

# Made in Sheffield 1

by Greg Spring

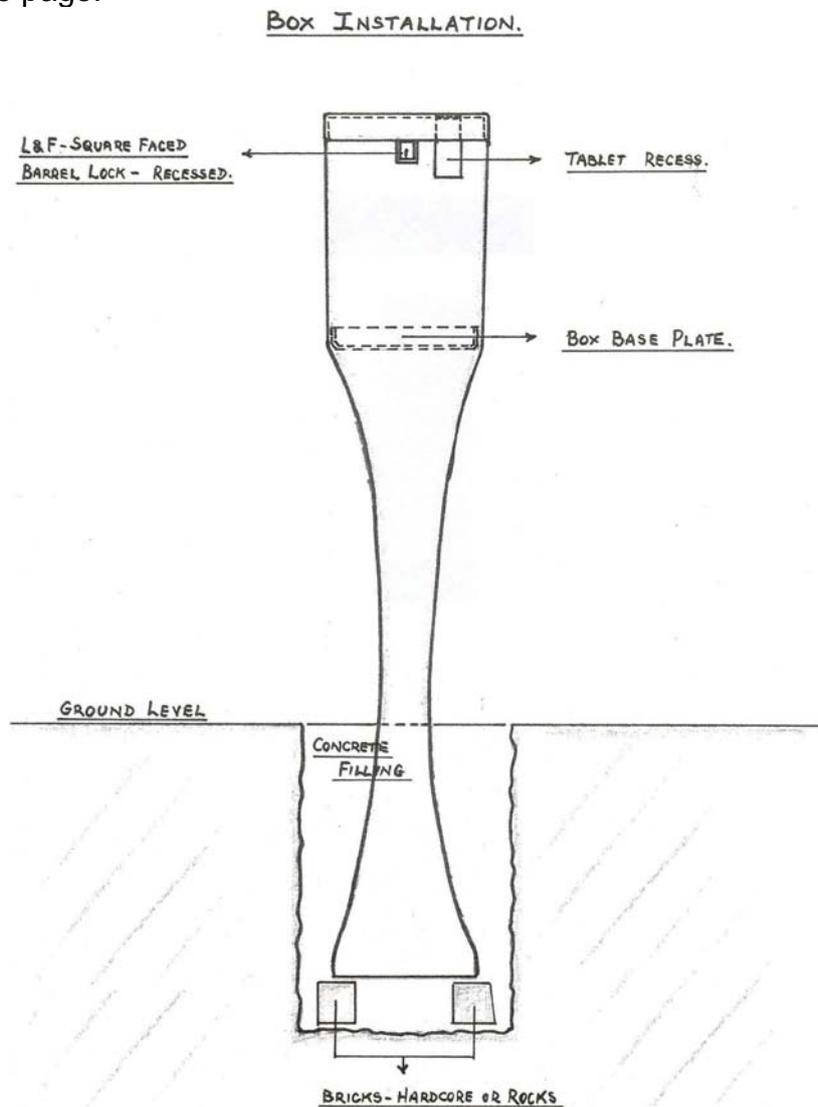
First published in *The Sheffield Philatelist*

Volume 6, Number 4. December 2004.



**The Sheffield Philatelic Society**

In 1969, responding to complaints by delivery staff regarding the hazardous condition of the very long paths leading to remote rural residential properties, the Sheffield office of the Royal Mail instigated the installation of robust boxes to be used for both delivery and picking-up post. After a 'false start' with a sheet metal box, a new design was introduced in 1973 using heavy duty, high density, green polythene, ¼ inch (5mm) thick, with the box and pedestal in one unit (produced by Strigkey Limited, Chesterfield), and placed just within a customer's property, as close to a main road as possible. The basic installation is pictured over the page.



This diagram is taken from the report *Roadside Domestic Letter Boxes: Sheffield HPO Area* found at the Postal Heritage Trust, London, a copy of which I will place in the Society Library.

The cost of the boxes, including a lockable hinged lid, was £12.80 but the financial savings to be made both in time and miles traveled were very considerable:

<u>Factors for a single route</u>	<u>Value (£)</u>
<b>Annual savings in:</b>	
Staff hours 28.8 hrs x 20 boxes x £2.49 Per hour	1434.24
Mileage 234 miles x 20 boxes x £0.105 per mile	<u>491.40</u>
<i>Annual financial savings</i>	<i>1925.64</i>
<i>Weekly financial savings</i>	<i>37.03</i>
(also unquantifiable reductions in vehicle wear-and-tear)	
<b>Installation costs:</b>	
Box production and installation cost - 20 boxes at £28.80 each	576.00
<b>Time to recoup investment:</b>	
<u>£576.00</u>	
£37.03 per week	c. 16 weeks

The Royal Mail purchased the injection moulds, and in all 32 boxes were installed along the Bradfield, Moscar, and Crawshaw delivery routes. I have the maps for these routes and have made a cursory investigation of them. The boxes were so robust they can still be seen in some places, sometimes without their original pedestals but clearly still in use. 166 boxes were supplied to other postal areas as far away as Wales and Scotland. Does anyone know if these innovative items are still being produced?

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You can find more articles on Sheffield's postal history at our web site.

The Sheffield Philatelic Society meets at 7.15 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month (except August) at the Central United Reformed Church, 60 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2JB.

For a programme of events please visit:

[www.sheffieldps.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldps.org.uk)