

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

<b>Editor's Column</b>	<b>p 2</b>	<b>Membership Report</b>	<b>p 14</b>
<b>Chairman's Message</b>	<b>p 3</b>	<b>My Oldest Cover</b>	<b>p 15</b>
<b>Programme 2026</b>	<b>p 5</b>	<b>Demise of the HPF</b>	<b>p 16</b>
<b>Packet Manager</b>	<b>p 6</b>	<b>Something of an Oddity</b>	<b>p 17</b>
<b>Chandler's Ford</b>	<b>p 8</b>	<b>Oldest Postal History</b>	<b>p 20</b>
<b>Postal History</b>	<b>p 9</b>	<b>Auction Find</b>	<b>p 21</b>
<b>Zoom Meetings</b>	<b>p 11</b>	<b>Christmas Lunch</b>	<b>p 23</b>

## EDITOR'S COLUMN

by Steve Gerrard [sdpseditor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sdpseditor@hotmail.co.uk)

January 2026

**A**s we say goodbye to 2025 and enter into 2026, I wonder what the new year will bring.

At the end of 2025 we saw the closure of the Hampshire Philatelic Federation and we had 16 clubs and societies affiliated to the Federation. The Federation was there to help our members and also to put together HAMPEX, so, with the closing of the Federation, we have also lost HAMPEX. The problem being that none of the members wished to take on the chairmanship of the HPF. The details of the clubs and societies have been put on the S&DPS website and are available to everyone. It was agreed that any monies held by the HPF will be equally split between the 16 clubs and societies affiliated to the HPF at the time of its closure.

The Society has seen numbers falling (See graph on page 7) and in 2026 we see subs rise to £25.00 a year. A good thing or a bad thing? Only time will tell. Hopefully we continue with the success of the Packet and the 5 Auctions in 2026. We have an excellent program of speakers, not only in the flesh at our meetings, but over ZOOM which has been a great success. Our archives have steadily grown over the past 12 months but our Postal History Collection has not really increased in the past year.

So, let's hope that in 2026 we see more achievements in the club and the next 12 months will see a steady growth in our membership numbers.

My sincere thanks go to all the following who have contributed to this issue, in alphabetical order: Austin, Patrick / Blundell, Stephen / Bradshaw, Melvyn / Bruce, Peter / Chard, Kevin / Coe, Malcolm / Jones, Julian / Montgomery, Malcolm / Painter, D.W / Stewart-Cox, Adrian.

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## SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

By Kevin Chard (Chairman) December 2025

**F**irstly, I will take this opportunity to express my best wishes to you and yours for the year ahead. Happy New Year! May your philatelic passion remain undiminished.

I am certainly looking forward to the year ahead for the Society – an exciting programme, a full auction programme and hopefully some special events.

The first thing though is the changes we are making to membership subscriptions. The main rates are now £25 (for hardcopy Postmark / Auction catalogues, including postage where incurred) or £15 for a digital membership (electronic distribution, saving printing and postage costs). There is a second household member rate and an associate membership for vendors to the Packet / Auction. If you pay by standing order, please make sure you have changed this to reflect your membership preference. This will be the last hardcopy Postmark / Catalogue for those choosing digital membership.

Once the dust has settled from the subscription changes, the Committee will be able to assess the finances and decide on what we can and can't do. This will be additional to the current programme. We will of course review what is offered every year but the 2027 programme (and beyond) will more be in response to attendance numbers at meetings. We have seen a decline in numbers since Covid, the Auctions draw the largest attendances. I would encourage all members to make an effort to attend meetings either at Chandler's Ford during the day or an evening at Holy Saviour, Bitterne. These are all good, sociable events – and you may pick up some added knowledge and insight into the bargain.

In December we held a Christmas Lunch at City College in Southampton. Not strictly an innovation as we have held lunches before but certainly a return and addition to our programme of activities. My thanks to Alan Blakey and Steve Blundell for making this happen. The food was excellent quality, and we had the venue to ourselves (we used up most of their capacity). The meal was also excellent value, for £25 we had a 4-course meal plus coffee and the portions were generous. The Society waded in with wine and drinks. Many attendees brought spouses, partners, friends and this made for a very sociable occasion. Everyone I spoke to had a good time and

# SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

## By Kevin Chard (Chairman) (Continued)

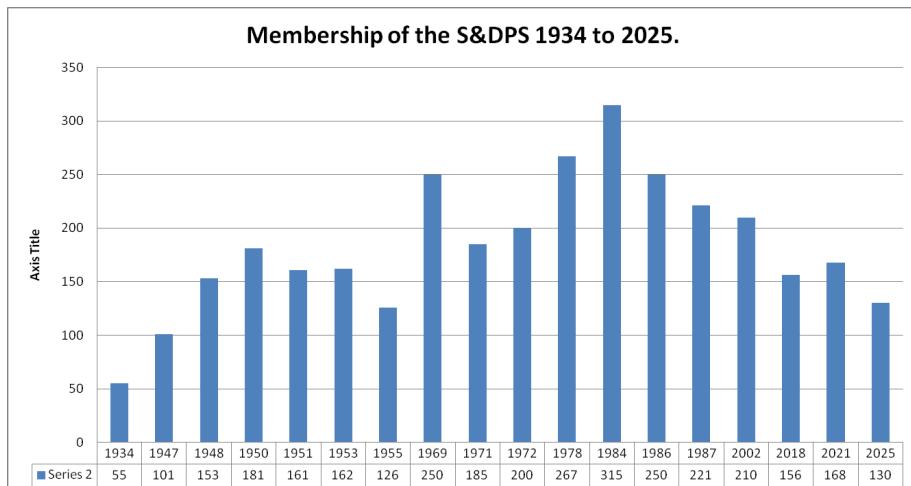
December 2025

I hope that we can recreate this in 2026 and have already enquired about dates.

The first Auction of 2026 will be in February, and the Catalogue will accompany Postmark. Putting my Auction manager hat on, I am very excited about this Auction – we have some very nice quality material right through to some sorter lots that look as if they are tremendous value at reserve (and indeed far beyond reserve). Take a look. Remember that if you can't attend, it is very easy to bid postally. You can just send an email if preferred.

Here's looking forward to another exciting philatelic year!

## HIGHS & LOWS OF THE SOCIETY



The highs and lows of the society from 1934 to 2026 has seen 4 peaks in membership in 1950, 1969, 1984 and 2021 with a membership ranging from 55 in 1934 and then 130 in 2025.

# 2026 PROGRAMME - JANUARY to APRIL

## By Patrick Austin (Programme Secretary)

December 2025

### **JANUARY**

- 6th - No Meeting
- 8th - Afternoon meeting at Chandler's Ford
- 20th – Members' Evening - Bring & Show
- 27th - SDPS Jubilee - Society Members (ZOOM Meeting)

### **FEBRUARY**

- 3rd - Speaker - Africa & Adjacent Islands - James Podger (FRPSL)
- 10th February - Committee Meeting
- 12th - Afternoon meeting Chandler's Ford
- 17th - Auction
- 24th - Speaker - Jon Higgins (FRPSL) - British Borneo Air Mails 1926-1941 (ZOOM Meeting)

### **MARCH.**

- 3rd - Speaker - Peter Webb - India
- 12th - Afternoon meeting at Chandler's Ford
- 17th – Members' Competition to be judged by members & Bourse/Silent Auction
- 31st - Speaker - Reg Dixon (FRPSL) - Nothilfe - German Emergency Aid 1924-1935 (ZOOM Meeting)

### **APRIL**

- 7th - AGM, Mini-Auction and Queries and Recent Acquisitions
- 9th - Afternoon Meeting Chandler's Ford
- 21st – Members' Evening - Letter G
- 28th - Speaker - Ceylon Revenues - Peter Cockburn (FRPSL) (ZOOM Meeting)

## PACKET MANAGER REPORT

By Melvyn Bradshaw (Packet Manager)

December 2025

**N**ineteen boxes have been audited and paid to date. Total sales in these boxes amounted to £8,620, with the Society receiving £921 in commission, non-member levy and donations. Currently, twenty-five boxes are in circulation or prepared for circulation, including a box supplied by the Isle of Wight Society. A further box has been received from the island for future circulation. Sales in these boxes amount to a little over £5,148.

Six boxes are currently on the Isle of Wight, and four boxes have been collected from the island for audit, one to be paid and three for recirculation. As explained previously, the number of boxes being taken to the island has been increased owing to the good sales from recent boxes which have circulated there. The decision to take more boxes to the island does mean that it takes longer for the full circulations to be completed and hence later audit and payment.

Thank you for ensuring that boxes are moved on with reasonable speed. I appreciate receiving 2 boxes at once may take longer than 3 days, and if you are unlucky and get 2 more in the opposite direction 3 days will not be enough! Please pass on boxes as quickly as convenient.

We have received several new, previously unused, circuit boxes. These have a smaller depth than current boxes and therefore hold only between 23 and 25 booklets depending on thickness. The value and range in these boxes is likely to be lower than usual. Depending on other factors, you may receive 3 boxes if one or two of the new boxes make up your next distribution.

Thank you also to all who have responded by combining amounts in one cheque to cover purchases from several boxes, and to all those who have remembered to post their slips, even if paying by bank transfer. It makes life so much easier for me.

Although we have a reasonable number of booklets ready for future boxes,

**IMPORTANT NOTICE - PLEASE REMEMBER TO INFORM THE  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY IF YOU MOVE OR CHANGE /  
CANCEL YOUR E MAIL ADDRESS OR PHONE DETAILS ETC.  
STEVE BLUNDELL - MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.**

# PACKET MANAGER REPORT

By Melvyn Bradshaw (Packet Manager)

(Continued)

December 2025

new booklets are always welcome. I have a good supply of empty booklets, If you require any, I will bring them to meetings or post them to you. The current cost is now 35p per booklet, or 3 for £1.00, plus postage where relevant. Thank you everyone for your support. If you need to contact me, please use my mobile phone number, 07973 696291, or by my email (melbradshaw44@gmail.com).

## MEMBERS' PRESENTATIONS



On the 18th of November, members gave presentations starting with the letter 'F'. (Julian Jones, S&DPS President).



On the 2nd December we had a presentation from Sue Lambert (Member) on Liberty & All the Colours of the Rainbow.

# CHANDLER'S FORD MEETINGS

## By Peter Bruce (Convenor)

December 2025

Meetings in the winter months are often lighter on numbers and this year was no exception. However, we still enjoyed some interesting displays and, of course, some good socialising together.

September gave us Fiji, World War Two, and our chairman with an extensive collection of "Odd" countries! More to come on this we anticipate.

In October we had Falklands wildlife, Australia and New Zealand airmail, and a display of stamps made from unusual materials such as cotton weave, or ones including holographic pictures.

November produced a large collection of early GB postal history, a collection of Kuwait and an old letter which seemed to have time travelled! Talk to Ian Greig to find out more about that.

December was our Christmas Social, so supplies of mince pies and sausage rolls fortified us all. The displays had a mostly Christmas theme, with items from Guernsey and Jersey and the USA amongst others.

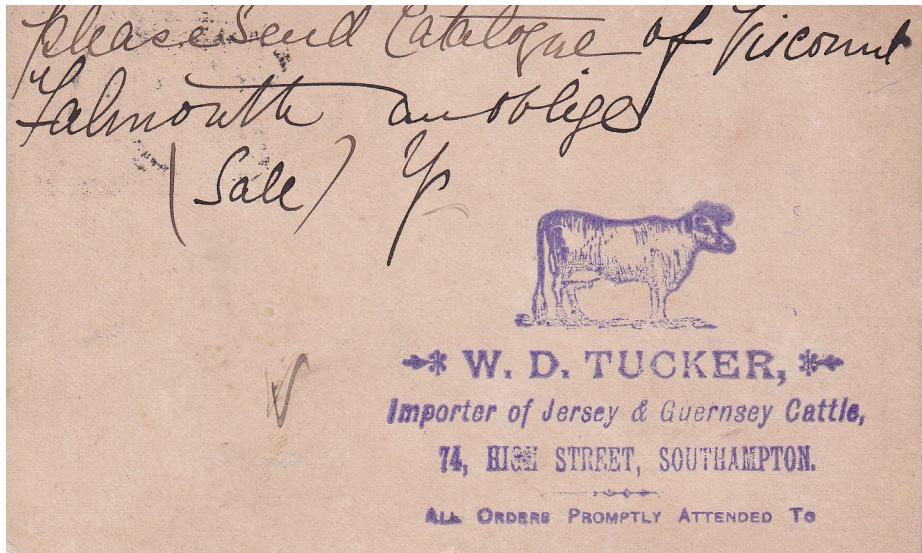


# SOUTHAMPTON POSTAL HISTORY UPDATE

By Steve Gerrard (Curator)

December 2025

I have added the following 2 items to the Society Postal History that I found whilst surfing eBay. (Other auction sites are available).



This advertising postcard was for W.D. Tucker who were importers of cattle from the Channel Islands.



**TO SEE THE 2026 PROGRAMME & KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS**

Visit our website [www.southamptondps.org.uk](http://www.southamptondps.org.uk)

# SOUTHAMPTON POSTAL HISTORY UPDATE

## By Steve Gerrard (Curator) (Continued)

December 2025



This cover celebrates the 40th Anniversary of the 'Discovery of the Titanic' and is date stamped 1.9.2025.



The British Heart Foundation.



Congratulations England Women's Rugby Squad World Cup Champions 2025.

I keep looking for new Special Cancels and Slogan Cancels so, if you see anything on the internet or receive anything with the above, please send me a copy for our Postal History Collection.

**ZOOM SESSIONS September – November 2025**

**By Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-ordinator)**

**Malc.coe@gmail.com**

**December 2025**

Since the last issue of Postmark we have enjoyed three excellent Zoom events. Attendance remains good, 25 attended the most recent one, but it would always be great to have a few more SDPS members attending to encourage our speakers who put so much effort into their presentations. We run an open doors policy so anyone outside of SDPS may request to be put on our Guest List – just contact me at the address at the bottom of this article if you or a friend want to join the mailing list.

In September we had a very entertaining zoom talk from Terry Page FRPSL. His title was “Russia-Zemstvo Postal History”. It was a fascinating presentation in which he showed how the rural postal system in Russia played such an important part of local communications.

**Russia Zemstvo Postal History.**

**Terry Page (FRPSL).**

**A display given to the Southampton & District Philatelic Society.**

**30th September 2025.**



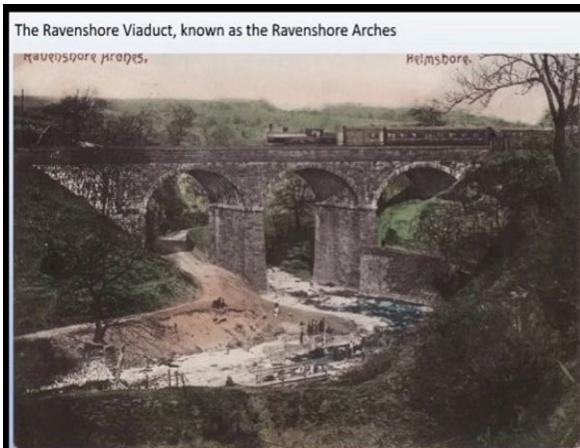
ZOOM SESSIONS September – November 2025  
By Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-ordinator)  
[Malc.coe@gmail.com](mailto:Malc.coe@gmail.com) (Continued)

December 2025

For our October talk we welcomed Len Stanway FRPSL with the title "Mails under London". A fascinating insight into the use of dedicated rail systems under London to move the post around.



Then for the last one of 2025 we had another excellent presentation by Keith Burton FRPSL. He took us into fascinating story of viaducts, both within the UK and abroad. A topic obviously close to his own heart.



**ZOOM SESSIONS September – November 2025**  
**By Malcolm Coe (ZOOM Co-ordinator)**  
**Malc.coe@gmail.com (Continued)**

**December 2025**

Our library of these video talks continues to grow and provides an impressive array of accomplished speakers and their talks. This library may be watched by anyone, all you need is a web browser on any platform (iPad, Mac, Windows PC, Android device etc). You do not need to use Zoom. Just take a look at the list on our web site and click on the title of interest to you:

<http://www.southamptondps.org.uk/avideolibrary.html>

Our programme of talks for 2026 is now fully booked and we have the following to look forward to:

Jan 27 - SDPS members Jubilee

Feb 24 - Jon Higgins "British Borneo air mails 1926-41"

Mar 31 - Rex Dixon "Nothilfe – German Emergency Aid, 1924-1935"

Apr 28 - Peter Cockburn "Ceylon Revenues"

May 26 - John Berridge "The story of Bulawayo"

Jun 30 - Margaret Emerson "The 1953-54 Coronation Tour"

July 28 - Barbara Booler "Isambard Kingdom Brunel"

Sep 29 - Graham Winters "Post Cards! Post Cards! Post Cards!"

Oct 27 - Malcolm Gascoyne "Mail along the Andes: Ecuador"

Nov 24 - Sue Burn "The Rise of the Flying Boats and the Empire Airmail Scheme"

I hope you can join us for some of these talks.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Steve Blundell (Membership Secretary)

December 2025

**I**t is that time of year again! A number of members have been in contact requesting a change to the digital membership. Also some members have told me that they wish to continue as regular members and have changed their bank standing order accordingly. Just as a reminder, the new subscriptions are £25 for regular members and £15 for digital members. The only difference between the membership types lies in the delivery of Postmark Viz. by post as before for regular members and by email for digital members. As I said in the last Postmark - I would be a member who had forgotten all about these changes and would now be expecting a phone call from our friendly membership secretary.

Obituary - Miller McGrath. We have to report the passing of long time member Miller McGrath. Miller was a regular speaker at our meeting over many years. A message was sent to Miller's family on behalf of the Society. Members on the email list were informed and a number were able to attend Miller's funeral in late November. (Member for 21 years).

Obituary - Miss Anne Roberts. We have received notice of the passing of Miss Anne Roberts. Anne has been a long term member of the Society joining in May 2000. She actually moved to Exeter a few years later but kept in touch with the Society receiving Postmark until very recently. (Member for 25 years).

Obituary - John Dimond. John Joined the Society in 2020. He was a resident of New Milton and kept in touch by taking advantage of our packet system as well as receiving Postmark. We were informed of his passing by Mel Bradshaw.

Current membership stands at around 130.

# MY OLDEST COVER

## By Julian Jones (President)

September 2025

In November 1755 Great Britain introduced a packet service to New York to speed communication with military units in the American colonies who were engaged in what Americans call the French and Indian Wars.

My oldest cover is this paid entire sent from London, via Falmouth and New York to Philadelphia on board Falmouth Packet 'General Wall' in January 1757.

Payment of one shilling is indicated by "P 1N" with London "9/IA" Bishop mark (9th January) on the reverse. This was the single Packet rate from London to New York of 1/-.

The packet ship 'General Wall' departed Falmouth 21st January but returned to port and re-sailed on 10th February finally arriving in New York on 22nd March 1757.

At New York the cover was rated in manuscript "NY 3dwt" and at Philadelphia re-rated "1/3" postage due in local currency. While New York rated the cover as three pennyweight of silver the local Philadelphia currency was worth less:  $3\text{dwt} = 9\text{d stg.}, 9\text{d} \times 1.66 = 15\text{d} = 1/3$ . Coinage was scarce, so payment of postage due was often made in local Pennsylvania currency.

The cover is docketed: "From Mary Groth rece'd 24th of 3 mon. 1757 via New York".

John Reynell (1708-1784) emigrated to America from Exon, Devon,

England sometime before 1730, and quickly established himself as a merchant in Philadelphia. He dealt in a wide variety of goods, importing manufactured items from England or sugar and rum from the West Indies for sale in Philadelphia, and shipping raw materials and staples to be sold in the West Indies or Europe. This letter appears to be from John's sister, Mary Reynell (who became Mary Groth from about 1750), in England.



# DEMISE OF HAMPSHIRE PHILATELIC FEDERATION

By Julian Jones (FRPSL) November 2025

It is with some regret that I report the demise of the Hampshire Philatelic Federation. For over two years we have failed to refresh the committee positions of Chairman and sufficient committee members to run the annual HAMPEX fair and competition. I would like to record my thanks to those members of the Hampshire and Dorset area stamp clubs who have rallied around each year to help keep the show on the road during my tenure as Chairman for more than 20 years. I also thank those dealers who have continually supported the HAMPEX fair over the years. My thanks finally to the hard core committee members who have assisted me in the last two years: Peter Jones, Steve Gerrard; Paul Davidson and Colin Mount. As a result, Secure Competition Display Frames (of the "old STAMPEX" style) are available to any Federation or Society who would like them at no cost other than the provision of transport to remove them from their present storage site in Wickham, Hampshire. There are sufficient parts for 25 frames. Contact Julian Jones by email [jones2@f2s.com](mailto:jones2@f2s.com)

## FROM THE POSTAL HISTORY COLLECTION



1845. June 2nd. From the Editor of the 'INDEPENDENT' (Brooks) to the owner (Harman) at Cambridge Mass., USA. Letter sent via Liverpool (CALEDONIA), arrived Boston 19th June. Letter reports newspaper business... "Unfavourable so far after the spring".

(donated by Bryan Hunt)

# SOMETHING OF AN ODDITY

## By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE)

December 2025

Over the years I have accumulated a number of letters that illustrate the sometimes unrecognised importance of Southampton (and the other Solent ports) as an axis for world shipping. Those letters have never really qualified as a 'collection', but have provided glimpses of maritime postal history and are often interesting and sometimes difficult to explain. The cover illustrated is an example ... advertised on E-Bay (with a start price of \$2.50, but eventually fetching a little more than that), it didn't attract much attention and was pretty much bereft of clues to its origin or passage to London.



The first marks were on the front of the cover, a handstamp '26' and manuscript '1/2½'. On the reverse, there were two date-stamps: 'NEW YORK. AM. PKT. NOV 8' and 'LONDON NO 19 60'. The '26' suggested a claim against the United Kingdom, but five cents more than the more common '21' (cents): a claim for five cents United States, inland postage plus sixteen cents for an American packet to the United Kingdom. This suggested the letter's origin might be the Caribbean or the West Coast of America, even Canada – more of this later. The date-stamps on the reverse narrowed the search for the vessel that carried the letter to the United Kingdom; better than that, if correct they excluded all options other than the Hamburg-America Line

## SOMETHING OF AN ODDITY

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE) (Continued)

December 2025

‘Borussia’, sailing from New York on 8<sup>th</sup> November for Southampton on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1860.



**‘Borussia’**

But there was a minor complication. In ‘*North Atlantic Mail Sailings*’, ‘Borussia’s November 1860 passage from New York to Southampton is recorded twice. First for her parent

1. W. Hubbard and R.F. Winter, ‘*North Atlantic Mail Sailings*’, p. 165, note 16, and p. 175, note 14.

Hamburg-America Line and again for Vanderbilt’s European Line. Vanderbilt’s ‘*Illinois*’ had been scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1860 sailing but had been forced to put in to Halifax for coal when returning from Southampton at the end of October 1860. That would have been the last eastbound crossing by the Vanderbilt Line on this schedule. In her absence ‘Borussia’ was contracted for just one voyage to carry mails outward from

## SOMETHING OF AN ODDITY

By Malcolm Montgomery (MBE) (Continued)

December 2025

New York on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, the sailing delayed for two days to conform to the scheduled Saturday sailing of the United States' contract steamers.

There remains the rate and, from that, the origin of the letter. The normal transatlantic charge for a letter from New York to England would have been 24 cents, a shilling Sterling. But the letter was charged 26 cents and has a manuscript '1/2½' charge on arrival, indicating that it was charged 10 cents the unpaid rate to California, 5 cents United States' inland postage, and a corresponding extra 2½d, on arrival in the United Kingdom. It would be tempting to claim that the origin of the letter was California, but the contents have been removed and there are no transit markings from the early part of the letter's journey. However, on the plus side, the '26' handstamp is rarely seen, especially on mail through Southampton, and is recorded by Richard Winter as known only between July 1854 and October 1857. Unfortunately, I have been unable to identify the ships that carried the letter to New York.

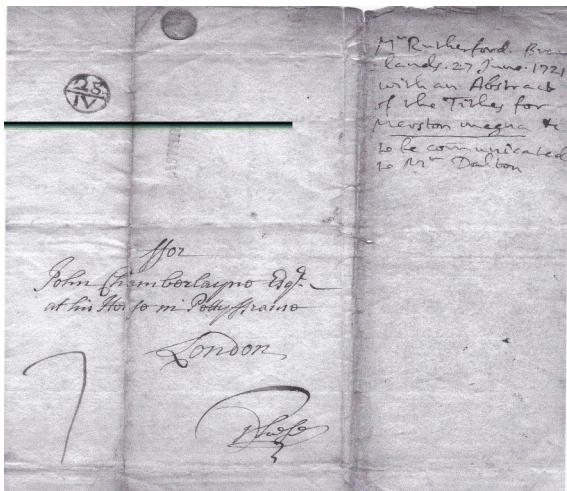
2. R.F. Winter, '*Understanding Atlantic Mail*', Vol. 1, p. 119: On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1851 the internal postal rates were reduced to 3c for distances up to 3000 miles if prepaid, 5c if unpaid; for greater distances, which included the West Coast the rates were 5 cents if prepaid, 10 cents if unpaid.

## ANOTHER ITEM FROM THE POSTAL HISTORY COLLECTION



# OLDEST POSTAL HISTORY OR STAMP, ROMSEY 1721 By D W PAINTER (MEMBER)

November 2025



**S**traight line ROMSEY (21mm x 4 mm) on an entire from the St Barbe house at Broadlands with a Bishops Mark of 28 over IV. The letter itself is dated the 27th June 1721 & is addressed as follows:

John Chamberlayne Esq at his home in Petty France London.

(Large figure '7' here).

Text Reads: I send yo enclosed the Abstract of Sir John St Barbes title to the Impropriate Rectory of Marston with Mr. Cropos opinion upon it. Sir John My Lady and her (Greyloos ??) as Mr. Cropso (??????). Yr humble Servt Baron Rutherford.

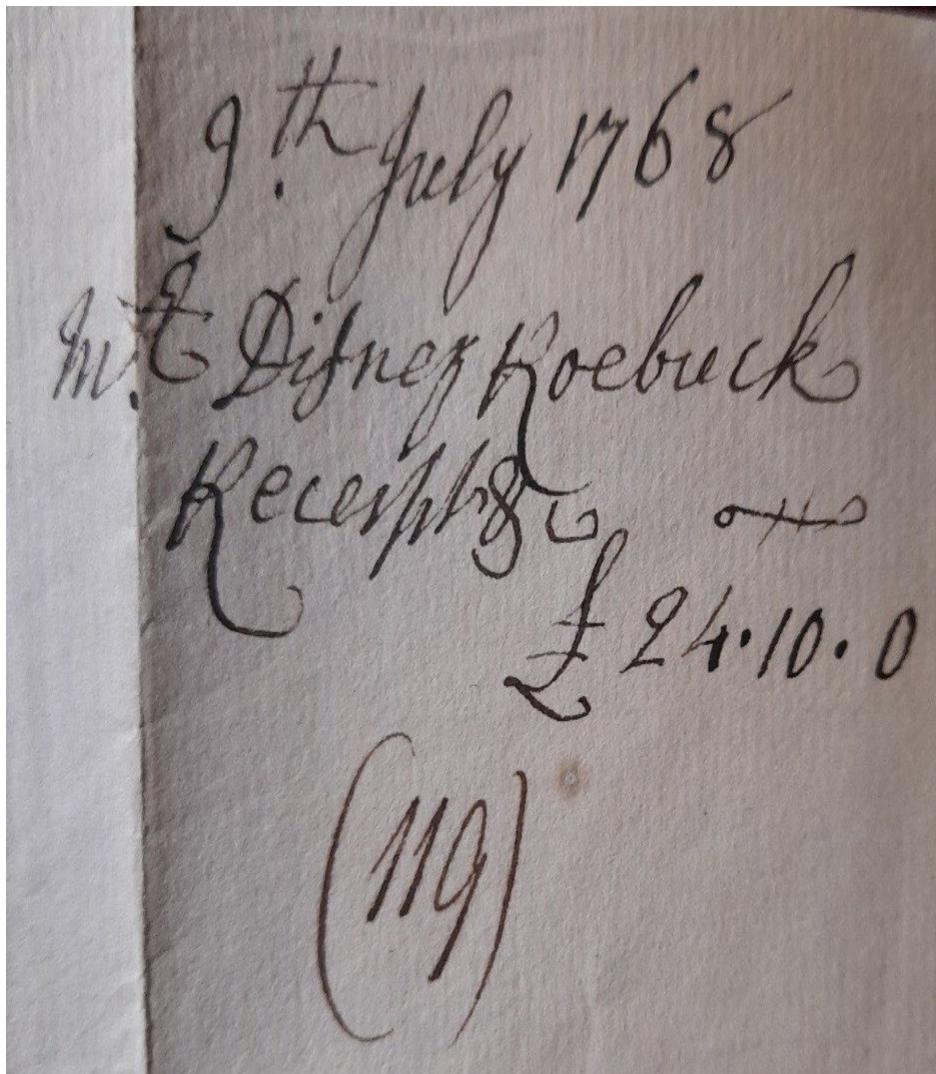
The note vertically (which seems to relate to a reply by way of a file note) reads:- Mr Rutherford, Broadlands 27 June 1721 with an Abstract of the title for Marston Magna to be communicated to Mr Dalton.

The St Barbe family have origins on the female side with the last days of the Nunnery. The elder brother Francis died of wounds received at the first Battle of Newbury leaving John as heir. His sole surviving son, John, had a knighthood by purchase when a young lad. He engaged in many forms of public service and the family had connections in Somerset (Marston Magna). Their house passed to the first Lord Palmerston who built the present Broadlands.

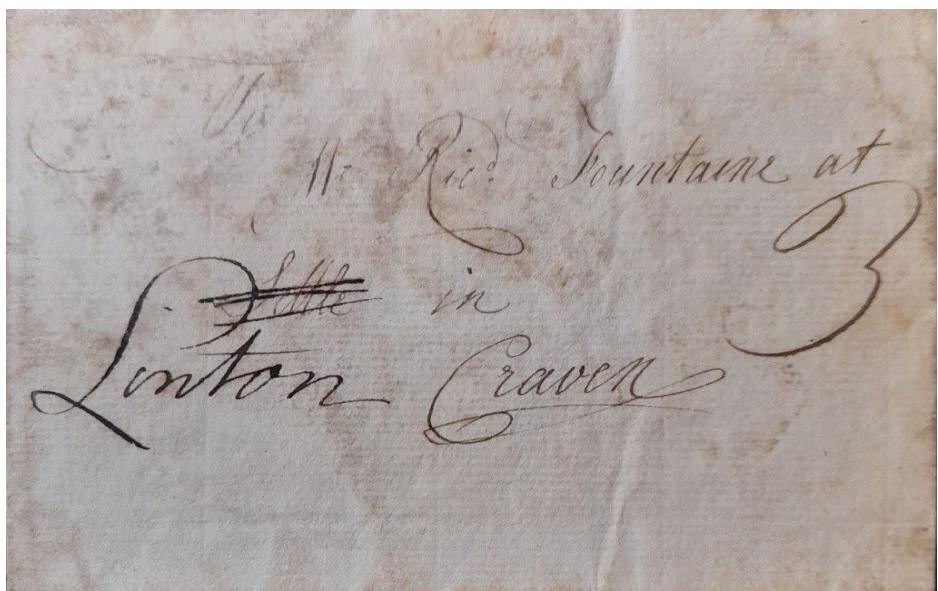
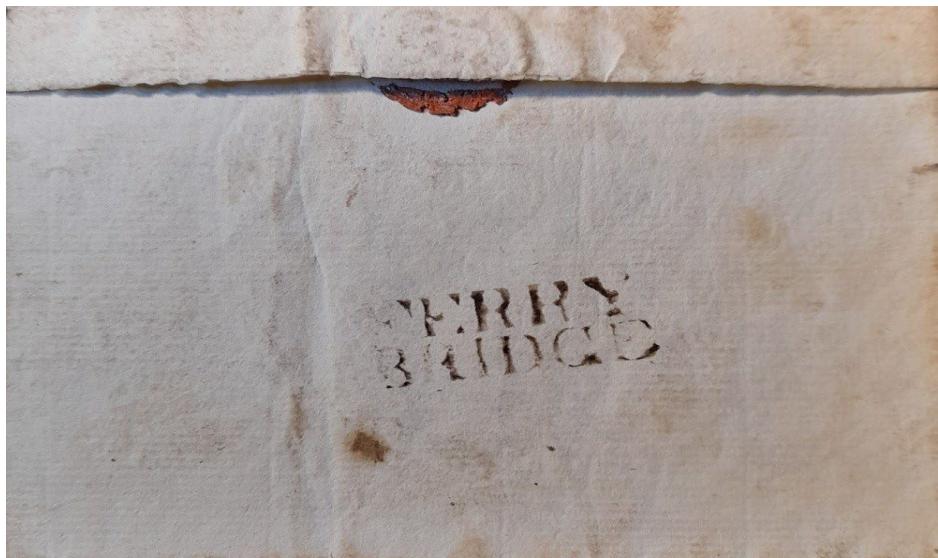
AUCTION JOB LOT FIND 1768  
By ADRIAN STEWART-COX (MEMBER)

December 2025

I was pleasantly surprised to find the attached as part of an auction job lot I acquired recently. As you can see it is internally dated as 9th July 1768.



AUCTION JOB LOT FIND 1768  
By ADRIAN STEWART-COX (MEMBER) (Continued)  
December 2025



# CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2025

## By Steve Gerrard (Editor)

December 2025

Our December Christmas 2025 lunch was a great success as we had wonderful food, drinks and a very good atmosphere. The layout of the room was excellent as were the table decorations. We must thank Alan Blakey for arranging this. It has been many years since I worked as a caretaker at the college and it has changed into a site that I found very interesting.



# OFFICERS OF THE SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Archivist	<b>Steve Gerrard</b>
Assistant Treasurer	<b>Debbie Hindson</b>
Auction Manager	<b>Kevin Chard</b> (01489 574834)
Chairman	<b>Kevin Chard</b>
Chandler's Ford Convenor	<b>Peter Bruce</b>
Facebook Co-Ordinator	<b>Szymon Borys</b>
Librarian	<b>Reg Sheppard</b>
Membership Secretary	<b>Steve Blundell</b>
Packet Manager	<b>Mel Bradshaw</b> (07973 696291)
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President	<b>Julian Jones FRPSL</b>
Programme Secretary	<b>Patrick Austin</b>
Public Relations Officer	<b>VACANT</b>
Secretary	<b>Cathy Bruce</b>
Society Postal History Keeper	<b>Debbie Hindson</b>
Treasurer	<b>Mike Watts</b> (02380 454131)
Vice Chairman	<b>Mike Watts</b>
Vice President	<b>Mel Bradshaw</b>
ZOOM Co-ordinator	<b>Malcolm Coe</b>
<b>S. &amp; D. P. S.</b>	<a href="http://www.southamptondps.org.uk">www.southamptondps.org.uk</a>

## SUBMISSION DATES FOR POSTMARK 2026

**15th APRIL**  
**15th AUGUST**

**Submissions to be received by the Editor by midnight of the 15<sup>th</sup>.**