

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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1935 airmail cover from Shrewsbury to Australia, see page 13 for a 1934 airmail cover from Herefordshire to Morocco

CONTENTS

Page

- 2 – Announcements, Roger Broomfield, An Apology
- 6 – The Postal History of Oundle, 1730 to 1852
- 10 – Anyone for Tennis?
- 13 – Registered Airmail from Moccas, Hfd to Morocco, 1934
- 15 – Lord Tweedmouth's Enquiry
- 18 – Retford or Redford – What's in a Name?
- 22 – Here Today – Gone Tomorrow & Help Wanted

Page

- 3 – Inland Cash on Delivery
- 8 – An Inverted Date Puzzle
- 12 – The Moose that loved a Cow – Honestly!
- 14 – Rothley (under Loughborough) to Glasgow, 1842
- 17 – Worcester Penny Post Update
- 21 – Response to Ian Baker's Article, MM 206 / 17
- 23 – Shropshire Postal History Society – a Memoir

ANNOUNCEMENTS, Roger Broomfield, An Apology, Jon Baker Trophy, Oundle Postal History, etc

ROGER BROOMFIELD – An Appreciation by Frank Bennett



The recent death of Roger has robbed us of a loving husband and family man. He was a wonderful friend who I knew for over 70 years and a fantastic postal historian. Roger's family moved to Malvern when he was very young and he lived there all his life. He was educated at the Royal Grammar School, Worcester and the Royal College of Food Technology, Weybridge, Surrey. Roger spent all his working life in the food industry in one format or another. He worked for Fry's Chocolate, Bristol; Ledbury Preserves and finally he was a food inspector for Worcester County Council Trading Standards Department, dealing with the quality of food in retail outlets, and advising the owners.

He started collecting stamps at an early age and then progressed to Postal History. He was a great researcher of his covers, which prompted him to write *The Undated Postmarks of Wales, 1840 to 1860*, which is used by all collectors of that material. The book was awarded a Large Silver Medal at Italia 1998. Roger was a Fellow of the Society of Postal Historians, Secretary of the Hereford & Mid Wales Philatelic Society for many years and County Editor of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society Midland edition for Herefordshire. He was Vice Chairman of the Welsh Philatelic Society, as it then was, from 1997-2000, Chairman from 2000-2003 and he served on the Committee for a further 4 years from 2003-2007. He became Editor for Wales of the British County Catalogue of Postal History (Willcocks and Jay) from 1997.

Roger was a true friend who I often described as "The Brother I never had" and a wonderful postal historian. We will all miss him.

AN APOLOGY – The technology gremlins were highly successful in burrowing into the previous issue of Midland Mail (MM206). The spacing went haywire, particularly on pages 20 & 21, though other pages suffered as well. It was due to an error when transferring from a Word document to a pdf file to send to the printer. The pdf copy sent to Ian Baker, who proof reads Midland Mail for me, was fine but after making his few changes to the Word document, transferring to a new pdf was when the problem occurred and I didn't notice! In my enthusiasm to get copies to everyone before Easter I didn't read it before they hit the mail, not discovering what had happened until emailed the day after mailing by one of our observant and courageous members. Chris Jackson's article on page 20 was particularly badly affected and will be produced again in this issue as a peace offering. My apologies to everyone.

MARTIN TOWNSEND, Change of address – Martin is a long time member and well known to us as a dealer and advertiser in Midland Mail. His new address is P.O. Box 1100, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 9RY and his Mobile number is 07801 769117.

JON BAKER TROPHY – Please don't forget to vote for the article of your choice, send an e-mail to me at sniktab@gmail.com. The suggested options were:

Four 19 th Century Covers between Shropshire & Southern Africa	Brian Atkins	MM201 / 12-13
Contrary to Regulations / Not Contrary to Regulations	John Soer	MM201 / 18-19
The Jack Barlow Collection – An Unexpected Find	Marion Turner	MM202 / 11-13
Coventry Cathedral Consecration Covers	Ian May	MM202 / 14-17
Mail on the Midland Railway & its Constituents 1840 – 1875, Part 7	John Soer	MM203 / 7-16
Is it Gobbalds or Cobbalds or Gobalds or Gobbalds or Gubballs	Brian Atkins	MM203 / 18-19
A 1942 Express from Maryport to Manchester ending in Oklahoma	Malcolm Allinson	MM204 / 14-15
More on Coventry's Couriers	Alan Godfrey	MM204 / 16-17

BOOK on Oundle Postal History – On page 6 you will find a heavily abridged account of part of Richard Capon's book *A History of Oundle through its Post*. Richard's email is richard_11@btinternet.com. If you would contact him he would be happy to send a pdf file of the whole book (nearly 60 pages) to anyone interested in the story in much more detail. I am grateful to Richard for allowing me to abridge part of his book for this issue.

From the Editor – I am grateful to everyone who responded to the request for articles and to the committee of the society for allowing this extra edition to be published at this difficult time. At the moment we cannot meet to show each other our treasured items, so there are no reports of meetings. Thanks to all our writers this edition of the journal is an 'article only' one of 24 pages, I trust you will find something interesting to help fill your time, instead of running around the mown lawn trying to catch the robot, cordless mower you forgot to switch off!

INLAND CASH ON DELIVERY

by Ian M. May

It never ceases to surprise me how many services the Post Office offered during the 19th and 20th century. Many are now discontinued as they have been made redundant due to the rapid growth of the digital economy. The aim of this article is to explain how one of these services, Inland Cash on Delivery, COD, was introduced and what it was intended to do. The Post Office Guide of 1933^[1], in the section Inland Post, describes Cash on Delivery, as: ‘*The value of an article sent by Registered Letter Post or by Registered or Unregistered Parcel Post can, on certain conditions, be collected from the addressee by the Post Office and remitted to the sender by a means of a Special Order*’. An article by Mackay^[2], and a brief section in The Parcel Post^[3], are two of the few references on the topic. Reference 2 covers not only the British scheme but also similar schemes throughout the World. My objective is to describe the British Inland COD system and to aid this, extensive use has been made of all 3 references in the preparation of this article.

Inland Cash on Delivery was introduced on 29th March 1926. However, it had been envisaged as early as 1883 by the Postmaster General, Henry Fawcett^[2]. His proposals were raised again, and rejected, in 1904. However, by 1904 a similar scheme had existed in India for six years and had already spread to the Australian colonies. The United States implemented a similar scheme in 1913. Just prior to World War 1 and over the next few years the British Post Office had to offer reciprocal COD arrangements to countries that had adopted the COD system for parcels, but this did not extend to items sent within the British Isles. Further details of these arrangements are given in reference 2.

It is difficult to understand why the Post Office waited so long to extend the service to the inland post as it had been so successful in other countries and when the Inland Cash on Delivery service was finally introduced it was an immediate success. Mackay reports that in the first year over 2 million items were sent COD. The service was also available for packages sent by rail and details of this service are given in reference 1. Before the introduction of COD an individual or company requiring to purchase goods by mail order either had to send the payment prior to delivery, and hope the goods would be delivered! Or the company had to send the goods and request payment on delivery and hope the payment would be made!

The COD service streamlined the mail order business. The Post Office would collect the payment from the addressee on delivery and remit the money to the merchant by means of a Trade Charge Order which was encashable through a bank. Reference 1 mentions that arrangements could be made for the Trade Charge Order to be encashed for those without a bank account!

The Post Office Guide of 1933^[1] gave the limit of the amount to be collected to be £40. For amounts less than £10 the package was delivered to the addressee on payment of the Trade Charge, for larger amounts the package had to be collected by the addressee from the post office, after the addressee had been informed of its arrival. The cost to the user, in addition to postage and registration fee, was on a sliding scale and, for example, in 1933 varied from 4d on a Trade Charge not exceeding 10s to 2s 0d on a Trade Charge of £40.

As mentioned above the COD service was available for inland registered letter post and registered or unregistered parcel post. However all the covers I have were sent by registered letter post. Most are from motor car companies, namely, Standard, Humber, Alvis and Triumph. Mackay states that the motor industry was a substantial user of the scheme for the rapid supply of spare parts. Most of the covers have a red triangular label attached marked ‘INLAND COD’, Fig. 1, and a white label with black print approximately 100 mm by 80 mm, which was marked COD in a triangle and contained details of the addressee, the sender and the amount to be collected, Fig. 2. All the items I have were franked 4½d, 1½d postage and 3d registration fee. A similar label but printed in red was also used, Fig. 3, in this case there being no need for the red triangular label.

The cover shown in Fig. 4 was sent COD using a registered envelope and it is possible that it was sent by a private individual.

By the early 21st century the use of the Post Office’s COD had declined partly through the use of digital banking and also because of the implementation of similar systems by the courier companies.

- References:
- 1 The Post Office Guide 1933
 - 2 Mackay J. A., Cash on Delivery, G. S. M., June 2004, pp77-81
 - 3 Mackay J. A., The Parcel Post of the British Isles, Published by Author, Dumfries, 1982.

See next two pages for the illustrations



Fig 1, COD 25th September 1933, Coventry to Cardiff, Showing red Inland COD triangular label

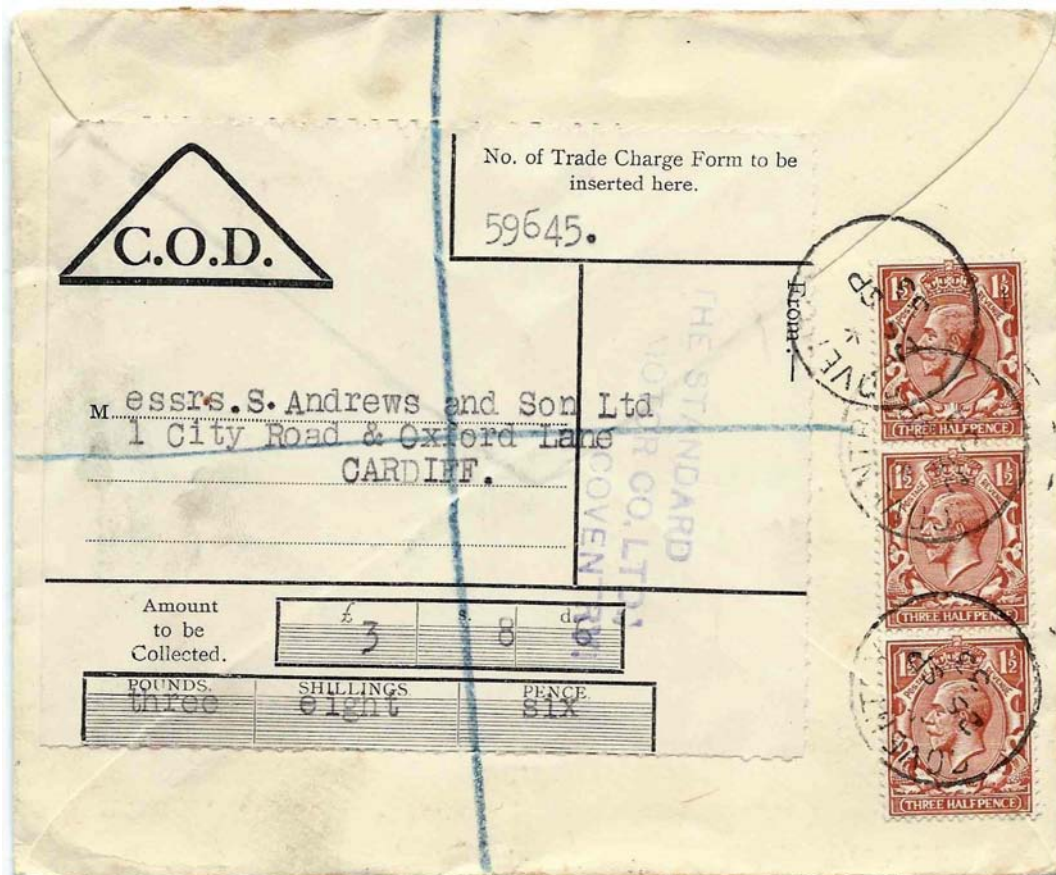


Fig 2, Inland COD, Reverse of cover in figure.1 showing Trade Charge label.



Fig 3, Inland COD, 29th May 1934, Coventry to Cardiff, Showing red Trade Charge Inland label including Inland COD triangle

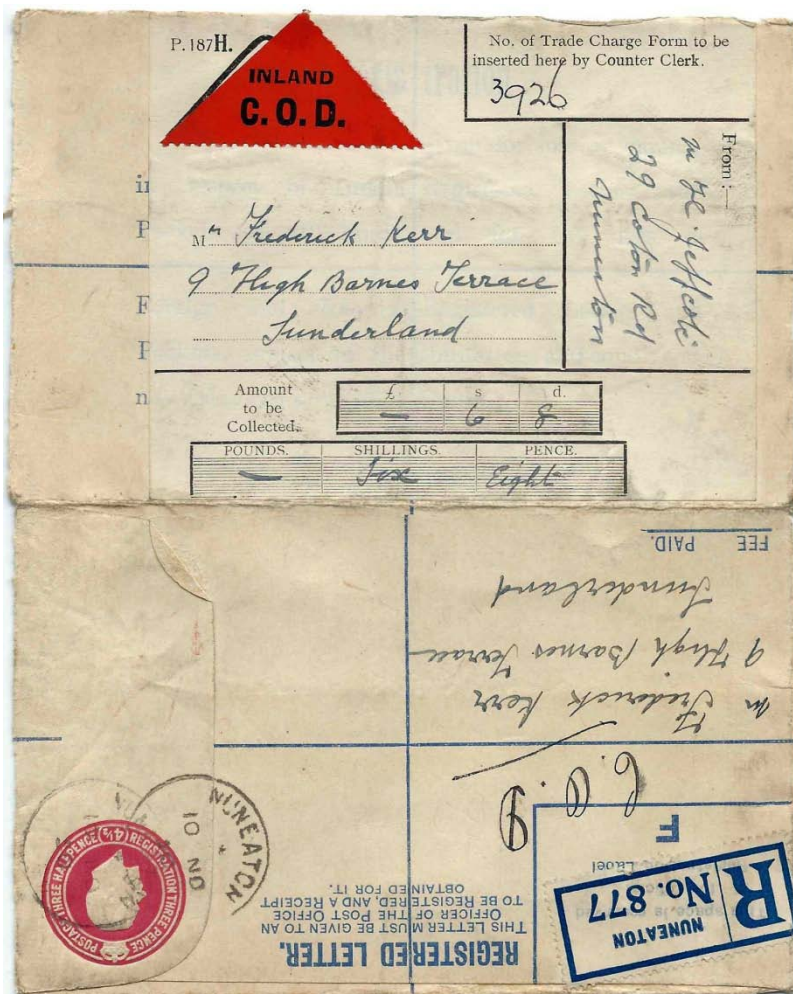


Fig 4 (reduced) Inland COD, 10 November 1930, Nuneaton to Sunderland, Inland COD using registered envelope (reverse at top, front below).

POSTAL HISTORY OF OUNDLE & ITS POSTMARKS, 1730 to 1852

by Richard Capon (A much abridged version of part of his book – see page 2)

Oundle is listed in Blome's Britannica as a post town in 1673, and Herman Moll's map of 1724 shows a cross post from Oakham to London via Caxton on the Great North Road. There was also a cross post between Oundle and Thrapston, mail was probably left at the crossroads at Achurch, which was listed as a Post Receiving House. In 1722 there was a complaint recorded that the postmistress of Oundle was notorious for opening letters and Post Office records indicate that a Mr Hersey was appointed to be postmaster in 1730. In 1760 the records show that Jane Hitchcock was appointed to be Postmistress at Newport Pagnell at a salary of £134 a year with her responsibilities including the offices at Olney, Castle Ashby, Wellingborough, Kettering; Rockingham; Oundle and Thrapston!

Any intermediate appointments are unknown, but a Mr. Harvey was appointed on 23 November 1770. Early Post Offices typically occupied a room in one of the coaching inns such as those that filled much of West Street in Oundle. The Talbot Hotel is known to have stabled the Post Office's horses at the end of the 19th century and the hotel was listed as receiving the post in the 18th century so it may have been the earliest post office. Thomas Ellis, the inn-keeper at the Talbot eventually took over the post office but where that office was established is not known.

Peterborough had a penny post but there is only circumstantial evidence that Oundle had a penny post. Two unusual examples involving Oundle are known; one being sent to Cotterstock and one to Fotheringhay. These had a price inscribed that was one penny higher than it ought to have been, which may indicate that a penny post did exist from the Oundle office, but the Post Office of the day did not report its existence in the report to the Select Committee on Postage, which reported to the House of Lords in 1838.

The very detailed Enclosure Map of 1810 does not show a building identified as a post office, but the survey map of the town made by G. Cuming in 1824 has the post office three shops away from Latham's hospital in North Street, the postmaster of that time was probably Edward Everest, who resigned in 1828 and was replaced by his son George Everest, a corn factor, on the recommendation of Lord Althorp. After three years George resigned and was replaced by his sister, Anne, who was a 'spinster of no other occupation'. Both were appointed on a bond of £300. In those three years the post office was moved from North Street to New Street as the Pigot's Guide for 1830 records. In the 1841 census, she is listed as postmistress in New Street (Aged 46), with Francis Everest (22) who is living with her as an assistant. 1851 shows Anne as Postmistress (60), living with a niece Jane (23) as her assistant, plus a servant. In 1861 Anne was still living in the same premises, but is now listed as Retired Postmistress with one servant. She was 70 years old. Anne's successor was Robert Turner. He was a pharmacist who, in 1861, was living with his wife Ann (35) in the post office in Market Square; in the premises currently occupied by Oundle Pharmacy.

Ann Turner must have died at some point in the early 1860's because Robert (50) is listed as Chemist, Druggist and Postmaster in 1871. Ten years later in 1881 Robert is still postmaster and chemist with six children, a telegraph assistant, a chemist's assistant, a servant and a nursemaid!! Robert died in January 1890, his widow, Sophia, remained in the premises and became the postmistress. Sophia died in April 1900 and the era of self-employed postmasters and mistresses came to an end. The properties at the junction of Market Square and New Street were being redeveloped by Oundle School, and the Post Office took the opportunity to erect purpose-built premises next door to the Talbot Hotel at 5, New Street, opening in 1903. From the Northampton Mercury 24th July:

The Post Office at Oundle was opened to the public on Monday. The building is conveniently placed and very admirably fitted. On the ground floor there is the public office, behind which is a splendid long room for dealing with the dispatch of mails. The fittings are of the newest type, and the arrangements are most convenient. There is a retiring room for the postmen, also accommodation for the telegraph boys. On the first floor there are several rooms for different purposes, including provision for the telephone. The whole building is a model of convenience, and it is doubtful for the size of the town, if a finer office could be found.

Soon after Sophia Turner's death, a salaried Postmaster was appointed. He was William Warren, aged 41 and a native of Falmouth in Cornwall. He lived at 1 Snowdon Terrace in St. Osyth's Lane with his wife, and three children. The Postmaster in 1906 was Robert Roxburgh. He made it clear in the Census of 1911 that he was a Civil Servant. He was 47 at that time and had worked for the Post Office since at least 1881 when he was appointed to be a letter carrier and stamper at Guildford. Whilst the Postmaster he had become a civil servant and salaried in the early 1900s. The town lost its Head Office status in December 1915 to become a salaried office. Finally it was downgraded to a Sub-office under the control of Peterborough in March 1923. The sorting office part of the Post Office was closed and replaced by a larger office at an industrial site on the Oundle by-pass, where it remained until the lease ran out. The new sorting office in Peterborough was opening at the same time so the sorting office was closed in 2008 and Oundle lost one more element of its postal history.

Postmarks enhance the history of each used stamp and cover, their sequence has been researched extensively. These patterns and dates for the pre-stamp period follow the scheme devised by Willcocks and Jay, published in 1978. The earliest postmarks for Oundle are very rare.

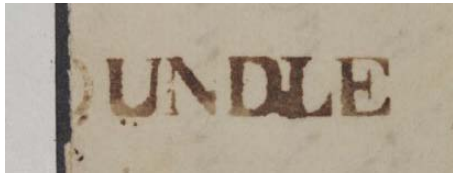


Fig 1, Type 195, Pattern 4 OUNDLE straight line in seriffed capitals, size 37mm x 6mm, black ink (NN159, recorded 19 FEB 1733 to 17 JUL 1750). The earliest known Mark used at Oundle.

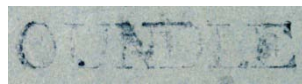
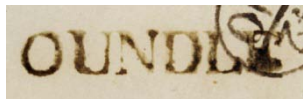


Fig 2, Type 162, Pattern 4 straight-line OUNDLE seriffed capitals, size 33mm x 5mm (NN162, recorded in black, one in blue 26 AUG 1789 to 24 AUG 1799)



Fig 3, Type 164, Pattern 29, OUNDLE boxed mileage 28mm x 11mm. (NN164, recorded 14 SEP 1801 to 1814), black.



Fig 4, Type 165, Pattern 30, OUNDLE, mileage between two lines, 28mm x 11mm. (NN165, recorded 12 AUG 1813 to 1 MAY 1824), black ink

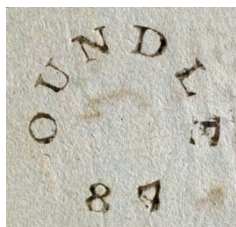


Fig 5, Type 166, Pattern 35, circular OUNDLE distance (87) in seriffed capitals, size 25mm diam (NN166, recorded 4 JAN 1825 to 22 JAN 1829), black ink.

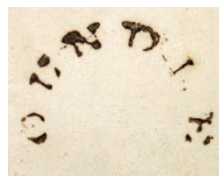


Fig 6, Type 167, Pattern 35. As for Type 166, but circular OUNDLE mileage removed, size 25mm diameter. (NN167, recorded 9 APR 1829 to 25 MAY 1830), black ink



Fig 7, Type 168, Pattern 15, undated OUNDLE with the name of the town forming the upper arc, size 22mm diameter (NN168, issued 31 MAY 1830, recorded 10 JUL 1830 to 7 AUG 1838, black ink.

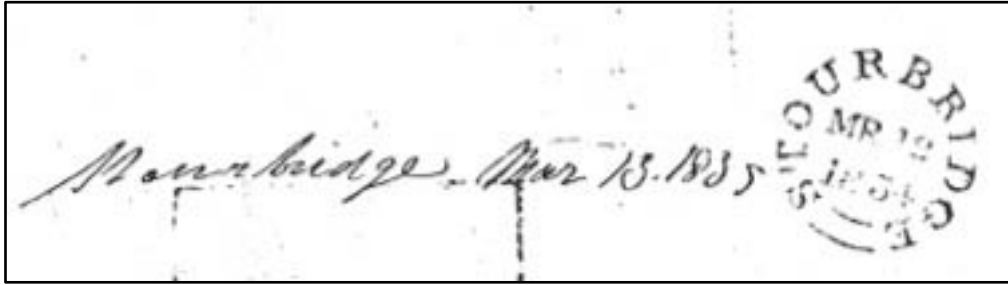


1852 cover from Oundle to Geelong, Australia with the 4 x 1841 2d blues cancelled by the 1844-type 601 of Oundle. SHIP LETTER / LONDON / CROWN / FE 20 / 1852, the stamps presumably paying the post-1840 8d ship letter rate. Illustration courtesy of Prestige Philately / Mossgreen Auctions (Melbourne)

AN INVERTED DATE PUZZLE

by John Calladine

The post office at the Midland industrial town of Stourbridge was issued with a circular date stamp on 13th March 1835. (Those familiar with the steel impression books may not be surprised that the impression of the handstamp - illustrated below - bears the date 1834, rather than 1835, but the issue date was definitely 1835). Pre-1840 examples are not easily found and those seen by me have been struck rather weakly. However, all recorded strikes have been normal, with the day and month in one line above the year on a second line. Prior to 1847 there was no code letter below the date.

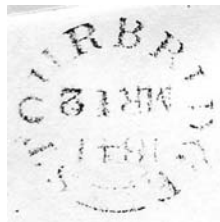


Issue of STOURBRIDGE date stamp 13 MAR 1835 from Proof Impression Book

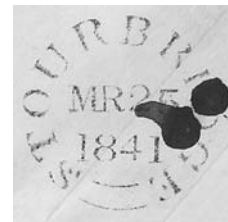
What happened in 1840 and when it happened is a puzzle. Early in the year and certainly by 17th February the whole date in the CDS became inverted, with the year line now above the day/month line. Inversion of the date continued, with no exceptions known, for a period in excess of a year. A strike dated 12th March 1841 is still inverted but a strike of 25th March has the date upright. The end of the inversion is therefore better documented than its beginning.



Inverted date stamp (6 Mar 1841)

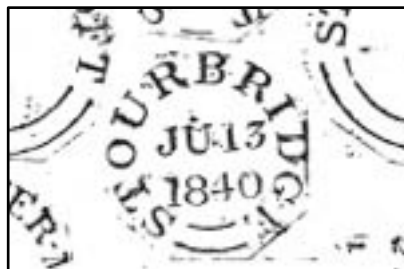


Inverted date stamp (12 Mar 1841)



Upright stamp (25 MAR 1841)

What makes this inverted date particularly unusual is that a “new” circular date stamp was issued to Stourbridge on 13th June 1840. In fact, although it looks somewhat different, it is believed to be a re-cut of the 1835 stamp, not a new stamp. (This is further supported by the use of a skeleton stamp at Stourbridge immediately before the issue of the 13th June stamp, an example being recorded used on 9th June 1840.) Inversion of the date was therefore normal both before and after the CDS re-cut and was not apparently due to a technical problem resolved by the re-cut.



The 1840 re-cut of the Stourbridge circular datestamp

Later in the century, when Stourbridge was cancelling adhesives with a duplex stamp, use of an inverted code letter ‘A’ is known to have been deliberate, not accidental. The postmaster changed the code several times a day and he needed more codes than the available letters of the alphabet. However it is difficult to see any possible intended

purpose for the inverted date in the circular date stamp. Nor is the inversion of the day/month line only on a strike of 16th December 1843 likely to be more than a singular error.

Although not strictly relevant to the above, there is always the controversial matter of whether changeable slugs can be reversed as well as inverted. An inverted “B”, for example, looks like a reversed “B”, as does an “E”, but an inverted “F” could not be mistaken for a reversed “F”. Does anyone recollect seeing a “reversed F”? In connection with this problem, I contacted the Postal Museum in 2018 to see if they had a Victorian date stamp with moveable slugs I could examine and the most relevant item they could offer was a London circular date stamp of 1894 that had changeable date slugs. What I found when I visited the Museum was so different from my expectations that I left the Museum with more questions than answers.

I am not sure the photographs I took help but one is illustrated. I had expected the date slugs to slide into position but these were rectangular and dropped into rectangular holes, with a shoulder on the slug to position it. I did not have an opportunity to attempt to invert one. I have doubts that slugs were fitted in this manner in 1840 and my limited investigation into any reason for the date in the Stourbridge CDS to be more conveniently inverted than upright was unresolved. Any helpful suggestions would be appreciated.



LONDON.W./19/U/25 JA/94 handstamp

Postal Museum Accession Number 2009 -0613/1
(Reproduced by courtesy of The Postal Museum)

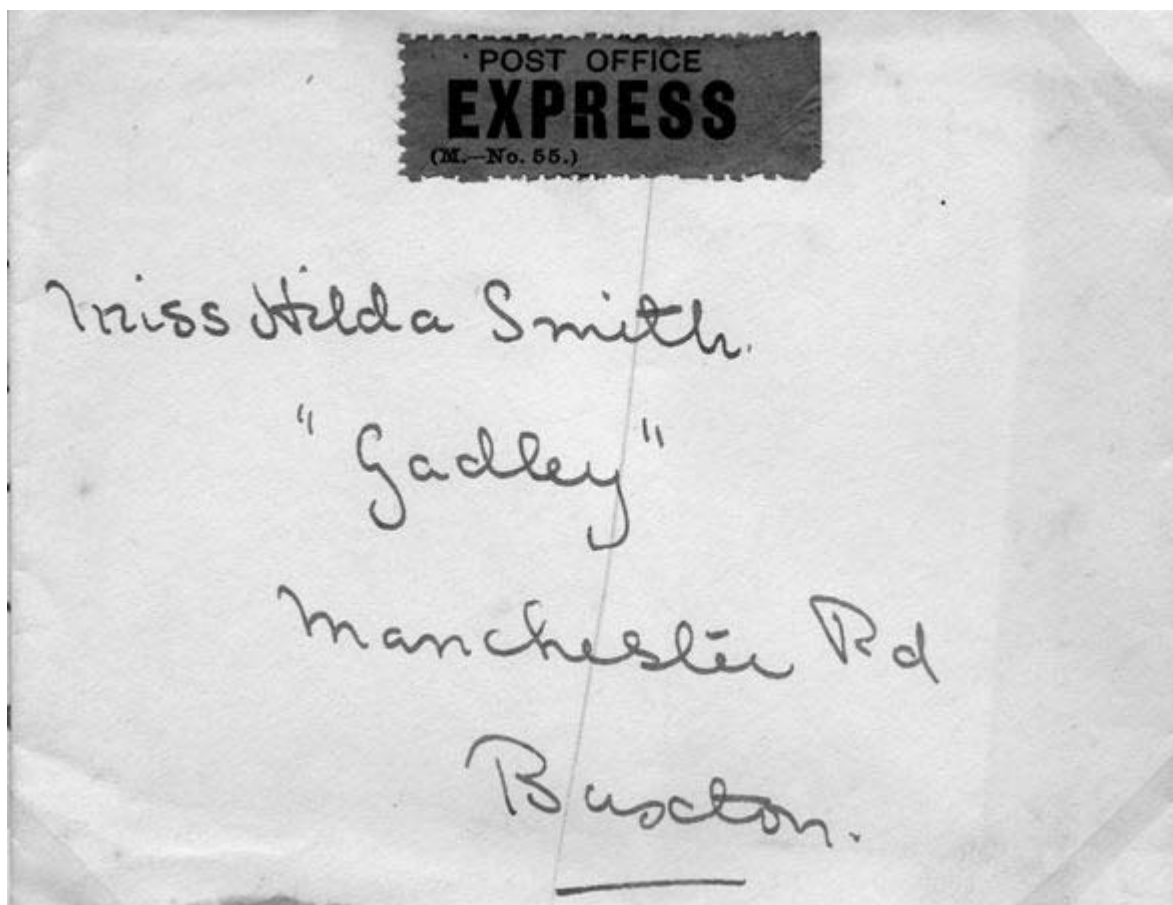
ANYONE FOR TENNIS

by Jim Hammond

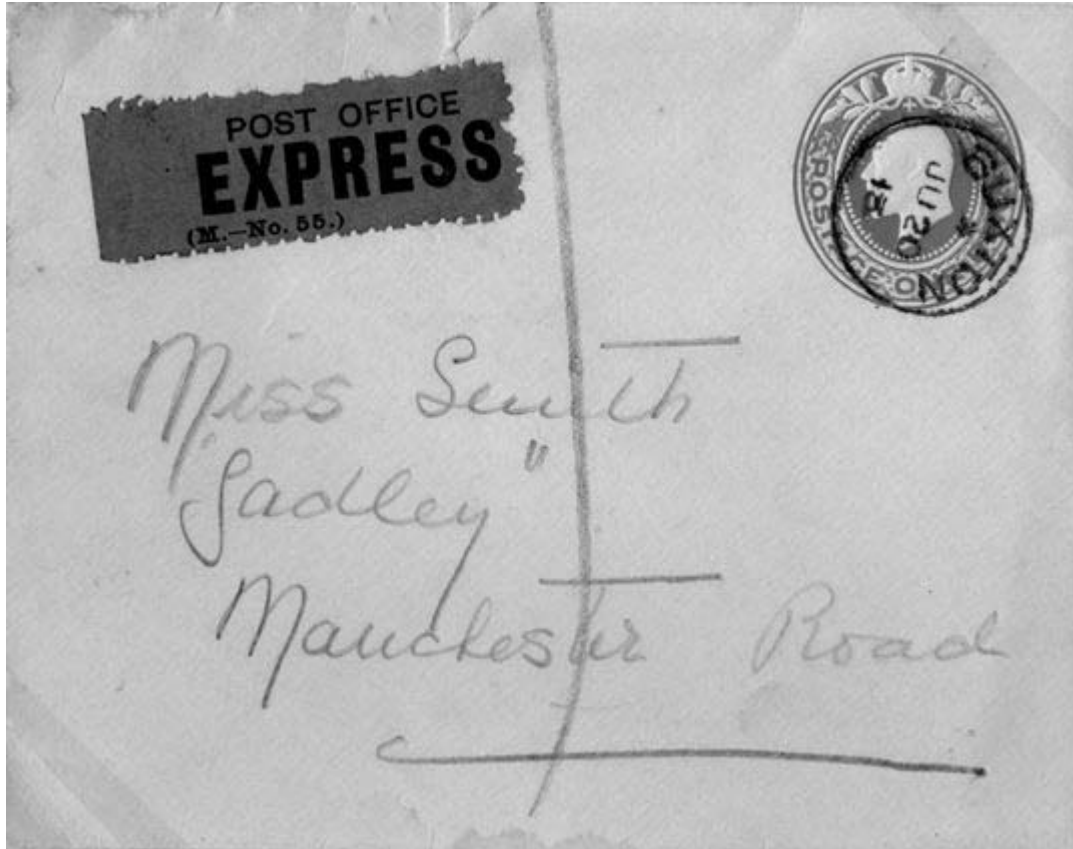
The family of Miss Harriet Hilda Duke Smith came from Bootle in Lancashire, she being baptised in the church of St Catherine, Edge Hill, on the 19th January 1884. Nine children were born to her parents, Aston William Smith and his wife Sarah Meggitt Smith (née Duke), but Harriet Hilda Duke and her siblings would not grow up in poverty – her father was a wealthy contractor with a business engaged in the surveying and building of railways. Harriet's father, Aston William Smith died on the 16th August 1905, his Executors being his widow and two of his sons. The value of his estate was sworn at £68660 - 5s - 6d, a colossal sum of money at that time, so it is no surprise that subsequent references to his widow describe her as "of private means". It is not certain when the family acquired Gadley House near Buxton in Derbyshire, nor is it known whether the tenure was freehold or leasehold, however a newspaper report of Aston's death in 1905 describes him as 'of Gadley, Buxton'. Aston Smith's widow Sarah is recorded living there in the 1911 census along with an unmarried daughter, a married daughter with husband, and two servants. Her daughter Harriet, who is still single in 1911, is not in the house on the day of the census. Sarah Meggitt Smith, widow, was still living at Gadley when she died on the 23rd April 1937.

The above preamble to this article is designed to set the scene of a family that would have had not only plenty of leisure time, but also the means to enjoy it. One leisure activity that seems to have been popular, at least with the daughter Harriet Hilda Duke, is tennis. She appears to have been active in arranging tennis 'fours' with friends in the neighbourhood of Buxton. This has given rise to some interesting correspondence that has survived for the year 1913. It also shows that she was known by the name Hilda, presumably having dropped her first name – Harriet.

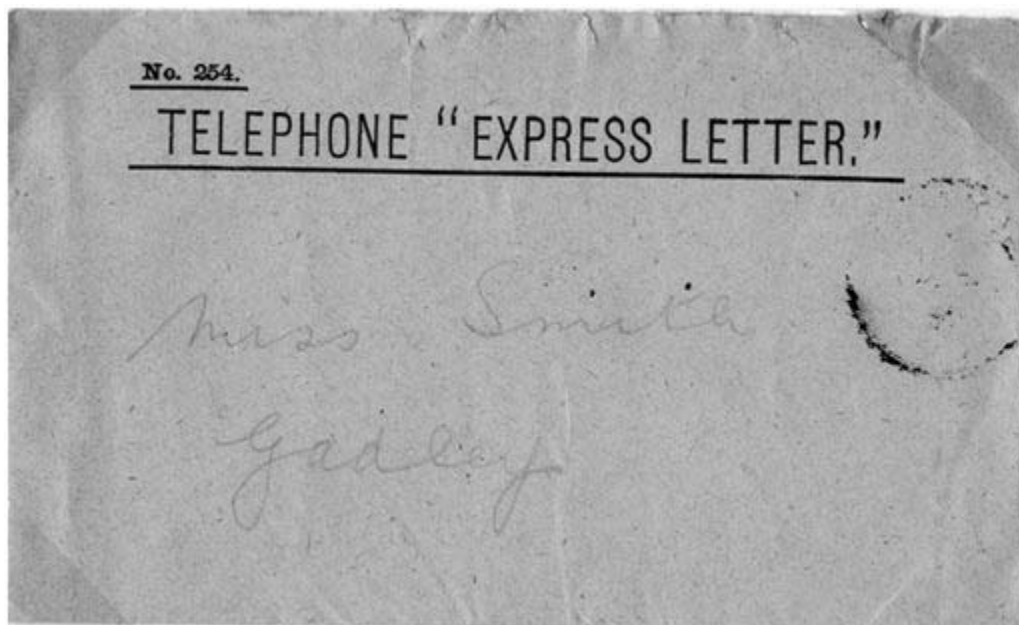
The first item is an express letter dated "Wednesday". There is no further date information in the letter and no postmark. I assume that the year is 1913 as it was with other similar items all of that year. The writer lived in Buxton, and Gadley is about ¾ mile from Buxton Post Office. The writer states that she is unable to play "this afternoon" and has sent an Express Letter. As this does not need to pass through the post, it is carried by special messenger all the way. The Express fee then was 3d for up to a mile, paid in stamps at the post office. No postage is payable. Therefore, the envelope has only the vertical crayon mark and a pink EXPRESS label on the front. No stamp or dated postmark.



The next item is dated June 20th 1913. It is an express letter like the previous example, except in this case a penny postal stationery envelope has been used and cancelled by a Buxton single ring dated the 20th June 1913. This does not make much sense, as the Post Office in Buxton was little over three quarters of a mile from Gadley with no other office in between. The letter itself is written on an unstamped telegraph form giving a long explanation why the writer is unable to play tennis 'today'. Maybe she originally intended to send a telegram, but an express letter was much cheaper. But why the penny envelope? From Buxton Post Office it would be an Express Letter carried by special messenger 'All The Way', express fee 3d for up to a mile. No postage required. Perhaps it was the only envelope available, so the postal clerk date-stamped it! It is not possible to be sure what happened, and other explanations are possible. Item is shown below:



The next item is more interesting as it is a scarce example of a "Telephone Express Letter". It is dated the 6th March 1913, and informs 'Miss Smith' that there will be no dancing class 'This Evening'. The envelope is shown below:





The hint of postmark on the front is an offset from the next item cancelled in the office. The Buxton single ring was struck on the back of the envelope and is shown left.

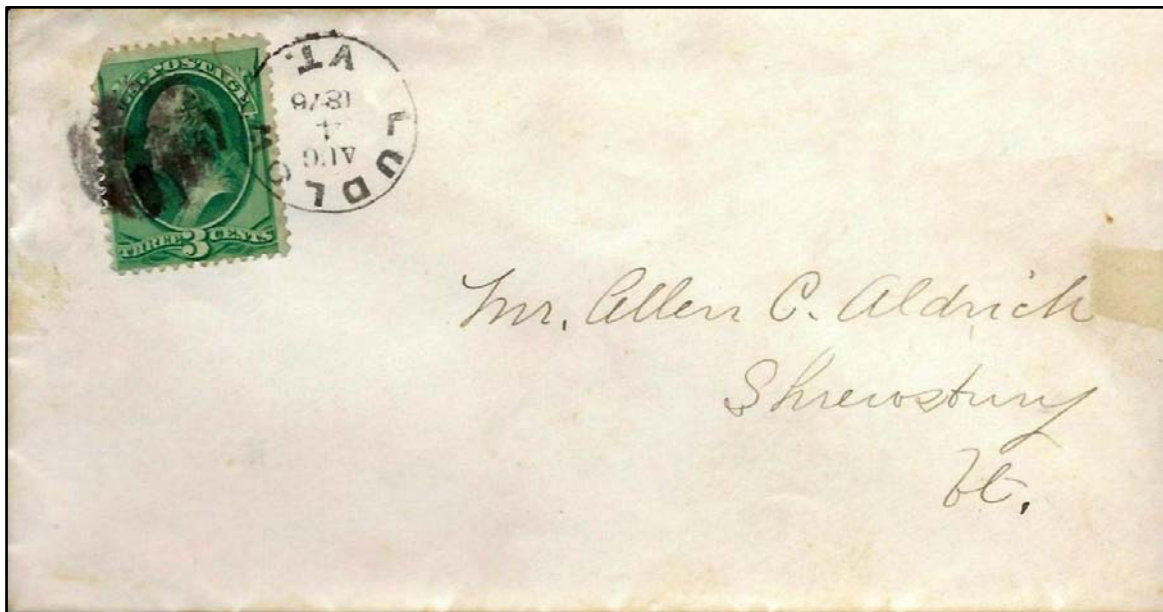
The telephone express letter system was available to anybody who was a subscriber to a Telephone Exchange. The charge for this service was the cost of the telephone call to the Telegraph Office plus the express fee. The message was then written on a standard telegram form, which was date-stamped the same as the envelope. The express fee in this case was 3d for 30 words. The total charge was added to the telephone bill. The message was delivered as if it were a telegram.



There is one other item in this group of 1913 messages. This is a Reply Paid Telegram, dated January 11th 1913, inviting 'Miss Hilda Smith' and 'Duncan' to dinner at seven. The message was received at Buxton Telegraph Office at 4.54 pm. Reply Paid Telegrams (paid by the sender) enabled the addressee to hand a reply to the messenger to be taken back to the Telegraph Office. This one bears the single ring Telegraph date-stamp (with a 'T' at the base) of Buxton shown here. I assume that Duncan was a friend of Hilda's, and that he was invited along as a chaperone.

The invitation to dinner was from 'Davis'. This is almost certainly Alfred Arthur Davis to whom Hilda was quite likely by now engaged to be married, and he must have been staying in Buxton. He lived in the Cathedral Precincts at Chester. The Banns were called in May of 1914, and the marriage solemnised shortly afterwards at Chester. No more tennis fours at Gadley.

**LUDLOW to SHREWSBURY, well it is and it isn't
or 'THE MOOSE that LOVED a COW'**



A 3 ¢ Washington pays the United States inland rate on a 4 August 1876 cover sent from LUDLOW to SHREWSBURY within the state of Vermont. Ludlow, Vermont (or VT) had a population of 1,963 at the 2010 American census. It has a ski resort and Wikipedia says it is named after Ludlow, Massachusetts, which was, naturally named after OUR Ludlow! There is also a Shrewsbury in Massachusetts! Complicated!

At the 2010 census Shrewsbury, VT had 1,056 inhabitants, so neither place is very large. With respect to Shrewsbury, VT there were two snippets of interest: No murders in between the 1880s and 2016 and **in 1986 / 87 the town received worldwide attention from the media, when a moose called Bullwinkle spent 76 days unsuccessfully courting a local farmer's cow, named Jessica.** Unrequited love, only in a Shropshire town in America, eh! If consummation had occurred might the result have been a moo-cow????? Come on now, desperate times require desperate measures.

REGISTERED AIR MAIL COVER FROM MOCCAS, HEREFORDSHIRE TO MOROCCO, 1934

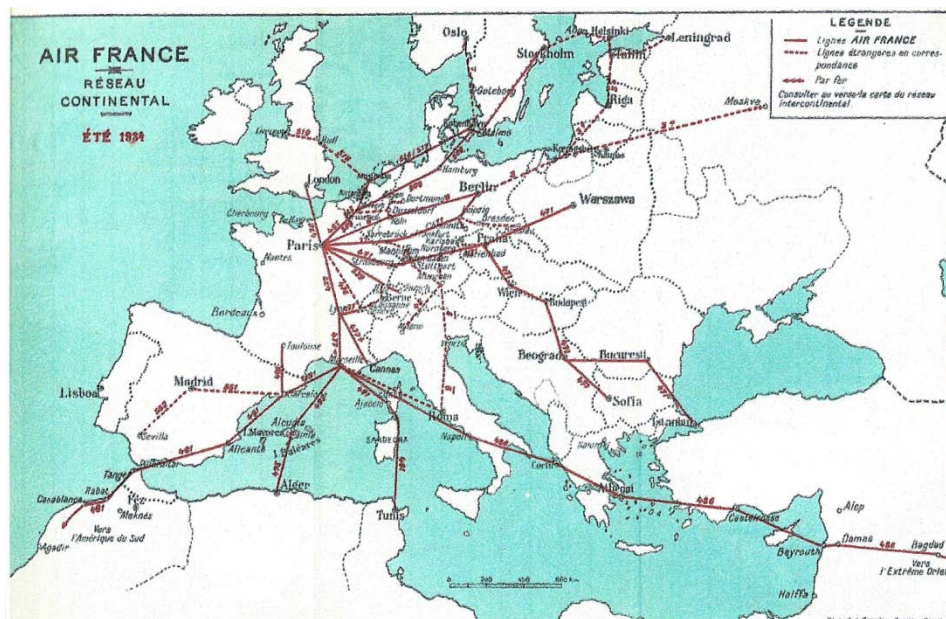
by Frank Bennett



The cover was posted in Moccas on the 6 October 1934, and although there is no evidence to support it, it was probably sent by Sir George Cornwall from Moccas Court. The adhesives covering total postage are obliterated by a **MOCCAS / HEREFORD** rubber dated 6 Oct 1934. The cover went via a **STANTON ON WYE**, and was struck with a double arc dated the 8 October. On the reverse there are 2 strikes of the **MOCCAS / HEREFORD** rubber dated the 6 October plus a **REGISTERED HEREFORD / STATION** cancellation dated the 8 October and a Morocco arrival mark (cover reduced in size)



Route: Cover addressed to the Vice Consulate, Fez, Morocco probably went London-Paris by Imperial Airways then Paris-Marseille and on to Morocco by Air France; a 1934 Air France timetable shows the route. The French were well ahead of the game developing their routes down the West African coast all the way to Dakar.



ROTHLEY (UNDER LOUGHBOROUGH) TO GLASGOW, 1849

by Marion Turner



A recent addition to my Leicestershire collection is this undated ROTHLEY (issued 28 JUN 1845, PIB 7 / 159, recorded in black from 27 May 1849 to 13 Dec 1852) on an envelope with a rather soiled imperforate penny red. A blue date stamp for Loughborough (code letter C reversed) is dated 31 May 1849. The journey took 2 days as the Glasgow receiver shows, collecting a transit hand stamp from London on the way. The almost complete wax seal is rather striking, a stag's head facing to the right with a marvellous set of antlers placed above 3 diamonds. Would it be possible to discover who the writer was?

Rothley is a small rural village situated just a few miles north of Leicester, at the time of the envelope it had a population of around the 1000. Wondering if they had a local history society I soon discovered that everything concerned with the village was listed on the Parish Council website and all enquiries must be addressed to the clerk. This caused me to hesitate as my request did not concern subjects such as missing wheelie bins, vandalised bus shelters etc. However I decided to try my luck and on 21 January sent off a scan with my story. The following afternoon I received an answer from local historian Terry Sheppard. He informed me that the most likely candidate was Sir James Parker, Vice Chancellor of England and for a brief period Lord of the Manor and Soke of Rothley.



From 1567 eight generations of the Babington family had held the Manor as Lords until the death of Thomas in 1837. For a short while the Lordship was held by two of his sons as executors of their fathers will. James Parker, born in Glasgow in 1803 and a leading Q C on the Queen's Bench, had married Mary Babington, third daughter of Thomas in 1829. In 1845 he bought the Rothley Temple Estate and the Lordship. He became Vice Chancellor in 1851 and received a knighthood, but unfortunately just one year later he died at Rothley Temple aged 49. On the wall in the chapel at the Temple is his funeral hatchment. The Babington tuns are on the right side and on the left are the three diamonds, the Parker emblems. The Estate was sold in 1893 and since 1959 has been a hotel, at the present time the Rothley Court Hotel.

Knowing who the writer was from an envelope opens up further fields of research and once again makes one realise how invaluable these local historians are.

www.rothleyparishcouncil.org.uk

LORD TWEEDMOUTH'S ENQUIRY

by Jim Hammond

Name of Town	Number of established postmen	Number of Auxiliary postmen	Number of these Auxiliaries who are ex-Telegraph Messengers	Comments
Birmingham	480	14	2	Northampton under revision
Bristol	287	14	1	
Cheltenham	53	32	14	
Coventry	25	13	6	
Derby	93	4	3	
Gloucester	54	16	12	
Hereford	15	11	7	
Leicester	123	13	2	
Northampton	35	5	5	
Nottingham	143	30	21	
Peterborough	22	13	5	
Rugby	13	14	2	
Shrewsbury	30	11	5	
Stafford	31	4	3	
Wolverhampton	57	1	1	
Worcester	38	6	2	

This enquiry into the working conditions of Postmen was appointed in 1895. The committee was made up as follows:

Lord Tweedmouth – Chairman, Sir A Godley, Sir F Mowatt, Mr Spencer Walpole, Mr Llewellyn Smith

Evidence to the enquiry began to be taken on the 3rd of February 1896, with the final submission on or about the 8th June. The majority of submissions to the enquiry were provided by members of the Postman's Federation, with a couple of submissions by officers of the Post Office at the end.

In the evidence supplied by Mr E B Lewin Hill, Joint Third Secretary to the Post Office, is included a table showing the numbers of postmen employed "At certain towns, 70 in number". I have extracted the details of those towns that relate to the area covered by the Society. These are shown in the table above.



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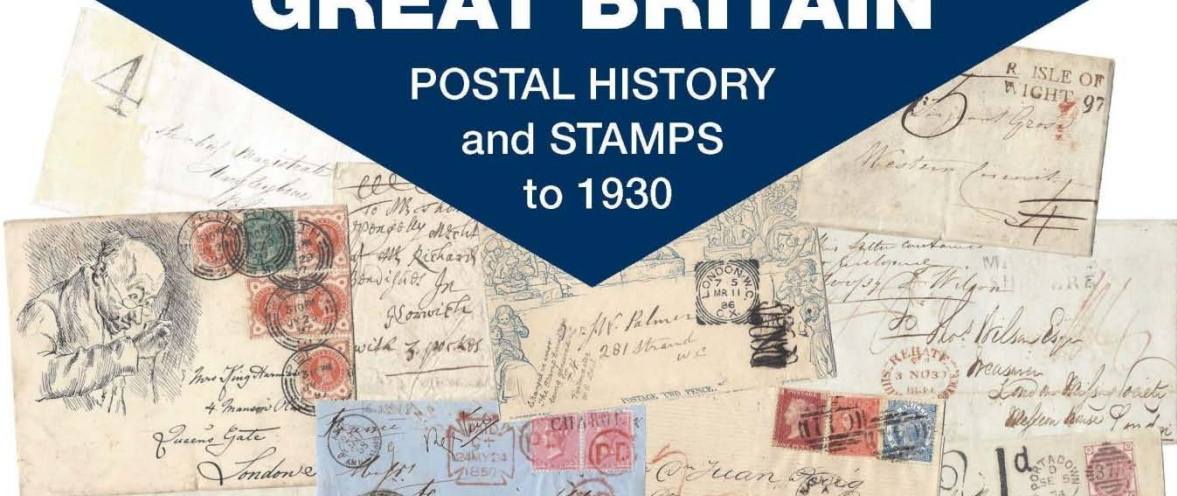
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WORCESTER PENNY POST UPDATE

by Chris Jackson



Wrapper from Kempsey to Bewdley 21 July 1834, prepaid 6d, 5d for the General Post up to 20 miles and 1d for the Worcester Penny Post. Framed **Worcester/Penny Post** and a manuscript **N°5** of Kempsey Receiving House.

Three major new finds have come to light which extend our knowledge of the penny post which ran from Worcester. It was always known that in 1834 penny posts to Kempsey (R H No 5) and to Broadwas were approved. However, until recently no examples of the Broadwas receiving house had come to light. The new finds consist of a boxed R H No 6 for Broadwas in December 1836 together with manuscript marks for both receiving houses in March and July 1834, presumably during the period between approval being granted and the receipt of hand stamps.

Right:

Entire letter sent from Broadwas to Bewdley dated 8 December 1836, charged 6d, 5d for the General Post rate up to 20 miles and 1d for the Worcester Penny Post and stamped with the framed **Worcester/Penny Post** in black and the boxed **N°6** of the Broadwas Receiving House.



The revised listing for the Worcester Penny Post is shown with the additions and changes to the B.C.C. in red.

BCC No	MP No	Type	Mark	Colour	Earliest Date	Latest Date
WO 902	1030	42	WORCESTER/ Penny Post	B	Nov 22, 1813	Sep 10, 22
				G	May 2, 13	Aug 13, 22
WO 904	1031	44	Worcester/ Penny Post	R	Mar 25, 29	Aug 27, 29
				B	Nov 27, 32	Sep 19, 39
				GR	Jun 3, 36	Dec 2, 36
WO 507	1033	53	No.2	B	Jan 25, 19	Sep 10, 22
WO 568	1034	53	No.2	B	Nov 27, 32	Dec 15, 39
WO 523	1035	53	No.3	O	Mar 25, 29	Aug 27, 29
WO 931	1036	53	No.3	B	Oct 25, 33	Oct 1, 39
WO 933	1037	53	No.4	B	Nov 18, 32	Jan 10, 39
WO 378	Not Listed	mss	No.5	B	Jul 21, 34	
WO 380	1038	53	No.5	B	Feb 7, 35	Jun 27, 39
WO 96	Not Listed	mss	No.6	B	Mar 11, 34	
WO 98	Not Listed	53	No.6	B	Dec 8, 1836	

RETFORD or REDFORD – WHAT’S IN A NAME?

by Mick Gill

Today the town is known as Retford. It is situated in the Bassetlaw District of North Nottinghamshire and comprises the former ancient borough of East Retford (first charter 1246), the hamlets of Moorcroft and Spittal Hill in the parish of Claborough, the parish of Ordsall and the parish of West Retford. East and West Retford are divided by the River Idle.

East Retford is mentioned in the Domesday Book as both *Redeford* and *Redeforde* and in early 13th century documents as *Este Reddfurth*. In the following century it is recorded as *Este Redeford*, afterwards *East Redforde* and, up to the middle 1700s as *East Redford*, after which the name gradually changes and becomes East Retford¹.

The name Redford derives from the ancient ford which crossed the River Idle a little below today's bridge on Bridgegate which unites East and West Retford. It was called the 'red ford' from 'its stratum of red clay being disturbed so frequently by the passage of cattle etc as to tinge the water with its colour'¹.

Originally Retford was not on the line of the Great North Road, which passed two miles to the west, where it took the 'Forest Road' as recorded on Armstrong's road map of 1776². This route went from Markham Moor, through West Drayton to Twyford Bridge, then directly north to Barnby Moor. Mail for Retford had to be dropped off and picked up at the Rushy Inn at Babworth. However, when the Great North Road was set to be turnpiked the inhabitants of Retford petitioned for the road to be diverted to better serve the town. The petition was successful and the road diverted and turnpiked in 1766.

The Great North Road continued to pass through Retford (from 1919 as the A1) until 1961 when the volume of traffic forced a further diversion which is still in use. From Markham Moor today's A1 follows the A57 to Apley Head to join the A614 north to link with the A1M at Blyth at the southern end of the Doncaster bypass.

In the first and second editions of the Nottinghamshire County Catalogue all the Retford hand stamps up to 1804 are listed as straight-line marks. Another four were added during the drafting of the MPHS Midland catalogue whilst NG226 was found not to be a straight-line and revised as a two-line RET / FORD (Fig 1). Dated 23 June 1744 this is currently the earliest Retford mark with the exception of a straight-line mark on a letter dated 5 July 1711 held in the Manuscript Department of the University of Nottingham.

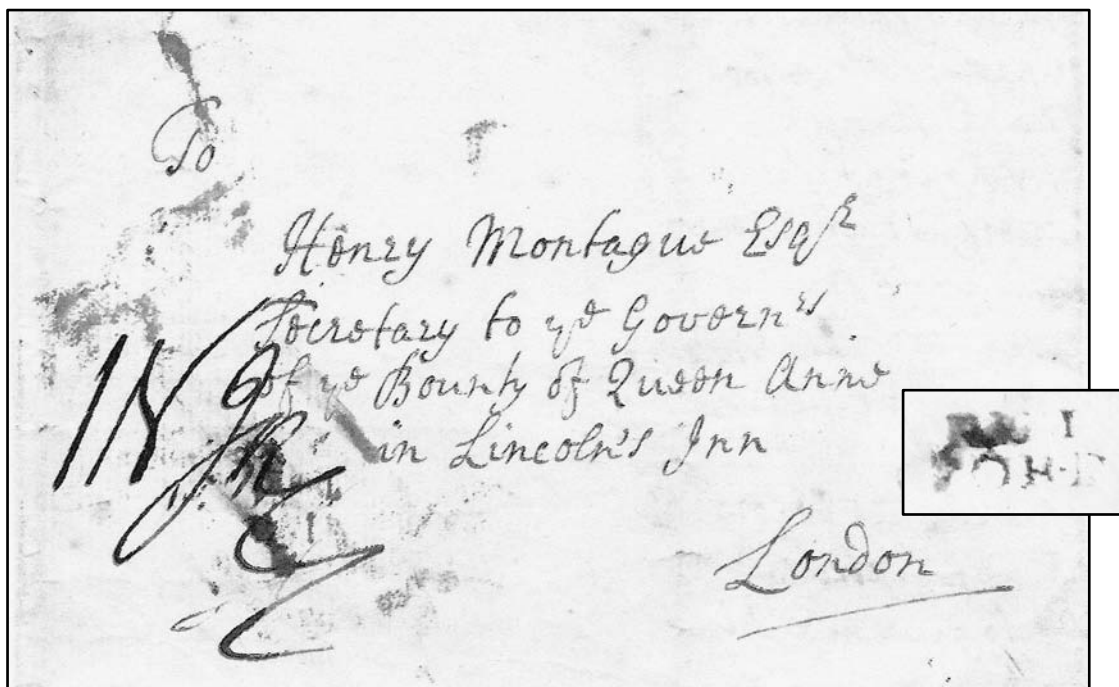


Fig 1, 23 June 1744 entire, from South Leverton to Lincoln's Inn, London with a RET / FORD two-line hand stamp NG 226 on the reverse (see insert).

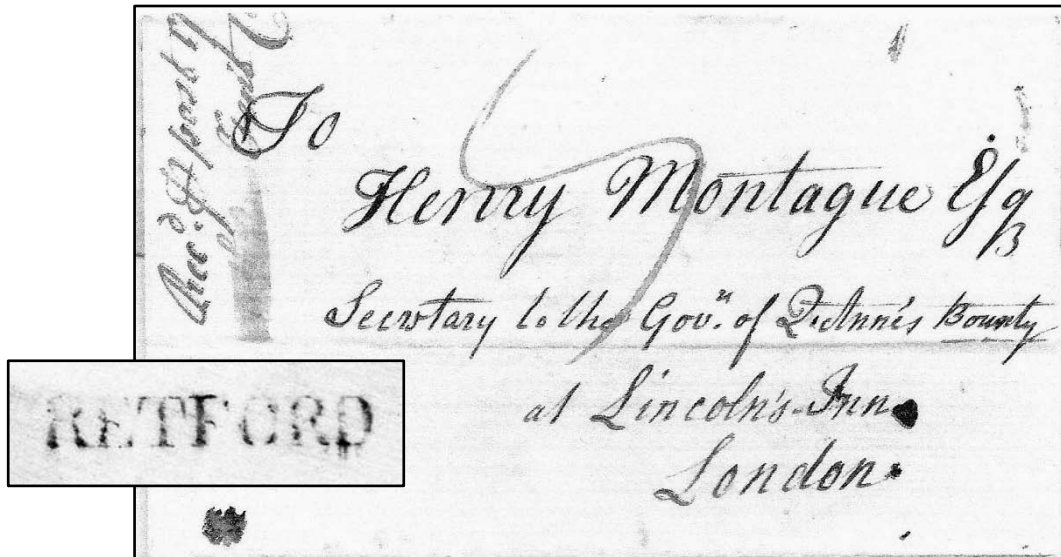


Fig 2, Wrapper to Lincoln's Inn, London with a RETFORD straight-line NG 227 dated 15 December 1762

In the draft Midland catalogue the RET / FORD two-line mark was followed by all straight-line marks, the earliest dated 15 December 1762 (Fig 2). However, during the drafting period, I received a package from a well-known dealer which included a wrapper to London with, on the reverse, what was described as a straight-line RETFORD hand stamp. The wrapper has a filing note which records the date as 9 January 1762 and the writer as the Curate of West Burton. Whilst I could clearly read the RE and FORD, I struggled to make out the T. After some deliberation I came to the conclusion that the T was, in fact a D and that I had a new mark – a straight-line REDFORD (Fig 3). My conclusion was agreed by the Nottinghamshire editor and the mark included in the Midland catalogue. The name Redford was clearly still in use locally in the early 1760s.

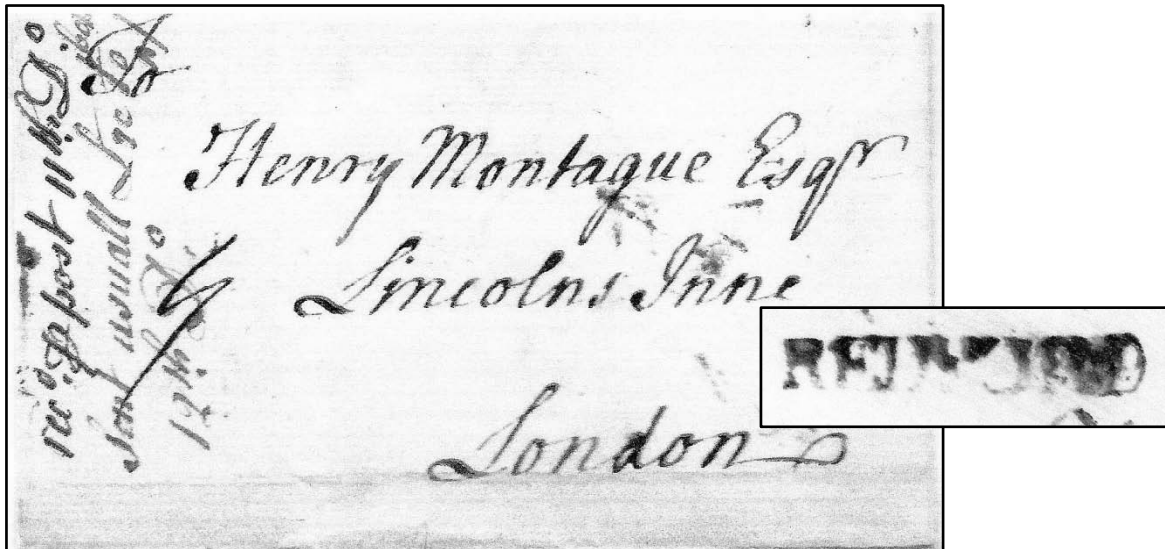


Fig 3, Wrapper to Lincoln's Inn, London dated 9 January 1762 with a REDFORD straight-line hand stamp NG 226b

That Redford continued in use for much longer is evidenced by further postal history items. First, a Free wrapper from York dated 14 March 1828 is addressed to *Redford* (Fig 4), note the letter *d* of Redford does not conform to the letter *t* in the three preceding lines. Second, an envelope with a Halifax postmark of 13 November 1874 addressed to *Redford* was missent, not surprisingly, to Bedford (Fig 5). Endorsed *Retford*, it was returned incurring a day's delay.

Finally, an example of Redford still in use in the early 1900s comes with a postcard clearly addressed to *Cannon Square, Redford, Notts*, postmarked RAMPTON / LINCOLN / OC 10 / 06 (Fig 5). Why a Nottinghamshire village six miles east of Retford, and also a number of other villages close by, have LINCOLN as the post town at this time and not RETFORD is another story still to be investigated.

Figs 4, 5, 6 next page

- References:
- 1) White's Directory of Nottinghamshire 1853 p660
 - 2) An Actual Survey of the Great Post Roads between London & Edinburgh, Armstrong, Mostyn John, 1776, plates 11 and 12.

York Bank fourteen
1828
Mr. Whitare
Thouton
Redford
Murkay

Fig 4, W rapper to Redford dated 14 March 1828

Mr. John
Invergate Villa
Redford
Redford

HALIFAX
NOV 13
74

REDFORD
A
NOV 14
74

Fig 5, E nvelope t o R edford dated 13 N ovember 1874, missent, n ot s urprisingly, to Bedford

POST-CARD

WRITE HERE FOR INLAND POSTAGE ONLY

THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN HERE

Miss Ward
 8 Cannon Square
 Redford
 Notts.

Hampton
OCT 10
1906
LINCOLN

*Thank you for the letter
 I have just received
 I am sure you are
 all well. I am
 home. I am
 know. I am
 that you have
 about your
 your self*

Fig 6, Postcard to Redford dated 10 Oct 1906

RESPONSE TO IAN BAKER'S ARTICLE, MM206 / 17

Ian M May



Fig 1, Margoschis 'By aeroplane' express letter.

In MM206 an article by Ian Baker was illustrated^[1] with a cover flown by the air mail service operated during the 1919 rail strike. I illustrated an article^[2] in MM194 with a similar cover, which I show again in Fig. 1. There are a number of similarities! They are addressed to the same person in the same hand and were posted at the same time on the same day. The only differences being that the cover Ian illustrated was sent c/o Mr Stanley, "Birmingham Gazette" and that shown in Fig. 1 was sent Express so was charged 6d more and marked Express by the Post Office. So why were the two covers so similar? The answer is that I believe they were philatelic rather than commercial!

The reason my belief is that John Margoschis, to whom the covers were addressed was a stamp dealer in Birmingham. Alan Spencer, a member of this Society, has carried out extensive research^[3] into John from which I have taken a few details. The business was founded in 1877 in Constitution Hill, Birmingham; in an advertisement in the Birmingham Philatelic Society's annual report his business is described as Stamp Importers, Dealers and Philatelic Publishers. He was a member of the Birmingham Philatelic



Fig 2, Margoschis first day cover, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association FDC

Society from 1896 and acted as an auditor from 1899 to 1910 and a committee member for the 1912 to 1913 season. In 1923 the business moved to Lower Temple Street. John died in 1932 after which his wife and daughter continued the business. His wife died in 1955 but his daughter continued before moving, due to the development programme of Birmingham City Centre, to a small shop in Burlington Arcade. The business finished trading in the 1990's. I recall visiting the shop whilst it was in Burlington Arcade and amongst my purchases were two albums still in my possession, and the first day cover, Fig 2.

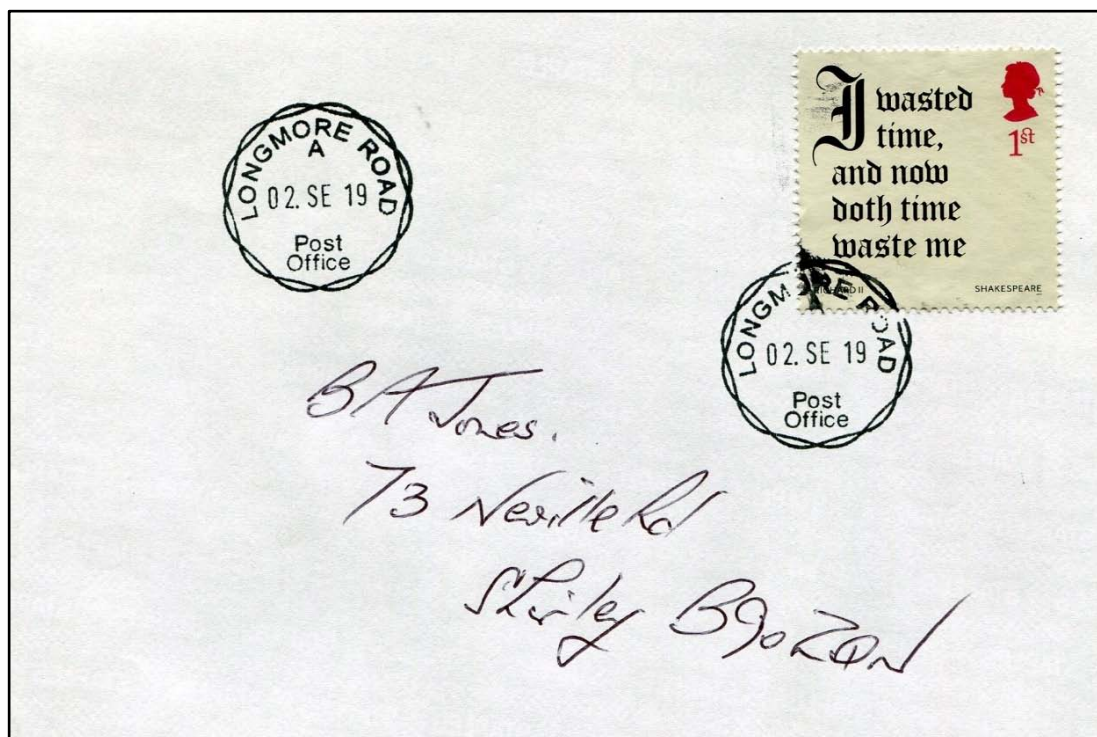
References

- 1 Baker, I., Birmingham 1919 'By Aeroplane' strike mail cover, Midland Mail, April 2020, p17
- 2 May, I., M., The Midlands and internal air mails until 1940, Midland Mail, April 2017, pp7-15
- 3 Spencer, A., John Arthur Margoschis., Personal Communication.

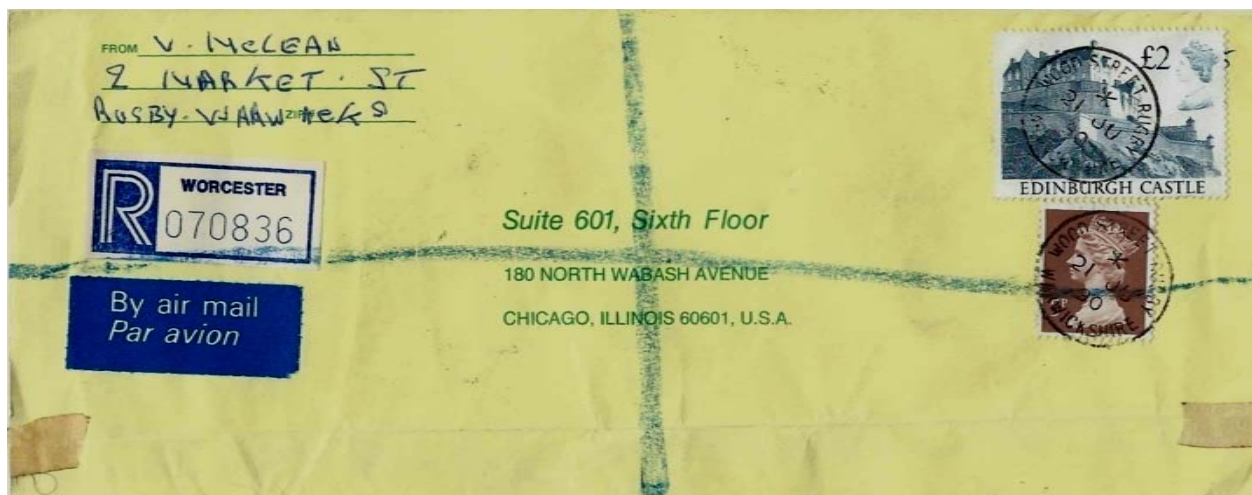
HERE TODAY – GONE TOMORROW!

Bryan Jones reports: I was delighted to be able to report to the Midland Postal History Society (see MM 204 / 2, Oct 2019) the opening, on 8 February 2019, of a new post office in Solihull. The new post office was located in the Martins Newsagents at the corner of Longmore Rd and Blossomfield Rd, a shop which provided me with my daily newspaper delivery, always through the letter box before I came down to breakfast. So imagine my surprise when making my regular visit to pay for my newspapers in January this year to be told that the shop was closing with effect from 28 February 2020 and no alternative location for the post office was being sought. So a life of about a year, surely there cannot be many such new offices in the modern age with such a short life!

Fortunately I had managed to get a cancellation to include in my collection!



HELP WANTED! Ian May writes: Registered air mail letter (reduced to fit) to USA dated 21 JUN 1990, weight 10 – 20 gms. Rates are correct at £1:55 registration plus air mail postage zone B 34p for first 10 gms, 16p for next 10 gms, so total £2.05 covered by £2 Castle and 5p Machine. The stamps are cancelled WOOD STREET RUGBY / WARWICKSHIRE, BUT Worcester Registration label, why and was this acceptable?



SHROPSHIRE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY - A MEMOIR

by Mike Mapleton

When I went to the Shrewsbury library to ask for information on letter boxes in connection with a primary school project, I was given the information that the Shropshire Postal History Society had just been founded. I was given details of venue and time and in due course, I attended what was the second meeting of the society. It was all very formal and even a touch forbidding. Ties and jackets were worn by the almost entirely male membership. I did not realise it at the time but there was a distinguished gathering of postal historians present including Bill Hart, Denis Salt, 'Cactus' Denis George, so-called because he collected the plants as well as a formidable range of pre-stamp material, Steve Stobbs together with the retired postmaster of Whitchurch (*Bernard Smith - Ed?*) and Jim Hammond, Denis's son-in-law and others of that ilk. Ed Druce was an absentee member living in Australia and Brian Atkins and Dave Tarry were soon to join the happy company. I was by a very long chalk the lone neophyte. I had collected stamps as a schoolboy but had sold my modest collection when I needed funds to buy a cricket bat. I knew nothing at all about postal history. For the first few meetings, I felt so daunted that I hardly said a word for fear of foot inserting. Two members in particular helped me greatly. Denis Salt was a wonderfully kind and generous man who for many years hosted meetings at his spacious house in Shrewsbury. In his company, I felt able to ask simple questions without any embarrassment. Eventually, I would be setting more challenging posers for the great man. Steve Stobbs was similarly amiable. For many years, I would give him lifts to meetings and as we journeyed, the conversation would always be about postal history and I benefitted enormously from all the knowledge thus gained. Denis George was a real character. He had a wonderful collection of earlier Shropshire material which came to a sticky end. Being something of a recluse and living in the middle of nowhere, news of his death did not reach members until long after the event. Our then secretary, Sheila Hart, drove up to his house to offer the society's condolences to his widow, thinking that the personal touch would be better than a cold phone call. When she repeatedly knocked at the door, there was no reply so Sheila went to the back of the house. There, standing by a large, blazing incinerator, was Mrs George disposing of one of the two best Shropshire collections together with all his notes. Let this be a warning to all postal historians and philatelists whose wives or partners are not keen on their hobbies. Sheila was, for many years, a stalwart member of the society though much in the shadow of the redoubtable Bill. Unless I have it wrong, Bill gave the first ever display at the inaugural meeting of the society. His subject was Shropshire rubber hand stamps, a subject later covered by Denis George in his catalogue of county examples. He was a dealer, an international judge and an authority on the Boer War amongst many other areas of postal history. At one of our earlier meetings, he was invited to judge our annual competition - nine sheets of Shropshire postal history. At that time, I scarcely had enough material to go to nine sheets but I managed in the end. I burned the midnight oil in the week prior to the competition only to find my entry publicly condemned. Bill ripped my entry to pieces. He found fault with everything, the presentation, the writing up and the quality of the material. It was very cruel but at least it was a lesson to be learned.

By the time I left Shropshire to take up a post in Cumbria, the society was well established with three or four meetings a year and a strong and numerous membership. Guy Bridges and the indefatigable Jim Ball had joined and over the later years, I managed to keep in touch with an occasional trip down south for a meeting when my wife and I were able to count on Denis Salt's generosity as a host.

Now the time has come to wind up the society. Anno domini is victorious and as is the case everywhere, there are few if any youngsters to take such societies forward. Jim Ball and Guy Bridges have manfully run the affairs of the group for many, many years but when they decided to resign, no one was able to take over. Although this is all very sad, I have nothing but happy memories - some wonderful displays by invited guests such as Chris Beaver of Penkridge, Mike Young of Worcester and John Calladine, and the best education in the black arts of displaying postal history a man could want.

A Note from the Editor – My experience of the Shropshire society is similar to Mike's and he has allowed me to add a few comments to his excellent piece. I was living in London, 'collecting in isolation', so I was not at the first meetings. A chance meeting with Steph Stobbs at Stampex 1981, I think it was, when I overheard him ask a dealer whether he had any Shropshire items, began my association with the society. I didn't take any persuasion to join, met Messrs Salt & George and my interest took off. Mike's mention of Bill Hart reminded me of an 'incident' at an early meeting when he observed that the cancel on a cover I displayed had 'inks of two different shades'. He summoned me, his finger placed under the aforesaid aberration. I felt his eyes fix on me awaiting a comment. In my confused innocence and naivety I made the mistake of asking how it might have occurred, when he launched into a mini-lecture on collectors 'enhancing' covers. Before I had time to unburden him of his thoughts, he removed his finger and walked away. I'm sorry to say that we hardly ever spoke again! On a happier note I would like to publicly thank Guy Bridges and Jim Ball for the sterling work they did when I was producing the Shropshire postmark book. Lists were sent from Canada, recordings made at meetings, owners of 'new' marks noted and requests for photocopies dispatched. Without their help the book would never have appeared.

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