



Chairman
Elizabeth Lewis
Tel No 021/429/1222

MIDLAND (G.B.) POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Treasurer
Peter Baxter
72 Midhurst Road
Kings Norton
Birmingham



Secretary
Please reply to:
124 Henhurst Hill
Burton on Trent
Tel. 0283/6615.

BULLETIN NO. 24 MARCH 82.

Next Society Meeting

Will be the joint meeting arranged with Postal History Society (London) to be held at SHREWSBURY on Saturday 20th March commencing at 10-30 am until about 4-30 pm. Details are attached to the rear of this Bulletin. Remember to bring along with you, wherever possible, up to 25 sheets representing one, or all, of the following general subjects 'Collection, Despatch, Carriage and Delivery of Mail' as applicable in the United Kingdom. Please assist us in making this joint meeting a success.

AGM & AUCTION

This is the last meeting of the 1981/2 Season and will take place on Saturday 17 April at our usual meeting place, Dr. Johnson House in Birmingham. Hopefully in the larger Room 44. AGM will commence sharp at 2 pm. **LAST DATE FOR AUCTION Material Monday 22nd March** - poor response so far - send your LIST only direct to Jon Baker 13 Station Road Hinckley A.S.A.P. please

Report on January Meeting

On January 23rd, members attending at Birmingham, were entertained by Brian Brookes who displayed a most comprehensive selection of his Channel Islands collection.

To write a detailed report of material displayed would be virtually impossible, some of the items that attracted attention are as follows :

- Letters and documents from Charles II and Cromwell dating from 1600's.
- Jersey and Guernsey Scrolls and other early markings
- Penny Posts of the Islands
- All 3 types of the Jersey skeleton (1840's)
- Later postal markings some being the earliest known use.
- First message to and from Qn. Victoria despatched by the first telegraphic apparatus reproduced on a poster.
- Disinfected mail and wreck covers
- Mail from Paris during 1870 siege, many items bearing name of Balloon. Also mail to Paris despatched during the siege but retained for delivery until siege was over.
- Cross channel mail with 'Mobile Box' markings including a red 'Jersey France M.B.'
- A P.O. issue Penny Post Jubilee envelope used on 3rd July 1890 in Jersey - day after envelopes were put on sale in London !
- Parcel post labels, including one with a 9d adhesive for postage and £1.4.9d made up with two 10/- 'Seahorses' etc. for Custom Duty.

January Meeting Report contd.

Being Islands, much of the mail, was of course to and from the Islands and a variety of Ship Letter Handstamps were shown together with various forwarding agents markings, including a letter with 3d postage from London to Guernsey with the addition of one farthing for the forwarding agent at Southampton.

Overall the quality was excellent, not only in the postal markings but in the covers themselves. Apart from the postmarks it was a pleasure to see so many surface printed stamps nicely used on letters sent as far as places such as China. Also nicely used strips of four 1d line engraved stamps making up the 4d rate.

After Mr. Brooks had answered a number of questions put to him by those present the meeting closed with a vote of thanks given by John Calladine.

Elizabeth Lewis Chairman.

Report on February Meeting

The meeting was held in Birmingham with slightly fewer than normal members in attendance.

This was the occasion of our Annual Competition and the following members brought along displays for judging:

D. Smeathers	-	Postal History of Weedon
C. Beaver	-	Fine display of Uttoxeter
R. Farman	-	Dudley and District Undated Circles
S. Stobbs	-	Interesting items of Ellesemere
Mrs. E Lewis	-	Inspectors Marks

This time a different procedure was adopted than usual and the appointed Judges (C. Coles and J. Calladine) did not know the identity of the 'entrant'.

The winner was announced as Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis with in the words of one of the Judges 'a superb entry of Inspectors Marks'. C. Beaver and S. Smeathers came in close with a joint Second with their displays. Congratulations Elizabeth.

After the Competition members were entertained by D. Keen, F. Coles and R. Farman who each gave a short display of Railway material, International T.P.O's and Ashby-de-la-Zouch Postal History respectively.

Membership

Membership numbers this year have slightly decreased on last year - we have not reached the 40 mark. Some members have not renewed their subscription and have reluctantly been dropped from the Bulletin circulation list. If you know of any 'lapsed' member perhaps you would jog his arm for next year.

PENNY POSTS, TWOPENNY POSTS AND OTHER 'PUPAL POSTS' IN DERBYSHIRE

by James Grimwood - Taylor.

INTRODUCTION

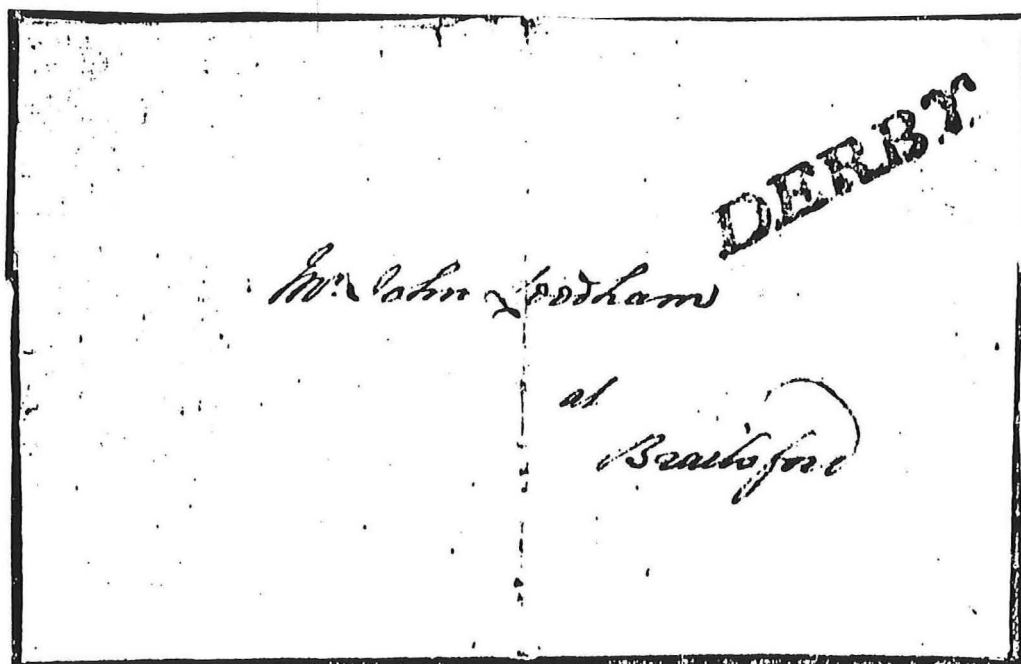
A good deal has been written about the Penny Posts of the first half of the nineteenth century; but as the heading of this article suggests, these are really only the tip of an iceberg.

From earliest times, people living more than a short walk from the nearest post office had either to collect their own letters from the office, or employ a messenger to bring them their letters. Free delivery within a town or city was fairly common, but local charges were made at the discretion of the postmaster or postmistress, and anyone outside the centre of a town was very likely to have to pay an extra charge for every letter which he did not collect himself.

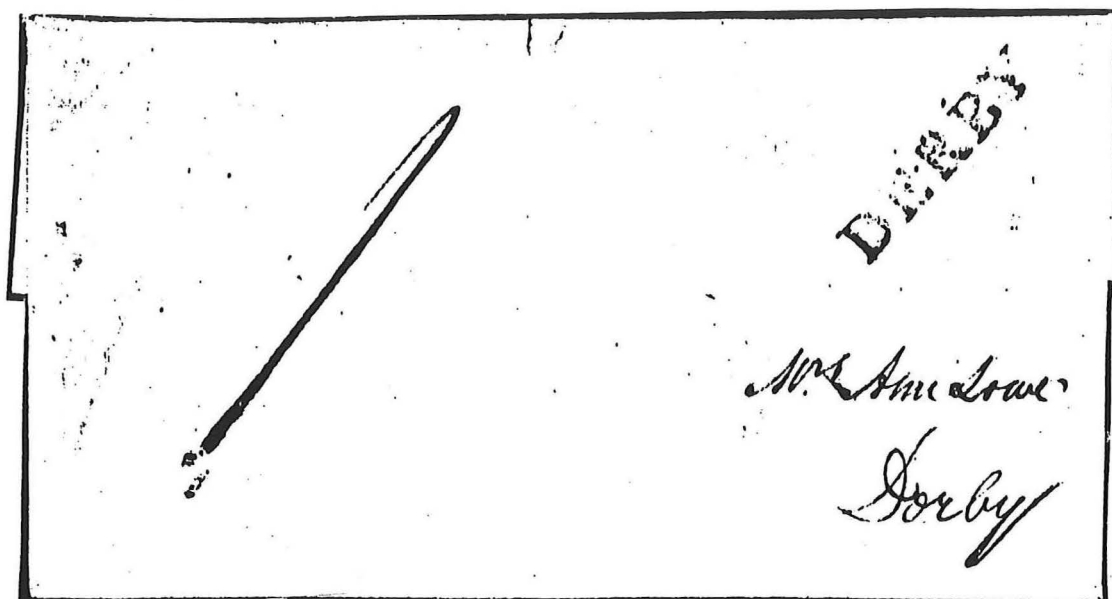
One problem for the postal historian is that many of these local 'discretionary' charges were never written on the letters themselves, unlike official charges which were all marked on the letters. Research into these charges is restricted to the letters that do have extra charges marked on them, and other contemporary documentary sources such as local directories. Letters prior to 1765 with an extra penny added to the general post charge can be found; I have recently seen a group sent to rural Lincolnshire with a "3" charge on the front, and a "1111" charge (= 4d., simplified for an illiterate messenger to show him how much to collect) on the reverse. In 1765 an Act of Parliament authorised the postmaster general to establish penny posts in any British town, but it was not until 1793 that the Manchester penny post began; the first official penny post outside London, Edinburgh and Dublin. Penny posts became widespread, officially only from 1811.

DERBYSHIRE'S 'UNOFFICIAL' PENNY AND TWOPENNY POSTS

From my studies of Derbyshire postal history I have found that unofficial local posts were starting at least as early as 1793 in towns much smaller than Manchester; I have a letter of 1792 sent from Derby to Brailsford (c.6 miles) with no m.s. charge, but which was probably charged a penny:-



A clearer example of a Derby penny post of three years later is dated 27th May ~~1775~~ - 1795.



From Derby, delivered probably to Spondon (where the Lowe family lived) about three miles away.

There were also unofficial Twopenny Posts at least as early as 1808; I have a letter from Derby to Egginton with a red "DERBY/126" mileage mark charged "2". I also have a letter of 1804 from Derby to the same address, also with a red "DERBY/126" mileage mark, but charged "1", so these local charges were sometimes changed. A letter from Derby to Smalley cost 2d. in 1810, while a similar letter cost only 1d. in 1820: see below. Decreases were possible!

I have many letters addressed to Derby, written at various local villages and charged 1d. or 2d., but as one cannot ascertain exactly where these letters entered the post, I have not counted these as proven 1d. or 2d. post letters connecting the villages they were written in to Derby. Letters from Derby addressed to local villages seem to me to be more reliable indications of the precise villages which were served by these local posts.

The details of such local letters emanating from Derby to local villages which I have in my collection, and which have manuscript "1" or "2" charges, are as follows (excluding those carried by the 'official' penny post from 1811):-

2d. Posts

Destination	Date	Distance from Derby
Egginton	11th Aug. 1808	c. 10½ miles
Smalley	13th Oct. 1810	c. 6 miles
Egginton	19th Mar. 1814	c. 10½ miles

1d. Posts

Destination	Date	Distance from Derby
Brailsford	5th April 1792	c. 6 miles
Spondon (?)	27th May 1795	c. 3 miles
Melbourne	18th Oct 1799	c. 7½ miles
Radbourne	c. 1801	c. 5 miles
Egginton	28th Mar 1804	c. 10½ miles
Smalley	3rd Aug 1820	c. 6 miles
Spondon	13th Jul 1827	c. 3 miles
Ockbrook	26th Jan 1832	c. 4½ miles
Kirk Langley	13th Jan 1837	c. 4½ miles
Willington	14th Feb 1839	c. 5½ miles
Sutton on the Hill	20th Sep 1839	c. 8 miles

(All these letters have the appropriate "DERBY" namestamp)

I also have twopenny post letters from two 'post-towns' to Derby, with namestamps of both towns:-

27th April 1829 letter with "CAVENDISH BRIDGE/109" and "DERBY" c.d.s. charged "2".

30th April 1830 letter with "KEGWORTH/109" and "DERBY" c.d.s. charged "2". (Both these letters also have boxed "No 2" receiving house marks, in ink that matches the colour of the Derby c.d.s.'s. I have a number of other letters with this "No 2" mark apparently struck in Derby, and all are local 2d. post letters coming into Derby. All the examples of this "No 2" mark that I have seen on "official" Penny Post letters, i.e. those also with handstruck "DERBY/Penny Post" or boxed "Derby/Py.Post" marks have been in a different colour to the Derby namestamps. This suggests, as I see it, that there were at least two boxed "No 2" marks used on local Derby letters between 1811 and 1840; one used at Belper on official Penny Post letters handed in at that office, and one used at Derby on "unofficial" two penny post letters from various places arriving in Derby. The "No.2" used in Derby was not apparently intended so much as a charge-mark (all my examples are in combination with m.s. '2's), as a confirmation that the twopence charge was correct.

This is only a theory at present; I need to see more examples of the boxed "No.2" mark on Derby letters. (Please send me details of any that you have).

"Unofficial" penny and twopenny post letters of other Derbyshire towns are more difficult to find, but a similar widespread network for the other market towns seems likely. The few examples that I have are as follows:-

Office of Posting	Destination	Handstamps	Charge	Date	Distance involved
Ashbourne	Hulland	"ASHBOURNE/139"	"2d"	c.1815	c.5 miles
South Wingfield	Wirksworth	"WIRKSWORTH/139"	"2"	27 Jan 1823	c.6½ "
Ashbourne	Shirley	"Ashbourn" c.d.s.	"1"	22 Nov 1834	c.4 "

DERBYSHIRE'S 'RURAL POSTS'

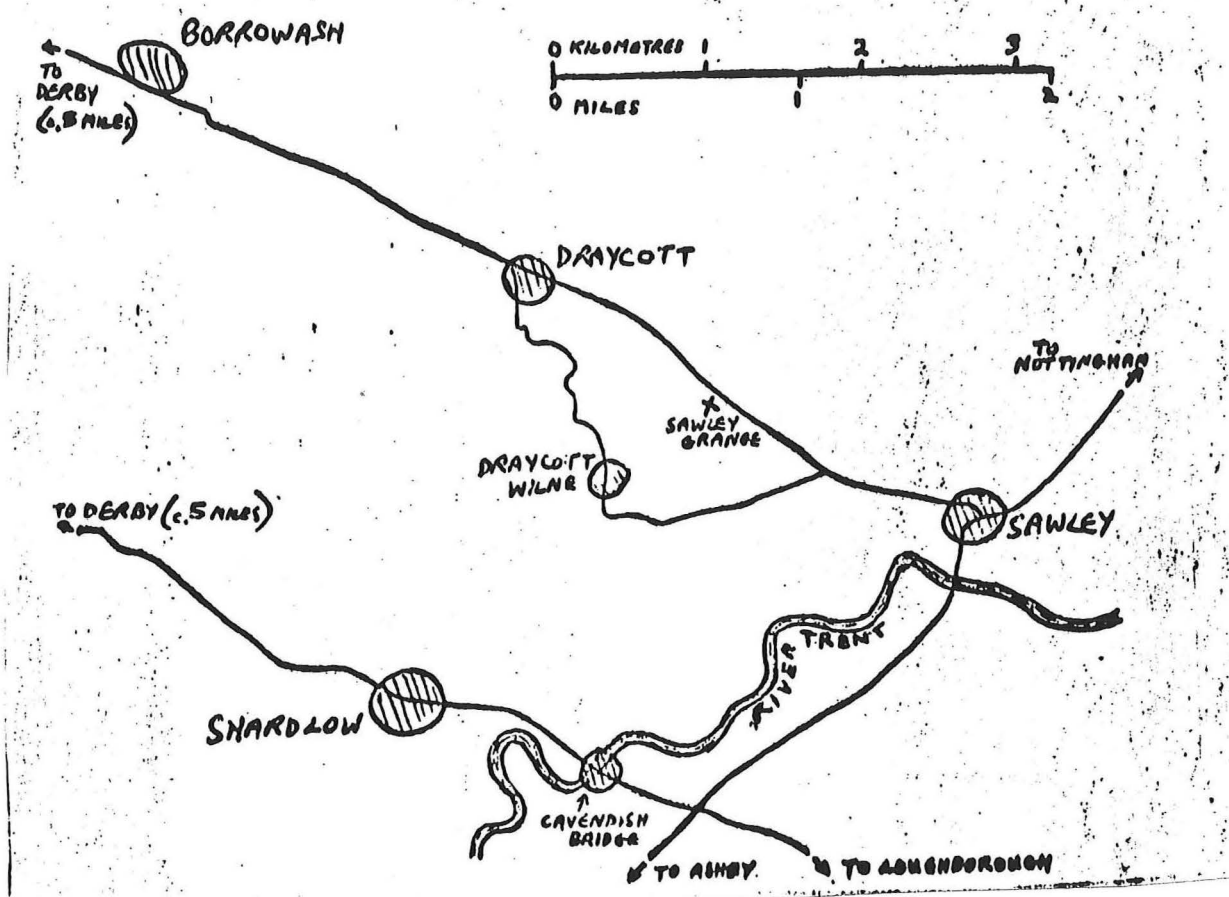
I have only four Rural Post covers of Derbyshire, but they are sufficient to show how complex this subject is. All four are addressed to farmers; three to Sawley Grange and one to Draycott Wilne.

Date	General Post Charge	Extra Rural Charges.
17th Feb. 1827	10p	$1\frac{1}{2}d + 1d = 2\frac{1}{2}d$ total
1st Apr. 1828	10p	$1\frac{1}{2}d + 1d + 2d = 4\frac{1}{2}d$ total
1st Jul. 1828	10p	$1\frac{1}{2}d + 1d = 2\frac{1}{2}d$ total.

Mrs. J. G. Green
Savoy Grange
Berkshire

It appears that there were two routes from Derby to Sawley Grange (a distance of c. $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles); one costing $2\frac{1}{2}$ d and one costing $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. What were the routes, and why the variation? Who received the extra money?

The geography of the area is as follows:-



Pigot's 1829 Derbyshire Directory includes details of various postal arrangements; the entry under "SHARDLOW" is as follows:-

"POST OFFICE, SHARDLOW, Elizabeth Moore, Post Mistress.
CAVENDISH BRIDGE, Receiving House at Wm. Smith's
 - Letters are sent from this office by the same mails as from SHARDLOW, and by a foot post to CASTLE DONNINGTON, SAWLEY, WILN, DRAYCOTT, Etc."

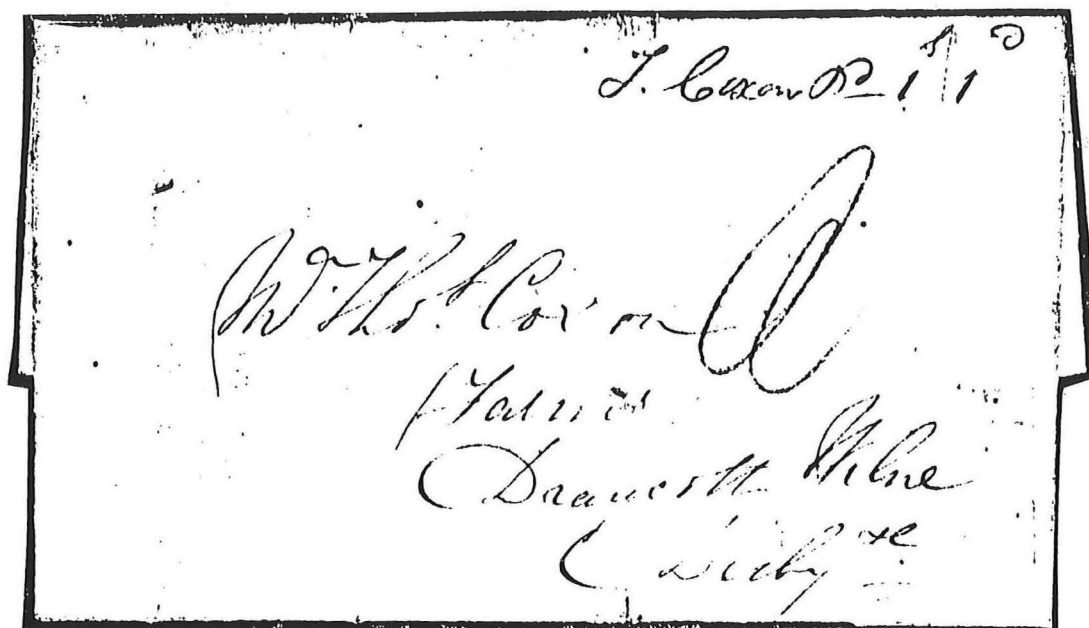
So it seems possible that the 1st April 1828 letter travelled via Derby and Cavendish Bridge to Sawley Grange, because it includes a 2d charge (see reference to 2d post letter from Cavendish Bridge to Derby of 27th April 1829, above), while the other letters went by a shorter route (possibly via Borrowwash (?))

This could suggest charges as follows:-

The two letters at $1s.0\frac{1}{2}$ d cost 10d general post charge from London to Derby, plus $1\frac{1}{2}$ d to Borrowwash and 1d on to Sawley Grange. The third letter at $1s.2\frac{1}{2}$ d cost 10d general post charge from London to Derby plus 2d to Cavendish Bridge, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d to Sawley and 1d on to Sawley Grange.

This is only a suggestion; has anyone a better one?

My only other Derbyshire Rural Post cover is addressed to a farmer at Draycott Wilne (once again from the Legacy Department of the Stamp Office in London), dated 1st May 1838:-



It seems that the addressee was out, probably in the fields, when the letter arrived; so a relative paid for the letter, and (luckily for me) the letter was endorsed accordingly:- "J.Coxon Pd. 1s.1d" so it cost threepence extra for the delivery from Derby to Draycott Wilne, and from the evidence of Pigot's Directory given above, this suggests:- 10d from London to Derby, 2d from Derby to Cavendish Bridge and 1d from Cavendish Bridge to Draycott Wilne. Or does it ??

How many other Derbyshire Rural Post covers have been seen? I would appreciate details of any that you may have come across.

(Incidentally I have another 1838 Stamp Office letter from London to a farmer; but to Bledington near Stow, in Gloucestershire. This letter was missent to Gloucester but the correct general post charge of 9d is accompanied by an 17½d charge, suggesting a Rural Post from Stow to Bledington costing 2½d per letter for a distance of 6 miles or so. Other Rural Post charges must have existed)

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BREDON u.c. I85I, envelope and contents	£16
MALVERN WELLS in brown Great Malvern side duplex I857	£30
COVENTRY in two lines I7I3 and B.M. lovely strike	£150
Boxed ATHERSTONE PENNY POST and No 3 dotted boxed I834	£30
CHURCH St u.c. blue I854 envelope	£18
I796 straight line STONE	£24
WHITTINGTON u.c. under Litchfield I850 and Id red imperf	£20
I764 STONE with joined NE	£65
SHIRLEYWITCH straight line in script type lettering I84I	£35
with Id red imperf and Rugeley date stamp. Attractive.	

March 1982.

Meeting at Beauchamp Hotel, The Mount, Shrewsbury,
on Saturday, 20th March 1982.

I acknowledge your notification of your intention to be present at the next meeting of The Postal History Society at the Beauchamp Hotel, The Mount, Shrewsbury, on 20th March 1982, starting at 10.30 a.m. A cup of coffee will be available on arrival, and lunch will be served at about 1 o'clock. The cost, including lunch, is £6 per head, payable on arrival.

I am enclosing a plan of Shrewsbury on which I have marked the location of the Beauchamp Hotel, which is about 1 mile from the railway station and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the centre of the town. Taxis are available in the station forecourt. Members arriving by road from the north will enter the town centre near the railway station, and should proceed along Smithfield Road and over the Welsh Bridge (see Plan). Members arriving by road from other parts are advised to follow the Shrewsbury by-pass (A.5) to the light signals at the Oak Hotel at the western end of the by-pass, where they should turn right doubling back along the A.458 about 1 mile to the Beauchamp Hotel.

We are being offered the following alternative main courses at lunch:-

Roast Turkey	Duckling a l'Orange.
Roast Beef	Roast Chicken
Roast Pork	Deep Fried Plaice
	Steak & Kidney Pie.

To avoid possible disappointment in the event of everybody making the same choice, please let me know in advance if you wish to state a particular preference of main dish.

R.E. FARMAN
SECRETARY

FOR MAP SEE OVER