

Part 3. People & Personalities

3.1 The Postmasters/Postmistresses of Epsom

Introduction

Prior to 1769, the various Bye & Cross Posts in England were under the control of Ralf Allen, who 'farmed out' the jobs of Receiver at the various receiving houses; from 1769 these appointments were made by the Postmaster General.

John Cole (1769-1803)

John Cole, at 42 years of age, was appointed Deputy (i.e. Postmaster) in 1769 for both Epsom and Leatherhead; John Cole's other occupation was as a watchmaker with a business in Epsom. In 1774, a separate Deputy was appointed for Leatherhead, but Mr. Cole continued at Epsom.

Mr. Cole's duties as Deputy involved rather more than merely receiving and dispatching the mails; in 1793 he made a claim to the Post Office for an increase in allowances for 'Riding Work' incurred in carrying the mails to Darking and Ryegate. In the same year, he was claiming arrears from the Post Office to cover Filewood's pension (it is not yet clear what position Filewood previously held).

In 1800 the carrying of the mails to and from Epsom, Darking and Horsham was shared between Mr. Cole (of Epsom) and Mr. Lee (of Horsham). Apparently, Mr. Lee suddenly withdrew from his part of the contract, leaving the whole duty to Mr. Cole, for which additional duties Mr. Cole claimed increased allowances. In connection with this claim, the Post Office estimated that not less than three horses were required to enable this duty to be carried out.

John Cole died on 12 March 1803 aged 76, as the oldest Postmaster in England. He must have carried out his duties well, because after being notified of Mr. Cole's death, the Postmaster General wrote 'I know no Office against which there were so few complaints as this of Epsom'.

His daughter, Miss Nancy Cole, must have been carrying out some of her father's duties during the latter period of his service, because in reply to a request seeking the appointment at Epsom left vacant by her father's death, the Secretary to the Post Office wrote 'if he should be inclined to continue her in office'. However, she was not successful in her application, and made her views clear when she 'expressed herself very strongly and improperly to me (Mr. Freeling) on the subject.' In fact, she gave up the care of the office and rides instantly, leaving the Post Office to send urgently (at an hour's notice) Mr. Samuel Johnson to Epsom to take care of the business.

John Parish (1803-1806)

After the death of John Cole in 1803, John Parish was appointed as his successor. Very little is known of John Parish – he does not appear to have been a local man. It was not long before he had differences with the Post Office; in the latter part of 1803 he made 'several very pressing applications..... on the inadequacy of his allowances for Riding Work'. Mr. Freeling, Secretary of the Post Office, advised the Postmaster General that he believed 'the Postmaster, Mr. Parish, has suffered losses by his Contract and that he has bought his

experience in the management of Horses' and advised no addition to the allowance should be made.

It would appear that Mr. Parish was determined to recoup his losses by any means he could find, because in early 1806 Mr. Freeling received a report from the Post Office Solicitor which he forwarded to the Postmaster General, together with his comment that the Report 'will convince your Lordship that the Revenue has been defrauded in the Post Office at Epsom'.

Mr. Freeling continued 'I certainly see nothing in the case to free him particularly from the strong suspicions that have arisen and so he has offered to resign. I am of the opinion your Lordship will do well to accept his resignation and to call on the Town Letter Carrier and the 5th Clause Messenger also to resign'.

John Lewis Jaquet (1806-1843)

Following the resignation of Mr. Parish, Mr. John Lewis Jaquet, at 43 years of age, was appointed as Postmaster. Mr. Jaquet was born in Epsom in 1763; at his birth his surname was spelt Jacquate, but the family name appears to have been changed to Jaquet in about 1770. In some publications it has been spelt Jacquet, but this is incorrect. In addition to his duties as Postmaster, he was also a collector of taxes and an agent for Sun Insurance.

Mr. Jaquet's wife, Martha Ann, died in 1810, at about the time of the birth of their youngest son Thomas. Mr. Jaquet did not marry again and had the task of bringing up a family of nine children (two others died before 1810); these children ranged in age from 10, being the eldest, down to a baby, possibly only a few days or weeks old.

One of the problems faced by Mr. Jaquet was the mending of clothes for this large family. Fortunately, his landlord was Thomas Furniss who was also a tailor and who carried out the Jaquet's repairs. To give some idea of the cost of this repair work in the period around 1823, the Jaquet's repair bill was about £6.10.0 per annum, compared with the rent of their house being £15.15.0 per annum. This bill gradually reduced as the family grew up and paid for their own repairs. Around the period 1831 this repair bill was averaging about 17s.0d. per annum, which was for Mr. Jaquet's own personal repairs only.

Mr. Jaquet appears to have carried out his duties well as postmaster; Henry Pownall, in his book written in 1825 and titled 'History of Epsom', states 'The post-office is open every night, except Saturday, till eleven o'clock, at which hour the mail leaves Epsom for London, and, by a late arrangement, letters from London may be obtained at the post-office as early as six o'clock in the morning, for which the inhabitants are indebted to the highly respectable post-master Mr. Jaquet, who has performed the duties of the office for many years with credit to himself and advantage to the neighbourhood'.

Mr. Jaquet must have been fairly highly regarded in the neighbourhood, because in 1823 a Committee was formed, consisting of 15 local residents nominated by the parish, to assist the Churchwardens during the rebuilding of St. Martin's Parish Church; Mr. J.L. Jaquet was amongst those nominated. At least towards the end of his period as postmaster at Epsom, Mr. Jaquet was a property owner, owning three houses, outbuildings and gardens at Woodcote Green.

John Lewis Jaquet died in 1843, at the age of 79, having spend all his life in Epsom.

William Chase Morris Andrews (1843-1857)

William Chase Morris Andrews, aged 42, a bricklayer and builder and an insurance agent, succeeded Mr. Jaquet as postmaster. Mr. Andrews was born and bred in Epsom, his father William Andrews, also a builder, having moved to Epsom in about 1790.

At the beginning of his term of office, William C.M. Andrews owned two houses with gardens near Woodcote Green. William C.M. Andrews was a married man with three children (his first son having died earlier) at the time of his appointment, with two more children being born later.

Unfortunately, Mr. Andrews died in March 1857 at the relatively young age of 55.

Lucy Welby Andrews (1857-1891)

Lucy Welby Andrews was appointed as postmistress, at the age of 48, on the death of her husband William C.M. Andrews in 1857. Lucy Andrews was the daughter of William Dorling, a printer and stationer, who moved to Epsom from Bexhill in 1821; Lucy Andrews was born in Bexhill.

Lucy Welby Dorling married William Chase Morris Andrews in about 1834. It seems likely that many of the duties of the postmaster during William C.M. Andrews' term of office were undertaken by his wife Lucy. In any event, she carried out these duties, in addition to running a bookseller's business, from after her husband's death in 1857 until 1891, when she retired at the age of 82. During this period she was assisted by two of her daughters, Mary Ann and Lucy, who were both telegraphists at one period.

Mary Ann(e) Andrews (1891-1902)

On the retirement of her mother, Lucy Welby Andrews, Mary Ann Andrews, at the age of 49, was appointed to succeed her as postmistress. Miss Andrews, amongst others, was instrumental in persuading the General Post Office to provide a new Post Office building in Epsom High Street, which was opened to the public in January 1898.

Mary Anne retired in 1902, at the age of 60. Mary Anne was the first of the full-time officials at Epsom.

William Charles Joyce Meade (1902-1915)

William Charles Meade was appointed postmaster in 1902, at the age of 47. He was also a Churchwarden of St. Martin's Church, Epsom, from 1906-1928.

Mr. Meade was the last of the longer serving postmasters at Epsom when he retired in 1915, at the age of 60.

General

After the retirement of William Charles Meade, the average period served by postmasters at Epsom was about five and a half years, when the job became a career rather than an occupation.

Period	Postmaster / Postmistress	Other Occupation	Remarks
1650-1769			

Period	Postmaster / Postmistress	Other Occupation	Remarks
1769-1803	John Cole	Watchmaker	Died 1803 as oldest postmaster in England aged 76
1803-1806	John Parish		Resigned (fraud)
1806-1843	John Lewis Jaquet	Agent for Sun	Died 1843 aged 79, Insurance, Tax Collector
1843-1857	William Chase Morrish Andrews	Builder	Died 1857 aged 55
1857-1891	Mrs. Lucy Welby Andrews	Bookseller	Widow of William Andrews
1891-1902	Miss Mary Ann Andrews		Daughter of William & Lucy Andrews
1902-1915	William Charles Joyce Meade	Churchwarden	
1915-1919	David George Meadows		
1919-1923	William Thompson		
1923-1929	T.T. Champion		
1929-1937	Capt. A.J. Lord, D.S.O, M.C.		
1937-1941	J.P. Allcott		
1941-1948	J.D. Elder, M.S.M.		
1948-1952	W.A. Bean		
1952-1956	R. Mackenzie		
1956-1960	S.C.C. Boyce		
1960-	H.A. Parnell		

3.2. The Postmasters/Mistresses of Ewell

Period	Postmaster/Mistress	Other Occupation	Remarks
1826-1840	Joseph Banks	Stationer & Hairdresser	
1845-1855	James Sawyer	Stationer & Hairdresser	
1859-1861	Mrs. Mary Sawyer	Stationer & Hairdresser	
1962	John Pilgrim	Stationer & Hairdresser	
1867-1870	Abdiel Evans	Chemist	Died 1870
1870-1903	Mrs. Harriet Fry Evans	Chemist & Druggist	Widow of Abdiel Evans
1903	Ernest Maitland Evans	Druggist	Son of Abdiel & Harriet Evans
1904	Clerk in charge		
1905	James Edward Brunton	Stationer	
1906-1937	Mrs. Edith Ellen Wicks/Cleal		Mrs. Wicks (widow) married Ernest Cleal In 1931/32. Died 1937
1938			
1940	E. Jones		

3.3 Index of Names of Sub-Postmasters/Mistresses & of Sub Post-Offices

Name of Sub PM or name of 'Shop'	Occupation of Sub PM or Type of Shop	Name & Address of Sub-Post Office
Allen, William J.		Ruxley Lane
Appleton, Miss M.H.		Ewell Court
Banks, Joseph	Hairdresser	Ewell
Barcock, George	Shopkeeper	The Downs
Barcock, Mrs. R.	Shopkeeper	The Downs
Bayliss, Miss G.L.		Ewell
Beams, Mrs. Annie	Draper	West Ewell
Beams, Miss Edith	Draper	West Ewell
Blacking, W.T.		Ewell
Blackman, Albert E.G.	Newsagent	Ruxley Corner
Bridger, R.L.	Confectioner	Stoneleigh
Brunton, James Edward	Newsagent	Ewell
Bullamore, J.A.		Pound Lane
Charles, Benjamin Alfred	Confectioner	Stoneleigh
'Charles & Hoare'	Confectioners	Stoneleigh
Clarke, Walter William	Grocer	East Street
Cleal, Mrs. Edith Ellen		Ewell
Dangerfield, J.S.	Dyer & Cleaner	West Ewell
Dunn, Frank	Grocer	Church Road
'Esme'	Ladies' Outfitters	Tattenham Corner
Evans, Abdiel	Chemist	Ewell
Evans, Ernest Maitland	Chemist	Ewell
Evans, Mrs. Harriet Fry	Chemist	Ewell
Faulder, Miss Beatrice	Wool Shop	Tattenham Corner
Fulker, Walter Francis	Fancy Goods Dealer	West Ewell
Girton, Edwin A.	Grocer	Ruxley Lane
Girton, Mrs. Lillian	Grocer	Ruxley Lane
Hall, Leslie	Ironmonger & Newsagent	Ewell By-Pass & Ruxley Corner
Hardy, H.F.	Newsagent	Wells Estate
Hedger, Cyril D.	Newsagent	Ruxley Corner
Hewett Henry Robert	Grocer	East Street
Hillman, Harry	Confectioner	Pound Lane
Hussey, George	General Store	Church Road
Jones (Joshua) E(mlyn)	(Confectioner)	(Pound Lane) & Ewell
Lindsay, Maurice J.	Newsagent	Ewell Court
Linegar, Harold J.		Woodcote Side
Mansbridge, Mrs. George	Newsagent	East Street
'Marlow, T. & M.'	Confectioners	Stoneleigh
'Martin'	The Newsagent	Drift Bridge
Middleton, Mr.		Ewell
Middleton, Mrs.		Ewell
Miller, Harold David		The Downs
Morris, Percy	Stationer	Pound Lane

Name of Sub PM or name of 'Shop'	Occupation of Sub PM or Type of Shop	Name & Address of Sub-Post Office
Nelson, John Edward	Grocer	Church Road
Nicholls, G.W.	Grocer	Pound Lane
'North Surrey Dairy Farm'		Ewell
'Parks Brothers'	Grocers	Church Road
Parks, Wallace	Grocer	Church Road
Payne, Mrs. Ethel E.	Shopkeeper	Woodcote Side
Peachey, Louise Alice	Tobacconist	Drift Bridge
'Peachey & Co.'	Tobacconists	Drift Bridge
Pearse, Frank	Grocer	Church Road
Pennington, Mrs.		Ewell
Perry, Mrs. Frances Annie		East Street
Pilgrim, John	Hairdresser	Ewell
'Potter, S. & C.'	Drug Store	Poole Road
Rossiter, Edward John	Stationer	Pound Lane
Sanders, Frederick George	Grocer	Church Road
Sanders, Mrs. F.C.	Grocer	Church Road
Sawyer, James	Stationer & Hairdresser	Ewell
Sawyer, Mrs. Mary		Ewell
Sawyer, William		Ewell
Schooley, Mrs. D.A.		Woodcote Side
'Shopwise'	General Store & Tobacconists	Woodcote Side
Simmons, Harry		97 Kingston Road
Stokes, Henry George	Dairyman	Station Road & Ewell
Stone, Mrs. B.B.	Chemist	Poole Road
Talbot, A.H.	Ironmonger	Ewell By-Pass
Taylor, Miss H.	Grocer	Church Road
'The Corner Shop'	News, Sweets, Toys	Wells Estate
Tolhurst, Miss B.		Ewell Court
Turk, George Henry	Baker & Grocer	West Ewell
Turner, Mrs. L.M.		The Downs
Varrall, Edward	Stationer	Pound Lane
Vernham, William John	Confectioner	East Street
'Watling Stores'		Woodcote Side
Wicks, Mrs. Edith Ellen		Ewell
Wilkinson, Henry W.	Confectioner	Wells Estate



3.4. The Postmen of Epsom

1821

John L. Jaquet (Postmaster)
Francis Morris
Thomas Elson

1831

John L. Jaquet (Postmaster)
Thomas Elson
John Oliver

1841

John L. Jaquet (Postmaster)
John Oliver
Thomas Watson
Richard Greenfield

1851

William C. Andrews (Postmaster)
Richard Greenfield
Edward Scott
William George
Frederick Walters
William G. Steer
Henry Elsey

1861

Lucy W. Andrews (Postmistress)
William George
Johnson W. Hawes
James Elliott
James Holt

1871

Lucy W. Andrews (Postmistress)
William George
Edward O. Breeden
Henry E. Morris
John Gait

1881

Lucy W. Andrews (Postmistress)
William George
Edward O. Breeden
Henry E. Morris
William Layton
Mark Hayton
Arthur Chandler
William Brabazon
William H. Thomas

1891

Mary Ann Andrews (Postmistress)
Edward O. Breeden
Henry E. Morris
Mark Hayton
Arthur Chandler
William Brabazon
Charles Chandler
Herbert Cooper
William E. Gosling
Thomas H. Peat
Frederick Payne
William John Payne
William Matthews
Francis Burrow
William Jones
Thomas Humphrey
Felix Ridge
William E. Letts

3.5 Reminiscences of an Epsom Postman

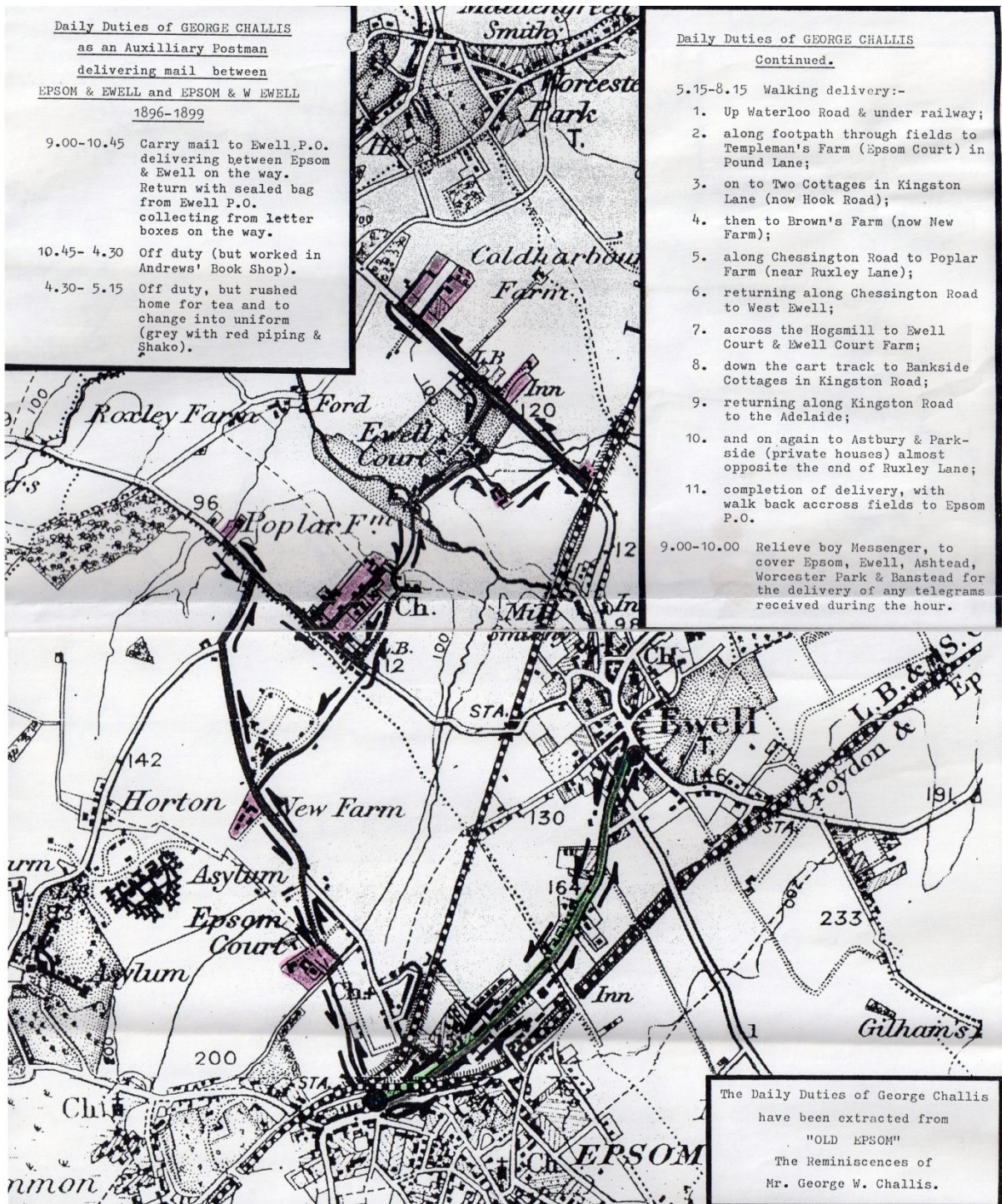
Mr George W Challis, a former postman, recorded some reminiscences of his life and work in Epsom. These reminiscences can be read on the [Reminiscences of Mr. George W. Challis](#) page. His various routes are shown below:

Daily Duties of GEORGE CHALLIS
as an Auxilliary Postman
delivering mail between
EPSOM & EWELL and EPSOM & W EWELL
1896-1899

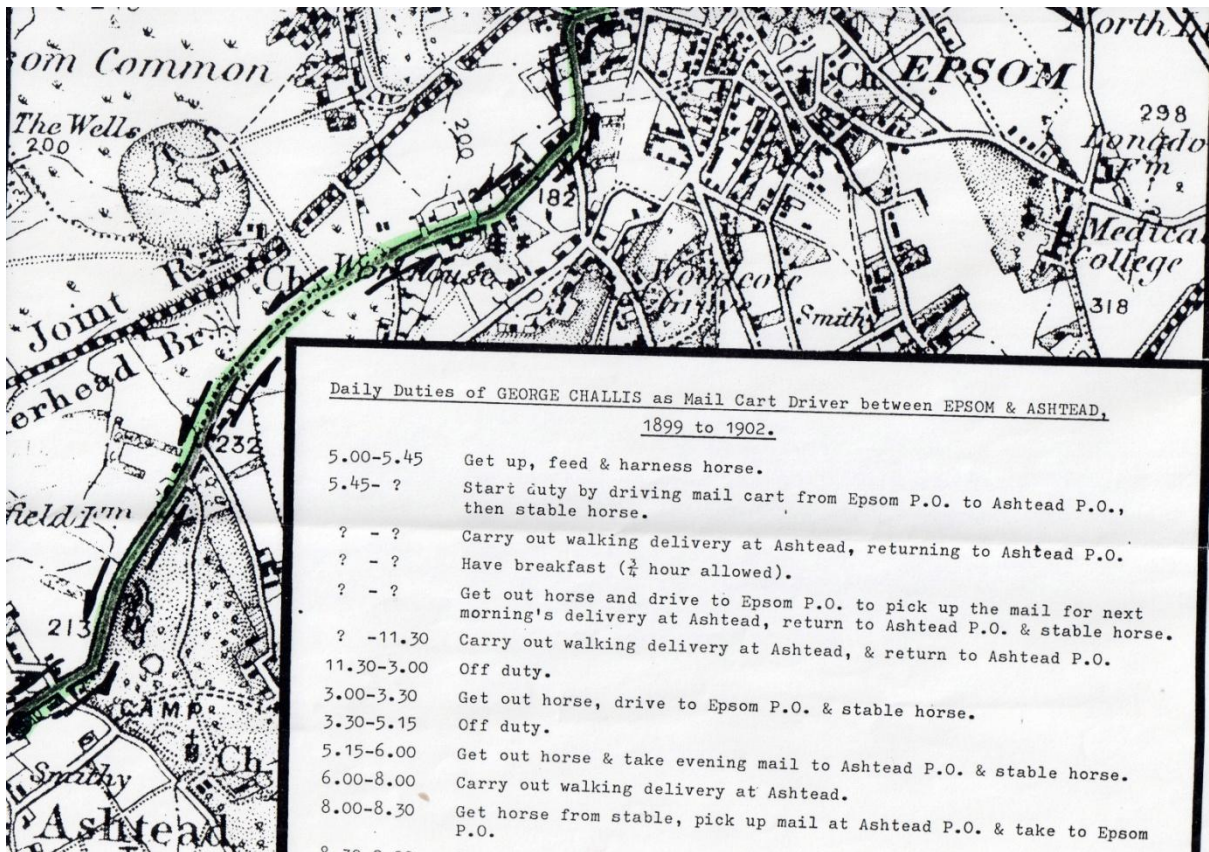
- 9.00-10.45 Carry mail to Ewell P.O. delivering between Epsom & Ewell on the way. Return with sealed bag from Ewell P.O. collecting from letter boxes on the way.
- 10.45- 4.30 Off duty (but worked in Andrews' Book Shop).
- 4.30- 5.15 Off duty, but rushed home for tea and to change into uniform (grey with red piping & Shako).

Daily Duties of GEORGE CHALLIS
Continued.

- 5.15-8.15 Walking delivery:-
1. Up Waterloo Road & under railway;
 2. along footpath through fields to Templeman's Farm (Epsom Court) in Pound Lane;
 3. on to Two Cottages in Kingston Lane (now Hook Road);
 4. then to Brown's Farm (now New Farm);
 5. along Chessington Road to Poplar Farm (near Ruxley Lane);
 6. returning along Chessington Road to West Ewell;
 7. across the Hogsmill to Ewell Court & Ewell Court Farm;
 8. down the cart track to Bankside Cottages in Kingston Road;
 9. returning along Kingston Road to the Adelaide;
 10. and on again to Astbury & Parkside (private houses) almost opposite the end of Ruxley Lane;
 11. completion of delivery, with walk back across fields to Epsom P.O.
- 9.00-10.00 Relieve boy Messenger, to cover Epsom, Ewell, Ashted, Worcester Park & Banstead for the delivery of any telegrams received during the hour.

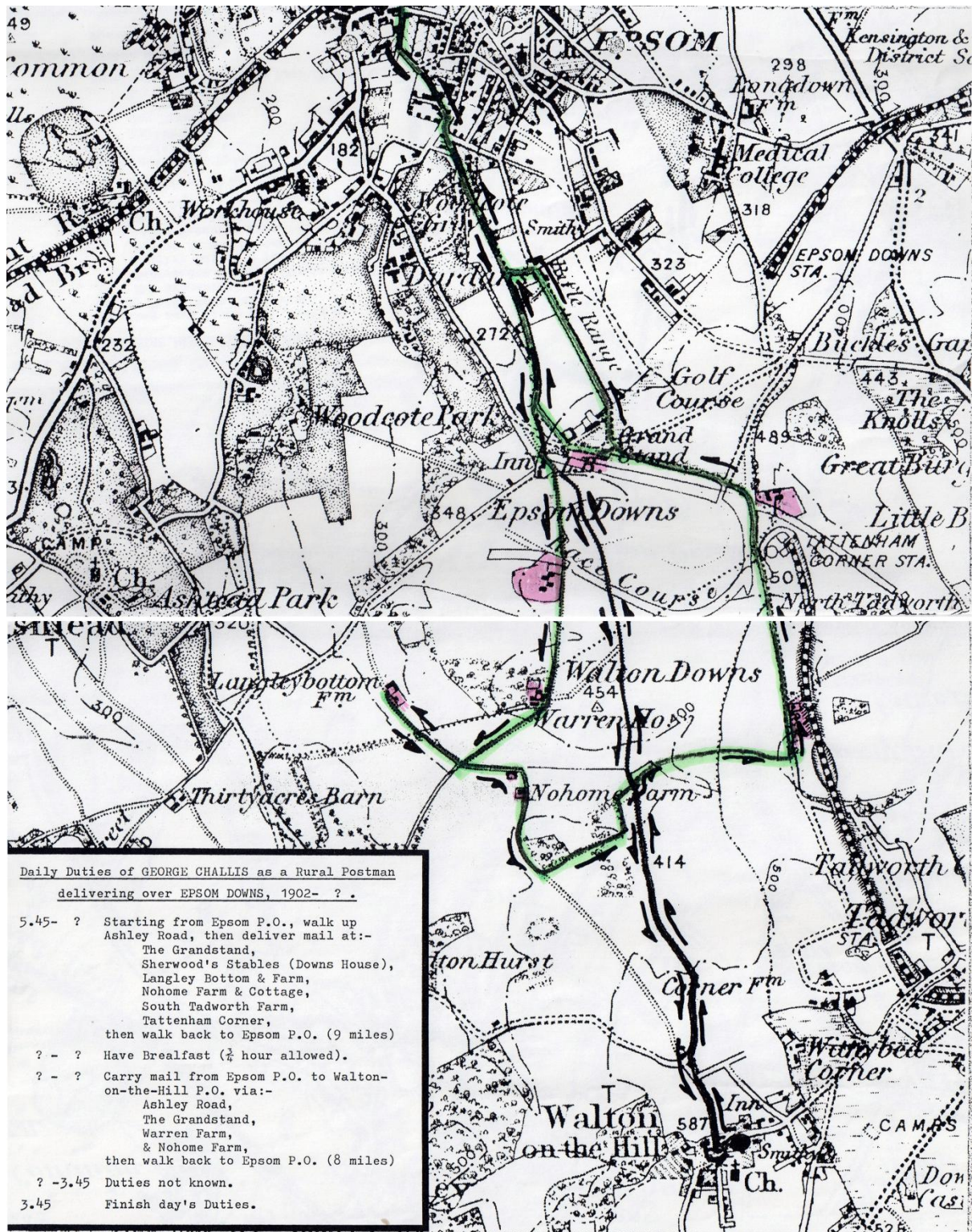


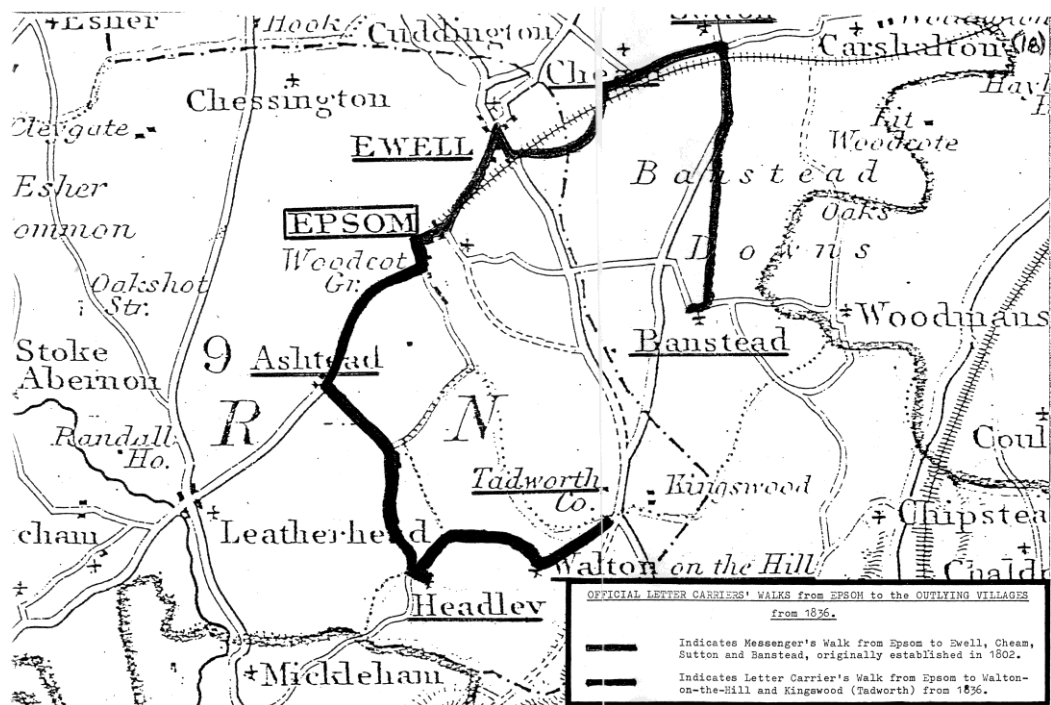
The Daily Duties of George Challis
 have been extracted from
 "OLD EPSOM"
 The Reminiscences of
 Mr. George W. Challis.



Daily Duties of GEORGE CHALLIS as Mail Cart Driver between EPSOM & ASHTEAD,
1899 to 1902.

5.00-5.45	Get up, feed & harness horse.
5.45- ?	Start duty by driving mail cart from Epsom P.O. to Ashted P.O., then stable horse.
? - ?	Carry out walking delivery at Ashted, returning to Ashted P.O.
? - ?	Have breakfast ($\frac{1}{4}$ hour allowed).
? - ?	Get out horse and drive to Epsom P.O. to pick up the mail for next morning's delivery at Ashted, return to Ashted P.O. & stable horse.
? - 11.30	Carry out walking delivery at Ashted, & return to Ashted P.O.
11.30-3.00	Off duty.
3.00-3.30	Get out horse, drive to Epsom P.O. & stable horse.
3.30-5.15	Off duty.
5.15-6.00	Get out horse & take evening mail to Ashted P.O. & stable horse.
6.00-8.00	Carry out walking delivery at Ashted.
8.00-8.30	Get horse from stable, pick up mail at Ashted P.O. & take to Epsom P.O.
8.30-9.00	





3.6 Lady 'Postman' Enlisted at Epsom

On Monday 27th December 1915, Miss Nora Willis, of Horton Lodge, Epsom, became the first lady to become a postwoman, not only in Epsom, but in the whole of the British Isles.



Miss Willis arrived at the Post Office each morning shortly before 6.30 am and commenced preparations for the first delivery, leaving the office at about 7.00 am. She returned to the

office at about 10.00 am ready for the second delivery. Miss Willis continued with this work for about 4½ years when she resigned from the Post Office.

On 31st March 1928, Miss Willis was elected to the Epsom Urban District Council as the representative for Stamford Ward. She was forced to retire as a Councillor on 18th December 1940 after being injured in a fall.

Second Postwoman at Epsom

On Wednesday 29th December 1915, Miss Hamilton Pott, of Bentham Lodge, The Parade, Epsom, followed in the footsteps of Miss Nora Willis and became the second postwoman in Epsom.



Miss Hamilton Pott and Miss Willis worked part-time, and between them they were able to release one postman for active service. Miss Hamilton Pott resigned from the Post Office on 2nd January 1919 for reasons of health.



Epsom Head Post Office Staff in 1916
Note: Out of 54 Staff, 33 women and 21 men

3.7 Jesse Beams, one of Ewell's Postmen

Jesse, born in 1837, was the eldest son of John and Mary Beams. The family lived in Green Man Street (now High Street) with Jesse's grandparents, John and Ann Beams. Jesse had at least six brothers and sisters. His grandfather, his father and himself were all gardeners, but sometime between 1861 and 1871 he became a 'Rural Post Messenger'.

Jesse married Charlotte in 1862, and set up home in West Street, where they had at least eight children. In 1881, Jesse was described as a 'Rural Letter Carrier'.



c.1900-1910

In his book 'A Short History of Ewell and Nonsuch', C.S. Willis writes 'The last Beadle was Jesse Beams; his uniform was a tall hat with a gold-lace band. He was also the postman, and for many years delivered all the letters in the parish, with the exception of Ewell Marsh; walking to and from Epsom with the letters, and making a delivery on Sunday morning also'.

Jesse died in 1910, aged 74 years.

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Part 1. [Introduction, Dates and Mail Routes](#)

Part 2. [Post Marks \(Franking, hand stamps etc\)](#)

Part 3 [People & Personalities](#) *(This part)*

Part 4. [Buildings](#)

You may also be interested in the shorter [Postal Services](#) page.