

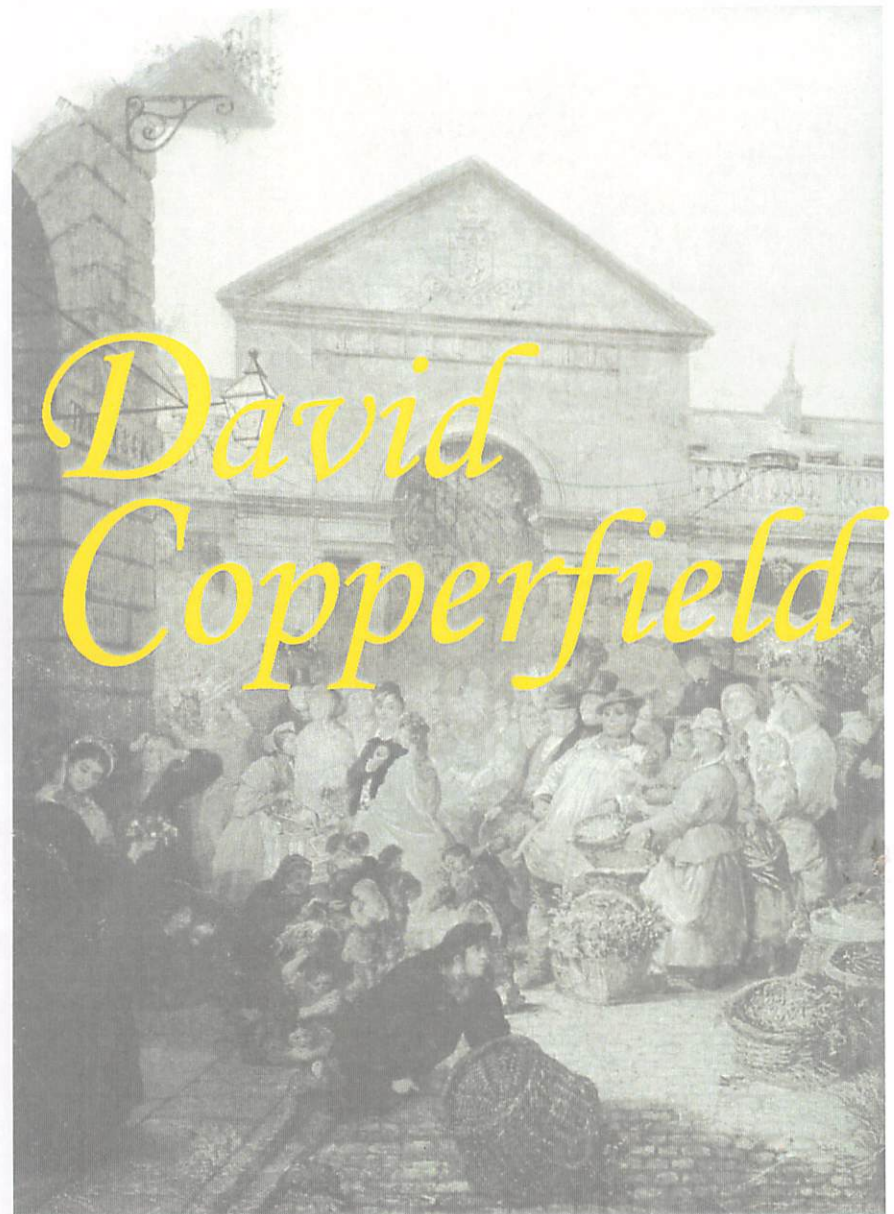


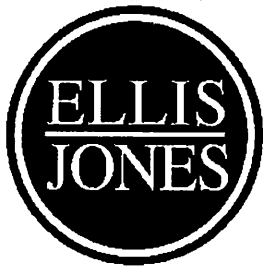
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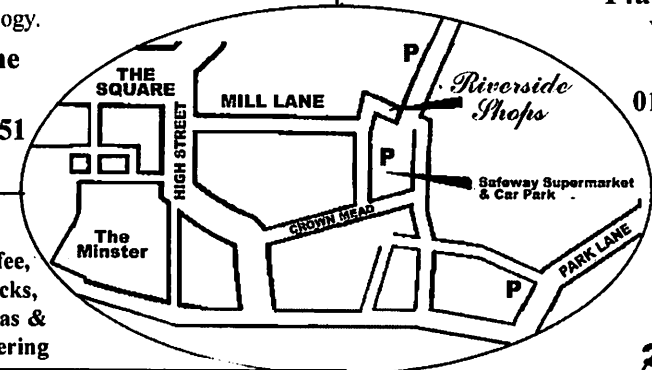


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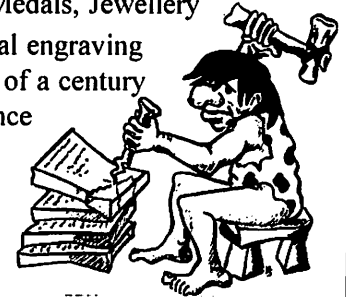
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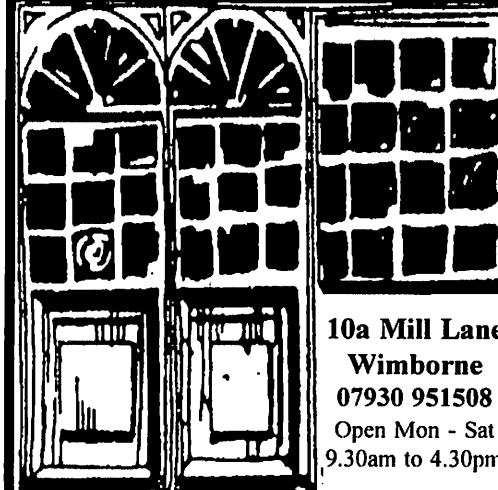
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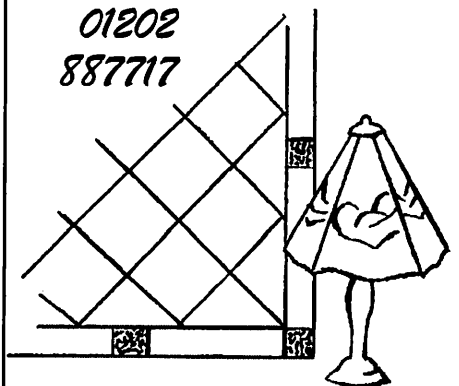
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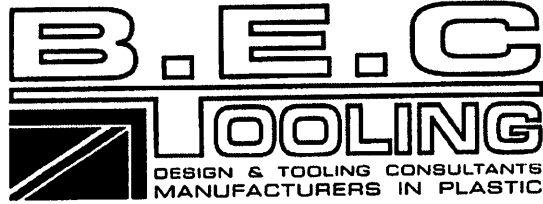
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*I REMARKED in the original Preface to this Book [October 1850], that I did not find it easy to get sufficiently far away from it, in the first sensations of having finished it, to refer to it with the composure which this formal heading would seem to require. My interest in it was so recent and strong, and my mind was so divided between pleasure and regret - pleasure in the achievement of a long design, regret in the separation from many companions - that I was in danger of wearying the reader with personal confidences and private emotions.*

*Besides which, all that I could have said of the Story to any purpose, I had endeavoured to say in it.*

*It would concern the reader little, perhaps, to know how sorrowfully the pen is laid down at the close of a two-years' imaginative task; or how an Author feels as if he were dismissing some portion of himself into the shadowy world, when a crowd of the creatures of his brain are going from him for ever. Yet, I had nothing else to tell; unless, indeed, I were to confess (which might be of less moment still), that no one can ever believe this Narrative, in the reading, more than I believed it in the writing.*

*So true are these avowals at the present day, that I can now only take the reader into one confidence more. Of all my books, I like this the best. It will be easily believed that I am a fond parent to every child of my fancy, and that no one can ever love that family as dearly as I love them. But, like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favourite child. And his name is DAVID COPPERFIELD.*

*Charles Dickens*

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*My meaning simply is, that whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; that whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; that in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest.*

*I have been very fortunate in worldly matters; many men have worked much harder, and not succeeded half so well; but I never could have done what I have done, without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one object at a time, no matter how quickly its successor should come upon its heels, which I then formed.*

*Some happy talent, and some fortunate opportunity, may form the two sides of the ladder on which some men mount, but the rounds of that ladder must be made of stuff to stand wear and tear; and there is no substitute for thorough-going, ardent, and sincere earnestness.*



difficulties, he separated from his wife. They had been for many years "temperamentally unsuited" to each other. Dickens, charming and brilliant though he was, was also fundamentally insecure emotionally, and extraordinarily difficult to live with.

In 1859 his London readings continued, and he began a new weekly, *All the Year Round*. The first installment of *A Tale of Two Cities* appeared in the opening issue, and the novel continued until November. By 1860, the Dickens family had taken up residence at Gad's Hill. Dickens, during a period of retrospection, burned many personal letters, and re-read his own *David Copperfield*, the most autobiographical of his novels, before beginning *Great Expectations*, which appeared weekly until August 1861.

1861 found Dickens embarking upon another series of public readings in London, readings that would continue through the next year. In 1863, he did public readings both in Paris and London, and reconciled with Thackeray just before the latter's death. *Our Mutual Friend* was begun in 1864, and appeared monthly until November 1865. Dickens was by now in poor health, due largely to consistent overwork.

In 1865, an incident occurred that disturbed Dickens greatly, both psychologically and physically: Dickens and Ellen Ternan, returning from a Paris holiday, were badly shaken in a railway accident in which a number of people were injured.

1866-67 brought another series of public readings, this time in various locations in England, Scotland and Ireland. Dickens was now very unwell but carried on, compulsively, against his doctor's advice. Late in the year he embarked on an American reading tour, which continued into 1868. Dickens's health was worsening, but he took over still another physically and mentally exhausting task - editorial duties at *All the Year Round*.

During 1869, his readings continued, in England, Scotland and Ireland, until at last he collapsed, showing symptoms of a mild stroke. Further provincial readings were cancelled, but he began *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

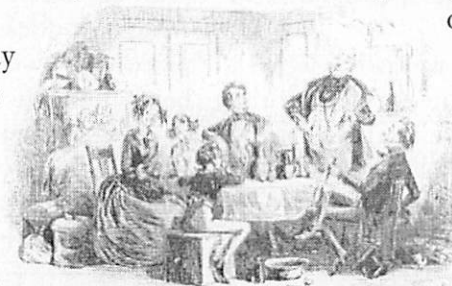
Dickens's final public readings took place in London in 1870. He suffered another stroke on June 8 at Gad's Hill, after a full day's work on *Edwin Drood*, and died the next day. He was buried at Westminster Abbey on June 14, and the last episode of the unfinished *Mystery of Edwin Drood* appeared in September.

# David's journey

*David Copperfield* is Charles Dickens's semi-autobiographical novel. Matthew Francis has adapted for stage a work that moves through three decades.

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Two actors play David. One is young David, 'a child of excellent abilities, quick, eager, delicate'; the other is David's older self who comes to believe he has lost 'love, friendship, interest - the whole airy castle of my life'.



**'Mr Micawber delivers some valedictory remarks'. An illustration by Phiz for *David Copperfield***

The two interact throughout the play: one is the constant witness to childhood hopes, the other watching, questioning, desperate to regain a land of lost content.

It is this device that moves the play forward.

The scenes are for the most part short; time and place move quickly.

The delight of directing such a play as this is to bring such wonderful characters to life truly and naturally. Each cameo of character gives an actor the chance to create a role on stage that will be remembered, not perhaps for the length of lines but more for the

eccentricities that Dickens has given them. Directing this play has been a pleasure and a challenge. We have created places from Yarmouth to London. The stage remains the same and our imagination takes the journey, assisted by the characters, the charm of their words and the atmosphere of the action.

We hope you will enjoy this time with us and for a while return to Victorian society and share David's journey.

**Lesley McGill - Director**

# Dickens and London

Charles Dickens is without question the most widely read of all Victorian novelists whose immense fund of sentimental portrayals, memorable caricatures and sensationalist stories provides a panorama of English social history which remains many people's main picture of the Victorian period.

Dickens applied his unique powers of social observation to particularly good effect when describing the sights, sounds and smells of nineteenth century life in the city in which he spent much of his life - London.

Victorian London was the largest, most spectacular city in the world. While Britain was experiencing the Industrial Revolution, its capital was both reaping the benefits and suffering the consequences. In 1800

the population of London was around a million people. That number, by the century's end, would swell to 4.5 million. While fashionable areas like Regent and Oxford streets were growing in the west, new docks supporting the city's place as the world's trade centre were being built in the east. Perhaps the biggest impact on the growth of London was the coming of the railway in the 1830s that displaced thousands and accelerated the

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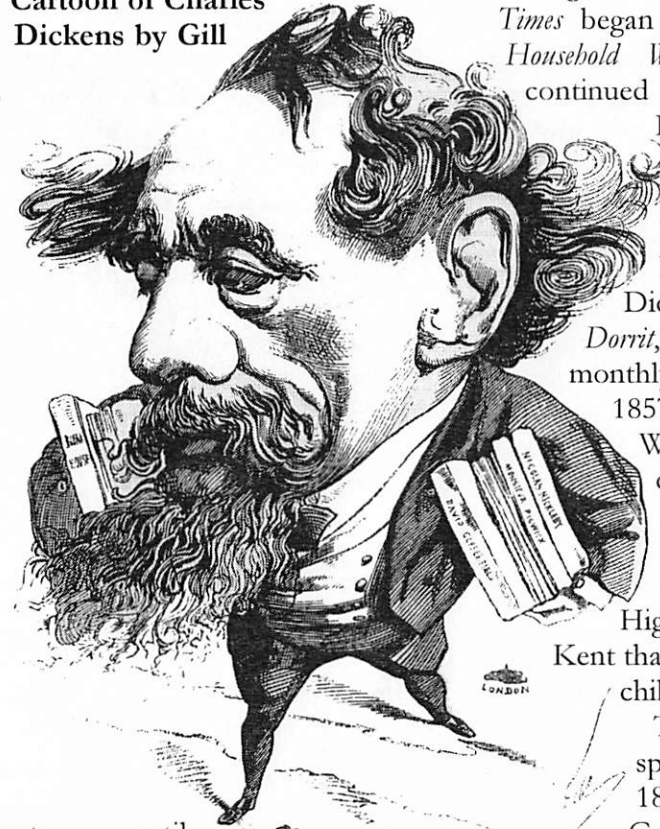
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Cartoon of Charles Dickens by Gill



parts until November 1850. In that year, too, Dickens founded and installed himself as editor of the weekly *Household Words*, which would be succeeded, in 1859, by *All the Year Round*, which he edited until his death. In 1851, the Dickens family moved to Tavistock House and Dickens began work on *Bleak House*, which appeared monthly from 1852 until September 1853.

In 1853 he toured Italy with Augustus Egg and Wilkie Collins, and gave, upon his return to England, the first of many public

readings from his own works. *Hard Times* began to appear weekly in *Household Words* in 1854, and continued until August.

Dickens's family spent the summer and the autumn in Boulogne.

In 1855 they arrived in Paris in October, and Dickens began *Little Dorrit*, which continued in monthly parts until June 1857. In 1856 Dickens and Wilkie Collins collaborated on a play, *The Frozen Deep*, and Dickens purchased Gad's Hill, an estate at Higham, near Rochester, Kent that he had admired since childhood.

The Dickens family spent the summer of 1857 at a renovated Gad's Hill. Hans

Christian Anderson, whose fairy tales Dickens admired greatly, visited them there and quickly wore out his welcome. Dickens's theatrical company performed *The Frozen Deep* for Queen Victoria, and when a young actress named Ellen Ternan joined the cast in August, Dickens fell in love with her. In 1858, in London, Dickens undertook his first public readings for pay, and quarreled with his old friend and rival, the great novelist Thackeray. More importantly, it was in that year that, after a long period of

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1843, and ran until July 1844. *A Christmas Carol*, the first of Dickens's enormously successful Christmas books - each, though they grew progressively darker, intended as 'a whimsical sort of masque intended to awaken loving and forbearing thoughts' - appeared in December 1844.

In that same year, Dickens and his family toured Italy. Dickens returned to London in December 1844, when *The Chimes* was published, and then went back to Italy, not to return to England until July 1845. 1845 also brought the debut of Dickens's amateur theatrical company, which would occupy a great deal of his time from then on. *The Cricket and the Hearth*, a third Christmas book, was published

in December, and his *Pictures From Italy* appeared in 1846 in the *Daily News*, a paper which Dickens founded and of which, for a short time, he was the editor.

In 1847, Dickens's commitment to philanthropic causes led him to help establish Miss Coutts's Home for Homeless Women. In the same year, in Switzerland, Dickens began *Dombey and Son*, which ran until April 1848. *The Battle of Life* appeared in December of that year. In 1848 Dickens also wrote an autobiographical fragment, directed and acted in a number of amateur theatricals, and published what would be his last Christmas book, *The Haunted Man*, in December.

1849 saw the birth of *David Copperfield*, which was published in

expansion of the city.

One price of this explosive growth and domination of world trade was untold squalor and filth. In his biography, *Dickens*, Peter Ackroyd notes that "If a late twentieth-century person were suddenly to find himself in a tavern or house of the period, he would be literally sick - sick with the smells, sick with the food, sick with the atmosphere around him".

In *Little Dorrit* Dickens describes a London rain storm:

In the country, the rain would have developed a thousand fresh scents, and every drop would have had its bright association with some beautiful form of growth or life. In the city, it developed only foul stale smells, and was a sickly, lukewarm, dirt-stained, wretched addition to the gutters.

Until the second half of the 19th century London residents were still drinking water from the very same parts of the Thames that the open sewers were discharging into. Several outbreaks of cholera in the mid 19th century, along with The Great Stink of 1858, when the stench of the Thames caused Parliament to recess, brought a cry for reform. The link between drinking water tainted with

sewage and the incidence of disease slowly dawned on the Victorians. Sir Joseph Bazalgette, chief engineer of the new Metropolitan Board of Works, put into effect a plan, completed in 1875, which finally provided adequate sewers to serve the city.

After the Stage Carriages Act of 1832 the hackney cab was gradually



**A pauper's coffin is carried unnoticed through the crowded slums of London**

replaced by the omnibus as a means of moving about the city. By 1900 3,000 horse-drawn buses were carrying 500 million passengers a year. A traffic count in Cheapside and London Bridge in 1850 showed a thousand vehicles an hour passing through these areas during the day. All of this added up to an incredible amount of manure that had to be removed from the streets.

Cattle were driven through the

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streets until the mid 19th century. The Smithfield live-cattle market was finally moved to slaughterhouses in Islington in 1855. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens describes the scene as Oliver and Bill Sikes travel through the Smithfield Market on their way to burgle the Maylie home:

It was market-morning. The ground was covered, nearly ankle-deep, with filth and mire; a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above. All the pens in the centre of the large area, and as many temporary pens as could be crowded into the vacant space, were filled with sheep; tied up to posts by the gutter side were long lines of beasts and oxen, three or four deep. Countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, and vagabonds of every low grade, were mingled together in a mass; the whistling of drovers, the barking dogs, the bellowing and plunging of the oxen, the bleating of sheep, the grunting and squeaking of pigs, the cries of hawkers, the shouts, oaths, and quarrelling on all sides; the ringing of bells and roar of voices, that issued from every public-house; the crowding, pushing, driving, beating, whooping and yelling; the hideous and discordant din that resounded from every corner of the market; and the unwashed, unshaven, squalid, and dirty

### Catherine (Kate) Dickens in 1842



year. The Dickens family moved from their first home at Furnival's Inn, Holborn to 48 Doughty Street.

*Nicholas Nickleby* appeared in 1838, and the family moved again, to 1 Devonshire Terrace. In 1839 Dickens resigned as editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*. The first issue of *Master Humphrey's Clock* appeared in 1840, and *The Old Curiosity Shop*, begun in *Master Humphrey's Clock*, continued until February 1841, when Dickens commenced *Barnaby Rudge*, which continued until November of that year.

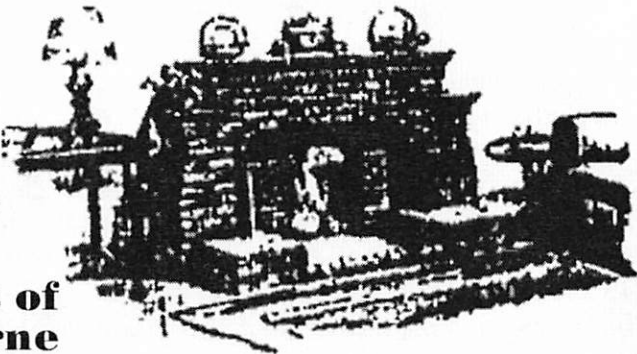
In 1842 he embarked on a visit to Canada and the United States in which he advocated international copyright (unscrupulous American publishers, in particular, were pirating his works) and the abolition of slavery. His *American Notes*, which created a furore in America (he commented unfavourably, for one thing, on the apparently universal - and, so far as Dickens was concerned, highly distasteful - American predilection for chewing tobacco and spitting the juice), appeared in October of that year. *Martin Chuzzlewit*, part of which was set in a not very flatteringly portrayed America, was begun in

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Seymour, a popular artist. Seymour committed suicide after the second issue, however, and under these peculiar circumstances Dickens altered the initial conception of *The Pickwick Papers*, which became a novel (illustrated by Hablot K. Browne, "Phiz," whose association with Dickens would continue for many years). *The Pickwick Papers* continued in monthly parts until November 1837, and, to everyone's surprise, it became an enormous popular success. Dickens proceeded to marry Catherine Hogarth on April 2, 1836, and during the same year he became editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, the second series of *Sketches by Boz*, and met John Forster,

who would become his closest friend and confidant as well as his first biographer.

After the success of *Pickwick*, Dickens embarked on a full-time career as a novelist, producing work of increasing complexity at an incredible rate, although he continued, as well, his journalistic and editorial activities. *Oliver Twist* was begun in 1837, and continued in monthly parts until April 1839. It was in 1837, too, that Catherine's younger sister Mary, whom Dickens idolized, died. She too would appear, in various guises (Little Nell and Little Dorrit), in Dickens's later fiction. A son, Charles, the first of ten children, was born in the same

figures constantly running to and fro, and bursting in and out of the throng; rendered it a stunning and bewildering scene, which quite confounded the senses.

The Metropolitan Police, London's first police force, was created by Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel (hence the name Peelers and, eventually, Bobbies) in 1829 with headquarters in what would become known as Scotland Yard. The old London watch system, in place since Elizabethan times, was eventually abolished.

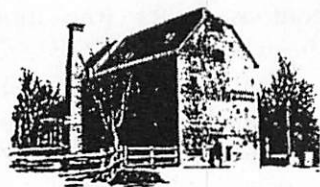
The Victorian answer to dealing with the poor was the New Poor Law, enacted in 1834. Previously it had been the burden of the parishes to take care of the poor. The new law required parishes to join together and create regional workhouses where aid could be applied for. However the workhouse was little more than a prison for the poor. Civil liberties were denied, families were separated, and human dignity was destroyed. The poor often went to great lengths to avoid this relief.

Dickens wrote in the preface to *Oliver Twist*: "I am convinced ... that nothing effectual can be done for the elevation of the poor in England, until their dwelling places are made decent and wholesome. I have always been convinced that this reform must precede all other social reforms; that it must prepare the way for education, even for religion; and that, without it, those classes of the people which increase the fastest, must become so desperate,

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and be made so miserable, as to bear within themselves the certain ruin to the whole community.”

Dickens, because of the childhood trauma caused by his father’s imprisonment for debt and his consignment to the blacking factory to help support his family, was a true champion to the poor. Many of his novels reflect his own youthful experiences with poverty. He wrote much about the grimness of industrialisation and corruption of big government. *Oliver Twist* was written to take the romance out of crime - to show the underworld of London as the sordid, evil place Dickens knew it to be - as well as highlight the shocking conditions within the workhouses.

In London of the 1850s, experts estimate that there were 30,000 street children wandering the city; Dickens struggled to help these unfortunates with such programmes as the Coram’s Foundling Hospital in London and the establishment of Ragged Schools - which provided education for the very poorest children.

With the turn of the century and Queen Victoria’s death in 1901 the Victorian period came to a close. Many of the ills of the 19th century were remedied through education, technology and social reform... and by the social consciousness raised by the immensely popular novels of Dickens.

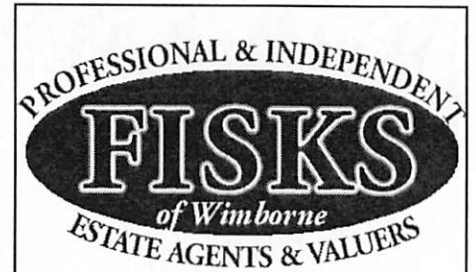
The earliest known photograph of Dickens, taken at the time of a visit to America in 1843



daughter of a banker. By 1832 he had become a very successful shorthand reporter of Parliamentary debates in the House of Commons, and began work as a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*.

In 1833 his relationship with Maria Beadnell ended, probably because her parents did not think him a good match (a not very flattering version of her would appear years later in *Little Dorrit*). In the same year his first published story appeared, and was followed, very shortly thereafter, by a number of other stories and sketches. In 1834, still a newspaper reporter, he adopted the soon to be famous pseudonym “Boz”. His impecunious father (the model for Mr. Micawber in *David Copperfield*) was once again arrested for debt, and Charles, much to his chagrin, was forced to come to his aid. Later in his life both of his parents (and his brothers) were frequently after him for money. In 1835 he met and became engaged to Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of the editor of the *Monthly Magazine* to which Dickens had been contributing articles.

The first series of *Sketches by Boz* was published in 1836, and that same year Dickens was hired to write short texts to accompany a series of humorous sporting illustrations by Robert



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# Charles Dickens 1812-1870

Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth on February 7, 1812, the son of John and Elizabeth Dickens. He was five years old when his father came to work as a clerk in the Navy Pay office in Chatham, Kent, where Charles Dickens's earliest and happiest memories were formed.

But in 1824 his father was transferred to London and the family crammed into a small house in Camden Town. By now John Dickens had accumulated a number of debts, and in that same year he was imprisoned. His wife and

children, with the exception of Charles, who was put to work at Warren's Blacking Factory, joined him in the Marshalsea Prison. When the family finances were put at least partly to rights and his father was released, the twelve-year-old Dickens, already scarred psychologically by the experience, was further wounded by his mother's insistence that he continue to work at the factory. These three months changed Dickens as a person and shaped his outlook as a writer and social critic. It was at Warren's that Dickens met the boy who later became the Artful Dodger in *Oliver Twist*. The misery of the Warren experience is reflected in several chapters of *David Copperfield*. Many of his broad novelistic images and themes - prisons, degraded conditions of labour, children lost in the city - grew out of this traumatic childhood experience. His father, finally, rescued him from this fate, and between 1824 and 1827 Dickens was a day pupil at Wellington House Academy in London. At fifteen, he found employment as an office boy at a firm of solicitors, while he studied shorthand at night.

In 1829 he became a freelance reporter at Doctor's Commons Courts, and in 1830 he met and fell in love with Maria Beadnell, the



*“Whether I shall turn out to be  
the hero of my own life, or  
whether that station will be  
held by anybody else,  
these pages must show”*

~ ~

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# David Copperfield

## Blunderstone, Suffolk

Mama  
Peggotty  
Mr Chillip  
Barkis  
Mr Murdstone  
Quinion

**JEAN DISHINGTON**  
**CAROLYN HEWITT**  
**BARRY BAYNTON**  
**DAVID PILE**  
**RUSS GUILLAUME**  
**BOB HUCKLESBY**

## Yarmouth

Mr Peggotty  
Ham Peggotty, his nephew  
Young Ham  
Little Emily, his niece

**CHRIS BROWN**  
**ANDY WALKER**  
**JOE BELL**  
**LAUREN NEWBURY**

## Salem House

Mr Creakle  
Mr Tungay  
Mr Mell  
Young Thomas Traddles  
Young James Steerforth  
Schoolboys

**JOE BROOKS**  
**HOWARD LOVEJOY**  
**BOB HUCKLESBY**  
**MATT DOUGHTY**  
**MATTHEW HOLMAN**  
**MEREDITH TYSON-BROWN**  
**ALFRED TYSON-BROWN**

David Copperfield  
Young David

Director  
Assistant Director  
Stage Manager  
Assistant Stage Managers

Lighting  
Sound Recording  
Costumes  
Sound & Light Technics

**RICHARD NEAL**  
**FRED TYSON-BROWN**

Dover  
Aunt Betsey Trotwood  
Mr Dick  
Janet

**JAN BURSBY**  
**DAVE WILLIAMS**  
**KATE COMPIANI**

**LESLEY MCGILL**  
**PAUL DODMAN**  
**ASHLEY THORNE**  
**REBECCA JACQUES**  
**JODIE BUCKLAND**  
**RUSSELL PARKER**  
**MARK SOUTHGATE**  
**ECLECTIA COSTUMES**  
**TIVOLI CREW**

London  
Mr Micawber  
Mrs Micawber  
Micawber Children

James Steerforth  
Thomas Traddles  
Thief

**SIMON JACKSON**  
**CHRISSIE NEAL**  
**REBECCA FELTHAM**  
**CONOR FELTHAM**  
**TONY FELTHAM**  
**COLIN PILE**  
**REBECCA JACQUES**

## Canterbury

Mr Wickfield  
Agnes Wickfield  
Dora Spenlow  
Uriah Heep

**BARRY BAYNTON**  
**TRACEY NICHOLLS**  
**LUCY HARROLD**  
**MARTIN MATTHEWS**

## Highgate

Mrs Steerforth  
Rosa Dartle

**MARGARET POPE**  
**BOO DICKSON**

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*The action takes place in various interior and exterior settings  
There will be one interval of 20 minutes*