MIDLAND MAIL

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDLAND (GB) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Number 152, November 2007

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

We pay our annual visit to the Coors Visitor Centre in **Burton-on-Trent** on **8th December**. From **10.30am** there will be standing displays by members on the theme of "*Post Boxes*". At **2pm** Avice Harms will give a talk on "*The History of the Post Box*". Lunch will be held at **12.30pm,** and if you would like to join us for lunch please ring Richard Farman (01283 566515) by 1st December.

On **12th January 2008** our meeting will be held at **Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham**. Brian Jones will display "*The Postal History of Stratford-on-Avon*", beginning at **1.30pm**.

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

The following books have been added to the library:

"*Collecting British Squared Circle Postmarks*" - the Second Edition which comes in two volumes: Volume 1 - The Provincial Offices, Volume 2 - The London Offices.
"*Royal Mail Coaches - An Illustrated History*" by Frederick Wilkinson. (See the review in MM150/13).

The above books plus all others in the library are available on loan from our librarian - Eric Lewis (0121 429 1222).

THE ANNUAL AUCTION

This will be held on 26th April 2008, starting at 1.30 p.m. In order to distribute the catalogues in good time, particularly to our overseas members, it is necessary that lots are handed to Eric preferably at the meeting on 12th January but by the latest at the meeting on 16th February. Alternatively, they may be sent to Mrs E Lewis at 27 Rathbone Road, Smethwick B67 5JG by 16th February. Please give full descriptions together with estimated market values and your reserve price.

Please note that there will be a **minimum reserve price of £3.** Also the increments in the bidding will now be: up to £10 - 50p; from £10 to £20 - £1; from £20 to £50 - £2; from £50 to £100 - £5; over £100 - £10.

A gift of surplus material that you may care give to sell for Society funds would be much appreciated. The money raised by the auction not only gives us an opportunity to dispose of surplus material or to acquire items for our collections, but also raises a valuable amount of money, so keeping subscriptions down.

JOHN PHILLIPS

We regret to announce the death on 5th November of John Phillips of Harborne. John who was 70 collected Birmingham material. We send our sincere condolences to his sister, Margaret

MICHAEL CHAMPNESS – An Appreciation

I first met Mike Champness in 1971. In those days I was a collector of line engraved stamps, with only the first stirrings of an interest in postal history, and working in one or other of the several Ministry of Defence buildings in Whitehall. Any spare time in the middle of day, supposed to be devoted to a quick lunch, was spent either in the late lamented Strand Stamp Centre or frequently in the Maiden Lane office of John H. Lobo, a gentleman dealer of the old school. There, perched on a high stool, one could spend thirty profitable minutes delving into ancient albums of 1d red 'stars'.

The visitors to Maiden Lane were invariably of interest. They included Dr W.R.D.Wiggins, a consultant anaesthetist, who could be depended upon to plate a penny 'star' on sight in the street and whose 'Postage Stamps of Great Britain – The Perforated Line-Engraved Issues' became the standard work. There was an itinerant stamp dealer of no fixed abode, a youthful Michael Jackson, and a customer who never gave the adhesive stamps more than a glance but asked to see the stamps on cover – and then devoted his full attention to the back of the envelope! John Lobo explained to me that this gentleman's interest was in the postmarks applied at the village post offices and encompassed the entire British Isles. I was shown an example of an undated circular handstamp and it crossed my mind there were advantages in having a collecting field to oneself. Unplated 1d 'stars' on cover, particularly without an unusual cancel, could be bought for peanuts. In due course, I was introduced to Mike Champness.

Needless, to say, there was no systematic definition of undated handstamp types at that time. Two years after I met him, in 1973, Mike was challenged by the London Postal History Group to produce a classification system. By then, he was able to use his extensive collection to devise the system we know today. There were always those who blamed him for calling the larger double arc UDCs type 'C2' and the smaller UDCs 'C1", when the former preceded the latter. However, Mike's classification system was never intended to be chronological. The fact that the system remains in use, after more then thirty years, suggests it was well-considered.

Our society was formed in 1975 and it was September 1982 when a meeting invited members to show 9 sheets of undated circular marks. The indefatigable Steph Stobbs, our late Shropshire County Editor, had, by that time, accumulated every Shropshire UDC he could lay his hands on, so much so that his collection was regarded as an authoritative list of the UDCs of the county. However, at the same time, we had, by chance, been offered the loan by the then Post Office Records, of photocopies of the Steel Impression Books and the Society was able to embark on a more complete listing, as John Soer had already made for Leicestershire. (Even Steph was surprised to see what had been issued but evaded him.) It was inevitable we would ask Mike Champness if we could use his classification system for our list.

Assuming that, by then, someone would have produced a comprehensive and authoritative article on the subject, we set out to write an Introduction to what we had decided would become the Society's first publication, 'The Undated Circular Marks of the Midland Counties'. Finding that no such article existed, we had to draft our own Introduction. To whom could we turn to vet our draft, comment on it and add to it? Again, inevitably, it was Mike Champness and it is to Mike that we owe its accuracy and authenticity. He joined the Society and was quite disconcerted when he discovered that, in thanking those *outside* the Society who had helped us with the book, his name had been included!

Of course, it went further than that. Anyone who had the privilege of visiting Mike's home in Northamptonshire knew what a treat lay in store. We merely wanted to add all the usage dates from his vast collection of UDCs to our growing usage list but, in his house, we could have asked to see an album of almost any aspect of postal history one cared to mention and he would have produced it. In 1996, Michael Champness and David Trapnell wrote the standard work on Adhesive Wafer Seals, which they described as "a transient Victorian phenomenon". Who but someone who perused the back of envelopes so carefully would ever have thought them significant and made a collection?

After the loss of his wife, Mike moved from Northamptonshire to Cornwall and, eventually, the sale of his collections at Cavendish attracted widespread attention, not least from our own members. As he became frailer, he moved into a residential home. However, in September 2003, Mike appeared at the meeting at Northampton arranged by Derek Smeathers, the last occasion most of us will have seen him. Even then, he was able to show the scope of his remaining collections with penny blacks on cover, relevant railway material and not a few delicious wafer seals for good measure.

Between 1974 and 1981, Mike edited 'The British Mailcoach', the bulletin of the Great Britain Group of the Postal History Society, writing many of the articles himself. As a source of information on British postal history, its only rival has been our own 'Midland Mail'. That the Postal History Society killed off the GB Group (and 'Mailcoach'), on the supposed grounds of its unsupportable cost, has remained a sore point for a number of its older members and no body has yet adequately replaced it. The twenty nine issues of 'The British Mailcoach' remain an invaluable reference source on so many topics. Mike documented 'The End of the Mileage Mark', 'Coloured Postmarks 1840-1860' and 'The End of the Secret Office', to give three random examples of the diversity of his knowledge and interests, at a time when few of us had an inkling of their significance. We have lost one of the most important contributors to our knowledge of British postal history and someone whose interests were, thankfully, never diverted to foreign fields. Mike knew there was still more than enough to discover at home to last a man a lifetime.

WJC

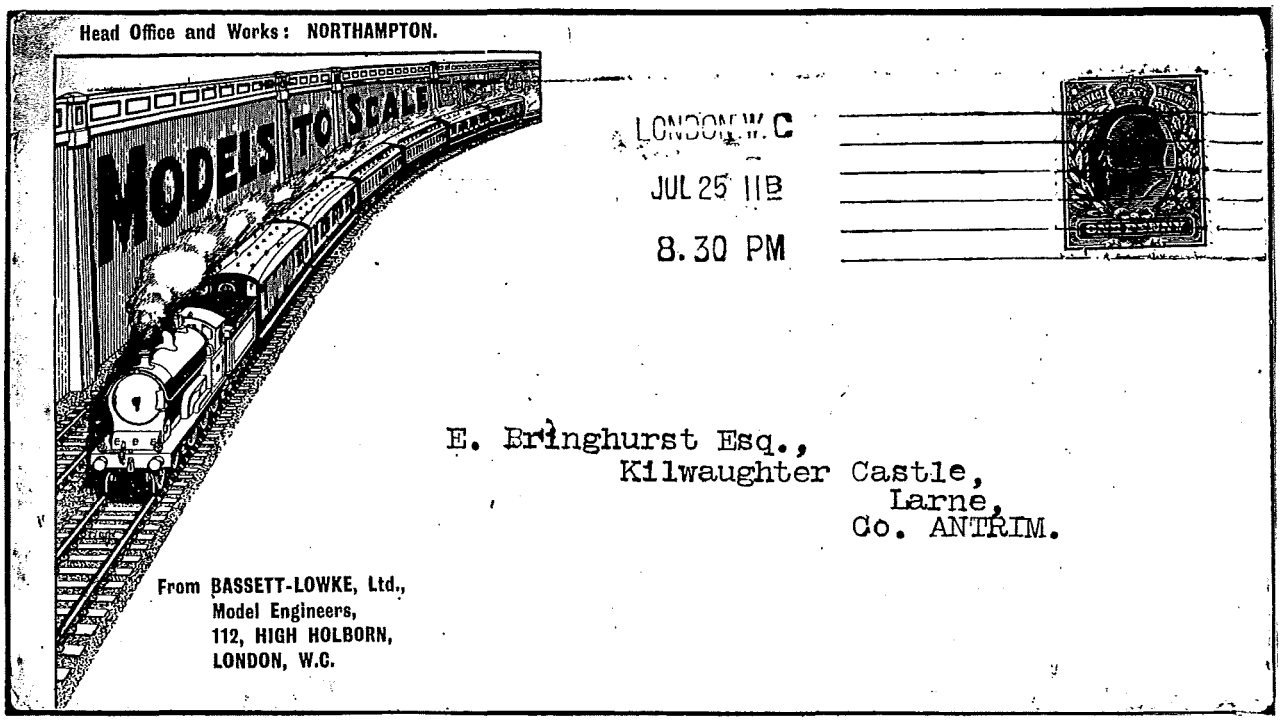
A FURTHER APPRECIATION OF MICHAEL CHAMPNESS

Some of our members were regular supporters of the now-defunct Northamptonshire Postal History Group, and will have been particularly saddened to hear of the death of Mike Champness. His early years of postal history were in London and Essex, but when we learned he was coming to live just up the road from Northampton I think we all knew we were in for the best postal history years of our lives! And so it turned out. He immediately put his home on offer for meetings; his vast library was explored; hundreds of sheets of mouth-watering covers and ephemera appeared for our delectation - not to mention things like letter seals, ink wells, postal scales and so on... We had never had it so good! But best of all was Mike himself - a true fount of knowledge - who was always welcoming, always ready to help us new boys, and never flinching when we got it wrong! A great gentleman who gave us some great years. Thanks, Mike.

DS

A BASSETT-LOWKE ADVERTISING COVER

The cover illustrated below was one that Eric Lewis showed at the October meeting. I am indebted to Eric for permission to reproduce this.



THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

The first meeting of the new season this year, on 15th September, took the form of a joint meeting with the Birmingham Philatelic Society at St Germain's Church. There was an excellent attendance of thirty, eight of whom were members of both societies. There was a variety of material on display in the morning, ranging from Specimens of line-engraved stamps to birds on Japanese stamps.

Before I give a report of the main display, I must congratulate Sharon and her helpers on providing an excellent lunch which was very much enjoyed by all those present.

Members of our Society have learned to await any display by Eric Lewis with great anticipation, knowing that they are going to see material that is entertaining, informative and above all eclectic. Those present on 15th September were not disappointed. Eric began his display "*Wrapping, String and Sealing Wax*" with a Venetian merchant's letter of 1403 to which the string was still attached. This was followed by letters of 1458 and 1459 both of which had been sent to Venice. A letter of 1514 showed the wafer seal of the Cardinal Archbishop of Padua , while another had feathers incorporated into the wax seal to show that express delivery was required.

Eric then showed us items illustrating the use of sealing wax, beginning with some examples of sealing wax kits from the Georgian and Victorian eras. These contained sealing wax (in one instance green in colour), a spirit lamp and a seal. A letter sent in 1833 by a Mary Atkinson bore a seal in black wax into which was impressed quite clearly the name 'Mary'. We also saw letters with the seals of the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the Welsh Midland Railway Company, the Ludlow postmaster, and "Better late than never" on a letter which was a reminder that a payment had not been made.

The next section of Eric's display was devoted to wafer seals, beginning with wax wafer seals. One cover had these in four different colours. Eric then moved on to paper wafer seals some of which were in the form of imitation wax wafer seals. We saw examples from a variety of Midland towns.. Eric explained that these seals went out of favour in the 1860s on the introduction of gum on the flaps of envelopes. However, envelopes with a crest on the flap then became fashionable. We saw a great variety of these, including one of a letter sent in 1898 by the Channel Tunnel Company Ltd.

Parcel post items were next on the menu. Not, as might have been expected, with material solely post-1883, for Eric began with a printed bill of a Shrewsbury carrier dated 1790. This was followed by an invoice from 1820 for 39 yards of carpet sent from London to Worcester by Jolly's Worcester & Hereford Wagon, and for which the carriage was 2s/9d. Next, came some wrapping on a lot which Eric had received from a stamp auction company, but which had originally been the wrapping on a parcel sent on 21st October 1794, and had been endorsed 'Parcel to pay 6d'. A copy of the London Gazette from 1684 reported that the Kettering carrier had been fined £380 for 'collecting and conveying letters'. We saw letters sent by carrier in 1822 and 1841 where there was no reference to an accompanying parcel. A vicar sent £1 to the Post Office in 1815 in compensation for illegally sending letters in parcels. Eric showed us the letter from Freeling which accompanied the money which was returned to the clergy man. The final item in the first half of the display was a refund of a postal charge of £16.12.0 levied on a parcel from Portugal which had incorrectly been put into the post at Falmouth.

Eric began the second half with more parcel post material - wrappers on which the actual coach was named followed by material relating to parcel delivery companies.

Then came a wide range of material relating to the Post Office Parcel Post in which a 1st type of Parcels Post label used at Ross within the first month of service was of particular note.. We saw various caricatures from publications such as 'Punch'. In one the P.M.G. (Fawcett) was flying through the air carried along by parcels. Among various items of ephemera were a Mauchlineware rule showing the first parcels post rates, a Victorian money box in the form of a parcel, and a tape measure for measuring parcels on the back of which was indicated the maximum width etc. Of particular interest were a number of private Parcel Post labels used by firms such as Cadburys, Marshall & Snelgrove, Theobald & Co, Selfridges (whose store contained a sub-office), and Whittington Barracks.

We saw a number of letters containing references to letters carried by sea and canal.. Then came a section on redirected parcels. A label from Acock's Green carried an endorsement that there was a 6d re-direction fee to be paid. Parcels sent to the forces were represented by one sent to a POW which carried a censor's label and a Guildford Parcel Post Label of December 1914 with a '0' against the post charge. The last part of Eric's display was on the Cash on Delivery system and began with a page from the Illustrated London News reporting its introduction in 1903. We saw items from the Foreign & Colonial System including the various versions of a booklet detailing the regulations.

THE OCTOBER MEETING

The topic for our meeting at Warwick on 13th October was "*The letter A,B or C*". To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the use of the 'Machin Head' on stamps, Mel Matthews began the proceedings with a display on the work of Arnold Machin. Mel outlined the career of Arnold Machin with copies of examples of his work as well as presentation packs of the stamps.

Material from Andoversford formed the greater part of Colin Fountain's display. We saw the mileage removed mark used in 1832, the cds used on 28th March 1840 (with no '4' in the year). In 1842 Andoversford became subordinate to Cheltenham and so the cds was then used as a UDC. Colin also showed us examples of the barred numeral (572) and the squared circle.

Mick Gill took us to the other side of the Midlands with covers from Lincolnshire villages which had been served from Newark. We saw UDCs from Bassingham, Beckingham, Brant Broughton. The last village used a skeleton in January 1922. Another skeleton was used at Claypole in September 1910. We also saw a rubber from Carlton-le-Moorland used on an 'anonymous' registration label.

Bingham material was shown by Alan Marshall. A letter of 1795 from the vicar of Orston carried the straight-line mark. In this letter the stated that he had five sons and three daughters between 3 and 15 years as well as a wife in "a very precarious and often dangerous state of health. The very unusual mark 'BInGHAM' was to be seen on a letter of 1809. Bingham used handstamps made up from a fixed 'BINGHAM' along with the date in loose type. Alan showed us examples such as 'BINGHAM. De * 10' from 1835 and 'BINGHAM. Sep 26' used in 1840. This was followed by examples of the barred numeral 584 and the later 656. Alan finished with the earliest and latest dates of a skeleton used in 1906.

Eric Lewis produced items using all three letters. These included A letter from Brecknock to Cardiff, Anne Bagot's Communication (to her husband in the early 1600s), A Birmingham Chandelier (January 1773), Airmail Before Coaching - Eric's description of a letter of 1775 with a straight-line mark 'AIR' of Ayr, and finally an Advert for Bassett -Lowke on Cover.

The Shrewsbury TSO of Abbey Foregate was Guy Bridges' chosen topic. Guy showed us photographs of the various sites that this sub-office had occupied as well as copies of the UDC in black, green and blue inks, a parcel post label and an impression from 1860 of the mailbag seal.

Malcolm Allinson chose to show Bishopmarks, beginning with an example from January 1662 which was followed by three other examples from within the first few years (1663, 1664 and 1667) of that postmark. An Edinburgh bishopmark of 1723 was struck in red ink. Rather unusual was the bishop mark of New York which had no dividing line between the day and the month. This we saw on a letter sent from Dunbar to New York.

Alan Godfrey displayed a number of UDCs from Warwickshire. We saw examples from Aulcester, Allesley (a Cresswell type), Atherstone, Bidford, Bishop's Tachbrook, Brailes and Coughton.

In 1898 six Boston single impression cancelling machines were ordered for trial in London between 30th August and 30th September 1898.Material from this trial was shown by Martin Scroggs.. We saw examples in which the year was split by a star, numbers in the bars as well as various machine numbers. In 1899 two further machines were ordered for trial in Liverpool. Cancellations from these machines are scarce but Martin was able to show us examples.

A British Concentration Camp was the title of Derek Smeathers' display. Eastcote House near Patishall in Northamptonshire was used up to May 1915 for the internment of German prisoners of war. Derek showed us a number of postcards of the camp as well as letters carrying censor marks.

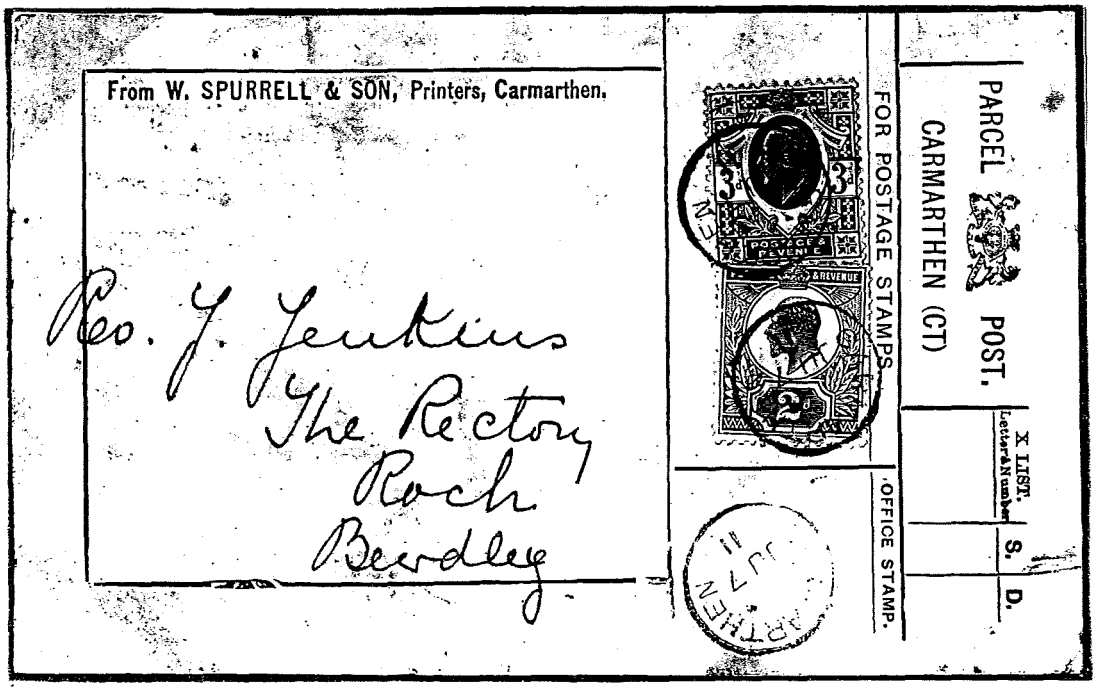
John Calladine displayed the mileage marks of Cirencester. John outlined the history of the posts to Cirencester and commented that the mileage direct from London was 91, but, as he showed us, the distances shown in the mileage marks were 92, 93 and 94 miles. He also showed that the postmaster did not do a very good job in erasing the mileage when producing the 'mileage removed' mark

Some members had brought along a second display. Colin Fountain also showed mileage marks of Cirencester; Mick Gill produced a superb display of Penny Blacks (with some very early dates) and Twopenny Blues; Alan Marshall showed us Censor Marks while Eric Lewis rounded off the afternoon with material from the Cross Post.

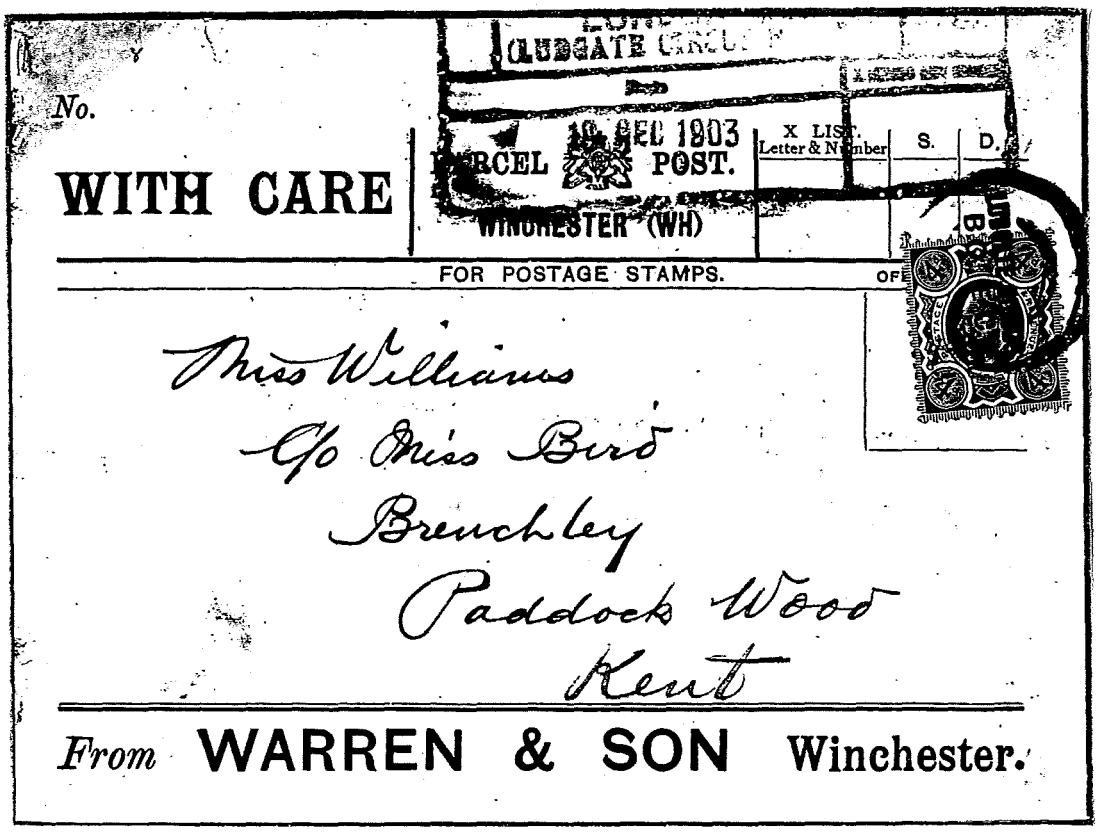
PRIVATELY PRINTED PARCEL POST LABELS

The items illustrated on the following two pages are from Eric's display in September. I would like to thank him very much for providing these illustrations. James Mackay in his book on parcel post records only five firms known to him as having used privately printed labels which incorporated their name and a design similar to that of a P.O. label but usually with a larger coat of arms. Those on this page were not known to him at the time.

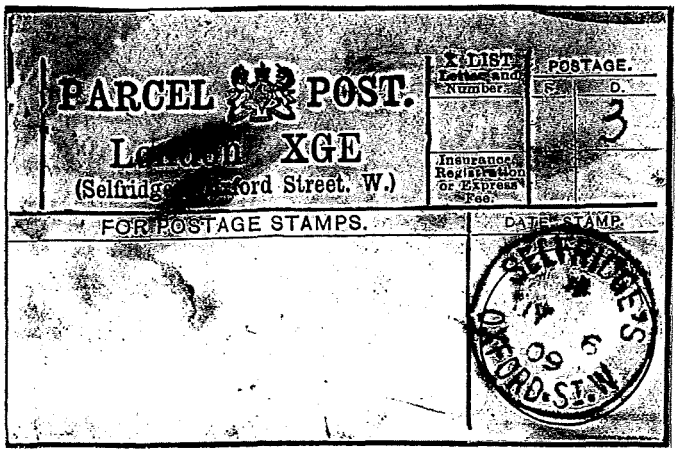
W. SPURRELL & SON, PRINTERS OF CARMARTHEN
Used on 7th June 1911



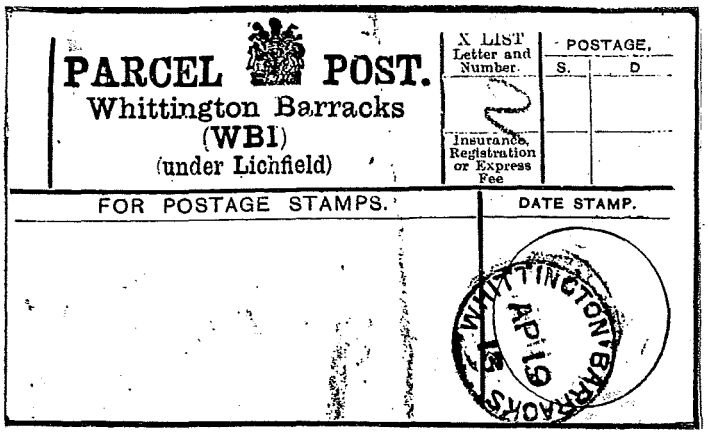
WARREN & SON, WINCHESTER
Used on 18th December at the Ludgate Circus sub-office



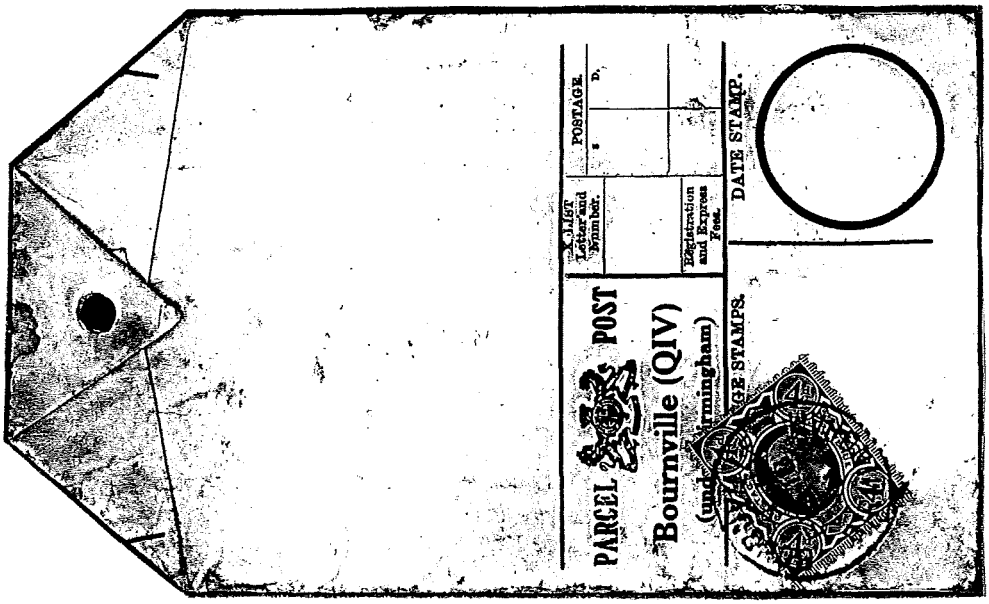
SELFRIDGE'S, OXFORD STREET



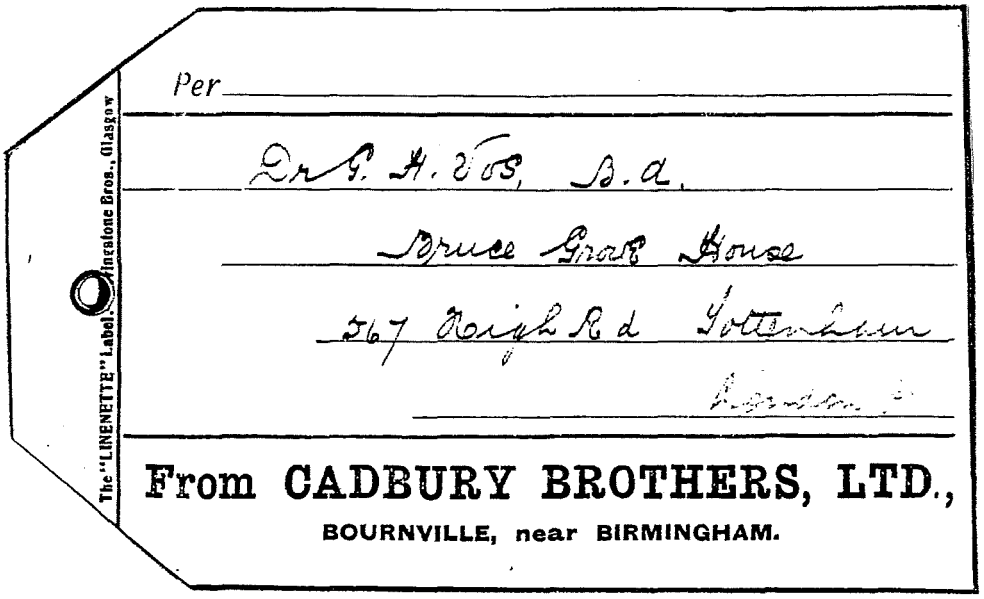
WHITTINGTON BARRACKS



CADBURY BROTHERS, LTD



Reverse side of the label



A WORN BIRMINGHAM UNDATED CIRCLE AND A POSSIBLE UNRECORDED RECUT

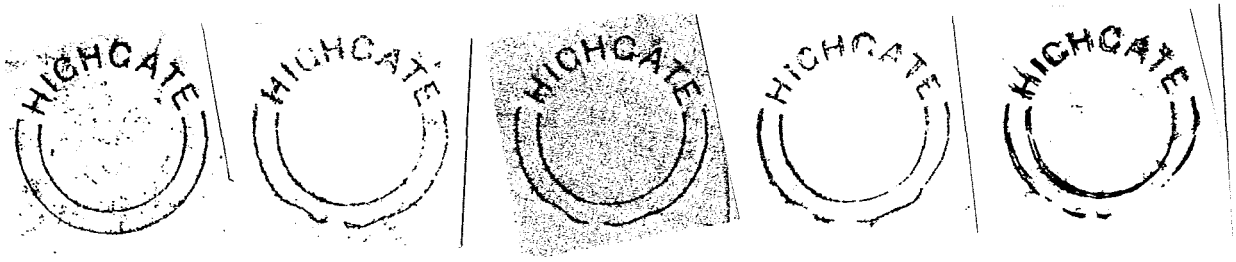
by Elizabeth and Eric Lewis

While we were gathering information to produce the updated listing of Birmingham's UDCs, our member Ian Baker submitted photocopies of apparent progressive wear to the base of the Highgate type C1 handstamp on three covers dating from 1851 to 1856. Comparison with the two examples in our collection revealed that when the handstamp was first used there was no sign of wear, but by 1858 the stamp had worn rather more than on Ian's 1856 cover. Also it was now showing appreciable wear to the lettering as well as to the arcs at the base, even allowing for the fact that our 1858 example is a slightly overlapping double strike. The illustrations show the progressive development over the years of this, comparatively speaking, common UDC handstamp.

Ian also drew our attention to a possible recut of the Hockley Heath type C1 undated circle. Ian pointed out that later usages are slightly smaller in diameter, and closer examination reveals that the 'E' in 'HEATH' has the centre stroke positioned much higher. Examination of our two examples confirmed his observations but we cannot find any record of the issue of a recut stamp in the Steel Impression Books. The original format and the probable recut are illustrated. The first shows the original state of the handstamp on one of our covers dated 2nd April 1852 and the possible recut is shown on another of our covers dated 15th July 1857. Ian states that he has an example of the possible recut dated 2nd October 1852 which is only six months after the stamp was issued in March 1852.

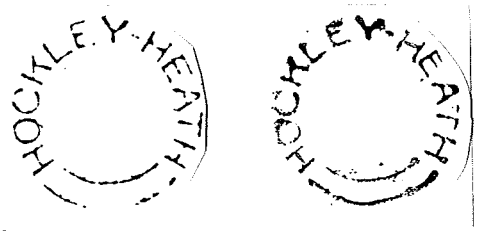
Our thanks are expressed to Ian for drawing our attention to these two items.

Strikes of the 'HIGHGATE' UDC



13/6/1847 10/4/1851 14/6/1852 6/4/1856 18/4/1858

'HOCKLEY-HEATH' UDC



SOME NUMERAL HANDSTAMPS OF COALVILLE

In 1885 the Leicestershire town of Coalville was issued with a duplex mark with H43 in the obliterator. Then in 1913 and 1920 the town was issued with a number of surcharge marks one of which is shown in fig. 1. By the 1924 list the number for Coalville had been changed to 196 as shown in fig. 2. A recent acquisition was card which had been cancelled by a triangular mark containing the number 196 - fig. 3

fig.1

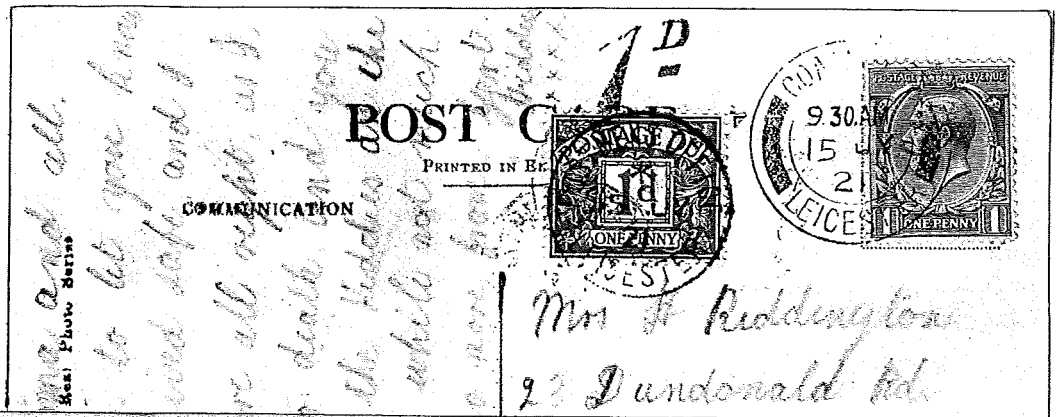


fig. 2

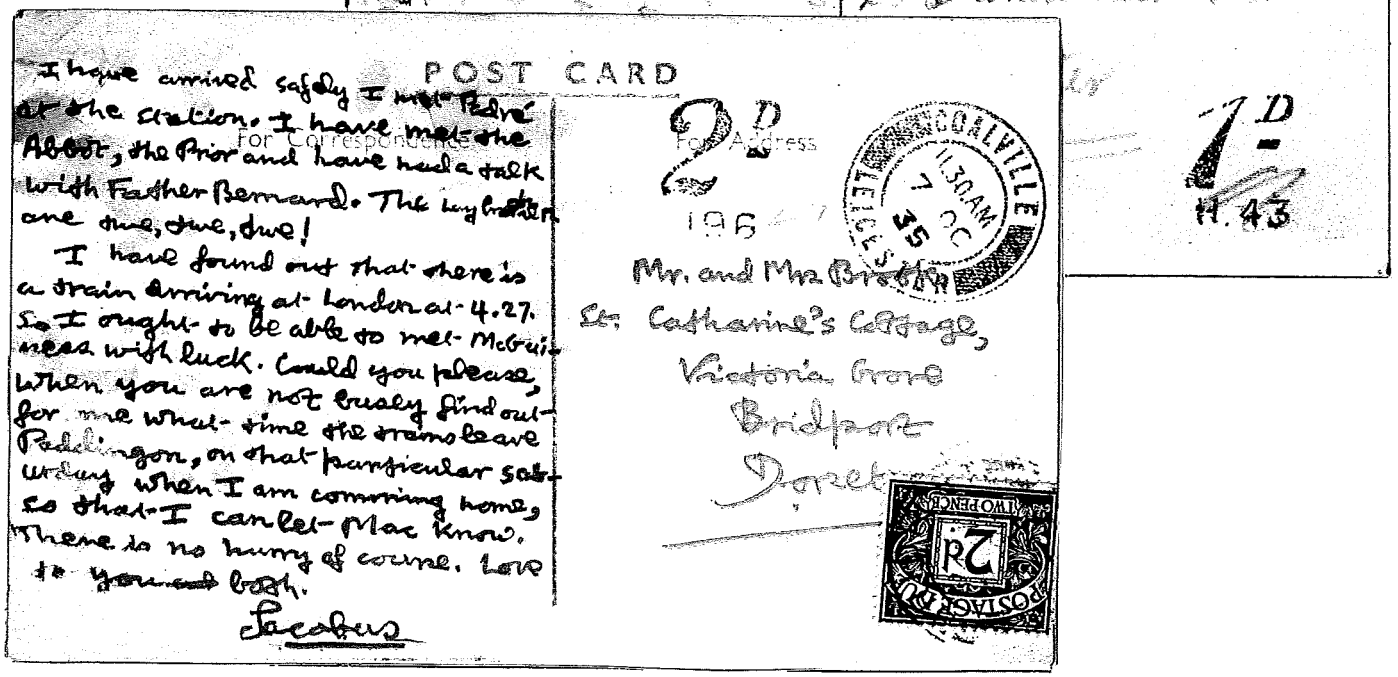


fig. 3



A DAVENTRY COVER

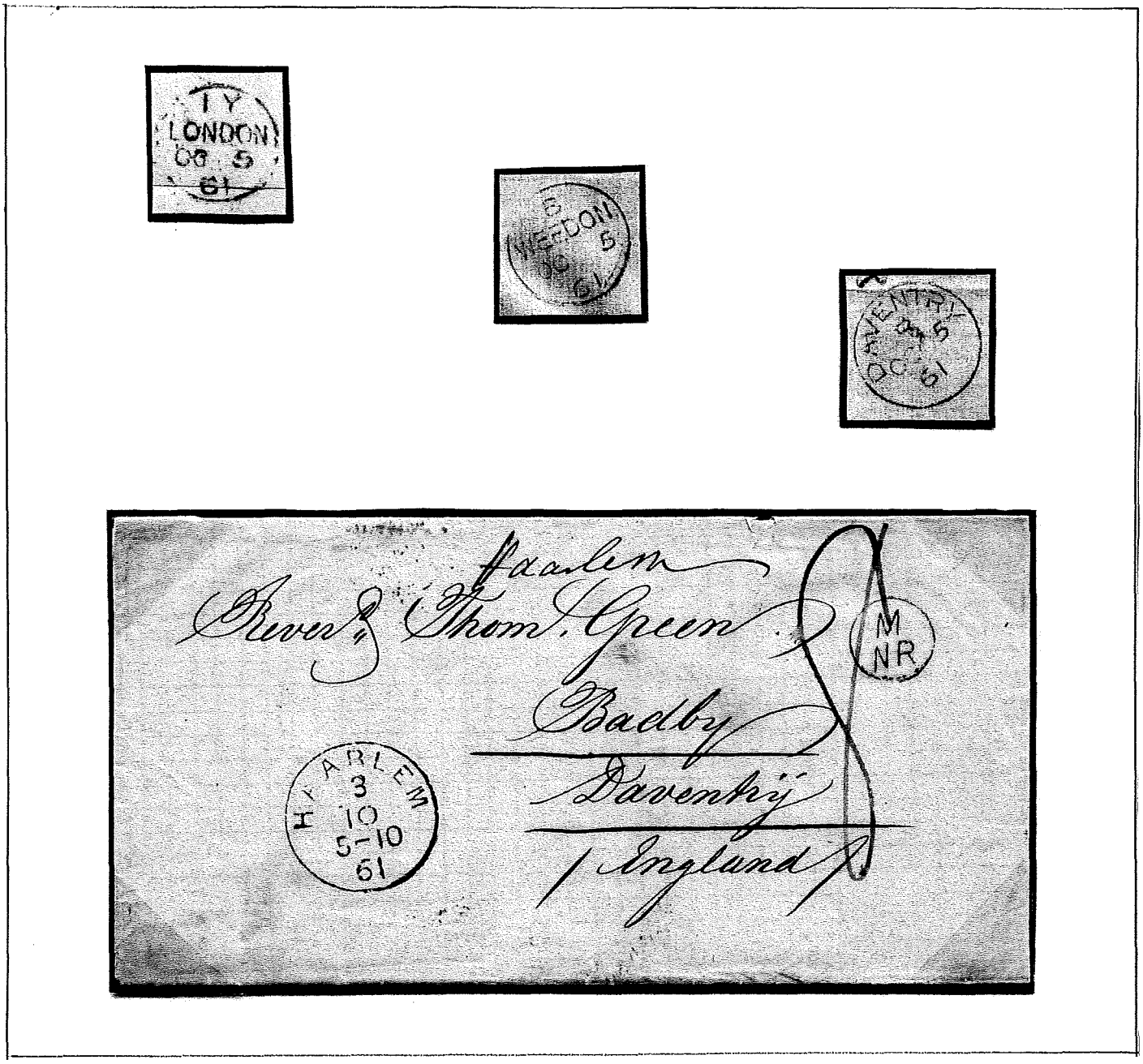
I am indebted to Bernard Ridley for sending a copy of the cover illustrated below. It was sent from Haarlem in Holland to Badby near Daventry in October 1861. It is likely that the letter was carried in a closed mail to Ostend in compliance with the Convention between the British and Dutch Post Offices that came into effect on 1st January 1855.[1] (The steamboat service from Rotterdam had been withdrawn in December 1853.) Carriage from Ostend would have been on the Ostend-Dover mailboat. From Dover it would have been taken by train to London. At the Inland Office the circular M/NR mark was applied in red ink. This mark was applied to letters that had arrived too late to be sorted into a bag for the appropriate post town. (The mark E/NR was applied to letters going out in the evening on the night mail.)

The letter was then taken by train from Euston in the day mail to be dropped of at Weedon by apparatus for onward transmission to Daventry from where it was delivered to Badby.

On 1st August 1862, The Belgian Government organised a day mail by ship between Ostend and Dover and letters in this mail arrived in London in time for dispatch of those going beyond London in the night mails.

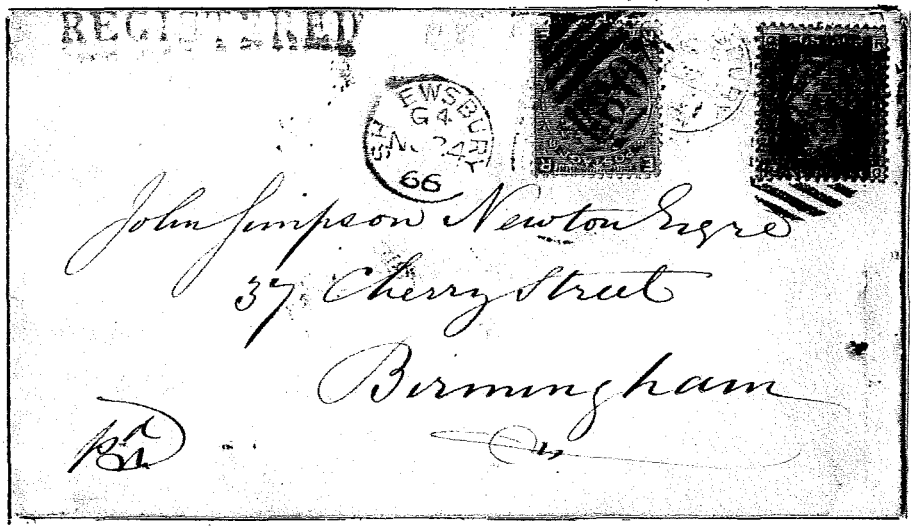
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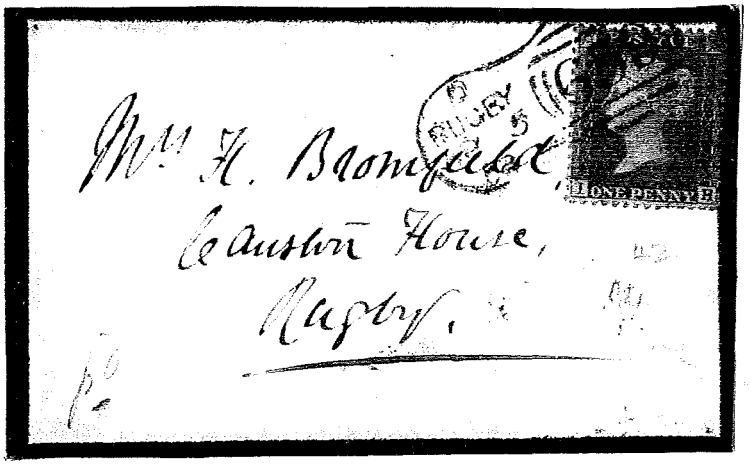
1. British Letter Mail to Overseas Destinations 1840-1875, J&M Moubray, p122.



Midland Counties Postal History: a regular feature of our sales.

Unrecorded REGISTERED mark of Shrewsbury, (1866)





Nice Rugby 'shoe' duplex (1858) with UDCs of Bilton and Newbold on Avon

Contact James Grimwood-Taylor or Ken Baker

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AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE LISTS (and, where relevant, the Transfer Lists) IN THE SOCIETY'S BOOK OF UNDATED CIRCULAR MARKS.

Over the past twelve issues of 'Midland Mail', amendments to the Usage (or Chronological) Lists of the 4th Edition of the Society's book, 'The Undated Circular Marks of the Midland Counties', have been included for each county. Sometimes as a direct result of these amendments, changes now need to be made to the Office Lists, the lists that show each office in the county, under its post town, and the UDCs that are associated with it. These changes can be the result of a UDC having been discovered that had not previously been recorded or it has been found that a listed mark did, in fact, belong to another office (with an identical name) and should not have been included at all.

Compared with the amendments to usage, these amendments are relatively few in number and some counties have none at all. It is therefore considered unnecessary to produce new lists and members are invited to make manuscript amendments to the counties of interest or to retain this amendment list for future reference.

Although amendments to the usage lists will not have affected the Transfer Lists, where new discoveries have been made or errors found, the opportunity is being taken to include them here.

DERBYSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 14	Old Brinsley (under Alfreton)	Delete this office.
Page 15	Ridgway (under Chesterfield)	Delete the reference "See TL14&15".
	Kingstone (under Derby)	Revise to Kingstone (Kingston on Soar).
	Lea (under Matlock Bath)	Delete "12/242".
	Add a new line "Lea Bridge"	Add "12/242".
	Breedon (under Ashby de la Zouch)	Add "1".
	Packington (under Ashby de la Zouch)	Add "1".
	Ravenstone (under Ashby de la Zouch)	Add "1".
	Stretton en le Fields (under Ashby de la Z)	Add "1".
Page 16	Appleby (under Atherstone)	Add "1".
	Measham (under Atherston)	Add "1".

Note: Norton (12/181), under Mansfield, is now believed to be Norton by Cuckney in Nottinghamshire and may be deleted from any future Derbyshire list.

TRANSFER LIST

Page 17	TL14	Delete TL 14 entirely.
	TL15	Delete "Ridgway".
	New entry	Add "TL2a." "Hayfield from Stockport to Manchester some time between 1841and 1857."

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 29	Combe Hill (under Cheltenham)	Revise to read "Co(o)mb(e) Hill".
	Fossbridge (under Cheltenham)	Revise to read "Foss(e)bridge".
	Montpellier (under Cheltenham)	Revise to read "Mo(u)ntpellier".
	Uckington (under Cheltenham)	Revise ref to Comb Hill, as above.
	Winchcombe (under Cheltenham)	Revise to read "Winchcomb(e)".
	Woolstone (under Cheltenham)	Revise to read "Wo(o)lstone/Walstone".
	Edgworth (under Cirencester)	Amend to read "Edgeworth".
	Llandogo (under Coleford)	Revise to read "L(l)andogo".
	Stanton (under Coleford)	Revise to read "Sta(u)nton".

Page 29 (cont)	Cambridge (under Dursley)	Revise to read "Cambridge (Glos)".
	Add a new post town	FAIRFORD (294). 1/53 (CDS 20 AUG39)
	Under Fairford	Add Bibury 5/199
	Maisemore (under Gloucester)	Revise to read "Mais(e)more".
	Mitcheldean (under Gloucester)	Add "(313 from 1845)".
Page 30	Thornbury (under Gloucester)	Add "9/168" after 4/42.
	Add a new post town	LECHLADE (296). 1/105 (CDS 20AUG39)
	Stow (under Moreton in Marsh)	Add "(535)".
	Cinderford (under Newnham)	Add "?" after 11/160.
	Littledean (under Newnham)	Revise to read "Littledean/Little Dean".
	Respidge (under Newnham)	Amend to read "Ruspidge" and move below Ruardean.
	Stonehouse (a post town)	Amend CDS date to "12JUN52".
	Cainscross (under Stroud)	Revise to "Cainscross/Cains Cross".
	Chalford (under Stroud)	Amend CDS date to "8AUG39".
	Crudwell (under Tetbury)	Add "See TL39a."
	Long Newnton (under Tetbury)	Add "18/57" before 18/85.
	Minety (under Tetbury)	Add "See TL39a."
Page 31	Beckford (under Tewkesbury)	Delete "3".
	Kemerton (under Tewkesbury)	Delete "3".
	Yate (under Wotton under Edge)	Delete entry (moved to Chippenham).
	Add a new post town	BRISTOL (134).
	Under Bristol	Add "Beachley 7/211 See TL34a."
	Tiddenham (under Chepstow)	Revise to read "Tid(d)enham".
	Add new office under Chepstow	Add "Tutshill 11/179".
	Add new office under Chippenham	Add "Yate 11/179 18/18 See TL35a."
	Faringdon, Berks (a post town)	Delete Bibury, Fairford & Lechlade entries.
	Monmouth (a post town)	Delete Dingeston & May(s) Hill entries.
	Redbrook (under Monmouth)	Amend "11/57" to read "11/67".

TRANSFER LIST

Page 32	TL14	Delete parentheses and "?" from "and St Briavels".
Page 33	New entry	Add "TL34a." "Beachley from Bristol to Chepstow on 5OCT54."
	New entry	Add "TL35a." "Yate from Chippenham to Wotton under Edge for most responsibilities by 1855."
	New entry	Add "TL39a." "Crudwell and Minety from Tetbury to Chippenham by 1858."
	TL40	Add "Burton Hill".

HEREFORDSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 46	Add a new post town	MONMOUTH (532), Mon
	Under Monmouth	Add "Welch Newton 11/172".
Page 47	Under Worcester (a post town)	Add below Pencombe, "Sapey Bridge 9/47 12/99".

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

There are no changes to the Office List.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 70	Boughton (under Northampton)	Add "14/57" after 7/166.
	Weston Favell (under Northampton)	Amend 14/69 to read "14/63".
	Benefield (under Oundle)	Amend 12/244 to read "12/247".
	Under Wansford (a post town)	Add below Apethorpe, "Blatherwick 12/103 14/248" and " Bulwick 12/103".
Page 71	Orlingbury (under Wellingborough)	Amend 12/244 to read "12/247".
Page 72	Under Market Deeping (a post town)	Delete the entries for Blatherwick And Bulwick.
	Easton (under Stamford)	Add "18/52" after 7/102.

Note: At the time of the usage amendments, Newnham 9/98 continued as part of the Warwickshire listing but it may be in Northamptonshire and will probably be moved in any 5th edition of the book.

TRANSFER LIST

Page 73	TL10	Delete this TL entry.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 83	Kirkby (under Mansfield)	Revise to "Kirkby (in Ashfield)".
	Langwith (under Mansfield)	Add "1".
	Norton (under Mansfield)	Delete "1".
	Clifton (under Newark)	Revise to read "Clifton (North)".
	Dunham (under Newark)	Revise to read "Dunham (on Trent)".
	Eagle (under Newark)	Add "3".
	Kneesal (under Newark)	Revise to read "Kneesal(l)".
	Newton (under Newark)	Revise to "Newton (on Trent)".
	Sutton (under Newark)	Revise to "Sutton (on Trent)".
	Cotgrave (under Nottingham)	The first UDC should read "9/82".
	East Bridgeford (under Nottingham)	Revise to "East Bridg(e)ford".
	Moor Green (under Nottingham)	After 9/183 add "14/14".
	Nuttall (under Nottingham)	Revise to Nuttall (Nuthall)".
	Radcliffe (under Nottingham)	Revise to Radcliffe (on Trent)".
Page 84	Strelly (under Nottingham)	Revise to "Strell(e)y".
	West Bridgford (under Nottingham)	Revise to "West Bridg(e)ford".
	Sturton (under Retford)	Revise to "Sturton (le Steeple)".
	Carlton (under Worksop)	Revise to "Carlton (North Carlton/ Carlton-in-Lindrick)".
	Letwell (under Worksop)	Add "4".
	Add new office under Bawtry	Add below Misson "Newington 9/46".
	Add new office under Bawtry	Add "Burnham 3 16/104 16/114".
	Gringley (under Bawtry)	Revise to "Gringley (on the Hill)".
	Kingstone (under Derby)	Revise to "Kingstone (Kingston on Soar)".
	Stockwith (under Gainsborough)	Revise to "Stockwith (West)".
	Stanford (under Loughborough)	Revise to read "Stanford (on Soar)".

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (Cont)

TRANSFER LIST

Page 85	TL8	Delete "Several minor offices" et seq and substitute "Epperstone, Farnsfield, Kirklington, Oxton, Thurgarton and Upton were transferred to it."
	TL10	Add "Rufford was closed in/after 1846."

OXFORDSHIRE

There are no changes to the Office List.

SHROPSHIRE

There are no changes to the Office List.

STAFFORDSHIRE

There are no changes to the Office List.

WARWICKSHIRE

There are no changes to the Office List but please make a correction to the amended usage (Chronological) List and delete the superseded 28NOV31 usage date from Leamington C2 1/105.

BIRMINGHAM

OFFICE LIST

Page 156	Aston Park	Add "13/250" after 12/331.
	Beech Lane	Add "12/93" before 14/192.
	Henley in Arden	Add "1/74". after (78).

WORCESTERSHIRE

OFFICE LIST

Page 173	Beckford (under Tewkesbury)	Add "3".
	Kemerton (under Tewkesbury)	Add "3".

FROM THE BEAVER ARCHIVE - EXTRACTS FROM RALPH ALLEN'S INSTRUCTIONS TO SURVEYORS

Post 68/1 contains the instructions sent by Ralph Allen from Bath to the riding surveyors. The extracts here relate to the West Midlands as Chris did not copy any of the instructions regarding offices on the roads through Northamptonshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. In fact, they focus very much on the Stone office and the difficulties that Ralph Allen was having with the postmaster of that place. However, these entries do show some of the problems that faced Allen in keeping a check on the postmasters.

The first set of instructions to Mr Lumley are dated April 1731 and order Mr Lumley to start at Gloucester:

"Begin at Gloucester and at that place inform yourself whether all the London, Bye, & Cross Road Letters which in their passage from thence to South Wales lyes several hours at Ross to no purpose may not by altering of the Riding work, and without any new expence to the Office, be directly conveyed to Monmouth & Hereford, and by that means not only cause the letters to be received at those places several hours before they now arrive, but enable them to send their answers the same day instead of waiting (w^h is now their case) till the return of the London Mail.

"Then proceed to Worcester where it will be necessary for you to continue at least ten days & take to the management of that Office that you may have a distinct view of the Conduct of the several Deputies throughout the Cross Road. While you are enquiring whether the late abuse in the Riding Work in that country & especially between that place and Kidderminster is redressed, leave with Mr Glynn & indeed with every other Deputy that you survey a copy of the Letter which is written at the bottom of these Instructions relating to their stamping of all the Bye & Cross Road Letters. I need not tell you the mischief which has already attended the omission of this necessary part of their Duty nor the Difficulty which I have hitherto met with to get this Order observed, but when they find their neglect will for the future hurt themselves, this evil will be stopped. Receive Mr Glynn's arrears and let him know that his Vouchers at the close of every Quarter [were] not sent hither. I cannot any longer forbear acquainting the Postmaster General with the Injury my Affairs receive by his constant (& I fear designed) delays. Then go thro Kidderminster, Stowerbridge & Birmingham to Coleshill where it will be proper to remain a week at Birmingham. Endeavour to detect the Carriers who I am told in the most open manner convey letters from that place to all the Trading Towns in that Country. Some particulars you will, I believe, have of from Mr Williams of Kidderminster. Before you leave Coleshill cause the Deputy of Coventry to remit his arrears and then go to Litchfield whose clerk I am afraid is again creeping into his old faults because the Postmaster of Towcester writes me that he of late often neglects to charge him with the full number of letters. I need not tell [you] the consequence of designed omissions on this head. Examine into his conduct and then proceed thro Stafford & Uttoxeter, whose arrears you must collect, to Stone where it will be necessary to continue a fortnight to take [over] the management of that office. Mr Barbor's claim for over charges in his Bills is considerable & upon my clerk's desiring his Acc^t of undercharges to my hurt he writes that there are never any mistakes of that kind at his office. Be sure to observe this article while you continue at that place, receive his arrears & then go on to ..... Chester."

Then in March 1734 Mr Robinson was sent to Stone:

"Then proceed to that place [Stone] for a full Survey of that Stage because Mr Barbor's claim on me for missent Letters since your last Survey instead of lessening rather exceeds his former demands notwithstanding those articles during your attendance at that office was considerably less than the Surcharges.

What I have now to desire is that you will take the management of that Office for a fortnight and if the Missents etc during the time of your inspection bear any proportion to Mr Barbor's demands, I have no Exception to his entry and will upon the receipt of your Letter give him credit for this article. But if during this Survey you find that the Letters to my hurt are equal to or rather exceed this whole claim, I must desire you will insist on a reasonable account why he is always hurted in this Article in the Surveyor's absence... Especially when by experience it is found that the Deputys throughout every Road are much more exact in their accounts after they have known of the Surveyors' attendance on any Stage than before they had notice of his arrival."

The next entry is dated 27th July 1734 and contains an implication that the postmasters of Coventry and Stone colluded in perpetrating a fraud by failing to record letters sent to Stone from Coventry.

"When you have thoroughly settled the new branch between Doncaster and Hull set out for Stone to survey that Office. By one of the enclosed Papers you will see that during your last Survey of that Stage the errors made to my injury considerably exceeded those made to the hurt of that Deputy. But from that time to Midsummer last (except the few

days that Mr Haslam attended that Office) you will by one of the other papers find that the Articles to my hurt are dwindled to a trifle, and the others much augmented which causes Mr Barbor to make constant & large claims on me for the difference. What I have now to desire of you is to take the whole management of that Office and fully inform yourself and by your diary acquaint me how this case really stands, that it may be entirely adjusted. Sometime since Mr Thomas Barbor, the Deputy of that place, sent me a little state[ment] of his Demands on this Head with an Oath at the bottom of it that the severall articles to his prejudice were all true. I always understood that Mr Thomas Barbor never concerned himself with the management of the Bye Letters, but left that Business wholly to the care of his unkle Mr William Barbor. Pray inform yourself at Stone if I am right and if so ask Mr Thomas Barbor why he sent me such an Oath. There is one remarkable Circumstance to make me apprehend if the management of that stage can't be right, which is that Coventry for the last Quarter have not charged Stone with, neither have Stone acknowledged the receipt of one Letter from that place for his own delivery. I will not say it is impossible that no Letters should during this time pass between such Trading Places. But during your stay at Stone I must in a particular manner desire you will examine whether you receive none whilst that Business is under your management. Especially since by one of the enclosed papers you will see that but 22 letters are acknowledged to be received at Stone from Coventry in the last 2 years.

"By other papers from Mr Sharpless of Lichfield you will find that one of Mr Barbor's boys have been detected of rifling the Bags, and another of delivering the Bye Letters in Rugely under a pretence that he had them from, and even paid a penny a Letter to Mr William Barbor of Stone for them. You are sensible this is one of the greatest and most dangerous abuses that the riding boys can fall into and what ought immediately to be suppressed, and severely punished. But instead of taking the least step to either, you will only meet with a slight answer from Mr William Barbor who seems to attempt a justification of the Boy, without making the least enquiry into the fault that I can any ways learn which is very surprising. I must add that since Sharpless detected the Stone riders the Letters he receives from Stone amounts to almost double to what they produced before this discovery.

"I've reason to believe there is a private difference between the Deputys of Litchfield & Stone and therefore it will be to hear Mr Sharpless charge against Mr Barbor with tenderness and caution. But this at the same time must be no Barr to the strictest and most impartial enquiry, and when you have examined into the whole affair lay it before the Postmaster General in a just and clear Light and pray their commands for your conduct.

Coleshill omitted to enter the letters which he sent to Litchfield the 25 of May & 15 of June last. Litchfield takes no notice of this omission so that the Letters sent those post days are sunk, tho' they generally amount to 4 or 5 shillings every post day. At Litchfield examine into the cause of this joint mistake & put it right."

In October 1734 Allen wrote to Mr Robinson:

"After the Coleshill Office is fully surveyed instead of continuing with Mr Lumley I desire you would go through Birmingham, Wolverhampton (whose arrears must be remitted and their vouchers sent hither) to Kidderminster a Town in the Cross Road upon whom the Letters for Birmingham and some other considerable places are charged and whose allowances for Letters said to be sent for Coleshill are lately considerably increased. While you and Mr Lumley continue at Coleshill you will have an opportunity to examine what those letters each post day amount to, and in this examination pray inform yourself whether the letters said to be sent from the Cross Road and for which Mr Williams claims an allowance are stamped from any Cross Road Town. Otherwise it is in the power of the Postmaster of Kidderminster (if faulty) to enter any unlimited number in this article and to make his demand on me for their Postage.

"At Kidderminster beside a regard to the articles which I have just mentioned inform yourself fully why those letters are so suddenly augmented... and examine how the Riding Work on the Cross Roads between that place and Worcester is performed. If you find it amiss be sure to redress that fault and proceed to Worcester, and after you have examined into the management of that Office cause his vouchers to be sent hither and his balance to be remitted to Mr Rouse."

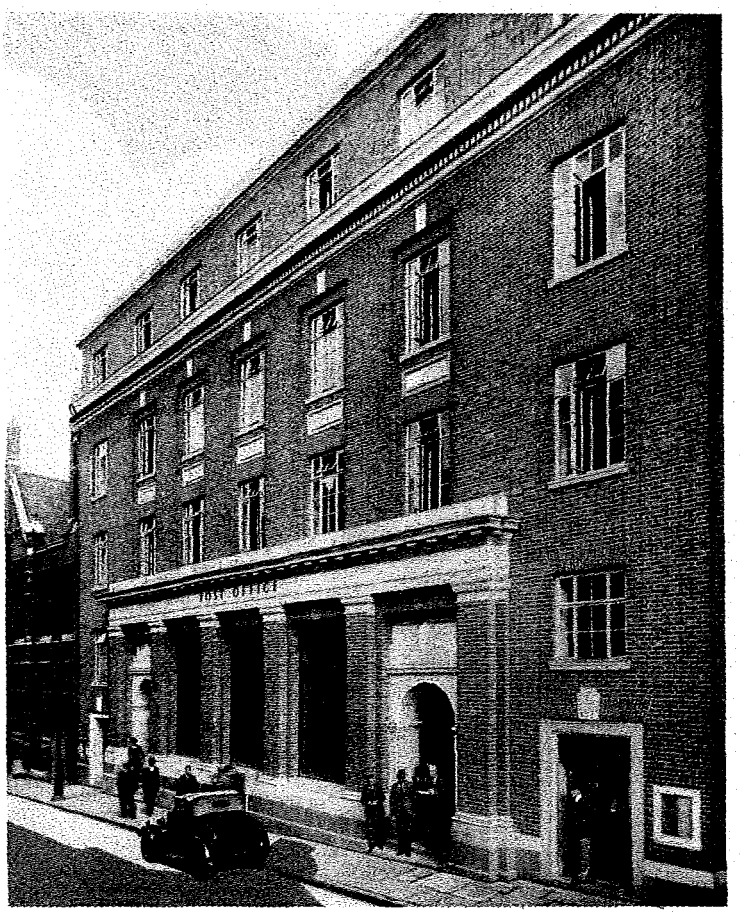
Mr Barbor again came to Ralph Allen's attention in August 1738, this time concerning a 'Free' letter:

"... and at Stone inform yourself why Mr Barbor the Deputy of that place freed the enclosed Cover which appears to be directed by some other person, and why he made and afterwards struck out the Tax which is upon it. The Deputy of Wolverhampton sent it hither with his Dead Letters and claims an allowance for it. Keep the cover by you because it may be proper to make further Enquiry into this affair, and if any of the Deputys which you survey should to the injury of the Revenue attempt to free any Letters beside their own, I must desire that you will cause all such letters to be duly taxed and represent their faulty behaviour to the Board."

A little over two years later Mr Barbor was replaced by a Mr Thomas Jones, with Mr Robinson spending six weeks at Stone instructing him in the duties of a postmaster.

IN MEMORIAM

The Bishop Street Post Office, Leicester, a truly fine building, passed away at 5.30pm on 7th November 2007 after seventy-two years faithful service. Possibly it says something about the state of the Post Office, or even the country in general, that post office facilities moved from this imposing building to the basement of what was already a cramped shop.



Opening
of the
New Head Post Office
Leicester

Tuesday, 23rd July, 1935

A SEASONAL REMINDER

Would a parcel posted on 22nd December 2007 arrive in time for Christmas?

POST EARLY.

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND PARCELS

should be posted not later than

WEDNESDAY MORNING,

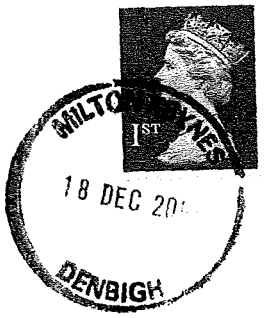
22nd DECEMBER.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,

1915.

TAILPIECE

I am indebted to Derek Smeathers for the cancellation shown below. One could be forgiven for thinking that Milton Keynes had been moved to Wales, but Derek explains that it is in fact a handstamp from the Postmen's Delivery Office which is about a mile



THE SOCIETY'S INTERIM WEB SITE

The Society's interim web site at WWW.geocities.com/midlandgb has been fully updated and the information available on the Society's yellow programme card (and more) may be found here. A membership application form can also be downloaded.

Computer literate members who 'Google' for the Midland (GB) PHS will not find that this site appears but will probably be referred to the Worcester PS site where the Society has a link. (They will also find a reference to the Secretary's contact details on the ABPS site.) The reason for this apparent anomaly is that our interim site is with a free Yahoo host and has cost us nothing, either to set-up or maintain. Updating of the information is kindly carried out by a friend. Any member who has an improved suggestion for an alternative hosted web site that would allow more than a single page entry and be available to us without charge may wish to advise the Secretary.

MEMBERS' E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Members who do not complete a sub renewal form but pay at the AGM and are willing for their e-mail addresses to be included in the Society's address list (which has a very limited circulation to the officers of the Society) are asked to notify their address to john.calladine@mac.com before the end of the year.

THE NEXT MIDLAND MAIL

All that is certain about the next issue is that it will appear in January. So please send articles, short or long, to

John Soer, 51d Barkham Road, Wokingham RG41 2RG

POSTAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD
BILL PIPE

THE MAGPIE

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