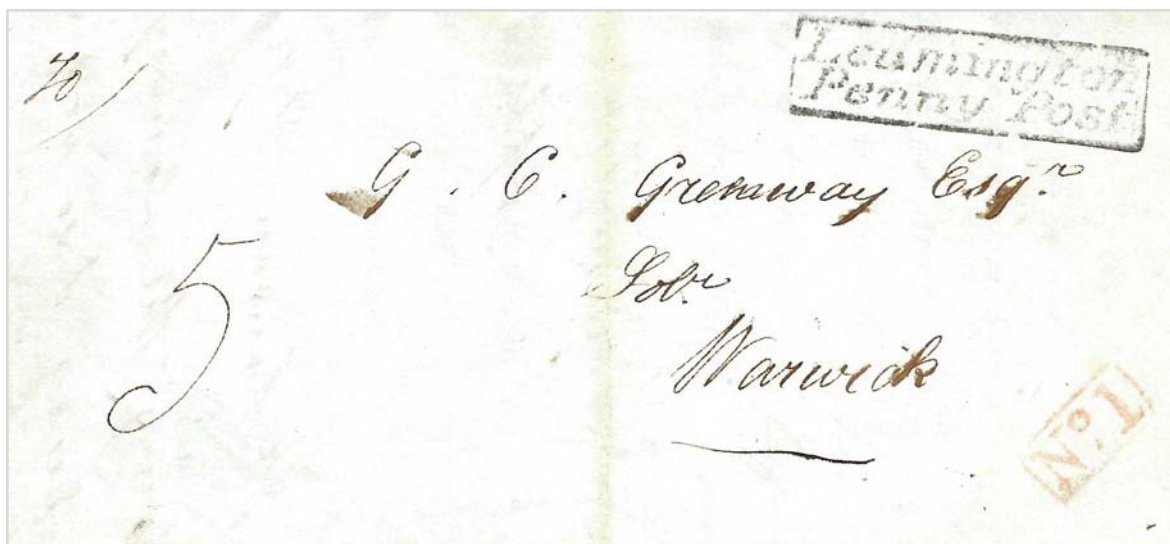


Fig 5, 8 April 1835, Leamington to Warwick, charged 5d

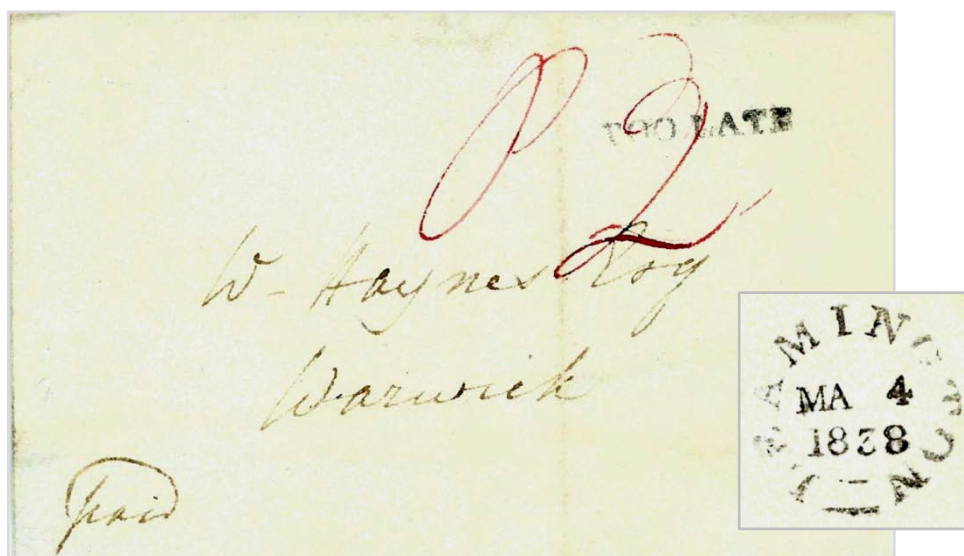


Fig 6, 4 May 1838, Leamington to Warwick, prepaid 2d

## Coventry Penny Post



Fig 7, 27 September 1824, Nuneaton to Coventry, charged 1d

The Penny Post at Coventry was established in 1810 with the first two Receiving Offices at Nuneaton and Kenilworth. As with the Warwick Penny Post all General Post mail passing through the Penny Post was charged a 1d in addition to the General post charge. Unlike the Warwick Penny Post local mail was only charged a 1d when carried from Nuneaton to Coventry, Fig.7 and Kenilworth to Coventry, Figs 8 and 9, which show both a paid and unpaid penny charge. Covers show that only a 1d was charged throughout the period prior to the introduction of Uniform Postage in 1840.



Fig 8, 14 March 1816, Kenilworth to Coventry, prepaid 1d

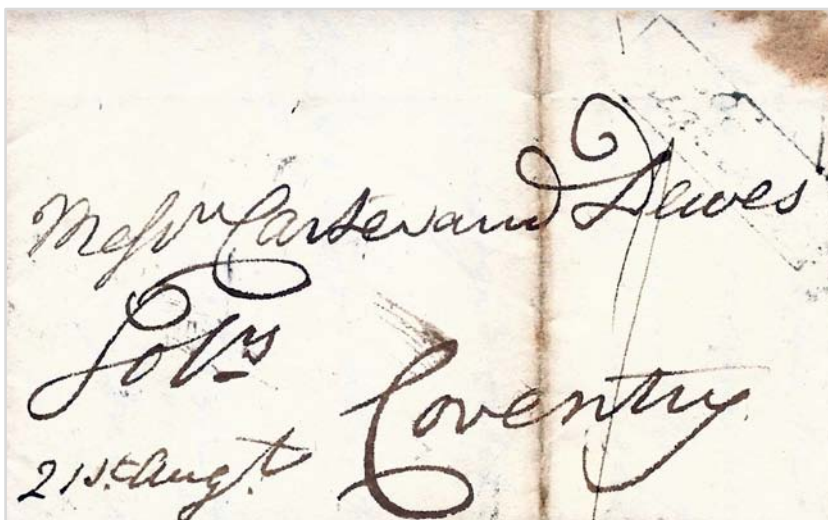


Fig 9, 20 August 1825, Kenilworth to Coventry, charged 1d

## Discussion and Conclusion

The charge for mail carried solely within a provincial Penny Post appears to vary being either a 1d or 2d. Table 1 differentiates between town and district areas, however because the 1794 Act applies to the London Penny Post no definition is given. This would appear to indicate the decision was possibly made independently by each Penny Post. It is notable that Leamington and Kenilworth are both within 3 miles of Warwick, yet 2d was charged for mail carried within Warwick Penny Post, whereas Nuneaton was about 9 miles from Coventry and a 1d was charged. Although there were also 2d charges in the Coventry area<sup>[6]</sup> on local mail but this was possibly the Postmaster's perquisite.

It would be interesting to be able to ascertain what charges within a Penny Post for local letters.

## Acknowledgement

I am very grateful for some very useful discussions with John Calladine about charges within Penny Posts.

## References

- 1 The Local Posts of the Midland Counties to 1840, Publ. Midland (GB) Postal History Society, 1993.
- 2 Postage Act 1765, 5 Geo 3 c.25, 10th October 1765.
- 3 Penny Post Act 1794, 34 Geo 3 c.17, 28th March 1794.
- 4 Robinson, D., For the Port and Carriage of Letters, Publ. by Author, Scotland, 1990.
- 5 Oxley, G. F., The English Provincial Local Posts, 1765-1840. Postal History Society, 1973.
- 6 May, I. M., Foleshill Yet Again!, Midland Mail, No 93, January 1996, pp13-15.

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PARCEL POST LABEL UPDATES

PARCEL POST.		X LIST Letter and Number.		POSTAGE.	
Birmingham				S.	D.
Witton Road		Registration and Express Fees.			
FOR POSTAGE STAMPS.			DATE STAMP.		
					

Ian Baker has sent an unrecorded PPL, Type C3 of 'Birmingham / Witton Road' dated 06AUG1908



PARCEL POST.		X LIST Letter and Number		S. D.	
NORTH MUSKHAM (Under Newark)					
FOR POSTAGE STAMPS			OFFICE STAMP.		
					
			Sep 19 99		

Mick Gill has sent updates of Parcel Post labels including the example left.

NORTH MUSKAM
(Under Newark)
B2 19 SEP 1899 unlisted

The front of the tag is addressed to Totley Hall, Sheffield and is endorsed 'Game Perishable'

WESTBURY, SALOP, A VILLAGE RECEIVING HOUSE in TWO PENNY POSTS

by Brian Atkins



Fig 1, 1825 Shrewsbury to Westbury, mileage date stamp superimposed

The village of Westbury (Shropshire) is just under 2 miles south of the Shrewsbury to Welshpool road, the turn off being at Halfway House, a village supposedly halfway between the two towns already mentioned and also halfway between Birmingham and Aberystwyth.

Westbury was part of an extensive unofficial local post system run by the postmaster at Shrewsbury, each letter being charged a 1d¹. The wrapper (Fig 1) dated 25 February 1825 addressed to Westbury, is an excellent example of mail carried in this system. But things were about to change.

On 22 August 1833 Mr Turner, the landlord of the Halfway House Inn, and supported by a number of influential locals, wrote to Francis Freeling requesting a post office be established at Halfway House, since mail was already dropped there for nearby villages as well as horses changed there. For details see the society's excellent Local Post book¹. The upshot was that approval was given on 30 September 1833 for a penny post to be established from Shrewsbury with the receiver (the Halfway House landlord!) receiving £10 per year to deliver letters to Westbury.

The penny post to Westbury has never received much literary attention.....until now! In a piece written a long time ago, Michael Scott Archer showed the Welshpool penny post had receiving houses at Berriew (No1) and Llanfyllin (No3, under Oswestry as well). He included Westbury as a receiving house but did not note a No2 and stated no mail seen²! In *The undated Postmarks of Wales 1840 – 1860: Update to 25 July 1999*, our late member Roger Broomfield wrote: 'Now to an interesting find. Prior to the advent of Uniform Penny Post, the village of Westbury (Salop) was served by the Welshpool and Shrewsbury penny posts' but, he went on, 'in a 1987 supplement to *The Welsh Post Towns Before 1840* no hand stamps for the village had been recorded in the Welshpool penny post' (Scott Archer, Blakely & Jones)!

At some point Westbury was issued with a No2, though whether this was through Shrewsbury or Welshpool is

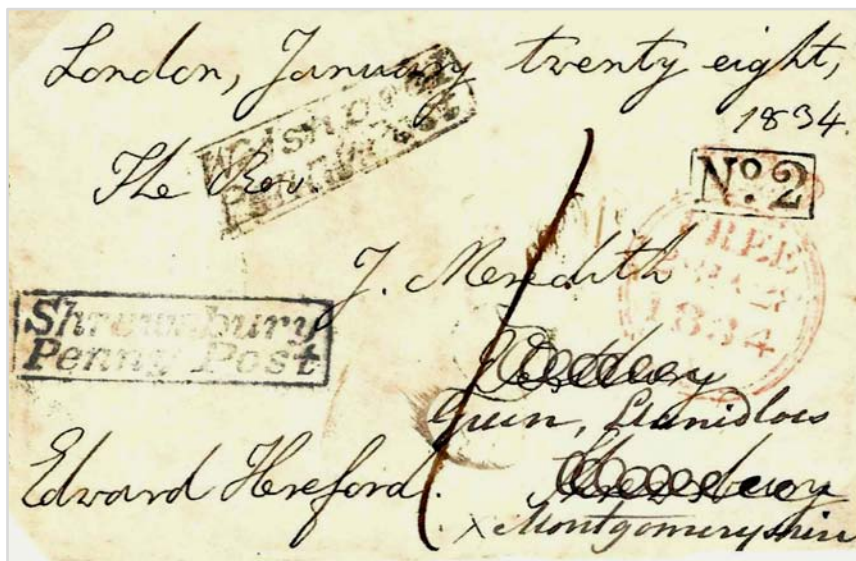


Fig 2, 28 Jan 1834 London to Westbury, forwarded to Llanidloes

uncertain (No2 was the only number used by a receiving house in the Shrewsbury penny post, which may be significant). Roger had found an example of the No2 on a letter dated 3 April 1843 to Welshpool and bearing the WELSHPOOL dda; but an earlier example dated 28 Jan 1834 is now known (Fig 2). The letter (now a front) was franked by Edward Grey, Bishop of Hereford from 1832 to 1837 and shows the 1d charge in the Shrewsbury penny post to Westbury. But Mr Meredith had left for The Green, Llanidloes (a Grade 2 listed dwelling built in 1749). The letter received a No2 at Westbury and was forwarded to Welshpool in its penny post and then in the General Post to Llanidloes, 28 miles

SW of Welshpool via Newtown and Caersws. No extra charge was raised, when an extra 1d might have been expected, at this time, for carriage in two different penny posts for the letter to reach its destination.

Letters are known from Westbury with the boxed No2 and Shrewsbury / Penny Post such as one endorsed 'from a Chelsea Pensioner' addressed to *The Secretary & Register of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea* (Fig 3). William Williams, a 'Late Gunner in the 6th Battⁿ of the Royal Regiment of Artillery' had a pension of 6d a day from November 1818, which he drew at Welshpool but he had moved to Cardeston (Fig 3) and wished to draw his pension at Shrewsbury.

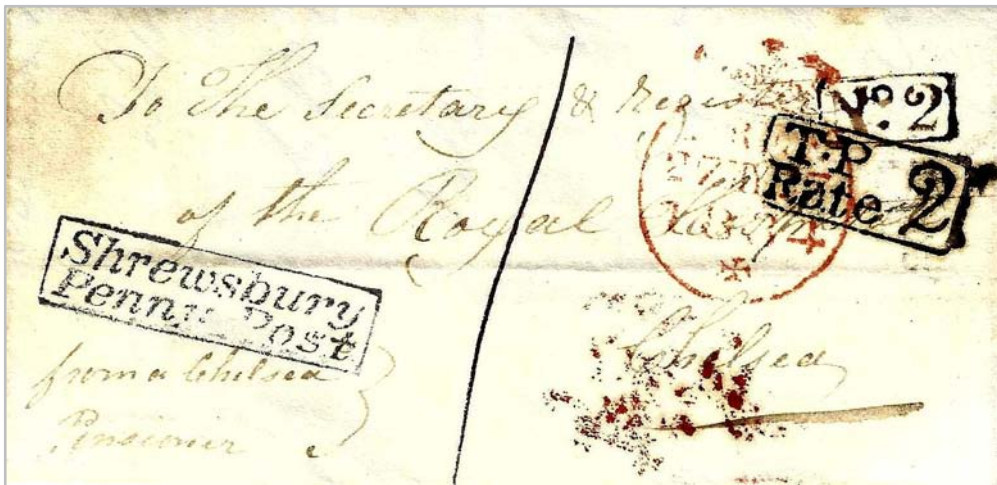


Fig 3, letter dated 26 May 1834 from Cardeston to Chelsea with Shrewsbury dda on the reverse (see below).

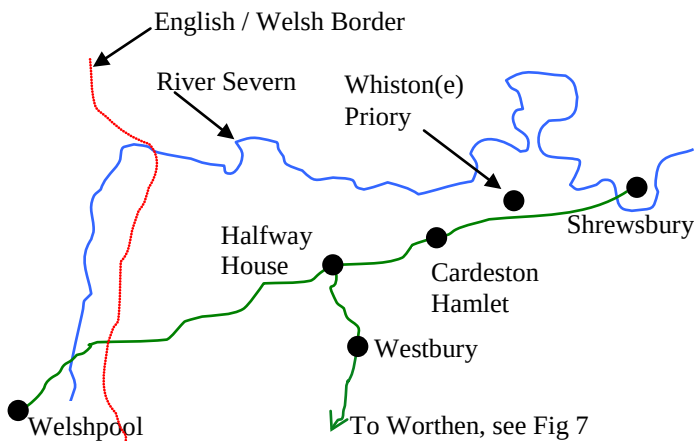


Fig 4, Sketch of the Westbury branch of the Shrewsbury Penny Post (not to scale)

Cardeston is 2½ miles from Halfway House toward Shrewsbury and has never had a post office. It was proposed to call the receiving house Westbury but also proposed the post office be at the Halfway House Inn on the main road². The letter was taken to Shrewsbury in the penny post, from where it went free in the General Post to London, when it was transferred to the Twopenny Post to Chelsea (see adjacent map, Fig 4, for relative positions of towns / villages around and serving Westbury).

A *Westbury Salop / Penny Post* stamp was issued on 27 August 1838 with 13 examples known via Shrewsbury between 15 October 1838 and 20 Aug 1852. The No2 was applied until 16 July 1842 but is not seen after that date; a typical example is seen in Fig 5. The letter is from Mr. J. Meredith, the addressee of Fig 1, to

Whistone Priory, about 4 miles along the road to Shrewsbury. It is charged a 1d and has a clear SHREWSBURY dda for 3 Nov 1839 on the reverse, meaning the letter went up to Shrewsbury, to be accounted for, and then back along the same road to Whistone Priory.



Fig 5, Westbury to Whiston Priory & SHREWSBURY dda on the reverse

It is quite an extraordinary letter written at Westbury, Saturday Night (1st November). It reads:

My Dear Sir,

I hereby send you a copy of the new song to be sung by Mr (underlined space, no name given) at the Oak Inn, W'Pool at the dinner to be given & eaten in honour of the Visc^t Clive etc, etc.

Very Sincerely Yours
J. Meredith

What follows are five written verses of an Air (Meredith's word) entitled 'O let the kind Minstrel attain his soft lay', in a PS Meredith alludes to the 'authoress'; the whole event has a 'Masonic Air' about it.

Viscount Clive is probably Edward James Herbert, 3rd Earl of Powis (5 November 1818 – 7 May 1891), who was styled Viscount Clive between 1839 and 1848. He was Member of Parliament for North Shropshire from 1843 to 1848. Timotheus Burd & Son were Land & Estate Agents with offices in Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. Burd senior lived at Whiston Priory, a large house between Cardeston and Shrewsbury just off the main road³ (see Fig 3).

Three examples of the Westbury / Penny Post stamp are known prior to Uniform Penny Post, after which Westbury used its penny post hand stamp as a village stamp as in the entire letter illustrated at Fig 5. The entire illustrates another example of the combination of the Westbury / Penny Post and the boxed No 2 but were they struck at different offices? The different colour ink suggests they might have been.

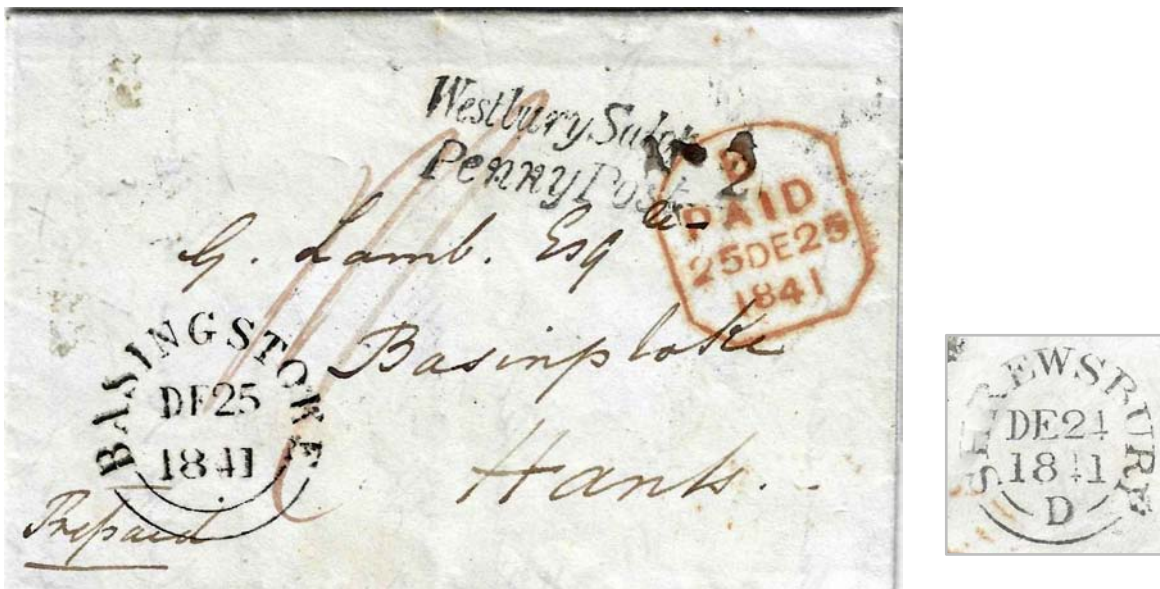


Fig 5, Westbury to Basingstoke 24 Dec 1841 and the SHREWSBURY dda on the reverse

The letter, written at Alberbury Vicarage, is interesting from a social history point of view as it provides an insight into travel costs at that time, it reads – 'Not having journeyed from Bath to Shrewsbury before, I had formed a wrong estimate of the expenses for I found the coach & railway fares alone amounted to £3.6.0. and being two days on the road & a day in Bath, making in all 5 days, I expected I could not do it under £11.12.0, allowing £1 per day for food and lodging – so that had it not been for your kindness in the mention of the £10, I should have been out of pocket considerably'. Wow, £1 a day food and lodging!

In a booklet dated 2005, the late Rev. Chris Beaver⁴ showed a mail coach running between Shrewsbury and Newtown via Welshpool, a distance, he states, of 32 miles. It ran from 15 May 1823 to 1841. However, he also shows a continuing mail coach running from Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth from 1841 via Mallwyd, and thus Welshpool⁴, until 5 April 1852. All the letters described here would have been carried on one of these coaches, both of which had 2 horses and allowed 4 outside passengers.

Remarkably the above letter arrived in London and Basingstoke the next day (Christmas Day), suggesting that it went by coach from Shrewsbury to Birmingham and from there by train to London. The London to Birmingham railway line was completed via Coventry, Rugby and Bletchley on 17 September 1838⁵. On 24 September the Post Office stated the Great Northern R.P.O. would run from London to Warrington (*via Birmingham, my addition*) from 1 October. On 26 September it was announced that the route would be London to Liverpool, so there is no doubt that the letter illustrated at Fig 5, would have been able to reach London the next day by 'Letting the Train Take the Strain'⁶!

The impression of the SHREWSBURY dated double arc hand stamp looks quite 'sharp or crisp' and so it should. This is the earliest record of its use, two days after it was sent to Shrewsbury on 22 Dec 1841 (Proof Impression Book Volume 5 Page 60, the image of the date stamp is very blurred, as are all the images on that page, but the date when the stamp was sent is extremely clear). The date stamp was in use until at least 27 April 1843.

So, what happened to postal services at Halfway House and Westbury when the penny post ceased? Although less than two miles apart, they both became sub-offices of Shrewsbury, and were issued with undated circular stamps.

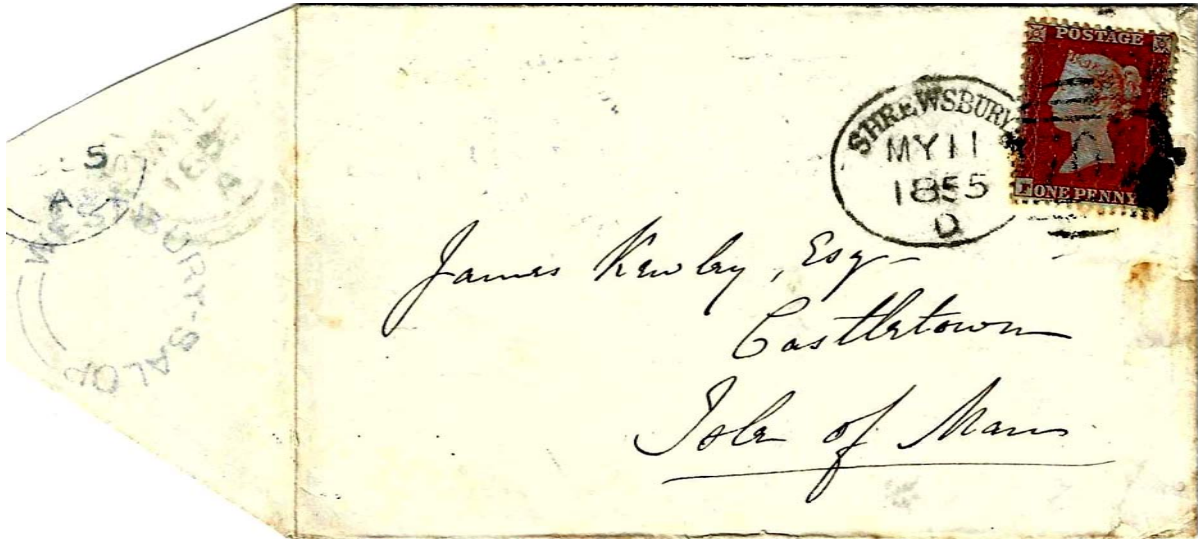


Fig 6, Cover from Westbury to Isle of Man dated 11 May 1855

With the *Westbury / Penny Post* stamp being used until the 1850s, it should come as no surprise that undated marks were not issued to the two offices until the 1850s. The undated WESTBURY-SALOP stamp was issued on 24 April 1851; it is scarce with 3 examples recorded, one in yellow and two in blue between 1854 and 1856 (no day / month for either of these recordings).



Fig 7, HALFWAY-HOUSE udc on a 20 May 1856 cover to Shrewsbury originating in Worthen, 5 miles south of Halfway House. The cover would have passed through Westbury to get to Halfway House.

The undated stamp was issued on 10 August 1855 and has 4 recordings in black, blue and a mucky green (above) from 20 May 1856 to 8 April 1859

References not specifically referred to in the text:

- 1) The Local Posts of the Midland Counties to 1840, Midland (GB) PHS, No3 (especially Page 230)
- 2) The Penny Posts of Wales before 1840, Scott Archer, Reprint from Postal History Nos 159 & 160, undated
- 3) Bagshaw's Directory of Shropshire (1851)
- 4) The Welsh Mail Coaches, late Reverend Christopher Beaver, The Welsh Philatelic Society, 2005
- 5) History of the Mail Routes to Ireland until 1850, Ayres, 2nd Edition, Privately Published, 2017
- 6) The Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain & Ireland, Wilson, Railway Philatelic Group, 1996

