

CHARLES DICKENS

The Pickwick Papers



Introduction by Dr. Beryl Rowland COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

THE PICKWICK PAPERS

*The Posthumous Papers
of the Pickwick Club*



CHARLES DICKENS



AIRMONT

AIRMONT PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.
22 EAST 60TH STREET • NEW YORK 10022

An Airmont Classic
specially selected for the Airmont Library
from the immortal literature of the world

THE SPECIAL CONTENTS OF THIS EDITION

©, Copyright, 1969 by
Airmont Publishing Company, Inc.

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA
BY THE RYERSON PRESS, TORONTO

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE COLONIAL PRESS INC., CLINTON, MASSACHUSETTS

The Pickwick Papers



CHARLES DICKENS

Introduction

The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club appeared in monthly installments from March 1836 to November 1837. The first issue consisted of a modest four hundred copies run off one evening by the foreman of a printing press after the other workmen had gone home. Four issues were out before sales picked up and then the impact of the work was astounding. The plump, benevolent-looking Pickwick with his gaiters and spectacles became a national hero. London and the provinces were swept by Pickwickmania. There were Pickwick hats, coats, canes, cigars, Pickwick joke-books and dramatizations. Sam Weller corduroys became the stock-in-trade of every breeches-maker. People named their cats and dogs "Sam," "Jingle," "Mrs. Bardell," and "Job Trotter."

Dickens reaped no direct financial advantage from this unauthorized commercial exploitation, but he seemed to realize that at the age of twenty-five he had written a work which would hold a permanent place in literature. "If I were to live a hundred years," he wrote to his publishers on November 1, 1836, "and write three novels in each, I should never be so proud of any of them, as I am of Pickwick, feeling as I do, that it had made its own way, and hoping, as I must own I do hope, that long after my hand is withered as the pens it held, Pickwick will be found on many a dusty shelf with many a better work."

The novel was the turning-point of Dickens' career, and although he was to live thirty-four more years and write fourteen

more novels, he could never surpass the story of the "immortal Pickwick."

In many ways Dickens' life (1812-1870) was as dramatic as that of his fictions. His father was a clerk in the Admiralty, a poor manager with a small income and a large family. Dickens' happiest early years were spent in Chatham (1817-1821), a dock-yard town adjoining the ancient and then beautiful city of Rochester on the Medway, an area which was to provide the setting for several of his novels. He was nine when the family moved to London and at twelve he experienced the supreme humiliation of his life: he became an apprentice in a blacking factory at a wage of six shillings a week while his father went to prison for debt. He worked there five months at the most but he had no way of knowing that his bondage would ever end.

"No words can express the secret agony of my soul. . . ." he wrote later. "My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander desolately back to that time of my life."

When family fortunes improved he resumed school and became first a solicitor's clerk and then a newspaper reporter. Early in 1836 the successful publication of *Sketches by Boz* enabled him to marry Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of the editor of the *Evening Chronicle*.

There ensued for Dickens a life of intense activity and of spectacular literary success. In addition to writing his great serialized novels *Oliver Twist* (1837-8), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-9), *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge* (1840-1), he edited *Bentley's Miscellany* (1837-9) and embarked on his first triumphant tour of the States in 1842. Many other novels followed: *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-4), *Dombey and Son* (1847-8), *David Copperfield* (1849-50), *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854), *Little Dorrit* (1857), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1861), *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), and the unfinished work written after his second tour of the United States in 1867, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, which began publication in 1870. His other activities included the founding and editing of a liberal newspaper, *The Daily News*, in 1845; the editing of *Household Words* (1850-9), and of *All the Year Round* later; increasing involvement in exposing the social evils of his day; participation in a number of dramatic enterprises; the giving of public readings in order to pay off his debts; the embarking on a love affair with a young actress called Ellen Ternan.

Such activities became increasingly taxing. In June 1870 he suffered a fatal stroke and died in his Gadshill manse, not far from Rochester.

INTRODUCTION

Dickens' *Sketches by Boz* was lively journalism, and *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* were originally planned in the same humorous tradition. But the work soon moved from burlesque to picaresque comedy with an emphasis on the reaction of character to incident and changing environment.

"What Dickens has done, in fact," states Edgar Johnson, "has been to devise a new literary form, a kind of fairy tale that is at once humorous, heroic, and realistic. Unlike the flat world of farce or the misty dream world of romance, it is as solid and ponderable as England itself, and full of the actual sights and sound and places of England."

Nearly all Dickens' works were written from month to month "almost as the periodical occasion arose." But whereas from 1846 onwards Dickens usually began publication of a work with a few installments in hand, in *Pickwick* he improvized from issue to issue and was immediately sensitive to public reaction. As a result the novel moves from improvization to unity, as the creator's confidence increases both in himself and in his reading public.

It is in the fifth installment beginning with the brief chapter XII that we begin to see the integration of character with plot and themes. Here we have the appointment of Sam Weller, as Mr. Pickwick's servant, thereby beginning an association which is to round off Pickwick's character in the Cervantes' tradition. Mr. Pickwick becomes a nineteenth-century Don Quixote with Sam Weller as his knowing cockney Sancho Panza, and pits his benevolence and gullibility against a world very different from what he has imagined, in a series of adventures which have the spontaneity and unpredictability of life itself. It is in this chapter also that the widowed landlady Mrs. Bardell—"a comely woman of bustling manners and agreeable appearance"—misunderstands Pickwick's intentions:

"Do you think it a much greater expense to keep two people than to keep one?," asked Mr. Pickwick. "La, Mr. Pickwick," said Mrs. Bardell, colouring up to the very border of her cap, as she fancied she observed a species of matrimonial twinkle in the eyes of her lodger; "La, Mr. Pickwick, what a question!"

The result becomes one of the central episodes of the book: Mr. Pickwick, whose question was prompted merely by his decision to hire a manservant, is sued for breach of promise.

Dickens wrote under the stimulus of direct communication with his reading public, and his presentation of his material enabled the reader to see contemporary life not, to be sure, as in the newspaper, but through Pickwickian lenses. Dickens was still on the *Morning Chronicle* and many of the events which he wit-

nessed in the law courts, in Parliament, at innumerable public meetings and private interviews, he transferred to his novel in such a way as to induce laughter as well as indignation without ever diminishing their vitality. It was in *Pickwick* that Dickens discovered the power of his peculiar vision of life and his ability to analyze the contemporary scene with such disturbing precision and humor.

BERYL ROWLAND, M.A., PH.D.,
York University,
Toronto

Author's Preface

TO CHARLES DICKENS EDITION (1868)

It was observed, in the Preface to the original Edition of *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, that they were designed for the introduction of diverting characters and incidents; that no ingenuity of plot was attempted, or even at that time considered very feasible by the author in connexion with the desultory mode of publication adopted; and that the machinery of the Club, proving cumbrous in the management, was gradually abandoned as the work progressed. Although, on one of these points, experience and study afterwards taught me something, and I could perhaps wish now that these chapters were strung together on a stronger thread of general interest, still, what they are they were designed to be.

I have seen various accounts of the origin of these Pickwick Papers, which have, at all events, possessed—for me—the charm of perfect novelty. As I may infer, from the occasional appearance of such histories, that my readers have an interest in the matter, I will relate how they came into existence.

I was a young man of two- or three-and-twenty, when MESSRS. CHAPMAN and HALL, attracted by some pieces I was at that time writing in the *Morning Chronicle* newspaper, or had just written in *The Old Monthly Magazine* (of which one series had lately been collected and published in two volumes, illustrated by MR. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK), waited upon me to propose a something that should be published in shilling numbers—then only known to me, or, I believe, to anybody else, by a dim recollection of certain interminable novels in that form, which used to be carried about the country by pedlars, and over some of which I remember to have shed innumerable tears before I had served my apprenticeship to Life.

When I opened my door in Furnival's Inn to the partner who represented the firm, I recognised in him the person from whose hands I had bought, two or three years previously, and whom I had never seen before or since, my first copy of the Magazine in which my first effusion—a paper in the "Sketches," called Mr.

MINNS AND HIS COUSIN—dropped stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box, in a dark office, up a dark court in Fleet Street—appeared in all the glory of print; on which occasion I walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half-an-hour, because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there. I told my visitor of the coincidence, which we both hailed as a good omen; and so fell to business.

The idea propounded to me, was, that the monthly something should be a vehicle for certain plates to be executed by MR. SEYMOUR; and there was a notion, either on the part of that admirable humourous artist, or of my visitor, that a NIMROD CLUB, the members of which were to go out shooting, fishing, and so forth, and getting themselves into difficulties through their want of dexterity, would be the best means of introducing these. I objected, on consideration, that although born and partly bred in the country I was no great sportsman, except in regard of all kinds of locomotion; that the idea was not novel, and had been already much used; that it would be infinitely better for the plates to arise naturally out of the text; and that I would like to take my own way, with a freer range of English scenes and people, and was afraid I should ultimately do so in any case, whatever course I might prescribe to myself at starting. My views being deferred to, I thought of Mr. Pickwick, and wrote the first number; from the proof sheets of which, MR. SEYMOUR made his drawing of the Club, and his happy portrait of its founder: the latter on MR. EDWARD CHAPMAN's description of the dress and bearing of a real personage whom he had often seen. I connected Mr. Pickwick with a club, because of the original suggestion, and I put in Mr. Winkle expressly for the use of MR. SEYMOUR. We started with a number of twenty-four pages instead of thirty-two, and four illustrations in lieu of a couple. MR. SEYMOUR's sudden and lamented death before the second number was published, brought about a quick decision upon a point already in agitation; the number became one of thirty-two pages with only two illustrations, and remained so to the end.

It is with great unwillingness that I notice some intangible and incoherent assertions which have been made, professedly on behalf of MR. SEYMOUR, to the effect that he had some share in the invention of this book, or of anything in it, not faithfully described in the foregoing paragraph. With the moderation that is due equally to my respect for the memory of a brother-artist, and to my self-respect, I confine myself to placing on record here the facts:

That, MR. SEYMOUR never originated or suggested an incident, a phrase, or a word, to be found in this book. That, MR. SEY-

MOUR died when only twenty-four pages of this book were published, and when assuredly not forty-eight were written. That, I believe I never saw MR. SEYMOUR's handwriting in my life. That, I never saw MR. SEYMOUR but once in my life, and that was on the night but one before his death, when he certainly offered no suggestion whatsoever. That, I saw him then in the presence of two persons, both living, perfectly acquainted with all these facts, and whose written testimony to them I possess. Lastly, that MR. EDWARD CHAPMAN (the survivor of the original firm of CHAPMAN and HALL) has set down in writing, for similar preservation, his personal knowledge of the origin and progress of this book, of the monstrosity of the baseless assertions in question, and (tested by details) even of the self-evident impossibility of there being any truth in them. In the exercise of the forbearance on which I have resolved, I do not quote MR. EDWARD CHAPMAN's account of his deceased partner's reception, on a certain occasion, of the pretences in question.

"Boz," my signature in the *Morning Chronicle*, and in *The Old Monthly Magazine*, appended to the monthly cover of this book, and retained long afterwards, was the nickname of a pet child, a younger brother, whom I had dubbed Moses, in honour of the Vicar of Wakefield; which being facetiously pronounced through the nose, became Boses, and being shortened, became Boz. Boz was a very familiar household word to me, long before I was an author, and so I came to adopt it.

It has been observed of Mr. Pickwick, that there is a decided change in his character, as these pages proceed, and that he becomes more good and more sensible. I do not think this change will appear forced or unnatural to my readers, if they will reflect that in real life the peculiarities and oddities of a man who has anything whimsical about him, generally impress us first, and that it is not until we are better acquainted with him that we usually begin to look below these superficial traits, and to know the better part of him.

Lest there should be any well-intentioned persons who do not perceive the difference (as some such could not, when OLD MORTALITY was newly published), between religion and the cant of religion, piety and the pretence of piety, a humble reverence for the great truths of Scripture and an audacious and offensive obtrusion of its letter and not its spirit in the commonest dissensions and meanest affairs of life, to the extraordinary confusion of ignorant minds, let them understand that it is always the latter, and never the former, which is satirised here. Further, that the latter is here satirised as being, according to all experience, inconsistent with the former, impossible of union with it, and one of the most evil and mischievous falsehoods existent in society—whether it establish its head-quarters, for the time be-

ing, in Exeter Hall, or Ebenezer Chapel, or both. It may appear unnecessary to offer a word of observation on so plain a head. But it is never out of season to protest against that coarse familiarity with sacred things which is busy on the lip, and idle in the heart; or against the confounding of Christianity with any class of persons who, in the words of SWIFT, have just enough religion to make them hate, and not enough to make them love, one another.

I have found it curious and interesting, looking over the sheets of this reprint, to mark what important social improvements have taken place about us, almost imperceptibly, since they were originally written. The licence of Counsel, and the degree to which Juries are ingeniously bewildered, are yet susceptible of moderation; while an improvement in the mode of conducting Parliamentary Elections (and even Parliaments too, perhaps) is still within the bounds of possibility. But legal reforms have pared the claws of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg; a spirit of self-respect, mutual forbearance, education, and co-operation for such good ends, has diffused itself among their clerks; places far apart are brought together, to the present convenience and advantage of the Public, and to the certain destruction, in time, of a host of petty jealousies, blindnesses, and prejudices, by which the Public alone have always been the sufferers; the laws relating to imprisonment for debt are altered; and the Fleet Prison is pulled down!

Who knows, but by the time the series reaches its conclusion, it may be discovered that there are even magistrates in town and country, who should be taught to shake hands every day with Common-sense and Justice; that even Poor Laws may have mercy on the weak, the aged, and unfortunate; the Schools, on the broad principles of Christianity, are the best adornment for the length and breadth of this civilised land; that Prison-doors should be barred on the outside, no less heavily and carefully than they are barred within; that the universal diffusion of common means of decency and health is as much the right of the poorest of the poor, as it is indispensable to the safety of the rich, and of the State; that a few petty boards and bodies—less than drops in the great ocean of humanity, which roars around them—are not for ever to let loose Fever and Consumption on God's creatures at their will, or always to keep their jobbing little fiddles going, for a Dance of Death.

Characters

MALE

SAMUEL PICKWICK, Founder of the Pickwick Club

AUGUSTUS SNODGRASS TRACY TUPMAN NATHANIEL WINKLE	}	Members of the Corresponding Society of the Pickwick Club
---	---	--

BENJAMIN ALLEN, a medical student

JACK BAMBER

ANGELO CYRUS BANTAM, Esq.

MASTER TOMMY BARDELL

CAPTAIN BOLDWIG

COLONEL BULDER

SERJEANT BUZFUZ

THE CHANCERY PRISONER

SIR THOMAS CLUBBER

MR. DODSON, an attorney

CAPTAIN DOWLER

DUBBLEY, a police officer

HORATIO FIZKIN, Esq.

MR. FOGG, an attorney

DANIEL GRUMMER

JACK HOPKINS, a medical student

ANTHONY HUMM

MR. LEO HUNTER

JEM HUTLEY ("Dismal
Jemmy")

MR. JACKSON

ALFRED JINGLE, a strolling actor

MR. JINKS

JOE, the Fat Boy

MR. LOWTEN

PETER MAGNUS

MR. MALLARD

MR. MARTIN

MR. MILLER

MR. MIVINS ("The Zephyr")

MR. JONAS MUDGE

MR. MUZZLE

NEDDY

GEORGE NUPKINS, Esq.

DOCTOR PAYNE

MR. SOLOMON PELL

MR. PERKER

MR. PHUNKY

MR. POTT

MR. RADDLE

MR. TOM ROKER

BOB SAWYER, a medical student

DR. SLAMMER

THE HON. SAMUEL SLUMKEY

MR. SLURK

SMANGLE

JOHN SMAUKER

SERJEANT SNUBBIN

MR. JUSTICE STARELEIGH

THE REV. MR. STIGGINS ("The
Shepherd")

LIEUT. TAPPLETON

JOB TROTTER

MR. TRUNDLE

MR. WARDLE

SAMUEL WELLER

TONY WELLER

MR. WINKLE, senior

FEMALE

ARABELLA ALLEN
MRS. MARTHA BARDELL
MRS. COLONEL BULDER
LADY CLUBBER
MRS. BETSY CLUPPINS
MRS. CRADDOCK
MRS. DOWLER
MRS. LEO HUNTER
MARY, a servant-girl
MRS. NUPKINS
MISS HENRIETTA NUPKINS

MRS. POTT
MRS. MARY ANN RADDLE
MRS. SUSANNAH SANDERS
LADY SNUPHANUPH
MISS EMILY WARDLE
MISS ISABELLA WARDLE
MISS RACHAEL WARDLE
MRS. WARDLE
MRS. SUSAN WELLER
MISS WITHERFIELD
MRS. COLONEL WUGSBY

CHARACTERS IN THE INTRODUCED STORIES

PRINCE BLADUD
JOHN EDMUNDS
MR. EDMUNDS
GABRIEL GRUB
HENRY
GEORGE HEYLING
MR. JINKINS
JOHN, a pantomime actor

OLD LOBBS
JACK MARTIN
NATHANIEL PIPKIN
TOM SMART
MRS. EDMUNDS
MARY HEYLING
KATE
MARIA LOBBS

THE PICKWICK PAPERS

**The Posthumous Papers
of the Pickwick Club**

1. *The Pickwickians*

The first ray of light which illumines the gloom, and converts into a dazzling brilliancy that obscurity in which the earlier history of the public career of the immortal Pickwick would appear to be involved, is derived from the perusal of the following entry in the Transactions of the Pickwick Club, which the editor of these papers feels the highest pleasure in laying before his readers, as a proof of the careful attention, indefatigable assiduity, and nice discrimination, with which his search among the multifarious documents confided to him has been conducted.

"May 12, 1827. Joseph Smiggers, Esq., P.V.P.M.P.C.,¹ presiding. The following resolutions unanimously agreed to:

"That this Association has heard read, with feelings of unmingled satisfaction, and unqualified approval, the paper communicated by Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C.,² entitled 'Speculations on the Source of the Hampstead Ponds, with some Observations on the Theory of Tittlebats;' and that this Association does hereby return its warmest thanks to the said Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C., for the same.

"That while this Association is deeply sensible of the advantages which must accrue to the cause of science from the production to which they have just adverted—no less than from the unwearied researches of Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C., in Hornsey, Highgate, Brixton, and Camberwell—they cannot but entertain a lively sense of the inestimable benefits which must inevitably result from carrying the speculations of that learned man into a wider field, from extending his travels, and consequently enlarging his sphere of observation, to the advancement of knowledge, and the diffusion of learning.

"That, with the view just mentioned, this Association has taken into its serious consideration a proposal, emanating from the aforesaid Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C., and three other Pickwickians, hereinafter named, for forming a new branch of United Pickwickians, under the title of the Corresponding Society of the Pickwick Club.

"That the said proposal has received the sanction and approval of this Association.

"That the Corresponding Society of the Pickwick Club is therefore hereby constituted; and that Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C., Tracy Tupman, Esq., M.P.C., Augustus Snodgrass, Esq., M.P.C., and Nathaniel Winkle, Esq., M.P.C., are hereby

¹ Perpetual Vice-President—Member Pickwick Club.

² General Chairman—Member Pickwick Club.

nominated and appointed members of the same; and that they be requested to forward, from time to time, authenticated accounts of their journeys and investigations, of their observations of character and manners, and of the whole of their adventures, together with all tales and papers to which local scenery or associations may give rise, to the Pickwick Club, stationed in London.

"That this Association cordially recognises the principle of every member of the Corresponding Society defraying his own travelling expenses; and that it sees no objection whatever to the members of the said society pursuing their inquiries for any length of time they please, upon the same terms.

"That the members of the aforesaid Corresponding Society be, and are, hereby informed, that their proposal to pay the postage of their letters, and the carriage of their parcels, has been deliberated upon by this Association: that this Association considers such proposals worthy of the great minds from which it emanated, and that it hereby signifies its perfect acquiescence therein."

A casual observer, adds the secretary, to whose notes we are indebted for the following account—a casual observer might possibly have remarked nothing extraordinary in the bald head, and circular spectacles, which were intently turned towards his (the secretary's) face, during the reading of the above resolutions: to those who knew that the gigantic brain of Pickwick was working beneath that forehead, and that the beaming eyes of Pickwick were twinkling behind those glasses, the sight was indeed an interesting one. There sat the man who had traced to their source the mighty ponds of Hampstead, and agitated the scientific world with his Theory of Tittlebats, as calm and unmoved as the deep waters of the one on a frosty day, or as a solitary specimen of the other in the inmost recesses of an earthen jar. And how much more interesting did the spectacle become, when, starting into full life and animation, as a simultaneous call for "Pickwick" burst from his followers, that illustrious man slowly mounted into the Windsor chair, on which he had been previously seated, and addressed the club himself had founded. What a study for an artist did that exciting scene present! The eloquent Pickwick, with one hand gracefully concealed behind his coat tails, and the other waving in air, to assist his glowing declamation; his elevated position revealing those tights and gaiters, which, had they clothed an ordinary man, might have passed without observation, but which, when Pickwick clothed them—if we may use the expression—inspired voluntary awe and respect; surrounded by the men who had volunteered to share the perils of his travels, and who were destined to participate in the glories of his discoveries. On his right hand sat