

ART. III.—*Furness Travelling and Postal Arrangements in the 18th and 19th Centuries.* By J. MELVILLE and J. L. HOBBS.¹

REGULAR postal communication was first established between England and Scotland by the government early in the Stuart period, and was extended under the Commonwealth. Towards the end of the 17th century, the Royal Mail was carried on horseback from London to :—

Scotland, by the Great North Road, with a bye post to Carlisle.

Chester and Holyhead, for Ireland, with a bye post at intervals to Lancaster.

Exeter and Plymouth.

Dover, for the continent.

Norwich and Yarmouth,

also to Oxford, Bristol, Colchester, Lincoln and Hull.

In Lancashire the postal accommodation was wretched, being slow, irregular, and made costly by a system of gratuities (H. Joyce, *History of the Post Office*, 1893, 60). The post road ran through Warrington and Preston to Lancaster, where it ended. London wagons came as far

¹ In his paper "Muchland and its Owners" (these *Transactions*, n.s. xxiv) the late Mr. Paul V. Kelly made reference to material relating to the Furness district, collected by the late Mr. W. B. Kendall. Mr. Kelly's death cut short his study of the papers, on loan from Mr. Harold Kendall. Through the good offices of Mrs. Kelly and Mr. H. Kendall, we have been given the opportunity of continuing Mr. Kelly's work and among the unpublished MSS. discovered notes of Coaching and Postal Arrangements. These notes, written out in 1916, add interesting information to the knowledge of Furness in the 18th and 19th centuries, but were insufficient and unsuitable for a paper in their original form. A great deal of revision and correction was necessary and, in particular, searching for his sources and authorities occupied much time. We have, however, included Mr. Kendall's material where possible. J.M. J.L.H.

as Standish and loaded back with coal. North of Standish all goods were carried by pack-horses and so continued to be until 1750 or later. During the first half of the 18th century the post road from Lancaster to the south became more popular, travellers in summer making a short cut from Warrington on to the Chester post road at Stone. In June, 1719, Young Benjamin Browne of Town End, Troutbeck, went up to London to read Law, and a letter from him gives valuable information as to the route and time taken for the journey on horse back:—

Honrd ffather & Mother— London, June ye 16th 1719.
 Mr. Redman & I Got to London on Satterday the 13th Instant abt 3 a Clock in the afternoon, we Gott to Preston yt night after we left you from the Miter in Preston to Warrington & Baited at ye 3 Crowns from thence to Holms-Chappel there we Lodged at ye Lyon from there to Stone at ye Crown, and Baited & then to the George in Litchfield from thence to the Bear and Ragged Staff in Coventry and Baited, from thence to Daventry & Lodged at Sarracen's head there we parted with Mr. Hunter: from thence to a place called Brickhill² & Baited at Trew Blews. From thence to a place abt 27 Miles from London called Markt street³ and Lodged & from thence to London and our horses performed very well.

The journey therefore took him nearly six days.

He rode to London again in June, 1734:—

Satterday 15th June 1734

. . . You herewith have a Short Sketch of my journey as follows on Monday I layd at Preston wch I reached abt 7 o'Clock Tuesday Baited at Warrington & lodged at Chesterton abt 2 Miles beyond Talk o' th' hill Wednesday Baited at Litchfield & Inn'd at Coventry Thursday baited at Stony Stratford & lay at Dunstable on ffryday baited at Kick's End⁴ near Barnett & got to London abt 2 in the afternoon . . .

Better roads appear to have reduced his travel by a day as compared with 1719.

² Near Fenny Stratford.

³ Markyate, Herts.

⁴ Shown in Ogilby's Road Book of 1698; Paterson's Description of Roads, 1796 calls it Kitt's End. We are indebted to Mrs. O. W. E. Hedley and Canon R. B. Luard-Selby for permission to quote from these letters.

The passing of various Lancashire Turnpike Acts mark how roads were being improved:—

The Buxton to Manchester Turnpike Act in 1724, and Warrington to Preston in 1726; later, Preston to Lancaster in 1750 and Lancaster to the north through Westmorland in 1752.

Yet these improvements cannot have been entirely satisfactory for Lancashire roads remained notorious. Arthur Young, the agriculturalist, after riding over them in 1770 wrote "Let me most seriously caution all travellers who may accidentally propose to travel this terrible country to avoid it as they would the devil; for a thousand to one they break their necks or their limbs by overthrow or breakings down. They will meet with ruts four feet deep, and floating with mud only from a wet summer" (A Six Months' Tour Through the North of England, Vol. IV, 431), while as late as 1796 Sarah Aust (The Hon. Mrs. Murray of Kensington) authoress of "A Companion and Useful Guide to . . . the Lakes of Westmoreland, Cumberland and Lancashire . . ." who travelled to the Lake District from Matlock says "Avoid Lancashire roads if you value your bones; they are all bad . . . and the turnpike roads are no better than the rest."

In 1720 the Cross or Bye Posts of the kingdom were farmed by Allen of Bath, and postal arrangements in Lancashire were extended by him later. In 1735 he established a regular post through Lancaster, Kendal, and Penrith to Carlisle, the service being thrice weekly until 1764, when it was increased to six times a week and new services were added (G.P.O. Public Relations Dept.).

A coach "of sorts" ran from Preston to London as early as 1663 but it does not seem to have been continued. A traveller by it wrote that his journey was in no way pleasant, and had so indisposed him that he was resolved never to ride up again in the coach. The first coach from Manchester to London commenced in 1754. Known as

the "Flying Machine" it was advertised to make the journey or "flight" in four and a half days "however incredible it may appear (barring accidents)." Two years later the "Flying Stage" coach left Warrington on Mondays and got to London on Wednesdays, the inside fare being two guineas, with an allowance of fourteen pounds of luggage.⁵

In 1760 another coach reduced the time between Manchester and London to three days "if God permits", while according to the first Manchester Directory (prepared by Mrs. Elizabeth Ruffold in 1772), the "Royal Mail" with a guard all the way left Manchester every morning and reached London in twenty-eight hours, the fare being £3. 13s. 6d., and in 1774 a coach on *steel springs* ran daily between Liverpool and Preston, covering the distance in one day. The fare was eight shillings for the single journey.

MANCHESTER, LANCASTER, AND THE NORTH.

Shortly after, stage coaches were running on all the principal roads, but travellers from the remote Furness district had to join the main road services at some point en route (usually Lancaster) and it may be convenient, therefore, to consider these facilities in some detail.

An advertisement of April 3rd, 1781, states:—

"Carlisle and Preston Diligence. In one day. Will set out from the Bush Inn, Carlisle every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings at six o'clock, by way of Kendal to Lancaster, and arrives at Preston the same evening. Each passenger from Carlisle to Preston £1. 5s. 6d.; short passengers taken up on the road at threepence-halfpenny a mile, and each passenger to be allowed 14 lb. wt. of luggage, all above to Preston three-halfpence per lb. and in proportion to the rest of the road.

⁵ H. Fishwick, *History of Lancashire*, p. 258; H. Fishwick and P. H. Ditchfield, *Memorials of Old Lancashire*, p. 77.

It also sets out from Preston to Carlisle every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings at six o'clock, and will be joined in a few days by a diligence to Dumfries, etc. At Preston there are coaches set out from thence to London, Liverpool, and Manchester three days a week; a coach from Preston to London goes in two days, which will meet the Carlisle diligence at Preston. Performed by Cooper, Preston; Reynolds, Lancaster; Atkinson, Shap; Howe & Co., Carlisle. All passengers from Carlisle to Liverpool will be set down at Lancaster, and places engaged in a coach that sets out the day following from thence and arrives at Liverpool about six o'clock."⁶ In August of the same year the following announcement was made:—

“Manchester and Blackpool diligence sets out from Mrs. Hodgkinson's, Royal Oak, Market Street-lane, Manchester, every morning at six o'clock (Sunday excepted) and returns from Blackpool to Manchester every morning at six o'clock. A coach or diligence meets the above at Mr. Dawson's, Red Lyon, in Preston, which proceeds to Lancaster the same evening, where it joins a diligence which sets out every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday morning, at six o'clock to the north, through Kendal to Penrith, from thence there are coaches and diligences every day in the week to Carlisle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumfries, Kilmarnock, and most of the principal places in Scotland. Fares from Preston to Lancaster, 5s. 6d.; Kendal 12s.; Penrith 12s. 6d.”⁷

The North Coach was advertised in 1783 by Matthew Pickford and Co., from the Upper Royal Oak, Market-street Lane, Manchester, through Bolton and Chorley to Preston, Lancaster, Kendal, Penrith, Carlisle, Glasgow and Edinburgh, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings at six o'clock. Fares:

⁶ William Hewitson—Memoranda Relating to Lancaster and District—(Lancaster City Library).

⁷ *Ibid.*

	<i>Inside.</i>	<i>Outside.</i>
Manchester to Lancaster ..	9s. od.	6s. od.
Kendal ..	15s. od.	9s. 6d.
Penrith ..	£1 5s. od.	15s. 6d.
Carlisle ..	£1 9s. 6d.	18s. od.

A little later Pickford in conjunction with the Union Co., advertised a commodious diligence every morning (Sundays excepted) from the Royal Oak, Manchester, to the north by the same route (but including Dumfries, Ulverston, and Whitehaven), and at the same fares, except that there was a reduction of 2s. "inside" and 1s. 6d. "outside" to Penrith and Carlisle. (*Ibid.*).

With some exceptions the mails continued to be sent by post-boys on horseback, until Mail Coaches were established in 1784 and became general in 1785.⁸ This innovation was due to Mr. John Palmer whose "Plan for Conveying His Majesty's Mails every day in the Week (except Sunday)" was, on Monday, October 10th, 1785, extended to Carlisle from the Swan With Two Necks in Lad Lane, London⁹ through Manchester, and onwards by the same route as the North Coach. The Mail Coach from London to Manchester had been either re-organised or re-instituted under the "Plan" as from July 25th, 1785 (General Post Office Notices in the "London Gazette.")

According to an advertisement of January, 1788, Messrs. Richard Dixon and Co., of the General Coach Office, Lower Swan Inn, Manchester, ran a Lancaster

⁸ On September 26th, 1757, the post passed, for the first time, through Ormskirk from Liverpool to Preston and three years afterwards the first stage coach was established from Liverpool to London, which started once a week and performed the journey in four days. (E. Baines, *Directory and Gazetteer of Lancashire . . .*, 1824, Vol. 1, 165).

⁹ The "Swan With Two Necks" (Nicks) in Lad Lane, was a famous London hostelry, first noticed in 1556. The old hotel was a favourite with travellers from Lancashire. It was pulled down when the Birmingham Railway was opened and large warehouses were erected on the site by the proprietors, Messrs. Chaplin & Co., forwarding agents, the device being carved in stone over the Goods Entrance. Lad Lane was absorbed by Gresham Street in 1845.

Coach starting at 6.0 a.m. from the Swan Inn, Market-street Lane, Manchester, through Bolton, Chorley, Preston, and Garstang, to Lancaster (which was reached in about eleven hours), three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, returning to Manchester on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Fares were—inside 16s., outside 9d. 6d. (William Hewitson—Memoranda relating to Lancaster and District). From the following April the Carlisle Royal Mail Coach set out from the Bridgewater Arms, High Street, Manchester, daily at or soon after 2.0 a.m. The fares were considerably higher than by the "stage" coaches—to Lancaster £1. 2s.; small £1; large parcels 1d. per lb. From the *Lower Swan* there was a Lancaster coach (Cooper's) which fitted in with Dixon's service, going to Lancaster on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was somewhat slower however, for although leaving at 5.30 a.m. it did not arrive until 6 p.m.¹⁰ The Manchester Directory gives an early notice of carriers between the two towns: Mrs. Beeley from the Three Arrows, Deansgate; and John Scott from the same inn, each once a week. It is probable, however, that there had been carriers on the route for a considerable time.

Dixon and Co. announced in October, 1788, the Carlisle Mail Coach from Manchester at 1.0 a.m., through Lancaster (Bush Inn) to Beck's Coffee House, Carlisle, arriving at 8.0 p.m., the through fare being £2. Two years later the calling places were changed to the Old King's Arms, Lancaster, and Alkin & Fairbairne's Coffee House, Carlisle (William Hewitson—Memoranda Relating to Lancaster and District). Mr. Kendall notes that Barfoot and Wilkes's "Universal British Directory" for 1792-93 gives interesting information¹¹:—

¹⁰ Manchester Directory.—In February, 1794, Thomas Cooper, Preston "the public's obliged and obedient servant," respectfully informed the public that his "Manchester and Lancaster Old Original Stage Coach" still "performed." The times and fares remained as in 1788.

¹¹ This is the only instance where Mr. Kendall clearly indicated an authority. The British Museum Library authorities state that their collection of volumes

The North Mail was timed as follows:

London depart 7-30 p.m. daily, and was due at Manchester two days later shortly after 2 a.m. (generally it was nearer 3 a.m.)

It continued to

Preston	arriving	8. 0 a.m.
Lancaster	„	11.30 „
Burton	„	—
Kendal	„	5. 0 p.m.
Carlisle	„	11.0 „ ¹²

The daily time-table of the Royal Mail (south) was:

Carlisle	depart	3.30 a.m.
Kendal	„	10. 0 a.m.
Burton	„	—
Lancaster	„	1.30 p.m.
Preston	„	5. 0 „
Bolton	„	—
Manchester	arrive	11.30 „
	depart	1. 0 a.m.

then by Stockport, Macclesfield, Leek, Derby, Leicester, Northampton and St. Albans, arriving at the Swan With Two Necks, London, soon after 5.0 a.m. on the following day, about forty hours run from Lancaster, and twenty-eight hours from Manchester.

The coaches to Manchester already mentioned were still operating, and in addition there was a daily service to and from Liverpool at 8.0 a.m. from Lancaster, and 6.0 a.m. from Liverpool, the journey taking eleven hours. As a rule, Furness passengers for London spent the first night at Lancaster and the second at Manchester, proceeding next morning by one of the several alternative coaches available. The Expedition (Mondays,

of the "Universal British Directory" is very incomplete; from it they can only say that the information appears in skeleton form, and it may have been extended from supplements not in their possession or from other sources unknown and now not traceable.

¹² The note-book states that no information is given about the Post Office at Penrith, but the mails for Keswick and district were put off there. The branch mail arrived at Keswick at 11-30 p.m. and proceeded to Cockermouth, from whence it returned at 2-0 a.m. There was said to be a continuation to and from Whitehaven.

T W I C E a W E E K.

THE OLD

Lancaster, Kendal, Whitehaven, Penrith,
Carlisle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Paisley
W A G G O N S,

WILL continue to set out from the CASTLE INN, in *Wood-Street*, as usual, every *Friday* Afternoon, at Three o'Clock; and for the better Accommodation of their Friends and Customers, have a Waggon to set out from the SWAN WITH TWO NECKS INN, *Lad-lane*; to set out every *Tuesday* at Twelve o'Clock at Noon, gets to *Wigan Monday* and *Thursday* Mornings, *Preston* the same Days, *Lancaster Tuesday* and *Friday* Mornings, *Kendal Wednesday* and *Saturday* Mornings, *Carlisle Wednesday* and *Saturday*, *Glasgow* and *Paisley Thursday* and *Saturday*; carries Goods and Passengers, (with the greatest Care and Dispatch) by Way of *Litchfield, Stone, Newcastle-under-Line, Sandbach, Brereton-Green, Holmer-Chapel, Warrington, Winnick, Newton, Alston*, and to the following Places and Parts adjacent, *viz.*

Bolton	Blackburn	Carnell	Sedburg	Keswick	Hesketh New	Greenock
Leigh	Poulton	Wharton	Dent	Cockermouth	Market	Hanilton
Chewbent	Kirkham,	Slyne	Kirby-Stephen	Marv Port	Aunan	Stranawer
Ormskirk	Whaley	Carnforth	Brough	Egremond	Dunries	Lockmabin
Chorley	Garstang	Yealand	Ravenstonedale	Slap	Lockerby	Kircudbright
Exenburgh	Hornby	Burton	Barnardcalife	Penwith	Wigtown	Longtown
Standith	Wray	Holme	Appleby	Lowther	Kilmarnock	Hexham
Walton	Ulverston	Betham	Orton	Wigton	Ayr	Sterling
Crofton	Broughton	Kirby Lonsdale	Hawththel	Brampton	Irvine	AND TO
Cliethro	Dalton	Milnthorpe	Amblefide	Allonby	Beath	All Parts of
Burnley	Bouth	Havertham	Troutbeck	Allbone	Kilbarchin	Scotland, &c.
Leyland	Bootle					

PERFORMED BY { EDWARD BRADSHAW,
JOHN SHELLY,
JOHN WAKEMAN.

*** The above Carriers return their most grateful Thanks to those Gentlemen, Tradesmen, and others, who have been pleased to favour them with their Goods, and hope for a Continuance of their Favours, as they may depend on their being properly forwarded with the greatest Care; and at the same Time beg Leave to acquaint them, they will not be accountable for any Plate, Money, Watches or Writings, unless entered and paid for as such to W. WORRALL, Book-keeper at the above Inn, or at No. 99, *Wood-Street*.

WAGGON BILL (c. 1782)
(Now in the Barrow-in-Furness Museum)

Wednesdays and Fridays) was a popular service, leaving at 5.30 a.m. and arriving at the Swan With Two Necks about 2.0 p.m. on the following day. Thus, if they left home on Monday, they reached London on Thursday afternoon. For humbler travellers there were wagons from Lancaster—one to London every Monday and Thursday at 10.30 a.m., returning from the south on Tuesdays and Fridays; two to York, one on Wednesdays and one on Fridays; two twice a week to Preston and Manchester, and two twice a week to Kendal, one of which continued to Glasgow. During the last years of the 18th century, the Lancaster Post Office opened at 8.0 a.m. and closed at dark. There was a delivery of letters at 11.45 a.m.¹³ C. Clark's "Historical and Descriptive Account of the Town of Lancaster" 1807, says:—"COACHES. The mail coach from the south arrives at about half past eleven o'clock in the forenoon and proceeds north after changing horses; that from the North arrives about half past one and stops about half an hour for the passengers to dine. No London Mail arrives on Tuesdays nor is there any sent to London on Fridays. Several stage coaches set off for Liverpool every morning. The passengers for Manchester, London, etc. are taken by Messrs. Cooper and Co's coach to Preston, whence they proceed in another coach to Manchester. The Liverpool coaches arrive here in the evening and about an hour after proceed to Kendal. Coaches to and from Ulverston every day as the tides permit." The paragraph is repeated in the second edition of 1811. By 1813 three coaches started daily for Manchester from the Swan With Two Necks: Traveller at 12 noon; Defiance at a quarter before three; the Royal Mail at 7.30 p.m.; with opposition coaches from other London hotels: Telegraph at 2.0 p.m. and Light Telegraph at 4.0 p.m. All gave a through

¹³ All the above information regarding Lancaster appears in the "Universal British Directory," 1792-3, Vol. III, No. 43, 623-4.

service to Lancaster and Carlisle. The Light Telegraph was the original coach established to carry four only inside, and travelled with a guard and *lamps*. (Advertisement in the "Times," April 21st, 1813). Time-tables for these coaches are given in Cary's "Roads" (Coach Directory), 6th edition, 1815. In consequence of the reduction in the price of horse provender, fares were reduced after October 17th of that year. Reduction in fares between Lancaster and Liverpool were made in 1817, an extract from "Lancaster Records, or Leaves from Local History, 1801-1850," dated March 1st, 1817, stating "An opposition has started in the coaching trade, Thos. Gregson and Co. having commenced running the Royal Liverpool Coach, in opposition to Messrs. J. Dunn and Co's Royal Telegraph; Messrs Gregson and Co. advertise fares to Liverpool or Manchester—inside 14s., outside 10s." Upon this, Dunn and Co. advertised their fares at half the sums—inside 7s., outside, 5s.

Between 1810 and 1825 journey times were improved, and "A list of Mail and Post Coaches arranged as they leave Manchester daily: with the names of the coaches, the inns from which they start . . ." by M. Webb, 1822, gives useful comparisons. It has been estimated that the average speed of the Carlisle Mail via Manchester throughout at this time was slightly more than $8\frac{1}{4}$ miles per hour (Herbert Joyce—History of the Post Office, 1893, 400). In 1825 the Mail reached Manchester from London at 6.0 p.m. It left at 7.0 p.m. and was timed as follows:—

Lancaster	..	arrive	1.45	a.m.
		depart	2. 0	"
Burton	..	arrive	3. 0	"
Kendal	..	"	4.30	"
Carlisle	..	"	9.45	"
The return time-table was				
Carlisle	..	depart	6.30	a.m.
Kendal	..	"	noon	
Burton	..	"	1.30	p.m.

Lancaster ..	.. arrive	2.45 p.m.
	depart	3.0 ..
Manchester ..	.. arrive	10.25 ..

and departing for London at 7-45 a.m. the following morning.¹⁴

In the summer of this year some alteration of times were made, announced at Lancaster as follows:

COACHING. Turner & Co's General Coach Office,
Opposite the Fish-Stones, Market Place, Lancaster.
T. Turner & Co.

Return thanks to their numerous friends and the public in general, for all past favours, and at the same time announce, that they have commenced running nothing but Four Inside Light Post Coaches, upon a New, Safe, and Commodious plan, viz.

The Doctor, Light Post Coach every morning at nine o'clock, to Preston, Blackburn Bolton, to the Swan Inn, Market Street, Manchester, where it meets the Independent, Light Post Coach to London, which leaves on its arrival. Passengers and parcels booked through to London. Passengers by this conveyance have an opportunity of getting breakfast at Lancaster, and their supper, the following evening, in London: being a Direct Coach.

The Royal Liverpool¹⁵ every morning, at nine o'clock, through Preston, Ormskirk, to the Angel and Wellington's Arms Inn, Dale Street, Liverpool, in seven hours.

The Invincible, every day at twelve o'clock, to Carlisle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and all parts of the North.

The Invincible, between one and two o'clock, every day, to London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and all parts of the South.

Performed by Turner, Calvert, & Co.

Who will not be accountable for money, watches, plate, jewels, writings, goods, and any package or parcel whatever (if lost or damaged) unless insured and paid for at the time of delivery.¹⁶

¹⁴ Lancashire Mail Coaches Directory . . ., 1825; Edward Baines, History, Directory and Gazetteer of the County Palatine of Lancashire . . . Vol. 2, 32, 40, 392, 396-7. A complete list of coaches to and from Manchester, Lancaster, and the North is given.

¹⁵ The result of the 1817 competition is not known, but it will be noted that Thos. Gregson & Co's Royal Liverpool was now in the hands of Turner, Calvert & Co.

¹⁶ "The Lancaster Gazette; and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, etc." Saturday, June 4th, 1825.

SUPERIOR TRAVELLING—From the King's Arms and Royal Oak Inns, Lancaster, by the following

Mails,

and

Newly-Invented Safety-Coaches:—

Royal Mail, to Glasgow and Edinburgh, every morning at two o'clock.

Royal Mail to London, every afternoon at three o'clock.

Lord Exmouth Coach, to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, every morning at four o'clock (Sundays excepted) through Kirkby Stephen, Barnard Castle, Durham, to the Turf Hotel, Newcastle; where it meets coaches to Sunderland, Shields, Edinburgh, etc.

Royal Umpire, to Liverpool and Manchester, every morning at six o'clock.

Royal Telegraph, to Preston, Liverpool and Manchester, every morning at half-past ten o'clock.

New Times, to Kendal, Penrith, Carlisle, Glasgow, and Edinburgh every day at noon.

Telegraph, to Ulverston and Whitehaven, every day.

New Times, to Liverpool and Manchester, every afternoon at half-past one o'clock.

Umpire Post Coach, to London, direct every morning at six o'clock.

Royal Telegraph, to Millthorp, Kendal, Keswick, Cockermouth, and Whitehaven, every afternoon at four o'clock.

Royal Union to Leeds, every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings, at half-past six o'clock.

Performed by Jon. Dunn & Co.

Who most respectfully return their sincere thanks to the public, for the great support received on all occasions:—No exertion shall be wanted to render superior comfort and accommodation to travellers. The proprietors will not be accountable for any parcel whatever, above the value of five pounds, unless entered and paid for accordingly.¹⁷

Further improvements in the timing of the mails to Lancaster and Carlisle were made during the next ten years, as according to the "British Almanac" for 1837 (p. 78) the Mail coach, still leaving the Swan With Two Necks at 8.0 p.m., arrived at Lancaster in just under 26 hours, and Carlisle in approximately 33 hours. An extra

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Saturday, July 9th, 1825.

ten minutes was, however, allowed in 1838, when the time table was varied slightly (*Ibid.*, 1838, p. 80). The postage for a single sheet was

230-300 miles (which included Furness)	12d.
300-400 „	13d.

but a sheet weighing one ounce was charged as four letters. (G.P.O. : Public Relations Dept).

KENDAL.

Before turnpike roads were made and before wagons came into use, the merchandise of Kendal was transported by gangs of pack-horses, the town being the principal station for such between Wigan and the border. Nicolson and Burn's "History of Westmorland and Cumberland", Vol. 1, 66, gives a list of packhorse gangs and the various places from which they started for Kendal. It includes 5 horses from Ulverston weekly, 6 from Hawkshead twice a week, and 6 from Cartmel. Pack-horses continued to traverse Westmorland until 1870, long after the old-time wagons had disappeared. It is said that the last route over which they regularly plodded was that from Kendal to Whitehaven (T. W. Wilkinson—From Track to Bypass, 66).

But the importance of the place did not cease with the general passing of pack-horses, and it became a busy centre for wagons and coaches. It will have been noted that many of the Mail and Stage coaches already mentioned served Kendal, and a brief mention of others which affected Furness travellers will suffice. In 1793 Isabella Matterson's Post Coach left Kendal daily at 5.0 a.m. for the Swan With Two Necks, London, and there was a return coach every night (Sundays excepted). A mail came from York, via Leeds, every Monday, Thursday and Saturday, and was despatched to York on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday, the times being unstated. Two wagons went to Ulverston, by Cartmel, every Friday,

returning on Saturday, while two more went by Backbarrow every Tuesday and Friday, returning next day.¹⁸ The Union coach was advertised as continuing to run daily (except Sunday) at 5.0 a.m. from the King's Arms, through Kirkby Lonsdale, Ingleton, Settle, Skipton and Bradford, to Leeds, arriving there at 8.0 p.m. This gave a connection to York, Hull, Sheffield, etc. (J. F. Curwen—Kirkbie-Kendall, 279-280). The King's Arms was also the starting place, in 1811, of the light, four inside, post coach Good Intent, which proceeded to the Black Lion Inn, Whitehaven, via Ambleside, Keswick, Cockermouth, and Workington at 5.30 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, returning from Whitehaven on the following days at 7.0 p.m. It was announced, in 1813, to run daily (Sundays excepted) leaving half an hour earlier, and returning from Whitehaven an hour later (*Ibid.* 278, 280).¹⁹ The first mention of a *coach* from Kendal to Ulverston appears to be in 1819, when the Lord Exmouth was advertised from the White Hart, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, to the Sun Inn, Ulverston, returning on the following mornings (*Ibid.* 63). From July, 1833, a fast service of main road coaches was instituted here and publicly announced as follows:

Cheap Travelling from the King's Arms and Commercial Inns, Kendal. The Public are respectfully informed that Coaches leave the above Inns every Morning at six o'clock, through Lancaster and Preston to LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER IN 9 HOURS CERTAIN: at Very Reduced Fares.

N.B. Passengers travelling by these Coaches arrive in Liverpool in time for the Steam Packet to Dublin, And in Manchester in time for Coaches to LONDON IN 22 HOURS, being only One Night out on the Road. Performed by Jackson, Webster, Dixon & Co., Kendal, July, 1833. (Old Coaching Bill exhibited at Kendal Museum).

Furness travellers for the south sometimes went to

¹⁸ Barfoot and Wilkes—Universal British Directory. Article "Kendal."

¹⁹ At various times other coaches travelled between Lancaster and Whitehaven, passing through Kendal.

Kendal to avail themselves of this new facility, or joined en route at Lancaster if seats were obtainable, but its importance lies in the favourable comparison with the Mail times.

HAWKSHEAD.

In addition to the 6 pack-horses twice a week to Kendal there were, prior to 1752, 20 pack-horses each week to the same destination which passed through the town. Later, wagons from Keswick, Ambleside, and Broughton called, but travel was principally on horseback. "To Kendal and Ulverston are carriers twice a week, and to each of the other neighbouring market towns except Penrith always once and sometimes twice a week" (Barfoot and Wilkes—Universal British Directory, Vol. III, No. 37, 249). William Green (Tourists' New Guide to the Lakes, 1819) states that there was only one post-chaise available, which was kept at the Red Lion Inn. Here, in 1825, John Jopson, the postmaster, had his office. Letters arrived by Riding Post from Ambleside, every evening, which returned at 6.0 a.m. every morning except Tuesday (Edward Baines—History . . . of Lancashire . . . Vol. I, 653). Carriers came from "Conistone" every Monday, returning the same day, while others went to Kendal each Wednesday and Saturday, Broughton-in-Furness on Friday, and "Ulverstone," the latter starting at 1.0 in the morning. All returned the same day (*Ibid.*). In 1849 the Jenny Lind coach ran daily in summer from the Ferry (Lake Windermere) to Coniston, passing through Hawkshead.

ULVERSTON AND FURNESS.

Until a Post Office was established in Ulverston, Furness people had to post their letters at Lancaster and have their correspondence addressed to some Lancaster friend or shopkeeper. Mr. Kendall quotes from some interesting letters to which he had access, as follows:

1722. May 17th. Geo. Case to John Postlethwaite: Bond to perform award respecting Idle Cote.

"To Mr. John Postlethwaite in Dalton. To be left at Edward Petty's shop in Ulverston."

1753. "Dalton. Aug. 2nd. Dear Miss, When I took the freedom of writing you on the 11th of last month . . . I thought of being at Holmebank, because I did not know at the writing it in what manner I should get the letter conveyed to you."

1785. Dec. 3. Plymouth to Liverpool. Goods sent in a King's Cutter and to be forwarded by Mr. Postlethwaite to Ulverston or Lancr. as opportunity offer. . .

When a post office first opened in Ulverston is uncertain. An early letter, dated 13th September, 1736, was addressed to the Rev. William Hunter, at Walney, from J. Collinson at Lancaster, but Ulverston is not on the endorsement. Another, dated 30th August, 1780, addressed to the "Officiating Minister of Walney Chapel in the Parish of Dalton, near Ulverstone, Lancashire" clearly had gone through Ulverston.²⁰ When the Custom House was moved from Piel to Ulverston in 1760 a postal service was instituted between Lancaster and that town, but it seems to have been irregular and uncertain. *Official* letters to Piel may have been carried by sea from Chester, or perhaps sent by boat from Lancaster, as a regular postal service by water to that place is said to have commenced in 1735. By November, 1786 there was a post to Ulverston, probably three times a week (G.P.O.—Public Relations Dept.).

Before the Newby Bridge and Levens turn-pike road was made, the best way from Furness to Lancaster was "over the sands" involving crossing the estuaries of the Leven, Winster, Kent, and Keer. The route from Ulverston lay over the Leven sands, near Chapel Island, to Sandgate, by Flookburgh to Kent's Bank, then across the sands again to Hest Bank. It was a treacherous way, the dangers of which had been realised for centuries. The

²⁰ This letter and the reply are referred to in *Trans.* n.s. xx, 98-99.

first mention of a public conveyance "oversands" occurs as an advertisement in the "Cumberland Pacquet" dated 11th September, 1781. This was a diligence or chaise to carry three persons and went from the King's Arms, Ulverston, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, returning from the Sun Inn, Lancaster, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, as the tide permitted. The fare for the single journey was 5s. and the proprietors assured the public that they had "procured a sober and careful driver, who is well acquainted with the sands, and humbly hope that their plan will meet with due encouragement, as this is the most cheap, safe, and expeditious method of crossing the sands." About 1785 this was superseded by coach. From that time public conveyances ran regularly until the opening of the Furness Railway throughout, in 1857, caused the oversands route to be abandoned.²¹

When visitors began to flock to the Lake district, early in the 19th century, some hesitated to take the oversands route, and guide books of the period assure the nervous that it can be avoided. "Coaches also go to Ulverstone after every tide, across the Lancaster sands . . . Those however, who shrink at the idea of crossing the sands . . . may prosecute their journey with more pleasure by way of Kendal, which town is about twenty two miles distant from Lancaster. This route, which is certainly the shortest to the lakes is also the most convenient for those who are in any degree restricted to time." (J. Farington—Views of the Lakes, 1816, 4). By 1793 Ulverston was the centre of transport for Furness and a wide district around. A mail coach left the Globe Inn for Whitehaven

²¹ William White, *Furness Folk and Facts*, 94; *Westmorland Gazette*, December 23 and 30, 1933—E. Cuthbert Woods, *A Furness Hazard through the Centuries*; *Manchester City News*, December 8th, 1928, letter signed "Harry Wardle"; *Westmorland Gazette*, January 8th, 1927, letter signed "Belle Prickett"; *Lancaster Guardian*, weeks ending June 21st and July 26, 1851.

on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays "according as the tide suits at Esk," and returned on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays.²² From the same inn on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, John Clackson's²³ coach proceeded to Lancaster, returning on the following days, while another coach, from the King's Arms, went daily except Sunday. The timetables of both were variable "suitable to the tides" (Barfoot and Wilkes—Universal British Directory, Vol. IV, No. 60, 635).

Goods from Furness (except for West Cumberland, provided for by a weekly wagon to Whitehaven every Friday, returning on Tuesday, *Ibid*), went via Kendal, and goods for the district were despatched from London on Mondays and Fridays, also via that town. A carrier went between Ulverston and Cartmel on Mondays and Thursdays, while there was another who went to Kendal from Cartmel every Saturday. That village had no regular post, however, letters being carried to Flookburgh, where the messenger met the post between Ulverston and Lancaster "which goes and comes every day, or may be conveyed every Tuesday and Friday by the carrier who goes between Lancaster and Hawkshead and resides in Cartmel" (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 28, 650). No mention is made of any regular transport between Ulverston and the villages in Plain Furness, but an Appendix to the Directory published in 1797 records (p. 49) that a carrier went from Dalton three times a week.

Improvements to the principal roads in the district appear to have been made rather later than elsewhere in Lancashire and Westmorland. An Act relating to the road from Kendal to Ulverston was passed in 1763 and this formed the only reasonable alternative to the "oversands" route to Lancaster until the new turn-pike road from

²² Mails for the Isle of Man were forwarded by the vessel "Fly" once a week, on Tuesdays, from Whitehaven.

²³ So shown on page 650 (Vol. 11) of the Directory, but evidently a misprint for "Clarkson," as given on page 624 of Vol. III, and elsewhere.



THE OVERSANDS ROUTE TO FURNESS, from Paterson's *Description of Roads* (1821)

Levens Bridge to Greenodd was completed about 1820.²⁴ This enabled improvements to be made in both mail and travelling arrangements. By 1825 a Post Mail Gig connected daily with Milnthorpe and Burton (where Furness mails were now dropped by both north and south coaches) letters arriving at Ulverston at 8.15 a.m. and outgoing bags being despatched at 9.0 a.m. In connection with this, there was a "bye" or branch post to Cartmel from Newton-in-Cartmel, for which an additional fee of 1½d. was imposed. Another Mail Gig went to Whitehaven via Broughton-in-Furness on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, returning on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. It left Ulverston at 9.5 a.m. and was due there from Whitehaven at 6.0 p.m. but the times taken are said to have varied, being dependent on the state of the tide at Ravenglass. Robert Town was the Ulverston Post-master, his office being in Market-place,²⁵ but Lancaster and Broughton-in-Furness, like many other Lancashire towns at the time, had Post-mistresses in charge. There was a good service of carriers to the neighbouring districts, including one daily to Rampside, and two, thrice a week, to Dalton²⁶ (Edward Baines—History . . . of Lancashire 1800. Vol. I; 562, 597; Vol. II, 32, 562, 575-578).

The Telegraph coach had been crossing the sands daily for some years at times regulated by the tides, from Ulverston (Sun Inn and Bradyll Arms alternately) to Lancaster (King's Arms), but in this year (1825) changed its route, thereafter running at fixed times via Newby Bridge, leaving at 6.0 a.m. and reaching Lancaster four hours later. It returned at 4.0 p.m. taking half an hour longer.

²⁴ For other information regarding roads into Furness see *Trans.* o.s., vii, Art. 1. "The Guides over the Kent and Leven Sands," by John Fell; also William White, *Furness Folk and Facts*, 93-94, and 97-98.

²⁵ According to the *British Directory* (Vol. IV, No. 60, 637) Robert Town was Post-master in 1793; this is the earliest address of the Post-office so far discovered.

²⁶ "There is no Post Office here, the letters are conveyed by Common Carriers." (Baines: Vol. I, 631).

Changes in Mail arrangements occurred at various times, consequent upon the altered running of the main road coaches. In 1836, as has been stated, the mail left London at 8.0 p.m., and it passed Burton in time for the local gig to reach Ulverston at about 6.0 a.m. on the second day, this enabling the Whitehaven gig (now daily) to start on at 6.25 a.m. 1836 also saw the commencement of the foot-post to Dalton and Barrow, leaving at 6.45 a.m.²⁷ The outgoing post from Ulverston was arranged as follows: At 5.0 p.m. the foot-post from Barrow arrived, followed at 5.20 p.m. by the Mail Gig from Whitehaven. At 6.0 p.m. the Burton Mail Gig was sent off via Newby Bridge, arriving to catch the 10.56 p.m. mail coach for Kendal and the north. The mails for London and the south left Burton at 12.44 a.m., arriving at the General Post Office, London, about 5.30 a.m. next day—about 36 hours from Ulverston. The local Post Office was then in Queen Street, with Mrs. Wilkinson as Post-Mistress. Her letter-box closed at 5.25 p.m., letters taken to the window by 5.45 p.m. being charged 1d. extra as “Late Fee.” After that, until 6.0 p.m. the late fee was 6d. (*Ibid.*).

THE COMING OF THE RAILWAYS.

The opening of the railways now began to make frequent changes in the arrangements of the travelling public. The railway from Birmingham to Liverpool was opened in July, 1837. Passengers for Furness then left London at 8.0 p.m. by the coach. Travelling by Stony Stratford and Coventry, they arrived at Birmingham at 6.38 a.m. and left by rail at 7.0 a.m. to arrive at Warrington railway station at 10.41 a.m.; thence on by rail to Wigan (12.19 p.m.), by coach to Lancaster, which was reached about

²⁷ British Almanac for 1837, 78; The Ulverston Almanack and Tide Table, or Daily Remembrancer for 1837, Stephen Soulby, Market Place, Ulverston, 34.

4.0 p.m., and completed the journey to Ulverston over-sands, or by the Telegraph—they had been just over 24 hours on the way.²⁸ (British Almanac, 1838). The mails, however, were still carried all the way by road via Manchester as the Act for Conveying Mails by Railways only came into force on August 14th, 1838. After the railway became available through between London and Preston (October 22nd, 1838), they were sent so far by train. The Night Mail reached Preston at 9.19 a.m., went on by coach arriving at Lancaster at 10.30 a.m., then by the Mail Coach to Ulverston, arriving that evening at 8.30 p.m.²⁹ The outward mail left Ulverston in the evening by gig as before, joining the Carlisle-Preston coach at Burton. This arrived at Preston at 7.34 a.m. but the mail did not go on until the night mail train left, and so only arrived at Euston Square station, London, at 5.36 a.m. on the third day (British Almanac for 1839, 81; 1840, 82).

The railway reached Lancaster on June 26th, 1840, and Fleetwood on July 16th of the same year. The latter extension gave alternative travelling routes to and from Furness. Since about 1834 the "new, swift-sailing steam packet 'Windermere,' John Allenby Commander, with three handsome cabins and engines on an improved patent principle" had plied between Liverpool and

²⁸ After the Telegraph ran via Newby Bridge, other services commenced by the ancient route. In 1837, Thomas Hodgson of the King's Arms, Ulverston, took over the concern of John Ashburner of "regularly running a commodious covered car over Sands" to the Old Sir Simon Inn, Lancaster. The full text of the advertisement is quoted in William White's "Furness Folk and Facts," 94-95, but the source is not stated. In 1841 there was a daily service by the coaches Victoria from Bradyll Arms, and Guide to the Lakes from the Queen's Arms, each running on alternate days. In 1842 the Prince of Wales took the place of the latter. (Jackson's Ulverston and North Lonsdale Almanack and Tide Table. John Jackson, Market Place, Ulverston; for 1842, page 31; for 1843, page 33).

²⁹ When the Ulverston Telegraph began to carry mails it was known first as the "Mail" Coach, and afterwards as the "Royal Mail." (Stephen Soulby's Ulverston Almanack, 1840, this issue is not paginated; John Jackson's Ulverston and North Lonsdale Almanack, 1841, 34).

Ulverston Canal, calling at Blackpool, etc., every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday; and between Ulverston and Liverpool every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the journey taking about eight hours.³⁰ The "Express" and "James Dennistoun" now commenced to sail between Fleetwood and Bardsea, all these services continuing until 1847, when the Furness Railway Company bought the "Windermere," renamed her "Helvellyn" and instituted a daily summer service³¹ between Barrow (Piel Pier) and Fleetwood, the sea crossing taking 1½ hours.³² From Barrow, passengers proceeded to Dalton by railway, and thence to Ulverston and Newby Bridge by the Lady of the Lake coach. The fares from Fleetwood were:

1st class of Steamer and Railway, and Inside Coach

Ulverston 6/- Newby Bridge 9/6.

2nd class of Steamer and Railway, and outside Coach.

Ulverston 4/- Newby Bridge 6/-.

This gave access to Bowness, Ambleside, etc. by means of the steam yachts plying on Windermere Lake, and was advertised as "affording to Tourists the most direct, speedy, and attractive communication between the 'Lakes District' and the Southern parts of England."³³ The route evidently was intended to supplant the Mazeppa coach which commenced on June 6th, 1842 (advertisement in the "Lancaster Gazette," Saturday, 4th June, 1842) to run from Lancaster at 2.0 p.m. (after the arrival of the morning trains from Liverpool and Manchester) to Kendal, Bowness, Ambleside, and Keswick, returning next morning in time for the 1.0 p.m. train south from

³⁰ This service is mentioned in the Northern Tourist's Guide to the Lakes, published by J. Allison, Penrith, 1835, pages 117, 131 (The included Traveller's Guide, pages 127-131 gives interesting information with a list of coaches to and from Penrith); also in Jackson's Ulverston and North Lonsdale Almanack for 1841 and subsequent years.

³¹ The Winter Service was thrice weekly.

³² Later, the steamer "Cambria" worked the service. (Ulverston Journal, published by William Kitchin, Ulverston, for April 2nd, 1853).

³³ Contemporary posters and time-tables of the Furness Railway Company.

Lancaster. The Furness Railway route suffered from two grave disadvantages, (a) the number of changes of conveyance needed between Fleetwood and the Lakes, (b) the Helvellyn's sailing times were dependent on the tides, consequently they varied from day to day, so there were many days in every month when there was no connection with the trains at Fleetwood. For a time, in spite of this, it was quite a favourite way to the Lake District, but the railway through Kendal to Windermere, which had opened on April 21st, 1847, soon gained the bulk of the traffic. The mails were never sent to Furness by these alternatives.

An announcement dated Thursday, October 26th, 1848 gives the "best route" to Ulverston as by the Kendal and Windermere Railway and a new coach, the *Last Minstrel*, from Windermere via Newby Bridge (William White—*Furness Folk and Facts*, 95). It is doubtful, however, if the route always gave complete satisfaction. A paragraph in the "*Lancaster Guardian*" for the week ending July 12th, 1851, says: ". . . it may not be uninteresting to many of our readers, and especially to any shareholders in the Kendal and Windermere Railway to be informed from an eye-witness that this 'Gem' of Railways has at length arrived at the highest maximum of speed hitherto attained in the annals of railway travelling, a train having, last week, gone the whole distance between Kendal and Birthwaite (8 miles) in one hour and fifteen minutes!" The coaches between Lancaster, Kendal, and Carlisle were soon run off the road when the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway was opened on December 17th, 1846. Some who saw them make their first trip on October 10th, 1785, lived to see them perform their last journey sixty-one years afterwards, though not many coach services had a longer existence.

Our review of the Mail services is resumed after the institution of the Uniform Penny Post on 10th January,

1840. In 1841 the Night Mail left the General Post Office, London, at 8.0 p.m., and Euston Square Station at 8.30 p.m., reaching Lancaster at 8.21 a.m. next morning, and Ulverston by coach via Newby Bridge, at 1.30 p.m.—17½ hours from the G.P.O. The Burton Mail Gig with letters from the Lancaster and Carlisle coaches arrived in Ulverston at 3.0 a.m. bringing the Morning Mail from London which had left Euston Square at 9.45 a.m., arrived at Lancaster at 8.41 p.m. and gone on to Burton by coach. Letters for Whitehaven proceeded from Ulverston at 3.30 a.m. At 6.0 a.m. Thomas Shaw, the foot-messenger, left for Dalton and Barrow. He took in the country places on the route, picking up letters for despatch, and did the same on his way back to Ulverston in the evening, this representing a daily journey of nearly thirty miles (Joseph Fisher—Popular History of Barrow-in-Furness, 1891, 21). This arduous day's work appears to have arisen because half as much was considered insufficient to employ him fully, for J. Wilson Hyde (The Royal Mail, 1885, p. 124), states "Prior to 1847 there was nothing but a foot-postman, who served the town (Barrow-in-Furness) by walking thither from Ulverston one day and back to Ulverston the next. Later on he made the double journey daily and delivered the letters on his arrival at Barrow." The morning delivery of letters in Ulverston commenced at 7.0 a.m. (except between November and February inclusive, when a start was made an hour later) with an afternoon town delivery at 3.0 p.m. (Jackson's Ulverston Almanack for 1841, 31; and for 1842, 56). There were two return mails, one closing at 11.0 a.m., sent by coach via Newby Bridge at 11.45 a.m., and catching the 5.27 p.m. train from Lancaster, which arrived in London next day at 5.32 a.m. The second post closed at 6.40 p.m. The Barrow foot-messenger arrived at Ulverston Post Office at 6.0 p.m. followed by the Whitehaven Mail Gig at 6.55 p.m. (altered during the year

to 7.15 p.m.). The mail left the town by Mail Gig to Burton, where connection was made with the main road coaches. Letters for the south were transferred to the railway at Lancaster, leaving there at 1.57 a.m. and arriving in London at 1.32 p.m. about nineteen hours after the post had closed at Ulverston. By 1839 Mrs. Wilkinson had moved her office to Benson Street, where it remained until her successor, Moses Mawson, was appointed in 1841, when he moved to King Street. Post Office Orders were first granted there—not exceeding £2, poundage 3d.; from £2 to £5, poundage 6d. The two-penny “extra late fee” was again raised to 6d.³⁴ and these fees being now carried to revenue were invariably demanded (*Ibid.*). Another foot-messenger was put on in 1844 working to and from Ulverston, Bardsea, Urswick, Scales and Aldingham; while after the railway was opened to Kendal from Lancaster (September 21st, 1846) the Burton Mail Gig went to Milnthorpe station.

Important mail alterations and additions were made at the end of 1847:

Arrivals

The first mail from London	..	due 10.15 p.m.
„ second	„ „ ..	.. „ 10.10 a.m.
Whitehaven	.. .. ..	.. „ 6.25 p.m.
Bardsea and Aldingham	.. ..	7. 0 „
Dalton and Barrow	.. ..	8. 0 „

Despatches

Whitehaven (with bags for Broughton, Grizebeck, Bootle and Ravenglass)		10.45 p.m.
Bardsea and Aldingham Messenger	}	10.40 a.m.
Dalton and Barrow		

A daily service was given to the surrounding district by the appointment of additional foot-messengers:

(a) Leaving “Griesbeck” after the Whitehaven mail

³⁴ A short time before Mrs. Wilkinson retired, the late fees had been reduced to 1d. and 2d.

had passed, at 7.0 a.m. delivering letters through Beck Side, Sand Side, Soutergate, and on the road to Ireleth, which he left again at 3.30 p.m., reaching Grizebeck in time for the Mail Cart from Whitehaven to Ulverston at 5.30 p.m. (except Sundays).

(b) Leaving Greenodd with letters for Spark Bridge, Lowick, Blawith, and Nibthwaite, returning the same day.

(c) Leaving Haverthwaite for Redding, Redding Side, and forward to Satterthwaite, etc.; also returning the same day.

(d) Leaving Lindal after the Dalton and Barrow messenger had passed, delivering letters through Newton, Stank, Dendron, Gleaston, Leece, and to Rampside, returning to Lindal³⁵ to meet the Barrow messenger on his way back to Ulverston in the evening.³⁶

The Milnthorpe Mail Coach left at 2.37 p.m. with bags for Greenodd, Pennybridge, Backbarrow, Newby Bridge, Newton, Lindal, Milnthorpe, Lancaster, London, etc. Letters by this mail reached London, Liverpool, and Manchester the succeeding morning. Mails for the north of England, and Scotland were sent by this route also, and were delivered in Carlisle next morning; in Glasgow and Edinburgh about 2.0 p.m. The Milnthorpe Mail Gig left at 10.0 p.m. with bags as above, connecting with the

³⁵ This messenger, Jenkinson Salmon, held his appointment until December, 1867, and was succeeded by John Robinson, who was still a postman in 1904. (Proc. Barrow Naturalists' Field Club, Vol. XVII, 225). He was relieved of the Rampside portion of his journey on November 30th, 1878, letters for that village thereafter being delivered through Barrow.

³⁶ But the longest local journey for a foot messenger is mentioned in the November, 1808 issue of the "Sporting Magazine": ". . . The name of this extraordinary individual is William Brockbank. He is a native of Millom in Cumberland. He daily performed the journey between Whitehaven and Ulverstone on foot, under the disagreeable circumstances of frequently wading the river at Muncaster, by which place he constantly went, which is at least three miles round, and including the different calls he had to make at a short distance from the road, his daily task was not short of 47 miles." (North Lonsdale Magazine, Vol. IV, 164). Practically no information regarding local mails at the beginning of the 19th century is obtainable, but presumably this messenger supplemented the 1793 arrangements shown in the Universal British Directory.

2.10 a.m. train south, and the London bags reached Euston at 11.0 a.m. for the afternoon delivery, but Glasgow and Edinburgh letters only reached their destination on the morning of the *third* day (Jackson's Ulverston Almanac for 1848, 69-70 and inset "Alterations in the Mails since printing off the Post Office Regulations." N.B. The letter "k" in "Almanack" was dropped as from the 1845 issue, but Soulby continued the old spelling).

Next year two more messengers were added:

(a) From Newton-in-Cartmel to Cark, via Wood Broughton, Aynsome, Holker, and Holker Hall.

(b) From Lindale-in-Cartmel to Flookburgh, via Grange, Cart Lane, and Allithwaite,

both worked in conjunction with the passing of the Milnthorpe and Ulverston coaches and gigs (Soulby's Ulverston Almanack for 1849). With some variations in timing due to revised time-tables as railway speeds increased, all these arrangements continued till 1857. In addition, the New Times coach left daily except Sundays for Milnthorpe station between 6.0 a.m. and 7.0 a.m., leaving Milnthorpe at about 2.30 p.m. on the return, and reaching Ulverston at 6.0 p.m. It did not connect with through trains to London, nor, contrary to statements sometimes made, did it carry mails.

Until 1845, the Ulverston Post Office appears to have opened on Sundays as on week-days. Then it was "closed during the hours of Divine Worship," until 1850, when in addition it shut from 10.0 a.m. till 5.0 p.m. This was in consequence of London agitation against Sunday Post Office Labour. A Commission of Enquiry was appointed, which recommended that in the provinces there should be one delivery of letters on Sunday mornings, the delivery not to interfere with the hours of divine worship; and that as far as possible, every post office should close at 10.0 a.m. on that day ("Her Majesty's

Mails: A History of the Post-Office," by William Lewins, 1865, 227-229). During 1852 the office was moved to Benson Street again and in the next year was kept open on Sundays until 10.25 only (afterwards until 10.10 a.m. and eventually 10.0 a.m.) "after which it will be closed for the day and no applications whatever attended to" (Ulverston Almanacs).

After September, 1857, when the opening of the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway gave through railway communication between Furness and London, much of the mail was sent by train and the Ulverston to Milnthorpe coaches ceased running, though the Mail Gig continued to carry the Whitehaven bags until the early morning train from Lancaster to Whitehaven commenced on August 1st, 1869 under a Post Office Agreement of 1867.

This was after the retirement of Moses Mawson as Postmaster of Ulverston. During his service he saw many changes, but in 1863 he was succeeded by William N. Hartley, who moved the office to Queen Street, then to Theatre Street, and eventually to Benson Street.³⁷

The completed railway of course provided Furness travellers with much improved convenience. Soon, faster trains were provided, and the "express" train leaving Barrow at 1.0 p.m. and Ulverston 35 minutes later, arrived at Euston at 9.30 p.m. The down express leaving Euston at 10.0 a.m. arrived at Ulverston at 7.30 p.m., and Barrow at 8.5 p.m. (Furness Railway Timetables).

³⁷ Mr. Edward Walker of Sale, whose recollections of Ulverston extend over eighty years, kindly informs us that Hartley's last office was at 9, Benson Street, which still stands. It was a double house, his father and the family residing in the main portion, the annex being used as the post office. It continued as such until the present office was erected. William N. Hartley was the son of Philip Hartley, who owned the rope walk in the Ellers. The last driver of the Milnthorpe Gig was Robert Gunson Townson, an Ulverston "character."

BARROW-IN-FURNESS POST OFFICE.

The Post Office at Barrow was first opened on April 12th, 1847, as a branch office of Ulverston, James Fisher, a lad aged 17 being appointed as Post-master. Before that Capt. James Barrow, shipping agent to Messrs. Harrison, Ainslie & Co., pilot, and schoolmaster, received letters brought by the inhabitants of the village and immediate district around, which were called for by the foot-messenger before he started his evening journey back to Ulverston. This was an unofficial act of public-spirited kindness on the part of Capt. Barrow, for he had no appointment and received no recompense. Prior to 1836, the letters were brought from Ulverston by two men: J. Rigg, who had one arm only, and Henry Wardley. The service was very irregular and unsatisfactory, for neither received any Government stipend, and in that year representations were made by local influential residents which resulted in the appointment of Thomas Shaw, at a wage of 14/- per week, which he supplemented by carrying parcels also.³⁸ He continued in the service until 1844.³⁹ William Howsby, a shoemaker, was appointed official "Letter Receiver" at Northscale, Walney Island, in August, 1851 (Proc. Barrow Naturalists' Field Club, Vol. xiii, 67) but even local letters went through Ulverston and the extreme inconvenience of this regulation is illustrated by the Walney Island postal arrangements. A letter posted at Northscale at 9.0 a.m. on Friday, addressed to Biggar, reached Barrow at 8.0 a.m. on Saturday, and Ulverston that evening. It left again on Monday, and was brought back to Barrow, where it was given to the Walney foot-messenger at 9.0 a.m. He first had to make certain deliveries on the mainland so it was carried several miles in the direction of Ulverston, then to Northscale, and finally reached its destination at

³⁸ The Parcels Post was not instituted until 1883.

³⁹ Joseph Fisher, *Popular History of Barrow-in-Furness*, 1891, 21-23.

Biggar (not three miles from its starting point) to be duly delivered about five o'clock on Monday evening. Yet only long and persistent petitioning of the Postmaster-General eventually effected a reform. When the mail for Barrow became too heavy for a messenger, a mail gig was employed to convey it. The gig arrived from Ulverston at 8.15 a.m. and was despatched at 5.15 p.m., this arrangement continuing until Barrow became a head office in 1865, when the mails came, and were sent, by railway. Four years later the town had grown to such dimensions that three postmen were required for the local deliveries.

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APPENDIX.

The Ulverston and Lancaster Railway was opened for passenger traffic on August 26th, 1857. This caused the Oversands route to be abandoned, the Lancaster coach "oversands" from Ulverston being discontinued in September. The following time-table for May, 1857, may be of interest, therefore.

OVERSANDS COACHES.

Between Ulverstone and Lancaster.

Lancaster to Ulverstone.		Ulverstone to Lancaster.	
	May.		May.
Saturday	2 . 12.30 p.m.	Friday	1 . 12.0 noon
* Tuesday	5 . 1.30 p.m.	Monday	4 . 1.30 p.m.
Thursday	7 . 2.15 p.m.	Wednesday	6 . 2.30 p.m.
Saturday	9 . 3.0 p.m.	Friday	8 . 6.0 a.m.
Tuesday	12 . 7.15 a.m.	Monday	11 . 7.0 a.m.
Thursday	14 . 8.45 a.m.	Wednesday	13 . 7.45 a.m.
* Saturday	16 . 10.15 a.m.	Friday	15 . 8.0 a.m.
* Tuesday	19 . 1.30 p.m.	Monday	18 . 12.0 noon

Thursday	21	.	2.15 p.m.	Wednesday	20	.	1.30 p.m.
Saturday	23	.	2.45 p.m.	Friday	22	.	2.45 p.m.
Tuesday	26	.	7.15 a.m.	Monday	25	.	6.30 a.m.
Thursday	28	.	9. 0 a.m.	Wednesday	27	.	7.30 a.m.
Saturday	30	.	10.45 a.m.	Friday	29	.	8. 0 a.m.

On the Days Marked thus * Passengers from the South are requested to Book to Hest Bank Station.

Places of Departure:—Ulverstone: Braddyll's Arms Hotel.
Lancaster: King's Arms Hotel.

("The Penny Railway Guide." May, 1857. Lancaster: Milner, Printer, 37, Church Street).