

The opening of the 1188th meeting of the Manchester Pickwick Club was delayed because Tupman decided he wished to take a group photograph of members. Naturally, this wasn't as straightforward as one might think because of the forgetfulness one associates with elderly people and the group were sitting with fixed grins whilst Tupman fiddled with his equipment. Eventually the process was successful and within the next three or four years we might see the results. Pickwick was quite happy about these delays because he was due to fly to the United States at 5.00 the following morning and was already in holiday mood.

The meeting eventually commenced at 8.12 p.m. when a new member was introduced; this was Richard Johnson, a relative of Grummer, who was given the Pickwickian name 'Dr. Slammer'.

There was only one guest who had been brought by Grummer, a Mr Dennis Frank. In introducing him to members, Grummer related the tale of how he was talking to friends about the cost of holiday insurance when, to everybody's surprise, Dennis said he had obtained insurance cover for a trifling sum. When asked to enlarge on this he admitted he was only going to Southport!

In the absence of Dodson it was necessary for Mivins to collect the meeting subs and whilst performing this task it was realised that Fiskin, who had been recognised as a member was, in fact, a guest, having resigned some months ago. The effect of this was that neither he nor his host (Mr Pickwick himself) had to pay meeting subs on his behalf, thus causing utter confusion when the books had to be balanced at the end of the evening.

Dodson's absence also meant that a volunteer had to be sought to organise the raffle and on this occasion Jack Hopkins took the role, sadly without any improvement in the process which will be reported later in these minutes.

There was some discussion about Dodson's absence, it being suggested that he was having a break paid for by his son as a Christmas present. It was also suggested that he could have taken the break from Friday to Monday but instead chose to go from Monday to Friday and thus avoid the Pickwick meeting. Members unanimously decided a fine should be imposed at the next meeting for deliberately choosing to be absent.

In the absence of Dodson, Tupman said a police representative had called at Pickwick's pet shop recently and whilst talking to the owner had seen a monkey in the corner priced at £5000. Thinking this was on the expensive side he questioned to reason and was told that this was a monkey which had been specially trained to perform certain police functions relating to traffic control. The police representative then noticed another monkey in the opposite corner priced at £10,000 and was told