



MIDLAND MAIL

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



Chairman:
Elizabeth Lewis

Treasurer:
Trevor Clewley

Secretary:
Richard Farman

Number 46, September 1986

It is with considerable trepidation that I take over the editorship from John Calladine. The Society owes an enormous debt to him, for under his guidance Midland Mail has become an outstanding publication both in content and presentation. I only hope that I can maintain the high standard that he has set.

My wife expressed concern when I announced that I was taking on this job. She was heard to mutter "Do you realise that there are other counties in the Midlands other than Leicestershire." Well, I suppose there is Rutland. Anyway I assured her that she need not worry since the members would be writing lots of articles to rectify my ignorance. Even if you do not have the time or opportunity to research a major article, I am sure that we all have in our collections items which would make a small but interesting feature.

The fact that Birmingham is making a bid to stage the Olympic Games prompts me to express a thought that often occurs to me as I pass through Birmingham International on my way to meetings. Why not move B.P.E. and Stampex to the National Exhibition Centre? I say this as one who lives little more than thirty miles from central London. The present site of these two exhibitions hardly projects a vibrant image of philately. Not only is there more space at the N.E.C., but it is easily reached by road, rail or even air from most parts of the country. I imagine that quite a high percentage of the population of this country live within a ninety minutes drive, and you can actually park your car when you get there. All things considered, it would appear to be a far better site for the 1990 International Exhibition than West London.

New Member

The Society extends a warm welcome to Mr. Ivor Roberts of Shrewsbury.

Great Britain Postal History

from 1840 to date. County material,

FDCs and the unusual. Send for my latest list.

ROGER HUDSON
36 WEST STREET
WARWICK
CV34 6AN

Forthcoming Meetings

The first meeting of the season will be on Saturday 20th. September at 2 p.m. in Dr. Johnson House, Bull Street, Birmingham. We are asked to bring a maximum of 9 sheets of material from the period 1919-1939. The meeting last September, which dealt with the years 1900-1920, produced a varied and interesting selection of material so it promises to be an entertaining afternoon. Maybe the Treasurer will produce 65 double circles. This meeting will be preceded at 1 p.m. by a committee meeting to which the County Editors are invited.

As the next issue of Midland Mail will not be issued until mid November would you please make a note of the next two meetings.

The October meeting will be at the Birmingham and Midland Institute, Margaret Street, at 2 p.m. on 25th. October when the displays will be given by two of the members. This meeting coincides with the Annual Stamp Fair and Exhibition organised by the Birmingham Philatelic Society at which there are usually some Postal History dealers present.

On the following Saturday, the 1st. November there will be a joint meeting with the Shropshire and Welsh Postal History Societies at Shrewsbury. The speaker will be Keith Parker, and his topic "G.B. 1870-1920, Highways and By-ways."

Future Meetings

The programme for the rest of the season is expected to be as follows:

- 13 December - the annual gathering at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent. This year the meeting will commence at 11 a.m.
- 17 January 1987 (at Dr. Johnson House 10 30 a.m. to 1 30 p.m.) - 9 sheet display on Parcel Posts.
- 21 February (at Dr. Johnson House 2 p.m.) the Annual Competition.
- 21 March (at Dr. Johnson House 2 p.m.) - Guest Speaker.
- 11 April (at Dr. Johnson House 2 p.m.) - A.G.M. and Society Auction.

Book Review

P.O. ARCHIVES INDEX TO MINUTED PAPERS (1839-1973).

P.O. Archives have recently completed a catalogue by subject based on several numerical listings of HQ files. It has been compiled from three series of files:

Post 33 (part 5) covering the period 1949-1954.

Post 101 from the period 1941-1948.

Post 121.

The latter series consists of a hoard of old papers that had lain forgotten in the basement of the old P.O. headquarters in St. Martins-le-Grand. They are concerned largely with local postal history. A quick glance shows that the Midlands are well represented. In fact the material for the two articles that I wrote for the last Midland Mail was taken from files in this series. There are at least four more references to the carriage of mail by trams in the Midlands.

However the strength of the catalogue lies in the comprehensive view that it gives of the material made available in the last three years on the wider aspects of postal history. It will be invaluable to anyone wishing to consult this type of material or who just wants to know what is available.

It can be obtained from P.O. Archives, 23 Glasshill Street, London, SE1 0BQ. Price £3.50 (inc. p&p). Cheques made payable to The Post Office.

SOME CROSS POST PROBLEMS

One of the earliest cross posts, from Exeter to Bristol, was set up in 1696 by Joseph Quash. In 1699 this was extended to Wotton under Edge. Then in the following year authority was given for a further extension to Chester through Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Worcester, Kidderminster, Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury with a service three days a week.

The years from 1720 to 1761 saw considerable development of the cross post system due largely to the work of Ralph Allen. In Ralph Allen's Own Narrative (Appendix 2) the following cross posts which affected the Midlands are mentioned:

- 1736 Manchester to Chesterfield via Chapel-en-le-Frith, Tideswell and Bakewell;
Nottingham to Derby;
- 1754 Nottingham to Loughborough.
- 1761 Northampton to Daventry and Coventry on the three additional post days to give a six day post from London to Daventry and Coventry;
Derby to Chesterfield;
Nottingham to Newark;
Rochdale to York, and Ferrybridge to Leeds which quickened correspondence between towns on the Great North Road and Staffordshire, Birmingham and Coventry.

On the death of Allen in 1764, the running of the network of cross posts was taken over by the General Post Office in London. However Allen's nephew, Philip, was given the post of "Comptroller of the Bye and Cross Road Letter Office". This article is concerned largely with extracts from the instructions and reports book of that office (P.O. Archives Post 14 Refs. 1 and 2).

February 1771

When Philip Allen investigated complaints that letters sent through the Bath Office for Walsall, Stafford, Stone, and Newcastle-under-Line were being sent via London instead of by the Great Cross Road, so doubling the postage, he found that it was not only the Bath office which was at fault. Several postmasters between Exeter and Kidderminster were in the habit of sending letters through London which ought to have gone via the Cross Post and vice-versa. His findings are shown in the chart on the next page.

Allen then drew attention to the position of Lichfield which from the "old lists" did not appear to be served by the Cross Road. This despite the fact that both Stone and Coleshill, the stages to the north and south respectively, received letters by that route. This anomaly had been pointed out to Ralph Allen who had promised to rectify it, but the appropriate orders appeared not to have been given. However some deputies did send letters for Lichfield, Tamworth and Burton by the Great Cross Road. It was the supposition that such orders had been given which led to the issue of directions, when the post between Birmingham and Derby started in 1770, that letters between the above three towns and the area, served by the cross road, south of Kidderminster should be sent through Kidderminster.

He also noted that the postmaster of Coventry had sent letters for Bath by the Great Cross Road although Coventry did not have the right to use this route beyond Gloucester and its dependent branches in South Wales.

Finally Allen stated that the extensions of the six day post from Birmingham to Kidderminster (January 1769) and from Stone to Newcastle under Line, Brereton Green and Macclesfield had opened a faster route than through Chester and Bridgnorth from Cheshire and north Staffordshire to the southwest.

On the basis of all this Allen proposed that the towns on the Cross Road from Exeter to Tewkesbury were to send all the letters for "Birmingham, Coleshill and places in their deliveries in Warwickshire, Burton-on-Trent, Cheadle, Leek, Litchfield, Haywood, Newcastle-under-line, Penkridge, Stafford, Stone, Talk-on-the-Hill, Walsall, Wicknor Bridges, Wolverhampton and all other parts of Staffordshire;....and that answers to these letters be returned through the same Channel, that is thro' Kidderminster."

One result of this measure was to reduce the income of the Bridgnorth and Wolverhampton deputies since the correspondence between Wolverhampton and the towns south of Tewkesbury no longer went by Bridgnorth. The deputies at Bridgnorth and Wolverhampton shared equally the extra penny charged on every Cross Road letter carried between the two towns. Allen added that the deputy at Bridgnorth seemed to be considerably underpaid for the riding work and Bye Letter Office duty that she performed.

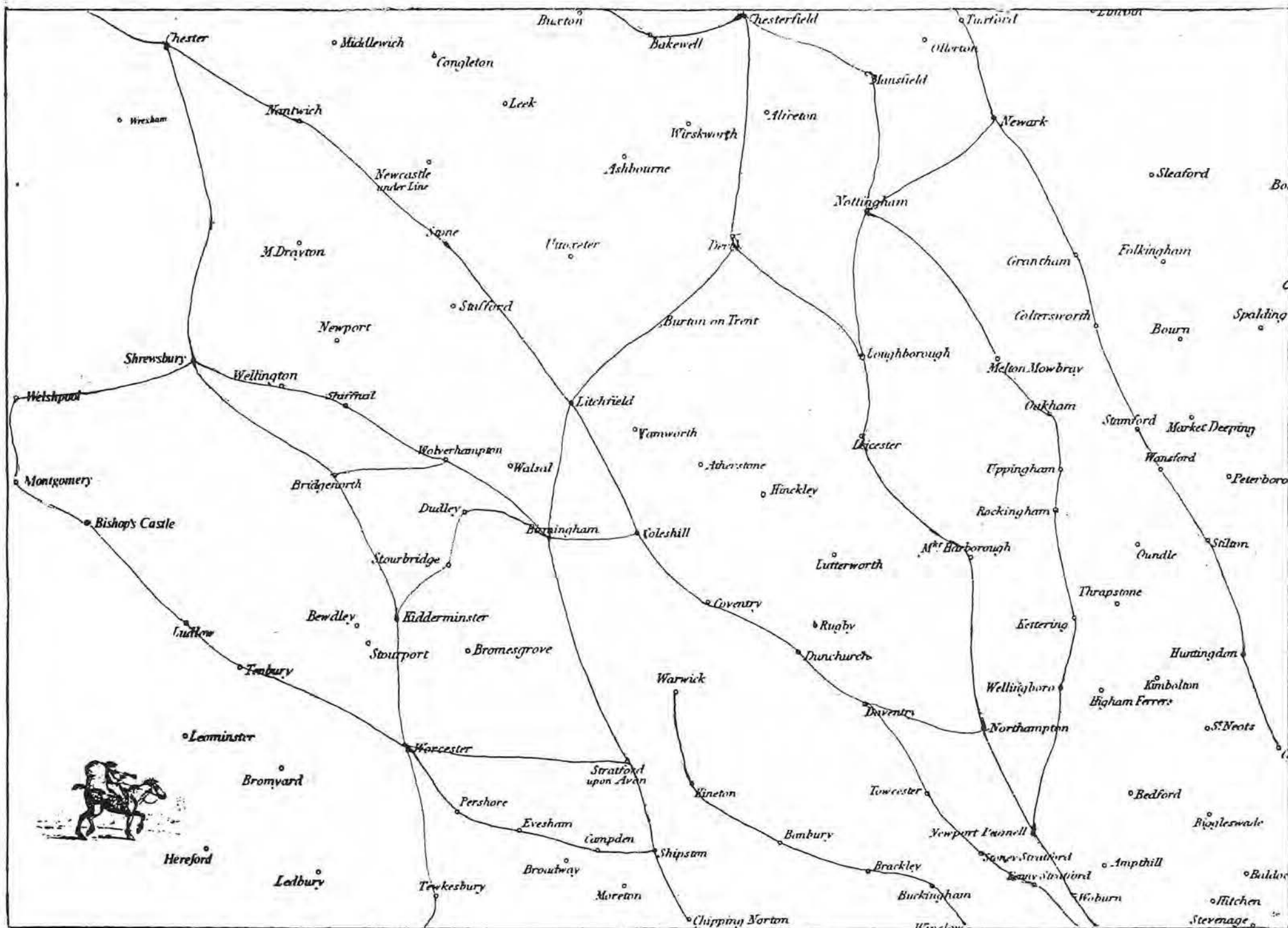
December 1771

Allen reported that letters from Coventry, Coleshill, Birmingham, Stourbridge, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Shifnal, Shrewsbury, Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire for Newport Pagnell, Oulney, Wellingborough, Higham Ferrers, Kettering and Rockingham had until 1770 been sent through London. But when the post between Birmingham, Lichfield and Derby was introduced on 5th July 1770 orders were given for them to be sent through the bye roads. This had been done since the clerk in the Birmingham office had told the surveyor that he sent letters for the above Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire towns to Northampton. Not only was this information incorrect, but the surveyor on the basis of it had ordered that the letters for those towns from Staffordshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Westmorland and Cumberland be sent through Birmingham instead of Nottingham. Allen asked the P.M.G. if these circulations should be confirmed but no reply is recorded. Do any members have covers which shed light on this?

In the same report it was mentioned that the clerk in the Birmingham office had taken it upon himself to send letters for Thrapston, Oundle, Peterborough, Brackley and Banbury through the bye roads. This despite his having been repeatedly forbidden from sending the Banbury letters in that way. Since the 9th November he had complied with that order. The postmistress of Birmingham was to be told to send letters for all those towns through London, and the clerk was to be reprimanded for his unauthorised action. Does anyone know which route to Banbury the clerk used? Was it through Stratford?

June 1773

Commenting on a petition from the traders of Worcester, Allen stated that the letters from Chester, Manchester, Liverpool, Stone, Salop, Shifnal, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, and all places as far as Kendal in Westmorland and Rochdale in Lancashire arrived at Worcester later than had been the case due to alterations made in 1768 on the introduction of the six days post to Ireland. These changes had been made to give an earlier arrival of the London mail at Worcester on the bye days. If the bags from London had been detained at Stratford on those days, until the arrival from Birmingham of the letters from the above places, they would have arrived 4 to 5 hours later. On the other hand, the bye letters would have been received little earlier than they were by means of the Great Cross Road. It seems that in mentioning bye letters Allen was referring to mail from the northwest etc; rather than from towns on the road to London. Also it appears that in 1768, the mails from the northwest were sent by the Great Cross Road rather than through Birmingham. (A post between Stratford and Worcester was authorised in 1757 - see Dennis Salt's article in Postal History No. 228).



Secondly, he refused to allow letters between Worcester and Durham, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and all parts of the North (presumably other than those mentioned in the previous paragraph) to be sent via Kidderminster rather than through London. The reason given to the people of Worcester was that this would have reduced "the opportunities for correspondence" from six to three days a week whether the letters were sent through the Cross Road or through Birmingham and Stratford. The requested alteration would have been less frequent but cheaper. A more valid reason, from the Post Office point of view, emerged when Allen said that such an alteration would reduce the revenue on country letters (those passing through London) by at least £1000 and possibly very much more since it would be difficult to refuse similar requests from Hereford, Gloucester and "in short every part of the Kingdom where the letters can be conveyed through the Bye Roads." Ralph Allen, when establishing cross posts, had been obliged to ensure that the revenue from the country letters did not suffer.

March 1774

Uppingham, Oakham and Melton Mowbray were to be allowed to correspond with Birmingham through the bye roads since Nottingham, to the north, and Rockingham, to the south, already did so. Some letters were already sent in that way although officially they should have gone through London.

1775?

The final report is undated but is headed: "Observations on the circulation of the Bye and Cross Road Correspondence at Shrewsbury to demonstrate that letters from Bishops Castle and Ludlow in Shropshire for Bradford in Yorkshire were not sent through the Bye Roads."

Before May 1769 letters from Shrewsbury to parts of Yorkshire (particularly Halifax, Bradford and Leeds), Durham and Northumberland were sent through London. In the reverse direction several places sent the letters to Manchester where many of them were stopped and sent to London as missent letters. This possibly arose since the deputies at Shrewsbury and Manchester had not been told to treat such letters as bye letters although it had been Ralph Allen's intention to do so. In 1769 this was corrected. All the post towns of Shropshire, with the exceptions of Bishop's Castle and Ludlow, were included in this measure. The reason for the exceptions was that the counties of Montgomery and Merioneth were not allowed to send their letters to the North as bye letters, but if Bishop's Castle and Ludlow had been allowed to do so, their letters would have gone through Montgomery. The deputies at Shrewsbury, Manchester and Rochdale were specifically instructed to intercept any letters for these two towns which had been sent by mistake as bye letters, and send them to London.

The opening of the post between Worcester and Bishop's Castle via Ludlow in 1769 could not have provided a route from the two Shropshire towns to Halifax etc, as Worcester then did not send bye letters to the North beyond the boundaries of the Great Cross Road. Also on the introduction of this post it was noted "letters from places north of Salop in and depending upon the Great Cross Road for Ludlow and Bishop's Castle will come quicker thro' Worcester than through Salop."

Then in 1771, when correspondence between Scotland and Shrewsbury, Shifnal and Newport was permitted to pass through the bye roads, it was particularly ordered that the deputies in the branch posts of Shrewsbury in Montgomery and Merioneth were not to send to Shrewsbury letters to the north of England beyond the boundaries of the Cross Post.

I am sure that amongst the collections of members there must be a number of covers which illustrate the points mentioned in this article. How about Ludlow to Leeds showing a "Missent to Shrewsbury"? The editor would be delighted to receive copies to show in future editions.

THE E/NR AND RELATED MARKS.

I imagine that members are familiar with the E/NR and similar marks which are sometimes found on letters sent, during a period of thirty years starting in 1844, from London to the Midlands and the North. It is now known that they were applied to letters, received at the Inland Office too late for enclosure in the direct bags, before they were sent to the T.P.O. for sorting. This is shown by the following directive issued to the Inland Office on 13th July 1860.

"On and from Monday evening next the practice of forwarding in the North Western Railway Post Office bag letters and newspapers which are too late for despatch in the ordinary bags at the Midland Division will be discontinued and a separate bag will be made up for the Midland Railway Post Office.

This bag will contain all such letters and newspapers with the exception of those for the following towns which are still to be forwarded in the North Western Railway bag.

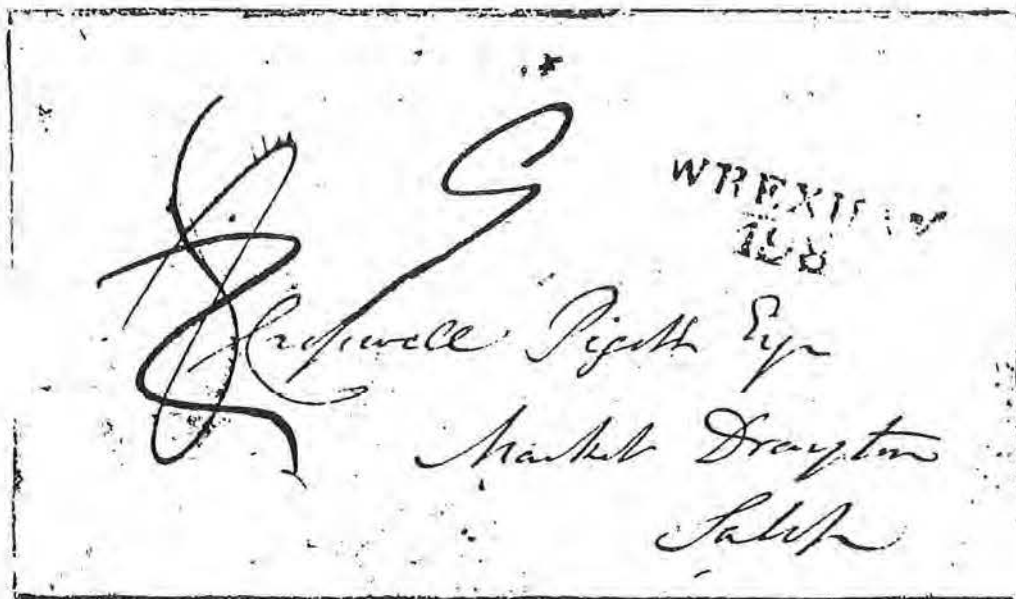
Ashbourne Alferton Bakewell Belper Chesterfield Derby
 Grantham Leicester Loughborough Mansfield Matlock
 Melton Mowbray Newark Nottingham Oakham Southwell
 Uppingham Wirksworth

The NR stamp must be placed on the letters for the above named towns.

As this bag will not be opened until the train reaches Tamworth great care must be taken that no letters for the towns named be forwarded in it.

The bag will be labelled 'Midland Railway Post Office North' via Tamworth and will be sent single."

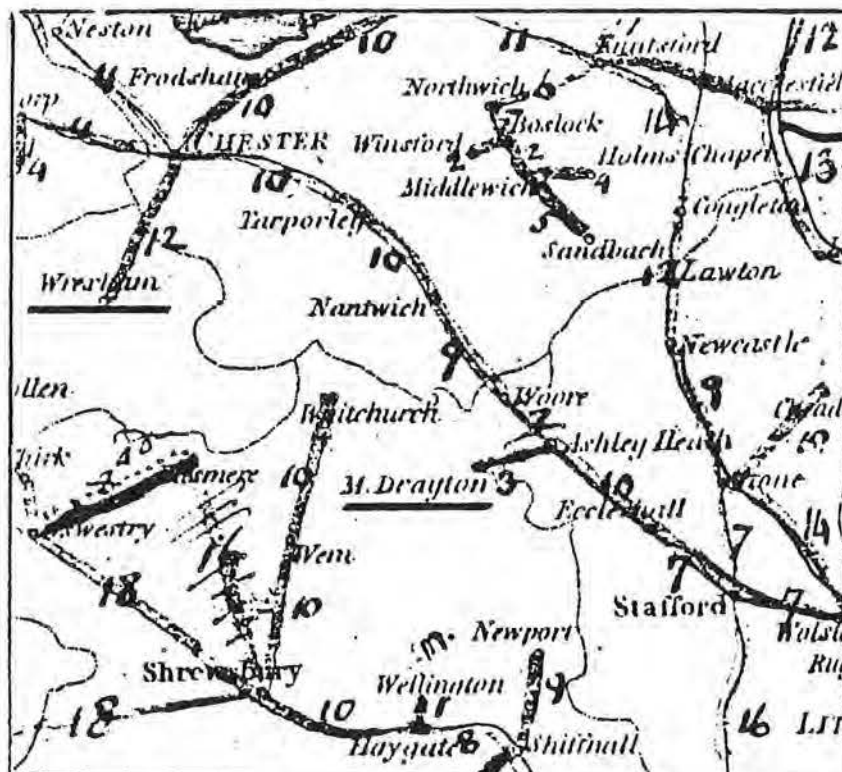


BY WAY OF WOORE ?

Some time ago I purchased the above letter, which is dated November 1817, thinking that it possibly showed a local delivery charge. However the charges are not as might be expected, but then I am a total ignoramus concerning Shropshire postal history.

From the circulation maps of 1807 and 1823, the obvious route was via Chester and Ashley Heath which was a distance of 46 miles for which 7d. was the correct charge. However the 1823 map shows a post from Wrexham to Shrewsbury so a possible, but roundabout, route was through Shrewsbury, Shifnal, Woilverhampton and Stafford. This distance was 94 miles for which the correct charge was 9d.

Would any members from Halesowen and points westward care to comment?



CARDINAL SPELLMAN PHILATELIC MUSEUM, INC.

Presents this Certificate of

SILVER AWARD

to

The Midland (GB) Postal History Society

for

THE UNDATED CIRCULAR MARKS OF THE MIDLAND COUNTIES

at

TENTH ANNUAL PHILATELIC LITERATURE FAIR


PRESIDENT

APRIL 1986




DIRECTOR

EVEN MORE GLORY.

46/10

FIREWORKS AT LEAMINGTON

When reporting this incident to the P.M.G. Freeling wrote,

"Mr. Churchill has done quite right in offering a reward of 2 guineas. The consequences which might have resulted from so mischievous an act are horrible to contemplate and will fully justify a higher reward, and if the present (one) does not lead to detection in a few days your Ldshp will think it right to offer 20 guineas for the discovery of the offender." Post 42/453/1824.



2 GUINEAS REWARD.

WHEREAS some evil-disposed PERSON or PERSONS, did,
on the Night of the 13th instant, between the hours of Eleven
and Twelve o'Clock, put

A Lighted Cracker
INTO THE LETTER-BOX,

BELONGING TO THE

Post-Office of Leamington,

A REWARD of TWO GUINEAS will be given on conviction,
to any one who will give Information (at the POST-OFFICE,) of the Person or Persons who committed the Offence, that he or they may be Punished according to the utmost rigour of the Law.

(By Command of the Post-Master-General.)

B. CHURCHILL, Surveyor,

G. P. O.

Leamington Spa, Aug. 16, 1824.

ROSE & LAPWORTH, PRINTERS, CLEMEN'S STREET, LEAMINGTON.

AN UNUSUAL USE OF A U.D.C.

Does this use of the Gretton U.D.C. qualify for inclusion in any future amendments to the U.D.C. book? This is to serve as a gentle reminder to obtain your copy of the 1986 revised edition from John Calladine. Hurry now, while stocks last.


 I acknowledge to have received of the Postmaster of _____
 One Pound's worth of Penny Postage Stamps,
 on credit, and I now hold credit stock to that amount
 Signed, John Gregory Sub-Postmaster.
 Stamp of Sub-Office, GRETTON the 22 day of December 1854.
 20,000. 12-54

A PROBLEM MAP

Reproduced on the opposite page is a portion of a map in the John Palmer papers in P.O. Archives (Post 96 Ref 21 Folio 9). It is titled "Mail Coach Routes England and Scotland c1786". That it is certainly not. For instance there was no mail coach to Uppingham and Oakham until 1807.

My guess is that it is a circulation map of the early 1780s. Then why are some routes represented by a double line? The obvious answer is that they were 6 day posts. But then Leicester etc. had a 6 day post from 1755; so far I have not come across any indication that it was ever withdrawn.

Several writers have mentioned that the Bristol - London mail coach stayed on the turnpike and did not pass through the village of Ramsbury as the post boy had done. It is not shown on this portion of the map but the route to Bristol is shown going through Ramsbury.

Does anyone else have any suggestions?

FOR

POSTAL HISTORY

ESPECIALLY

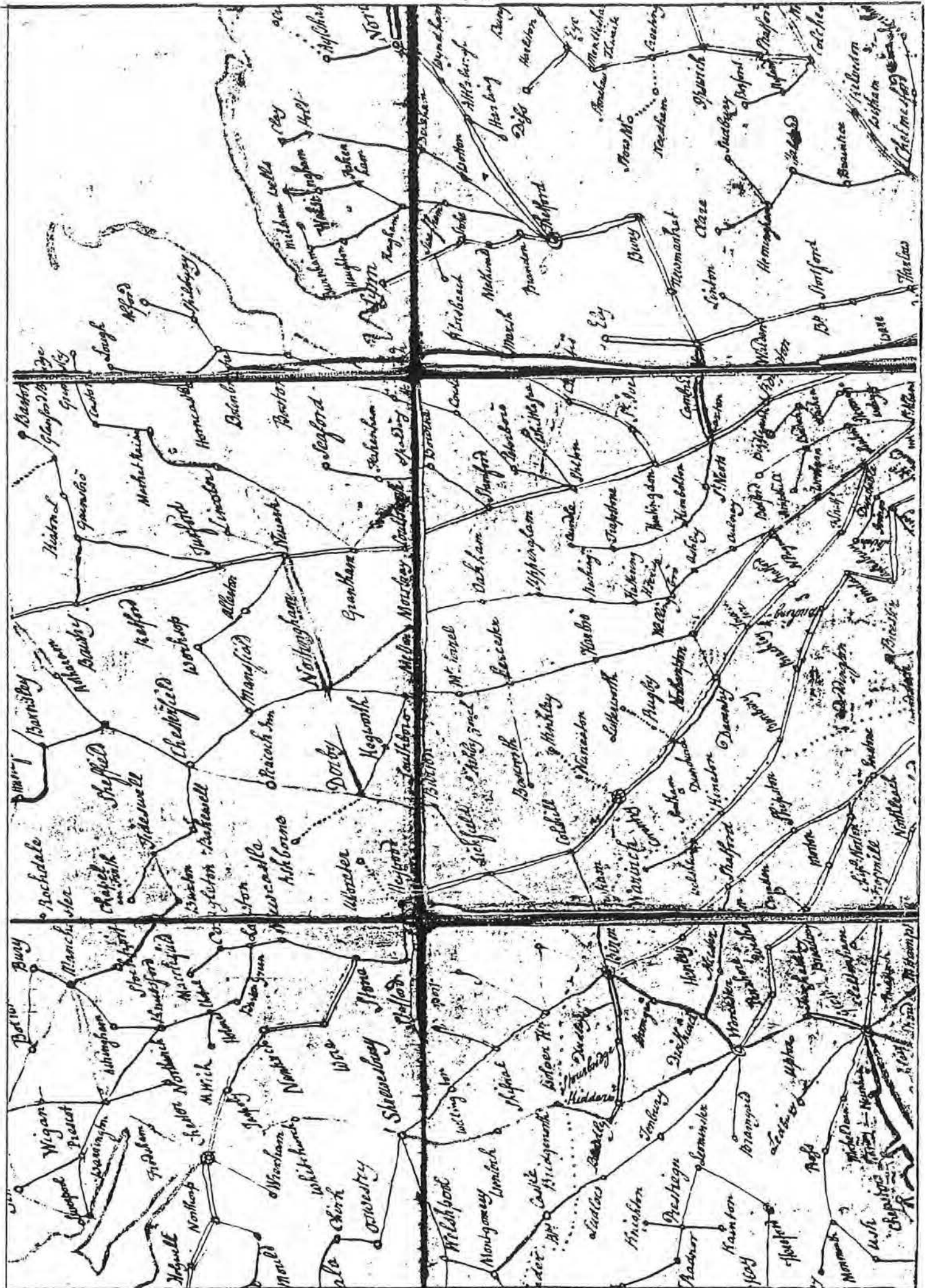
G.B. (County)
MARITIME
TRANSATLANTIC

and some FOREIGN

CONTACT

Michael Jackson (Philatelists) Ltd.
LONDON INTERNATIONAL STAMP CENTRE
27 KING STREET
LONDON WC2E 8JD

01 836 2748 - 24 hr service



OTHER THAN P.O. ARCHIVES (I.)THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE - CHANCERY LANE

This is the first in an occasional (i.e. when the editor is desperate for material) series on the sources available to postal historians other than P.O. Archives.

There are two main branches of The Public Record Office. One is in Chancery Lane; the other at Kew. Admission to either is by a reader's ticket which is usually issued on production of proof of identity such as a driving licence.

At Chancery Lane the two series of documents most likely to be of interest to the postal historian are the State Papers Domestic and the Acts of The Privy Council. These provide information on the posts both before and after the introduction of the public post in 1635.

In the State Papers for the reign of Elizabeth I posts through the Midlands are mentioned several times. In the 1570's a post to the North was erected which included stages at Grantham, Newark and Tuxford. Posts to Holyhead were set up when the need arose and then disbanded during the period 1576-1582. There were stages at Daventry, Coventry, Coleshill, Lichfield and Stone.

Coming to a contentious period amongst postal historians, in the State Papers for the Interregnum there are details of a post from London to Preston. This is to be found on the end cover of SP 21/7 date 1644? This would appear to be a Parliamentary post for besides the outward and homeward times, there are two columns one of which is headed "Persons to receive and send letters", the other "Persons to give intelligence." Amongst the stages were those at Northampton, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby.

There is mention of the postmaster of Lichfield in 1649, and of those at Coleshill and Birmingham (Robert Girdler) in 1652.

An undated, but probably of 1663, document (SP 29/88/100) announces the establishment of the branch post from Towcester to Sheffield. It gives details of the times and of the postmasters. At Northampton it appears that there were two - John King and John Sumner at the George.

There are other tables of places on the Post Roads to be found in the papers of 1667 (SP 29/218/84-88) and 1674 (SP 29/363/177).

A fascinating series of documents from 1666 and 1667 are a number of post labels which are illustrated on the following pages. They were carried with the mail bags and on them each postmaster wrote the time at which he received and dispatched the mail. There are examples from the Chester Road and its branches to Derby, Manchester, Preston and Shrewsbury. On 9th January 1666/7 the postmaster at Coleshill reported that he received the down mail a little after 7 but delayed the dispatch until after 8 so as to await the arrival of the bag from Birmingham. They were also used by the Letter Office in London to communicate with the postmasters. Thomas Challoner at Stone was reprimanded at least twice for the poor working of his stage. In 1667 the format was changed and the distance of each stage shown. From these the computed distances of some towns from London were Coventry 74, Coleshill 82, Litchfield 94, Market Harborough 68, Leicester 80, Loughborough 88.

Finally there is the list of post stages and the main market towns served by each stage of 1669 (SP 29/263/124). I am not entirely clear what this list shows. In some instances the post stage was connected to the towns shown by an official post. In others this was not the case. Possibly in these instances local carriers provided a service.

Lithpale den at 5. sent away before 7
 to Mr. Hothorne

When after 10 sent away by a 11 with an
 Irish mail bag of

Very dear Sir
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of



For the Special Service and Affairs of His
 MAJESTY.

Haste, haste,
 Post-haste.

Whereas the Management of the Post-Stage of Letters
 of England, Scotland and Ireland, is committed to my
 Care and Conduct: These are therefore in His Ma-
 jesties name to require you in your respective Stages
 to use all diligence and Expedition in the safe and speedy
 Conveyance of this Mail and Letters from London to Chester
 and from thence to return: And hereof you are not to fail, as
 you will answer the contrary at your perils. Given under my
 hand this 1st of January 17th past 7 in the morning, 1672

To the several Post-Masters
 on Chester Road

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

When the office the first of the
 safe at 6 of the clock
 of January 13th
 of the office the first of the
 clock of

Monday 24.



John Riegar

For His Majesties Special Service.



Whereas the Management of the Post-Stage of Letters of England, Scotland, and Ireland, is committed to my Care and Conduct; These are therefore in His Majesties Name to require you in your respective Stages, to use all Diligence and Expedition, in the safe and speedy conveyance of this Mail and Letters: And that you ride Five Miles the Hour, and so for every Hour, according to your Instructions from London to Shrewsbury, and from thence to return accordingly. And hereof you are not to fail, as you will answer the contrary at your perils.

1667

To the several Post-Masters betwixt London and Shrewsbury.

Waste, Waste, Post-Waste.

From the Letter-Office in London at 11 o'clock

Received at Colhall Hall at 12 o'clock
And sent away at 1 o'clock

Received at Birmingham at 1 o'clock
And sent away at 2 o'clock

Received at Shrewsbury at 2 o'clock
And sent away at 3 o'clock

Received at Shrewsbury at 12 o'clock

Returned.

From Shrewsbury at 1 o'clock

Received at Shifnal at 1 o'clock
And sent away at 2 o'clock

Received at Birmingham at 1 o'clock
And sent away at 2 o'clock

Received at Colhall at 1 o'clock
And sent away at 2 o'clock

Received at the Letter-Office in London

Shrewsbury John

The labels on the two previous pages have been reduced in size. The left hand column of that on page 15 was in fact on the reverse side of the label. It is rather difficult to read so I have tried to transcribe the contents but I would not guarantee the accuracy of my efforts.

Barnet recd at past 5 in ye morning.

St Albans past 8 in ye morning

Dunstable almost eleven(?) and sent in all speed by me Robert Foxon

Brickhill att one afternoone Jo Younger

Towcester att 5 and sentt with speede by mee Andrew Snape

Daventry past 7 and sent away speedily Wl Shukburgh

Coventry rcvd at 11 and sent away halfe an houre after by me John Lax

Coleshill received at almost 2 sent away at almost 3 by me Tho: Holbeche

Litchfield here att 6 sent away before 7 by..... John Rathbone

Stone after 10 sent away by 11 with an Irish Mail bag(?) by Tho: Challenor

Nampwich recd att 3 & sent away with speed with an Irish Male Ralph Deane

Chester Revd the Maile and Irish packquit(?) safe at 6 of the clock by Tho Baker

Chester 12 of January 66

dispatched thy Maile at 12 of ye Clocke by Tho Baker

Nampwich rcvd att 5 & sent away with speed by mee Ralph Deane

Stone past 9 sent away past 10 by Tho: Challenor

Litchfield here past 3 sent away past 4 by me John Rathbone

Coleshill received a little after 7 but staid (for) Brmigiem (Birmingham) bagg till after 8 sent away after with speed by me Tho Holbeche

Coventry rvd all most 11 and sent away w?n (within ?) halfe an houre by mee John Lax

Daventry almost 3 and sent away speedily Wl Shukburgh

Towcester halffe an houre aft 5 oc sent away speedyly Andrew Snape

Brickhill pastt 8 halfe a houre and sent with speed John Younger

Dunstable allmost eleven off night and sent it all hast Robert Foxon

(The entries for St. Albans and Barnet appear to be missing)

Chester Labill Received ye mayle at ye office Jan ye 13 66 at almost 6 of ye clock in ye forenoone

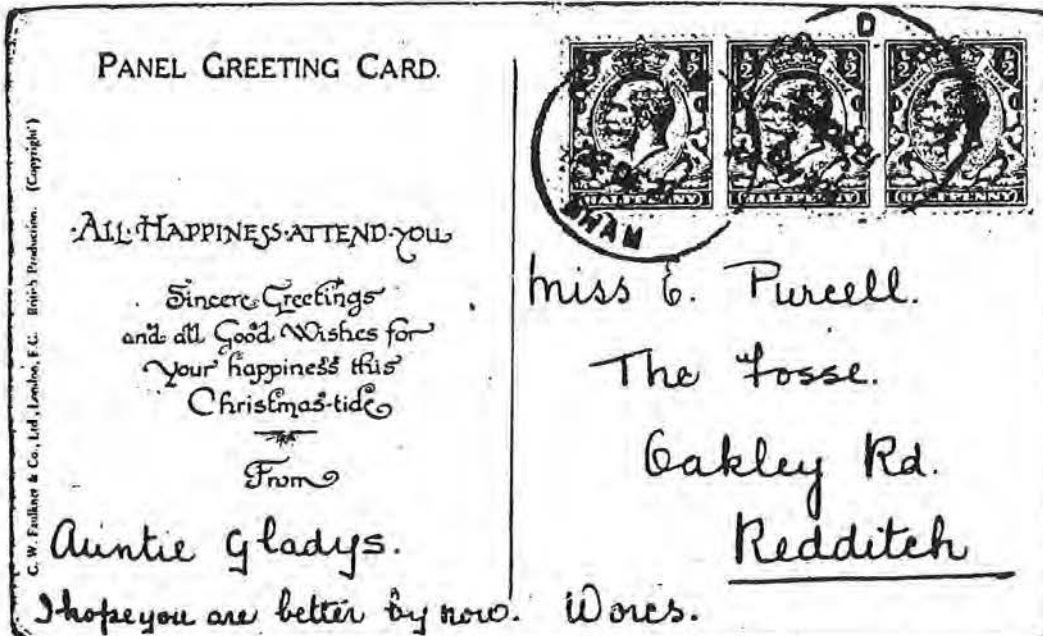
It appears that the Chester postmaster got the date wrong. The times of dispatch and arrival in London suggest that the mail left Chester at noon on the 11th. I wonder how local time varied from one stage to the next.

CAN YOU HELP ?

I am indebted to Elizabeth and Eric Lewis for the two following items.

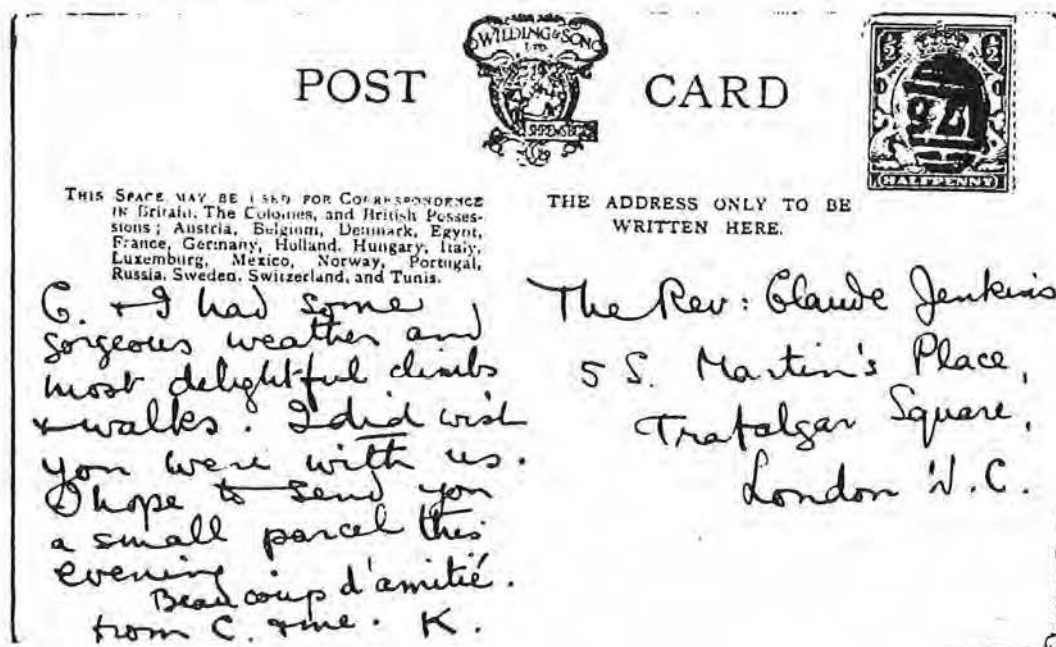
AN OLDBURY SKELETON ?

We have recently been shown the photostat reproduced below of a very much abbreviated skeleton which we assume must be Oldbury and that perhaps the other letters were not available to make up the handstamp. Has any other member an example or possibly seen one in the past?

A TINY "75" IN BARS CANCELLER USED AT BIRMINGHAM

Reproduced below is a postcard that we have had in our possession for a few years. The card unfortunately has no evidence of originating from Birmingham other than the tiny "75" canceller which is Birmingham's postal number. Fortunately last year we were shown a similar cancellation, by one of our members, on a card which undoubtedly came from Birmingham so we can say that this is a Birmingham canceller.

Has any other member seen such a small mark of this nature for Birmingham or for any other town?



191/2
ALLERSTONE
LION
Leonard J. D. Roche Esq.
3 Ashby Dr La Touche

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE 1986/7 SEASON ARE NOW DUE.

10th BIRTHDAY TREASURE HUNT

5. $47 - (84 + 25 - 73) = 11$ which places us in Derbyshire.

Three members - Eric Lewis, Ian May and John Soer submitted correct entries. Each will receive a book token to the value of '5.

TWO-PENCE MORE TO PAY

In order to introduce a little culture into Midland Mail I am reproducing a poem from the Town Crier of August 1869. It was apparently the work of a Birmingham postman.

*Ill fated missive, how I sigh and pause
To see thee stampless thus. And what the cause?
Has some rude hand from thy snug corner torn
Thy monarch's head, and left thee so forlorn?
Alas! the writing tells me some fair hand
Bathed with her lips a stamp, and bid it stand
In its right place. And now there's nothing left
But marks of gum to show why thou'rt bereft
Of that which should have freed thee through my hands today,
And saved harsh angry words, with two-pence more to pay.
History and poets repeat themselves in time,
And thoughts of good Queen Bess, confound my rhyme,
For 'tis not the first time I call to recollection,
A head dropped off by some fair maid's direction.*

The Next Issue

The only certain thing about the next issue is that it will appear in November. Like Mr. Micawber I hope that something will turn up. In the absence of a flood of articles from members, I shall be forced to publish more extracts from the Town Crier. You are also threatened with a comparison of the 1807 circulation maps of two Midland towns plus an article on the "Posted in Advance for Delivery on Christmas Day" scheme (the Christmas decorations have been in one of our local department stores since mid-August!).

Endpiece

As shown by the datestamp from a local sub office, the editor lives much further from the Midlands than you realised.



However, he will be pleased to receive articles at

51D RG11 2RG

**NES**

NEW ENTERPRISE STAMPS

NES

G. B. Postal History (all aspects and all periods); Postal Stationery; Stamps both on and off cover and other postally related material.

We offer a comprehensive list comprising the above subjects, carefully described with above average attention to detail and with appropriate background information and comment.

Send for our fixed price sale list with the now well established unique buying procedure. With not more than five sales per year may we suggest you send promptly to avoid missing our next list. Post free from N.E.S.