

# The WESSEX BULLETIN

Journal of the Wessex Philatelic Federation

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

Spring 2011

<b>Points of Contact</b> –	<b>Editor</b>	- Tony Smith email <a href="mailto:tonysmith1938@sky.com">tonysmith1938@sky.com</a>
	<b>Secretary</b>	- David Chamberlaine email <a href="mailto:rmbx3084@tiscalli.co.uk">rmbx3084@tiscalli.co.uk</a>
<b>IN THIS ISSUE</b> – WESSEX BULLETIN by email, Wessex Federation Website, Message from our Chairman, Dates for your Diary, Circulating Packet Material, Reports from Clubs/Societies, Try to Help Non-Collectors, Let the Buyer Beware, The Bideford, Westward Ho! & Appledore Railway, Appledore News Room, Philatelic Lecturers and Displays List 2011		

**WESSEX BULLETIN by email** – The initial response to our use of email to circulate the Wessex Bulletin as well as using mailed copies to club secretaries has been very favourable. If you wish to be included in this delivery process please let the Secretary know as soon as possible. This will enable a better Bulletin to be produced on a much more regular basis, so watch this space for more news on this exciting new venture.

## BE FIRST WITH THE NEWS

**WESSEX FEDERATION WEBSITE** – now carries a copy of the latest Wessex Bulletin, hopefully this may encourage casual browsers who find our site to join a local club.

**OUR WEBSITE IS YOUR SHOP WINDOW** – Please ensure that the details about your club are fresh and up to date, this is currently one of the best ways of attracting new members in your area. Contact the webmaster through the Wessex website. Have you some pictures of presentations that have taken place, forthcoming exhibitions or meetings you need to publicise. **IF SO – USE THE WEBSITE**

**DID YOU KNOW** – there is an integrated Calendar of the Meetings of all Clubs in the Federation on our website, if you are not providing details of your meeting dates – you cannot be included – and you may be losing either visitors or potential members.

**Message from the Chairman** - It is my privilege to have been elected as Chairman of Wessex Philatelic Federation but it saddens me that so few clubs send representatives to our Federation committee meetings.

Why is this? The Federation does matter to you and your club?

In fact why do we belong to stamp clubs? My thoughts are that we belong to our local club to acquire material and to sell our surplus through the club packet, bring & buy evenings etc, to meet fellow collectors, to be entertained by speakers and perhaps learn more about our own material so we can better appreciate it.

So, OK that's our club, but the Federation, what do we get for our 20p annual sub.? Its main purpose I think is to facilitate contact between clubs & people in a wider area. Wessex provides a Newsletter, a Road-Show (alternate years with WETS), Competitions, a Speakers List, & a Library. All of which have to be organized by people.

What can you do? Write something about your collection or club or what irritates you about our hobby for the Newsletter; provide good photocopies of 8 sheets (or multiple of 8) from your collection for the Road-Show (photocopies are returned), be a club representative so not piling everything onto your club secretary but mainly participate in the activities of your club and promote our hobby.

Unfortunately the number of Wessex organizers is getting fewer making tasks more onerous. We could do more IF WE HAD MORE VOLUNTEERS. We also need more ideas for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If you feel you would like to help please contact me, Carol Turner, Tel 01643 704128 or e-mail [4carol@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:4carol@tiscali.co.uk).

*(Watch out for more comments from our Chairman in the next issue – Ed)*

**Your comments and responses matter**

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Local Events**

Apr 23rd	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall
May 26th	Stamp Fair	Plymouth Guildhall
June 15th	Stamp Fair	Clyst St George - Parish Hall
June 25th	Stamp Fair	Kingsteignton - St Michaels Church Hall, Chudleigh Road
July 2nd	Stamp Fair	Taunton - St James Church Hall
July 14th	Stamp Fair	Plymouth Guildhall
July 23rd	Stamp Fair	Exeter America Hall

### **National Events**

**ABPS Sheffield 2011** The National Philatelic and Picture Postcard Exhibition will be held on the 6th & 7th May 2011 at the Pond's Forge International Sports Centre, Sheffield. For full details see the following website <http://www.sheffield2011.org.uk/>

**Philatelic Congress of Great Britain** 16 Jun 2011 - 19 Jun 2011 Portsmouth - Details to appear later. If you would like a copy of the booking form to be sent then please contact Paul Gaywood. Email: [advertising@abps.org.uk](mailto:advertising@abps.org.uk) Telephone: 01772 713917.

**CIRCULATING PACKET MATERIAL** – To date we have not heard any feedback from the idea put forward by Jim Wigmore of Dawlish Club to try and help clubs overcome the perennial problem of shortage of packet material and moving material out of one club and into another.

**REPORTS from CLUBS/SOCIETIES** – It is appreciated that club secretaries are busy people, however most clubs prepare minutes of their meetings, how about feeding this information to Tony Smith for inclusion in the next Bulletin. It is also noticeable that most clubs despite being members of ABPS do not submit reports to be included in ABPS News. Our Federation is also guilty of not doing this either. We all need to try a bit harder.

### **DO TRY & REPORT SOMETHING IN THE NEXT ISSUE?**

**TRY TO HELP NON-COLLECTORS** - It has happened to us all! An elderly widow/neighbour asks "You collect stamps don't you! Can you help me? My late husband/friend used to collect but who can I sell his stamps to now? Could you look at them ... are they worth anything?"

Try to offer to look at what is for sale. But quickly add "Don't believe the prices you see in a catalogue in your local library".

Recently, says Tony Smith, I was asked to get involved after a widow answered an advert in a local newspaper. 'We are visiting your area. We are looking to buy stamps' she read and wrote to the named dealer.

Another elderly friend asked me to look at what was for sale BEFORE the dealer turned up.

After one look I knew it was a large, valuable collection and too big for me to give a verdict so I called in a mate, a member of my club who is a part-time dealer. He spent over half an hour looking through box after box (nothing mounted in albums) and while he added-up endless half sheets of mint QE II from 1952-92 I laid-out booklets from the same period.

My friend offered the lady a cheque for £600 but suggested that if the dealer who had advertised in the local paper offered more he should accept his cheque. I even got a male neighbour to be present when the second dealer was to arrive and told him to make sure she didn't accept a lower offer.

The lady who knew nothing about her late husband's hobby or the enjoyment he got from it. But she is now £600 richer from his collection.

Oh, the second dealer? He spent 10 minutes looking through her boxes, talked about "very hard to shift this sort of stuff" and offered her £250. Remember, if you get a chance to help someone who didn't collect stamps themselves please do so!

## Let the Buyer Beware

- by Jim Wigmore

I recently purchased a Postcard with a Cyprus Railway Cancel in an auction run by the Railway Philatelic Group. Both sides of the card are shown right.

Careful examination of the card showed that the original stamp had been removed, new stamps applied and a new handstamp applied supposedly a Castle type 33.

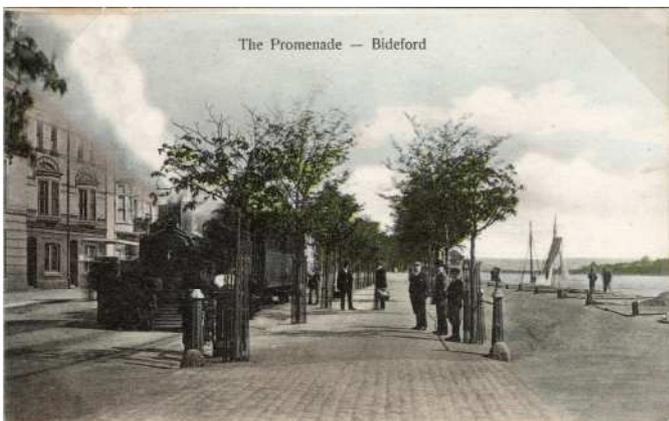
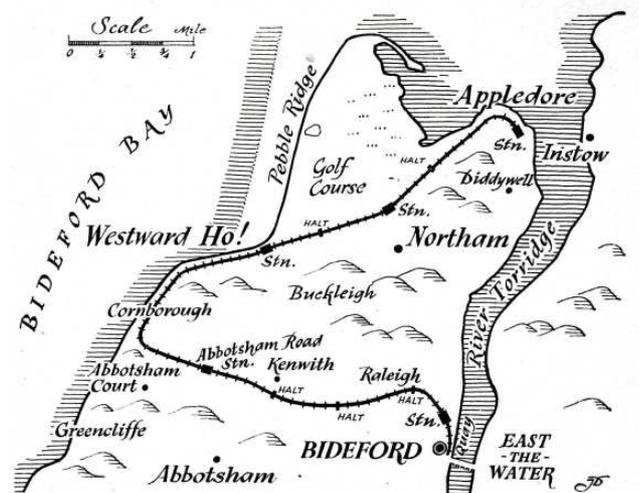
The applied handstamp looked as if it was based upon a rubber handstamp only 27mm diameter instead of the 29.5mm diameter it should have been and there were no dots either side of the word Cyprus.

Needless to say it was returned as being a FAKE.



## The Bideford, Westward Ho! and Appledore Railway by Jim Wigmore

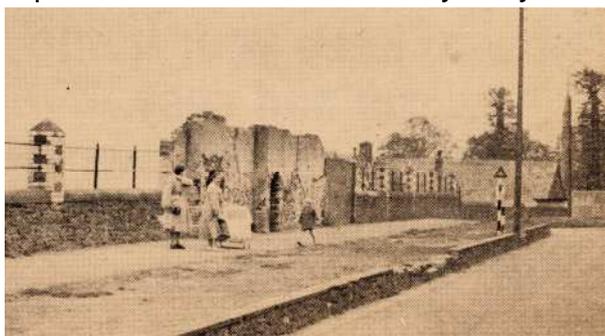
This small and short lived railway is not well known philatelically, although examples can be found. Bideford's Museum in the Burton Gallery has a few examples of mail relating to the railway. All mail would have been delivered to or from, but not actually carried upon the railway. The Bideford, Westward Ho! And Appledore Railway Act received Royal Assent on Thursday May 21<sup>st</sup> 1896 and the railway opened as far as Westward Ho! on Monday May 20<sup>th</sup> 1901, the extension to Appledore did not open for a further seven years.



A typical train is shown at the terminus on Bideford Quay right and the route of the railway is shown in the map above.

*Comments about the Wessex Bulletin and Copy by May 2011 please*

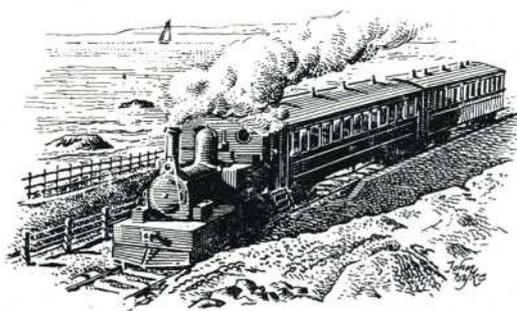
As can be seen from the map the railway was not connected to the LSWR railway operating on the opposite site of the River Torridge, this was a major part of the railways final demise along with the fact that it was operated as a tourist railway only. The shareholders of the company never received any dividends as the railway always ran at a loss hence the enterprise was doomed to failure. The end came on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 1917 when the last train ran and all the locomotives carriages and rails were requisitioned by the Government for use in France. The sad thing is the ship carrying all the above was sunk by a German Submarine off Padstow.



Much of the railway route can still be seen and followed if you know where to look. Appledore Station is seen right after the closure, although it now forms part of Torridge Road a plaque appears on the wall as a commemoration. There are those who think the



Appledore RSO cancel means Appledore Railway Station Office, this is not so it actually means Appledore Rural Post Office.



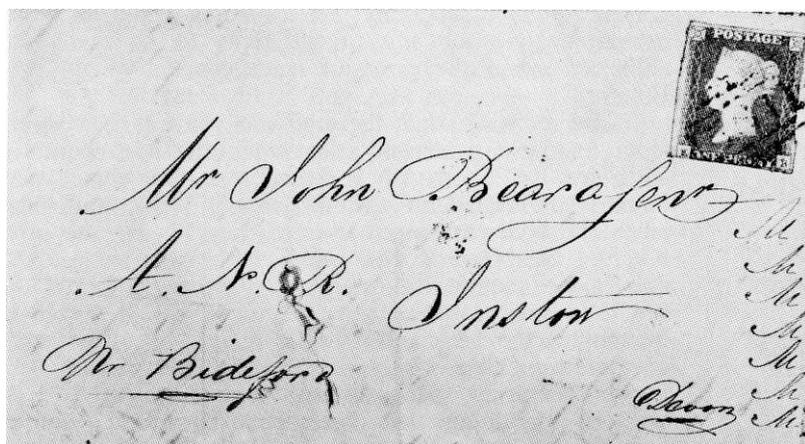
The illustration right gives a good idea of how the trains looked, the journey must have

been very picturesque. It is now almost 100 years since this short lived venture started and failed and it still has a fascination amongst railway historians and philatelists alike.

*Thanks to Edith Rees of Exeter for the supply of copies of articles that appeared in the Bideford Gazette and Devon Life about the railway.*

## APPLEDORE NEWS ROOM

Some years ago Dorothy Beara the sister of John Beara (*both were members of Bideford Stamp Club*) put an entry into the Wessex Federation Postal History Competition, it contained 10 of only 11 known covers marked A.N.R. The covers had all been spiked as was the custom of the day and the judges comments were "*The material needs improving*". One of the covers is illustrated. Note it is addressed to John Beara (*John & Dorothy's Father*) who at the time ran the Chandlery in Appledore.



What follows is the A.N.R. story by John Beara dating from 1976. "*Of all the methods employed by the Post Office for the transport of mail that in service at Appledore in bygone days was perhaps the most unusual. For a period of about 90 years, c1849-1939, in fair weather or foul, at high or low water, on springs or neaps, letters to and from the place were ferried across the river to Instow in an open boat, there to connect with the mail. Today, when security is a prime factor in Post Office policy, such a risky method of handling the mails seems almost incredible, but nonetheless it is a fact of history.*

*In the 1840s Appledore was a thriving town. Work was plentiful for the scores of little craft belonging here. The busy Bristol Channel and Irish ports kept many of them fully employed, but some of the larger craft traded to the Baltic, to the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and even across the Atlantic to the Americas; at this time, too, all the ship building and repairing yards were busy from dawn to dusk; the new Market Quay was in course of construction; and in addition to*

*Comments about the Wessex Bulletin and Copy by May 2011 please*

*this the important Prince Edward Island work recently brought to the port by Wm. Yeo gave an added stimulus to business. But for such a busy little place postal arrangements were very poor and gave rise to repeated and continuous complaints from the business section of the community. The mail came down from Bideford daily and on arrival at the Post Office, probably one of the houses on Post Office Hill, hence the name, was tipped out for sorting and delivery. The outgoing mail was then collected and taken back to Bideford for dispatch. This was the cause of complaint, for, in such circumstances, it was quite impossible to reply to letters on the day of receipt.*

*At that time the lives of the ordinary people of Instow and Appledore were much more closely knit than in these days and traffic between the two places was frequent and regular, so it is not surprising that everybody knew that on that side of the water letters were delivered hours before the mail arrived here. This fact gave someone an idea for a solution to the difficulty, and when shortly afterwards the idea was tried out it proved an immediate success. Not only did it solve the problems of the traders, but what is more important it also proved to be the means of obtaining a better postal service for the whole town.*

*It was the Appledore News Room, a place much used by the town's business fraternity, which adopted and worked the scheme. To take advantage of it, members had to arrange for their correspondence to be directed to Instow, not Appledore, and to ensure that the letters A.N.R. were incorporated in the address. The help and co-operation of the Postmaster at Instow was also essential to the scheme, for it was his job to see that all letters so addressed were placed in a locked box, which had been provided by the News Room and on which the initials A.N.R. were clearly marked. The box was then ferried across the river and in due course the contents were sorted and delivered to the addressees, who thus got their letters in ample time for any urgent reply to be ready for collection when the postman made his daily trip from Bideford.*

*One morning when the mail was being ferried across from Instow a passenger asked what the box contained and what the letters A.N.R. stood for. He seemed particularly interested in the ferryman's reply, and later when the box was passed over to Sam Fursey, the caretaker of the News Room, whose job it was to sort and deliver the mail, he followed him. Fursey unlocked the box and was sorting the contents when the stranger interrupted the work and revealed himself as an Inspector of the Post Office. Poor old Fursey seems to have got a good lecturing. He was told he had no right to do what he was doing; that it was most irregular to tamper with the mail; that the matter would have to be reported to the Head Postmaster in London.*

*But Fursey was not to be browbeaten in this manner, and, holding up one of the letters for the stranger's inspection, he pointed out that all of them were addressed to Instow and as far as the Post Office was concerned their responsibility ceased when the letters reached that address. One or two other letters were examined, and, in the end, the Inspector had to acknowledge the force of Fursey's argument, but he could not understand why the townspeople should go to such trouble to get their letters and, more than mystified, he asked the reason. In explanation, he was told of the many complaints concerning the town's inadequate postal service and listened with sympathy to the story of the successful way in which the problem had been solved. Before leaving he promised to bring the matter to the notice of the proper authority in London with a view to getting something done. What actually happened in London is anybody's guess, but it is a fact that very soon afterwards the Post Office began a regular postal ferry service from Instow and this method of handling the Appledore mail continued all through the years until 1939".*

**Both John & Dorothy Beara died many years ago, "what happened to the A.N.R. covers they owned", do they still exist, have any Wessex Federation members seen these covers or indeed actually own any?**

**PHILATELIC LECTURERS & DISPLAYS LIST 2011** – ABPS has recently released this listing and all clubs that are members of ABPS should have received a copy. It is a long time since the previous release and many changes have been made. There are some very interesting speakers many of which do not live too far from the South West. One thing that is very noticeable is how few of our Wessex Federation speakers have been included. The publication suggests that speakers willing to display and be included in the ABPS listing may do so by registering their interest via the ABPS website at [www.abps.org.uk](http://www.abps.org.uk) .

Items for the next issue by May 2011.