

The General Post Office began an express service in March 1891 for London and by August 1891 the service had expanded to cover the whole kingdom. In 1895 an express service using a messenger from the post office to the addressee could be used up to three miles for 3d. In 1897 the rate remained the same but the distance from post office was increased to under four miles.



21 April 1898 Brighton to Victoria Station, London and by express messenger to addressee endorsed by sender "Urgent" and "To be handed to Express Messenger at Victoria Station" requisite perpendicular line on front and back and "EXPRESS" handstamp 2d railway stamp and prepaid 4d (1d postage and 3d for express delivery)



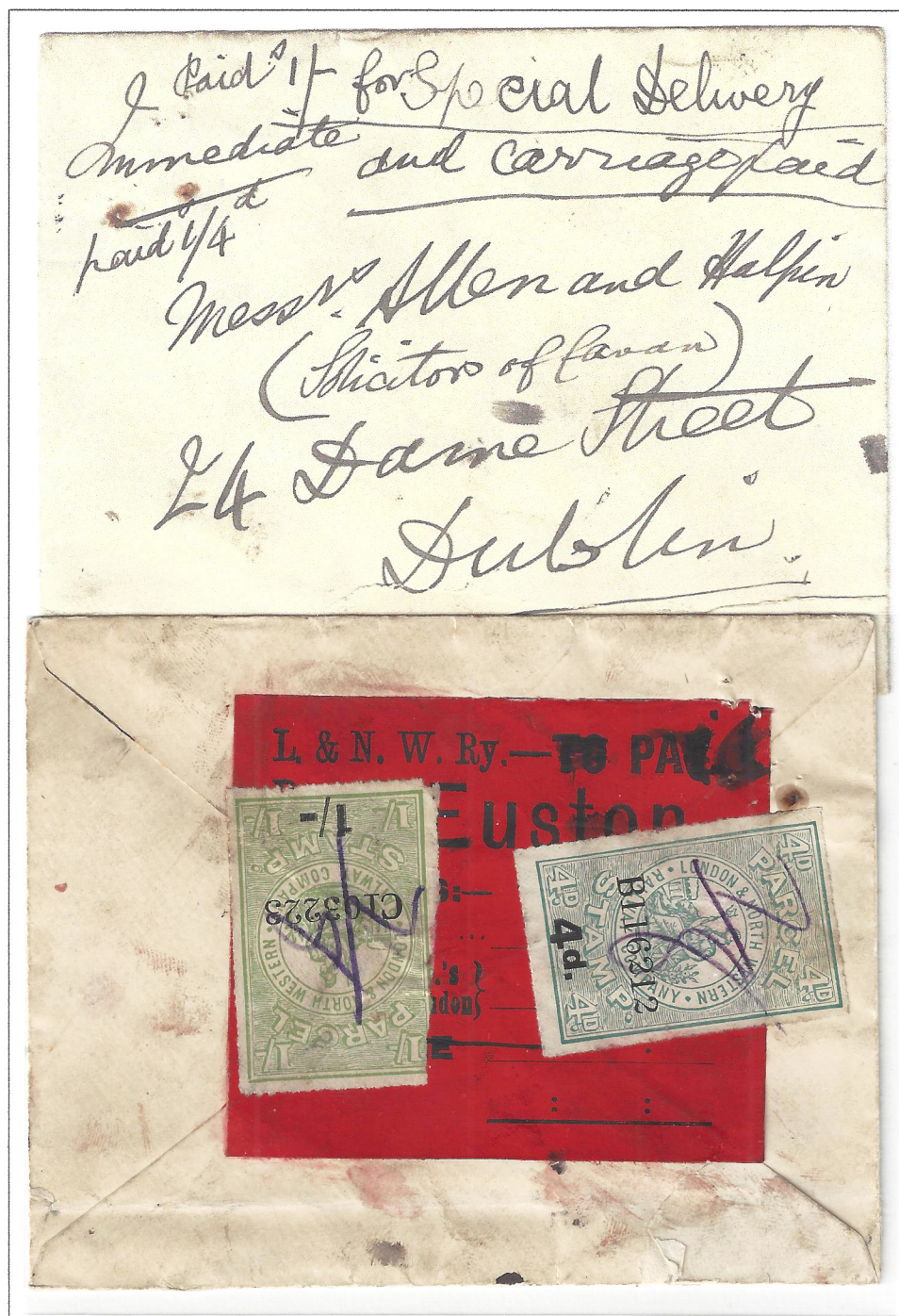
7 October 1898 Hull to Pontefract Railway Station and by express messenger to addressee
"EXPRESS" handstamp and endorsed by sender "By P.O. messengers from Railway Station"

Hull & Barnsley 2d railway stamp and 4d total postage (3d express fee + 1d postage)
the 1d stamp is perfin "LYB" (London & Yorkshire Bank) and flap with "Hull" and bank name

the only reported express delivery letter carried by the Hull & Barnsley Railway

London & North Western Railway Parcel Stamps Pay Express Delivery
Fee 1s (to 4 miles)

Carried from Euston Station, London to Holyhead and placed on steamer direct to Dublin docks. The railway company owned the steamers but the cover was charged double railway fee (4d) as though two companies were involved. The 1s that was paid for "special delivery" would have paid the quadruple 3d rate for distance to addressee plus postage. No postage was paid.



7 August 1899 letter dated Lavender Hill (London SW) and cover used to Dublin
"L. & N. W. Ry. To PAY Euston" label on reverse corrected in manuscript to read "PAID"
prepaid with L. & N. W. Ry. 1/- and 4d parcel stamps with "7/8" date cancels
address with "Paid 1/- for Immediate Special Delivery and carriage paid" plus total "paid 1/4d"
the only reported example with parcel stamps that did not enter the post office

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 states: Such (express) letters should be marked 'To be handed to Post Office Messenger at _____ Station' and the letter below shows the sender used this precise format.



15 December 1899 Pinner to Baker Street Station, London WC, prepaid 10d
"To be handed to The Express Messenger at Baker Street Station" sender's endorsement
entered the mails with Pinner 3:45 PM duplex postmark
prepaid 2d Metropolitan Railway, 10d stamp prepaid 9d express delivery fee plus 1d postage
Bakers Street Station is roughly 2.5 miles from final destination address

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 delineates the extra fee for Express Delivery: For a Letter, Packet or other article not exceeding 1 lb. in weight the Express fee for every mile or part of a mile is 3d.

The Letter must in all cases be marked "Express Delivery" and with a perpendicular line, both on front and back.



15 February 1900 London EC to Bournemouth and by express messenger to addressee endorsed by sender "By 12:30 train from Waterloo to P.O. Official at Bournemouth West Station, Immediate Delivery" no vertical lines but with "EXPRESS" handstamp prepaid 4d (1d for postage and 3d delivery) plus 2d railway fee

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 states: If it is to be delivered from the first Express Office which it reaches after being posted at the station, it must be marked "Express Delivery from first Express Office," and if direct from the station, with the words "Express Delivery. To be handed to Post Office Express Messenger Station." The postage, the Express Fee, and any charge for special conveyance must be prepaid on the letter in stamps by the sender.



14 March 1901 Norton Folgate (B.O.) to terminus at Liverpool Street Terminus
Great Eastern Railway 2d stamp plus 1d postage and 3d for express delivery
per instructions "Express Delivery from First Express Office" endorsement
nearest express office to the terminus was Throgmorton Avenue, NE
delivered from the Throgmorton Avenue express office to 4 Bedford Row

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 states: Such (express) letters should be marked 'To be handed to Post Office Messenger at _____ Station' and the letter below shows the sender used this precise format.



13 August 1902 Newport (Salop) postmark to Shifnal Station

London and North Western Railway 2d plus 3d express delivery but 1d postage not paid

13 August 1902 Newport Salop oval datestamp without name of railway text at top

"To be handed to P.O. Express Messenger at Shifnal Station" sender's endorsement

Post Office Guide instructions stated: The sender is responsible from the Express Fee and other charges. That fee is in no case less than 3d., and this and the postage must be prepaid by means of postage stamps affixed to the Packet.....(any) deficiency will be demanded from the Addressee.

The delivery distance for this cover is over 3 miles and a shortfall in prepayment of the delivery charges would have been due.



5 August 1903 Lincolns Inn to Victoria Station (London) and to Arundel Station
to be met by post office messenger at Arundel and then to addressee
endorsed "Express Post, "To catch 1:42pm train from Victoria"



4 June 1904 Victoria Station, (4:30 train) to Hove and by express messenger to addressee
requisite perpendicular line on front and M-55 "POST OFFICE EXPRESS" label
prepaid 4d (1d postage and 3d for express delivery) with telegraph office datestamp
2d London Brighton & South Coast Railway stamp with cross cancel
address of delivery is 1 mile from the Hove station

The addressee, Captain Francis C. A. H. Needham, 4th Earl of Kilmorey was a Royal Navy officer. In 1916 he was appointed as an Irish representative peer to sit in the House of Lords for life representing Ireland. No more such peers were appointed after the independence of the Irish Free State in 1922. When Kilmorey died in 1961 he was the last such surviving peer.

London And North Western Railway

Express Delivery
Fee 15d (to 5 miles)

The Post Office Guide for July 1905 included: Letters for transmission by train could be handed in at any railway station to be delivered by special messenger at the receiving station upon payment of the express fee of 3d a mile, prepaid in stamps. The sender must telegraph ahead to request that a special messenger be sent to meet the train.

prepaid quintuple 3d express delivery fee plus 1d postage



13 June 1905 Birmingham Station to Euston Station for delivery to Chelsea, London
"Per 8:15 train to Euston to be handed to the PO Messenger on arrival at Euston for delivery"
Euston Station by express messenger to Chelsea address, 4.6 miles distant
L&NW Railway 2d railway stamp, 1d postage plus 15d for express delivery to 5 miles
"Birmingham" origin postmark, railway stamp with "Birmingham Station" cancel
pencil note "fail to gain attention at address given, Jn. Harvey" on reverse

fail to gain attention
at address given
Jn Harvey

Post Office Guide for 1902 included: When the distance exceeds two miles, or in any case where a special conveyance is required, at least one half of the amount payable in respect of fee and charge for special conveyance must be prepaid, and the deficiency, if any, will be demanded from the addressee.

The cover below was delivered to an address 4.6 miles from Rickmansworth Station and was prepaid for delivery up to only four miles. It may have been subject to a further 3d due from recipient.



8 July 1905 South-Western District Office (London) to The Colony, Chalfont St. Peter
"Per 1:35 train to Rickmansworth, to be handed to the Post Office Messenger on arrival"
from Rickmansworth Station by express messenger to "The Colony," 4.6 miles distant
Metropolitan Railway 2d stamp and Metropolitan Railway Company datestamp
1d entire plus 1sh for express delivery to 4 miles, fee deficiency possibly paid in cash

The addressee was at "The Colony," a village community for patients with epilepsy.



17 February 1909 Bristol to Winscombe Station and by express messenger to "The Hall"
endorsed "11:15 train from Bristol"

EXPRESS label with pencil "Winscombe (Station) 12:11 PM" inserted
Great Western overprinted Manchester & Milford 2d railway stamp, boxed "GWR" cancel
prepaid 4d Bristol Telegraph office (1d postage plus 3d for express delivery to 1 mile)

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 delineates the extra fee for Express Delivery: For a Letter, Packet or other article not exceeding 1 lb. in weight the Express fee for every mile or part of a mile is 3d.

The Letter must in all cases be marked "Express Delivery" and with a perpendicular line, both on front and back.

In 1908, the GPO instructions included, "A red express label must be affixed to all Express letters."



30 August 1910 Waterloo Road SE to Bournemouth and by express messenger to addressee
M-72 Express label, "To be handed to Post Office Messenger at Bournemouth Central Station"
mourning cover, no vertical lines, prepaid 4d (1d postage plus 3d delivery) and 2d railway fee

The *Post Office Guide* for October 1896 delineates the extra fee for Express Delivery: For a Letter, Packet or other article not exceeding 1 lb. in weight the Express fee for every mile or part of a mile is 3d.

double 3d express delivery fee



17 March 1911 Lymington M.O. & S.B. Office to Waterloo Station and addressee M-72 Express label, "To be handed to Post Office Messenger at Waterloo" Waterloo Station by express messenger to Lincoln Inn Fields address, 1.3 miles distant prepaid 7d (1d for postage and 6d express delivery fee) plus 2d railway fee railway stamp with "LYMINGTON PARCELS" cancels



9 November 1911 Kineton Station (Warwick) to Cirencester

Cirencester Station by express messenger to local Cirencester address .4 miles away

Express to be handed to Post Office Messenger label with pencil "Cirencester" Station

S&MJ Railway 2d railway stamp, 1d postage plus 3d for express delivery

Kineton Warwick origin postmark, railway stamp with "KINETON STATION S&MJ Rly" cancel

London And North Western Railway

Express Delivery
Fee 12d (to 3 miles)

triple 3d for express delivery



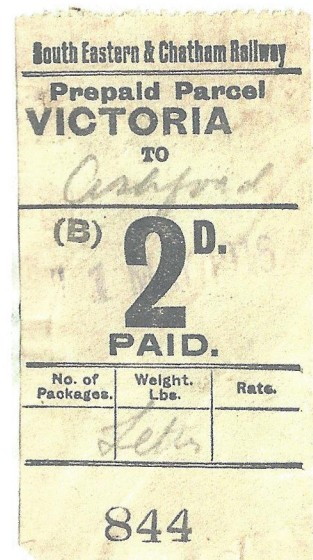
3 February 1913 Birmingham Station "By 11:25 PM" train to Euston Station, London
Euston Station by express messenger to Threadneedle Streets address 2.5 miles away
Express to be handed to Post Office Messenger label with pencil "Euston" Station
London & North Western Railway 2d stamp, 1d postage plus 9d for express delivery
Birmingham origin postmark, railway stamp with Birmingham railway station cancel

London Brighton & South Coast Railway
+ South Eastern & Chatham Railway

Conjunctive Use plus
Express Delivery
Fee 6d (to 2 miles)

Post Office Guide for 1911 includes: If the sender desires to have a letter conveyed by special messenger from the station of one Railway Company to that of another for onward transmission, he must arrange for the letter to be met by a Post Office Messenger ... a second Railway Fee of 2d (Parcel Booking fee) will be required in addition to the milage fee. A waiting fee may also become due should the train be late.

conjunctive use of two railways cost 4d for two railway letter fees



parcel 2d stamp on
reverse (reduced)

1 May 1916 Haywards Heath (West Sussex), via Victoria Station, London to Ashford, Kent
posted at Haywards Heath Station with London Brighton & South Coast Railway 2d stamp
overpaid with 8d stamp, 1d postage plus double 3d express delivery fee for 1 to 2 miles

Express label with "Victoria / Charing, Kent" directive

transferred at Victoria Station to South Eastern & Chatham Railway with Parcel 2d stamp

Calehill Park address is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the station, manuscript amounts due at top left:

Fees due 5d, Waiting fee 3d, (Parcel) Booking fee 2d, total 5d and Express fee for delivery



On June 1, 1919 the express delivery service charge for messenger delivery from a railway station to the addressee was raised to 6d per mile or fraction thereof. The railway letter fee, the express charge as well as the postage was payable at origin.

The address of the cover below was .4 miles from the Manchester Central Railway station.



14 November 1923 Liverpool to Manchester Central Station, oval "EXPRESS" handstamp
Manchester Central Station by express messenger to addressee on Chepstow Street
Express to be handed to Post Office Messenger label, pencil "Manchester Central" Station
Cheshire Lines 4d railway stamp, 1½d postage plus 6d stamps for express letter fee
Liverpool General Station origin postmark

On June 1, 1919 the express delivery service charge for messenger delivery from a railway station to the addressee was raised to 6d per mile or fraction thereof. The railway letter fee, the express charge as well as the postage was payable at origin.

The cover below is addressed to "Cliffe Hut, St. Margaret's Bay, Near Dover, Kent" which was a resort 2.3 miles from the Martin Mill train station. The endorsement at top of cover, applied at origin, notes the distance from station as 3.8 kilometers (2.36 miles).



30 September 1925 Charing Cross, via Cannon Street Station to Martin Mill Station
Martin Mill Station by express messenger to addressee at Cliffe Hut, St. Margaret's Bay
Express to be handed to Post Office Messenger label with pencil "Martin Mill" Station
Southern Railway 4d railway stamp, 1½d postage plus 1s and 6d stamps for express letter fee
Cannon St BO/EC origin postmark, railway stamp with Charing Cross railway cancel