

LAWS AND OBJECTS

OF THE

ROCHDALE SOCIETY

OF

EQUITABLE PIONEERS.

*Enrolled according to the Acts, 10th, George IV, and 4th
and 5th, William IV.*

Rockdale :

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1844.

Benefits

The following are among the benefits derived from a Friendly Society being enrolled under the 10th Geo. IV. c.56, as amended by the 4th and 5th William IV. c.40.

- 1.- The rules are binding, and may be legally enforced.
- 2.- Protection is given to the members, their wives and children, &c., in enforcing their just claims, and against any fraudulent dissolution of the society.
- 3.- The property of the society is declared to be vested in the trustee or treasurer for the time being.
- 4.- The trustee or treasurer may, with respect to the property of the society, sue and be sued in his own name.
- 5.- Fraud committed with respect to property of the society, is punishable by justices.
- 6.- Court of Chancery may compel transfer of stock, &c. if any officer of this society abscond or refuse to transfer.
- 7.- Exemption from all documents, &c., and from stamp duties.
- 8.- Application may be made to the Court of Chancery by petition; free from payment of Court or Counsel's Fees, &c.
- 9.- Disputes settled by reference to justices or arbitrators, and the order of justices or arbitrators to be final, with power to award compensation to any member if unjustly expelled.
- 10.- Power to invest their funds in Savings' Banks.
- 11.- Power to invest their funds with the Commissioners, for reduction of the National Debt, and to receive interest at the rate of £3 16s, 0½d. per cent.
- 12.- Priority of payment of debts, in case any officer, &c. of this society become bankrupt, insolvent has an execution, &c. against his property, or dies.
- 13.- In case of the death of any member payment may be made of any sum not exceeding £20, without the expence, &c. of obtaining letters of administration.
- 14.- Members are allowed to be witnesses in all criminal or civil, respecting property of society.

Objects

Law First

THE objects and plans of this Society are to form arrangements for the pecuniary benefit, and the improvement of the social and domestic condition of its members, by raising a sufficient amount of capital in shares of one pound each, to bring into operation the following plans and arrangements.

The establishment of a store for the sale of provision and clothing, &c.

The building, purchasing or erecting a number of houses, in which those members desiring to assist each other in improving their domestic and social condition may reside.

To commence the manufacture of such articles as the society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment, or who may be suffering in consequence of repeated reductions in their wages.

As a further benefit and security to the members of this society. the society shall purchase or rent an estate or estates of land, which shall be cultivated by the members who may be out of employment, or whose labour may be badly remunerated.

That as soon as practicable, this society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government, or in other words to establish a self-supporting home-colony or united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies.

That for the promotion of sobriety a Temperance Hotel be opened in one of the society's houses, as soon as convenient.

- 2.- That the government of this society shall be vested in a President, Treasurer, and Secretary, three trustees and five directors, the President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustees, to be elected at the general meeting held in January, the directors to be elected at the July general meeting, any of them being eligible for re-election, but if through death, resignation, or otherwise, a vacancy should occur among the trustees or other officers of this society, a special general meeting of the members shall be called, at which meeting another or others shall be elected to fill such vacancy or vacancies.

- 3.- That two auditors be appointed, each to remain in office six months, and retire alternately. They shall audit the accounts of the society, see that they are correctly kept and balanced quarterly, and report the same to each quarterly meeting or be fined.
- 4.- That the officers and board of directors shall meet every Thursday evening, at eight o'clock in the Committee Room, Weavers' Arms, Yorkshire-street. Rochdale, for the transaction of the society's business; the officers names shall be called over at a quarter past eight o'clock, and any officer not present shall be fined, - the secretary shall keep a record of all absentees.
- 5.- That general meetings of the members shall be holden on the first Monday in the months of January, April, July, and October, at eight o'clock P.M., at which meetings the officers of this society shall make their quarterly financial report, in which report shall be specified the amount of funds, and value of the stock possessed by the society.
- 6.- That an annual general meeting be holden on the "First Market Tuesday," on which occasion a dinner shall be provided at a charge of one shilling each person, and one week's notice.
- 7.- The president shall act as chairman at all meetings of this society. and should he not be present at any of the society's meetings, the officers or members present shall elect one from amongst themselves to act as chairman on that occasion. The president or chairman acting in his absence, shall sign the minutes of the proceedings at each of the society's meetings.
- 8.- The secretary shall attend all meetings of this society, record the names of officers present or absent, take minutes of the proceedings at each meeting, keep all accounts, documents, papers, books, &c., in such form, manner, or place as the society may appoint, and summon all general meetings.
- 9.- The treasurer shall be responsible for such sums of money as shall from time to time be placed in his hands by any of the society's officers, on account of this society, and for the investment and application of the same under the authority of the officers of this society.
- 10.- The property of this society shall be vested in the trustees, and the said trustees shall hold such property for the benefit of this society, and in the names of the trustees for the time being shall be made and taken all grants, conveyances, and assurances of property in favor of this society, and all instruments and assurances for the security of this society; they shall transact all business connected with the paying of money into, or withdrawing from, the bank, but on no pretence whatever shall they transact such business unless all three are present.

- 11.- They shall jointly and severally be responsible for all funds, deeds, effects, or assignments placed in their hands for the use and benefit of this society; and should they at any time either unitedly or individually misapply the property placed in their hands, upon due proof thereof, the president and directors shall give such trustee or trustees so misapplying the property, fourteen days' notice to give up possession of all funds, deeds, effects, or assignments in his or their possession belonging to the society, and should he or they refuse to do so, then the officers shall compel him or them to give up the property, and transfer the same pursuant to the 10th Geo. IV., c.56, sec.14. The trustees are to attend all weekly meetings, or be fined.
- 11.- That all securities, investments, and purchases which shall be taken or made by, or in the names of the trustees of this society, and all monies thereby or therein invested, or accruing therefrom, shall be under the control of the officers and directors, and every order made in writing by the officers and directors touching the management of, or dealing with, the said securities, investments or purchases, shall be obligatory on and observed by the trustees of this society, and be a justification to them, and their indemnification in acting in obedience to the same order, and all such trustees shall when required by a majority of the officers and directors, sign, seal, and execute such declaration of trust, of the estates, securities, moneys, and effects vested in them on behalf of this society, as the majority of the officers and directors shall require.
- 12.- That any person who may be appointed to any office in anywise touching or concerning the receipt, management, or expenditure of money collected for the purpose of the society, shall, if required to do so, before entering upon the duties of such office give such security as may be thought sufficient, by a majority of the members present at a general meeting. 10 Geo. IV. c.56 sec.11,
- 13.- Any person desirous of becoming a member of this society, shall be proposed and seconded by two members at a meeting of the officers and directors, and and if approved of by a majority of those present, shall be eligible for election at the next weekly meeting, each candidate shall pay the sum of one shilling as entrance money, on being admitted to membership, shares may be paid for by instalments of three pence per week, on each share.

Any member neglecting to pay such instalments for three months shall, except in case of sickness or want of employment be fined in the sum of sixpence. Any member neglecting to pay such instalment for the space of six months, shall be expelled, his or her share or shares sold, and the remainder after paying all necessary expences, returned to such expelled member. No member to have more than fifty shares.

- 14.- That should the officers and members of this society find the conduct of any of its members to be injurious to the interests of the society, the president is hereby called upon to remonstrate with such member, and should any member after such remonstrance still pursue the same offensive line of conduct, such members shall receive one month's notice of exclusion from this society, at the expiration of which time the offending member shall be expelled without further notice.
- 15.- That should any member wish to withdraw from this society such member shall give one month's notice of such intention to the officers, at the expiration of which time the member shall be at liberty to withdraw from the society, such liberty to continue in force until the next meeting of the board but no longer.
- 16.- That in all cases of exclusion or withdrawal from this society, previous to receiving the balance remaining (after paying all necessary expences) for shares sold, the excluded or withdrawing party shall sign his or her name in a book kept by the society for that purpose, after which he or she shall have no further claim upon this society, nor shall this society have any further claim upon him or her.
- 17.- Any member withdrawing from this society desirous of retaining possession of his or her share or shares until they can be disposed of advantageously, will be allowed to retain possession of such share or shares for the space of twelve months but no longer, but such member withdrawing shall not enjoy any of the privileges of a member, nor receive interest on such share or shares.
- 18.- That this society shall not be responsible for the debts of any of its members except to the amount of the share or shares held by a member, should any member of this society become bankrupt or distressed for debt, and application be made to the officers of this society by the creditor or creditors of such distressed member to know what amount of capital such distressed member may have invested in the funds of this society the officers are hereby bound to examine the accounts of such member, and make declaration of such accounts, and should the creditor or creditors claim the amount of such member's investment, then the share or shares shall be sold and the amount after paying all necessary expenses be paid to the proper party for receiving it, after signing his or her name in the book, as in the case of expelled members.
- 19.- That in case of dispute between this society and any of its members. or members or persons claiming on account of a member finding himself aggrieved or having any complaint against any member or officer may apply to the officers and directors for redress but should the party not receive satisfaction appeal may be made to a general meeting of the members of the society; whose decision shall be final and binding, except reference be made to arbitration.

- 20.- That at the first meeting of the society after the enrolment or the laws five arbitrators shall be named and elected, none of whom shall be either directly or indirectly interested in the funds of this society, in case of dispute the names of the arbitrators shall be written on pieces of paper and placed in a box or glass, and the three whose names are first drawn out by the complaining party or by some one appointed by such party shall be arbitrators to decide the matter or difference whose decision shall be final.
- 21.- That no person shall be allowed to purchase anything on behalf of this society except those who are regularly appointed by the officers or members and the officers of this society shall not in any case nor on any pretence purchase any articles except for ready money, neither shall they be allowed to sell any article or articles except for ready money. Any officer acting contrary to this law, shall be fined in the sum of ten shillings and be disqualified from performing the duties of such office.
- 22.- That at each quarterly general meeting the officers in their financial statement shall publish the amount of profits realized by the society during the preceding quarter, which shall be divided thus; - interest at the rate of 3½ per cent, per annum shall be paid upon all shares paid up previous to the quarter's commencement; the remaining profits shall be paid to each member in proportion to the amount of money expended at the store.
- 23.- That on the death of any member of this society the heirs, executors or administrators of such deceased member shall succeed to the share or shares of such deceased member, on subscribing to the objects and rules of this society, but should the said heirs, executors or administrators not subscribe to the objects and rules the officers shall cause the share or shares to be sold, and dealt with as in the case of expelled members.
- 24.- This society shall not be dissolved so long as the intents and purposes thereof or any of them, remain to be carried into effect, without obtaining the votes of five sixths of the then existing members of this society. Pursuant to 10.th, Geo. IV. th, c56, sec.26.
- 25.- That in giving effect to the foregoing laws the following meanings shall be assigned to expressions unless either the subject or content otherwise require. - The word laws, shall include laws, rules, orders, regulations, &c; treasurer or trustee to include treasurers or trustees, the word person to include, females as well as males, the word book to include books, bond to include bonds, name to include names, account to include accounts, member to include members, clerk of the peace to include town clerk. Pursuant to 10th Geo. IV. c 56 sec. 38.

Management of the Store.

- 25.- That the store be opened to the public on the evenings of Monday and Saturdays: on Mondays from seven till nine; on Saturdays from six till eleven,
- 26.- That all purchases be paid for on delivery.
- 27.- That a cashier and salesman be appointed to conduct the business of the store, each to serve six months alternately and be eligible for re-election.
- 28.- The salesman shall weigh, measure and sell such articles and commodities as are to be disposed of at the store but shall not receive payment for any articles or goods sold.
- 29.- The cashier shall receive payment for all goods purchased at the store; he shall give a receipt to each purchaser for the amount received, and keep a cheque of such receipt in a book provided for that purpose; he shall pay over to the secretary at each weekly meeting the money drawn at the store.
- 30.- That purchasers be furnished with printed forms containing the names of such articles as are on sale at the store, these forms to be filled up by the purchaser and handed to the salesman when goods are required; the salesman shall hand in such orders to the secretary at the weekly meetings of the board, as a cheque on the cashier.
- 31.- That the amount of money expended by each member during each quarter be determined by the cheque receipts produced by each member.
- 32.- That the cashier or salesman be fined one shilling for non-attendance at the proper time unless 48 hours notice be given to the president and secretary of inability to perform the duties of his or her office.
- 33.- That the president and secretary be empower to appoint a member to perform the duty of any officer not attending to his duty, but that the board have power to alter such appointment should it be thought expedient to do so.
- 34.- That the store be opened at the proper time by the president.

MILES ASHWORTH, *President*.
JOHN STOTT, *Treasurer*.
CHARLES HOWARTH.
JAMES STANDRING.
JAMES DALY, *Secretary*.

FINES.

That the following FINES be inflicted for non-attendance or non-performance of duty: -

Auditors,	2s. 6d. each,	for each offence.
Salesman or cashier,	1s.	do.
President	being late, 3d;	non-attendance, 6d.
Secretary	do. 3d;	do. 6d.
Trustee or Director	3d;	do. 6d.
For a violation of Law 21st,		10s.

I hereby certify that the forgoing Rules are in conformity to Law, and with the provisions of the Act 10th, George IV., c.56 as amended by the 4th and 5th William IV., c 40.

JOHN TIDD PRATT

The Barrister at Law appointed to certify Rules of Savings' Banks

London, 24th October, 1844.

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Copy sent to the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Lancaster.

J. TIDD PRATT.

JESSE HALL, PRITNER, ROCHDALE.

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Supplement of Amended Laws of the First Department of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers, Held in Toad Lane in the Parish of Rochdale in the County of Lancaster.

Addition to the first law.

That for the establishment of the store department a capital of one thousand pounds be raised in shares of one pound each, by not more than two hundred and fifty members. Each person on his or her admission to membership shall take out four shares in the capital, but should one thousand pounds be found not sufficient to carry on the business of the distributing of provisions and clothing, it shall be lawful to augment the number of shares from four to five, at a meeting of the members called purposely, by a majority then present. And that at the commencement of the store department, a member be allowed to have any number of shares in the capital under fifty-one; but, that in proportion as the shares of those having less than four augment, the officers shall with such augmentation, purchase down shares from those having more than four shares in the capital, and the officers shall act upon this principle so long as there are any members having either more or less than four shares in the capital. And should any member be compelled through want of employment or other cause to sell any of his shares, he shall, when he obtains employment; be brought upon an equality in the capital, by the operation of the 13th law. Members having more than four shares in the capital, shall have no power to refuse to sell any shares they may have in the capital above four when applied to by the officers to purchase the same. All shares when so brought down shall be sold at their original cost of one pound each, this rule not to apply to the sale of shares of persons leaving the society. That in case any member be thrown out of employment or reduced to distress by other causes, and he having a number of shares in the capital, the officers and board of directors shall have power to purchase any number of shares from him as may be agreed upon by both parties, should he apply to them for that purpose, or he may sell them to any member already having four shares in the capital; but, that in all cases when a member is compelled to sell any of his shares, he shall retain the possession of one, to retain his membership and its priviledges, and should he determine to sell the remaining one, it shall be sold as directed by the 13th law. A person ceases to be a member when he has sold the whole of his shares. That in the purchasing down of shares, he who has the greatest number in the capital shall have priority of claim, if he require it; but should there be a number equal, in shares, wishing to draw, in that case recourse shall be had to the ballot for decision.

A new law to be placed or read between the 4th and 5th laws.

That general meetings of the members be holden on the first and third Monday evenings in each month, the business to commence at eight o'clock, the four general quarterly meetings to be included. The business of these meetings to consist in the explanation of the principles, objects, and laws of the society, to discuss the affairs, and suggest any improvement for the consideration of the officers and board of directors. At these meetings, shall be proposed and seconded by two members, all persons for membership. A person proposed and seconded at one general meeting, may be admitted a member at the next, if approved of by a majority those present. Members present at all general, quarterly, and annual meetings, to have, each, one vote, and no more, in the decision of all questions, and should the number be equal for any motion, the president, or chairman acting in his place, shall have the casting vote, a majority to govern in all cases, except on a motion for the dissolution of the society, for which a special law is enacted.

Amendment of the 6th law.

That at the general meeting held on the first Monday in October, it shall be decided whether a dinner or tea or either be provided, on the following "First Market Tuesday," to celebrate the anniversary, and if it be decided by a majority then present that one be provided, the whole of the members shall pay for the same whether they attend or not, but any member unable to attend, may send a friend in his stead. The price of dinner or tea to be fixed at the above-mentioned meeting. A member being out of employment or sick at the time, to be exempt from attendance or payment, or residing more than three miles from the store, to be exempt. No part of the expences to come out of the funds.

The eleventh law repealed, and the following substituted.

That no trustee, or treasurer, or other officer of this society shall be liable to make good any deficiency which may arise in the funds of this society, unless such individuals shall respectively declare by writing under their hands, that they are willing to be answerable, and every such officer, or the whole of them collectively, may limit such responsibility to the sum specified in such instrument or writing, but that every such officer shall be personally responsible for an sums of money or other effects actually received by him, on account of, or for the use and benefit of the society, pursuant to 10th Geo. IV. chap. 56, sec.22. And should any officer or officers, individually or unitedly, misapply the property placed in his or their hands, upon due proof thereof, the officers and board of directors shall give such officer or officers so misapplying the property, fourteen days' notice to give up possession of all funds, deeds, or other assignments in his or their possession, belonging to the society; and should he or they refuse to do so, then the officers shall compel him or them to give up the property, and transfer the same to a person or persons whom the officers may have appointed to have possession of the same, pursuant to 10th Geo. IV. chap. 56, sec. 14.

Amendment of the 13th law.

Any person desirous of becoming a member of this society, shall be proposed and seconded by two members at a general meeting of the members, and if approved of at the next general meeting by a majority then present, shall be admitted to membership. A person being proposed and seconded, shall pay one shilling as entrance money. A person proposed and not admitted to membership shall have his entrance money returned to him. A person being proposed, and not making his appearance within two months, shall forfeit his proposition money, and shall not be admitted to membership unless again proposed. Each person on the night of his admission, shall appear personally in the meeting room, and state his willingness to take out four shares of one pound each, and to pay a deposit of not less than one shilling or three-pence per share, and to pay not less than three-pence per week after, and to allow an interests and profits that may be due to him, to remain in the funds until he shall have four shares in the capital. A member's interests and profits shall be added quarterly to his deposits, and go to the formation of his shares. Any member allowing his deposits to be two shillings in arrears, shall be fined three-pence; if four, he shall be fined six-pence; and six shillings, he shall be expelled the society, and the amount he may have in the funds sold, the remainder, after paying expenses, shall be handed over to him. A member being sick or out of employment, to be exempt from fine or expulsion.

Amendment of the 22nd law.

That the rate of interest be five pounds per cent per annum, instead of three and a half.

Amendment of the 24th law.

This society shall not be dissolved so long as the intents and purposes or any of them remain to be carried into effect, without obtaining the votes of five-sixths in value of the then existing members of this society, and the consent of all members who may be under any responsibility on account of the society, pursuant to 10th Geo. IV. chap. 66, see. 26.

Laws repealed.

That the 26th, 21th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd and the 34th laws be repealed, and the management of the store be left in the hands of the officers and board of directors.

That the sale of all shares of persons leaving the society be by ticket.

BENJAMIN RUDMAN,

CHARLES HOWARTH,

JAMES TWEEDALE,

JAMES DALY, Secretary.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Rules are according to Law, and with the provisions of the Act 16th Geo, IV., chap, 56, as amended by 4th and 5th William IV., chap. 40,

JOHN TIDD PRATT,
The Barrister at Law appointed to
certify Rules of Savings' Banks.

London, 7th August, 1845.

Copy sent to the Clerk of the Peace
for the County of Lancaster.
J. TIDD PRATT.