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

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Number 32, November 1983

Midland Femail

This is the thirty-second issue. It is doubtful, therefore, that anyone can argue with conviction that it is premature to consider giving the Bulletin a more distinctive title. Merely to call it "The Bulletin" is hardly good enough since specialist societies up and down the land send out "Bulletins" for everything from inter-planetary post to underwater philately. We need a name.

At the October meeting, the editor made the mistake of popping out for a cup of tea and returned to find that the Bulletin had been christened in his absence. Denis Salt had come up with an idea, the Chairman liked it and the meeting liked it too. That's the trouble with a lady chairman - she charms the men into voting for anything and everything she fancies.

Fortunately there is a saving grace: the editor thinks the name is pretty good too. It will be a little while before it appears at the top of the page because a new front page cannot be designed and printed until later in the season. When it is, we shall be -

MIDLAND MAIL

The Bulletin of the Midland (GB) Postal History Society

Thank you Denis for the idea, thank you lady Chairman for your persuasive powers, and thank you BMI for what turned out to be a rather significant cup of tea.

New name or old, the eager editor is still:

John Calladine, Dunley House, Cranham. Gloucester GI4 8HQ

JON BAKER

Members will be shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden death of Jon Baker on 17th October. Only a few days earlier, Jon, full of his customary good humour, had given a vastly entertaining display at the October meeting. A report of that meeting, written before he died, appears on a later page and has been left untouched as some small testimony to one of the Society's most popular members.

Jon made notable contributions to life in fields far removed from the sheltered world of postal history and it must be for others to provide an obituary worthy of him. We shall remember him for his warm friendliness and for the help he gave to the fledgling Society. It was Jon who designed the lettering on our competition trophy and, above all, it was Jon who shaped the Bulletin, taking over as editor in 1976 (when just three single page issues had appeared) and continuing in that post until last year in spite of his many other important commitments. It is difficult to believe that we must now continue without his cheerful and unstinting support and the Society extends its deepest sympathy to Jon's wife and family in their sad loss.

Our Next Meeting

There is no November meeting this year and the next meeting will therefore be the popular annual gathering at the Bass Museum, Burton-on-Trent on Saturday 10th December at 2.00pm. Once again Richard has offered to arrange a lunch (12 for 12.30) and would like to have names a week in advance. His phone number is on the first page of the Bulletin.

Each year, members await the disclosure of the speaker's name with keen anticipation because Richard always turns up trumps. This year is no exception and he has aimed to prove again how catholic are the interests of our supposedly-provincial society by inviting DENNIS CHARLESWORTH of Stafford to display postal history of Jamaica. Anyone who has glanced at the proof books in P.O. Archives will know what fascinating stamps were sent to that island and what a treat is in store.







The September Meeting

The first meeting of the new season on 10th September attracted 14 members and was an undoubted success. The theme for the nine sheet displays was 'Missent' and 'Too Late' marks and it would be surprising if anyone failed to learn something from the large selection shown.

Trevor Clewley showed misdirected items, mainly of the early 20th century. Perhaps 'Reddish' for 'Redditch' was not entirely unexpected but 'Durban' for 'Durham' was inexcusable. John Calladine illustrated the 'Missent to Sir Thomas Phillipps' theme and then showed Mike Young's more exotic offerings, Mike being on the high seas at the time. These included the scarce first type 'Missent to Worcester', a later type struck on the same cover as a 'Missent to Stourport' and 'Too Late' marks of Worcester from 1822 and 1835. Ian May had a Coventry 'Too Late' and a range of interesting instructional marks from the same city including an unusual use of a 'Posted out of Course'. Ted Coles brought the first type 'Too Late' for Lichfield and scroll type marks in red and black. (He also showed us a recent acquisition, a very nice 1742 Lich/field.) Peter Sharp had missent marks of Warwick, Leamington, Birmingham and Stratford and his 'Too Late' marks included use with a 1d black. Chris Beaver mistook 9 sheets for about 90 and managed to stick to the theme. They ranged from an 1814 'Too Late' of Newcastle Under Lyme through a group of 'Missent's (several inevitably to the wrong Newcastle) and misdirected letters, to a contemporary handstamp applied at Atherstone to any letter wrongly addressed to him as 'Near Atherstone'. Denis Salt showed 'Too Late' marks of Shrewsbury, Liverpool and Birmingham and 'Missent to Shrewsbury' when "Salop" was regarded as the town rather than the county. He emphasised the difference between "Missent" and "Misdirected" and offered a perceptive hypothesis to explain the positioning of mailbag apparatus on the main railway line from Shrewsbury. Steph Stobbs reminded us that the first instructions for marking missent letters date from 1793 and then apologised (I should think so !) for not showing a manuscript 'Missent to Hereford' earlier than 1797. He had undated marks of Broseley and Madeley with 'Not' in the centre and a lovely 'Missent to Stafford'. A letter from Oswestry to nearby Wem ended up 'Missent to London' and there was a stamped 'Missent to' with a straight line 'Birmingham'. Derek Smeathers included missent marks of Northampton and Daventry and, unusually in lower case letters, from Weedon. 'Too Late' marks of Northampton were in several colours. Eric Lewis was able to show a straight line 'Missent to Birmingham' of 1805 and then, from the same city in date sequence, the oval mark, double oval, 'Missent to' handstamp, small circle and the final scarcer straight line form. Elizabeth concluded the

displays with a selection of missent marks of Lichfield, Hereford, Worcester and Leominster and even produced an unlikely 'Sir Thos Phillipps' letter, which was 'Missent to Bromyard'. It had been a fascinating afternoon.

The October Meeting

It can truly be said that the 19 members and guests who attended the meeting at the Birmingham & Midland Institute on 1st October were ENTERTAINED by the speaker for Jon Baker's display was entertainment of the best kind. By choosing ten or more different topics and selecting a handful of sheets to illustrate each, he ensured that the afternoon was full of interest and that there would be something for everyone. He mixed all that with a 'deliberate mistake' puzzle, interspersing "helpful" clues in his commentary and the inevitable result was that nobody got within a mile of the correct solution. We were too distracted by his display.

Jon started with examples of covers and enclosures from the Returned Letter Office and the later Returned Letter Branch, one of which showed clearly that no fewer than 23 attempts had been made to deliver it. He followed with postmarks of Birmingham and Leicester including a 1729 two line LEICES/TER, a Birmingham 'horseshoe' of around 1800 and a 'Missent to Leicester' with mileage struck in red. We then saw 1840 1d blacks and 1841 2d blues on cover, amongst them a 1d black with a Sudbury mileage mark.

As expected, Jon let us see a selection from his collection of illus-

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OFFERS OF MATERIAL FOR SALE ARE ALSO WELCOMED.PLEASE WRITE FIRST.

trated envelopes. There were official Jubilee covers with the various handstamps, a Furniss caricature, an Elliott envelope essay and a nicely coloured example of the Fores No.1 envelope. The stationery was followed by late fee and 'too late' marks of London, items he said he could not fit into the nine sheet display at the first meeting of the season ! Then, just to emphasise that the Midland (GB) PHS is broadly based, we had three sections of New Zealand postal history. There were 'Chalon heads' of 1864-1867 on cover and interesting illustrations of how long it could take for Victorian letters to travel between towns in New Zealand or back to England. Jon pointed out the attractions of New Zealand registered envelopes and showed the postcard developed for use in both New Zealand and Australia following an agreement of 1890. He was able to tell us a great deal of the history of a letter which a mother wrote from Yorkshire in 1866 to her son in a New Zealand 'gold rush' town which appeared to have found him safely after a year in the mails.

We were brought back to England with early registered letters and some unusual re-addressed mail, highlights of which were an example of 1781 with three Bishop marks and a cover with a handstamp indicating free re-direction of a letter within the same postal district. Your reporter's favourites were the London receivers' handstamps. Starting with 'T' of 1689, we saw 'ML', 'AE', 'RD', a large 'MW' and more. Jon identified each receiver by name and location and made the point that the better known 'Partington' receiver's handstamp was probably one of the very first steel stamps brought into use. To gild the lily, the 1689 letter with the 'T' handstamp had, attached to it, instructions for a particular carrier to take the letter on beyond Warrington when it left the post road.

In retrospect, it is both poignant and appropriate that it was Elizabeth herself who proposed the vote of thanks to Jon and that he received such warm applause. It had been an afternoon that those of us privileged to be present will long remember.

G.B. COVERS

PTS ROGER HUDSON

36 WEST STREET

WARWICK CV34 6AN

Telephone: Warwick (0926) 492326

Members of the Midland (GB) PHS are invited to send for a copy of my latest list of GB cover material from 1840 onwards. I also BUY good quality items.

From the London Gazette, 6 August 1768

Numb. 10855.

The London Gazette.

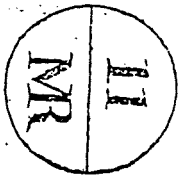
Published by Authority.

From Tuesday August 2, to Saturday August 6, 1768.

Whitehall, July 30, 1768.

Whereas it has been humbly represented to the King, That her Grace the Dutchess of Northumberland received, on Friday the 11th of March last, at her Grace's House at Charing-Cross, in a Cover, directed as hereunder, and which had the Marks of the General Post Offices both of Dublin and London upon it, a threatening Letter, containing the Words, Letters, and Figures following, viz.

Post-Mark. DUBLIN



" To
" Her Grace the Duchs. of
" Northumber
" land
" Northumberland House
" London

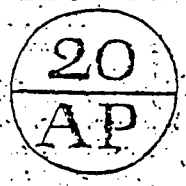
" Dublin March 1st. 1768

" May it please Your Grace
" If you do not leave two Hundred Guineas
" in a Bank Note at the Bar of the Bedford Coffee
" House directed for Mr. P. D. you may expect
" to hear of it in a dreadful Manner I hope my
" Poverty will excuse this: Though I date this
" from Dublin, Yet will I be over along with it
" and give you warning not to trifle with me for
" I shall find means to come very near yr. Person
" And shall know whether you deal Candidly
" with me or not. Please to leave the Above as
" directed on the 1st of April next, otherwise abide
" the Consequences.
" Yours P. D."

And wherear it has also been represented to the King, that her said Grace the Dutchess of Northumberland has, since the Time of receiving the aforesaid threatening Letter, received two other threatening Letters, each having the said respective Marks of the several Post-Offices of Dublin and London upon it, and containing respectively the Words, Letters, and Figures following, viz.

" To her Grace the Dutchess of Northumberland
" Northumberland House
" London

LONDON



Post Mark.

" You had better leave the Note at the Bar of the
" Bedford, P. D. is in London, he will receive
" the Money. Your Advertisement in the Publick
" Paper will do You but little good, farewell
" Commend me to his Majesty, A Dagger May
" find the way to Your bowells, and you may re-
" pent when tis too late your not sending the Cash
" for the Use of Your sincere friend."

" Dublin Castle April 21st. 1768."

" To
" Her Grace the
" Dutches of Northumbrland
" At Northumberland house



" I am a going over and Will be over in
" a few days and tak Care of your
" Person if you dont have what I have told
" You before and so tak Care if You
" do not have a Noat so having No more
" Madam I Am your Most Obedient
" humb P. D.

His Majesty, for the better discovering and bringing to Justice the Person or Persons principally concerned in the Writing and Sending any one or all of the aforesaid three threatening Letters to the said Dutchess of Northumberland, as above-mentioned, is hereby pleased to promise His most gracious Pardon to any one, (except the Person principally concerned in actually contriving, writing, or causing to be wrote, any of the aforesaid Letters) who shall discover his or her Accomplice or Accomplices in any of the said Facts, so that he, she, or they, may be apprehended and convicted thereof.

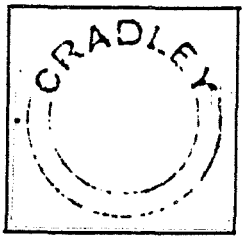
WEYMOUTH.

And, as a further Encouragement, the Duke of Northumberland does hereby promise a Reward of FIVE HUNDRED Pounds *to the* FIRST *Person making such Discovery as aforesaid, (except as above excepted;) to be paid upon the Conviction of any one or more of the Offenders.*

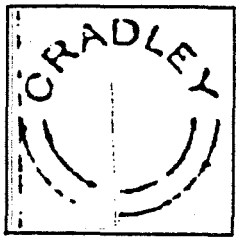
NORTHUMBERLAND.

July 20, 1768.

The type of 'Bishop Mark' illustrated here is recorded as having been used between 1746 and 1795. Elizabeth & Eric Lewis are thanked for spotting this unusual item.



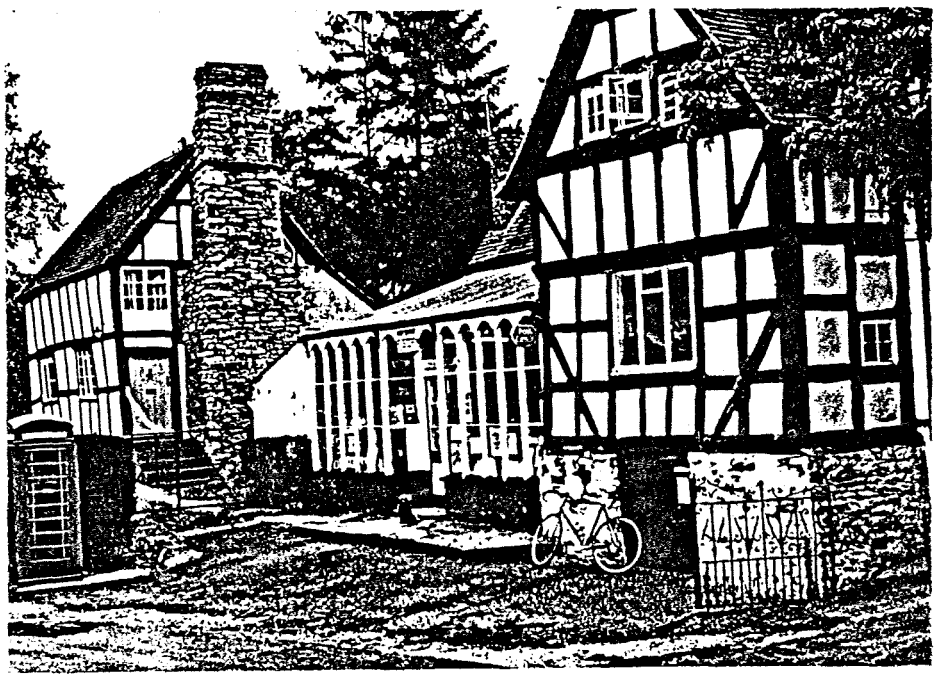
A TALE OF TWO CRADLEYS

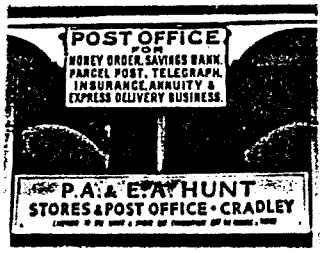


In the mid-1840s, two almost identical undated postmarks were issued to villages only thirty miles apart. Although the villages were in different counties, their post towns were both in Worcestershire and this has led to a confusion of marks that may be unique in English postal history. That the villages were so very different in character, gives the collector no help in separating their postmarks.

This, then, is a tale of two villages called Cradley. That one was, and is, in Herefordshire is beyond doubt and we shall refer to it as the "Herefordshire Cradley". The other village was probably just within the northern boundary of Worcestershire but the county boundaries were unusually complicated at the time: Shropshire and Staffordshire had 'islands' in northern Worcestershire and Worcestershire claimed Dudley as an 'island' in Staffordshire. We will take the simplistic view and refer to it as the "Worcestershire Cradley".

The Herefordshire Cradley is a delightful rural village on the gentle western slopes of the Malvern Hills. Locals pronounce the name with a hard vowel, as if it were spelt "add". It was on 19th April 1844 that undated circular marks for both Cradley and Malvern Link were issued to Great Malvern. The original site of the sub-office or receiving office in the village is not known but fifty years ago it was in the upper part of the village near the church. The sign from that office, which may even pre-date it, has been transferred to the present post office which is in a lovely half-timbered building at the bottom of the hill. Until recent years, mail sorting was carried out in an ancient cow shed at the bottom of the post office garden. There were no 'modern aids' such as





vertical sorting racks or pigeon holes; just a large table and, when sorting was complete, delivery around the village was by bicycle. It is said that the delivery route was seventeen miles long but that must surely have included collection of the mail from Malvern.

The Worcestershire Cradley presented a stark contrast in the 1840s. This village is an old settlement associated with the iron trades, particularly with chain and nail making. It was at Cradley Forge in the early 1600s that Dud Dudley claimed to have smelted iron using coal rather than charcoal as fuel. The claim is usually dismissed out of hand nowadays and Mr Dudley is said to have been of a "boastful and assertive nature". By the second half of the nineteenth century, Cradley had been somewhat swamped by its previously insignificant neighbour, Cradley Heath, and today itis not easy to identify it as a separate entity. In the 1840s, however, it was an important industrial community on a site between the, locally steep, valley of the River Stour and the main road between Stourbridge and Birmingham through Halesowen.

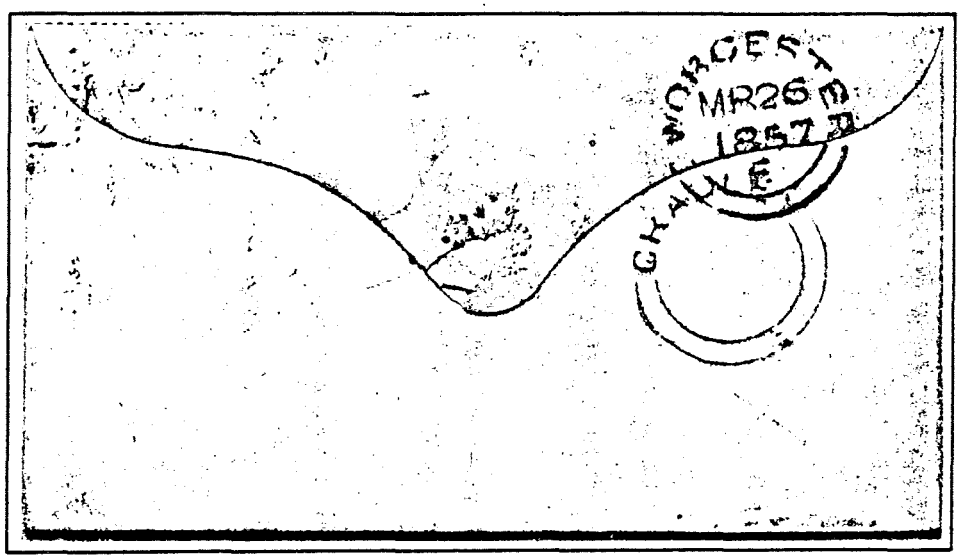


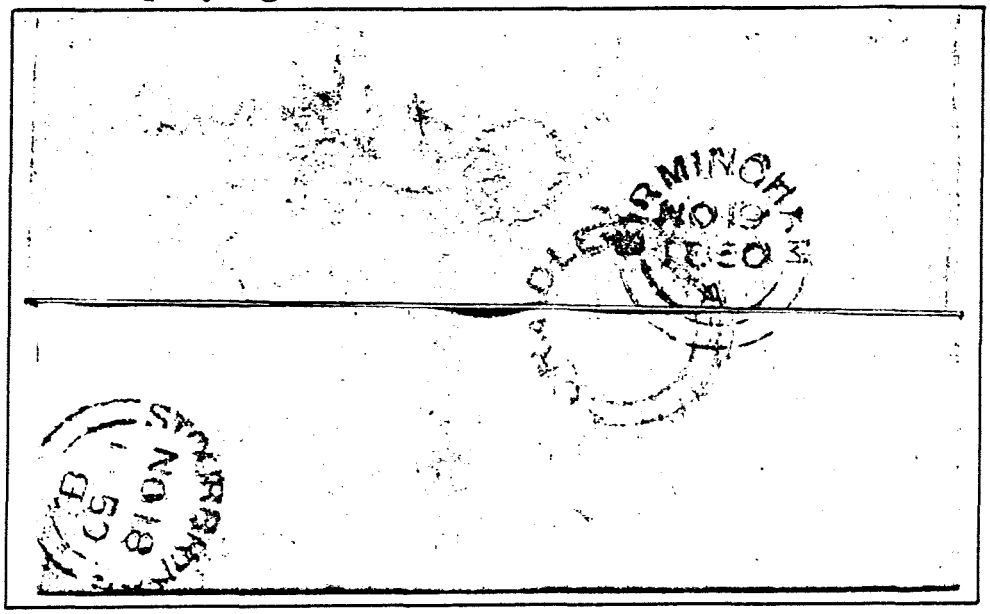
A puddling furnace at Cradley



The undated mark for the Worcestershire Cradley was issued, together with that for Lye, on 10th January 1846. A delivery route from Stourbridge ran along the main Birmingham road through Lye, a village every bit as industrial as Cradley, and the Cradley sub-office was probably also on the main road not far short of Halesowen. Cradley was under Stourbridge for about ten years but, in the late 1850s, became a sub-office of Brierley Hill, a town in Staffordshire.

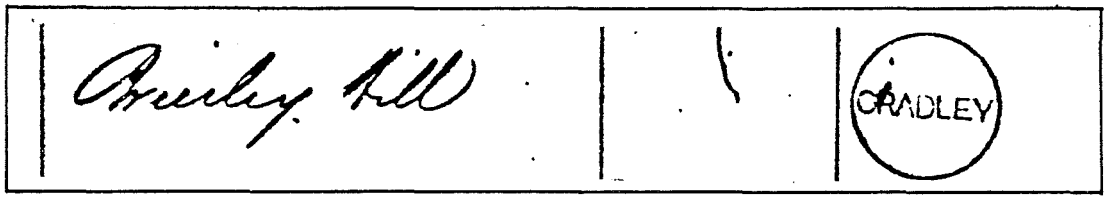
When the two marks are placed side-by-side, a luxury rarely available to the collector, it is clear that the inscription 'Cradley' is longer for the Worcestershire Cradley (about 150° of arc) than it is for the Herefordshire Cradley (perhaps 135° of arc). Otherwise there is little to differentiate them. Both are found struck in various colours depending on the year of use. The illustration of the Herefordshire Cradley (above) from 1857 is in orange: the Worcestershire Cradley (below) of 1850 is in green. Perhaps the safest method of being sure what you are buying is to look at the accompanying dated marks on the cover. The Herefordshire Cradley is usually with a Malvern or Worcester circular date stamp and the Worcestershire Cradley with a Stourbridge or Birmingham CDS.



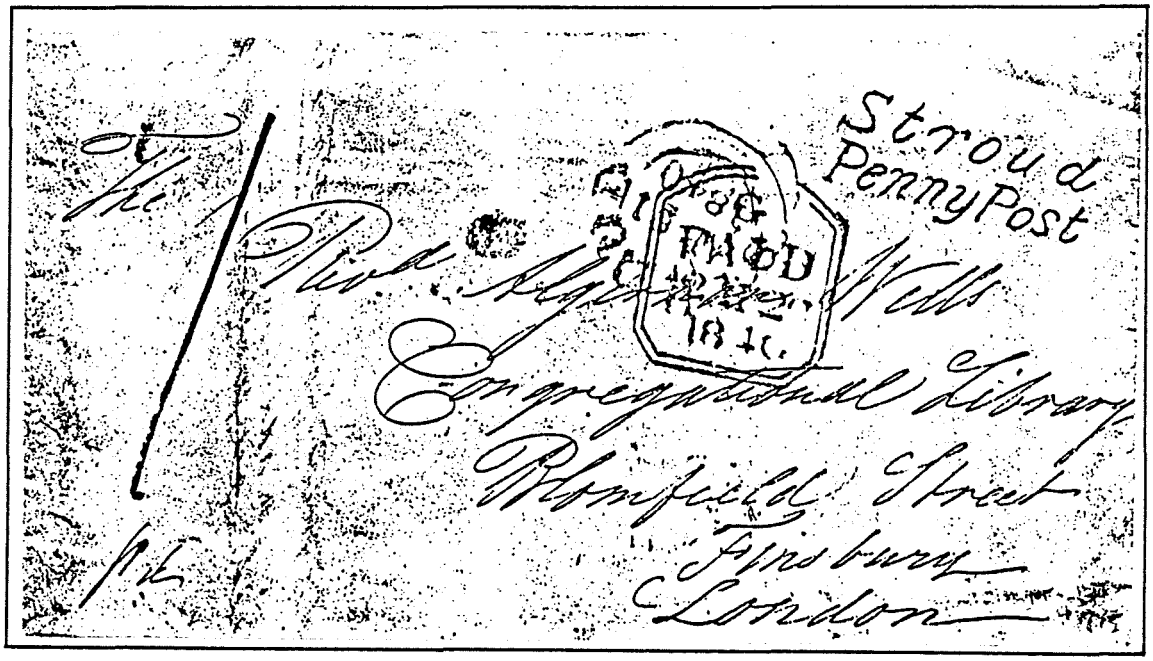


Finally we come to the $64,000 question, which is the rare mark? One really is quite scarce but it would seem a pity to spoil the fun by identifying it. Instead, let's add to the riddle by saying that it is not the one you might expect. Does that help a little ?

(Illustrations of the strikes in the proof books by courtesy of Post Office Archives. Illustrations of the two covers by kind permission of Mike Young.)



THE LAST PENNY POST HANDSTAMPS



The final issue of penny post handstamps, known to collectors as 'Oxley's Type 5' or the 'village type', was made between 1837 and 1841. The need for these stamps has been questioned more than once and the fact that there was hardly time to use some of them before the advent of Uniform Penny Postage (and that others were not even issued until after 6 May 1840) has led to some interesting theories. A minute from the Secretary of the Post Office, Colonel Maberley, to the Postmaster General, the Earl of Lichfield, dated 19th March 1838 provides most of the answers. It may well have been noted by previous researchers but the writer does not recall having seen it reproduced in any book and therefore, by courtesy of Post Office Archives, the complete text is given below.

For the Postmaster General

" My attention has been afforded to the present practice of stamping letters put into the country penny posts and sub-offices. In some few cases the name of the village is put upon the letters at the post town; in other instances the Penny Post Receiving House is denoted by a figure (this mode particularly applies to towns where the penny posts are numerous) and in other cases the name of the post town with the words "Penny Post" are stamped on the letter, the stamp of the town itself being occasionally added.

These various modes are attended with considerable trouble while they do not always accomplish the object of proving the particular receiving house in which a letter was deposited and in such cases the stamp is of

course useless. It occurs to me that the simple course would be to furnish every Receiver with a stamp bearing the name of the place, to be affixed by him to every letter put into his office, and as many letters are not deposited in Receiving Houses but collected by the penny post messenger, each post town to which a penny post is attached should also have a stamp with the name of the town and "penny post" added, without which some of the letters might, in the hours of business, escape the penny post charge. I should then propose to discontinue the use of the present stamps where they do not correspond with those I have recommended and thus introduce a simple and uniform rule on the subject. As many of the post towns are already in possession of stamps with "penny post" attached to them the chief expense would be in furnishing each receiving house with a new one of the description to which I have referred. I think however your Lordship will agree with me that this expense ought not to deter you from adopting a regulation in which both the convenience of the public and of this Office is concerned. I cannot at present state what the amount would be, but if your Lordship favours my proposition, I will proceed to ascertain the number of stamps that will be required and the charge that would be made for them.

I thought it right to consult the Surveyors upon the matter and beg to enclose the reports from which it will be seen they are unanimous in their opinion of the propriety of adopting an uniform plan, and think that which I have suggested will fully meet the object.

In Mr Karstadt's District the experiment on a small scale has in fact been tried by him and completely answered his expectations. "

19th March 1838 W.L.M.

"This proposed arrangement for penny post stamps will be very convenient and may be adopted."

Lichfield

With the exception of the small scale trial (presumeably in 1837) referred to above, it appears that this proposal for a standard penny post procedure allied to standard penny post stamps could not have been put into effect before the middle of 1838 at the earliest and, in view of the scale of the issue needed, it is not surprising that some handstamps were still being sent out in 1840. Furthermore, the stated need for "proving the particular receiving house in which a letter was deposited" did not disappear with the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage and the continuing use of the village penny post handstamps for some years after 1840 seems logical.

Books that may interest you - 7.

Although Ted Heath, who provides most of the information for this feature, naturally looks for books on postal history and postcards, he has kindly offered to provide a regular listing of any books which appeal to members' interests. The editor will forward letters.

PROUD-BAILEY E.B. 'Postmarks of the Date Impression Books Post Office Records, Section 2, Volumes 3 & 4'. 98 pages, reproductions of marks indexed to original volumes by county. £8 + p&p from Proud-Bailey Co Ltd, PO Box 74, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8PY.

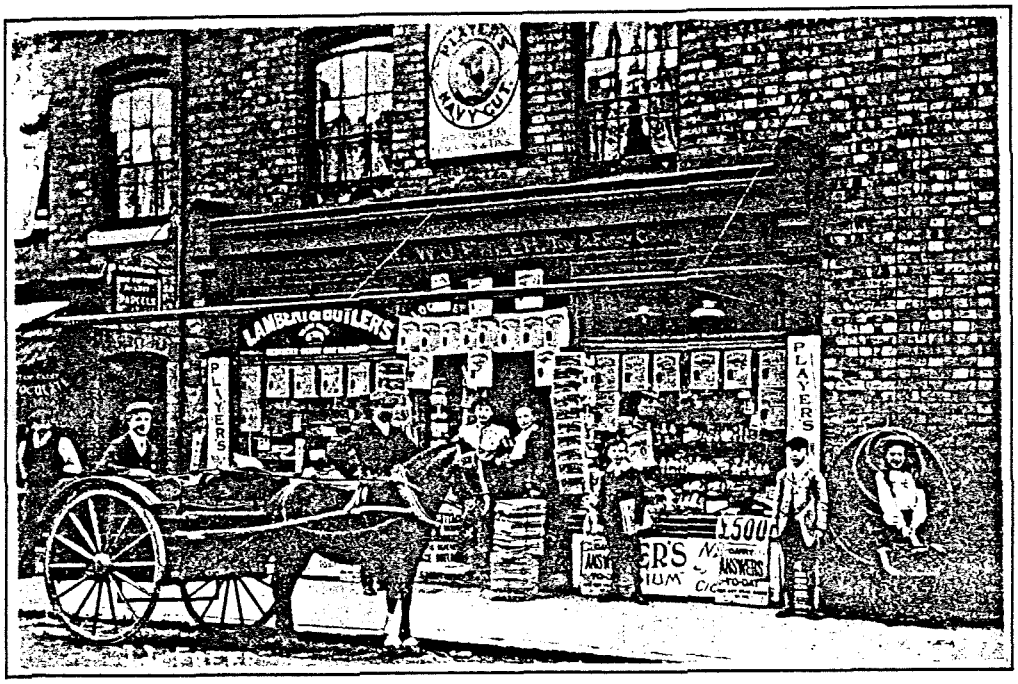
LONDON POSTAL HISTORY GROUP

1. 'District Post Cancellations, 1840-57 - Part 1: Horizontal Ovals'. Feb 82, 2nd edition, 17 pages, illustrated, 90p.
2. 'Inland Branch Cancellations Part1 - Early Experimental Machine Cancels' 1982, 22 pages, illustrated, loose-leaf paperback, £1-20.
3. 'Inland Branch Cancellations Part 2 - Vertical Oval Cancellations'. 1982, 44 pages, illustrated, loose-leaf paperback, £2-40.

(Items 2 & 3 together - £3-50)

Available from The London Postal History Group, 24 Dovercourt Rd, London SE22 8ST.

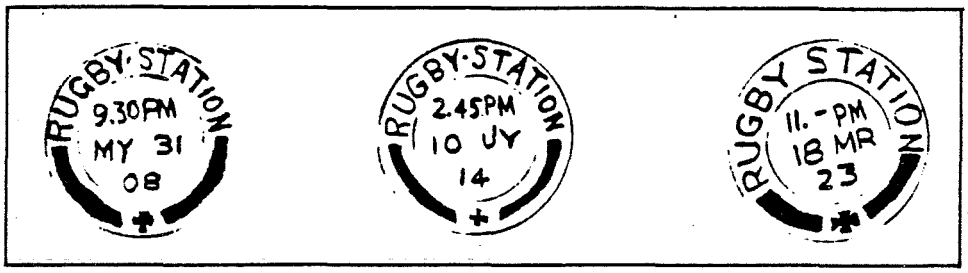
SOWERBY G. and FARMAN R. (Yes, that's our Secretary !) 'Burton upon Trent and District on Old Postcards'. October 1983, 96 pages on art gloss paper, mapcard cover, 150-200 words with each picture, Foreword by Denis Stuart MA Senior Lecturer in History at Keele University. £3-95 + 35p p&p from Richard Farman,124 Henhurst Hill, Burton on Trent, Staffs DE13 9SY. (Hurry, this is a limited print and the book is selling like hot cakes.)



THE RAILWAY POSTMARKS OF RUGBY AND ITS STATIONS - Part Two.

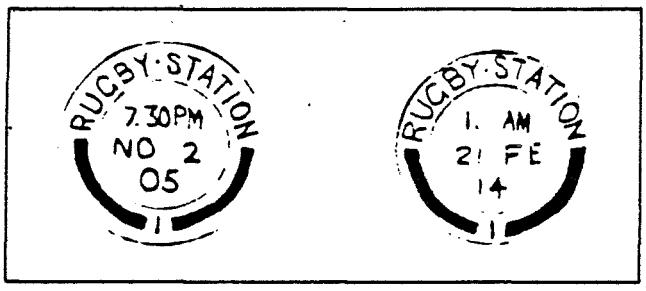
by David Hardwick

By far the most common of the Rugby Station postmarks was the double circle, primarily because its introduction coincided with the upsurge in the use and collection of postcards. This has resulted in considerable quantities becoming available on the philatelic market. These postmarks can be conveniently divided into two types since they appear with either a '+' (type 1) or a 'I' (type 2) at the base of the cancellation.



14. 15. 16.

Type 1 can be further sub-divided into three distinct sub-types. Type 1A (Fig 14) is by far the most common and I have seen it used between September 1905 and July 1909. Where the year is 1905 or 1907, the year numbers appear to be larger than in other years but I do not think this signifies the use of a different handstamp. Type 1B (Fig 15) is similar to type 1A except that the day and the month are reversed so that now the day precedes the month. Finally type 1C (Fig 16) has larger figures and is clearly different. I have seen this mark used only in May 1922 and in March 1923. Before leaving type 1, it is interesting to record that the time of 9.30pm appears on all the examples of type 1A that I have seen (12 copies) whereas a variety of times are shown on later issues.

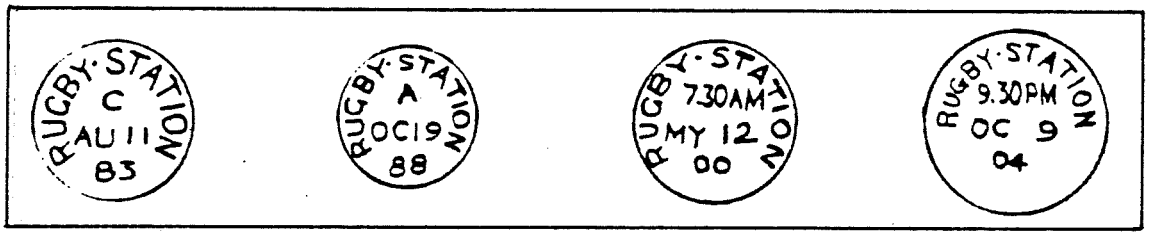


17. 18.

Type 2, which seems to have been more widely used than type 1, has only two variations. In type 2A (Fig 17) the month precedes the day whereas in type 2B (Fig 18) they are reversed. The outer circle of type 2A is also slightly larger with a diameter of 27mm as opposed to 26mm in type 2B.

Type 2A was used between April 1905 and April 1911 and during 1906 the year digits were smaller than in other years although probably the same handstamp was used. Type 2B seems to be much more scarce as I have seen only those dated October 1909 and February 1914.

The above postmarks were all used to cancel stamps. However, the single circle postmarks which were in use during the whole of the above period were used primarily as transit marks. These can be broken down into four main types. Type 1 (Fig 19) was issued on 11 August 1883 and was 21mm in diameter with largish lettering and the time represented by a single alpha code. This continued in use until at least March 1886 (the last date I have seen) and appears to have been replaced by type 2 (Fig 20) which is only 19mm in diameter, has smaller lettering and was used between July 1887 and January 1895. This, in its turn, was replaced by type 3 (Fig 21) when the diameter was increased to 21mm, the time code changed to a twelve hour clock with am or pm added and the smaller lettering retained. This I have seen used in September 1896 and May 1900.



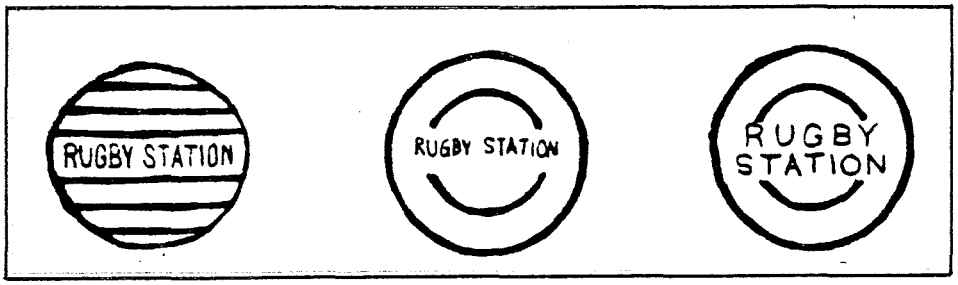
19. 20. 21. 22.

Finally, a 24mm diameter postmark (type 4, Fig 22) appears in which the lettering occupies the top half of the circle only. This one I have recorded as having been used on one occasion only, 9.30pm on 9 October 1904 when it cancelled a stamp - the only occasion I have seen where a single circle postmark was not used as a transit mark. On 25 August 1909, the Post Office Archives record the issue of an almost exactly similar handstamp, presumeably as a replacement.

D.P.Gowen, in his book on Railway Station Postmarks, records the use of a metal 'skeleton' Rugby Station postmark on 10 February 1919 but I have not come across this one myself.

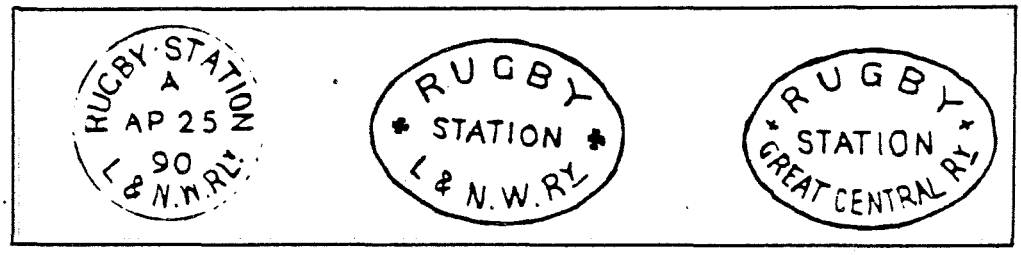
A section of Rugby Station postmarks which are very difficult to find used genuinely are the rubber parcel post handstamps. I have seen only three examples on stamps, none of which was complete. Consequently the following section has been compiled from the records kept in Post Office Archives.

The first rubber handstamp (type 1, Fig 23) was issued on 30 July 1888 and was an oval with three parallel horizontal lines both above and below the wording 'Rugby Station'. There was no date on the handstamp, a



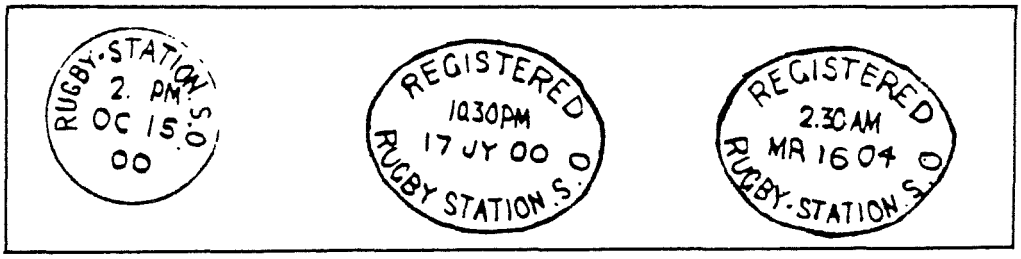
23. 24. 25.

peculiarity common to all the parcel post stamps. This was followed in 1890 by a double circle handstamp in which the inner circle was broken by a single line RUGBY STATION (type 2, Fig 24). Finally, in 1892, came a double circle handstamp in which RUGBY STATION appeared as two lines (type 3, Fig 25). Handstamps similar to this were also issued in 1899 and 1903, presumeably replacements for the old ones as they wore out.



26. 27. 28.

Another series of handstamps which were issued by the post office are those in which the initials of the railway company are included. The first of these was issued in 1890 and is a single circle with the description 'RUGBY STATION L & N.W.RLY'together with the date (Fig 26). I have seen this used on 21 September 1907 but on a document, not on a letter or card that was postally used. In 1900, two further handstamps were issued, both oval, and neither recorded the date. One was for the L & N.W.RY (Fig 27) and the other for the GREAT CENTRAL RY (Fig 28). This latter handstamp was, I believe, the only postal handstamp issued to the Great Central Railway Station in Rugby.



29. 30. 31.

Finally we come to a series of handstamps, all of which bore the designation RUGBY STATION S.O. being Sorting Office handstamps. These start with a single circle (type 1, Fig 29) which was recorded by Gowen in

July 1900 and I have seen this used until February 1909. There are two oval registered marks. Type 2A (Fig 30) has the day before the month and has been recorded as a transit mark only, whereas type 2B (Fig 31) has the day and month reversed and, in the only example I have seen, was used on 16 March 1904 to cancel the stamps on a registered letter. I have seen type 2A used in July 1900, May 1917 and December 1923. The last sorting office postmarks are double circle handstamps recorded by Gowen. The first (type 3A) has wording 'RUGBY STN S.O. WARWICKSHIRE' and was recorded used on 20 August 1929 whilst the second (type 3B) has wording 'RUGBY STN S.O. WKS.' and was used between September 1930 and November 1934.

This brings us neatly to the end of Rugby Station and its postmarks since it was in 1934 that a new head post office was built in North Street and the old sorting office opposite the station in Murray Road was closed.

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(N.B. Having read David Hardwick's most interesting article in its entirety; do any members wish to comment on the sub-types where the day and the month are interchanged ?)

STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY of GREAT BRITAIN 1660-1982

Learned Members of the Midland Postal History Society may perhaps raise their eyebrows at the prospect of a small firm offering postal history and stamps over such a long period as some 300 years and being so broad as to include not only usual town and county material but also more specialised subjects such as Maritime, Railway & Military postal history to the specialised shades of Ed. VII stamps. Certainly no-one can be a specialist in all such fields but this will have two advantages to the collector (i) for the general collector a wide spectrum is offered in a single list & (ii) the specialist will spot the rare and the obscure which we have missed and as sales are at fixed prices will still be able to pick up a bargain. Send for a post free list to:

NES NEW ENTERPRISE STAMPS NES
P.O. Box 10, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6FJ

Our Advertisers

Brief mention was made in the last issue of the support we have received from our two member-advertisers, Michael Jackson and Roger Hudson. To these we can now add Janet Miles of New Enterprise Stamps who recently received an exemplary write-up from Hunter Davies in the September No.2 issue of 'Stamp & Postal History News'. It is convenient that our three advertisers have significantly different modus operandi and therefore

complement rather than compete directly with each other. Please give them your custom - they deserve no less.

Late Use of the Double Arc CDS & UDC

No improvement on the latest known date for a double arc CDS (December 1865) has been reported but the editor has received the following note from Eric and Elizabeth Lewis:

"..... we thought it was common knowledge that undated circle handstamps were still in use at some receiving houses well into the first few months of 1860. We were even more surprised that our editor failed to recollect that we included an 1860 date in the list of Birmingham undated circles published in Bulletin No.22 of November 1981. "

The editor will take his punishment like a man but, in defence of the second point, doubts that the 1860 date referred to above was of a double arc UDC. However, Eric and Elizabeth have proved their point by quoting, without even searching for late dates, Kings Heath on 30 November 1859 and Harborne-Heath on 14 February 1860.

Meanwhile, Peter Baxter has had the initiative to look back through Roger Hudson's excellent sales lists and has found:

Hatfield 8 December 1859
Crick 27 February 1860
Nocton 10 March 1860

As Peter is not on the phone, the editor cannot check with him whether these marks are definitely double arc UDCs. Do YOU have any 1860 dates ?

County Editors

Information about undated circular marks or anything else should be passed to the Society's County Editors, a list of whom was given in issue No.30. Will members please note that Mr Peter Sharp has now taken over from Mr Chester as the Warwickshire County Editor.

The Parcel Delivery Companies

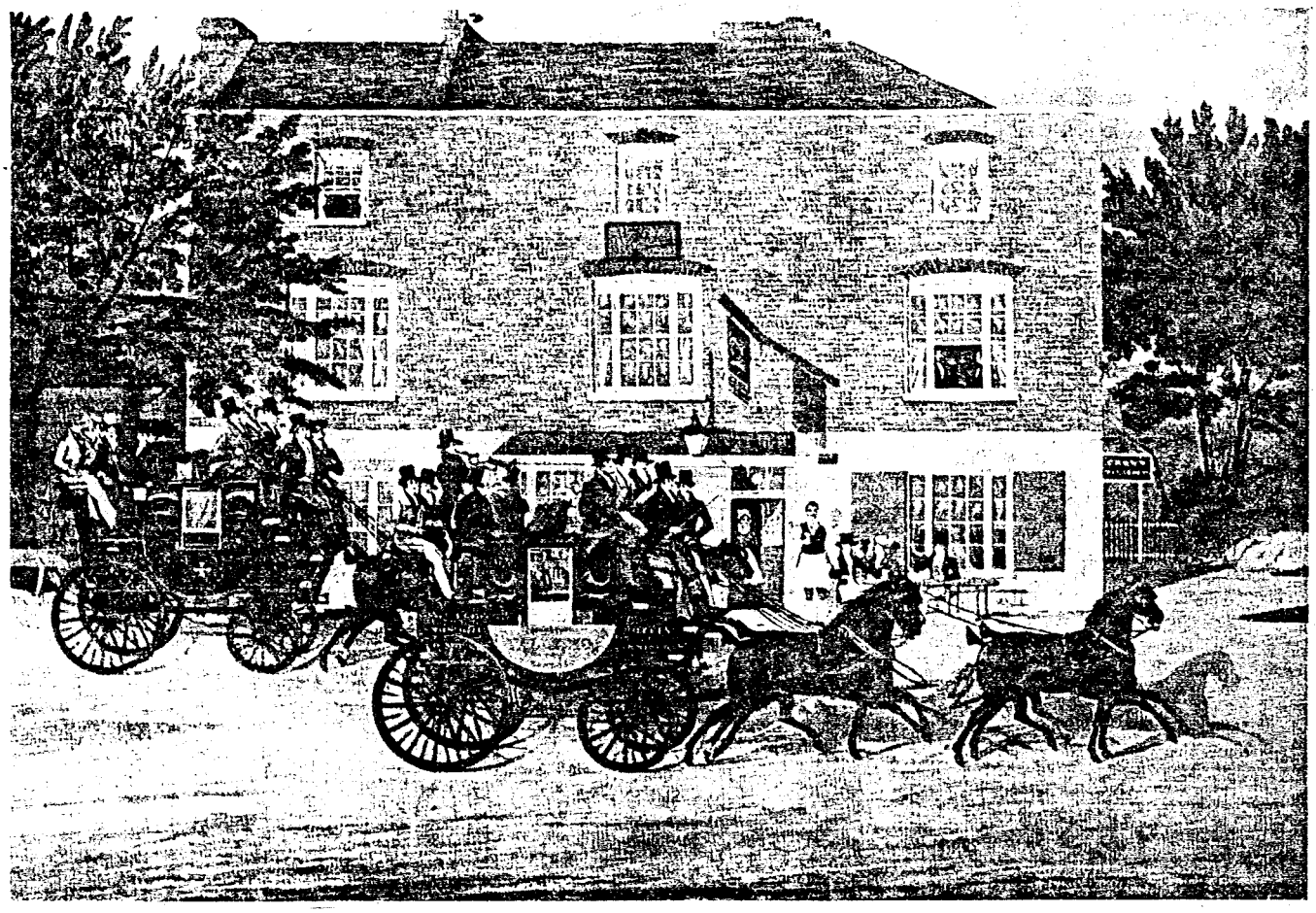
One of our members has already provided Robson Lowe with valuable information on this topic (see Bulletin No.31). Can you spare a little of your time to help ?

Requests for help are arriving with some regularity. Are they a fair imposition on members' time ? If you hold strong views on this somewhat controversial topic, the Bulletin would like to hear of them.

Tailpiece

This is the last issue before Christmas. The Chairman and Committee hope to be among the first to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

We haven't a genuine Victorian Christmas card to show you this year but a scene that might well have graced such a card.



The Birmingham 'Tally Ho!' coaches passing The Crown at Holloway.

The Next Bulletin

The next Bulletin will appear at the very beginning of January and members may find it convenient to be reminded now that we have a meeting on Saturday 7th January at which two excellent displays have been promised. In the next issue, look out for the first part of Denis Salt's history of 'The Shrewsbury Local Posts', another 'Visit to Post Office Archives' and a unique contribution from our "farthest-flung' member. There is contemporary comment on 18th century Innkeepers as Postmasters and the usual reports and news. There's more in the 'Midland Mail' - much more !