

SALLY SCOTT
* DEBBIE TAPLEY
ANGELA PALMER-PAUL
* SHONA YOUNG.

Staff i have at closure.

* now re-employed at Borham

see
attached

"The Den"
Stone Stile Lane
Shottenden
CANTERBURY
Kent CT4 8JT

28 October 1994

Dear Mr Tamsitt,

Many thanks for lending me the negative of the Bridge Post Office. I have now received a print back from Boots and am very pleased with it.

My interest in Bridge is that I am working out the development of the post ~~in~~ in Canterbury and to the villages and towns in the area. Bridge itself had before the 30th August 1824 a messenger, who also went to the Halfway House, to deliver and collect mail to + from

Canterbury. On the 30th August 1824 the post office opened a "Receiving House" in Bridge which was given a handstamp N^o 3 to be impressed on letters. N^o 1 is thought to have been Blean but at present there are no known examples of this. Whitstable was N^o 2 Receiving House. These were opened in October 1823.

The earliest postmaster (Receiver) I can find is Frederick Colegate at the White Horse Inn. He was possibly the first receiver but I only have the years 1826/32. The next receiver was Richard Sherrard in 1838/59, also at the White Horse. There are gaps which I am unable to fill in. Incidentally if any one in Bridge has an earlier photo of the Post Office

I would very much like a copy if at all possible. On the Ordnance Survey Map of 1873 the Post Office is shown on the right hand side of the road going towards Dover just before the bridge.

Any information would be most welcome and helpful.

Once again many thanks for lending me the negative.

Yours sincerely
Pat Harding

The fortunes of Bridge post office

b c 2 1793

- 1838 Stapleton: Post Master Richard Sherrard, White Horse Inn
- 1839 Pigot: Post Office, Bridge, Frederick Colegate, [carpenter] Post Master. Letters from London &c arrive (by foot-post from Canterbury) every morning at seven, and are despatched every evening at half-past six.
- 1844/45 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) Sub-postmaster Mr W[illiam] Perry, grocer; letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45; despatched 10.30a.m. and 8.5p.m. Post Office: The Street.
- 1847 Bagshaw: Post Office – at Mr Richard Sherrard's. Letters arrive at 7a.m. and are despatched at 45 min. past 6 p.m. [at the White Horse]
- 1861 Census: Ann Sherrard (widow, 55) Post Mistress
- 1871 Census: Anne Sherrard (widow, 65) Post Mistress
- 1881 Census: Alfred Prior (31) Postmaster & grocer
- 1888/89 Bedwell: Perry, Wm., Post Office and grocer
- 1890 Kelly: William Perry, grocer & provision dealer, The Post Office. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart 6 a.m. & 12.45 p.m. dispatched at 10 a.m. & 8 p.m.
- 1891 Census: William Perry (35) Grocer, sub-postmaster, Riverdale, High Street
- 1893/94 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury); Sub-Postmaster, Mr W. Perry, grocer [The Street]; letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45; despatched 10.30 a.m. and 8.5 p.m.
- 1897/98 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury); Sub-Postmaster, Mr J[ohn].C. Wilson, chemist; letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45; despatched 10.30 a.m. and 8.5 p.m.
- 1899 Kelly: Post, M.O. & T.O. S.B., Express Delivery & Annuity & Insurance office – J.C.Wilson, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.30 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2.5 p.m. Wall letter box cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m.
- 1899/1900 Kelly: Post, M.O. & T.O., S.B. & Annuity & Insurance Office. – John C. Wilson, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.30 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays 2.5 p.m. Wall Letter Box cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays, 2 p.m.
- 1901 Census: John C. Wilson (36) Chemist & postmaster [corner of Brewery lane next to plough & Harrow]
- 1902/03 Kelly: Post, M.O. & T.O., S.B. & Annuity & Insurance Office. – John C. Wilson, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.30 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays 2.5 p.m. Wall Letter Box cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays, 2 p.m.
- 1903 Kelly: Post, M.O. & T. O., T.M.O., Express delivery, Parcel Post, S.B. & Annuity & Insurance Office – J.C.Wilson, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.30 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays 2.5 p.m. Wall Letter Box cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays, 2 p.m.
- 1904/05 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Sub-postmaster, Mr F. Bedingfield, grocer. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45; Despatched 10.30 a.m. and 8 p.m. [Frank Bedingfield, grocer and general dealer, The Street; postmaster][J.C.Wilson still in business]
- 1905/06 Kelly: Post, M.O. & T.O. S.B. & Annuity & Insurance office – Frank Bedingfield, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.20 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays, 2 p.m.
- 1907 Kelly: Post, T. M. O., S. B., A. & I. Office – Mrs Edith Bowler, sub-postmistress. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.20 a.m. & 12.45 p.m.; dispatched at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays at 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box The Street, cleared at 10.30 a.m. & 8 p.m.; sundays, 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box, Bridge Hill, cleared at 10.15 a.m. & 7.55 p.m.; Sundays 1.55 p.m.
- 1911/12 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Sub-postmaster R[ichard] Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45; despatched, 10.15 a.m. and 8.40 p.m. [Arthur J Castle The Street was a baker]
- 1913 Kelly: Post, M. O. & T. & Telephonic Express delivery Office – Richard Castle [stationer] , sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.20 a.m. & 12.30 p.m.; dispatched at 10.15 a.m. & 8.45 p.m.; sundays at 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box, the Street, cleared at 10.10 a.m. & 8.40 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box Bridge Hill, cleared at 10.5 a.m. & 8.35 p.m.; Sundays 1.55 p.m.
- 1915 Kelly: Post, M. O. & T. & Telephonic Express delivery Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters from Canterbury arrive by mail cart at 5.20 a.m. & 12.30 p.m.; dispatched at 10.15 a.m. & 8.45 p.m.; sundays at 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box, the Street, cleared at 10.10 a.m. & 8.40 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. Wall Letter Box Bridge Hill, cleared at 10.5 a.m. & 8.35 p.m.; Sundays 1.55 p.m. [but he does not appear in the commercial list]
- 1915/16 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m; despatched 10.15 a.m. and 8.40 p.m.; Sundays 2 p.m. (Public Tele. Call Office) Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill, 10.5 a.m.; 8.35 p.m.

Alexandra House

next to W.H.?

River Dale

Corner of Brewery Lane

- 1918 Kelly: Post, M. O. & T & Telephonic Express Delivery Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury. Wall Letter Boxes. – The Street & Bridge Hill.
- 1919/20 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Sundays 2 p.m. (Public Tele. Call Office). Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1920-21 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Sundays 2 p.m. (Public Tele. Call Office). Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1921 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Sundays 2 p.m. (Public Tele. Call Office). Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1922 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; (Public Tele. Call Office). Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1923 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1924 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1924 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1925 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1927 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1928 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1929 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 12.45 p.m.; despatched 11.15 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1930 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1930 Kelly: Post, M. O., S. B., T. & T. E. D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1930/31 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.30 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1931/32 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.30 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1933 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1934 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office. Letters through Canterbury. [Castle Rd. deputy registrar of births & deaths, Bridge district, Post office]
- 1934 Kelly: Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office. Letters through Canterbury.
- 1934 Kelly: Castle Rd. deputy registrar of births & deaths for Bridge district & sub-postmaster, Post office.
- 1935 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.5 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1936 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.5 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1937 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.5 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1938 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Letters delivered at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.; despatched at 10.5 a.m. and 7.45 p.m.; Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1938 Kelly: Rd. Castle Deputy Registr b & d , ins. Agt. & P.O. [typed copy]
- 1939 Blue Book: Post, Money and Telegraph Office (under Canterbury) – Subpostmaster, Mr R. Castle. Public Tele. Call Office. Wall Letter Box, Bridge hill.
- 1939 Kelly: Post, M.O., T&T.E.D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury. [Castle Rd. deputy registrar of births & deaths for Bridge registration districe & sub-postmaster, Post office]
- 1940 Kelly: Post, M.O., T.&T.E.D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.

1940 Kelly (incl Pike's Blue Book): Post, M.O., T.&T.E.D. Office – Richard Castle, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury. [Castle Rd. deputy registrar of births & deaths for Bridge registration districe & sub-postmaster, Post office]

1949 Kelly: Post, M.O., T.&T.E.D. Office – George Henry Roberts, sub-postmaster. Letters through Canterbury.

1952 Kelly: Post M.O., T. Acceptance Office. – George Henry Roberts, sub-postmaster, Letters through Canterbury.

1955 Kelly: Post M.O., T. Acceptance Office. – George Henry Roberts, sub-postmaster, Letters through Canterbury.

[Samuel Shirley ? – 1965]

[Laurence Shirley 1965-1998]

MM Raraty 17/07/2015

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C. 10 September
2016

Notes about Bridge Post Office 1957-1965 by Martin Shirley

My parents Samuel and Mary Shirley purchased the Post Office in 1957 with the assistance of my Aunt and Uncle, who moved in with us to spend their retirement. My Father had spent more than 25 years in the Hampshire Police Service and was looking for a new career. The cost of the business at that time was I believe £2,500. The property with its associate cottage at the rear came in a rundown and poor structural condition. He had to spend his meagre resources in having a slightly improved lean-to kitchen built and then on a DIY basis we started to re-furbish the post office with a new counter and space for some business expansion. At that time there was no additional income other than provided by the Post Office excepting for some small amounts of stationery. Additional stationery together with cigarettes, tobacco and sweets were introduced. To improve sales my Mother would, on a weekly basis take them to The Close, at that time being used as a home for old people.

The small cottage had no electricity , and limited running water . It was occupied for many years by a widow , Mrs Carpenter . These difficult times in Bridge were only 50 to 60 years ago !

The weekly Post Office accounting balance, which had to be done to the penny, was always a stress for my father and when I became a trainee accountant I became involved from time to time. My recollection was that it was a paper intensive and bureaucratic system , there were, of course, no computers or even adding machines at that time .

Over the years life became slightly better for them, such that they were able to take a week's overseas annual holiday for the first time. In those days such holidays were fairly rare. My parents had no car and would walk or take the bus to Canterbury for their weekly outing.

In 1965 my father at the age of 59 had a heart attack and was taken to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. To our great distress he had a further attack in the hospital and passed away.

My brother Laurence Shirley gave up his building business in Cambridgeshire and moved with Ann, John and Nicolas to take over the Post Office.

My mother moved to Riverside Close where she lived until the age of 84. Both my parents are buried in Bridge churchyard

C. G. HARPER.
1895

do not permit them to "stoop to conquer" the conquerors of their fluttering hearts. "I could worship that man," says the Fairy Queen in *Iolanthe*, gazing admiringly upon "Private Willis of the Grenadier Guards"; and how much more worshipful



BRIDGE.

than a foot-soldier are the "cavalry chaps" of the Canterbury depôt!

It was a hundred yards or so along the road from Gutteridge Gate that two Dragoons figured in a highway robbery upon His Majesty's Mails in 1789. The bells were chiming three o'clock in the morning of July 31 in that year when Daniel Goldup, the mounted postman, came up the hill from Bridge with

the French mails slung across his horse's back. He eased his pace in ascending the hill, three men called upon him to stop. One of them he recognized as a villager from Elham named Hills, and the other two he perceived to be Dragoons disguised in smock-frocks. Telling Hills he had no letters for him, Goldup proceeded on his way. Hills fired but missed, and the three then ran after him; one lay hold of the horse's bridle while the other two seized the mail-bags and rifled them. They detained him an hour while they examined the letters, and then, after tying up the mail-bags again, let him go.

The village of Bridge, down below, takes its name from the small bridge that carries the road over the Lesser Stour. It is a pretty and peaceful place to-day, with quaint boarded houses; a Norman or Early English church, containing some curious and grotesque carvings of Adam and Eve; and enclosed by woods, the remote descendants of the almost impenetrable forests that once surrounded Canterbury, leaving only Barham Downs and their neighbouring chalk hills bare and islanded amid a sea of greenery.

Barham Downs commence immediately beyond Bridge. They have been the scene of many remarkable gatherings, from the time of Julius Cæsar to the waning years of the last century, when the Downs were alive with soldiers camping here in readiness for that inglorious Armada that never left port. Napoleon's flotilla of Boulogne.

To go back to the year 55 B.C., when Cæsar first landed at Deal, may seem to the readers of even