

MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.midlandphs.org.uk



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HALESOWEN 2 for postage due, to be auctioned at the society auction at Cotteridge on 25th May

CONTENTS

Page

- 2 – Announcements, Change of Venue, Awards, Jon Baker Trophy
- 6 – An earlier MISSENT / TO / WORCESTER
- 10 – The December Meeting
- 13 – Four 19th Century covers between Shropshire and southern Africa
- 18 – Contrary & Not Contrary to Regulations
- 22 – Oldcoats (Nottinghamshire) Post Office (1885 – 1942)

Page

- 3 – The October meeting.
- 7 – The November Meeting
- 11 – The January meeting
- 17 – 1948 covers between Shropshire & Uganda
- 21 – Ravenstone (Leicestershire) Post Office
- 23 – Saved from a Goat (see also page 2)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

It is with great sadness that we report the untimely death of ROBIN JARMAN, who was a member of our society but specialised in the early air mails of Chile (see below); condolences have been sent to his family.

CHANGE OF VENUE – The meeting on the 9th March (*Parcel Post labels* etc), due to be held at The Friends Meeting House, Cotteridge (B30 1JB) will now be held at 1.30pm at The Ladybird Inn, Bromsgrove, B60 2DZ.

MEETING CANCELLED – Because of the demise of WORPEX it was decided at the last committee meeting that the proposed regular Saturday meeting on 11th May 2019 will not take place either at Worcester or at another venue.

MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION – Autumn Individual Competition 2018, three members enjoyed success at the Convention at Rugby. **Clive Jones** won Gold and Best in Show for *The Clipper Period 1854-57*. One point behind was **Brian Atkins**, who was awarded a Gold for *The Postal History of Much Wenlock 1811-1895* and **Alan Godfrey** was awarded a Silver-Bronze for *Hi-Di-Hi Mail from Butlins* in the Open Class. At the **Inter-Society Competition May 2018**, **Chris Jackson** was awarded a Gold and Best in Show for *Worcestershire Postal History of 2d Charge* and **Robin Jarman** Silver-Gilt for *From Chile by Aeropostale*.

MIDLAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION – Speakers List - If you are wanting, willing and able to give some talks and wish to go onto the Speakers List of the federation, please contact Alan Godfrey on 01789 765385 or at alandgodfrey@hotmail.com.

THE SAVED FROM A GOAT BOX – Yes, you read it correctly. My Favourite Cover in the previous issue was deemed a success; favourable comments were gained regarding the variety of submissions and the reasons for the submission. Perhaps we could continue this theme in a POST BOX section by sending to the editor a scan / picture of a postal history item that particularly interests you. A cover, a postcard, a parcel post label, a cancellation etc., and provide a few words of wisdom about the item and why it is special. Think about which item you would rush to save if a goat got into your stamp room and started chewing your covers!!! Get the idea? Scan or photocopy with a few lines to make about a half page so I can get two to a page. Over to you, folks, but see page 23!

Member and postal history dealer, **Jim Hammond**, has retired as a dealer. His extensive stock has been entrusted to **Brian Purcell** for private treaty sales, contact Brian for photocopies of items from your collecting area.

JON BAKER TROPHY – Votes by email to the editor (sniktab@gmail.com) as last year. You might consider:

The Postal History of a Private Bank	John Calladine	MM 197 / 10
Postal Rates Charged on Country letters	Ian May	MM 198 / 8
Mail on the Midland Railway& its Constituents, Part 6	John Soer	MM 198 / 13
The Use of Computed Miles by the British Post Office	Ian May	MM 199 / 10
A Few Snippets Associated with the Mail of Bingham	Alan Marshall	MM 199 / 19
Computed Miles and John Ogilby	John Calladine	MM 200 / 20
An Aborted Robbery from the Lincoln-Tamworth Bag Tender	John Soer	MM 200 / 28

FROM THE CHAIRMAN – May I remind members of the Society's **Annual Auction** which will take place this year on Saturday 25th May at The Friends Meeting House at Cotteridge Birmingham. This is a new venue for our Auction but we have held a few meetings there already and it is a very good location with suitable facilities for our needs. The day will follow the format that has served us well over many years. Viewing of auction material is from 11:00am until 12:50pm.; 1:00 for the Annual General Meeting, followed by the Auction itself at 1:30pm. The sale is now closed for any further material. What we have received, promises to offer an extremely good mix of material both geographically and with many facets of postal history. Full details will be in the Catalogue which will be produced soon - I am aiming to have them ready for our March meeting, which you will note elsewhere due to external circumstances we have a different venue to that originally listed. (Our website is up to date). I look forward to seeing members there.

IMPORTANT NOTICE – It is with great vexation that your editor reports that he is now required to use two hearing aids despite which he cannot always hear clearly in meetings. This, together with his wonky fingers, which have now turned arthritic, caused by his inability to catch a cricket ball cleanly, means he can no longer take notes quickly or accurately enough for them to make sense when transcribing to Midland Mail (can't read my own writing – honestly). It has been getting worse for some while but at the meeting in January it was particularly difficult. All this means that unless a brief report is forthcoming from a member who has produced a display, there are no guarantees there will be an account of a display in future editions. If this means that the membership feels that the editor should be made redundant, they can be assured that he will go quietly and with good grace!

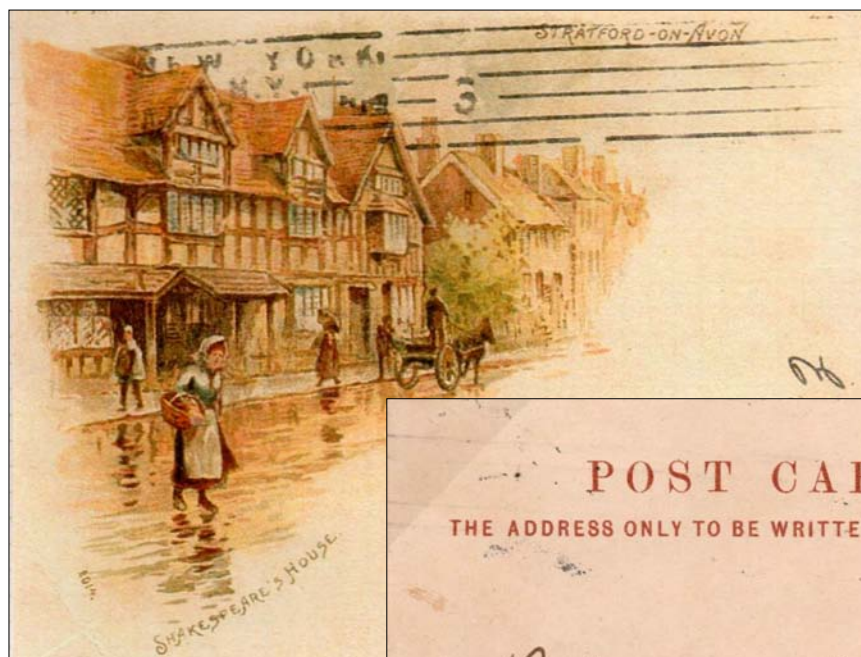
THE 27th OCTOBER 2018 MEETING AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, COTTERIDGE, proved to be a very short walk from Kings Norton Station with trains roughly every 10 minutes from New Street. There is plenty of off-road parking – so no excuses and the short walk back to the station is down hill! There is an excellent room with plenty of light, its large windows looking over a peaceful garden. The 13 members and 1 guest present were treated to some wonderful presentations of diverse material on the theme *Overseas Covers to and from your County*.

Malcolm Allinson began proceedings by showing 12 sheets from Cumberland, which included an 1853 Carlisle to Le Havre with a 10d embossed, which was also to be seen on another 1853 cover to Ohio, USA (there is a picture of this cover in the previous issue of *Midland Mail* at 200 / 15). With two 1d reds added to pay the 1/- rate, the cover was found to be overweight, so under the treaty the prepayment was ignored and the recipient had to pay a double rate 48 cents. Also noticeable were a 1938 Portinscale to Tokyo registered cover, stamped fragile, sent via the Trans-Siberian Railway, which took 20 days to arrive. Military covers were apparent with a 1941 from Workington to Egypt, returned 'Believed POW', another POW 1943 from Workington to Japan and a 1946 from POW Camp 103 outside Cockermouth.

John Calladine's display was of overseas mail to and from the town of Stourbridge (Worcs), mainly relating to the town's principal industries, crystal glass making, fireclay products and iron wares. An airmail letter of 1933 from Argentina was addressed to Corbett and Webb's glass works, a letter to New York was from a fireclay manufacturer in Lye, while letters from Amsterdam and Rotterdam (and a letter to Amsterdam) all related to the iron industry. Other items of interest included a letter of 1931 sent on the first combined sea and air post to Canada and a tragic airgraph of 1943 from South Australia to Wordsley.

Alan Godfrey presented a 1597 Corsini cover from Antwerp to London at 1 groat. There can't be many covers to France and written in French during the uniform fourpenny post period but one of 6 January 1840 was written by

Agatha du Chastelet from the Benedictine Priory of St. Mary at Princethorpe, near Leamington Spa to Paris. Though mailed in the uniform fourpenny post period, it was correctly charged 2/3, 1/5 British rate and 10d French rate. Items from Coventry included two uprated newspaper wrappers to Switzerland and France (1883 & 1889), a 1904 cover to Hallensteins, clothiers of



Dunedin, New Zealand and 1886 & 1891 uprated postal stationery envelopes to France.

Perhaps the gem, though, was an August 1899 postcard from Stratford to Worcester, Mass, USA with the 1d lilac and the 1/- blue Shakespeare stamp cancelled by a STRATFORD ON AVON duplex.



Fig 1, Both sides of an 1899 postcard from Stratford-on-Avon to Worcester, Mass, USA

Brian Atkins' first contribution was between Shropshire and Africa with the first 5 sheets forming the basis of the article at page 13 of the present issue. There was an 8d rate 1870 cover from Bridgnorth to Alexandria, two 1898 covers from Oswestry to Major Sandbach at Wadi Halfa at the 2½d rate, the August one being carried up the Nile while the Battle of Omdurman was at its height, Sandbach was Assistant Adjutant General to the Egyptian Army. A 1900 cover from Market Drayton to F. H. Wilson, Mansoura, Egypt had 3 penny lilacs being ½d overpaid and the final 1901 cover was a reply to Mrs Wilson, presumably from her husband in Cairo, at the 1 piastre rate.

Mick Gill began with an 1800 letter from Newark to Geneva 'smuggled' under cover to the writer's sister in Morges, Switzerland for posting as he was '*fearful that.....sending it directly.....with an English postmark, the letter might have been stopped and miscarried*'. He did not trust Napoleon! A 1/- green paid an 1860 wrapper from Nottingham to Barcelona, while an 1864 cover to Lima, Peru had two 1/- greens and a PANAMA transit mark. A cover from Keyworth to Sydney, Australia had a 6d on 6d lilac and a good 583 4VOD of Nottingham. Of two Poste Restante 1893 stationery envelopes to Las Palmas, Grand Canary, one was collected but the other returned to Nottingham. An 1896 cover from London to Burton Joyce was redirected to Paris and had a 1d UK rate and 2½d UPU rate. A 1906 Boots, Nottingham to Australia cover was carried from Adelaide to Melbourne on the English Mail TPO.

Brian Purcell showed some items from Cannock. The first was a remarkable 1888 reply paid postal stationery card to Germany and back! This was followed by a 1903 cover to Ireland, 1912 advertising from John Salmon's Cannock to Denmark, 1944 to USA at 3d, 1949 item registered at 8½d in total to Czechoslovakia, ending with a 1959 postcard from Germany to Cannock.

Chris Jackson began with covers from Oldbury with an 1895 cover to Melbourne, then Brisbane, franked with QV 4½d, 2½d and 1d, followed by 1866 to Vienna and 1869 to New Zealand. Covers from Malvern included an 1879 Colwell Green to Melbourne and an 1878 'Sandbach' cover to Sitapore, India franked by two 3d rose. An 1875 cover to Canada had figures 1 and 2 on the front and there was a 1937 item from Tristan da Cunha to Malvern. Twentieth century items included a KGVI label from Old Swinford to Wellington, NZ with 4 x 2/6 green on one side and QEII 1/- & 3d on the other. A 1951 air mail from Tenbury Wells to New Zealand also had a KGVI 2/6 green and there were 3 items from Kidderminster, 1903 to Egypt, 1938 to Hungary with what might have been a return label in Hungarian on the reverse and 1948 to Australia. The star of the show was an 1853 cover from Montego Bay, Jamaica to Pebworth, Evesham, which took 20 days to Campden and a further day to Mickleton and Pebworth, shown by the various marks on the front and reverse, 1/2 packet rate from Jan 1853 with 2d to Jamaica – see below.



Fig 2, 22 September 1853 cover from Montego Bay, Jamaica to Pebworth, Evesham

Robin Jarman stunned us with airmail letters to and from London and Chile prior to 1945. He explained that he was born within the Greater London area and so decided that this would fit the title for the day. Letters could travel one of three ways; by New York with the North Atlantic initially covered by sea or else the French and German operation went via the South Atlantic. The French again used sea travel to cross the ocean at the beginning. During the 1930s it cost 4 shillings to send a letter to Chile by air on the French/German route but was cheaper via USA. Later the South Atlantic services were shut down in World War II but by then the Americans had their Clipper flying boats in action across the North Atlantic. There was a 1929 cover of many stamps to Chile and a 1940 cover from the UK franked 3/6. A first flight cover wasn't a first flight as there was so much mail that the plane couldn't get airborne. A 1939 cover from Punto Arenas in southern Chile was charged a remarkable 105 pesos. Robin's imaginative presentation brought the first part to a close.

Gordon Hardy began the second part by displaying a 1798 entire from Holland to Yarmouth, a LIVERPOOL / SHIP LETTER from New York per ship *Otis* but, mysteriously, the *Otis* went to London. There were covers to Calcutta and one privately carried from Matlock to New York. An 1850 from London to Canada at 1/2 and unpaid Ripley to Pennsylvania as well as a Foreign 1¼d UPU postal stationery card to Geneva. He ended with a crash cover addressed to the actress Dianna Durbin, saved from a railway fire on a train from New York to Los Angeles.

Alan Godfrey's second contribution began with postcards of Stratford-on-Avon of 1900 and 1901 to the USA and France. Following in date order: 1868 Rugby to Pau, France franked with a 4d vermilion; 1874 Shipston-on-Stour to Peshawa, Punjab with two 1/- green cancelled by the 706 VOS; 1899 Stratford to Maryland, forwarded to Washington, DC franked with the 2½d purple on blue; 1905 Coton (?) post office to Bradford, Pennsylvania and 1934 Keinton to Germany from the Willoughby de Brooke family. There was also a taxed cover from Leamington to Worcester, Cape Colony.

Brian Atkins first seven covers of his second showing illustrated various frankings of the 4d rate to France, which commenced with the Anglo-French Convention of 1 January 1855. The 4d rose-carmine franked a 29 July 1858 cover to Paris, the earliest overseas cover from Wem. A similar stamp featured on a December 1860 cover to Bordeaux, sent from Shrewsbury by a travelling wine salesman, clearly doing good business in the town. The 4d pale rose was on an August 1860 cover from Shrewsbury with a printed address to Monsieur Alfred Wills, in the Haute-Savoie; Wills being the judge who presided over Oscar Wilde's 1895 'gross indecency' trial. Wills had married into the Martineau family, brewers in Dulwich. They had connections to Ratlinghope Manor and Norbury estates in Shropshire. Wills suffered badly from insomnia and in 1858 he bought property in Sixt, Savoie, on which he built the Eagle's Nest, a chalet which he visited frequently to try to overcome his disability. Incoming covers were franked with pairs of 20c blue Napoleon III stamps, the first an imperforate pair on a September 1861 cover from Boulogne to Shrewsbury, the second an 1866 perforated pair from Paris to Wellington. A cover from Much Wenlock to Nice had two plate 9 2d blues and two Bridgnorth covers, 1868 to Menton and 1869 to Cannes had the 4d vermilion. Of



the final two covers showing the 3d rate, which began on 1 July 1870, the first had a wretched 3d rose on a cover from Ludlow to Cognac, from another French travelling salesman, but this one selling brandy and finally an 1873 cover from Wellington, was INSUFFICIENTLY / PREPAID, had the PD cancelled and 9 decimes charged in France.

Fig 3, 4d pale rose on an 1861 cover from Shrewsbury to Haute Savoie, France

Chris Jackson began with a lovely cover of 1855 from Worcester to Barcelona with six 1d reds and another 1855 cover from Worcester to the Crimea was franked with a 1d red and 2d blue to pay the concession rate; a further Worcester cover of 1837 was addressed to Calcutta. 20th century covers were an air mail from Malvern to India (1937), Kidderminster to a POW (1941), West Malvern to Malaya but undelivered and 1/1½ postage repaid (1941) and a 1942 cover again from Kidderminster but to the East African Command.

For **Mick Gill's** second display we saw air mails from Southwell to Australia (1934), from Nottingham to the Raleigh Cycle Agent in Nicaragua (1936 and 1937) and from Nottingham to Chemnitz, Germany with an air mail label cancelled by a 'crossed ribbon' hand stamp (1936). A 1943 air mail from Barnstone to British Guiana had a fine display of ½d and 2½d stamps but took a month to arrive. For inward mail we saw a cover from HMS Satellite to Elston posted in Valparaiso, Chile in 1886 with a deleted Tax mark and a 1914 postcard from Paris to Nottingham, which had been returned via Birmingham RLB. A 1943 from the British Consulate General in Izmir, Turkey to Newark had travelled in the Foreign Office Bag to Newark in London without a stamp and surcharged 5d. An air mail envelope from Guatemala to Newark in 1950 had colourful stamps and was a reminder of the town's former malting industry. Finally an envelope from Malta to Nottingham in 1957 had been returned undelivered via the Nottingham RL duty.

Guy Bridges showed covers with letters from the Crimean War of 1854, written at 'Camp before Sebastopol 1854'. They are from St. John Stanley, a surgeon with the British army and addressed to various family members at Shifnal, all franked with three 1d red stamps. In the letters he mentions various activities and what is happening in the camp, some extracts are as follows: 'There has been nothing going on but getting the guns into position.....the Russians are shelling us from morning to night but without doing much damage. I believe we are due to open the battle with 1,000 guns' and 'We got our tents yesterday but no baggage, our uniforms, clothing and shoes are nearly worn out'. He goes on 'The accounts you read in The Times about the medical dept. is all stuff, we are almost entirely without morphine, in fact we have nothing to give our boys as our stock was almost expended in Bulgaria'. 'I can tell you about the fight at Alma, they opened up with canister round shot & Minnie rifles upon us & one artilleryman was very slightly wounded in the foot, a cannonball knocked a man's brains out close to me'. 'It is no use sending things out here, they would never arrive & I can get them anytime off dead officers'. 'We are short of small arms ammunition, having gone to the bottom amongst other things'. This statement is explained by the fact that a supply ship was sunk off-shore causing a severe shortage of supplies to the British.

Malcolm Allinson completed the displays showing a number of letters cancelled with Bishop Marks. We began with letters from Dublin to Bewdley dated 21st January 1661 and London to Dublin dated 26 March 1664 (at the time effectively New Year's Day). We then saw a number of letters to and from Amsterdam, those from Scotland too early to have Edinburgh Bishop marks. Both Foreign Branch (month over day) and Inland Branch (day over month) Bishop marks were seen on covers to and from southern Europe - Lisbon, St. Malo, Brussels, Cognac etc. Finally we were treated to two NEW YORK Bishop Marks - on letters to and from America before independence.

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#### **MISSSENT / TO / WORCESTER (WO927), new earliest record, reported by Brian Purcell**

12 January 1853 cover addressed to Sir Thomas Phillips, Middle Hill, Broadway, Worcestershire with 1d red cancelled by the London 7 numeral. There is a circular E / NR TPO mark and a fine MISSSENT TO / WORCESTER in red, BCC WO927 previously reported used 15 FEB 1853 to 5 AUG 1854, thus a new early use shown below.



**THE 10<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 MEETING** was held at the offices of the auctioneers Warwick & Warwick, when 24 members and 1 guest were present for the topic *Penny Posts of Warwickshire and Leicestershire*, introduced by John Soer with Richard Farman and Alan Godfrey also in attendance. Our three presenters dovetailed with their presentations, which was an attempt not only to show the penny posts of the two counties but to unravel the complexities of the cross-county penny posts around Ashby de la Zouch, Atherstone and Burton-on-Trent.

**John Soer** began by explaining the origins of the penny post which opened in 1815 from Atherstone (Warwickshire) to the Leicestershire villages of Sheepy, Twycross, Appleby and Measham. He showed examples of the numeral hand stamps of these offices, particularly the N<sup>o</sup>3 of Appleby which appeared in two different forms, one of which was dotted. In 1820 a penny post office which was subordinate to both Atherstone and Burton-on-Trent opened at Overseal. We saw examples of the N<sup>o</sup>5 hand stamp used on letters sent through each of the two post towns. When Overseal became subordinate to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, a straight-line mark, about 3mm in height was used, *Penny Post* having been removed.

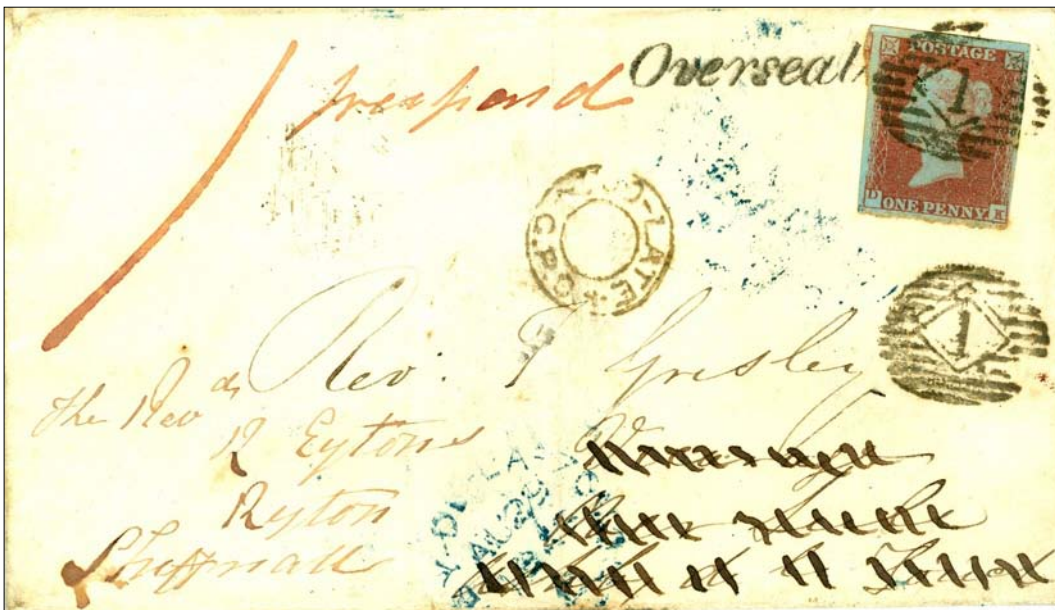


Fig 1, **Overseal** straight-line mark on an August 1849 cover from London, forwarded to Shifnal

We then moved to the Hinckley area, in particular Market Bosworth when the penny post receiving office used a N<sup>o</sup>2 hand stamp, and did so until the issue of a UDC in 1842. A letter sent to Congerstone via the Atherstone Penny Post was redirected to Scarborough, but put into the post at Market Bosworth where it was struck with the scarce mileage mark rather than the N<sup>o</sup>2. A receiving office opened at Earl Shilton in 1838. The UDC which was issued at that time has not been recorded used in the Hinckley Penny Post. However, John did show examples used in 1840 and 1842.



There were two receiving offices in the Lutterworth Penny Post which opened in 1837 – Ashby (Parva) and Ullesthorpe, both of which used UDCs; we saw examples of both of these.

Material from the penny posts of Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray is scarce. So, John was able to show one cover from both places. That from Melton Mowbray was struck with an unusual three-line hand stamp (Fig 2).

Fig 2, 3-line *Melton* / *Mowbray* / *Penny Post* on an undated letter to Louth

The official penny post at Leicester did not open until 1839. John said that it probably came into being as a response to the instruction to bring all unofficial penny posts within the official system. [Use the RPS search function to read the excellent article by Christopher Beaver *Bringing the Penny Letters to Account* in MM 55 / 8].

In 1837 penny post receiving offices in the country had their numeral mark replaced by a name of the office above *Penny Post*. The receiving offices under Ashby-de-la-Zouch did not receive theirs until after the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage. Nevertheless, they remained in use until the issue of UDCs in 1849. A hand stamp of the same type issued to Lutterworth in 1838 also remained in use until 1849, being used, it would seem, on letters which had not been franked with a 1d adhesive and which remained within the Lutterworth delivery area (Fig 3).

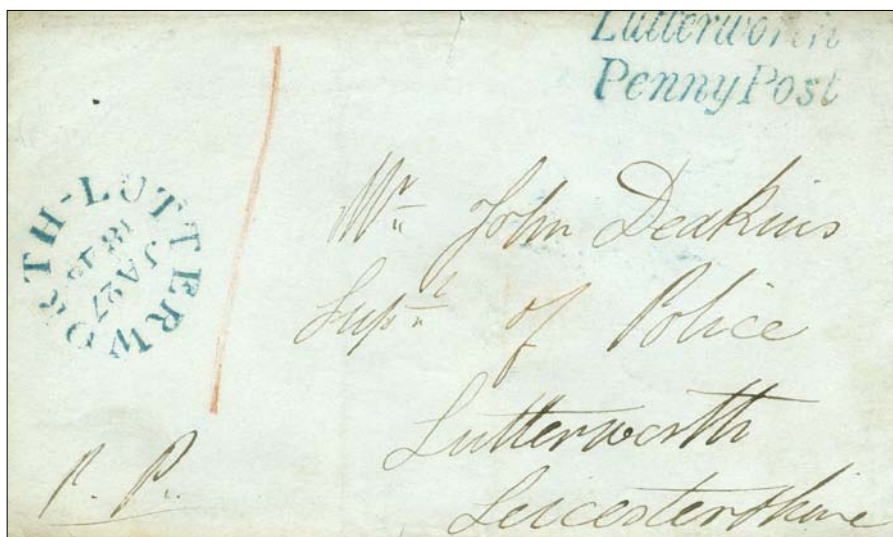


Fig3, January 1849 cover sent locally within Lutterworth

At many post towns a charge was made for the delivery of letters. John showed examples of the ½d and 1d levied at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Leicester respectively. The final part of John's display consisted of covers carrying the charges made for conveyance in unofficial posts. Among these were: Loughborough to Ashby; Leicester to Hinckley; Coventry to Hinckley; Hinckley to Market Bosworth; and Kegworth and Cavendish Bridge to Derby.

**Richard Farman** then took over with his first frame showing extra charges of ½d, 1d and 2d on letters from 1762. A December 1819 letter from Bedford to Ashby de la Zouch had the endorsement *By Atherstone bag*. Burton-on-Trent's first official penny post in 1815 was a direct consequence of the introduction of a mail coach from Leicester through Ashby de la Zouch and Uttoxeter to the Potteries and Liverpool. There was one receiving house at Tutberry. We saw two covers dated May 1816 and March 1817 from Tutberry to Derby in the Burton penny post both charged 5d, 4d in the General Post plus the penny post. The mail coach ceased in April 1817 and the Burton penny post along with it, though it was reinstated in 1824, illustrated by a December 1830 cover from Burton to Tutberry. As we had already seen, the receiving house of Appleby in the Ashby de la Zouch appeared to have two number No3s, one dotted and one with complete lines, examples of both were shown and reduced illustrations are below.

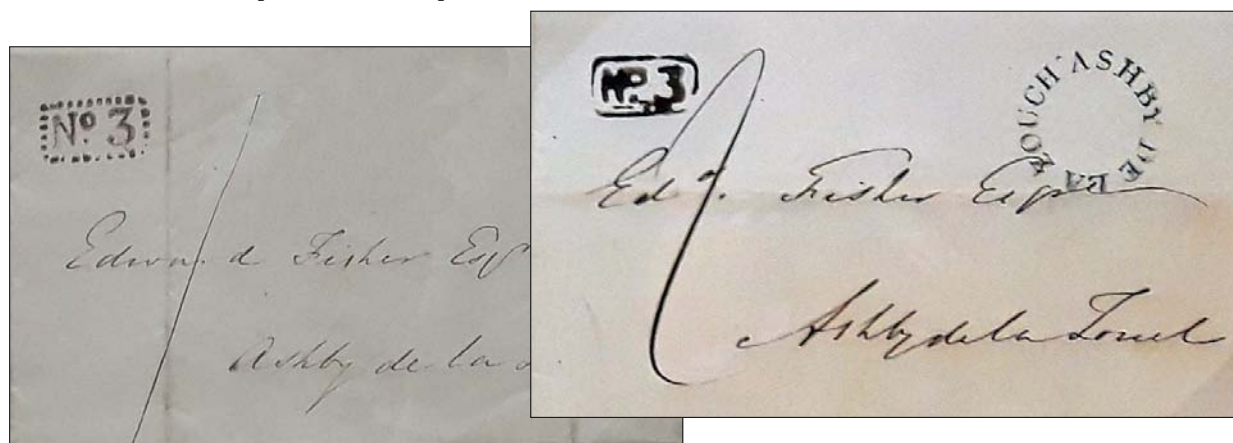


Fig 3, Appleby to Ashby de la Zouch, dotted No3 (6 Feb 1832) and continuous line No3 (5 Feb 1838)

Mail from Overseal went through Burton or Ashby or Atherstone, partly illustrated by a 1<sup>st</sup> October 1839 cover from Overseal to London via Ashby. Overseal had lots of mail because of the pits in the locality. Richard provided a map (see page 159 of society publication No3, the Midland Local Post book or below) which helped to explain the relationship of the penny posts of Burton, Ashby and Atherstone and their receiving houses. As well as the two number threes of Appleby, Sheepy was given No1, Twycross No2 and Measham No4, examples of all were seen.

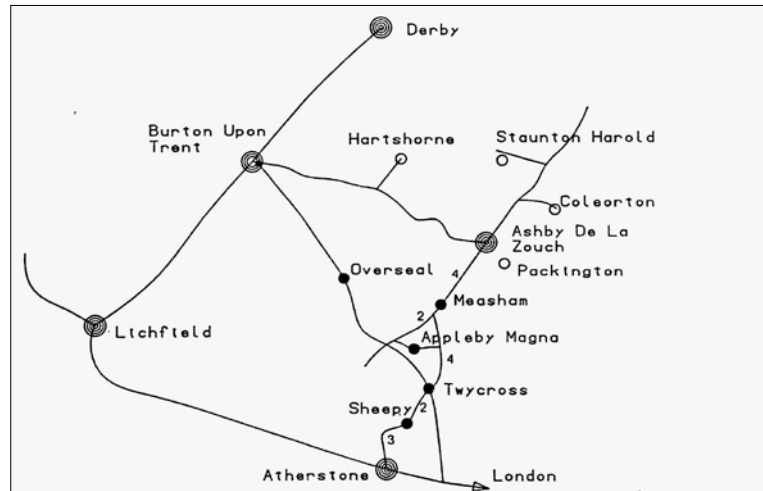


Fig 5,

He ended this section with a number of examples of italic village penny post hand stamps used post Uniform Penny Post. They were issued in May 1840, Sheepy, Twycross, Meesham and later Measham and Overseal were noted.

**Alan Godfrey** began the second half by reaffirming that most of Atherstone's receiving houses were outside the county of Warwickshire and he went on to illustrate the point with covers similar to what we had already seen. He soon moved on to other Warwickshire penny posts beginning with Coventry, whose main receiving house was at Nuneaton, which had a large No1, illustrated on an 1820 cover to Stourbridge. The No4 of the receiving house at Allesley was also shown. Alan then moved on to show a *Kenilworth / Penny Post* of 22 August 1839, previously unrecorded before 1840. The Warwick penny post had its main receiving house at Leamington, which used a red boxed No1 and an italic *Leamington / Penny Post* in its own right was seen used in 1843. An italic *Barford / Penny Post*, under Warwick was shown. Finally Alan delved into the Stratford-on-Avon penny post with examples of all seven types exhibited as were receiving houses at Bidford (No3) and Hockley.

**Richard Farman** brought the show to a close by showing both of the penny post marks of Lichfield on covers dated 1836 and 1838 for the first issue and 1839 and 14 January 1840 for the second issue. Richard explained that examples of the first issue *Lichfield / Penny Post* were always clear and legible but the second type were always poor strikes. There were also examples of the script-type marks of Barton (Under Needwood, 1838 and 1840) and Alrewas December 1839 both receiving houses under Lichfield.



The Three Postiteers

**Malcolm Allinson**, our Chairman, thanked all three presenters for a great example of teamwork and knowledge of the penny posts of Warwickshire, Leicestershire, not forgetting Staffordshire.

## THE 1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER MEETING at BURTON-ON-TRENT

Due to a prior commitment your editor was unable to attend the Christmas meeting. He is indebted to **Chris Jackson** for noting the standing displays and taking notes of the presentation of *The Indian Mutiny* by **Max Smith**.

**Richard Farman**, Indian Mail:

**Terry Harrison**, Army camps

**Clive Jones** Halifax

**Alan Godfrey**, Bull & Mouth Billhead & eclectic Warwickshire

**Gordon Hardy**, Moldavia & Walachia / Romania / India to Derbyshire

**Mick Gill**, 1930's Post Office leaflets

**Chris Jackson**, Shipston on Stour / Needlemakers

**Julian Tweed**, Late Fees of Liverpool

From the moment Max Smith started to set up his display it was apparent that this was something different. Lots of Postal History, as you would expect, but liberally sprinkled with large pictures of event and portraits of people together with the occasional set of medals. The events all occurred in a 2 year period and the amount of material that Max displayed from such a short period was amazing. Max introduced the subject as a very traumatic affair, not armies opposing each other but treachery and betrayal from within where your enemy could not easily be identified. That the East India Company had expanded in a hundred years from a trading company to a land grabbing body and how the whole of northern India became part of the Empire.

The problem of a mixture of pig grease on the new cartridges, which was unacceptable to the Sikh soldiers, combined with a training regime where a number of soldiers from a large number of regiments were all brought together provided a ready breeding ground for discontent and for the dissemination of opinions. We heard about Captain Herbert Gardner who wrote in a letter (displayed) that '*something strange and mysterious was going on*'; he realised that the British Army needed the co-operation of the local troops as they outnumbered the British by 50 to 1. In March 1857 ninety men of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Infantry at Meerut were ordered to carry out drill with the greased cartridges, 85 refused and were thrown in jail, they were publicly humiliated, by having their epaulettes and buttons ripped off. On the 10<sup>th</sup> May the regiment revolted and broke into the jail to release the prisoners.

When the Cantonments were attacked he left with his heavily pregnant wife and a Captain Tyler and his wife in Mrs Tyler's small coach, Mrs Gardner gave birth by the roadside and 3 days later they arrived in Umbala on a bullock cart. For their safety the ladies were sent from Ambala to Kussowlie. Max showed correspondence which detailed the events. There was unrest in various barracks with mutinies at Barrackpore and Berhampore, an uprising at Lucknow and in May murders at Meerut and a massacre of Europeans in Delhi. Max showed letters from the time referring to the various events and the people concerned. The major event was the Siege of Delhi, where the Bengal Fusiliers were recalled from the hills to remove the rebels from the city, the 75<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders broke through the barricades set up by the rebels despite the city being 7 miles wide with 30,000 men inside and only 3,000 men outside. Max told the story of Hills and Tombs heroic deeds with items of postal history and copies of the war office notice awarding them both the Victoria Cross. Large contemporary pictures showed how Brigadier General John Nicholson used elephants to pull canons to Delhi to provide fire power and 2 days of bombardment resulted in two breaks in the city wall. In the resulting advance a very narrow alley led to a gateway, and in the resulting slaughter Brig. Gen Nicholson was killed. It took 7 days to clear the city of rebels. The Bengal Fusiliers commenced the action with 437 men; at the end 319 were either dead or injured.

Max started the second half with the massacre at Cawnpore. It started on the 5<sup>th</sup> June when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry mutinied and surrounded the garrison. The garrison contained about 3000 people, 1700 combatants and 1300 women & children, they defended for 3 weeks and were running out of food with the rains due at the end of June they agreed safe passage down the river with the mutineers. When some 600 people had boarded the boats they were massacred. When Havelock was approaching the town the order was given to shoot the women and children, they deliberately shot over their heads which resulted in locals being brought in to do it and over 150 bodies were thrown down the well prior to Havelock arriving. The major change in the fighting was when the army introduced the Enfield rifle. The rebels were in the habit of listening for bullets coming and ducking in time to avoid them, the Enfield rifle bullet now travelled above the speed of sound and so could not be heard coming and many rebels were killed in action.

Lucknow was another town to come under rebel control and the first relief column failed to clear the town so a siege was started and it was not until the second relief column with the 93<sup>rd</sup> Highlanders and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Shropshire arrived that the women and children could be evacuated. By the end of March 1858 Campbell had 20,000 soldiers and 10,000 Gurkhas under his control and order was restored. On November 1<sup>st</sup> a Royal Proclamation abolished the East India Company and India was placed under direct rule of the British Government. Without doubt this had been a magnificent display of Postal History and also a very detailed history lesson by an expert on the subject. In his thank you speech the chairman said '*It had been a privilege to have seen such a display*', the membership concurred.

**THE 12<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2019 MEETING at THE LADYBIRD INN, BROMSGROVE**, when the topic was 'My Favourite Cover and Why! 18 members and two guests were present as the meeting began promptly at 1.30. There were a few questions as to whether there should have been a letter s after Cover, so the majority of those who displayed did so by showing 9 of their favourite items to fill one frame. There were apologies from Martin Scroggs, Derek Smeathers, Alan Marshall and Chris Jackson.

**Pete Elms** began proceedings by showing 5 covers beginning with a stunning 1887 advertising cover of J. Lancaster and Son, a Birmingham photographic company, followed by an 1875 stationery envelope from Birmingham and an 1893 cover, both of which had been much redirected. Also shown were two 1886 examples of the Birmingham 5-bar duplex and an 1856 stationery cover addressed to Captain Scobell, RN, MP, who was the first person to officially voice, in Parliament, a need for a new reward, that being the Victoria Cross.

**Stuart Geddes** produced a cover, dated 21 May 1841 in London, to Richard Lloyd of the Rifle Brigade, Newport, Montgomery but the Rifle Brigade had been quartered in Newport Monmouth since the middle of 1840. On 22<sup>nd</sup> it arrived at Newport Shropshire, where the instruction *Try South Wales* and a **Missent to Newport-S** were added. On 23<sup>rd</sup> it arrived in Newtown Montgomery, received a missent mark and *Monmouth* script. The letter finally arrived in Newport, Mon on 24<sup>th</sup> May. It was at one time in the collection of Robson Lowe, which makes it extra special!

**John Calladine's** favourite cover was one of little monetary worth but was selected because it had been in his possession for more than 70 years and was a happy memory of a great friend. The envelope was sent to him at boarding school by a young lady in Jersey and, although utterly puzzling at the time, turned out to be a first day cover of the first British regional issue celebrating the 3rd anniversary of the liberation of the Channel Islands. He showed items from the Channel Islands leading up to this issue and gave no clue to the fate of the young lady.

**Tom George's** favourite cover is a key addition to his India Convention State postal stationery collection. Gwalior was the only Convention State to issue post-independence (after 1947) overprinted stationery. The Gwalior Two Anna Red 'Ashoka Pillar' envelope was issued in 1950; the overprint design showing the smaller crest variety with the cobras facing inwards. This earliest recorded registered cover is dated 19 Jan 1950; it was commercially used from Ujjain to the Central Bank of India, Bombay. It is uprated on the reverse with a GVI Four Anna Gwalior overprinted stamp. A further similar cover was also shown dated 29 Jan 1950 from Mandsaur to Ajmer Rajasthan.



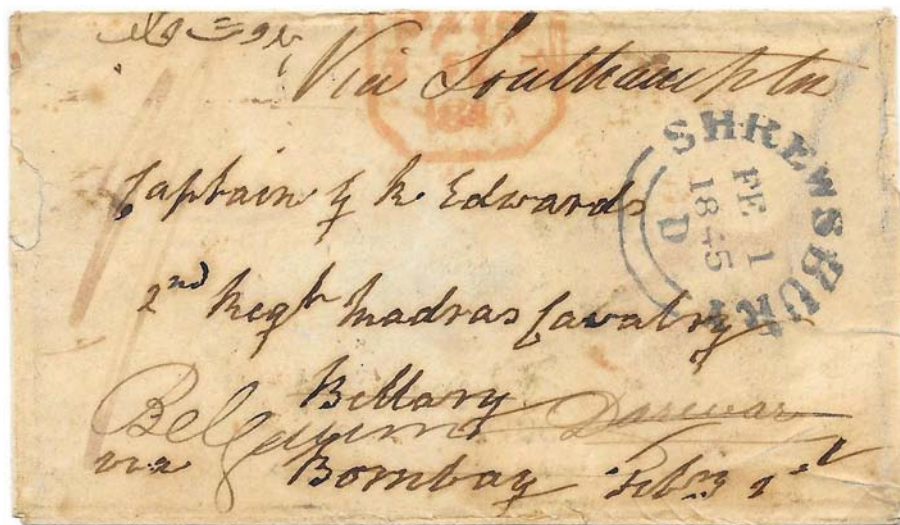
1950 stationary cover from Ujjain to Bombay with the GWALIOR overprinted GVI 4anna stamp on reverse

**Alan Godfrey** produced a 1651 Commonwealth period cover from Walsall to Coventry, a 1676 cover, the second oldest known for Warwickshire, a cover written by Dr Samuel Parr, vicar of Hatton, who wrote epitaphs, a 1d Mulready from Alcester to Reading, a 2d Mulready from Warwick to Stratford, an 1855 Crimea letter from the Ukraine to Alcester and a 2d blue cover from Alcester to Romford.

**Mick Gill's** first item was of a Newark WW1 era postbox, which his father used to sit him on! Next came the American Civil War envelope seen in the previous Midland Mail. Two 1969 postal items had Mick's handwriting. His two earliest items followed, a 1582 entire sent locally within Southwell and a 1609 entire from Newark. He, then, displayed a 1709 TUXFORD, the earliest Nottinghamshire mark and the earliest recorded specific Missent hand stamp – the **Mis-fent to / NEWARK** of 1787. Mick's second display began with the only recorded **REDFORD** (Retford) of 1762 and the earliest **MANS / FIELD** of 1734. A 1d black from Newark was dated 12 May 1840. The only recorded OLLERTON traveller was on a 20 July 1840 2d blue cover and a 5 October 1840 1d Mulready from Ollerton to Worksop was uprated with a 1d black. An undated Fores' Shooting envelope front to Southwell had a 1d black cancelled with a red maltese cross. A 1d Mulready from Newark (11 February 1841) had an advert for the Crown Life Assurance Company, the agent being Mr Fiddaman, along with two stoneware porter bottles from his shop. Lastly Mick showed a March 1841 wrapper to Nottingham with a 1d black cancelled by both a *Sutton IN Ashfield / Penny Post* hand stamp and an Alfreton maltese cross.

**Guy Bridges** began with the 1840 plate 2 1d black cancelled Whittington / Penny Post as per MM 200. This was followed by an 1842 2d Mulready from Shrewsbury to London and the first SHREWSBURY cover of 1705 to Wolverhampton with H and R joined. He also showed a 12 November 1660 entire sent to the '*High Sherrife of ye County of Derby*' from Shrewsbury requesting £348-10-9 to pay to disband a troop of soldiers at Shrewsbury. A wonderful 10 April 1854 cover from Shrewsbury to Ludlow had a 1d red with an Archer trial perforation 16. He finished with a 16 June 1945 family related cover from Field Post Office 148 with RAF Censor 78 from Sgt G. Bridges to his brother in Shrewsbury. Sergeant Bridges fought with the Greek resistance, went out on recces dressed as a woman and was at British HQ when cut off by ELAS; he also visited Marshall Tito.

**Brian Atkins** showed a disparate set of covers beginning with the 1713 WHIT / CHURCH X cross post cover and the 1839 Whitchurch 4 Uniform Fourpenny post cover as in MM 200. An Indian theme began with a 1 February 1845 cover to Bombay. A 1 May 1857 cover had the only known WEST-FELTON udc and was addressed to Lt. Hunt who had been killed in the Indian Mutiny on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, the letter arriving on the 18<sup>th</sup>. A 5 February 1880 cover to Martin Sandbach found him with the Cabul Field Force in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Afghan War. The 25 December 1898 cover was a first day of Imperial Penny Postage. Two items related to Wem were the earliest known going overseas in 1858 to Paris and a 1911 postcard from Shanghai, which took 27 days to arrive via the Trans-Siberian railway.



February 1845 to Captain Edwards, the first of many covers to him in India

**Brian Purcell** showed covers related to CANNOCK with undated and dated stamps and a Bridgetown to Walsall postcard which travelled 24 miles instead of 8

As usual **Clive Jones** produced an array of delightful covers beginning with a Uniform Fourpenny Post first day cover from Doncaster to Leeds, followed by the distinct York maltese cross on an 1842 cover and an 1850 registered cover from York with the scarce framed REGISTERED / PAID 6, when the 6d had to be paid in stamps, so they scratched out the 6 and replaced it with the registered number. He finished with an 1838 from York to the Friendly Islands (Tonga) via Sydney and an 1848 railway 'string' letter.

Displays were also given by Eric Winter, Richard Farman, Malcolm Allinson and Chris Jackson (notes about the display read for him in absentia). The reverse of one of Chris' 'needle' covers can be viewed at page 23 of this edition of Midland Mail – it is one he would save from a goat!!!

# FOUR 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY COVERS BETWEEN SHROPSHIRE and southern AFRICA

by Brian Atkins

No doubt we have all read somewhere that the earliest communication between southern Africa and Europe was by letters left under large stones at the Cape by sailing ships bound for Asia to be picked up and taken back to Britain or Portugal, for example, by homeward ships<sup>1</sup>. The practice of leaving a packet of letters beneath an inscribed stone appears to have been well established by 1591, when Admiral George Raymond reached Table Bay and left behind flat stones inscribed with the names of his ship and the dates of arrival and departure<sup>2</sup>. This practice became almost commonplace during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (see reference 2 for a long list); however the covers to be described here are firmly set in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by which time the Admiralty had contracted with two steam ship companies to provide a packet service. The General Screw Steam Shipping Company came and went between December 1850 and March 1854 and the Lindsay Line lasted even less time from August 1856 to September 1857, both lines finding the stipulated time to the Cape too strict and, although both companies were guaranteed payments of around £30,000, they both ran into financial difficulties and the services were abandoned<sup>3</sup>. During and between these contract services mail was also carried by private ships as ship letters, illustrated by the first two covers below.

The first cover is dated from the 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 1856 endorsement and the  / 31 OC / NATAL circular mark similar to Hart Type B known used at Durban from mid-1853 to late 1859 with incidental later uses<sup>4</sup>. It was carried on two ships, the schooner *Gitana* from Durban (1 Nov 1856) to Table Bay (10 Nov 1856)<sup>5</sup> and the steam ship *Northumberland* which was off Table Bay on the 18 Nov 1856 and arrived Deal / Gravesend 23 Jan 1857<sup>5</sup>. The manuscript 6d is a Natal (double?) charge for carriage to Table Bay and the 1/4 to be collected is double the 8d UK ship letter rate (Treasury Warrant 10 January 1840)<sup>6</sup>. Not a packet cover as the packet rate was 1/- per ½oz<sup>6</sup> and the dates do not fit a packet voyage, though the first Lindsay Line packet had arrived in Table Bay by then (see below).



Fig 1, Natal to Shrewsbury 1856 as a Ship Letter

At first I thought the second cover (next page) might have been carried by the *England*, the initial Lindsay Line packet steamer, which had arrived at Dartmouth on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1856 from London and left for The Cape and Calcutta on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1856 having waited for the mails<sup>5</sup>. Lloyd's List of Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 1856, page 3, confirms the arrival of the *England* at Table Bay on 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 1856<sup>5</sup>, a day before the CAPE TOWN date stamp. Since the cover is dated 12 July in Shrewsbury it would have been a long wait until the departure of the *England*. The cover is also endorsed *Private Ship* and shows 8d paying the 1840 UK ship letter rate for outgoing and incoming unpaid ship mail. As the packet rate was 1/- per ½oz, that further suggests it was sent as a ship letter and not a packet letter. The steamer *Victor Emanuel* (Capt Sheard) departed Gravesend on 14 July (two days after the LONDON date stamp) for the Cape of Good Hope and arrived in Table Bay on 30 September 1856<sup>5</sup>, the date of the CAPE TOWN date stamp. The large, black 8d is an incoming charge. An 1856 letter *to* the UK (Edinburgh) was shown by Brian Trotter at the Rhodesian Study Circle Conference in 2017; it also had a large, black, though differently shaped 8d as a charge. Trotter stated that the 8d breaks down to Cape port charge 4d and internal carriage 4d<sup>7</sup>, perhaps this outgoing 8d charge was also an incoming charge at Cape Town. It is clear that both covers have received the UK ship letter rate. The name Collison was written on the right of the 1856 cover below but I can find no reference for anyone of that name in and around Shrewsbury in contemporary directories. The sender of the letter has written under the flap 'John was quite charmed & excited when he received your letter'.

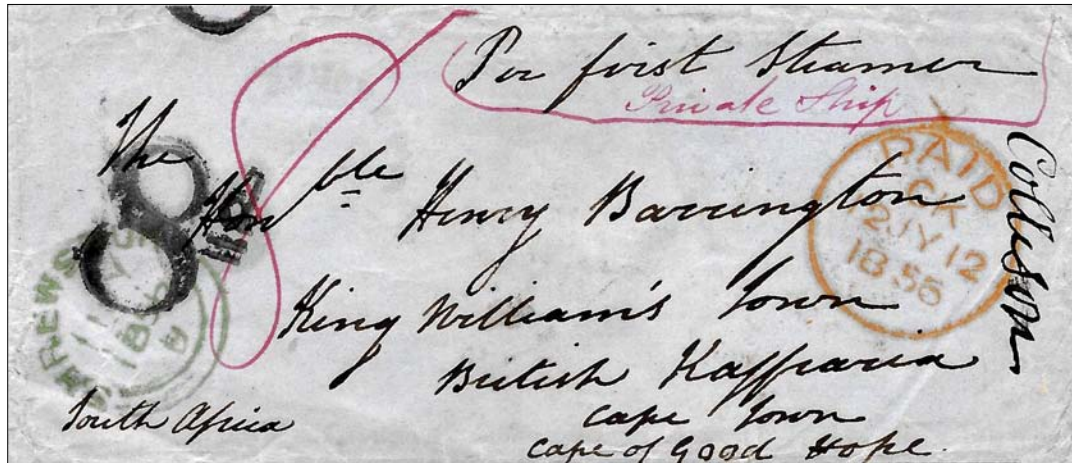


Fig 2, Shrewsbury to British Kaffraria 1856 and CAPE TOWN / CAPE OF GOOD HOPE arrival date stamp

**British Kaffraria** was a British colony/subordinate administrative entity in southern Africa, consisting of the districts now known as King William's Town and East London (now in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa). The term Kaffraria stems from the word 'Kaffir' (now regarded as extremely offensive), which was used for the black African inhabitants of southern Africa. The territory came under British rule in the 19th century. However, there was great disagreement on how it should be governed and its status changed several times before it finally became part of the Cape Colony<sup>8</sup>. The addressee, **Henry Frederick Francis Adair (Viscount) Barrington**, was born in County Durham, graduated from Oxford, became a southern African lawyer, farmer and, effectively, Attorney General of British Kaffraria.

In the summer of 1857 the Admiralty invited tenders for a third mail service by steamship to and from the Cape. The Union Steamship Company Ltd., which had provided transport in the Crimea War, put in a tender as the end of the war had left it with idle ships. On the 4<sup>th</sup> September 1857 the company was informed that its tender was successful and the contract came into operation eleven days later with the inaugural sailing of the *Dane*, which left Southampton on 15 September to begin a regular mail service which lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the beginning a monthly service was to be maintained in each direction and the passage was to take no more than forty-two days each way. The ships were to be not less than 530 tons, but the annual subsidy was an attractive £33,000<sup>1</sup>. The company must have had a good feeling about their tender as *The Times* of 10<sup>th</sup> September 1857 reported that the *Dane* (Captain Strutt) was expected at Southampton from Liverpool, confirmed by Lloyd's List of 11<sup>th</sup> September, showing she arrived on 10<sup>th</sup>. According to Sawyer & Robinson, she was drydocked, scraped and painted for the long voyage<sup>3</sup>, which the same copy of *The Times* referred to above confirmed was to be the 15<sup>th</sup> September. I know nothing about the cleaning of marine vessels but 4 days to do all that seems a very short time and one wonders if Sawyer & Robinson have been guilty of a little literary licence? She did sail on the 15<sup>th</sup> carrying the mails, a few packages of freight and six passengers taking nearly forty-four days, just over contract time, to reach Table Bay on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1857<sup>5</sup>.

Though they are dated later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, two further Shropshire related covers illustrate the mail services to and from the Cape. The first cover is addressed to Great Ness (near Nescliffe), Shrewsbury. It was put into the mails at Stellenbosch on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1876 and arrived at Cape Town the same day. The rate between The Cape and UK had been reduced to 6d per ½oz on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1876<sup>6</sup>. The cover was probably carried by the Union Line *Danube*, which left Table Bay on 18<sup>th</sup> September and arrived at Plymouth at 10.30am on 14<sup>th</sup> October, from which *The Times* calculates a passage of 25 days 16 hours with the letter in Shrewsbury on 15<sup>th</sup>. She landed 36 sacks of mail<sup>9</sup>. Thus a much faster time but note the word probably for in January 1872 the Donald Currie Castle Line began sailings to the Cape, at first using ships chartered from the Leith, Hull & Hamburg Steam Packet Co, one such being the *Lapland*,

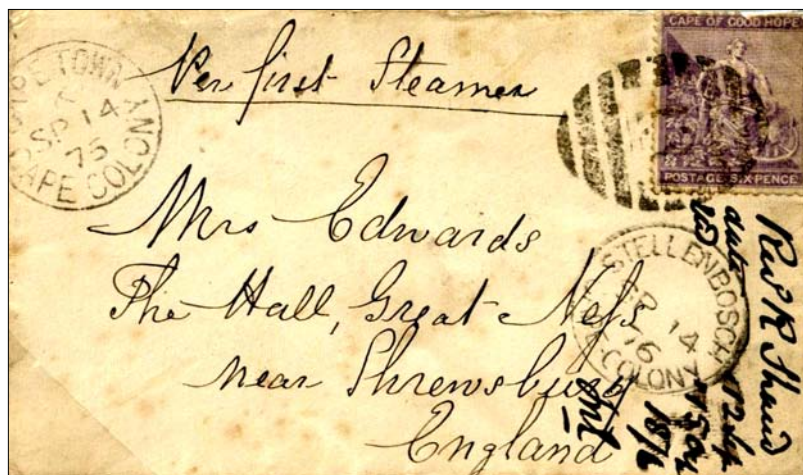


Fig 3, Stellenbosch to Shrewsbury, September 1876.



Fig 4, April 1889 cover from Wellington Salop to Natal (4d to Natal by British packet from PO Guide January 1889)

The cover at Fig 4 was carried on the Union Company's *Mexicana* from Southampton on 6<sup>th</sup> April and arrived at Natal on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1889, a 24 day passage, three weeks quicker than the inaugural packet. Today De Waar (now Dewaar) is described as a farm with a rural school but it had a post office from 1880 to 2 Dec 1888<sup>10</sup>, which closed 4 months before the arrival of the cover! The reverse has a BEITH mark for 2 May 1889. Beith (office open 1887 to 1903)<sup>10</sup> is 45 miles east of Ladysmith and about 10 miles west of Dewaar. There is also a BIGGARSBERG / NATAL date stamp for 2 May 1889; the office was open from 1882 to 1910, both it and Beith having Ladysmith as their head office<sup>10</sup>. As Biggarsberg was in the address it seems safe to assume the letter was delivered through that office. Despite his 'grand sounding' name, I can find no reference anywhere to David Bolton Lamb, any offers?

#### References:

- 1) British Maritime Postal History Vol 3, Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd, undated.
- 2) <http://www.sahistory.org.za/franco/postal-history-colonial-post-diary.htm>
- 3) The Cape Run, Sawyer & Robinson, Dalton, Suffolk, 1984
- 4) The postal markings of Natal, Hart W.R., Kantey B.A. & Leon A.L., Privately published (1977)
- 5) Lloyd's List from <https://www.uspcs.org/resource-center/research-projects/lloyds-list-newspapers/>
- 6) United Kingdom Letter Rates Inland and Overseas, Tabcart, HH Sales, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2003
- 7) [www.rhodesianstudycircle.org.uk/.../2017/04/Brian-Trotter-RSC-Conference-2017.pdf](http://www.rhodesianstudycircle.org.uk/.../2017/04/Brian-Trotter-RSC-Conference-2017.pdf)
- 8) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British\\_Kaffraria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Kaffraria)
- 9) The Mails Times [London, England] 16 Oct. 1876: 6. *The Times Digital Archive*. retrieved 30 Jan. 2018.
- 10) <http://www.postmarks.co.za/PH%20NATAL.htm>

which sailed from Table Bay on 16<sup>th</sup> September (two days after the letter arrived at Cape Town), and arrived at Plymouth on the same day as the *Danube*. On 9 October *The Times* refers to the Colonial Mail extra steamship *Lapland* though, crucially, *The Times* does not state that she is carrying mail, hence the use of the word probably for the *Danube* to carry the letter but, I suppose, it could be either ship! From September 1876 Currie's ships carried mail, eventually alternating with the Union Line until the lines amalgamated as The Union-Castle Line in 1900.



# Bill Pipe

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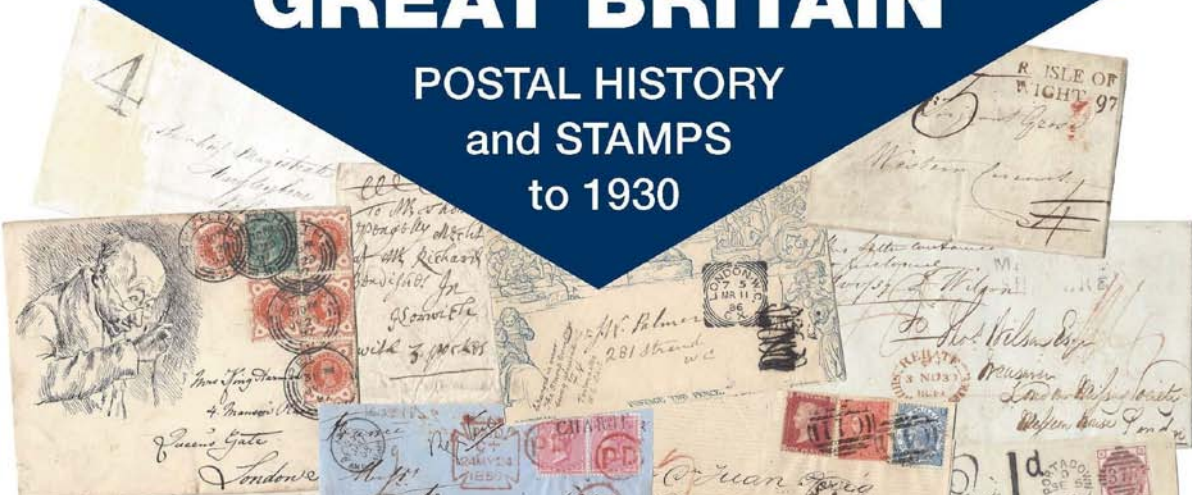
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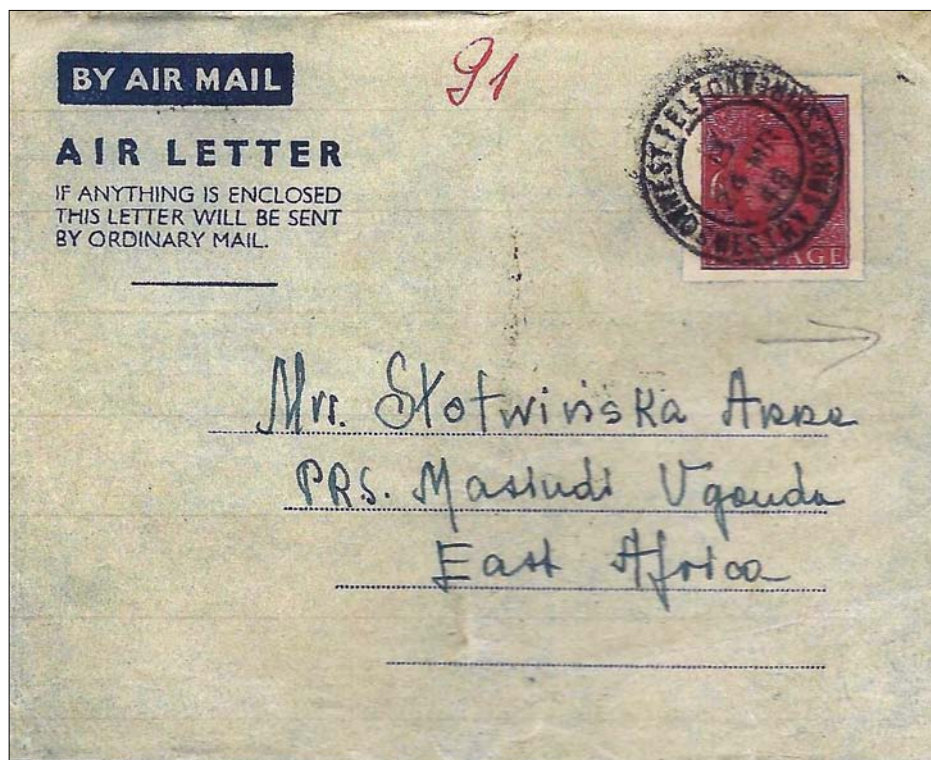


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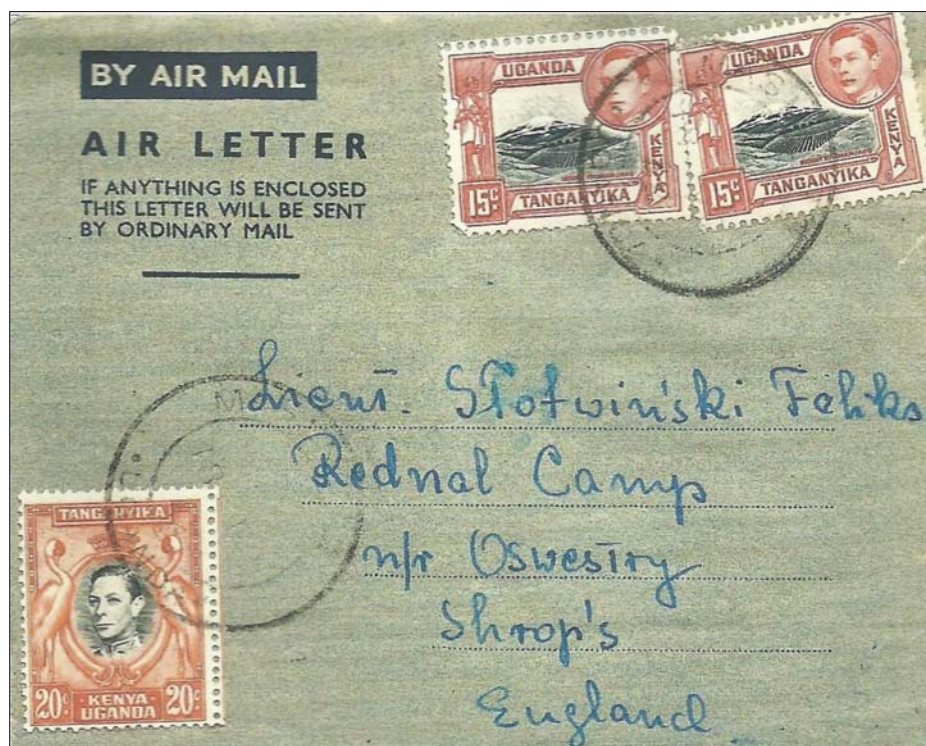
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## TWO 1948 LETTERS BETWEEN HUSBAND &amp; WIFE REFUGEES in SHROPSHIRE &amp; UGANDA

by Jim Ball



Air letter written at Rednal camp, near Oswestry by a Polish refugee pilot, Felix Stotwinski, to his wife, Anna, interred in the refugee camp at Masindi, Uganda, near the northern border with what is now Zaire. The impressed stamp is cancelled WEST FELTON / OSWESTRY SHROPSHIRE / 24 MR 1948. The reverse has a transit mark CORREO AÉREO / LAURENCO MARQUES / 30.3.48, indicating a route via Mozambique, and a MASINDI / UGANDA / 7 APR 48.



A similar air letter form dated Masindi 7 – III – 48 addressed to Lieut. Stotwinski, Rednal camp, nr Oswestry. Three KUT adhesives to the value of 50cents are cancelled by the indistinct MASINDI 2 UGANDA. There are no receiving marks on the letter. The top of the letter has a number 39, possibly the number of letters written to or received by her husband. One hopes they were eventually reunited.

The main function of Rednal was to train pilots to fly the iconic Spitfire fighter plane. The airfield also played an important role during July and August 1944 following D-Day,

receiving some 1,000s of wounded direct from Normandy for treatment at surrounding hospitals.

## CONTRARY TO REGULATIONS

by John Soer

When the Railway Letter Service was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1891, among the items excluded from this system were letters: 'Addressed to a Foreign Country, or to a Colony, or British Possession.' However, the Post Office was realistic for an instruction, in the Post Office Circular, on how items accepted in error should be treated, said that if an item for a foreign country etc was 'sufficiently paid', then it must be sent on.

The item shown below was sent on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1903 from Rushton Hall, Northamptonshire to Rustenberg in the Transvaal where it arrived on 6<sup>th</sup> July. The sender attached a 1d adhesive to pay the Imperial Penny Postage, introduced on Christmas Day, 1898. The clerk at Glendon & Rushton station either did not know about the prohibition on letters for overseas, or chose to ignore it as the letter had the correct postage stamp on it, for he then provided a Midland Railway 2d letter stamp which he cancelled with the oval telegraph handstamp of 'GLEDON & RUSHTON/STATION/MID. R<sup>Y</sup>.' (just visible in the scan) which had been issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1896.

When the station opened in 1857 it was called 'Rushton' and an oval telegraph handstamp with that name had been issued on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1893. The change in name, made in 1896, was probably to avoid confusion with Rushden on the branch line between Wellingborough and Higham Ferrers.



Fig 1, 1903 Midland Railway cover from Northamptonshire to Transvaal

Why should the sender want to spend an extra twopence when the letter will take over two weeks to reach its destination? At that time, a ship of the Union-Castle Line left Southampton every Saturday with mail for South Africa. Use of an eternal calendar shows that 12<sup>th</sup> June 1903 was a Friday. The sender clearly wanted to make sure that his letter was on that ship; a journey time of twenty-four days suggests that it was. (*British Maritime Postal History*, Vol 3, *The Union Castle Ocean Post Office* by Cattell shows that the Union-Castle Line Dunottar Castle left Southampton on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1903, arriving at Cape Town on 30<sup>th</sup> June – Ed, after a discussion with the author).

Rushton Hall is well-known on account of the triangular lodge in its grounds. The Hall was for many years the home of the Catholic Tresham family. Francis Tresham was involved in the Gunpowder Plot and died in the Tower of London in 1605. It is said that Charles Dickens based Haversham Hall in *Great Expectations* on Rushton Hall.

## NOT CONTRARY TO REGULATIONS

Illustrated below (reduced in size) is an envelope sent in October 1913 from Sunningdale, Berkshire to India. This item, like that shown on the previous page was franked with a 1d adhesive to pay the Imperial Penny Postage, and was put into the Railway Letter System as is shown by the LSWR 2d adhesive. This latter adhesive was cancelled with the oval 'SUNNINGDALE/STATION/L. & S.W.R.' handstamp.

The Post Office Guide for 1913 states that mail for India (British) via Brindisi would be sent every Friday evening until 2<sup>nd</sup> May, then every Sunday. Now, 17<sup>th</sup> October 1913 was a Friday so one would have expected a letter posted in Sunningdale on a Friday to fall into the Sunday evening dispatch from London. Maybe the sender thought that the dispatch from London was still on a Friday, or perhaps he/she was making sure that it left London on the Sunday. The catalogue for the auction in which I bought this cover stated: 'Regulations excluded overseas mail from the Railway letter system,....' So how do I explain the title to this article?

The Post Office Circular for 13<sup>th</sup> July 1909 contains the following: 'It has been arranged with the Railway Companies ... that the arrangement for the conveyance of single post letters by railway should be extended to include letters addressed to places abroad. The new arrangement will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> August.' The instruction went on to say that the Railway Companies would not provide details as to cost of postage, times of departure of mail etc.



Fig 2, October 1913 LSWR cover Sunningdale to India



Fig 3, Postcard of Sunningdale station c 1915

**"Midland Railway: Scenery · Industries · History."**

**Eastbourne**  
(continued from page 110).

**Places of Interest and Amusement** (continued).

Parades: Marine, Grand, Royal and Upper.  
Pier (Grand New Pavilion), performances daily.  
South Fields.  
Theatre Royal, Seaside Road.  
Town Hall.

**In Neighbourhood.**

Battle Abbey.  
Beachy Head.  
Hampden Park.  
Hurstmonceux Castle.  
Normanhurst.  
Pevensey Castle.

**Boating.**

The South Coast Pleasure Steamers make trips daily during the summer to Hastings and Brighton, return fare 1/6; round the Light Ship, 1/-; and occasionally to Boulogne, return 5/-.

The large sailing yacht, *Britannia*, licensed to carry 120, sails at 11 and 3 o'clock for a two hours' cruise, fare 1/-.

The charge for private sailing boats is 5/- per hour; rowing 1/6, with boatman 2/-.

Regatta held in September.

**Bathing.**

From Bathing Machines all along the Parades. Mixed bathing. Nominal charges.

**Hunting.**

The Eastbourne Fox-hounds meet twice a week, generally within eight miles, and afford good sport. Coaches take visitors to the meet; fare, 2/6.

The East Sussex Fox-hounds and the Bexhill Harriers are also within reach.

**Cycling.**

There is a track in Devonshire Park, and the Grand Parade is largely used by cyclists. The surrounding twenty miles of country offers exceptional facilities.

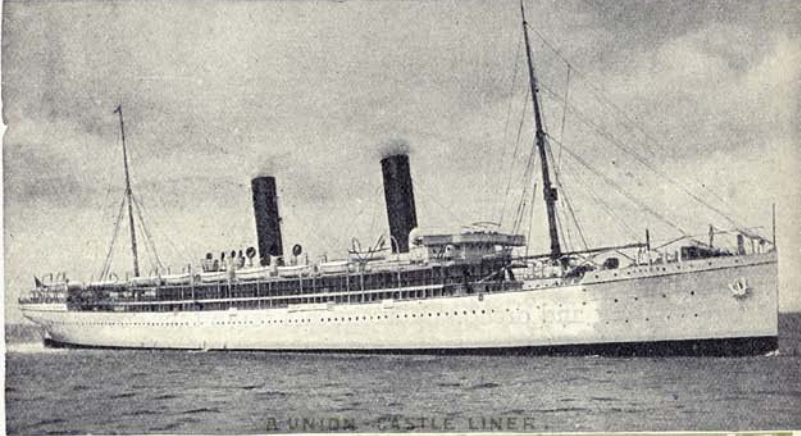
**Cricket.**

There are grounds at "The Saffrons" and the Devonshire Park.

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15, CROSS STREET - MANCHESTER.  
CANUTE ROAD - SOUTHAMPTON.

OR TO LOCAL AGENTS.

*Face Central London Ky. Map.*

The Africa theme wasn't planned but with Shropshire covers to southern Africa, a 1903 Midland Railway letter to the Transvaal, an 1890 'Jubilee' cover to Natal and Air Mail from Uganda, it seemed appropriate to include John Soer's delightful poster showing the Union Castle Southern Africa Royal Mail Service. Incidentally your editor once scored a good 50 on the Saffrons (see bottom left corner!).

**RAVENSTONE (LEICESTERSHIRE) POST OFFICE**

by John Soer

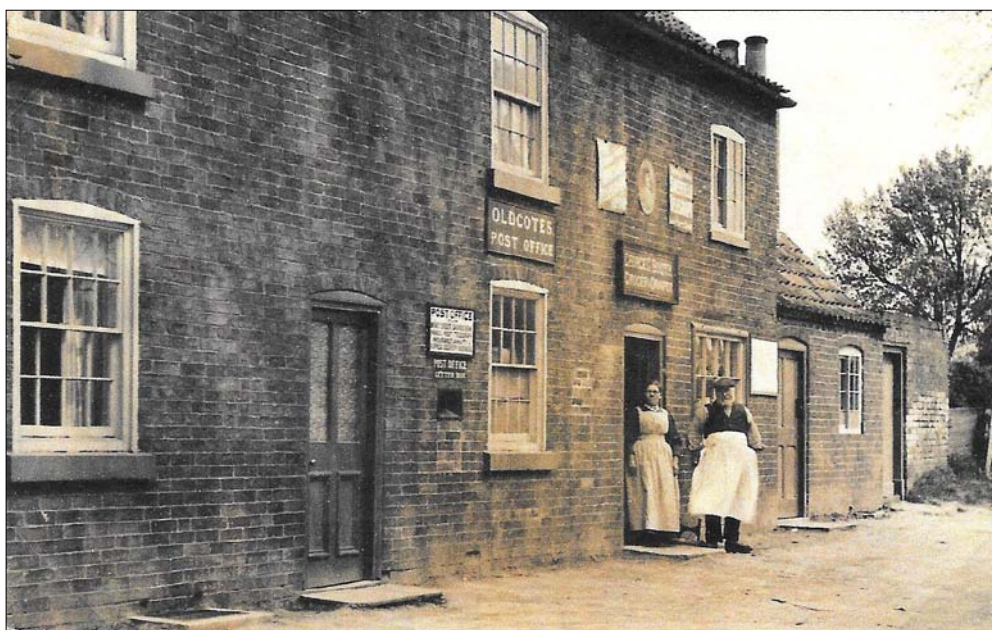
George Lomas was appointed as the receiver at Ravenstone in December 1843, two months after the messenger from Ashby-de-la-Zouch. His salary of £5 p.a. included an allowance for delivering letters in the village. At least ten people, three of whom also acted as the village schoolmaster, held the position of postmaster/mistress between 1843 and the appointment of Miss Fanny Atkins in July 1904. She was still the postmistress in 1916, but had relinquished the post by 1922. Her office in Church Lane is shown on the postcard below.



From the early 1950s, and possibly before that, until October 1981 the post office was at 24, Leicester Road. Mr Ken Pullen ran the office there until his retirement in January 1993. Three months later the office moved back to 24, Leicester Road, Mrs Deborah Pratt acting as postmistress in the interim. Mr Pullen's premises are shown below.



I started to collect postcards of Newark, my home town, in the mid 1970s but new finds have become something of a rarity. When former society member and Nottinghamshire editor, Dennis Humphreys, produced his 13 volumes of the county's post offices, it opened a new era for postcard collecting, so that I now look out for postcards which show Notts post offices or the buildings which had been a post office or were later to become post offices. A typical example of the first mentioned is Oldcotes post office, which was on the route of the Worksop – Tickhill penny post, which operated from 1811 to 1822 / 23 and again from 1837 to 1838.



In 1904 George Booth, shopkeeper, was appointed sub-postmaster to be succeeded by his wife Elizabeth Florence Booth in 1926, though she resigned the following year. On 12 November 1928 control was transferred once again to Worksoy. The post office remained in the same premises until 1942 after which it moved to Toll Bar Cottage, Blyth Road. There were two further moves before closure on 22 February 2001.



*'This is the house your sister is at' and 'This is my noble self and husband'.*

Love E J Booth

**SAVED FROM A GOAT** – At a recent meeting of the Shropshire Postal History Society, **Jim Ball** stated he would definitely save this cover from a masticating goat, or from any old goat for that matter.

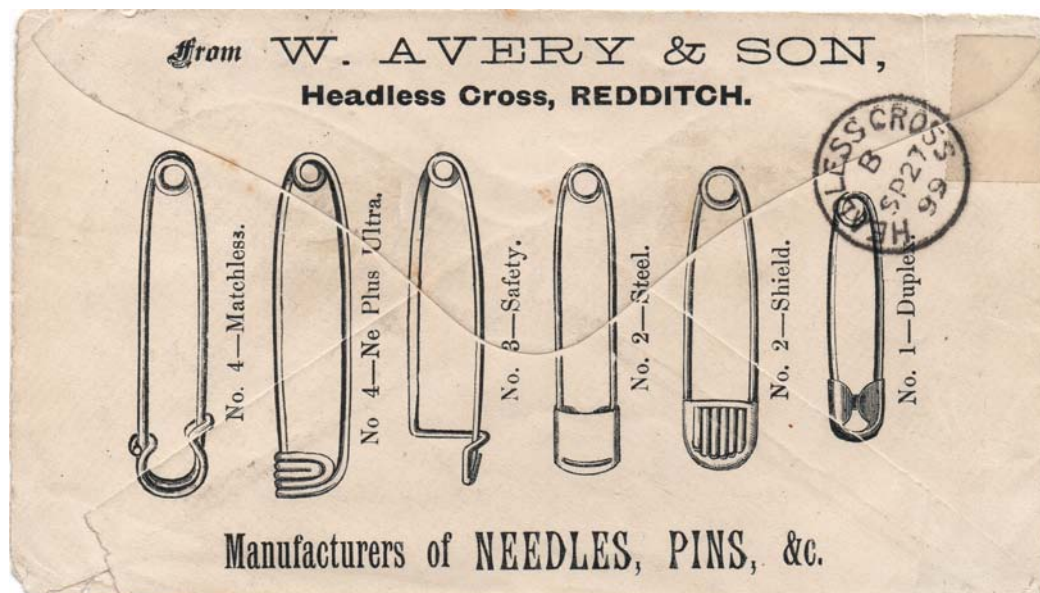


And why wouldn't you save this cover from an old goat. Sent at the double rate (GPO Notice, 5 October 1888) of 8d per oz, paid by 1d jubilee envelope (card still inside, so likely to be over ½oz if there was a letter as well), QV 3d purple on yellow and 4d green and brown cancelled by the only recorded example of the



Wellington 859 3VOS issued in July 1876. The Union Company's *Roman* left Southampton on 15 August and arrived at Cape Town 8 September 1890. Jim says it is one of his favourite covers, one to be savoured and saved.

Is it any surprise that **Chris Jackson** would save a needlemakers cover from that dastardly goat? Of course not and here it is!



Chris writes; This fragile envelope, the reverse of which is shown, was sent from Redditch to London on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1899 by W. Avery & Son, Needlemakers situated at Headless Cross, Redditch back stamped with a Headless Cross single ring for the day of posting. Being a sub office it was not allowed to cancel the stamp on the front which was done with a Redditch 140 3VOD. It is one of my favourite covers as it is a superb example of the skill of Victorian printing. The safety pin advertisement has not been printed onto the closed envelope but on each of the four flaps which when closed make a complete picture. It also shows how Avery's used what would otherwise have been a plain back of an envelope, and wasted space, to great advantage advertising some of their products.

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