



# A Season of Happiness

nothing too serious

Popcorn



P03

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS . . .

### OFFICE STAFF PRACTICES, 1852.

With conditions of employment very much a topic of conversation, a component headed 'Office Staff Practices' and dated 1852, found in a building in Lichfield which was demolished recently, makes interesting reading – especially for clerical workers.

1. Godliness, Cleanliness and Punctuality are the necessities of good business.
2. This firm has reduced the hours of work, and the Clerical Staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. on weekdays.
3. Daily prayers will be held each morning in the Main Office. The Clerical Staff will be present.
4. Clothing must be of a sober nature. The Clerical Staff will not disport themselves in raiment of bright colours, nor will they wear hose, unless in good repair.
5. Overshoes and topcoats may not be worn in the office, but neck scarves and headware may be worn in inclement weather.
6. A stove is provided for the benefit of the Clerical Staff; Coal and Wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of the clerical staff bring 4 pounds of coal, each day, during the cold weather.
7. No member of the Clerical Staff may leave the room without permission of Mr. Rogers. The calls of nature are permitted, and Clerical Staff may use the garden below the second gate. This area must be kept in good order.
8. No talking is allowed during business hours.
9. The craving of tobacco, wines or spirits is a human weakness and, as such, is forbidden to all members of the Clerical Staff.
10. Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced the partaking of food is allowed between 11.30 a.m. and noon, but work will not on any account cease.
11. Members of the Clerical Staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available, on application to Mr. Rogers.
12. Mr. Rogers will nominate a Senior Clerk, to be responsible for the cleanliness of the Main Office and the Private Office, and all Boys and Juniors will report to him 40 minutes before Prayers, and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, Brooms, Scrubbers and Soap are provided by the owners.
13. The New Increased Weekly Wages are as hereunder detailed:-
  - Junior Boys (to 11 years) – 1/4d.
  - Boys (to 14 years) – 2/1d.
  - Juniors – 4/8d.
  - Junior Clerks – 8/7d.
  - Clerks – 10/9d.
  - Senior Clerks (after 15 years with the owners) 21/-

The owners recognise the generosity of the new Labour Laws, but will expect a great rise in output of work to compensate for these near Utopian conditions.

*Reprinted from "The Clerk"*

*The above was written in 1852, some 25 years before we were founded in 1877.*

*Of course, times and conditions have changed, but even so, our chaps are punctual; they work overtime, and, sometimes, week-ends when required. They can wear what they like, although we do draw the line at brown boots, plus fours, dinner-jackets, and firemen's helmets. They are adequately safeguarded against the cold, and spend a penny whenever necessary. They are always talking about customers' jobs, and are even allowed to laugh – and frequently do. We can't stop them smoking even if we wanted to; and what they do with their human weaknesses after office hours is their own affair. Pens and pencils are supplied free, the better to translate your orders into action. We have our own Mrs. Mop who keeps us in a reasonable state of cleanliness, even though we do supply the soap. As for the New Increased Weekly Wages ... no comment ... not even in this Utopian Welfare State!!! All in all, our chaps are a jolly decent hard working lot, and are here to satisfy your requirements, and help in every possible way.*

*No wonder our telegraphic address is Woryanrush London E.C.3.*

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