

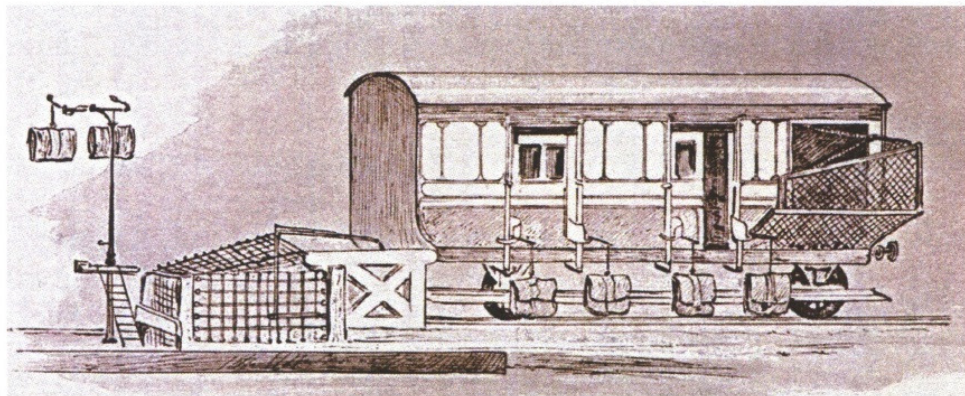
Section 2: Royal Mail Vehicles

This section covers some of the vehicles that have been used to transport our mail over the years, including:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Event</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1838 | The first Travelling Post Office |
| 1927 | The London Mail Rail |
| | Various historic Post Office vehicles |
| 1967 | The Royal Mail Postbus |
| 2014 | Mobile Post Offices |

Royal Mail Travelling Post Office

Mail was first sorted on a moving train in January 1838, in a converted horse-box, on England's Grand Junction Railway. It had two mail clerks who did the sorting. The first special postal train was operated by the Great Western Railway between London and Bristol. The inaugural train ran on 1 February 1855. The last Travelling Post Office services were ended on 9 January 2004,



A Travelling Post Office - circa 1890



Royal Mail Traveling Post Office cover - South Wales Down TPO

Mail Trains – Old and New



London Mail Rail

Unknown to most, the Post Office Underground Railway operated from 1927 to 2003, 70 feet below the congested streets of London. It delivered post from Whitechapel to Paddington, with nine stations in between, and crossed the city in 20 minutes. Mail Rail (renamed for its 60th birthday in 1987) covered the 6.5 miles using 23 miles of 2 foot gauge track.

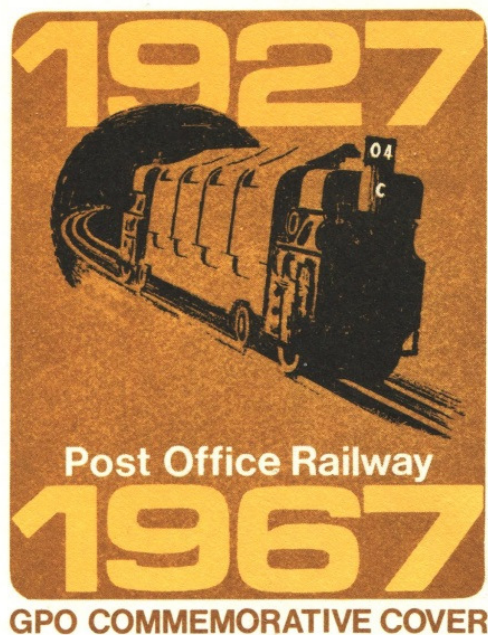
Mail Rail was an environmental boon for Royal Mail as it relieved about 80 van loads of mail a day – around 12 million items – from the streets. London had been suffering congestion problems for years and in 1855 Rowland Hill suggested using underground transport to speed the post.

The tunnels for Mail Rail were completed between 1914 and 1917 but work was then put on hold while the First World War continued. Mail Rail opened for business on 5th December 1927 and closed on 31st May 2003.



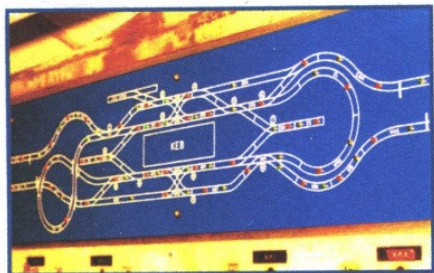
London Mail Rail – commemorative covers

Below are two commemorative covers associated with the London Mail Rail, The first is a GPO cover that commemorated the 40th anniversary in 1967 and the second is a PMSC cover to mark the moth-balling of the railway in 2003.



B. J. BROMLEY Esq.
16 LITTLE REEVES AVE
AMERSHAM CMV.
BUCKS.

Post Office
Mail Rail
Opened 1927
Moth-balled 2003



J.L.L. Burgess
18 Pigott Road
WOKINGHAM
Berks
RG40 1PY

Mail Rail Route Labels

Bag labels numbered 1 to 10 were used to indicate the appropriate route destination. Eight of those ten numbers are recorded:

| No. | Destination |
|-----|--------------------------|
| 1 | Eastern District Office |
| 2 | Liverpool Street Station |
| 3 | King Edward Building |
| 4 | Mount Pleasant |

| No. | Destination |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 5 | WC District Office |
| 6 | W District Office |
| 8 | Paddington Station |
| 10 | Paddington District Office |

