

Minutes of the 1090<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club  
held at the Black Horse Hotel on 21st November, 1991

The 1090<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was opened by Tadger at 8.15p.m. because he felt that Pickwick wasn't paying sufficient attention to the members and was conducting his own meeting. Tadger was, of course, fined for drawing attention to Pickwick's deficiencies once again, and the meeting was then formally opened with a request for volunteers to act as P.O.C's – a request which initially fell on deaf ears but was eventually resolved.

During the toast to Mr. Pickwick, several members noticed the grimaces of pain which furrowed the brow of Dodson but only Bantam was sufficiently compassionate to seek the reason. It emerged that Dodson was suffering from a complaint known as "Bursitis" or "Weavers Bottom" which had necessitated minor surgery. His tale of agony was met with scorn by the members who are becoming blase about such matters with so many members "hors de combat" including Sam Weller (Broken wrist and ribs), George Nupkins (Broken ankle) and Solomon Pell (Sore foot).

The proceedings were interrupted by Dodson who reported that he had once again returned from Spain with a gift for Alfred Jingle who claimed that any doubts about its effectiveness would be dispelled by the smile on Sheila's face when he gave it to her. The comments which greeted this statement resulted in a number of fines.

Dodson again interrupted the proceedings to enquire of Bantam and where his poems and photographs were, Jingle adding that Bantam was supposed to be producing new membership books which were also conspicuous by their absence. For a short time, Bantam was the centre of abuse but relief came from an unexpected source when Tadger announced that he had "lost it Mr Pickwick". This gave Bantam the opportunity to escape by turning the members wrath on to Tadger for failing to pay attention whilst the meeting was in progress.

The only guest at the meeting was a Danish engineering student Jens Ole Jacobsen who was staying with Grummer for two months; this was particularly useful because after the introduction of a selected number of members by Tupman, a trainee D.C. who carried out his duties well considering his limited experience, the remaining members were introduced by Grummer in an international language readily understood by any foreigner. How fortunate are the Manchester Pickwick Club members to be able to avail themselves of the services of such a distinguished linguist whose version of pidgin English spoken in the tones of Geronimo has been used to communicate successfully with Arabs, Danes, Spaniards,

French and various other nationalities; how unfortunate that only the English seem to have difficulty understanding him!

Bantam took the opportunity to borrow a camera off the guest in order to take a Pickwick Club photograph so we now have the situation that the Danes have a photograph of Manchester Pickwick Club, but the Club members haven't.

There followed a discussion about fines, it being pointed out that Dodson was in credit and Mivins hadn't paid for arriving late at the meeting. Grummer added to the confusion by suddenly remembering he had been fined because his guest was smoking, but his guest was a non-smoker so he was obviously owed money by another unknown member whose guest had been the offender. Pickwick was reluctant to make any refunds or to fine Mivins who had given advance warning of late arrival, and was promptly accused of bias by Dodson. Pickwick pointed out he could do no wrong and therefore was not biased whilst Bantam handed the fines box to Dodson and asked whether Dodson wished to fine anybody. Dodson refused because he thought there might be a catch somewhere and the fines box was returned to Bantam just in time for Tupman to be fined for swearing and Bantam for calling Tadger "Joe". Bantam thanked Grummer for drawing Pickwick's attention to the mistake but warned him to be very careful about his future conduct.

After being presented with a Pickwick Club tie by Mr Pickwick, the guest said that he had enjoyed the meeting very much but when he got home he would tell everybody the members were a little bit crazy. He then insisted on putting some money into the fines box – Sam Weller suggested he be fined for doing that.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Bantam who said he was fed up and tired and couldn't really say what the vote of thanks was for. He suggested that the original mistake had occurred when Grummer had brought Pickwick along as a guest; that mistake had been compounded when the club had accepted him as a member and the thing had snowballed from there. He said that some years ago he had tried to sell a second-hand car and had asked a potential buyer for £500. The potential buyer had suggested he must be a comedian and since then, everybody expected him to be funny at all times. He apologised for not being very funny on this occasion but felt that there was nothing in Pickwick's performance which was remotely amusing. In addition, he was saving his best funny stories in case he was asked to propose the vote of thanks at the Christmas Dinner. He agreed that Pickwick had probably done his best but looked forward to the day when Bantam once more occupied the Chair and members could again enjoy the meetings. Sadly, that would not be next year when Tadger would be in the chair and probably on his own. He suggested that members all raise their glasses immediately. Pott, the seconder, had finished speaking so that the meeting could end that bit quicker.

In seconding the vote of thanks Pott said the meeting had comprised a recital of illness and a demonstration of linguistic ability, nothing else had happened so the vote of thanks was really for nothing.

Pickwick responded to these magnificent eulogies but was criticised by Dodson for failing to stand whilst addressing the meeting. He answered the criticism by appointing Dodson to join Pott and Bantam in leading "Good Neet Own Friends" which was followed by the National Anthem.

The Fines Box contained £8.06 whilst the Raffle raised £3.20.