

MANCHESTER PICKWICK CLUB

Minutes of the 512th Meeting held at
Headquarters on Tuesday 2 December 1941

The 512th meeting commenced rather late owing to the inability of many members to "make it" by 6.30 p.m. but eventually Tony Weller in the absence of Mr. Pickwick declared the meeting open and nominated Sgt. Buzfuz to the vice Chair.

Sgt. Buzfuz protested - he thought one of the older members should be called upon but after argument and a fine of 1d. for resisting the Chair he eventually settled himself and the meeting proceeded.

The minutes of the 511th meeting were read and on the motion of Snodgrass seconded by Fogg accepted.

The Secretary reported that he had been searching through the Pickwick box for some old minutes and had failed to find those for the period 1918-23. Did anyone know anything of them. No member could throw any light on the matter and the Secretary promised to list those in his possession and again bring up the matter at the next ordinary meeting.

Pott arrived late but happy and was promptly fined one penny. He was shortly followed by Alf Jingle and two friends, Messrs. Runney and Rowbotham and Alfred was also fined the usual.

The Xmas dinner was discussed and the Secretary stated that in view of the high price of turkey it was for the consideration of members as to whether this could not be substituted by a good hotpot. This was agreed and the Secretary read out the proposed menu which was accepted and the Secretary instructed to get on with the washing.

It was agreed that suitable entertainers be engaged and this was left in the hands of Sam Weller.

Peter Magnus arrived at this stage - usual fine was inflicted.

The price of the dinner - excluding drinks - was fixed at 5/- per head, the Secretary to circulate the members to that effect and to ask for information as to attendance of members and guests.

It was agreed that each member should be held responsible for the fees of the number of persons he named to the Secretary, whether or not they attended.

It was also agreed that in view of the paper shortage no menus be printed and that any available crackers be left to the children.

The Secretary called attention to the fact that the vice chair had been guilty of an omission in his duties, in that he had not called for the health of Mr. Pickwick.

The vice chair admitted the impeachment and paid his fine without a murmur, then called the toast.

The Chairman now called on Alf Jingle for an item and Alfred gave "The Songs of Hiawatha" after Longfellow with great effect.

The Chairman enquired why Pott had retired from the table to seclusion under the curtain but Pott had no answer - he had just gone. He was still drinking grapefruit.

The toast to Absent Members was called by the Chairman who immediately after it was drunk fined himself for not having called the "Charles Dickens" Toast. The latter toast was at once honoured.

Alf Jingle came up again with "Old Ben Shuttleworth" music

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by Sam Weller, this joint effort is evidently a favourite with Pickwickians and was much applauded.

The Chairman called on P.O.R.I. for a reading and George Nupkins responded with Chapter 2, describing Goswell Street, the commencement of the Pickwickian adventures including the incidents of the cab driver and the first meeting with Alfred Jingle.

The Chairman congratulated P.O.R.I. and was upheld by Snodgrass who said George Nupkins had made a grand comper of the fight with the cabman.

Sam Weller's son with friend, both in uniform, came in and were warmly welcomed by the Chairman.

Mr. Rumney now craved permission to stand a round of drinks, which after some demur was given by the Chairman and the health of Mr. Rumney was drunk.

Mr. Rumney responded saying it was 14 years since he had been amongst us and expressing his pleasure at meeting the Pickwick Club members.

Sam Weller now went into reminiscences of one Shiny Williams who invariably slept, thereby usurping the character of the fat boy.

Alfred Jingle again obliged giving "The reward of honest industry" and "The survival of the fittest" bringing much applause. Sam Weller being so enthusiastic that he was promptly fined for calling Alfred "Duggie".

The Vice Chair now called for the toast of "Our Visitors" and in a few well chosen words expressed the happiness of the Club in having them present.

Mr. Rowbotham responded. He expressed his great appreciation of the night's reading and of Dickens, referring to the great work of Dickens in correcting the errors of the times.

The night had sped quickly and all were surprised when the Chairman announced he proposed to close the meeting.

The loyal toast was drunk, and after a vote of thanks to the Chair for his able conduct of the proceedings the meeting closed.

Present: Tony Weller, Snodgrass, George Nupkins, Dr. Slammer, Fogg, Sgt. Buzfuz, Sam Weller, Podder, Pott, Peter Magnus, Alf Jingle, Dodson.

Guests: Messrs. Rumney, Rowbotham, Grocock.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Pickwick, Jack Hopkins (by telegram) Bob Sawyer.

P. Rowbotham