A Postscript to the Postal Historian

The Newsletter of the Society of Postal Historians

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Editorial

This issue of Postscript has brought me up to date (again!) and your Editor is pleased to report some material has already been typed up for inclusion in the next issue! The final stages of collation have taken place over the Easter Weekend with the 1992 Kidderminster Conference only a few days away - the thought of some sixty or so copies of Postscript being distributed by hand instead of negotiating the labyrinth of the Post Office delivery system should help bring a warm glow to Bernard's chequebook.

Announcements

Congratulations to Peter Ibbotson who has been awarded the Crawford Medal for 1990/91 by the Royal Philatelic Society, London for his book 'The Postal History and Stamps of Mauritius' - the Editor apologises to Peter for not noting this in the last Postscript.

With great regret I report Ted Coles passed away suddenly at the beginning of March. He attended Stampex as usual and passed away unexpectedly, at his home, during the following weekend. His funeral was attended by a considerable number of SPH members. Keith Parker of Sheffield was involved in a fatal road accident, his funeral on Wednesday 8 April was attended by James Grimwood-Taylor.

Forthcoming Events & Meetings

Members are reminded of forthcoming Society Meetings at the Red Lion Hotel, Salisbury (Saturday 30 May), The Royal Philatelic Society, London (Saturday 27 June) and the Hassop Hall Hotel, Hassop (Saturday 25th July). Booking forms for all of these meetings are enclosed and it would help all concerned if everyone booked early.

Changes in Membership

Society membership changes notified up to 20 April 1992 are listed below:

Members deceased:

C W E Coles       Honorary Life Fellow
K Parker          Associate

Address Changes notified:

R W Moreton       1 Avondale Court, Goodeve Road, Sneyd Park, Bristol. BS9 1NU

Notification of Changes to Members' Addresses

It is very important for the Society to have up to date records of members' addresses. Please give notification of any address change as soon as you possibly can, notifying both the Treasurer (who may have need to pursue you through the debtors courts) and the Editor (who may have need to send you copies of Postscript). Your Editor can only assume that his present listing of addresses is correct because he never has any Postscripts 'Returned to Sender'. All changes (even minor ones like a wrong postcode) notified to your Editor are listed under the heading 'Changes in Membership' and everyone else can then take note accordingly.

The 1991 Conference at the Imperial Hotel Llandudno

This issue of Postscript contains reports of the 1991 Llandudno Conference. A list of those who attended will be found opposite and a complete index to the displays and events will be found on page 4.
SPH Conference at Llandudno, 5th to 8th April 1991

The 1991 SPH Conference was held at the Imperial Hotel, Llandudno. Friday evening began with the Chairman Richard Harlow welcoming everyone to the 41st Conference. Apologies for absence had been received from: Robert Macmillan, Denis Vandevelde, Derek Walker, Martin Davies, George Gibson, Peter Hartland-Swann, John Sussex, John Slingsby, Richard Stroud, Norman Bennett, John Dodd, Frank Peach, Cyril Kidd, John Birkett-Allan and Ian Warn.

Robert Johnson announced his 'Champagne Quiz' arranged for Saturday afternoon - there were '20 Questions' to be answered about 180 humorous postcards relating to the Post Office. The prize was a bottle of champagne and the winner would be announced after the President's Egg-Cup Competition. Robert also reminded everyone about the Stuart Rossiter Raffle, the draw would take place before the President's Egg-Cup Competition.

Standing Displays

Standing displays seen during the weekend included: Czechoslovakia from John Whiteside; Bulgaria from Geraint Jones; Chirk & Ruabon from Mike Scott Archer; Belgium from Jack Andrews; Egypt from Bob Emery; Gilbert Islands from Tony Eastgate, some maritime material from Ron Ward and 'Roads to Aberystwyth' by Roger Broomfield.

Members & Guests present at the Llandudno Conference for all or part of the Weekend, April 5th-8th, 1991

Mike Scott Archer
Jack Andrews
Ted Coles
Kevin & Rita Ashworth
Bernard & Inez Berklinshaw-Smith
Stan & Mavis Bidmead
Frank Bottomley
Richard Farman
Brian & Jean Brookes
Roger Broomfield
Frank & Margaret Daniel
Gerald Davis
Mrs G Kingston
Mrs T London
Trevor Davis
Bob & Joy Emery
Tony & Mrs Eastgate
John Firebrace
John & Jacqueline Forbes-Nixon
James Grimwood-Taylor
Dick & Pia Harlow
Ron & Gillian Hake
Gordon & Joan Harper
Bill & Sheila Hart
Chris Hitchen
Ron Hughes
Bryan and Mrs Hunt
John Jackson
Norman Hoggarth
Denis Kilner
Robert & Ann Johnson

Jeremy Martin
N Martin
Geoff & Judith Lovejoy
Bernard Lucas
Geoff Manton
Brian & Liz McCloy
Susan & Christopher Oliver
Geoff Oxley
Yvonne & Roy Newbury
Alan & Vera Rawlings
Bob Roberts
Dorothy Sanderson
Miss Poole
Bernard Smith
Mrs Bridport
Ken Sargeant
Colin & Pat Spong
Bob Swarbrick
Charles Taylor
David Trappnell
David Venables
Brian Wallas
Ron Ward
John Whiteside
Bryan Wood
Mike & Jan Young
Mr & Mrs Brindley
Geraint & Mrs Jones
Reggie & Mrs Edmondson
Mr & Mrs Filby
Mr & Mrs Kay

A Postscript to the Postal Historian 1992/3.
Index to Reports of the 1991 Annual Conference
The Imperial Hotel, Llandudno, 5th to 8th April 1991

Friday Evening:
Geoff Lovejoy looks into the 'Factory Inspectorate'. [Page 4]
Ron Hughes investigates 'Old Mold' until closing time. [Page 6]

Saturday Morning:
Jamaica by Bob Swarbrick (awarded Large Vermeil in 'London 90'). [Page 9]

Saturday Afternoon:
Seminar: Concessional postal rates for service personnel of foreign countries. [Page 15]

Saturday Evening:
Conference Dinner. [Page 20]
The President's Egg-Cup Competition. [Page 21]
Stuart Rossiter 'One Thousand Covers' Raffle - Result of Draw. [Page 20]

Sunday Morning:
The President's Display by Brian Brookes: 'St Kitts'. [Page 25]

Sunday Evening:
'Pot-Pourri' of members other interests, for entertainment & amusement! [Page 35]

Geoff Lovejoy looks into the 'Factory Inspectorate'
Geoff began by explaining that his display was more social history than postal history and the idea had come about after he joined the Health and Safety Executive, an organisation now responsible for all the previously separate Inspectorates such as the Factory Inspectorate. The display began with an Act of 1802 that dealt with children working in the cotton and other factories, an Act that was repealed in 1831. Prior to the formation of the Factory Inspectorate there was a series of investigations into the conditions and hours that children worked and Geoff showed newspapers, documents and letters which recalled not only what happened to the children, but the sorts of conditions that they had to work in.

Figure 1
Inspector of Factories
Envelope sent to Birmingham on 24 March 1867 from Sir Robert Baker with the official paid stamp and the oval frank of the Inspectors of Factories at 10 Whitehall. Sir Robert Baker overlapped with Leonard Horner as one of the four Chief Inspectors in 1859 and retired in 1878 having been joint Chief Inspector with Alexander Redgrave from 1866 to 1877.

[Figures 75% actual size]
These investigations lead to the Reform Act of 1832 and the Factories Act of 1833 and the Factory Inspectorate was formed. The first inspectors were paid a thousand pounds each and, although they had to pay their own expenses, that was a lot of money. Geoff showed the letter that started the collection, a free letter from the Secretary of State, London to Scotland, marked 'on Factory Business', it bore the signature of one of the four original inspectors who eventually became chief inspector. A selection of other letters and documents gave an insight into the man as well as the Inspector [Figure 1, Page 4].

The factory owners didn't much like the inspectorate, they were being fined and they were being told what to do and from the beginning there remained strong resistance. Letters were shown that went through the post along with papers and documents arguing for one side or the other and in 1855 a petition was prepared for submission to a Member of Parliament by the National Association of Factory Occupiers. Examples of letterheads were shown from companies and the National Association for the Amendment of Factory Law as well as hand stamps for inspectors of factories as well as the printed envelopes.

The Factories and Workshop Act of 1878 required birth certificates for children so that their correct age could be determined and recorded. As part of the inspectorate organisation they appointed factory doctors, who in Ireland were known as 'Certifying Surgeons' and Geoff showed documents and photographs of a family of three certifying surgeons and a copy of the requirement needed under the Children's Act. These doctors were required to keep general registers and one of 1901 was shown.

Geoff showed a range of 'penny magazines' and supplements which described some of the type of work that people did in those days, an example from the potteries illustrated the ghastly conditions in which they worked. Chimney sweepers didn't actually come under the Factories acts, they were under the police and a certificate of 1926 was shown [Figure 2, below]. The Chimney Sweepers Act of 1875 and two previous Acts were shown. An illustration of a man grinding the point of a needle showed him with a scarf over his mouth, so even in those days they knew that fine steel dust was not going to be very good for their health. Finally Geoff showed a set of Rhodesian stamps from 1976 which showed various aspects of safety: head protection, hand protection and eye protection.

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[Figure 2]

The Chimney Sweepers Act 1875
Certificate issued by the City of London Police 11
February 1926 authorising a chimney sweep to carry out his business.
This was the third Act regulating chimney sweeps, the others being dated 1840 and 1864.

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[Figure 67% actual size]

CHIMNEY SWEEPER'S CERTIFICATE.

In pursuance of "The Chimney Sweepers Act, 1875," I HEREBY CERTIFY that Jesse David, of 14, Coleman Street, in the City of London, is authorised to carry on the business of a Chimney Sweeper within the said City of London Police District for One Year, reckoned from the date of this Certificate.

Dated the Eleventh day of February 1926.

Commissioner of Police.

A Postscript to the Postal Historian 1992/5.
Ron Hughes investigated 'Old Mold'

Ron Hughes presented what for him was a new collection and display entitled 'Round About Old Mold'. Mold is a translation of the Welsh name for the town and actually means the green burial mound. In the burial mound of the name was found the skeleton of a British chieftain with one of the finest pieces of Celtic gold-work ever discovered in the British Isles, this is now in the British Museum.

Ron began by showing a map of North East Wales area covering Flintshire, the River Dee and the detached part of Flintshire. Mold is a county with some nice little towns and some fine postal history. It is an expression of great honour for anyone to be called 'Old Mold', especially in public, but you've got to come from the area to appreciate it. Picture postcards were shown that typified Old Mold, one showed Billy Baker a great local character who, along with his donkey Jenny - no less of a character, was extremely well known in the town of Mold.

The next item was of sentimental value because it showed one of the first foreign stamps Ron acquired as a boy in Mold when he first decided to collect stamps, and of course they had to be foreign stamps. Ron's father, a schoolmaster, was not in favour of collecting stamps because he taught in boarding schools and stamps to him meant lost approvals, letters coming from overseas and some genius taking the stamps off the covers. There were some Newfoundland boys in the school and they used to get beautiful letters from their fathers with the marvellous early Newfoundland stamps on. Sometimes the stamps used to go missing, for that reason Ron's father regarded collecting stamps as trouble. He tried to stop Ron from collecting stamps but was eventually persuaded and Ron sent away for stamps on approval, keeping the twenty or so free stamps offered and sending back the approvals intact! Ron found the 20 free Japanese stamps were the most boring stamps imaginable, all had a chrysanthemum on them. However, Ron did promise to show us a cover, a trans Siberian cover, bearing this type of stamp later in the display.

A family photograph was next showing the man who was postmaster of Mold for some years up to about 1870, Ron's great great grandfather (his mother's great grandfather). Surgeon Robert Parry of Mold was also the deputy Coroner to Flintshire as well as Postmaster of Mold. He had two nieces, Martha and Mary, who helped in the Post Office at Mold for many years. Items from that era included a penny black on cover from Mold.

A picture of Mold Post Office was shown when it was new along with photographs of the Post Office staff, another one of the family and one of his daughters, Martha Ann, with her husband who was later made postmaster and was also in charge of the gas and water companies and did a certain amount of supply teaching. Another of his jobs was station master so he more or less controlled the town! Another lady on the photographs was Ron's Aunt Ethel, she was in the post office at Mold for a very long time and took the job very seriously. On one occasion Ron was going to show some covers and postal history to a local society and he showed her some of the sheets and she said 'Do you know that in Mold, long ago, there were two post offices?'. Apparently there was the Mold General Post Office and, at the top end of the town, another small sub post-office which used registration labels with 'Mold 2' on them. Then she added, entirely in character, 'You must not divulge that to anyone while I am alive as I have taken the Post Office oath'. Some pictures of the local mail-coach, a little cart, were shown,
this used to take mail from Mold down to Flint where it would catch the train on the main railway line.

Flint is the rival of Mold Post Office to this day because either Flint was the Crown Office or Mold was, the honour changing from time to time with postal reorganisations. The locality was a lead mining area and several covers were shown from mining villages, a postcard showed Mold station to be a peaceful place just one hour from Liverpool by train. One card showed a local train on its way from Mold to Denbigh and another a couple of farm carts going along the Valley of the Alyn from Mold towards Denbigh, a very beautiful valley without too much traffic still largely unspoilt. There is an Afon Wen in Flintshire situated on the same valley, the name Afon Wen means white river, so named because there is a great deal of limestone in that area and it tends, especially after heavy rain, to colour the water rather white. There was a paper mill on the river and Ron was delighted that one of his letters has on the paper the watermark 'Afon Wen' - an example of locally produced paper.

Yale, the man who founded Yale University, was born about six miles from Mold and is buried in the churchyard of Wrexham parish church. Any graduate of Yale University who goes to Wrexham parish church and sees the verger has the right to write his name in a book to show he's been there. Ron thought the verger did quite well out of it! During the war when American GI's were over in Wrexham Ron hadn't realised so many people in America were graduates of Yale University! They got through about a book a week!

Ron explained that if you lived on a country post-round a country postman would take a message from you, at your house, to somebody down the road and deliver it, but, even if it was only a verbal message you were supposed to pay the equivalent of the postage in stamps and the postman would normally be carrying stamps with him. When Ron's late aunt Mary Ann wanted to ask a friend down the road to come up to tea with her she would ask the postman to take the message and then produce a penny stamp at which the postman would say 'No, I'll take the message for you'. So, after the postman had gone aunt Mary Ann always burnt the penny stamp! Ron thought some of the mysterious pen cancellations on stamps had been done by people who handed things over to the postman for local delivery, it was very unlikely the postman would have had a pen with him although he might have had an indelible pencil.

Mold was one of the few places outside Lancashire that had a cotton mill but when this closed it was turned into, oddly enough for North Wales, a tin plate factory. Ron thought you should never buy a cover because there is a story attached to it (or at least you think you've got a story attached to it), because if you do you're not doing any good for postal history but you are getting a lot more fun! Ron showed a cover addressed to the Reverend Walter Davies, a literary man in all sorts of
ways. He wrote a 3 volume work, still sought after, on agriculture in Wales, and in the view of the local people he was also a little bit of a magician and encouraged his parishioners to believe that he could do 'White Magic' of one form or another. He lived on his own in the rectory and had an elderly woman as his housekeeper. He thought he was settled down for life because she was looking after him quite well. One day she told him she had decided to leave and get married and of course the rector was horrified, absolutely horrified, saying it would take him a long time to find anyone else. Could she delay it for a year or so to give him time! She said No! 'Well', he said, 'I have ways and means of stopping you from leaving'. When she went up to the attic where she slept and looked at her trunk she found it couldn't be moved - the rector had 'magicked' it! He told her it won't be moveable for a whole year. The rector was a very good hand at magic - but he was an even better hand with a screwdriver!

Liverpool was a good place to go for a day out, about an hour from Mold by train via Chester, past the ship building works and across the Mersey on the ferry, a delightful day out. On the landing stage at Liverpool there was a Post Office, the Landing Stage Post Office, this was a successor to the Floating Receiving House which used to receive late mail for the liners on payment of a late fee, Ron showed an example with four sixpenny stamps on bearing the Floating Receiving House mark. The Floating Receiving House was succeeded by the Landing Stage Post Office and, as a boy, Ron remembered crossing on the ferry with his mother and father carrying some parcels,

Two covers from the Welsh Colony in Patagonia.

In 1865, after several years of planning, a small group of Welsh settlers left their homeland to establish a ‘new Wales’ in Patagonia, free from social and cultural oppression.

The present day descendants (some 10,000 or so) still have a recognisably ‘Welsh’ culture to this day. Most of them live in or near the towns of Gaiman, Trelew, Rawson and Puerto Madryn in the Argentinian Province of Chubut.

[Both figures are 75% actual size]
which were posted at the Landing Stage Post Office. Ron was never able to understand why the postmark is so rare, nowadays it is normally found only on registered items. Ron then quoted from 'The Liverpool Post Office - Past and Present - Part IV' by F Salisbury, [Vol 10 of St Martins-le-Grand magazine dated 1900]: 'The present arrangement is to accept "late fee" letters at the Landing Stage Branch Office, up to a short time before the sailing of foreign mail packets, and the officer in charge encloses them in a bag which is handed by a mail porter to the ship's mail officer'. Possibly the reason for their scarcity was that they didn't normally use the postmark on anything with local addresses, but only on ship mail.

The Royal Naval Air Service came to Mold with their airships during the first world war and Ron also showed a card illustrating what was supposed to be the first airship flight attempt in Wales, in 1908. Airships were used by the Royal Naval Air Service at an aerodrome in Anglesey supported by wireless stations at Rhyl and Holyhead. Their purpose was to alert the navy to any submarines that were lurking off Liverpool, on one occasion a submarine got into the Mersey and sank the Liverpool pilot boat.

On one occasion Ron read in a magazine that it would be possible to send envelopes by the first Imperial Airways airmail from Britain to Africa, he showed that to his father who unexpectedly said, 'We'll send six letters!' Ron's father had finally bowed to the inevitable - his son was going to collect stamps and postal history! The letters went off to Kenya and Ron remembers that the postman eventually brought them all back. In conclusion it has to be said that Ron entertained us very well with his tales and interesting postal history.

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**Jamaica**

by Bob Swarbrick

Jamaica, discovered by Columbus in 1494 and initially colonised by the Spanish, is an island in the Caribbean roughly 144 miles by 49. The first part of Bob's display dealt with the pre-adhesive period in the history of the Jamaican Post Office, from the early days of the 'Dummer' packet service in 1705 up to the establishment of a regular service to and from England and the Continent of Europe. The rare Jamaica Bishop Mark and town markings shown included Kingston. These early marks are often found on mail coming from Nova Scotia and this may seem an unusual source for mail but there were important trading reasons for this. Nova Scotia provided enormous quantities of salt-fish as protein for the slaves and the ships returned with wood for making barrels and salt for pickling the fish. An interesting letter carried by a slave was shown with the endorsement 'per Scipio', a native wandering around on his own would be liable to arrest and the endorsement was his 'right to pass'.

Among marks recently discovered several remain the only known examples extant. In addition a superb example of the Jamaica 'Bishop' mark on an entire from Nova Scotia finally clinched the theory that it was a Jamaica mark and not from North America - or elsewhere! This newly found marking turned Jamaican postal history on its head, nothing quite like it had been seen before and it was bought at one of the main London auction houses, very badly described indeed.

At this point of the display a side door flew open (it was very windy outside) and the blast of wind whistling through the room sent many of Bob's sheets flying from the frames and scattered them on to the floor - there was a delay as the sheets were rounded up but Bob soon recovered the situation by claiming they were now also first flights!

A letter was shown from Mexico (at war with America at the time) to London, which had to go via Jamaica, sent under separate cover and simply annotated 'Received at the Post Office, Kingston, 8.30 am on the 12th' on the cover addressed to the Postmaster, it was then forwarded to London.

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The Jamaica Coffee House acted as a clearing house, a cover from Quebec being shown. An interesting point was the different rates for packet and ship letters, a shilling for a ship letter and two shillings for a packet letter. A letter from France to Jamaica showed on the reverse a breakdown of the 22 centimes postal rate, 10 centimes for the French share and 12 for the English. A letter dated 10th May 1813 didn't arrive in England until August 10th and that was a long time for a packet letter. On investigation Bob found that the June packet had been captured by an American Frigate, the mail was kept on board, taken to America and when the ransom was paid the letter continued its passage [Figure 1, opposite].

There followed fine covers from exotic places all over the mainland of South America, all of which went through Jamaica en route back to Europe. Jamaica had become a very important interchange point for mail, a lot of mail was brought in by feeder routes and then put into the packet system to go back to Falmouth or, indeed, to other South American places. Ship letter marks of towns on the Jamaican north coast were shown, the north coast was important because ships coming down from North America usually had difficulty in battling all the way round the coast and coming in to Kingston so they used the north coast ports which, in the main, are very small places. Those ships coming from England were able to use either the Leeward or the Windward Passage depending on the season of the year. Covers showing the marks of these small ports which in the main only saw local traffic in the form of small schooners that could tie up anywhere, are all extremely rare. Letters of 1794 to New York and Philadelphia with American markings were shown.

Letters carried to Spain by private vessel were shown, these received Spanish rate markings on arrival but the practice was officially illegal because at that time the British Government insisted any mail leaving a British Colony must be carried in a British vessel. Letters that actually left Jamaica in Spanish vessels were therefore in contravention of the regulations. An interesting letter detailed shipping departures: it was the practice, if a vessel was leaving for England, to prepare an advertisement stating letters would be accepted for delivery in England; it also gave warning to local shopkeepers to check their accounts and see if anybody owing them money might leave on the same ship!

Forwarding Agents played an important part in Jamaica collecting mail for other places. One example was addressed to a lieutenant in the navy who was on detachment from his unit - because the detail of his location was unknown 'intelligence' from the commercial rooms was used to simply address the letter to him by name and it would have been handed on via passing ships for delivery to him, probably at sea - that illustrated an unusual aspect of Forwarding Agents. The Commercial Rooms in Jamaica later became the Commercial Buildings and an illustration showed a tower to the front which enabled incoming vessels to be recognised as early as possible.

A letter from Port Au Prince to Holland went through various places and illustrated that rates and routes could be quite complicated. Letters from Jamaica to Spain, Bordeaux, Germany, Holland and Madeira were shown. One item showed that ships used to tout for mail, they got a penny per letter and if enough letters were received it could be quite lucrative because they didn't eat or require lifebelts!

The Falmouth halfpenny mark was put on incoming letters to save trouble when crossing the frontier into Scotland. One or two heavy, local ship letters were shown, all quite rare. 'Paid halfpenny', 'Paid eightpence' and 'Paid 1/2d' reflected the various rates depending on the routes. In an attempt to try and standardise procedures in Jamaica postmasters were instructed to write the address on the reverse of covers in manuscript and markings like Green Pond, Runaway Bay and May Hill can all be found but this practice didn't last very long. Some important early paid markings were shown, at that time nobody liked prepaying for letters because it was never certain they would arrive.
In an effort to please those members whose interests lay in more modern postal history the second half of Bob's display included wreck and crash mail, soldier's letters and similar material. Letters sent by various German, Dutch and British shipping lines were shown along with their associated handstamps and cancellations. A section was devoted to military mail and included covers used by the Forces of Canada [Figures 5, 6 & 7 on Page 14], America, Netherlands and Great Britain with concessionary rates of the army and navy.

One cover, not particularly rare in itself, showed the manuscript comment 'Used during the 1907 earthquake'. Other delightful cards shown included some from Jamaica during the Boer War period. No contingents were sent to the war from Jamaica but they did work very hard to raise funds.

The West Indian Regiment also served abroad in the Ashanti War, the availability of infantry was no problem but they were definitely short of artillery and gunners. The West Indians were the only people that had any form of artillery with coloured troops who would be able to stand the climate and its associated hazards of illness and disease. A West Indian detachment was sent over to fight in the Ashanti Wars and letters from the campaign were shown.

The second world war period was fascinating with mail from civilian internees, merchant seamen, naval and U-boat personnel and Dutch troops. People were evacuated from the Rock of Gibraltar and other places in Europe, this led to an elaborate censorship service with Spanish, Dutch, German, Italian, Japanese and British language censors in operation. One letter written in German passed through normal civilian censorship channels, Dutch refugees who went to Gibraltar to escape from the Germans ended up in Jamaica and acted as guards for the POW camps. At the end of the war all the Germans were repatriated, most had originally come from West Africa and had never seen Europe but the British said they could all go back to Germany - if they spoke German they must be German! They wanted to go back to West Africa but were taken initially to Crystal Palace and then on to Swansea: eventually they got back to West Africa!

[Continued on Page 13]

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Figure 1 at left, 75% actual size.
Detail of Post-town handstamp, below, actual size.

![Goshen JA](image)

Post-town handstamp of Goshen (Type T3)

A letter dated 10th May 1813 from Goshen (backstamped in Kingston on 23rd May) addressed to Edinburgh. Rated 2/5d, inland postage paid - plus the Scottish additional ½d tax - and endorsed 'per packet'.

The June 1813 packet (the Duke of Montrose) was taken by the American Frigate 'President' on the 19th June. This 'packet' was taken, with the mails, back to America and later ransomed. She was released with all her crew and cargo and finally reached England on 10th August 1813, a voyage of over 60 days.

[References: 'PO Archives' & 'Jamaica, its Postal History' by Foster, page 40]

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[Above figure is 75% of actual size, details below are actual size]

FORWARDED BY
J.A. GARCIA DEL RIO
KINGSTON, JAMAICA

JAMAICA
SHIP LETTER

Forwarding Agents Cachet
Type FAC 5
(The earlier of the two recorded examples)

Type SL 5
Type PD 6

Figure 3: The Haughton River Disaster of 1890 [75% actual size]

On the night of Tuesday, 18th February 1890, the mailcart engaged in transporting the mails between Kingston and Annotto Bay was washed away.

On the reverse side:
Type PD7 [actual size]

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Shipping items included Dutch Lines, the Hamburg Mail Line and HMS Melbourne which was detached from the Australian Navy to serve with the British Navy. An unusual 'Passed by Naval Censor' mark was shown, they obviously weren't very good censors because one 'censored' letter stated where the office was - and much else! Unusual markings included the 'Naval Agent in Kingston', 'Commodore', 'By the English Packet' and 'General Staff, Jamaica'.

A cover illustrated the Haughton River Disaster. This was hardly a disaster! The mail cart was pulled by two mules; one slipped and everything went into the river, both mules were drowned and the mail washed away and only recovered about three days later. The details are well documented, the only things not yet known were the names of the mules! [Figure 3, bottom of opposite page] The following has been extracted from the 23rd Annual "Report of the Post Office" for the year ending 31 March 1891:

"On the night of Tuesday, the 18th February 1890 while the mail-cart engaged in the conveyance of the mails between Kingston and Annotto Bay was crossing the Haughton River, about four miles out of Annotto Bay, it was washed away - the mules being drowned and the van smashed and the contents, which consisted of the mails from Kingston and Annotto Bay for Port Maria, as well as a bag for New York were washed away. An officer was immediately dispatched from Kingston to try to recover the lost mail and I am glad to say through his energy, and that of Sergeant Major Allen of the Constabulary, the bag from Kingston, which also contained the mail for New York, was recovered and brought back to Kingston intact, and although the mail had been submerged for nearly 24 hours, the contents were in a good state of preservation and were forwarded to the respective addresses.

In the mail in question there were 35 registered letters and about 1000 ordinary letters"

An interesting cover appeared to be from the only philatelic crash mail known; a change in Jamaica postal rates had been announced, a collector in Scotland sent a parcel of covers over to his friend with a request for him to post them when the rate changed from a shilling to 1/3d. The aircraft crashed and the collector in Scotland was presented with a whole bundle of authenticated, well documented crash covers! It must have made his day!

One cover shown had been 'wrecked' twice! The 'Kingstonian' bringing mail back from Egypt was torpedoed, beached at Sardinia and temporarily patched up to sail back to Egypt. They didn't know another U boat was waiting so having been torpedoed first by U68, a couple of days later the 'Kingstonian' was finally sunk by the U48. A small section of delayed mail followed by crash covers and more modern items included two covers damaged by fire following a U boat attack.

Letters to and from internees, both civil, military and POW's of Italy and Germany, in both 1914-18 and more recent times completed the military aspects. Odd items of Civilian Censorship and 'Free' mail completed a fine display rounded off with a favourite saying of Bob's: 'Keep dogs inside and avoid sleepless nights'.

Figure 4, at right
[75% actual size]

Ship letter 11 May 1852
8d double letter rate, 20 cents US postage. Mail to the USA was normally carried by private vessels under contract with the US Post Office. All mail had to be prepaid. The US rates of 10 cents & 20 cents were collected from the recipient.

MOBCOM TO CARIBBEAN

Soldiers and airmen from Canada's Mobile Command are participating in a major training exercise under tropical field conditions in the Caribbean. Lieutenant-General W.A.B. Andersen, Commander Mobile Command, said a total of 1,000 personnel, including the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, London, Ont., are taking part in the exercise on the Island of Jamaica.

Under the name "Exercise Nimrod Caper" the force began to move out of London, Trenton, Uplands and St. Hubert on March 1. The exodus continued until approximately 800 troops had been airlifted to Jamaica.

The RCR battalion group, accompanied by elements of No. 10 Tactical Air Group, including 429 Buffalo Squadron from St. Hubert and 403 Helicopter Training Squadron from Petawawa, will spend 14 days on the Island and return by March 16. Troops will be living under field combat conditions about 60 miles from Kingston, Capital of Jamaica.

The 3,000-mile airlift was carried out using strategic heavy transport aircraft from Air Transport Command. The Canadian troops arrived at Jamaica complete with equipment and vehicles. A total of 3 Yukon and 34 Hercules flights were required to lift the Battalion group to the exercise area.

Lt.-Col. J. J. Barrett, RCR battalion group commander who has been named the exercise director, said the exercise will not only train the ground force under tropical conditions but will exercise them in their air transportability role.

The training scheme to be conducted near Port Antonio and in Jamaica's famous jungle "cockpit country" will provide an indoctrination in the tropical field conditions which Canadian servicemen may be faced with in their peacekeeping tasks.

Figures 5, above & 6 right, [75% actual size]

Canadian Forces in Jamaica

"Exercise Nimrod Caper" of March 1970, C.F.P.O. 5003

CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS

Correspondence School Branch, Armée Building, Edmonton, Alberta

Figure 7, at left [75% actual size]

Canadian Army Overseas

"Y" Force No 2

The Argyle & Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise’s Own) on duty in Jamaica. Cover dated 2 April 1942 by handstamp on reverse.

A Postscript to the Postal Historian 1992/14.
The 1991 Llandudno Conference  
Saturday Seminar  
Concessional Postal Rates for the  
Service Personnel of Foreign Countries

Mike Scott Archer introduced the 1991 Conference Saturday Afternoon Seminar by saying it was intriguing to see how different countries tackled the problem of letters which seem to have been delivered either free or at less than the standard rate. How were such concessions for free postage or a reduced rate granted? It was very difficult to find sources which give answers to these questions for countries outside Great Britain and the Commonwealth and Mike had a shrewd suspicion that many SPH members did not consider it could be easily studied.

Two members, Robert Macmillan and John Sussex, had sent apologies but their material was presented by Mike Scott Archer and John Whiteside respectively. Bill Hart, Ted Coles and Richard Harlow and other members had brought material along. The format of the seminar was displays and talks followed by general discussion.

Ted Coles started proceedings and supplied the following notes on his display:

**France - Concessionary Postal Rates for Soldiers and Sailors on Active Service**

by C W E Coles

I would have had great difficulty in writing this article if a comprehensive book on French postal rates had not been published in 1982. It is *Les Tarifs Postaux Francais 1627 - 1969* compiled by a quintet of prominent postal historians: J-P Alexander, C Barbey, F-F Brun, G Dewarnaud & Dr R Joany.

Special rates for the Army on Active Service were first introduced in 1705 and continued during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods but it is a complex subject and I have not completed my study of it. In this short display I shall confine myself to the period of the Crimean War (1854-56) onwards.
Concessionary rates from 1854 onwards were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Unit</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22 June 1854</td>
<td>Army of the Baltic</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Interior letter rate + 60 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>Letter rate: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All ranks</td>
<td>Paid letters: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Army of the Orient</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaid letters: 30 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 August 1854</td>
<td>Army of the Baltic (via Danzig and</td>
<td>All ranks</td>
<td>French interior tariff, ie:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the Prussian Post Office)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paid letters: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaid letters: 30 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1859</td>
<td>Army of Italy</td>
<td>All ranks</td>
<td>Interior letter tariff as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1859</td>
<td>Expedition to China</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Paid letters: 40 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>Unpaid letters: 50 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paid letters: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1862</td>
<td>Expedition to Mexico</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Paid letters: 50 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>Unpaid letters: 60 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paid letters: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1862</td>
<td>Expedition to Mexico</td>
<td>All ranks</td>
<td>Unpaid letters: 30 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paid letters: 20 centimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1870</td>
<td>Franco-Prussian War</td>
<td>All ranks</td>
<td>Free postage for letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The occupation of Rome had begun in 1849 and lasted until 1870 and although a law introducing concessionary rates was not passed until 1859 internal rates appear to have applied from the outset.

December 1859 Expedition to China Officers Paid letters: 40 centimes

Other ranks Unpaid letters: 50 centimes

February 1862 Expedition to Mexico Officers Paid letters: 50 centimes

Other ranks Unpaid letters: 60 centimes

April 1862 Expedition to Mexico All ranks Paid letters: 20 centimes

Unpaid letters: 30 centimes

July 1870 Franco-Prussian War All ranks Free postage for letters

This franchise lasted whilst on active service and ended in June 1871 except for wounded in hospital for whom it ended on 8 April 1872.

After this date free postage for letters was granted to all overseas troops on active service and was only withdrawn when their duties became occupational.

In December 1900 all other ranks serving at home or abroad were granted the privilege of sending two letters/postcards a month free of postage. Ordinary stamps were overprinted "F.M." (Franchise Militaire) and were affixed by the unit postmaster who authenticated their use with the unit handstamp. These stamps were first issued in June 1901 and continued to be issued, except during the first and second World Wars, until 1 July 1972 when the privilege was ended.

During both World Wars free postage was granted.

Richard Harlow followed with some correspondence from a Lieutenant Taylor RNVR, writing to the UK from the middle of 1918 to the middle of 1919. They all bore marks in English, all slightly different of either a Divisional Naval Transport Office or a British Naval Transport Office with the post town in Italian. There were three examples and Dick’s query was whether there were any others and how scarce or common they were. All the correspondence was addressed to the same firm of Marble Dealers in London, or to Massa Carrara where the marble was produced. It appeared the officer might have been engaging in commerce on the side. One cover also showed a small 'Censored' cachet, these letters had been put into the Italian Post, apparently not subject to any charge, except for one registered cover.

Bill Hart showed items from the South African Republic, Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The first Postal Act in the South African Archives made provision for post-free carriage of letters, books and newspapers to service personnel. But parcels had to be paid in full at the normal rates, which seemed odd. Bill had not been able to find anything from the Orange Free State archives but an Orange Free State artillery cachet was shown authorising free postage. During the Boer War
Campaign the boers eventually made some large oval FPO marks for towns in both Natal and the Cape Province. There seemed to be no reason as to why letters were stamped or not, they were merely authorisations to validate the cover. In places where they had the postage stamps they did use them. In some cases where covers went abroad stamps had to be put on, an example going to the Dutch Indies via British Guiana was shown with the full 2½d overseas rate applied.

The first type of mark used in Newcastle from October 1899 was a straight line mark. A cover from a member of the Scandinavian Corps going back to Sweden showed that he paid the full postage rate of 2½d. The same pattern could be discerned from many other covers, handstamps authorised free postage in the campaign areas, examples from Dundee (which had then been captured) were followed by several examples from the German Units of the two cachets they used. An interesting cover was an official envelope with a very large cachet. Examples of covers sent while the boers retreated and regrouped were shown, they were still using postage stamps in addition to handstamps that were only in use for about a week. Another cover was actually written by the Commander of the Boer Forces outside Ladysmith - he had no stamps to use. Lack of stamps on official covers was emphasised by the Post Office underlining the 'Official' markings to ensure they were not tax. Another example was allowed to go through, addressed to a gold mining company in Johannesburg, it had been stamped with a one penny stamp, correctly, but a Transvaal stamp was not permitted. This was disallowed but the post office didn't bother to tax it, although there was a handstamp near to the stamp they let it go through. Bill concluded by saying it seemed to be a very odd system.

Robert Macmillan was unable to attend the Conference in person but had sent some First World War Netherlands military mail. In this case there clearly was an open free-franking system, this started early in October 1914 and mail had to be certified by an officer. Several examples were shown, all with an officer's signature - Robert Macmillan would welcome any comments, suggestions or clarification about these covers. A cover from a Dutch Internment Camp was sent free but one from a Belgian Internee showed use of special green 'stamps' (which cost nothing) intended to serve as an identification label. They were used for a very short period, possibly the Germans were afraid that messages could be hidden under the 'stamp' and disallowed their use [Figure below]. Some prisoner of war mail was shown, there were few Dutch prisoners so such cards are relatively rare.

5 February 1916
Refused letter from a Belgian Internee.
This letter was correctly franked with the new special stamp for internees' use and signed by the Commandant of the camp at Haederwijk. But, ostensibly due to the possibility of messages being concealed under the stamp, the Germans refused after a short while to deliver such letters to Belgium and returned them.

[75% actual size]
John Sussex was also unable to attend the Conference in person but had submitted some Portuguese material of the First World War from Mozambique, military personnel did not have to pay postage from there.

John Whiteside showed Czechoslovakia. When the republic was formed after World War I the Slovaks were not entirely pleased at being subsumed with the Czechs and there was a certain amount of unrest. Czech forces were sent to Slovakia and a very few post offices were set up, postage was free and letters didn't have to be signed by an officer but they did have to show a unit cachet mark to indicate the writer was authorised to free postage. There were two marks of this general type. When the Hungarians invaded Czechoslovakia at the end of June 1919 they pushed almost right across Czechoslovakia to the Soviet border and in so doing they separated some of the units from each other. John raised the question of the Italian Field Posts in Czechoslovakia and also outlined the relationships between the Czech Legion and the Italians mentioning the complications that the Serbs caused.

Two examples were shown from early 1919 of the Czech Home Guard Battalion, cards sent back to Czechoslovakia were carried free by a form of courier service. Registered mail was treated differently: free postage only applied to letters and post cards, for registered letters a registration fee had to be paid. John showed examples of registered mail from individual service personnel (where postage and registration had to be paid) but troop mail (ie 'Official Mail') was treated as completely free even when registered. As well as free postage on letters and postcards from the troops in the field there was also free postage for letters addressed to serving soldiers and John showed several examples.

Yvonne Newbury showed items relating to the Siege of Paris. Examples of mail from Paris by balloon were shown, commencing with a pre-siege letter of the 5th of September. Later the forces had to use adhesive stamps. Mention was also made of the voluntary corps and special cachets.

James Grimwood-Taylor wondered if the parameters of the seminar had been designed specifically to exclude him because of his reputation as a 'GB' collector! However, determined not to be excluded he presented some material accumulated over time that proved it was not just GB items that interested him! James showed material from the post offices of the Island of Rhodes: he did admit there was a British postal administration involved in the island at some time. James had chosen to collect only up to the eve of the second world war and had been quietly accumulating without really writing it all up - and he thought he might have some concessionary rate covers. Covers, photocopies of information and a book were shown. The Italians moved into the Island of Rhodes well before the first world war, they seemed to have just taken it over with no real resistance. Cards from the Italian troops writing home were shown, a July 1912 postcard to Padua from the island of Rhodes showed a boxed mark. Some items had cachets and others showed attractive Italian Red Cross marks. From 1913 military regimental cachets appeared, some covers went free. Also shown were local letters and postal stationery items.

Mike Scott-Archer mentioned an item he had intended to bring along! When Belgian Reservists were called up at the beginning of the 1914 war they received a concession when issued with their uniforms: their civilian clothes were sent home as a concessionary parcel. Mike had one of the labels from such a parcel and thought the concessionary rate was probably about half the normal parcel postage. Mike's label was also interesting for another reason. Because the parcel rate was of an amount which matched one of the standard railway parcel label rates exactly and there had been great demand for these at the particular post office that served the sender's unit, the office had run out of stamps and had overcome the shortage by bisecting another value and making it up to the correct rate with a lesser value. It was an extraordinary way of giving the concession but the only example Mike knew of.

Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith began by saying that the earliest French concessions to forces personnel meant letters were only charged the internal French rates - in other words: postage was free from campaigns abroad but had to be paid from the frontier to destination. Bernard showed
a range of mail from a number of the French Campaigns abroad including: the French Expedition to Spain; the Expedition to Greece, the Greek War of Independence; the Crimea; the Campaign against Austria; the French Imperial Expedition to Lebanon; the French Campaign in China and the Mexican Expedition.

Eight years after the Battle of Waterloo the French occupied the whole of Spain, the campaign had progressed rapidly and Bernard showed covers illustrating a variety of rates to different parts of France commenting that there did not seem to be any logic to the rates. Also shown were a few prepaid letters one of which was registered, pre-paid letters were rare, the theory of the day was posting letters unpaid was an incentive for the post office to deliver a letter and collect their money. There were an enormous number of post offices which used the alphabet several times over in postal markings. Letters from the Spanish Expedition were also shown, again there were a variety of rates from 1811. It appeared that in one sense 'concession' for French mail from overseas campaigns was a 'bag', presumably carried free, to the frontier of France where mail was put into the French postal system.

The expedition to the Crimea was a Franco-British Expedition and mail was carried in closed bags, usually by British ships, Bernard commented he had never seen any of these expeditionary forces letters with stamps on. They usually had a straight line mark, they are rare and usually they were surcharged as unpaid simply because stamps were not available. Bernard showed examples of straight line and circular marks, Crimean mail was usually carried by French ships to Marseilles. Circular datestamps were generally authorisation for the reduced rate and a number of examples were shown. This concession in many cases also applied to mail sent to British troops, near to the Crimea, from the French Forces, a number of letters were shown and one apparently had a double surcharge but Bernard was not sure what it represented.

In the 1859 campaign against Austria military franchise was applied again and there were handstamps and circular datestamps to authorise a reduced rate. Field Post Offices had 'killer' bar cancellers to use on adhesive stamps that were quite separate from the circular datestamps used alongside. The next campaign was in China followed immediately by Indo-China. After the end of hostilities some of the French troops were withdrawn to Saigon in February 1862. The end of the franchise was supposed to be on the 1 February 1862 but the instructions were not received out in the east until some two months later.

The Mexican Expedition started unexpectedly and there were no special cancellations ready so they used a rectangular cancellation 'Correspondence des Armees' combined with the rate. These are unusual and Bernard had seen only a few, one example was shown. Bernard concluded with a 'first day' cover of the Siege of Paris marked 'Armee De Paris' in manuscript and a PP mark, it was a letter probably handed in by a soldier in uniform and also showed a Paris censor mark.

Mike Scott Archer summed up the seminar by listing the elements to bear in mind: Was the concession authorised? Did it need the signature of anybody to confirm it? What level of rank did it apply to? Did it apply going outside the country which authorised it or was it then necessary to 'add on' the foreign postage? Did it apply in both directions, ie from the family to the service person as well as from the service person to his family? Was the concession 'completely free' postage or only 'reduced postage' and did registration have to separately paid for?

One of the points Mike found particularly intriguing was that a British soldier serving in the Napoleonic Wars had the concession rate of a penny, but as soon as he became a prisoner of war (and was incarcerated somewhere in France) his mail was sent to London free, but it was then put into the post and his family had to pay the full charge on delivery and that could possibly be as much as 10d or a shilling. If his letter was 'on active service' it was a penny all the way: if he became a prisoner of war his family were effectively penalised! In reverse, of course, French soldiers in Britain had to pay the full postage to London and then, presumably, on a quid pro quo basis, their mail was carried in a sealed bag across to France and presumably, the internal mail within France would be charged on a distance basis. It could be an interesting, if sometimes complicated, study.

A Postscript to the Postal Historian 1992/19.
The Saturday Evening Conference Dinner

To commence the evening President Brian Brookes called upon Ron Hughes to say grace, Ron obliged by saying it in both Welsh and English! Your editor chickened out of editing the Welsh version but, in English: 'Oh God, grant thy blessing for our food, and help us to supply the needs of others and give us thankful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen'.

After the dinner Brian proposed the Royal Toast to the Queen. This was followed by toasts to the two founder members and two honorary life members present: John Firebrace, Ron Ward, Jack Andrews and Ted Coles. Brian followed this with toasts to his immediate predecessor, Alan Rawlings and his wife Vera, the President-Elect, Brian McCloy, and all the past presidents who were present.

There then followed a hearty welcome to our guests; Mr and Mrs Peter Brindley of the Welsh Philatelic Society, all the other guests, and all the wives. Brian said it was very nice to see such a large party and he hoped everybody was having an enjoyable weekend. He then thanked Mike Scott-Archer for arranging the Conference, this was greeted by spontaneous warm applause and calls of agreement. Brian also thanked Ken Sargeant for providing the illustration reproduced on the dinner menu [illustrated below] and Reggie Edmondson for providing flowers for all the ladies. Other important people thanked by Brian were the chefs and the hotel staff for the preparation and presentation of the dinner.

The Chairman Richard Harlow announced that, following the deliberations of the Membership Committee, Chris Hitchen had been promoted to Member and David Trapnell & Richard Stevenson would be invited to join the Society as associates.

At this point there were some loud calls of 'Tell us who won the Grand National!' - Brian said as this had been seen on television he might as well announce it. The winner was Seagram - Frank Bottomley had won the society draw. There were immediate calls of 'Drinks all Round!' - Robert Johnson pointed out the grim reality that his winnings wouldn't actually cover drinks all round!

Mike Scott-Archer announced the President's Egg-Cup Competition would be followed by the results of the Robert Johnson Postcard Quiz and these would take place as soon as the meeting room had been made ready for us.

The Stuart Rossiter 'One Thousand Covers' Raffle

Robert Johnson announced that Jean, our good President's wife, would make the draw to find the lucky winner of the Stuart Rossiter 'One Thousand Covers' Raffle. After an expectant pause while the ticket number was checked the winner was declared to be Michael Bament who was not at the Conference.

Saturday Evening, The Egg-Cup Competition.

This report of the 1991 Egg-Cup Competition includes brief notes that may remind those members actually present as to what they they thought they saw or heard (not necessarily the same as what they actually saw and heard!) on the night! There were 25 entries for the competition and your editor cannot remember if anyone was actually penalised for talking for too long. The displays are reported in the order of 'performance'. The Secretary, James Grimwood-Taylor, had devised an extremely cunning way to negate attempts by competitors to gain advantage by positioning themselves in the room so as to be at a preferred point in the batting list. Once James had listed the participating members names he stuck a pin in the list, started part way down and, once the bottom of the list had been reached, continued from the top!

Ron Ward showed some covers from Wales: not the Principality but the village in Yorkshire on the outskirts of Sheffield. Ron related the true tale of the MP for Rother Valley, Yorkshire, who wrote to the Minister of State for Education about comprehensive education at Wales Village School only to receive a reply from the Minister saying he had passed it on to the Welsh Office for attention! Ron also showed an early entire dated 1838, the only entire letter he had ever seen from Wales.

Tony Eastgate showed 'Eggs from Malta', including an example on a card dated 1918 showing an Easter Bunny and Easter Eggs.

Bob Swarbrick showed probably the only Tasmanian stamp cancelled on non philatelic tin-can mail, complete with letter and contents. Bob also claimed to have the world's largest collection of non philatelic tin-can mail, how about that!

Bernard Smith had a simple saga based on 'Romantic Llandudno', three picture postcards that raised cries of 'Ah!' from those members still awake.

Trevor Davis explained it was probably a lady who had written the letter he displayed. During the 19th century much mail was sent to the War Office from soldiers' wives and relatives asking for details of what had happened to their husbands and fathers; whether they were still alive and, if they were not, could they please have some money as compensation. The letter shown was obviously from one such wife who was not very good at writing letters - she had addressed it to the 'Whore Office'.

Gordon Harper showed some true Welsh postal history, principally two letters, written by a young man on a cycling tour of Wales in 1898.

Mike Young showed a display 'built' around a very fine used brick. This had been manufactured around Stourbridge in 1910, was imprinted 'OV' and had appeared in a recent postal history auction but failed to reach its reserve. As an example of a particularly fine Worcestershire brick it has now found a good home.

Alan Rawlings provided a metrical contribution to the evening called 'I Can't Remember' or 'The Lament of the Ageing Postal Historian':

Just a line to say I'm living,
That I'm not among the dead.
Though I'm getting more forgetful,
And am mixed up in the head.
I can cope with my arthritis,
To my dentures I'm resigned.
I've got used to my bifocals
But, By God, I miss my mind!

For sometimes I can't remember,
When I stand below the stair.
If I must go up for something,
Or have just come down from there.

And before the fridge, so often,
My poor mind is filled with doubt.
Have I just put beer to cool or,
Have I come to take some out?

So its time for me to write you,
There's no need for getting sore.
I may think that I have written,
And don't want to be a bore.

So remember that I love you,
And I wish that you were near.
But now it's nearly mail time,
So I'll say 'goodbye' my dear.

Here I stand beside the mail-box,
With my face so very red.
For in posting you my letter,
I have opened it instead.

John Forbes-Nixon: John showed us some of the smallest letters you could possibly find, including one sent only about a month previously. His final cover was a hundred and twenty five years old - just about the size of a postage stamp!

Yvonne Newbury showed some modern balloon mail, namely the centenary for the Paris Balloon Posts in 1971, when a special flight was arranged. It seemed that although flown in a balloon it never went very far, landing at the same place and probably getting the same cachet twice, once before the flight and once after!

Geraint Jones showed three covers from Bulgaria. The first from the Crimea War period as the British Army gathered to advance into Bulgaria. The second was a registered envelope addressed to the mother of Nicholas the Second of Russia and the third was a 1912 postcard written by an English lady who was on the last train from Bulgaria to Turkey before the Balkan War broke out.

Bryan Hunt showed three sets of postal cigarette cards: Ogden's 1909 set 'The Story of the Post', 'The Romance of the Post' and finally the 1905 Lambert & Butler set 'The Work of the General Post Office'.

Robert Johnson began by lamenting that after 1850 half the fun went out of postal history because envelopes didn't need a cover and the big cry these days is that you never know what was inside the envelope, how collectors would have loved to see the contents! The item Bob showed us was the top of a box that had been nailed down and sent by air to JD Macaulay (a past president of the SPH), the contents had been one of the better bottles of reserve port. Not only was it sent registered and charged but it was also sent airmail so the former president was obviously very excited at the feeling this bottle gave him. Robert concluded by saying that £1.84p customs duty had to be paid on it!

James Grimwood-Taylor showed us some 'Faxes from Hawaii' commenting that he thought he would show some oddments. Some members have pen-pals, some members have girl-friends, some members just have friends, but James seemed to have acquired a 'Fax-friend'. For what it was worth he hoped to be the first person ever to have displayed the most modern form of postal history at an SPH meeting. James read from one of these which had come from Hawaii: Question
'Why did the perverted postal historian cross the road?' Answer 'To mount a stamp.' James insisted he did not make that one up! It was all perfectly genuine postal history!

**Mike Scott-Archer** showed a trio entitled Holy Welshmen.

**Roger Broomfield** showed a postcard and a cover and had penned a limerick about the penny post handstamp of Llandudno with 'Penny Post' removed.

The postal historian should know  
The penny-post stamp of Llandudno,  
Oh Lord! He cried out  
There can be no doubt,  
They've nicked the free post from Llandudno!

**Ron Hughes** recounted a story from his youth about 'The Thursday Camp'. When a lad his parents would bring him year after year for holidays in the town of Llandudno and as he got older he became more and more bored with it. Then, one year, he went on holiday to a simply wonderful place called Cunningham Camp in the Isle of Man, where they slept in bell tents, and women and girls were only admitted on Thursdays. Ron showed a postcard of some typical campers and their bell tents. There was a shop and there was a post office but there were no traces of any postal markings, except in the year 1923, when for that season only, there was a cachet applied at the camp 'Posted at Cunningham Holiday Camp, Douglas, Isle of Man'. The way to the camp in those early days was up a long series of steps from the promenade at Douglas, these were illustrated on a card called 'The Golden Stairs' that showed people attempting to climb them. The title originated from a popular music hall ditty of the period:

> Oh Noah and his wife  
> Will be there with drum and fife,  
> Riding up the golden stairs.  
> They will give you brimstone hot  
> And they'll cook you on the spot,  
> Riding up the golden stairs.

The final card showed the languor of the camp on a Thursday. Ron commented that if we saw him standing on Llandudno's promenade looking out towards the north west over the bay, we would know he was dreaming of Cunningham Camp, on the Isle of Man, and he would be thinking about Thursday!

**Bill Hart** gave a dissertation on how the modern Post Office was increasing its profitability. He showed a cover illustrating a total postage due of 37 pence on 4 pence underpaid, this was a profit margin of some 925%!

**Frank Bottomley** [Right, upper] announced that he had received an exciting new development (from a philatelic establishment in Derby) for his study of the free franking system of the British Post Office. At previous SPH meetings we had seen the free frank with 'P' for privilege, we had examined Lady Louisa's sideways 'O' and also viewed Hilary's full frontal free. Now, for the first time in the history of this Society Frank was able to present a humorous posthumous free!

**Bob Roberts** [Right, lower] gave a short talk summarising his recent research into coil stamps and concluded with an experimental device introduced for use with postal stationery. Because of the experimental nature of these coils initially they had perforations top and bottom, later
they introduced interrupted perforations and also experimented with a suitable mount. Bob concluded by showing a monogrammed dispenser.

Richard Farman said his performance was derived from three theatres: the Grand Theatre of Littlehampton; Mr Noakes’ Theatre, which was at the back of the Staffordshire Knot Public House; and the old Town Hall, Burton on Trent.

David Venables blew the whistle on the Merioneth Mafia. This was a tale of a postcard with the message ‘Welsh interpreters at head office disagree’, a picture postcard of six Welsh cyclists and a cover bearing a Welsh label that translated as ‘Welsh League of Youth’

Brian McCloy showed three sheets from his Norwegian TPO collection which brought back memories of a weekend spent at Leamington Spa. The first sheet was of a train from Oslo through to Bergen with a snow-plough attached, the next item was a view of a train from Trondheim through to Sweden which called at a station called Hell and this was followed by a railway postcard addressed to the hotel, posted on the TPO.

Brian Wallas began by admonishing Mike Scott Archer for booking postal historians into a hotel with a leisure centre called ‘Mint Condition’! Brian’s theme was criticism and protest with an Irish flavour. He showed a complaining letter written from Dublin bearing two penny blacks (plate three), backstamped Dublin 4th January, with the penny blacks on the envelope upside down; and a letter quoting a good Irish protestant, who had lived in that country for 88 years until, at the age of 88, he married a lady of 38, and subsequently enjoyed another eleven years of active life. For the last 99 years of his life he was a tee-totaller! In conclusion Brian showed a valentine envelope with the heading ‘Intoxicating drinks are a bane and curse to society’.

Stan Bidmead showed three seals from the 16th and 17th centuries.

After the voting slips had been counted the Egg Cup Competition winners were announced as:

Members Competition: Ron Hughes

Ladies & Guests Competition: Bob Roberts

Marking of the Robert Johnson Postcard Quiz took place immediately after the Egg-Cup Competition. At right, Robert announces the prize was awarded to Alan Rawlings. A condition stipulated by Robert was that the stopper must not remain in the bottle for too long!
The President's Display by Brian Brookes

St Kitts

Brian Brookes showed us material from St Christopher, a small island only fifteen miles long in the West Indies that appears on most maps as just a dot [Map on Page 26]. St Kitts was discovered by Christopher Columbus on his epic voyage in 1493 but did not come into the British purview until 21st January 1624 when Thomas Warner landed with a party of settlers. The earliest letter Brian had from that era going into St Christopher was dated 2nd October 1669 and endorsed on the front 'Pr Pieter Bartholomew's' [Figure 1, below, this page]. The Dutch, Swedes and English signed the Triple Alliance against France in 1668 but in 1670 Charles II deserted the Dutch, the French subsequently overrunning the country in the following year. An important document shown was the appointment of Colonel Christopher Codrington 'To be our Captain General and Governor over our islands of Nevis, St Christopher, Monserrat, Antegoa, Barbuda, Anguila' signed by King William III on the 23rd September 1689 at Hampton Court in the first year of his reign with Mary.

The British Government needed a packet service out to the West Indies, various private ships had been used to send mail but really urgent official mail was sent by British government vessels - a packet service was not set up until 1745. The first postal mark was possibly the only two-line St Chris/topher mark, shown on a letter dated 30 October 1746 this was going to the customs office at Sandy Point and charged 1/6d, the rate agreed from 1st June 1711 until 1765 for mail from London to St Kitts. A letter dated 1753 was included because the writer mentions 'all the gentlemen of the island eat off china or white stone ware made in Staffordshire and entirely disuse pewter'.

Admiral Rodney's fleet with 14,000 soldiers under General Monkton took Martinique on 14th February 1762, St Lucia on 25th February 1762 and Grenada on 10th March 1762. The troops under Lord Albemarle took Cuba on 14th August 1762, 500 being killed in action but over 4,700 died from fever. Lord Albemarle's share of the booty was £122,697 - but the troops received less than £5 each. As a small island with few postal markings Brian had included some interesting letters in his display, he found the contents of some of these to be very interesting although some of the markings may look poor.

From the Madeira Correspondence Brian had a letter from St Kitts in 1766 endorsed 'P. Capt. Alexander via Philadelphia Q.D.C.'. Early letters with a Dover ship letter mark and then two Deal ship letter marks with a similar Deal ship letter mark endorsed per Capt. Ashington. One of these
was addressed to the owners of a ship and the writer mentioned 'The Maly sailed from St. Croix on the 5th instant after being 4 days wind bound, and as Captain Smith was much recovered and all went well on board we hope he will have a good passage to the coast.' She was loaded with extra strong rum with which to barter for slaves - the coast mentioned was the East African coast.

Brian showed a Portsmouth ship letter addressed to the Jamaica Coffee House in London, established about 1674 and mainly engaged in the West Indies trade. The first St Kitts straight line mark was a redirection mark, Brian showed one on a letter from London addressed to Madeira which went to St Kitts in error [Figure 2, page 27, opposite] A small circular mark, 'Penny
Postage Not Paid' with 'G' in the centre was shown. A letter written on board HMS Intrepid in Basseterre Road was shown, built in 1770 she was in the West Indies from 1780 and fought at the battle of St Kitts in 1782. The only red handstamp that Brian had seen, 'ST-*KITTS*' was used during 1784 on a cover from Antigua via St Kitts to England [Figure 3 below, this page]. St Kitts was near the middle of a group of islands and much mail originating from the smaller islands therefore went through St Kitts to get onto the packets. There were many straight line St Kitts marks.

A letter carried on the Greyhound packet left St Kitts on the 11th September 1787 and arrived in Falmouth on 24th October 1787. The Greyhound was commissioned on 19th September 1781 under the command of James Dunn. There followed further examples of the various St Kitts straight line markings.

A letter dated 13 July 1793 from Basseterre addressed to Newbury Port in the USA showed the 'N.YORK Aug.2' mark of the Statehood Period (1788 to 1797) applied on arrival [Figure 4, page 28]. A cover carried on the Princess Royal left St Kitts on 2nd February 1796 and arrived in Falmouth 12th March 1796. This was a very difficult period for the packet services, 12 out of 21 packets were lost in the period of nine years from 1790 to 1798. A letter dated 18 December 1798 from Martinique to Glasgow via St Kitts showed the seventh type of St Kitts mark.

[Figure 5, page 28]

Figure 2.
The first type of St Kitts straight line mark used on a letter from London dated 28th May 1779 (concerning a shipment of wine to St Kitts) addressed to Madeira. The letter went to St Kitts in error and was charged 'In all 1/5d'. It arrived back at London via Falmouth/Ship-Le on 24th November 1779 and finally reached Madeira on the 19th January 1780. [Figure 75% actual size]

Figure 3.
St Kitts straight line in red used during 1784 on a letter dated 12th March from Antigua via St Kitts to England. Received in London on the 22nd April 1784. [Figure 75% actual size]
The first two-line dated handstamp came into operation in 1798. Two letters arriving at Lloyds Coffee House together were shown, one to insure the vessel and the other to say the vessel had been lost and they were claiming on the insurance. Lloyds wrote to Francis Freeling to say they couldn’t be certain a ship was lost before claiming letters were posted - was there any way in which letters could be marked to ensure this did not remain a problem? After deliberation the use of dates was suggested and Francis Freeling wrote to the Postmaster General suggesting that they should use dated postmarks. That letter was dated 6 October 1798 and in full concurrence with the underwriters he suggested that all islands and all Colonies should be issued with a dated stamp thereafter. The earliest known use of the new dated marks was shown, 22 May 1799 [Figure 6, page 29].

Various two-line marks followed (from 1799 until 1805), a number of them had the year, the date and the name St Kitts. The first large fleuron mark appeared and a letter dated 22nd October 1805 was shown in which the writer mentioned ‘From the precarious situation in which all the islands were every person was apprehensive of drawing being doubtful whether their Bills would be honoured. The Wm. Manning and a few ships partly loaded sailed from here in May in consequence of the arrival of the combined Fleet at Martinico, but no regular convoy sailed from here until the last day of July’. A letter from Lieutenant C Harrison of the marines on board the HMS Ethalion at St Kitts showed the two-line dated Antigua mark in use from 1799 until 1809. The Ethalion was built in 1802, participated in the battle of Martinique in 1809 and went out of service in 1872. On
another letter dated 21st March 1807 the writer mentioned 'We are anxiously looking for the London Fleet, as the stores are much wanted it was a very fortunate circumstance that I planted Yams last year as provisions have been enormously high, at present there is nothing to be purchased if there are no arrivals from America soon, I don’t know what may be the consequence a great many Estates have nothing to give their Negroes'.

Lord Seaforth was Governor of Barbados from 1801 until 1806 before retiring to England. A St Kitts large fleuron was shown on a packet letter to London charged 2/-, this being the packet rate to London from 1805 until 1813. This seems expensive, another similarly rated cover from J Dace at Nevis was endorsed 'contains nothing in particular' and addressed to London where the recipient refused the letter to avoid paying the postage but with the knowledge that the writer was still alive and well.

A medium sized fleuron mark was in use from 1810 to 1822, an example on a letter dated 21st April 1812 was addressed to General Leigh in London - the fleuron showed the second '21' of the date missing and the '1's of '1812' inverted. A letter mentioned 'the first post packet was taken near Barbados but was afterwards retaken the mail however was lost to us as it was thrown overboard' The second letter mentions '... sorry to find that the Rio Navo has been captured off Madeira'. A letter from St Kitts via Tortola showing the two-line 'TORTOLA / 20 OCT 14' handstamp was charged 2/2d - packet rate to Falmouth of 1/2d plus inland rate of 1/- to London from 1813 until 1839. Another St Kitts medium fleuron on a letter endorsed 'P Lady Louisa Packet' was charged double letter rate of 4/4d, the letter was disinfected at St Just Pool at the mouth of Falmouth Harbour by slitting.

A newspaper dated 1815 included an advertisement offering a reward of $50 dollars to any person '... that will bring home, or cause, by intelligence the said Negro woman to be apprehended ...'. The writer of a letter dated 14th August 1817 mentioned 'Letters addressed to me have lain in the Post Office for a long time the officer being extremely neglectful'. A letter from seaman James Coltman on board HMS Tribune at Old Road, St Kitts, addressed to Derby arrived in Portsmouth on 6th July 1820. The cover was marked 'Not According / to the Act' and 'More to Pay' added, the letter was disallowed under the Act because the seaman had not filled in the name of the ship himself. A letter endorsed 'By the / Prince Ernest Packet', dated 10 August 1821, showed the Falmouth ½d, the letter going on to Glasgow. Another letter with a two-line handstamp of 'Tortola / 15 Aug 21', from St Kitts to Glasgow was charged as a triple letter rate of 7/3d, this was made up of 3/6d Packet rate (1813-1840) plus 3/9d Falmouth to Glasgow (500-600 miles, from 1812-1839).

A St Kitts medium fleuron used on a letter dated 27th June from St Bartholomews sent via St Kitts on 6th August 1822 was charged 2/2d packet rate to London. St Bartholomews was ceded by the French to Sweden in 1784 in return for commercial concessions to French vessels in Swedish ports. It was bought back by France in 1827. Letters to or from St Bartholomews are very rare. From
the Leeward Islands a letter was shown with the date 29th January 1827 (used at Falmouth in green from 1810 until 1830) on a letter dated 26th December 1827 addressed to Hackney, this was the only example of the mark Brian had seen from the Leeward Islands. A letter dated 27th September 1827 from St Bartholomews was addressed to Baldwin & Forbes in New York - this was charged 12 cents, in red, 6 cents ship letter charge plus 6 cents inland rate.

Brian started the second half of his display with a letter dated 30th March 1832 from St Kitts, endorsed '1 1/2 oz', charged 15/2d this was seven times the normal packet letter rate and at the time it would have taken a farm labourer about a month to earn that amount. An OHMS wrapper from the Quarter Master General’s office was endorsed 'Frank' and showed the double circle red Free Frank of 1st September 1832 addressed to St Christophers. The writer mentioned, 'Arrived Portsmouth after a remarkably quiet passage of only five weeks from St Kitts and expect to embark about the 1st of next month for the Mauritius'.

The Abolition of Slavery Act received the Royal Assent on the 29th August 1833 and became law on the 1st August 1834. At the time there were 668,000 slaves in the British West Indies, St Kitts having 19,780 for which the British Government paid £329,393 in compensation. In a letter dated 10th August 1833 the writer mentioned 'The question at issue respecting immediate emancipation is of such a tender nature that West India Proprietors will be very glad to part with their estates on almost any terms'. Slaves were freed - but they weren't really free because there was no other work for them to do: they were now paid for what they already did, but they didn't have such good conditions as when they were slaves because they weren't actually independent. They were unable to move out - most of the West Indian Islands (and certainly St Kitts) had been very prosperous, but a lot of the money being made had been taken back to England. So the inevitable decline set in.

Brian showed a small fleuron from St Kitts (in use from 1824 to 1843) on a letter dated 12th March 1835 from St Eustatus (one of the Dutch Islands) via St Kitts. This arrived in London on 11th May 1835 and was charged 2/2d. King William IV appointed Lieutenant Colonel Henry George Maclead as Lieutenant Governor of St Christopher, the relevant document signed by William IV was shown dated 9th September 1836.

An inter-island letter dated 17th April 1837 from St Kitts addressed to Barbados was shown, charged 4d on the front this was the inter-island rate in operation from 1711 until 1891. An interesting mark was the 'Letter / (Crown) / Nevis' in an oval with the word 'Ship' removed; this was used to signify the place of origin on a letter from Nevis to London where it arrived on 16th July 1837 [Figure 7, below]. The only forwarding agent Brian had seen from St Kitts was George Watley of St Kitts, the example shown was going from Stockholm to St Bartholomews via St Kitts and was charged 2/2d packet rate.

Figure 7. 'Letter/(Crown)/Nevis' in oval with the word 'Ship' removed, this was used to signify place of origin on letter from Nevis to London where it arrived on the 16th July 1837. Charged the packet rate of 2/2d in operation from 1813. [Figure 75% actual size]
A letter dated 20 January 1843 regarding Bill of Lading for sugar from Cayon Estate sent on the 'Benjamin Greene' was received on the 24th February 1843 and endorsed on the front 'P Steam Ship'. A letter from England to the West Indies illustrating the shilling rate in operation from 1840 until 22nd March 1854 was dated 28th June 1846 - from Manchester, it was addressed to Major MacClean, 3rd West India Regt. Granada. It arrived in Grenada on 5th August 1846 where it was endorsed to Demerara before this was cancelled and then re-addressed to 'Major McClean, Commandant St. Kitts' on the reverse, the writer mentions 'the protective duty on sugar I fear is doomed. The Anti Slavery Quaker Party will no doubt now make their minds to sweeten their fluids with whatever sugar may be the cheapest'. Slavery had been abolished in 1833 in the British Colonies and the French finally abolished the trade in 1848.

A small cover showed the St Kitts double arc used from 1844 until 1861 on an entire dated 17th August 1846 which also bore a 'Buckingham House' seal in yellow and white. The original house was built in 1703 by John Sheffield for the Duke of Buckingham and pulled down in 1825. Buckingham Palace was completely rebuilt on the site and completed in 1837. An OHMS cover from Barbados to 'The Field Officer Commanding the Troops at St Kitts' was charged 1/4d, four times the inter-island rate of 4d, this rate was in operation from 1790 until 1891. The daily packet list for September 11th 1849 was shown and the St Kitts double arc used from 1844 to 1861 [Figure 8, below]. The sixpenny rate was illustrated by a letter dated 15th October 1857 from Charles Tottie and Sons of London to Sir James B Haasum, Governor of St Bartholomews, sent care of George Wattley at St Kitts. The island of St Bartholomews was ceded by France to Sweden in 1784 and re-purchased in 1877.

Further examples of paid marks included some on newspapers and several dated and undated types, Brian had never seen any letter earlier than 1840 with a dated paid mark of St Kitts, a wrapper dated 18th January 1840 charged at the packet rate of 2/2d to London was shown. Copies of two newspapers (both 1859) were shown; 'The St Christopher Advertiser & Weekly Intelligencer' and the 'St Croix Avis'. Both had been through the post and showed paid markings of St Kitts. Dated and undated marks were shown for both the 6d rate (Rate per ½ ounce from 23rd March 1854) and the 1/- rate (Rate from 1 April 1863). When the Post Office made it compulsory to use postage stamps they issued British 1d, 4d, 6d, and 1/- values, Brian had only ever seen one cover bearing each of the 1d, 4d and 1/- values; that had been sent to Australia and appeared in an auction some five or six years previously.

St Kitts had been in a state of continual decline since the emancipation of the slaves so when British postage stamps were withdrawn they claimed they could not afford to purchase their own postage stamps and reverted to using the dated marks until in 1870 they were able to have their own postage stamps. De la Rue prepared their first issue of postage stamps and these are rare on cover because of the small quantities involved, Brian showed a 6d on a 1873 cover to Antigua and a cover to

Figure 8.
The St Kitts double arc mark used 1844-1861 on a letter dated 11th February 1851 from St Eustatius via St Kitts to London. Charged 1/- this was the ½ ounce letter rate between the British West Indies and England from 1st January 1842 until the 23rd March 1854. [Figure 75% actual size]
Melbourne with ten one-penny stamps on to pay the rate. A pair of sixpences on cover to London, dated 26th August 1875 was shown as a double letter rate. Also shown was a 1d local letter rate on a statement of account for the Island of St Kitts in the year 1876, the account amounting to just £30,000. A letter dated 26th March 1877 showed two 6d green stamps paying the treble letter inter-colony rate that was in operation from 1711 until 1891, the 8d mark in manuscript was an accountancy mark showing the amount of postage due to the British Post Office out of the one shilling charged. The next cover showed the fourpenny rate cover prepaid by a strip of four 1d magenta cancelled by a dumb cancellation, it took seventeen days by steamer from St Kitts arriving in Beckenham, Kent, in 1880.

The penny postcard was issued and an example used with an additional ½d dull green stamp made up the 1½d rate to England. Dated 11th July 1882 from St Kitts to Essex the message reads 'You will see by this that I still remember your desire to be supplied with new issues the 1d card being used for countries within a radius of 500 miles under a portion of the Postal Convention just put into force. They will necessarily be scarce at home' [Figure 9, above]. A further example of the same card dated 12th March 1883 had been made up to the 1½d rate by adding a bisected 1d magenta, addressed to the same person in Essex. The 1½d postcard was out of stock from February until the end of March 1883 when a fresh consignment arrived from England.

The penny newspaper rate to England was in operation from the 1st July 1879 and a copy of the St Christopher Advertiser dated 8th April 1884 was shown posted on 10th April 1884 from Basseterre the 1d carmine being cancelled by the 'A12' numeral, addressed to Hull it arrived after a journey of 18 days. Most of the provisional surcharges applied to St Christopher stamps were done at the Offices of the St Christopher Advertiser. A cover was shown dated 12th October 1883

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from St Kitts to London, the 4d blue (cancelled by the 'A12' barred oval) paying the rate per half ounce to England in operation from 1st July 1879 when the Leeward Islands joined the UPU [Figure 10, bottom of page 32].

St Kitts was a poor country that couldn't really afford postage stamps so when they had a surplus of 1d stamps following changes in postage rates they decided to overprint them. Varieties and bisects resulted from this decision. Brian began with a cover dated 31st March 1885 addressed to Dominica bearing a strip of eight of the Halfpenny on One Penny stamps with inverted surcharges. Some surcharges were inverted and some of the surcharged stamps were also bisected. A registered cover showed the 4d postage rate and 2d registration fee made up from the provisional issues. They were short of 4d stamps so the 6d stamp was surcharged and Brian showed one used on cover dated 12th May 1885 to pay the half ounce rate to England in operation from 1st July 1879. Collectors were trying to obtain these provisional stamps and Brian showed a normal 1½d postcard (cancelled 'A12'), posted on 9th July 1885 from the Postmaster of St Kitts to England, the writer stating 'Sir, £5 note received - neither kind of surcharge left - shall I return or send balance in stamps that are now being issued. Postmaster, St. Kitts 9 July, 1885'. The ½d on 1d carmine rose and the 4d on 6d green stamps had been issued in March 1885 due to shortage of these values.

On a cover dated 20th January 1886 from St Kitts to New York the 4d rate was made up by a 2½d blue plus 3 halfpenny dull-greens endorsed on the front 'With two newspapers'. This was followed by an 8d double letter rate prepaid by a pair of 4d grey, both items were to the same addressee in New York. A cover dated 5 August 1886 showed the 4d on 6d green paying the 4d rate to foreign countries in operation from 1st July 1879.

The 5d rate from St Kitts to Antigua was illustrated by a cover dated 9th June 1887 with five 'One/ Penny' on dull-green halfpenny surcharged stamps, this surcharge was done at the Post Office Basseterre to meet a shortage of one penny stamps. One of the scarcest of the overprints, and the most difficult to find on cover, is the one penny on 2½d ultramarine applied at the Printing Office of 'The Advertiser' in Basseterre and issued in May 1888 to meet a shortage of 1d stamps Brian showed an example dated 24th May 1888. Brian also showed a piece with the inverted ½d surcharge on a penny stamp together with a 1d carmine rose bisect. A registered cover from St Kitts was shown dated 1st August 1888 with three stamps on the front paying the 4d rate and a pair of 1d carmine rose on the reverse paying the 2d registration fee.

A 1d revenue stamp cancelled by manuscript date (16/5/89) was shown on a Bill of Lading for the ship 'Claudius' bound for Delaware Breakwater in the USA. St Kitts managed with overprinted stamps for three years, they then ran out of stamps and reverted once more to St Kitts paid markings but used a new small type, 'St Kitts Paid' in black. This was used during the shortage of stamps from about the middle of November to the middle of December 1889. Brian showed a cover going to Scotland, another to Barbados and one to England dated 10th December, all of these showed the small undated mark.

St Kitts were short of stamps again so their next attempt to solve the problem was to have stamps from Antigua. Brian showed a cover dated 27th February 1890 from St Kitts to Antigua with the Antigua 1d cancelled with the 'A12' numeral. By order of the Executive Council of the Leeward Islands eight sheets of 120 stamps were dispatched to Basseterre on 15th February 1890 and a further eight sheets forwarded on 11th March 1890 for use in St Kitts until supplies of the St Kitts 1d stamps arrived from London, the total number of the Antigua stamps used was 1920. The new stamps arrived from London at the end of March 1890. Another cover dated 28th March 1890 showed two pairs of these Antigua 1d and a pair of the St Kitts 4d grey (cancelled with the 'A12' numeral) to make up the treble letter rate of one shilling in operation from 1st July 1879 until 31st December 1890, one of the stamps showed a prominent re-entry on the 'O' and 'N' of 'One'.

A Leeward Islands printed stationery envelope dated 16th May 1894 with additional stamps (½d and 1d) making up the 2½d rate to England was shown with the 'A12' cancellation in purple, this

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colour being used during the early part of 1894 only. This was the only cover Brian had shown
with Leeward Islands stamps and also the only postmark he had seen cancelled in purple.

The final section of the display dealt with the sub-offices in St Kitts, Brian introduced these by
quoting two explanatory official letters. One letter from the Postmaster at St Kitts dated 25th
February 1881 mentioned ‘... as there is no interior arrangement of Postal Service connected with
the post office ...... but I have stated that a Police Postal Service exists - by these taking a mail round
the Island daily, the charge on each letter, parcel or paper uniformly 1d without reference to the
weight’. Another letter, also from the Postmaster at St Kitts, dated July 1887 mentions 'There is
no Express Delivery; there is a Letter Carrier. The road round the Island of St Christopher is 30
miles. There is a Post Office at Basseterre, the chief Town, and four in different parts of the
Country. The Police act as letter carriers, and deliver all letters within a quarter of a mile of the
road round the island. Letters from off the Island are thus delivered from the Chief Office without
any extra charge to the addressee. Two deliveries in Town each day and one in the country.
Registered Articles must be sent to the Chief Office, but Ordinary Letters, etc., can be posted at
any of the Country Offices. There are P. O. Boxes in the Chief Office by which any holder can obtain
his letters at any time the Office may be open at a rental of 5s. per annum'.

The 'country offices' had no postmarks whatsoever and letters were cancelled in manuscript. The
first example shown was of a single stamp, the 'One/Penny' overprint on the sixpence green issued
in June 1886 with a double overprint. All known copies of this variety are pen cancelled. It would
appear that the sheet was distributed to one of the local offices for internal postage none being
known used from Basseterre. That one sheet was used in just one office, a total of four copies have
been found with the double overprint and all bear similar manuscript cancellations - Brian's was
dated 3rd August 1886. Brian showed a page of various single one-penny stamps off cover
cancelled with various dates between 4th May 1876 and 22nd April 1885. These stamps had been
used to pay the local inland letter rate at the local offices. The overseas rate would have been
cancelled on arrival at Basseterre. Covers included one addressed to England dated 10th April 1883
posted at a local office and sent via the Head Post Office on 11th April 1883. The 1d magenta
applied to pay the local inland rate was cancelled with the date '10.4.83' in manuscript. On arrival
the 4d blue was cancelled with the 'AWJY' in circle at Basseterre before being forwarded to
England where it arrived on the 27th April 1883. The manuscript cancellation of 1d stamps at the
local offices to pay internal postage appeared to be the practice from 1879 until 1886.

One of the rarest items Brian showed was a cover addressed to a J D Adamson Esq from a lady
who lived very near to Lodge Estate enclosing an invitation, with the flap tucked in. The postage
was only a half-penny. The 1d carmine rose was bisected and used for local postage within the
village. As village postmasters were not supplied with handstamps the date was written in ink. This
was the practice with the 1d stamps affixed on letters in respect of the additional charge for carriage
from the village to the Head Post Office in Basseterre - Lodge Estate was at one time the Governor's
Residence [Figure 11, below].

Figure 11.
A local unsealed cover with the flap tucked in containing an invitation. The
postage was only a half-penny, a 1d stamp was bisected for this rate. Further
notes about this cover are included in the text above. [Figure 75% actual size]
A cover dated 25th August 1885 had been posted 'up-country' with the 1d carmine-rose being applied and cancelled in manuscript to pay the extra one penny fee for carrying it to the capital by post, the 4d grey on the same cover being cancelled on arrival at Basseterre on 26th August to pay the usual half ounce rate to England [Figure 12, below]. Brian concluded his display with a 1890 handbill advising an alteration in the day of departure for mails to the West Indies.

Figure 12.
A cover dated 25th August 1885 posted 'up-country' with the 1d carmine-rose being applied and cancelled in manuscript to pay the extra one penny fee for carrying it to the capital by post, the 4d grey on the same cover being cancelled on arrival at Basseterre on 26th August. [Figure 75% actual size]

The Sunday Evening Pot-Pourri

Yvonne Newbury showed some stamp boxes & Mauchline ware briefly outlining their history and development with examples of various items including hidden-hinge snuff boxes, advertising boxes and stamp boxes. Stamp boxes are usually plain although there are some circular ones with onlays of either actual stamps, miniature stamps, reproductions of stamps or fiscal stamps.

Helen Davis showed a selection of thimbles beginning with examples from the Middle East and Spain dating from about 1100AD. The early ones looked large, probably because they were lined with a piece of cloth or leather to soften it, not because people had very much bigger fingers! Thimbles produced in a variety of materials were shown, including brass, mother of pearl, tortoise-shell and ivory as well as decorated or enamelled ones.

Bryan Hunt admitted to being a member of the Philatelic Music Circle as he is very interested in opera. He showed one of his albums of stamps and postcards of world opera-houses and opened it at a page that showed a picture of him in 1936 when a member of the 'Hitler Youth Opera Goers' in Hanover. Bryan had also brought some world war one propaganda in the form of an album of cartoons and picture postcards.

Ron Hughes showed us one of his sidelines, very appropriate for Sunday, of letters to and from clergymen. He briefly explained the workings of Queen Anne's Bounty, which resulted from an Act Queen Anne got through Parliament enabling the clergy to have a little bit more money.

Along with his letters Ron told a number of tales in his own entertaining way including the story of a visit to a church lit with oil lamps and candles. On a table in the vestry was a candle giving a pretty good light. The rector put his hat on the table and went down to the end of the church to arrange the hymns with the organist where they must have had a bit of a disagreement because they were gone for a long time. All of a sudden Ron realised the light had suddenly become quite good and he saw it was being generated within the vestry: the rector's hat was brim uppermost, near the candle, and the candle had set the brim on fire. As the rector wore oil on his hair it had the effect of an Aladdin lamp! A great rift of light, you see! The front of the cap had gone by then and Ron blew the flames out. When the rector came back Ron said to him what was probably the silliest
remark ever made by one clergyman to another: 'Excuse me rector, but while you were away your hat went on fire'. The surprise was the rector just said, 'Oh, did it? Really? Never mind', and he carried on with the service. Afterwards everyone went down to the village pub to have a meal together and the rector walked there in his hat with no front!

**Bernard Lucas** gave a short dissertation on French revenue stamps as 'revenue history' when they were actually shown used on documents. He showed a special stamp for identity cards and stamps which had to be put on official copies of bills of exchange. When France issued a general issue of fiscal stamps in the 1920's for some time after all the specific fiscal stamps could be used generally - Bernard showed some of these, including income tax stamps used on bills of exchange and affiche stamps on a bill of exchange.

**Bob Emery** began by saying he had recently been able to buy a run of postcards from Australia, all depicting troop ships. The troopships had been photographed leaving Australia, the photographs then being made into postcards which were sold, each postcard was engraved with the name of the ship and the date it left Melbourne - they obviously didn't worry too much about security in those days! They made an interesting run and Bob had checked through all the dates of departure from Melbourne to find that just one item in his listing of troop ship sailings was incorrect by just one day!

**David Venables** showed some itineraries of Welsh Railtours and told a tale about one of these. The train left Newport at about 8 o'clock in the morning, growing up steep lines in the Welsh valleys to visit colliery yards. Whenever the train stopped at the end of a line many of the enthusiasts leapt out of the train and ran round taking photographs. One couple on the train were rather well dressed, in fact they looked to be quite out of place on a railtour. The morning passed with the train going up one valley and coming down again; reversing at the junctions and going up yet another valley only to come down again. After a couple of hours of this to-ing and fro-ing up and down the valleys the well dressed man leaned over and said to the people opposite him, 'What time does this train get to Gloucester?' They were on the wrong train! The signalman contacted the signal box down the valley and made arrangements while we travelled down; on arrival a taxi was waiting to whisk them off to Newport and get them on a train to Gloucester.

**Stan Bidmead** showed his collection of French sugar wrappers. In the second half of 1990 the largest of the French sugar manufacturers decided to wrap their lumps of sugar in paper on which were printed the designs of various items of French postal history. Each of the wrappers, making up a series of 24, could be obtained by raiding sugar pots in cafes and restaurants. All the wrapper designs had some connection with French postal history, for example stamps and postmarks, but when closely inspected they don't quite meet the criteria for accurate postal history. The compiler of the wrapper designs had used some license and included 'deliberate errors' in every one of them.

**Bryan Wood** showed a display of mails between the United States and Spain (in both directions) prior to 1875. At that period it was difficult for United States citizens to send mail to Spain, there was actually no service to Spain and no way in which to fully pre-pay a letter. Letters had to be sent to England and then passed to a forwarding agent for onward transmission to Spain. Bryan's display illustrated the difficulties they had in getting mail to Spain. Even after 1849 the US had to rely on the British and French arrangements with the Spaniards to get their mail through - the best the US could offer was to get mail to the Spanish frontier with France and hand it over to the Spanish postal authorities - this meant the part of the journey through Spain was always paid for by the recipient. In other words, it was only possible to pre-pay part of the journey. Similarly, when the Spaniards were sending mail to the United States they had exactly the same problem, the mail was always surcharged for delivery from the US ports to destination.

**Joan and Gordon Harper** commenced with a display of maps dating from about 1250 AD, mainly of examples pertaining to north Wales. A card from the British Museum illustrated one of the earliest detailed maps of great Britain extant, drawn about 1250 AD by a monk at St Albans, on
which Wales could be recognised along with the Isle of Anglesey. Two other maps were early Saxon, maps of Anglesey, Denbighshire and Flint followed; early maps made no reference to Llandudno. Attractive maps of north Wales showing mileages followed together with a larger version of the print that appeared on the Conference Dinner menu the previous night - an explanation was given of the 'apparent' railway that was running from the west shore [Illustration on page 20]. This was only an artists impression, a proposed development for Llandudno in the 1840's or thereabouts that never came to fruition but some of the other buildings of that time still exist. Gordon completed the display with some pictures of the early railway accident which occurred, not far from Llandudno, between Colwyn Bay and Abergale, the first railway accident in which Royal Mail was either damaged or lost completely.

John Whiteside showed Czechoslovakia from the period of the Austrian Empire before it became Czechoslovakia. Mainly revenue material they included documents with and without stamps and delivery notes for magistrates' court messengers, delivering documents from the magistrates court around the area for a variety of reasons. Also shown were an invoice from the magistrates court for expenses incurred on a case and a protocol with a receipt for two sets of stamp duties. The first Austrian Empire revenue stamps were issued in 1854, John showed three receipts for the supply of altar candles to churches in Southern Moravia. Other receipts were shown for a consignment of cattle-cake being sent across Prague, this showed two tolls for passing through gates in the City of Prague. One problem of collecting revenue stamps is that they often appear inside a cover with an equally interesting postal mark on the outside - it is difficult to show both sides!

Brian Wallas showed some serious postal history, beginning with a 1913 registered cover from Cork to Lucerne with a 4½d Irish National Health & Insurance stamp, the correct rate if a wrong stamp, as it so happened. There were no 4½d Irish postage stamps in those days so the Swiss just let it go through. Secondly another Irish item of 1832 was proof of a serious outbreak of cholera in southern Ireland and what was purported to be the only example of a UK disinfected letter. Finally, letters of 1928 and 1935, one from Stettin and the other from Helsinki.

Bill Hart showed mainly labels on cover but his first sheet was an exception, a machine cancel 'A Happy New Year, and a New Government Too' - it only lasted for two days! Netherlands Spitfire Fund labels were followed by insurance stamps, savings stamps and an Irish savings stamp, all 'properly' used on covers with no tax marks. Red Cross labels, a Malaya famine relief label tied to cover, anti-famine labels of China, Australian Red Cross and the South African Red Cross 4d label - which is quite rare used on a cover - followed. Other labels included: St John Ambulance

A Picture of Concentration.

Members listen attentively during the Sunday Evening Pot-Pouri displays and talks.

Your Editor cannot quite remember what they were concentrating on but they did have an excellent weekend of philatelic pleasure in the most enjoyable company.
Association of Southern Rhodesia, Ceylon War Purposes contribution of 1941 and a South Africa 1943 'Help Our Ally the Russian Communists'. Other labels encouraged the purchase of British or Colonial manufactured produce, promoted tariff reforms and the Australian anti-German trade campaign of 1915. The Common Market engendered quite a number of labels, some for, some against: one of each were shown. In 1938 politics invaded the British Post Office, a label 'Mosley will Win' so enraged the sorter he used his handstemp to obliterate it heavily, right on the face so that Mosley couldn’t be seen!

Alan Rawlings showed a short display of items relevant to the Llandudno area. These included the mark 'Posted on La Marguerite', the steamer which plied from Llandudno in the great Edwardian days and (with the exception of the 1914-18 war years) from 1904 to 1925. Two kinds of cachet exist, both the straight line and circular types being shown. For Geoff Manton's benefit Alan also read a sporting poem from around 1820:

When my very first day, to the field I had got,
I discovered great natural parts as a shot.
My spaniel had put up a snipe from a bog,
I missed it I own, but I brought down my dog.

So then, my first hunt, I brushed over the grounds,
I decidedly distanced the fox and the hounds,
And I leaped my first hedge with so earnest a mind
That I left a fine gelding I rode on behind.

But time and experience rendered me cool
And I counsel young sportsmen to think of this rule
When you go out a shooting, don't shoot your dog dead
And, in riding a horse, don't fly over his head.

Alan also showed some original campaign photographs of the Boer War. Finally a remarkable letter addressed to Lady Drummond, headed 'Simla, August 21st, 1894', in which the writer was saying he had attended a great party where they heard a phonograph, one of the best in the world, play music as clear as if they had been at the opera itself. This was at the height of the Great British Raj in 1894 and was a very early reference to the phonograph.

Jeremy Martin showed ephemera of the Elder Dempster Line which carried mail and passengers to West Africa. The most famous of their ships is probably the SS Jebba which ran aground on to the coast of Devon - Jeremy showed some postcards, labels and advertising cards illustrating public parts of the ship. Also shown were postcards of the SS Accra, baggage labels, a handbook and luggage labels.

Geraint Jones showed a local miscellany including local government postal history material that he had 'rescued'. This was followed by a letter from the Bishop of Bangor in 1912 who was inspecting a strike in north Wales, the Bishop expressed concern that there would be shortages of food, fuel and everything else. In the final item, dated 1917, the Mayor of Bangor was complaining that troops coming home on leave cannot travel by train further than Bangor, effectively stranding them. The mayor had been trying to organise meals for troops arriving there very late at night or very early in the morning.

Mike Scott Archer concluded the evening with a book 'The Record Book of the Head Postmaster of Cardigan', a record for his territory from the end of the first world war to about 1930. Mike had photocopied some of the pages and these showed pages with impressions of handstamps used on tender packages, the metal datestamps and draft documents for the telephone office. It was all most unusual material! The range of entries in the book included notes on things like lost property, damaged parcels, damaged letters, inappropriate material in letters - it was a microcosm of the perils of being a Head Postmaster in mid-Wales sixty or seventy years ago.
The Postal Services of Chirk & Ruabon

A standing display by Mike Scott-Archer at the Llandudno Conference

Prior to 1800 and the industrial revolution, life in these communities was largely linked with the three major estates - Chirk Castle, Brynkynallt and Wynnstay. Their postal links were with Oswestry or Wrexham, both towns themselves off the main mail-coach routes. In 1808 the new Holyhead road through Chirk and Llangollen was at last chosen for the Mail Coach to Ireland. At the same time a Mail Cart from Chester via Wrexham and Ruabon met the Coach at Whitehurst Gate midway between Chirk and Vron.

By this time too, the feeder Canal from Llangollen through Pontcysyllte and Chirk was carrying the rapidly expanding coal and iron produce of Plas Kynaston, Acrefair etc. Chirk had been established as a Post Office Receiving House by 1805 and in the month of April 1810 Sir Watkin Williams Wynn wrote to Freeling, Secretary to the Post Office in London, about the establishment of a Receiving House at Ruabon; by late summer Ruabon was open.

On 27 December 1811 Chirk was made Receiving House No 1 under Oswestry Penny Post, it was finally established as a Post Town on 25 November 1831 when the Wrexham mail was transferred from the Shrewsbury-Ellesmere route to Chirk-Ruabon. Ruabon seemed to retain Post Town status throughout 1810-1840 as letters from there bear no evidence of a 1d rate with one exception: a letter dated 13 June 1838 to Oswestry has both Ruabon undated double circle arc and Chirk (very faint) and is rated 5d though the total distance from Ruabon to Oswestry is only 11 miles - i.e., less than the 15 allowed for 4d.

Both Ruabon and Chirk received Maltese crosses and, in 1844, numeral oblitarators. By the 1850’s mail was regularly rebagged at Ruabon and by 1859 Chirk was under Ruabon, which cancelled all adhesive stamps on letters from Chirk. Thirty years later Chirk began to cancel again and from then both offices were subsidiary to Wrexham in administration, though Chirk remained under
Ruabon until about 1915. Datestamps incorporated Wrexham and/or Denbighshire for both towns from the 1920's until county reorganisation in the 1970's. The village datestamps indicate their own status by the inclusion of one or more of Chirk/Ruabon/Wrexham/Denbs.

At various times other villages in the Ceirog and Dee Valleys came under Chirk and/or Ruabon, but if they were at any period under Llangollen they are included in the Llangollen group.

The replacement of the Holyhead Mail Coach by the railway between Wrexham and Shrewsbury in 1848 was followed by the establishment of a Mail Coach or Cart from Llangollen Road Station to Barmouth, and subsequently (In 1850?) by one from Ruabon via Acrefair to Dolgelly and Barmouth. The opening of the Vale of Llangollen Railway in 1863 was followed by a Railway Mail Contract.

Cefnbychan was replaced by Rhosymedre in 1842 and Newbridge by 1847. The Lodge was replaced by Weston Rhyn about 1890.

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**RUABON POST OFFICE - 1835 - 1895**

Extracts from Directories (local) & P.O. Directory for 1850.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Postmaster/mistress</th>
<th>London Letters</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Other Mail</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In</td>
<td>Out</td>
<td>In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Mary Edwards</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>10.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Edward Morris</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>08.45</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>08.00</td>
<td>16.45</td>
<td>v.Wrexham/Barmouth/DolY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>06.30</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>v.Chester</td>
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<td>17.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Edward Morris</td>
<td>04.30</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td></td>
<td>no change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1868 | Robert Lloyd delY{and | 07.00 | 10.30 |
|      | 16.00 | 20.30 |
| 1874 | " " Church St.       | 07.00 | 10.30 | Irish/Chest 15.20 |
| 1876 | also despatches as follows: Oswestry | Chirk | Llangollen & Corwen |
|      | 12.30 | 14.45 | 21.03 |
| 1883 | Robert Lloyd         | 04.00 | 10.30 | others as above except Llig/C |
|      | 13.15 | 20.30 | AND extra London IN 09.42 |
| 1889 | G.O. Davies          | 07.00 | 10.30 |
|      | 13.30 | 21.00 |
| 1895 | William Jones        | 07.00 | 10.30 | to Oswestry | 11.30 |
|      | 14.00 | 21.30 | Chirk | 14.50 |
|      |              | Chester | 18.40 |

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**Talepiece**

*It's a Dogs Life!*

He: 'I always kiss the stamps on your letters, because I know that your lips have touched them.'

She: 'Oh! And to think I dampen them on Fido's nose!'

[From a Christmas cracker pulled by a member at the Christmas Lunch, Solihull, on Saturday 14th December 1991]

A Postscript to the Postal Historian 1992/40.