

porters with bands playing, he was cheered through the principal streets of the town, receiving the salutations and congratulations of the ladies and children dressed in their party colours as they appeared in large numbers at their windows on the route of the procession. Returning to the Market Place, the member having safely left the chair, a desperate fight and scramble for the ribbons ensued. Every inch of ribbon was torn from the chair, which was broken to atoms by the mob. A large quantity of beer was given away at many public-houses. It was long past the hour of midnight before peace and quietude reigned in the streets. Now in giving you a description of one of our borough elections I am giving you a very feeble and lenient picture of the reality. There was great disorder and drunkenness in the town, I admit, but no serious injury to life or damage to property is recorded.

At the time Her Majesty ascended the throne in 1837, the Post Office management was very unsatisfactory. The wide system of getting letters franked to avoid postage, by having the signature of persons in the higher circles of Society, Peers, Members of Parliament, and others. Letters bearing the signatures of these important personages exempted the letters from postage. The revenue from the Post Office became smaller year by year, so that the expenses of management grew yearly larger and the income in the revenue showed a great decrease. Many other restraints were levied on the letter-writing public. The writing paper then used was about the size of a boy's small copy book, and called Bath Post Gilt Edges, and sold at one penny per sheet. Sealing wax was then generally used to seal the letters, as envelopes were unknown in England. If two sheets of paper were used in the letter double postage was charged. Postal Reform and Penny Postage was then the great cry in the land. Mr. Rowland Hill was one of the leading pioneers and advocates. In 1840 this great concession was given to the people, and the Penny Post reformation was established in the kingdom.

On a bright but cold day, April 25th, 1843, about eleven o'clock in the morning, the town was startled by the ringing of the church bells, which soon burst out into a joy peal clang clang, which denoted that some royal event had occurred, and it was soon known that the queen's horses, carriages, and postillions had arrived in the town, for on that morning, a royal princess had been born at Buckingham Palace. The nurse, who had daily been expecting to be called to London, was the wife of Mr. William Willifer, butcher, living in South Bar, near the Swan Inn, in the house now occupied by Mrs. John Cheney. Early in the afternoon the royal postillions returned with their important passenger to Stevenage, then the nearest station on the Great Western Railway