

NOTEBOOK

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EDITORIAL

This issue has been delayed for a variety of reasons, not the least the Editor trying to understand the software and an alarming work load, involving up to eleven hours a day over a long period, leaving the evenings devoted to "collapse of stout party", as *Punch* would have expressed the event.

For the next issue, on which it is hoped to start soon, is in urgent need of material from readers. There are a number of items in the stock-pot but rather more from which to select would be welcome.

In case number 90 comes too late, a Happy, Peaceful Christmas to all readers.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF FRANKING

Although not uncommon, it is of some interest to record yet another example of the abuse of the franking system. The letter, which has for postal markings an incomplete Temple Dockwra for Tuesday (the 17th. March was the previous Wednesday) with a manuscript *Knight* (?) as the receiver. Addressed, in what appears to be different hands, which surely must have been a give away to a sharp eyed postal examiner, to her daughter c/o a lady whose reputation in Greenwich required no further direction to the local letter carrier !

My Dr. Anne,

Bath 17th. March
1784

I have duly recev'd your letters, but did not answer them immediately as I was so happy to find you were well, & I had nothing new to communicate to you. Your Brother has been indisposed with a fever, but is now recover'd.

A patient which your Papa can't leave, will prevent our being in London before the 10th. of April, you may depend upon our seeing you, as soon as we arrive in Town.

This goes under a frank to Mrs. Horne, and if you write one in the course of a few days, & send the Letter to her. she will send it to me.

Your Papa & Brother write with me in Love to you, & Comp^t. to your Gouvernefs's & Mifs Betsy Athell, & I am my dr. Child Your

aff^t. Mother

A M Adair

HERMA TRANSPAROL

Members may be interested to know a smaller version of these mounts, which dispenses 250 self adhesive corners, can be obtained from Vera Trinder. The price is less than the much larger mounts and they deal with all but the thickest items very neatly indeed.

Recommended.

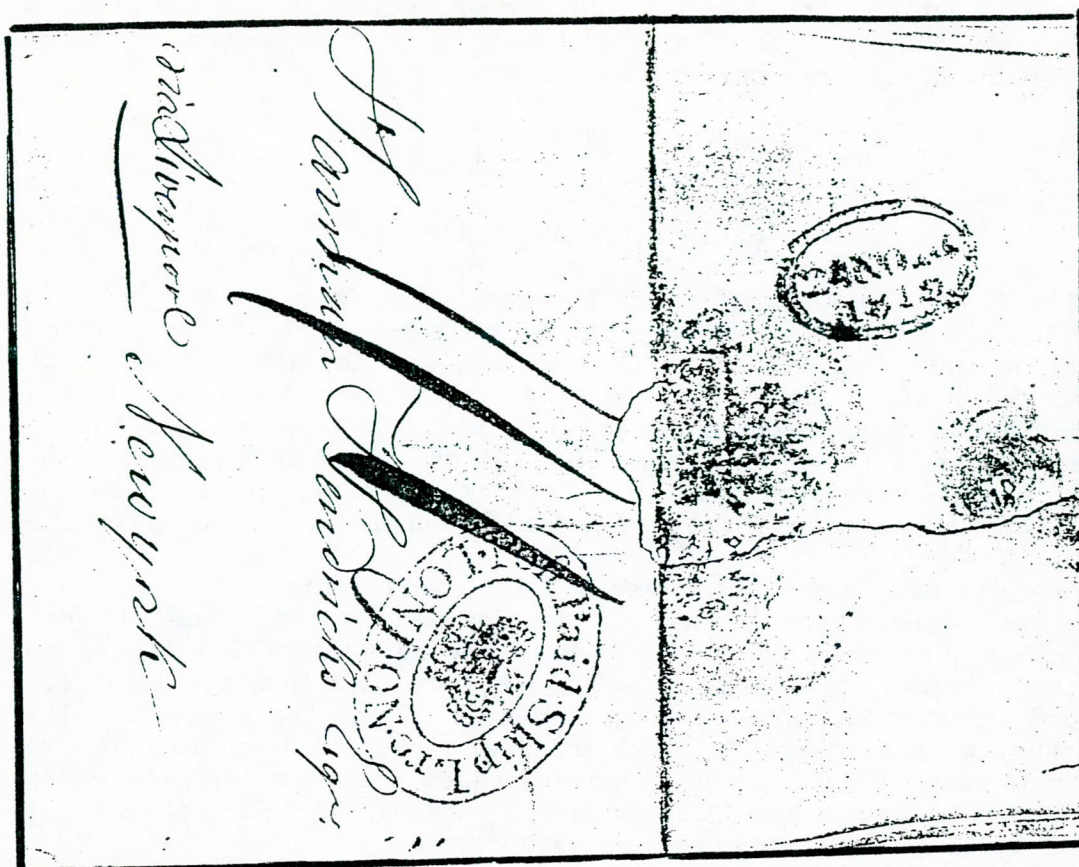
SHIP LETTER OFFICE SAILING DATE MARK by Grace Dove

In *Notebook* No. 49 Martin Willcocks suggested this mark could be a sailing date for India. However, the item shown here is on a letter from London to New York.

The *BCC* Part 3 has a note on the mark: "This date stamp has been seen on 3 covers, all passing through London and each with a London Ship Letter handstamp. "Barrie Jay, to whom a copy of this item has been sent, agrees this is a Ship Letter Office sailing date mark, although it has previously been thought to have been a Foreign Office stamp by some collectors.

This particular example is written as from London, dated 17th. November and the datestamp (L. 1424) is for the 24th.

Editor's note - In the other recorded examples there is also a delay between either the date given by the writer and/or the datestamp when posted and L. 1424, this giving rise to the suggestion it was some form of *delayed mail* mark. The Editor believes this definition is also applicable, since date of sailing coming some time after the initial receipt by the Post Office would call for a clear signal of an



officially recognised time lapse between the two events in the event of a query.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984

When the Editor manages to work through and at least partially master the software, it would be a great help to have members' name, address, telephone number and collecting interests on file. In addition, the record of subscription payment will be entered, which will - we hope - speed up reminders. This will enable the more rapid addressing of the envelopes for the despatch of *Notebook*, the auction catalogues and to put members in touch with others with like collecting interests.

The *Data Protection Act 1984* fortunately permits organisations such as LPHG (an unincorporated club) requires each and every member have to be asked whether they object to the personal detail relating to them being held by LPHG. Interestingly enough, if the member does object, the details can lawfully be held on a card index !

In addition the terms under which the information will be disclosed have to be stated. In brief, we will not be disclosing any of the information to anyone but the member concerned. Those wishing to contact a member will have their request routed through the Secretary and it will then be up to the recipient member to establish contact. This is the way we deal with enquiries already.

No lists of members or their interests will be published and list will not be sent to any other organisation(s).

This notice is to be read as constituting the notice to members under the Data Protection Act 1984 and any member objecting to the details noted above being put into a computer file are requested to lodge their objection, in writing, to the Editor

THE 1988 POSTAL STRIKE

The October issue of *British Postmark Society Quarterly Bulletin* deals with the effects on mail stamping of the recent strike. There are many readers who collect such material on the very proper basis that postal history comes through the letter box every day. The following notes have been prepared from the *BPS* report and although the nationwide effects are covered, London did have a number of offices which were effected more quickly than others, so any information you have on local offices could usefully be added to the record.

The dispute was started because of the intention to introduce recruitment bonuses for London and SE England, which makes it very much part of LPHG remit ! There was a one day national stoppage on the 31st. August but *BPS* record a 6.45pm machine postmark for Guildford and one for 2.30 am from Aberdeen. Since the great majority of counters were open both parcels and registered mail continued to be dealt with normally. Apparently some metered mail was over stamped by the Post Office with 1st. September datestamps, a relic of earlier times when delays were marked by datestamps ?

The use of casual labour (which according to one Post Office spokesman heard on LBC was not that much more employed than before the dispute) triggered a second interruption to services across the country. Initially the effect was patchy until the 7th. September, then almost a complete standstill became effective to the 12th. The clearing of the mountains of mail (including *Notebook*) started on the 13th., though many offices would not handle registered or other counter mail for several days after. Judging by the pattern in Carshalton the build up was rapid locally but parts of London, so it is understood, did not get much from outside their local area for days.



One interesting feature was the lack of a complete date on datestamps, some showing just the year, others just month and year, this to avoid quality of service enquiries is suggested by *BPS*.

Those of you who check their mail for irregularities of cancellation may have kept examples. A note of these would be appreciated.

THE FOREIGN BRANCH DIAMOND

It is not the prettiest cover seen, badly torn at the top right but what a nice find in the LPHG packet.

Posted in Stockport, with the duplex for 29th. October, 1865 cancelling a penny plate (82), that it was underpaid appears not to have recognised until arrival in London on the 30th. (backstamp).

The fine deficient postage and fine stamp was applied in black, 1/- and 6 being correctly entered, with the total shown for good measure to the left.



Then the really interesting part. In the top left, in red ink, is "1st ret^d to / Stockport". This presumably means what it says, though there are no postal markings to show it went back to Stockport. The London datestamp on the obverse for the 31st. is in red, and apart from the Barbados arrival for November 20th., there are no other stamps apart from, cancelling a very battered plate 4 shilling green, the single FB diamond, just tied to cover.

Seemingly as a consequence of the shilling being paid, the charge marks were erased with a red ink scrawl and the letter left for sunnier climes.

Yes it could be a prettier cover and it will never do for an competitive entry item but as an item for the Editor's Maritime collection (well, it went by sea) the packet comes up trumps.

POSTMEN'S UNIFORM

This article appeared in "St. Martin's Letter Bag" for 1915 (sent with a number of other items included in this issue from Post Office Records, to whom our thanks). Unfortunately it is not possible to reproduce the illustrations, but we have used one photograph from P.O. Records (ref: H 992), the source acknowledged with appreciation. The descriptive capabilities of the author paint a clear picture, which does much to overcome the lack of pictures.



ENGLAND - PLATE 24.

Published Jan^r 1815 by J. Murray, Esq. No. 1, Pall Mall.

An announcement of much moment to our Postmen colleagues was made in the "Gazette" of that body for the 6th. of February last, namely that, under a recent departmental decision, in future each Head Office area will be asked to decide the question, which type of shako shall be worn in that particular district. The result of local deliberations upon this ruling will therefore henceforth determine whether postmen shall wear

(a) a hat with a single peak in front so familiar in their childhood to the eyes of London people who are now about forty, or to, for example, the inhabitants of Dover of the present day, or

(b) the double-peaked shako now worn by postmen in the E.C. district of London.

"Chacun a son gout"; and it is not for us to express an opinion on what appears to be a vexed question among the wearers themselves. But all our readers both at home and abroad will no doubt be interested in a brief survey of postmen's uniform in general, including headgear, from early times in London; and we are glad to be able, as a result of rummaging in the Post Office Muniment Room and in old illustrated newspapers, to throw additional light on the subject by reproducing contemporary prints.

It would seem likely the uniform of Post Office servants may be connected through the old Mail Guards with the uniform of the army. Mail Guards and coachmen appear to have worn uniform from the time of their institution; but Post Office uniform proper apparently commenced to be worn in 1792 and consisted, so far as London letter carriers were concerned, of beaver hats with gold bands, a scarlet "cut-away" coat with blue "lapels" and a blue cloth waistcoat. The buttons were made of brass and bore the wearer's number. Trousers were not supplied by the Department, the officer himself provided these garments; and as each man probably followed his own individual taste in cloth in the connection, the result in the mass could not have been very happy. However, no exception could, we think, reasonably have been taken by even the most fastidious of the subjects of Her Majesty Queen Charlotte, on whose birthday, by the way, special efforts were always made to issue the new uniforms, if all the postmen presented so well-groomed an appearance as the officer represented in the illustration on the next page. Indeed, it must be admitted this gentleman of those early times was a most resplendent creation, and fully realised the aim of the authorities, who represented to Their Lordships of the Treasury as one of the reasons for the proposal to institute uniforms, that their servants should "present an appearance creditable to the Department".

There were of course other reasons than aesthetic ones for the grant of uniform. At that time letter-carriers were called upon to collect postage on delivery; and it was considered uniforms would tend to give them authority for the collection of the sums due, and also, in view of the public attention which would be drawn to their person, act as a preventive of loitering.

The scarlet cut-away coat appears to have continued to be worn by the General Post Letter-carriers; but at some period before 1854 the London District Letter-carriers had been supplied with a blue coat of similar pattern; and in the coloured lithograph from which Plate No. 1 was reproduced, the postman seen disappearing - at a less hurried pace, be it noted, than our General Post Adonis - up the street at the left hand side of the picture is portrayed in such a coat, but with a cockaded tall hat and gold band similar to that of his colleague.

A great change occurred in 1854. It was admitted the cut-away coat did not afford adequate protection against the inclemency of the weather and a frock-coat was thenceforth issued. The waistcoat was withdrawn, and a pair of grey trousers issued in lieu thereof.

Simultaneously the beaver hat and the gorgeous gold band disappeared, and a glazed tall hat which id said to have been based on a Paris was introduced. The number on the buttons was transferred to the collar. Our heroes must have then presented the appearance of the merry-looking individual shown in Plate No.2, which is copied from a coloured lithograph forming the frontispiece to a piece of music entitled "The Postman's Knock Quadrilles", and published about that time. The tune of the then famous song "The Postman's Knock" was introduced into the Quadrilles, and from another source we are able to reprint the words of the song :-

THE POSTMAN'S KNOCK

WHAT a wonderful man the Postman is,
As he hastens from door to door;
What a medley of news his hands contain,
For high, low, rich and poor.
In many faces he joy can trace,
In as many he grief can see,
As the door is ope'd to his loud rap tap,
And his quick delivery.
Every morn true as the clock,
Somebody hear the Postman's knock.

No.1 he presents with news of a birth,
With tidings of death No. 4,
At 13, a bill of terrible length
He drops through the hole in the door.
A cheque or an order at 15 he leaves,
And to his presence doth prove;
While 17 does an acknowledgment get,
And 18 a letter of love.
Every morn, true as the clock,
Somebody hears the Postman's knock.

May his visits be frequent to those who expect
A line from the friends they hold dear,
But rarely we hope compell'd he will be
Disastrous tidings to bear.
Far, far be the day when the envelope shows
The dark border shading it o'er.
Then long life to Her majesty's servant we say
And oft may he knock at our door.
Every morn, true as the clock,
Someone hears the Postman's knock.

In 1835 both the General Postmen and the London District Postmen were alike clothed in scarlet coats and grey trousers; and there was thus uniformity at last. This state of affairs continued until the 10th. of July, 1861, when the scarlet coat and tall hat officially disappeared, and gave place to a new uniform consisting of a blue tunic, edged with scarlet, and withscarlet collar and cuffs: trousers of grey tweed with a red cord stripe: and a peaked blue cap with a black leather rim and a red edge at the top. The average weight of the new caps appears to have been about 9 oz., and a glazed cover was for use in wet weather. It is recorded how the scarlet coats showed dirt very quickly, and although they were periodically "scoured" they then were often the reverse of respectable. Blue cloth was for this reason decided upon.

We mentioned an "official" disappearance of the old uniform advisedly, because it seems that, on the date fixed for the introduction of the headgear portion of the new outfit, only a limited number of caps could be issued, the contractor having failed to complete his order. The artist of the Illustrated Times had the happy thought to proceed to St. Martin's-le-Grand to depict the exit of the newly-clothed postman on that famous occasion. It seems a policeman, and at least one admirer of the fair sex, also attended on the occasion in question. It is difficult to gather from the lady's expression whether she favoured the old or the new type of hat; but a bunch of flowers tended by a Napoleon-the-Third-looking officer on her left no doubt weighed the scale against the gentleman with the side-whiskers and the new type of hat who is so gallantly saluting on her right. The dog in the foreground might quite conceivably be barking his disapproval of the, we hope, unwonted delay to public business.

A specimen of those ancient cylinder hats is, alas, not preserved in the Muniment Room of the Post Office; but we gather they were enormously heavy, and manufactured specially for the Post Office. The postmen who were left out of the first distribution of the new caps were in the circumstances no doubt heartily glad when the contractor at last did his duty and relieved them of the necessity of any longer appearing in public in the old uncomfortable, though apparently fashionable, form of headgear. The present shako of our postmen is an adaption of the kepi worn by their French colleagues; and we have a detailed recollection of the arrival in the Secretary's office some time in 1894 of the specimen hat lent by the French Post Office for the inspection of the Postmaster General, Mr. Arnold Morley.

It is interesting to note that the only survivals of the scarlet coat once worn by our postmen are those worn by certain doorkeepers and lobby officers of the Post Office Buildings; but we trust this disclosure will not create undue curiosity on the part of outsiders round the doors of those building, especially during this time of stress, when loitering about such places may meet with sharp orders to "move on" from the sentries stationed there with fixed bayonets.

We have not attempted to deal with the various minor changes and developments in uniform and protective clothing of more recent years, as those will be familiar to most of our readers; and it is perhaps only necessary in conclusion to call attention to the part played by the Stores Department in the supply of uniforms to the vast army of Post Office workers.

(In a subsequent issue the following article appeared.)

Our well-known contributor, Mr. W.V. Morten, is of opinion the tale told in our April number respecting the development of postmen's uniform needs completion by the publication of a clear picture of a London postman as he appeared after the great change which took place on the 19th. of July, 1861. He has accordingly been good enough to lend us from his collection a coloured showing the uniform which consisted of a blue tunic edged with scarlet, with scarlet collar and cuffs; trousers with a red cord stripe; and a peaked blue cap with a black leather rim and a red edge at the top.

Mr. Morten also sends us two extracts from "Punch", dated 1855, reproduced below. No. 1 contains a humorous criticism of the scarlet-coloured frock coat, which we pointed out was issued to our postmen in 1854; and No. 2, a supposed petition from the wives of the postmen protesting against the non-supply to their husbands of official trousers and boots :-

No. 1
THE POST-OFFICE IN A BLAZE

We lately had our eyes very uncomfortably dazzled by the sight of the Postmen in a glaring red uniform, more fitted for the Fire Brigade than for a peaceful body of men connected with the department of "literæ humaniores", as the carriers of letters. We cannot comprehend the taste which has pinned a large plaid of scarlet skirts to the coat of the Postman, and caused us to mistake him for a sentinel off his post, by his resemblance to a FOOT guardsman in one of the new regulation wrappers. Considering there is a reward payable for the apprehension of a Deserter, we wonder that half the Postmen in London are not taken into custody every night on suspicion of their having deserted from one of the Infantry regiments.

We can see no necessity whatever for the military aspect which is given to these men; and indeed in these war times it is enough to alarm half the old women in London, to have their portals thundered at every hour of the day by men of military aspect. In the days of distinction between the town and the country post there might have been some cause for the red coats of the latter, if it were only for the sake of the mild joke that used to be perpetrated, by asking the London Postman - "Well, Two-Penny, how's the General ? " We recommend the immediate abolition of this very martial attire, which is likely to cause some delay in the delivery of letters, by elevating the Postman into a very formidable rival to the Policeman, in those little flirtations with our female servants, which have often kept a sentimental Constable grunting hoarse nothings into our Housemaid's ear, while some burglarious gentleman has been emptying our neighbour's plate-chest. Now that the Postman is rendered so killing by his military costume, we can scarcely hope the Cooks who take in the letters all the way down Fleet Street, will allow him to reach 85 with his usual punctuality.

The Post-Office is in every other respect a Model Department, and the new costume has probably not originated from its heads, which are too much occupied with improving our means of communicating to be able to bestow much time on the cut and colour of the Postmen's attire. Perhaps the manner is of little importance, though we hear the new hats weighs very heavily on the heads of the Department, on whose behalf we seriously suggest the removal of an invention which gives both heaviness and headache to the very meritorious class of public officers.

No. II
THE WRONGS OF THE POSTMEN !

We have received the following petition from an important section of the female kind; namely, the wives of the postmen - (poor under-paid pilgrim's !) - The said petition was agreed to at a very numerous meeting, though we have not seen it reported in any contemporary columns.

.....To Her Gracious Majesty the Queen :

The Humble Petition of the Wives of the
Postmen.

"MADAM,

"May it please your gracious goodness to look with a smiling eye upon the husbands of your Petitioners. Your gracious goodness supplied to 'em from the Crown, a coat, a waistcoat, and a hat with a band which only the illiterate multitude take for gold. Your petitioners pray that the Crown would not leave off at the waistcoat,
- 89. 10-

but continue its bounty in the way of trousers, and end it with shoes. then would your MAJESTY'S Postmen be all of a piece. As it is, half of your MAJESTY'S Postmen belongs to the Crown - and half to others. That they get their coats and waistcoats from the Government, and (saving your MAJESTY'S presence), their trousers and high-lows from Holywell Street !

" If your Petitioners' husbands were like mermaids, and never but half-showed themselves, your Petitioners would not approach you with their distressed tale, - but as your Petitioners' husbands are often respectable about the shoulders, at the same time that they are seedy about the toes and knees, your Petitioners pray that you will be graciously pleased to make their husbands all alike.

"Your Petitioners humbly appeal to your MAJESTY'S sympathies as a wife. What would be your MAJESTY'S feeling to see PRINCE ALBERT in the fine laced coat of a General (or a late Twopenny), with shabby trousers and boots not fit for any painter to take him in ?

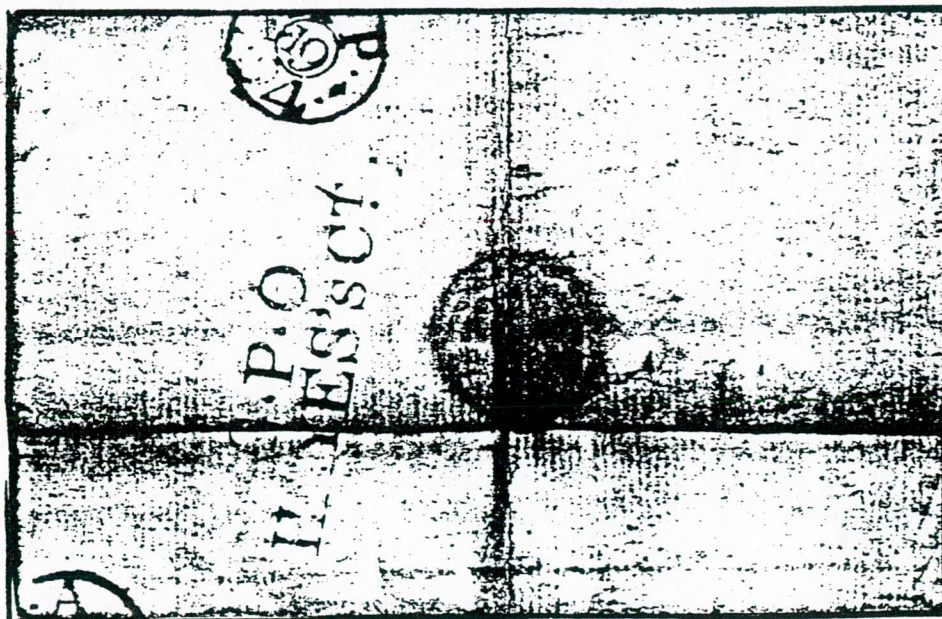
"Your Petitioners would not distress your MAJESTY'S feeling by dwelling on the dreadful sight, but again entreating that your MAJESTY will give orders that all - instead of a part - of their husbands may henceforth be the care of a maternal government, so that in future they may not complain of half measures on the part of the tailor, -

"And your Petitioners will ever pray "

here follows an army of signatures

NEW GENERAL POST MARK FOR THE RECORD

The Autumn Stampex (or BPE for the traditionalists) seemed to be something of a disappointment for several members encountered wandering around the stands and displays. Quite what it is for which they search is never entirely clear but the refrain is usually that they cannot "find anything". This, it is pleasing to note, was not a universal remark as the illustrated item shows.



The London catalogue (L77 et seq) lists the several G.P.O. stamps to which we can now add "G.P.O. / HAYES's CT" with a dating of 19th. April, 1794.

PROGRAMME FOR 1989

Meetings are held on Saturdays at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo, which is just off the Waterloo Road close to the station. Open from 1.30pm when there is (usually) a chance to buy from a good range of material - and to bring along your own surplus. The displays start at about 2.30 pm, though this too is a variable. Members are asked to bring and display all material they have which is connected with the subject matter (however remotely). Refreshments are available at the club.

January 21st. At the AGM last year it was suggested we try the "Members 20 Sheets" which so often features in other societies programmes, the advantage being there is no restriction on what is shown. Apart from the observed fact the connection with the subject matter has never deterred members from showing almost anything from their collections in the past, this time is it fully authorised. (If you have less than 20 sheets, show those.)

March 18th. We are inviting a visit from another Society and what they choose to show, other than it will be London connected, is not known at the time of writing.

May 27th. The Auction ; material list of lots (one line if you can manage to make it look more intelligible than a cut price house advert) and your reserve (The Auctioneer does not provide reserves.) Minimum value £3 per lot. Viewing 1.30 to 2.30 pm.

July 15th. INVITED SPEAKER: Barrie Jay with his superb material.
Reserve tickets not required but there should be a "sad crush"!!!

September 16th. Annual General Meeting followed by what the last AGM suggested, a "Bring and Buy", so root out all those bits and bobs you have not the time to put into the packet or the auction, pop on a price and see what happens.

November 18th. Postal Ephemera: we all must have material which relates to postal history without being mail. Posters, leaflets, weighing machines and, for the strong, post boxes! There must be so much of interest to many which each of us has.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

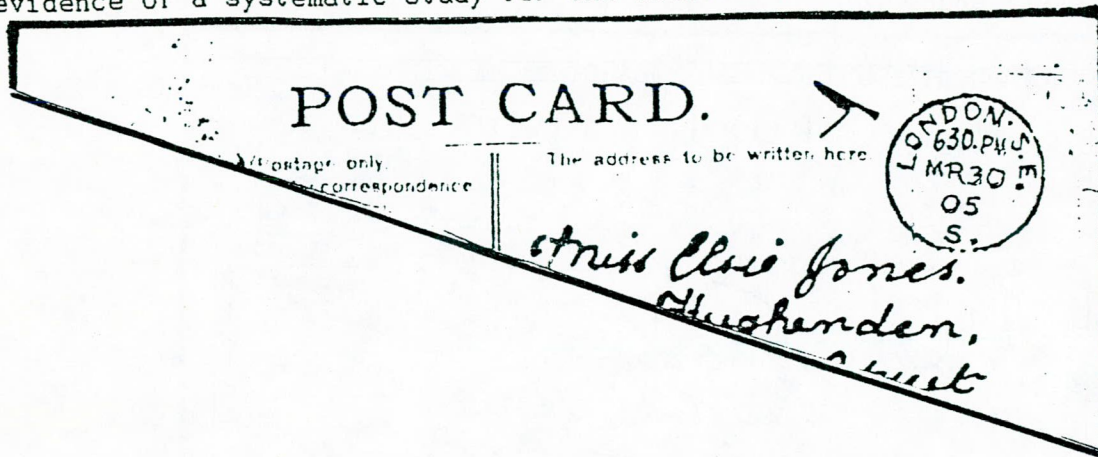
Please note subscriptions are payable on 1st. May, currently £7 and this covers the calendar year to 31st. December. Many now use a standing order which reduces the number of chase letters. If you do not yet use this method of payment, please do consider this method.

Suggestions for future programmes are very welcome....not every member was at the A.G.M. to suggest items for 1989 and we would appreciate thoughts from every member.

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LONDON DATESTAMP CODES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Much has been written about the function of code letters to be found in datestamps of the nineteenth century but there is little evidence of a systematic study for the twentieth.



Not visible from the photocopy is the halfpenny KE VII under the datestamp but what Mr. Swain would like to know is the significance of the letter " S " to be seen at the base of the mark.

THE LONDON EVENING POST

Many members collect material which not being postal history adds an interesting extra dimension to a display. The Editor likes to acquire newspapers with news or notices relating to the post in London, then spends his time reading the rest of the news for a week in 1801 !!

David Trapnell is known to us as a collector of, amongst other things, Royal mail. It comes as a surprise to learn of his work with *The Society for Wildlife Art of the Nations* in connection with which he is offering to members the opportunity of obtaining copies, in clean, unfolded condition, of *The London Evening Post*, either directly now or through the auction if not sold before.

Available are :

Continuous run, May 24/26 - Dec 29 1798/Jan 1 1799 (bound together, no covers, tax stamps mostly poor but a few are good) in all 71 copies, which must be worth an average of £2 Each. Offers from £110 for the read of a lifetime !!!

Odd copies - 1795/1798 - 3 with poor tax stamps at £1 each
30 with fair to superb, either a lot at, say, £80, or £4 each.

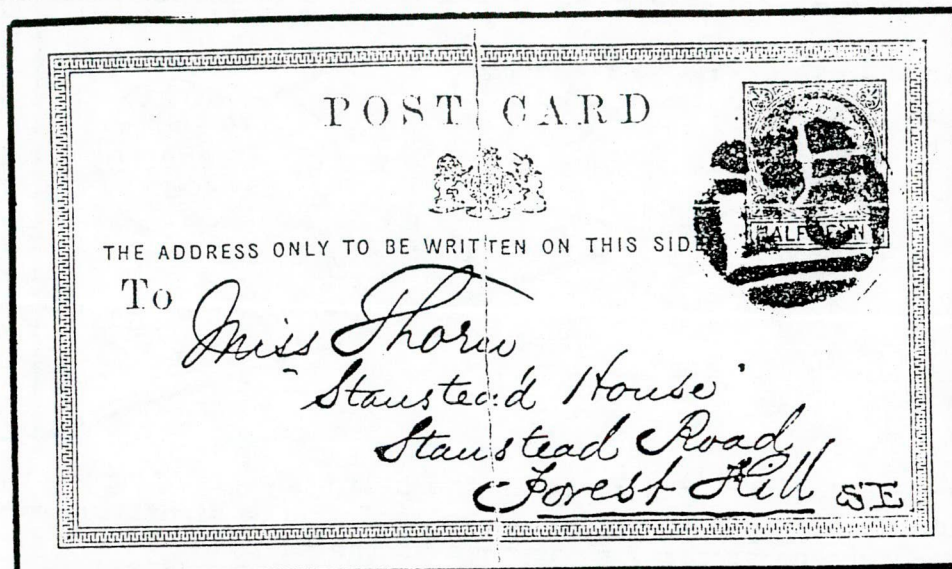
Also available are other antique papers (Spectator etc) and a list of these can be supplied on request.

If you would like to buy any other the items, cheques payable to SWAN....to get more details write to David at

Dumbles Cottage, Awre, Newnham, Glos. GL14 1EP

NEWSPAPER BRANCH KILLER from Colin Weaving

The card illustrated is dated 28th. January, 1871 and written in a language I do not recognise but is clearly addressed to Forest Hill in south east London.



Stitt Dibden identifies the cancellation of being an experimental type for use on post cards, two being issued numbered 1 and 2 respectively, this example being the number 2. No date of issue or use is provided by SD.

but given post cards were put on sale on 1st. October, 1870, this worn impression denotes extensive use. SD quotes the staggering figure of 75,000,000 by 1871 - any cancellation has the right to look worn if used on that lot !!

Post cards have ever provided a source for interesting cancellations and we all must have at least one or two tucked away somewhere. Should you be able to offer details of this or the number 1, please write to Notebook. It is unusual to find any dating other than the writer's, so a note of other postal dating would be useful.

MEMBERS' WANTS.....

KEW 1790 - 1850...anything from Kew between 1790 and 1850. Even if you would rather not dispose of the actual item, do at least let me have a photocopy with dates for my study of Kew markings.

Many thanks....Jim Elkins, Poplar Avenue Cottage,
Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6PN

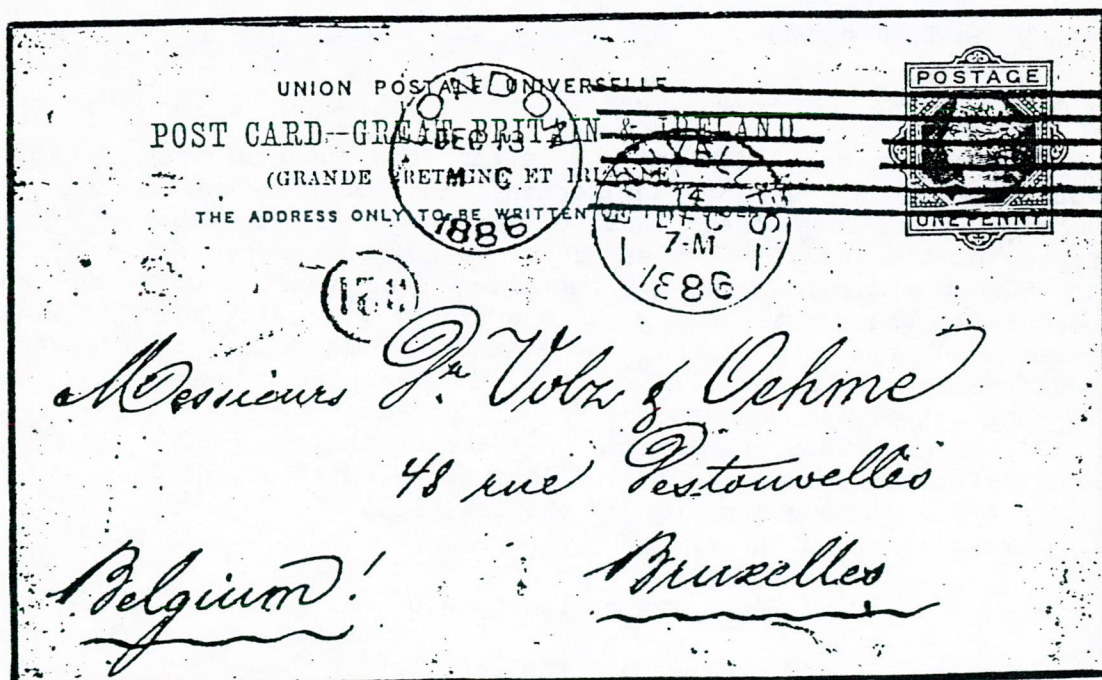
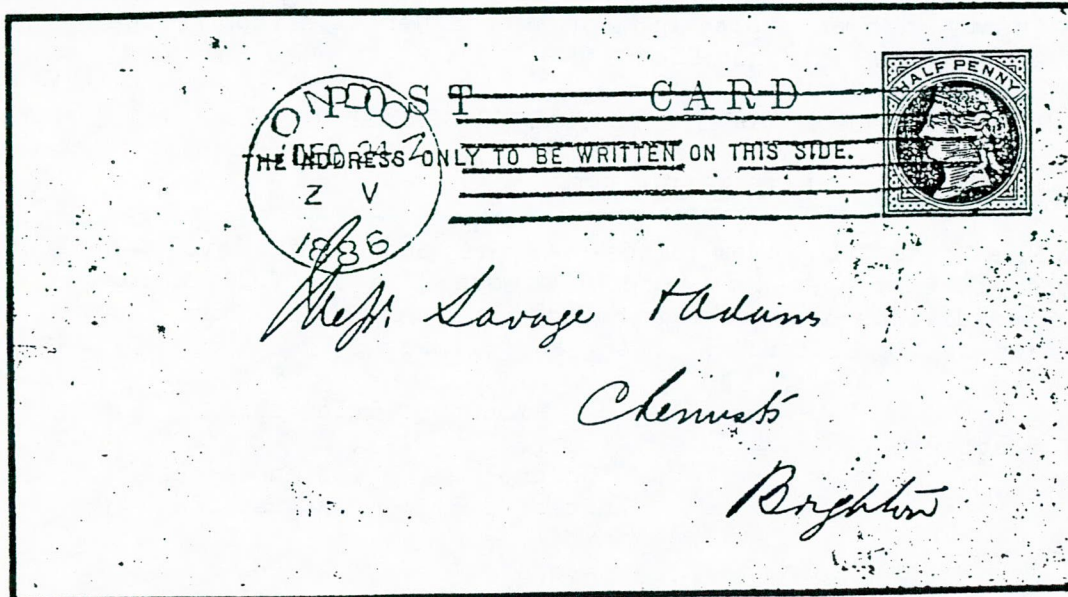
WALTHAMSTOW....anything from anytime for a local study. Not just postal markings but press notices, local office notices, post cards etc., etc.

Details to the Editor please

OLD KENT ROAD....not content with his birthplace, the Editor also has a small collection of the Old Kent Road, with all the name variations. As ever, if you also have any non postal related material, this too is of interest.

THE ETHRIDGE MACHINE

In Notebook 88 we illustrated a fine example of the Ethridge for January 7th., 1887 with code Z T. Michael Goodman provided the example for December 24th., 1886 with code Z V and records code ZT for January 8th., 1887 and ZE for February 19th., 1887. However his example for October 16th., 1886 is code ME. Was the "Z" for a "late" signal or a dater die identification? Tony Potter provides code M C for December 13th., 1886.



D.G. Haslam provided a copy for 10th. February, 1887 with Z U codes but the copy is a little dark for reproduction here.

There are a number of Ethridge machines in captivity and it should be practicable to construct a pattern of coding which, with help from some slight understanding of the rules, we hope to put into Notebook before too long.

LATE FEES AND POSTAL RATES

The abstracts given here were kindly supplied by Mr. F.M. Johnson as a direct result of the short note in *Notebook 86* by Roger Horton on *The L of London*.

These pages are from the 16th. and 22nd. Reports of the Postmaster General and show the basic rate to France in 1874 was 3d. per 1/3 oz., explaining the 5d. combined rate when a 2d. late fee had been paid and indicated by the boxed L2 handstamp. The 22nd. Report shows the date of the next change of rate to 2½d. as a result of the Postal Union Treaty with an explanation of the higher rate from France to England i.e. 30c (3d.) and not 25c (2½d.).

FROM THE 16TH REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL 1870

LATE LETTER FEES

In 1869 a reduction took place in the amount of late fee chargeable upon letters posted in London between 7.15 and 7.30 in the evening. The conditions of posting before and after the 23rd. of August, the date of the alteration, being as follows :-

Hour of Posting	Amount of late Fee.	
	Before August 23.	On and after August 23.
	d.	d.
From 6 to 6.45 p.m.	1	1
From 6.45 to 7.15 p.m.	2	} 2
From 7.15 to 7.30 p.m.	4	

The revenue derived from late letter fees advanced from 13,606l. in 1868 to 14,801l. in 1869; an increase of 1,195l. It would, however, be wrong to suppose that this increase was a consequence of a reduction of the fee. If the year be divided into two periods, the one before and the other after the reduction, and these two periods be compared with the corresponding periods of the preceding year, it will be seen that the concession was attended with some, though very inconsiderable, loss to the revenue, represented, indeed, by the difference between an increase of 9 and 7 per cent.

From Jan. 1, 1869, to Aug. 23, the date of the alteration, the late letter fees amounted to.....£9,716
From Jan. 1, 1868, to Aug. 23, the late letter fees amounted to..... 8,883

Showing an increase of..... £833
or 9.3 per cent.

From Aug. 22, 1869, to Dec. 31, the late letter fees amounted to.....£5,085
From Aug. 22, 1868, to Dec. 31, the late letter fees amounted to..... 4,723

Showing an increase of..... £362
or only 7.6 per cent.

FOREIGN SERVICE

Since the date of my last report the Postal Convention with Greece raising the unit for a single rate of postage from a quarter of an ounce to half an ounce has been ratified and brought into operation.

I have also had the satisfaction of concluding a convention with the United States of America, by virtue of which the postage upon letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight has been reduced from 6d. to 3d. A similar reduction has been made in the postage to Canada and Prince Edward Island.

To the States of Equador, Bolivia, Chili(sic), and Peru via Panama, the postage has been reduced from 2s. to 1s.6d. per half ounce; to Guatemala, by the same route, from 2s. to 1s., the British Government being relieved in this case from the cost of transit across the Isthmus; to Italy and the Papal States via Belgium from 11d. to 8d.; to Sweden via Stralsund from 9d. to 8d.; and to Norway via Denmark from 8d. to 7d.

By an extension of the arrangement heretofore existing between this country and the principal countries of Europe, printed papers, books, and trade patterns not exceeding two ounces in weight can now be sent to the whole of the British Colonies as well as to all Foreign States with which we have a book and pattern post; in short, to almost every part of the world, at an uniform rate of one penny per ounce.

Soon after I had assumed the direction of the Post Office, I turned my attention to the question of increasing the weight to be allowed for a single letter between the United Kingdom and France.

I found that in 1862 a proposal made by the British Post Office to adopt the half-ounce scale had been met on the part of the French Post Office by a counter proposal to adopt a scale of 10 grammes, equivalent to one third part of an ounce. Anticipating some little difficulty from the adoption of a scale for which no standard weight exists in this country, my predecessor had then suggested that letters to France from the United Kingdom should be charged according to the half-ounce scale, and that letters to the United Kingdom from France should be charged according to the scale of 10 grammes; that each country, in fact, should use the weights to which it is accustomed; but even to this the French Post Office were unable to consent. Again, in 1866, the question had formed the subject of renewed negotiations, but with equal want of success.

Under these circumstances, it appeared to me to be useless, if indeed it would have been quite becoming, to make any further overtures in favour of the half-ounce scale, and I determined to accept such concession as France might be willing to grant. Accordingly, it was agreed that as between France and the United Kingdom the unit of weight for a single letter should be raised according to French weight from seven and a half to ten grammes, and, according to English weight, from one fourth to one third of an ounce.

Simultaneously with this alteration of weight, the French Post Office consented to a reduction of postage from 4d. to 3d.

Upon the settlement of this question with France, I proceeded to make proposals of a similar character to other countries where the quarter ounce scale prevailed; viz, to Austria, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and I am glad to be able to state that in each case they have met with cordial acceptance. Austria has already adopted the half ounce scale, and Italy has agreed to adopt it, except as regards letters to and from Sicily, in respect to which it has not been found possible to go beyond the French or third of an ounce scale. Spain and Portugal have also consented to adopt the French scale, and as regards

these countries, as well as Italy and Sicily, the alteration will shortly come into effect.

FROM THE 22ND REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL 1876

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POSTS

The provisions of the Postal Union Treaty, concluded at Berne on the 9th. October 1874, were carried into operation generally on the 1st. July 1875, an exception being made in the case of France, in which country, according to agreement, the provisions did not take effect until the 1st. January 1876.

From this date also Gibraltar has been considered as belonging to the Union, which now comprises the whole of Europe. The United States of America and Egypt are already included in the Union; British India and all the Colonies of France were admitted on the 1st of this month; and proposals for the admission of some other foreign countries, as well as the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland, have recently been made.

A misapprehension appears to exist extensively that identical rates of postage have been adopted by the several countries of the Union, and this misapprehension has led to numerous cases of surcharge on letters reaching this country, but particularly in the case of letters posted in France. the writers would appear to suppose that because the British charge on a single letter for France is 2½d., a like charge of 25 centimes is the proper postage on a single letter to England. The single letter rate from France to England is really 30 centimes.

Within certain limits prescribed by the Treaty, each State is free to fix its own rate. the great majority of the Continental States have, however, adopted the normal charge of 25 centimes, but France, Italy, Russia, and Greece have fixed their unit of charge at 30 centimes, or at the nearest equivalent to that sum in their national currency.

Many complaints have been made respecting the difference of charge in opposite directions, I think it well to afford the above explanation for general information.

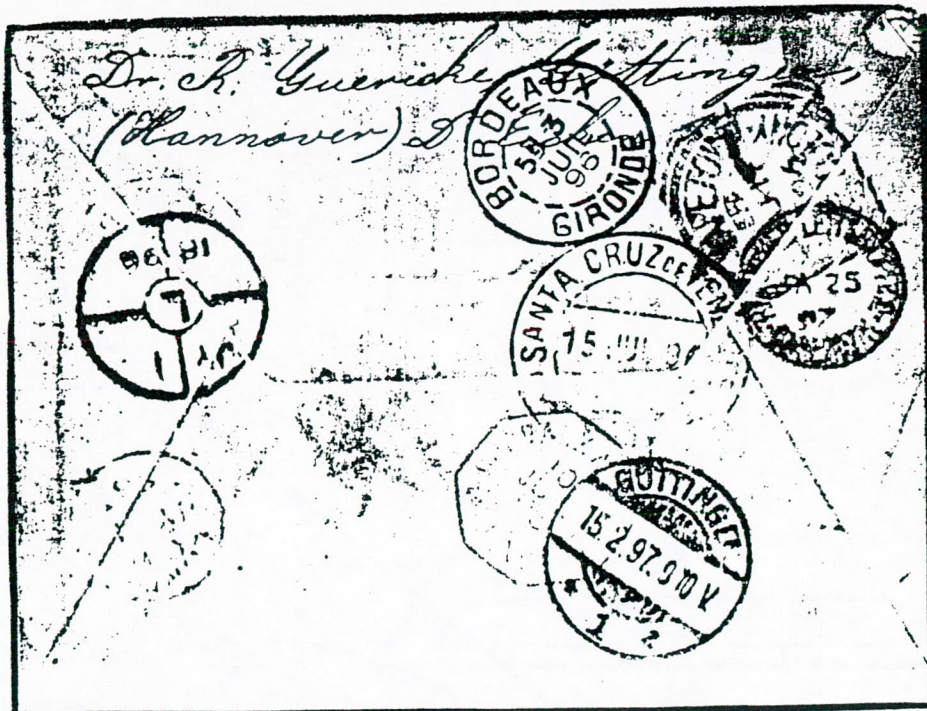
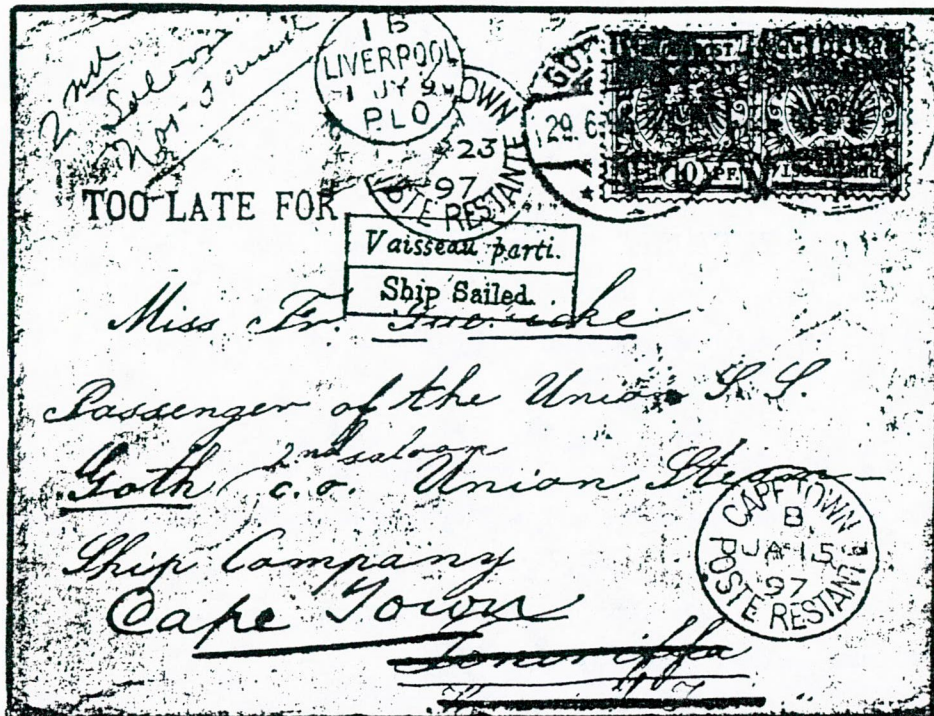
THE QUARTERED CIRCLE BAGGING STAMPS article in Notebook 88 has produced a number of replies but there must be more.....details please, even if you have just a single example.

SHIP SAILED

Martin Townsend sent in what might fairly be described as a well travelled cover with just happens to show a quartered circle date stamp, as if it really need any excuse to illustrate on the next page. As far as could be seen, the postal markings run as follows :

posted Gottingen, Germany 29.6.1896
 London quartered circle 1.7.1896
 London (district?) date date 1.7.1896

Liverpool PLO 1.7.1896
 Bordeaux 3.7.1896
 Bordeaux A Loango LL No 1 10.7.1896
 SantaCruz De Tenerife 15.7.1896
 Cape Town 17.8.1896
 Cape Town P Rest 15.1.1897
 TOO LATE FOR.....(or was it later?)
 Cape Town P Rest 23.1.1897



Returned Letter Office Cape Town 25.1.1897
 TOO LATE FOR.....(or was it earlier?)
 Vaisseau parti/Ship Sailed
 (applied in London)
 returned to Gottingen 15.2.1897

LAND-TAX REGISTER-OFFICE

The printed form is quite explicit, put the letters L.T.R.O. in the left hand corner or the reply will not be opened. Just to make their point the Tax-Office use the same device to ensure franking. Readers will now know what the letters mean should they find them on an otherwise uninformative item.

Land-Tax Register-Office,
No. 9, Lincoln's-Inn Fields,
Oct 15 - 1812!

SIR,

HEREWITH you will receive an Account of the several Sums of Land-Tax redeemed in your Division, by Contracts which have been left at this Office for Registry since the former Accounts were transmitted.

You will have the Goodness to return these Accounts as soon as convenient, (together with those before sent, if they have not been already returned), addressed to "The principal Register" under Cover, to the Secretary, at the General Post-Office, London, with the Letters L. T. R. O. in the left hand Corner. No others will be opened.

I am SIR,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

W. Radcliffe
DMS

Benjamin Wright and Co. Printers,
31, Little Queen Street, Holborn, London.

O H M S
J. Berri
Clerk to the
L.T.R.O.