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FIRSTS

THE BOOK COLLECTOR'S MAGAZINE



Charles
Dickens
Special

A portrait of Charles Dickens, shown from the chest up, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. The portrait is set against a dark background and is framed by a gold-colored border.

Collecting Charles Dickens

by Lee Biondi



Charles Dickens: Strategies of Collecting

LOVE. HATE. ADMIRE. DISPARAGE. One can do anything with Dickens but ignore him.

Dickens is ideal for collecting. For starters, he is a great writer and immensely popular. And when looking over his output, a nice "Dickens Collection" is do-able at various paces and price levels, and with a reasonable degree of difficulty. If one "collects" Margaret Mitchell or Henry Roth—let's face it—the project is finished as soon as it's started, unless one someday upgrades. Pynchon and Salinger don't present an

availability problem if you have the checkbook for it. At the other extreme, proper collecting of Anthony Trollope and Henry James would take several lifetimes, and Poe, Austen, the Brontës and Melville firsts in original bindings are beyond the resources and patience of most of us.

All that said by way of preface, I would like to give an overview of Dickens' career in chronological order, with an eye toward sorting things out for beginners and would-be collectors who might be a little timorous about starting down an unknown path. I'll point out certain obstacles they will encounter and, where possible, suggest alternate routes. Collecting Nineteenth century books is more complicated than the typical modern

firsts collector might be used to, and I hope to put the subject into perspective here.

In the world of modern firsts there is generally more clarity: one usually knows that what one wants is the first trade edition in jacket (if obtainable) and then it is a matter of whether one can afford the object sought. You can get a nice *Catcher in the Rye* for five grand (if you've got the money), and there is no real alternative to the first printing in jacket. This is the case for most Twentieth century literature. (*Ulysses* is a notable exception in that this book in a binding is a possibly acceptable alternative.) *My Antonia*, *Portrait of an Artist*, *Tarzan of the Apes*, *Main Street*, *Gatsby*, etc. are exceptions in that copies do exist in jacket, you'll just probably never get one and will have to settle for a copy without. Even in the arms of disappointment there can still be clarity.

The Nineteenth century presents a different set of problems from the world of modern firsts. By way of example, let's digress for a moment about Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Ideally one would want it in its original boards. But that is unobtainable: the waiting list for the next copy that comes up at a hundred grand is half-a-dozen deep. So how about in a binding? Okay, would that be contemporary calf or half calf? How about modern morocco? Modern calf to period style? Turn-of-the-century polished calf? What about half-titles? Can you live without them? What about the ads? What about levels of foxing? You can see that it is best to go into this kind of purchase being comfortable with making a few real-world compromises that will still allow you to be happy with the copy you finally acquire; knowing what you're getting and knowing—and accepting—what you're missing.



Each Dickens title presents its own set of problems, complications and acceptable compromises which I will attempt to address, though briefly, in this article. The price figures I relay here are extremely flexible and wide-ranging, as many elements combine to account for the final price one puts on a Dickens first edition: issue points, cleanness of text and plates, presence or absence of ads in the parts issues, wrapper substitutions in the parts issues, level of wrapper restoration, condition of cloth bindings, cloth repairs, hinge repairs, bookplates, type of binding, condition of binding, the amount the text block has been cut down for binding, etc. etc. The prices I mention will be outdated as Dickens prices continue to rise. But I hope they will serve a purpose as *relative* indicators of rarity and value between titles and between different formats of the same title. These *ratios* are likely to hold, if not the actual prices.

In the "let x equal x" world of this article, let's call a fine *Christmas Carol* \$20,000, a standard respectable *Pickwick* in parts \$3,500, and a very good *Great Expectations* in original cloth \$45,000 plus, and you'll get a pretty clear sense of relative values of other works. Prices I mention will run the range from acceptable collector's copies to near fine copies. Remember, any book's value can dwindle all the way down to zero given enough flaws and, at the other end of the spectrum, the final increments in condition can have an outsize effect on the price.

Dickens in bindings usually are: contemporary half calf with attendant acceptable scuffing; later polished calf, gilt; and standard modern morocco, gilt. For the purposes of this article I will treat bound copies as a single entity, assuming a respectable condition in any of these styles of binding.

Before we get into the thick of it, spare me a moment first to forward a note regarding my personal relation to Charles Dickens, which is not one of unalloyed delight or pure admiration. I spend so much time with him that it is inevitable that he occasionally gets on my nerves. I am paged to the phone to deal with "Dickens" calls every day I go to work. I hasten to say that these articles are not to preclude such calls but, I hope, even to encourage them; for I love talking about Dickens, and learning from other Dickensians, and I love the opportunity to handle and sell first editions of Dickens to eager and curious collectors. Dickens remains as popular as he ever was. First editions of his works only get more and more sought after, and therefore more and more expensive.

There's a reason. He's Charles Dickens.

Sketches by Boz

[DICKENS, Charles]. *Sketches by "Boz," Illustrative of Every-Day Life, and Every-Day People*. In Two Volumes. Vol. I. [II.] Illustrations by George Cruikshank. London: John Macrone, [February] 1836.

[DICKENS, Charles]. *Sketches by Boz: Illustrative of Every-Day Life, and Every-Day People. The Second Series*. Complete in One Volume. London: John Macrone, 1837 [i.e., 17 December 1836].

[DICKENS, Charles]. *Sketches by Boz Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People*. With Forty Illustrations by George Cruikshank. New Edition, Complete. London: Chapman and Hall, 1839 [parts issue: November 1837-June 1839].

Dickens' first book was a two-volume collection of stories and sketches that had appeared in only very slightly different form—usually—in various London periodicals. Unlike many anomalous and insignificant "author's first books," these *Sketches by Boz* are absolutely essential Dickens, undeniably part of the canon. There is a great deal germinating here, and one can see quite a few future directions that the young writer pursued more thoroughly as he matured. The *Sketches* are particularly prescient of *Oliver Twist*, and one can see that this novel was percolating for quite a long time. As an added plus, the illustrations by George Cruikshank are a constant delight. The second and third editions of this two-volume work are easily spotted by the different prefaces, but there were three printings of the first edition, and these can be misidentified if you don't know to look for the imprint that identifies the actual printer as the firm of Whiting. (Hazard and Vizetelly handled the second and third printings, respectively).

Sketches by Boz (Second Series) was the one-volume follow-up published by Macrone in December 1836. Cheaply produced, this book is generally encountered in dreadful condition. It was an ugly duckling from the start, and even fine copies hold almost no visual appeal. There are state points to look for: Very early on, the plates showed "Vol. III." Also, neither the "List of Plates" nor the book itself should have the two last plates that Cruikshank contributed after the book had already been published.

The two series of *Sketches* are obtainable, but expensive, in original cloth. Nice sets of both series together can reach \$10,000 to \$15,000 very quickly. Condition problems bring them down from there. Contemporary bindings or even later polished calf bindings seem to be acceptable compromises in these books (though they still won't come cheap) for collectors on a budget, who might want to save their "original cloth" money for bigger titles.

The copyright to the *Sketches* was purchased from publisher John Macrone by Chapman and Hall and a monthly parts issue was arranged to follow the hugely successful Chapman and Hall parts issue of *Pickwick*. The format was changed to octavo and Cruikshank redid the plates. This title and *Oliver Twist* were the only two parts issues of Dickens that were subsequent to the book form appearance. Both these parts issues are extremely rare. The fact that the *Sketches* in parts was a flimsy production that faded quickly and was published in diminishing numbers, has left copies of sets of the parts now in the \$15,000-plus stratosphere, depending on overall condition and number of substituted wrappers and level of remaining pinkness in the wrappers.

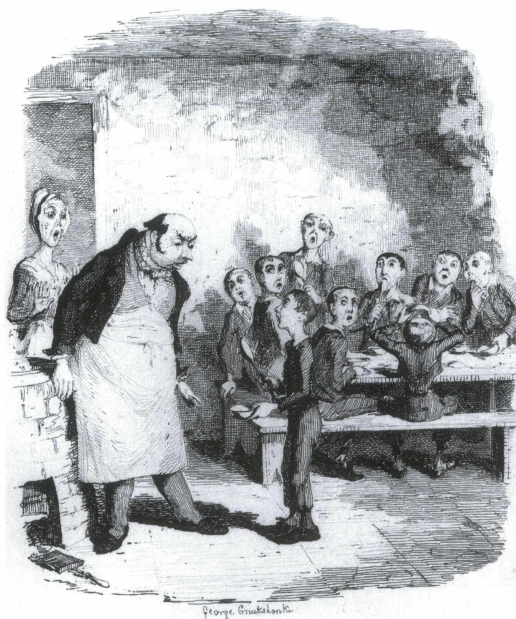
These parts issues were followed by the 1839 "New Edition, Complete" in book form via Chapman and Hall. This single volume collection is an excellent book to have, especially in original cloth, similar to the contemporaneous *Nickleby* and *Pickwick*. Even in polished calf, as it often shows up, this collection is still desirable. In a binding this book should only run about \$350 to \$500.

(Please see "Charles Dickens Makes a Pseudonym for Himself" for further comment on and publication information concerning all the *Sketches* from the 1833 first appearance of Dickens in print to the 1839 Chapman and Hall collection).

The Pickwick Papers

DICKENS, Charles. *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*.—With Forty-Three Illustrations, by R. Seymour and Phiz [Hablot Knight Browne]. London: Chapman and Hall, 1837 [parts issue: April 1836–November 1837].

The *Pickwick Papers* literally launched Victorian fiction, being published the year Victoria took the throne, and was one of the most important events in publishing history. This is a monumental work of fiction and humor, containing some of the most memorable and lovable characters and scenes in literature. In this business, one sometimes loses perspective on the world outside of collecting: *Pickwick* is so hugely important to book collectors, yet I find it is mostly unknown to modern Americans, even avid general



Oliver asking for more.

readers. Sad, because this book is an unending delight.

With this book, let's start by admitting that you're not going to get a "prime" *Pickwick* in parts even if you're ready to lay down the big bucks. But for around \$3,500 you *can* get a typical respectable set with no early points in the early numbers and correct points in the later numbers, and try to upgrade from there. Each new correct point in an early number of a set will increase the set's value dramatically; proper illustrator identifications, especially, and the correct "Addresses" inserted. I have sold sets with some of the early points up to

about the \$20,000 level.

A "prime" *Pickwick*, if one were to come onto the market, could conceivably bring—well, who knows? Copies of first editions in respectable condition in original cloth can run from a few thousand upwards into five figures as condition warrants. This spread of dollar values can give you some idea how books like this have to be priced individually, weighing a lot of different factors, and that there can never be reliable "price guides" for books this complicated. Only the experience of handling a lot of copies of such a book can qualify a dealer to price it appropriately, or allow a collector to know what to expect to pay. Standard copies of *Pickwick* in contemporary calf, later polished calf, or modern morocco shouldn't top a grand unless they are exceptional in some way.

(This fascinating book had an extremely complicated and interesting publishing history, as well as a huge influence on subsequent publishing history, which I try to tackle briefly in the following article "Rise to Fame.")

Oliver Twist

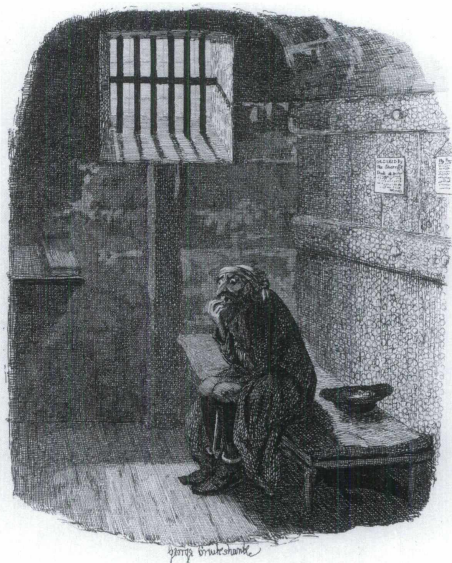
[DICKENS, Charles]. *Oliver Twist; or, The Parish Boy's Progress*. By "Boz." In Three Volumes. Vol. I. [II. III.] London: Richard Bentley, 1838.

The 1838 *Oliver* was Dickens' first three-decker, the standard prestigious three-volume publishing format of the era. This is also, it seems to me, where the average modern American begins to read Dickens or at least to recognize him through general cultural usage and familiarity. I think we all know the "Please-sir-I-want-some-more" business, and Oliver,

The Artful Dodger and Fagin are characters known to most of us even if we haven't actually read the book, helped along in the public consciousness by the wonderful illustrations by George Cruikshank and adaptations into other media.

The story was serialized in "Bentley's Miscellany" to fulfill certain contractual obligations Dickens had unwisely entered into through his youthful enthusiasm, self-confidence and financial worries, and from which he already wanted to escape. At this time in his life, Dickens was writing for his life. *Oliver* overlapped with *Pickwick* and infiltrated into his *Nickleby* time. He was also doing a little rewriting on the *Sketches* for Chapman and Hall and dashing off a couple of minor librettos in addition to other work.

The serialization of *Oliver* is ignored by collectors. The three-decker (colloquial for the standard three-volume novel of the period) has a few important points to watch out for. In cloth casings, the spines should attribute the work to "Boz" rather than Dickens. Also, the title-pages should read "Boz" rather than Dickens. Upon publication, Dickens insisted on proper attribution and the change was made within about a week. Also there was a substituted rendering of the Cruikshank plate in Vol. III entitled "Rose Maylie and Oliver"—the earlier so-called "Fireside" plate being replaced with the "Church" plate. These changes were near-simultaneous and usually are



Fagin in the condemned Cell.



The Last Chance.

found in synch, though copies do exist in mixed states. These first issues are not as rare as one might think and a serious collector with the funds is advised to wait for them. A nice set of the three-decker in original cloth with the right points should set you back about \$7,500 to \$10,000. The title is pretty common in various bindings, and a nice set should be in the \$2,000-plus range.

In 1846 Dickens revised *Oliver Twist*, publishing the revision in 10 monthly parts, followed by a one-volume octavo. This parts issue is extremely rare and expensive, in the same cost stratosphere with *Sketches by Boz* in parts. The one-volume book form edition is pretty readily obtainable in either cloth or binding though, as always, fine copies in cloth are rare. This 1846 revision is the text that is generally republished these days, and the revisions and recut illustrations are significant enough to make this reprint important to collectors and readers alike.

Nicholas Nickleby

DICKENS, Charles. *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*.—With Illustrations by Phiz. London: Chapman and Hall, 1839 [parts issue: April 1838–October 1839].

What a novel! This work shows the young genius at his best. As lengthy as *Pickwick* (*Oliver* was a mere tidbit by comparison), but much better structured. Still written as he went along, and not yet as thoroughly mapped out in advance as *Dombey* and subsequent novels, *Nickleby* nonetheless has a cohesive story arc and the feeling of a work written before, rather than during, publication. It contains, at times, as much good-natured humor as the rollicking *Pickwick*, yet is tempered with a



much darker and serious element as well. Neither side of Dickens' character and writing style is overwhelmingly dominant here: the novel strikes a perfect balance.

Nickleby is rarer in parts than some people seem to think (remember it's his first original parts issue after the phenomenon of *Pickwick*) and a nice-looking set that collates and shows well and has the right parts issue points could be priced up to \$5,000. Condition and collation flaws would bring sets down from there; most I've seen are pretty decrepit.

The points of imprints on the first few plates and the misspellings in the text required in parts issues (*visiter* for *sister* in Part IV and *latter* for *letter* in V) are nice to have in book form but not, I think, essential to hold out for—except in parts. Remember, points in the parts issues of Dickens are not necessarily points to be insisted upon when the sheets reach book form publication. The plates by R. W. Buss in Part III of *Pickwick* are the perfect example. These were replaced about October 1837 and are not to be expected in the book form publication, only to be looked for in the parts publication, and in copies of the books that were later cloth-cased or leather-bound from the parts (distinguishable by stabholes of the original parts' stab-stitching). So with *Nickleby* and other novels issued in parts.

A good-looking copy of *Nickleby* in original cloth might cost \$5,000 to \$8,000. Better condition will bring a higher price. As with so many of the others, there is no way on this one to name a price for a fine copy. In a binding, not to top a grand.

Master Humphrey's Clock

DICKENS, Charles. *Master Humphrey's Clock*.—With Illustrations by George Cattermole and Hablot Browne. Vol. I. [II. III.] London: Chapman and Hall, 1840 [-1841] [parts issue: 4 April 1840-27 November 1841].

This title is little known outside the world of book collecting because immediately after the weekly and monthly parts issues and the three-volume book-form publication using this umbrella title, the book was split. Future editions dropped the introductory



Fairfax Wood
Engraved by Finden

The "*Nickleby*" portrait by Maclise.
Engraved by Finden.

and connective material and published the two novels comprised in this rather sprawling work separately as *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*. Completists are required to get the 88 weekly parts in white wrappers, the 20 monthly parts in blue wrappers, the three-volume book in original cloth, and the first separate appearances of *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*. But shy of that, I usually suggest the 88 weekly parts, because of the uniqueness and precedence of that issue, unless one's collection focuses on book form editions in original cloth.

Crisp, clean, white sets of the weeklies should hit the \$2,500 to \$3,000 level. Monthlies that collate properly are in the same ballpark. Three volumes in first stamping (cleverly designed with the clock face

indicating volume number) run in the neighborhood of \$1,250 to \$1,500. Bound in three volumes, the work usually runs less than a grand.

Martin Chuzzlewit

DICKENS, Charles. *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*.—With Illustrations by Phiz. London: Chapman and Hall, 1844 [parts issue: January 1843-July 1844].

Not particularly rare in any format (excepting in fine condition), and with no text points to look out for, but an interesting work on a couple of levels. Mrs. Gamp and Pecksniff are wonderful creations. And, from the perspective of publishing history and writing styles, the book is a great example of writing a parts issue to suit readers' desires as the story develops and to reverse a trend of flagging sales—here evident when Dickens alters the tale to take the action to America, a move similar to his starting *Old Curiosity Shop* during the failing experiment of *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

We sometimes tend to forget that at least up until *Dombey*, Dickens really was making up his novels as he went along. Flagging sales during the parts issue of *Martin Chuzzlewit* prompted the first rift between Dickens and his publishers Chapman and Hall, leading to Dickens engaging Chapman and Hall's printers, the firm of Bradbury and Evans, as his next publishers. (Dickens returned to Chapman and Hall

for *A Tale of Two Cities* and subsequent novels.)

Typical acceptable parts issues of *Chuzzlewit* run about \$1,250 to \$1,750. Standard cloth copies always seem to be restored/recased, faded/recolored, etc. and run about \$1,000 to \$2,000. Nicer copies always bring more. This is a very common title in bindings: \$350 to \$650. Remember that the vignette title "point" about "£100" or "100£" is insignificant: these plates were used simultaneously.

The Christmas Books: A Christmas Carol

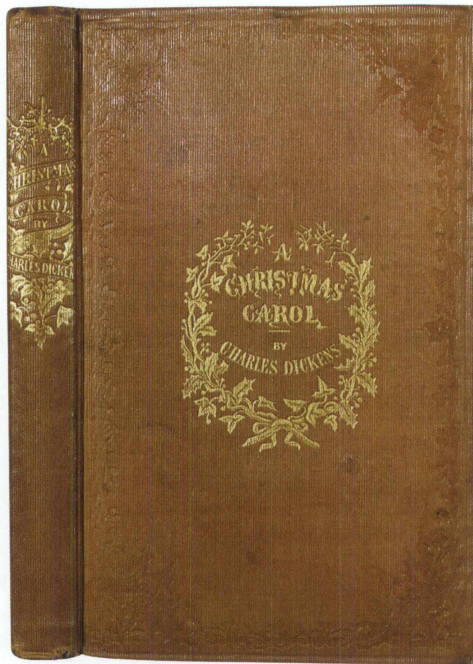
DICKENS, Charles. *A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas.*—With Illustrations by John Leech. London: Chapman and Hall, [December 1843].

"It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man and woman who reads it a personal kindness."

— William Makepeace Thackeray

Dickens originally stipulated the following requirements for the production of his little "Christmas Book": a decoratively stamped casing (in both blind and gilt); all edges gilt; four engraved plates to be colored by hand; a title-page printed in red and green; and dusted green endpapers—all of which proved surprisingly expensive. (And the green-dusted endpapers did not even prove satisfactory in appearance.) Dickens opted very quickly to change the title-page to red and blue and return to stock yellow-coated endpapers. Dickens' changes of mind led to a period in December of 1843 when there were on hand at the printers and binders different endpapers, title-pages, half-titles and text pages already printed, though not yet cased—a situation that led to copies going out with mixed features.

The eight illustrations are by John Leech, who also etched the four charming hand-colored plates. The textual woodcuts were engraved by W.J. Linton. As one would expect with hand-colored plates, the coverage and density of color vary from copy to copy. This hand-coloring



was an expensive process and Dickens (himself the de facto publisher of this title, relegating Chapman and Hall to the position of hired printers and distributors) declined to use color in any future works.

These lovely plates, plus the other details and touches stipulated by Dickens, made this little book a particularly precious production and gift item. But the expenses for such a nice presentation drastically cut into Dickens' expected profits (at first).

Few bibliographical histories have occasioned more debate than the earliest issues and variants of *A Christmas Carol*. Many acknowledged experts over the years have expressed differing opinions of issue priority, and have often presented cogent evidence to support their differing claims. There is the detailed work of Osborne, Gimbel, Calhoun and Heaney, and Todd, as well as the synthesis and summaries of their work as put forward by Walter Smith and coupled with his own expertise (see Footnote 1).

To encapsulate as briefly as possible here, Todd stated "whatever the circumstances duplication of

stereos [stereotype printing plates] prevents any ordering of the states." He elaborates with this example: "Evidence of concurrent printing from different plates is best illustrated by signature C at foot of p.17, a letter in outer forme described by Calhoun

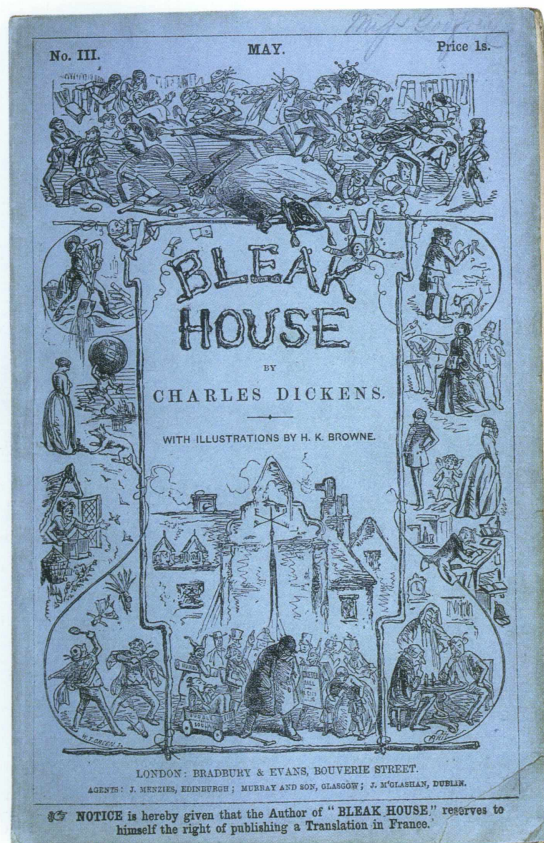
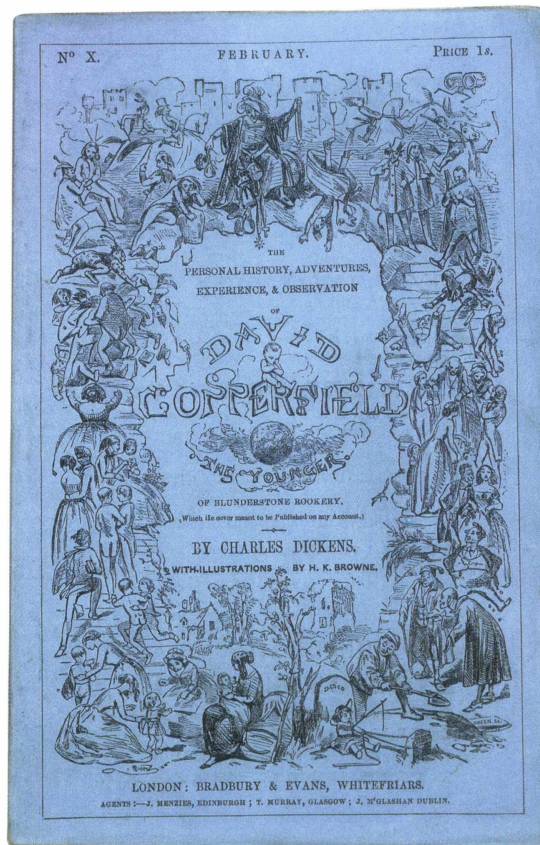
and Heaney (p. 291) as existing in three states (i.e., unbroken, broken, and replaced with a new sort), but...probably only occurring in two: a.) unbroken in one stereo; and b.) broken in the other. An evident counterpart, unnoticed by Calhoun and Heaney, is the I of It, p. 31, line 15, an inner forme letter with a defect varying inversely to the C, the 'a' state of one always combining with the 'b' state of the other." (Todd, p. 450ff.)

So, according to Todd in *Book Collector* of Winter 1961, Calhoun and Heaney defined (and Todd agrees) the two states of the "first issue" as: yellow endpapers; red and green title-page; "1844;" and "Stave I." and Green endpapers; red and blue title-page; "1843" and "Stave I." The "second issue" then is: yellow endpapers; red and blue title-page; "1843" and "Stave One."

The issue of red and green title-page dated 1844 is often referred to as the "trial issue"—but some propose that it may have been a published version, along with other combinations of points.

There are also text points to check against Smith.

Because of the complexities of early issue variances among all the points, Todd has sought and, he believes, found, a single point by which to judge "first edition, first impression, first issue." Todd argues that the gilt wreath on the top board, stamped

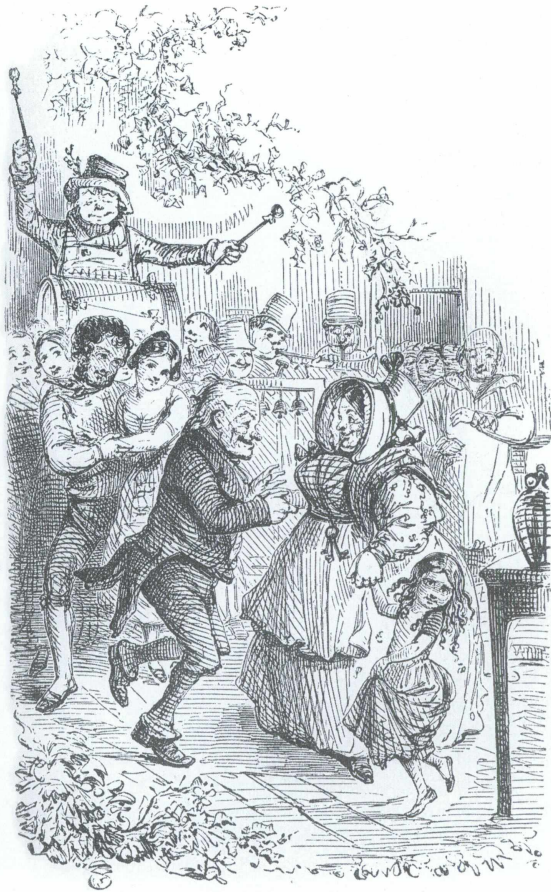


by a single machine, offers the best evidence of priority. The brass for the vignette began to shift to the left, Todd claims, and the earliest issues show the gilt as farthest from the left side blind-stamping (and the D in Dickens should be perfect). "This desideratum is a single point, encompassing all others..." (Todd, p. 453).

This is helpful to an extent, I suppose, and is usually trotted out in dealers' catalogues, but I contend that the printed sheets must be dealt with apart from their eventual cloth casings and that, in this case, Todd sidesteps the issue (no pun intended).

Dealing with the sheets, one must turn to Smith for the best overview.

But let's face some hard facts: out there, in the real world, *A Christmas Carol* is so complicated and so confusing that given a few standard and agreed-upon points, dealers should price and collectors should purchase based on condition. Find a copy that you like. I have seen pink endpapers and white endpapers; there exist a few copies with the "Stave I" number in a Gothic type; I have seen a genuine red and green title-page dated 1843 (not reported in any published bibliography); I have seen copies with most points of earliest issue but with "Stave One," and so on. We know that there was a rush to the public with this immediately successful book and copies were thrown together with whatever was at hand at the printers and case-binders when demand rose.



THE DANCE AT TROTTY VECK'S.

Illustration by H. K. Browne, from *The Chimes*.

The Chimes

DICKENS, Charles. *The Chimes. A Goblin Story of Some Bells That Rang an Old Year Out and a New Year In*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1845 [i.e., December 1844]

Okay, so it's a New Year's book. *The Chimes* is usually found with the second state of the engraved title-page, but it doesn't really matter since it's an insert and the book is minor. Standard copies in cloth run about \$250-\$500. A gorgeous copy will fetch up to \$1,000. All the subsequent "Christmas Books" had much larger first printings than *A Christmas Carol* because their success was expected. At about the time *The Chimes* hit book stalls *A Christmas Carol* switched to red cloth also, and from then forward matched this and the subsequent three "Christmas Books."

The Cricket on the Hearth

DICKENS, Charles. *The Cricket on the Hearth. A Fairy Tale of Home*. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1846 [i.e., December 1845].

No points to fret over, except the two states of the *Oliver* ad. Standard, \$250 or so. Absolutely gorgeous, \$1,000.

The Battle of Life

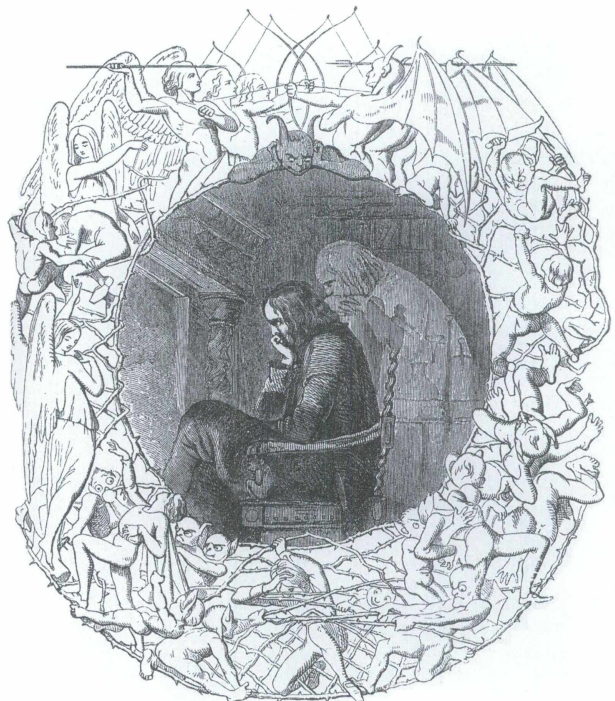
DICKENS, Charles. *The Battle of Life. A Love Story*. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1846.

So you'll never have the first or second state of the engraved title; you'll have to live with the later states (see Todd and Smith again for details). Don't let it bother you. Condition matters. Standard, \$250 or so. Absolutely gorgeous, \$1,000.

The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain

DICKENS, Charles. *The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain. A Fancy for Christmas-Time*. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1848.

Yes, he skipped Christmas 1847, thanks to *Dombey and Son*. Same dollar ranges as the previous ones. This was Dickens' last Christmas Book; from here forward he contented his public with an "Extra Christmas Number" of his periodicals, first "Household Words," then "All the Year Round."



HAUNTED.

Illustration by J. Tenniel, from *The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain*.

Dombey and Son

DICKENS, Charles. *Dombey and Son*.—With Illustrations by H.K. Browne. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1848 [parts issue: October 1846-April 1848].

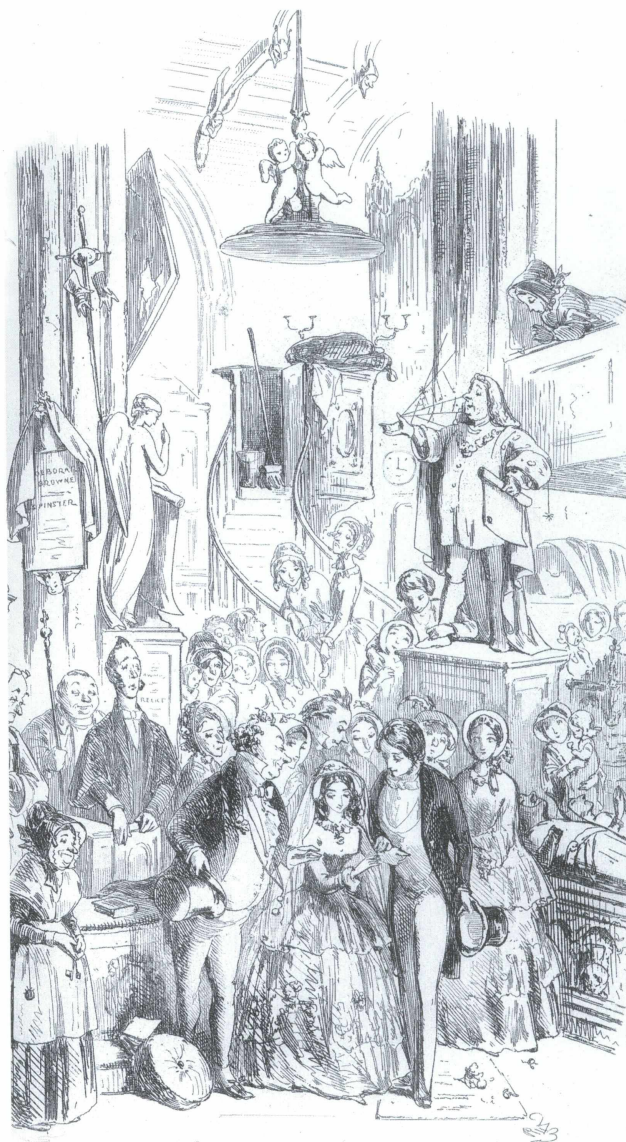
Some sort of new phase in Dickens' authorial technique begins with *Dombey and Son*. It is here, evidence from Dickens' notebooks shows, that he began to map out the story arc of the full novel much more thoroughly before commencing parts publication than he had for previous works. This technique and this particular work are the "runway" to *David Copperfield*.

A standard *Dombey* in parts runs \$1,000 to \$2,000. Parts issue points to look for are the misspelling *Capatin* in Part XI and the dropped *431* and *if* in Part XIV (not always seen in synch).

A typical copy in cloth (frustratingly, almost never the primary stamping, by the way) is only in the same range as the parts, maybe a little more. A beauty in the primary casing would be triple or quadruple the numbers. Bound copies exist in abundance and hover around \$500.



Paul goes home for the holidays.



I am Married.

David Copperfield

DICKENS, Charles. *The Personal History of David Copperfield*.—With Illustrations by H.K. Browne. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1850 [parts issue: May 1849-November 1850].

"I am born." Tells you something about Dickens' self-confidence factor. But this is a great novel by any standards. Added interest because of the much-studied autobiographical aspects and the oft-cited report of Dickens dubbing it his favorite. A Nineteenth century high spot on anyone's list. This combination of ingredients equals "expensive." Parts copies in good condition that collate complete will jump to \$8,500 (a big difference from sets of *Chuzzlewit* and *Dombey* which precede it, and *Bleak House* and *Dorrit* which follow).

The key ad in the collation is the Lett's Diaries ad



From *Bleak House*.

in Part VIII: this must be a fold-out advertisement accompanied by sample sheets, not just the sample sheets themselves (even the most attentive cataloguers can get tricked here). Nicer sets in parts, with little or no rebacking, can top \$12,000 pretty quickly.

Copperfield in cloth is extremely sought after. It is usually seen in secondary stamping and junky, often rebacked. A respectable copy even in secondary stamping can run to \$7,500 easily. Fine in primary stamping? Hugely expensive, but a moot point: they aren't out there. Real world compromises? A mediocre set in parts, second-rate cloth copy or, for this book, I recommend an attractive copy (i.e., clean plates) in a nice binding at around \$1,000-\$1,500.

Bleak House

DICKENS, Charles. *Bleak House*.—With Illustrations by H.K. Browne. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1853 [parts issue: March 1852-September 1853].

One of the truly great novels: an indisputable masterpiece. Many readers and scholars rank this as Dickens' finest work. There are no points to be wary of in the text. There is just a great deal of time to be spent verifying all those nasty little slips advertising Dickens' periodical "Household Words."

Parts run \$1,000 to \$2,500 (there are a lot of ads). Cloth in primary binding: \$3,000 on up, as they get better. Bound copies are plentiful in the \$500 range. Every lawyer should have one.

Hard Times

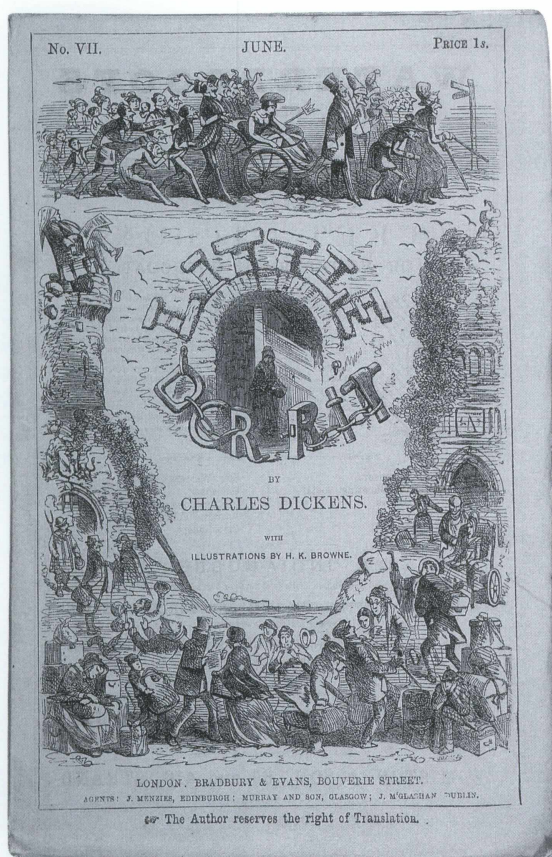
DICKENS, Charles. *Hard Times. For These Times*. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1854 [no parts issue] [serialized in "Household Words" from 1 April to 12 August 1854].

This is quite a boring book from the collector's standpoint: it was not issued in parts nor was it illustrated. After serialization in "Household Words" the book was issued in a one-volume octavo in green cloth and is easily obtainable as such at relatively modest prices. A beauty should not top \$1,750 and standard respectable copies with little wear but typical spine fading run \$1,000 to \$1,250.



Nurse and Patient.

From *Bleak House*.



Little Dorrit

DICKENS, Charles. *Little Dorrit*.—With Illustrations by H.K. Browne. London: Bradbury and Evans, 1857. [parts issue: December 1855-June 1857].

Needs *Rigaud* for *Blandois* throughout Part XV, but frankly, you hardly ever see it without. Issued in big numbers, like *Bleak House*. Typical parts: \$1,000 to \$2,500. Typical cloth: \$2,500 to \$5,000. Better: more. Fine? Never seen it. The title is common in bindings, again about \$500 or so.

A Tale of Two Cities

DICKENS, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*.—With Illustrations by H.K. Browne. London: Chapman and Hall, 1859 [parts issue: July-December] [Serialized in "All the Year Round" from 30 April to 26 November 1859].

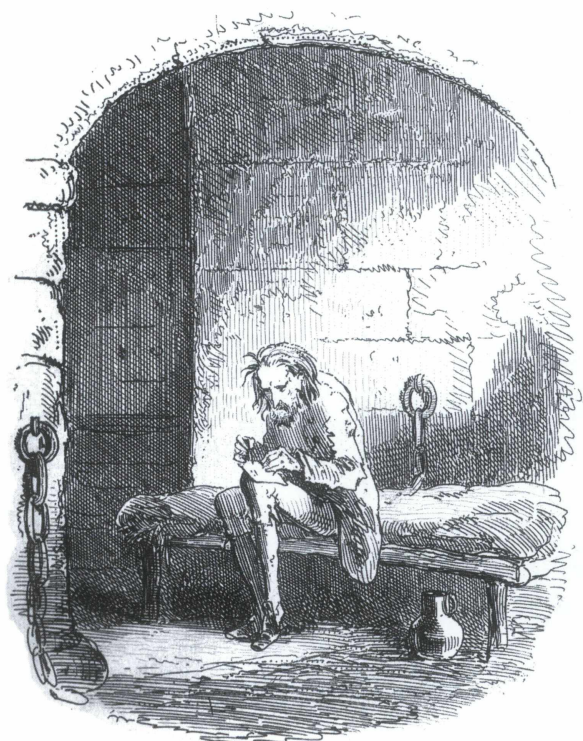
By now Dickens was back with Chapman and Hall, and his weekly continued with the name changed from "Household Words" (via Bradbury and Evans) to "All the Year Round" (via Chapman and Hall).

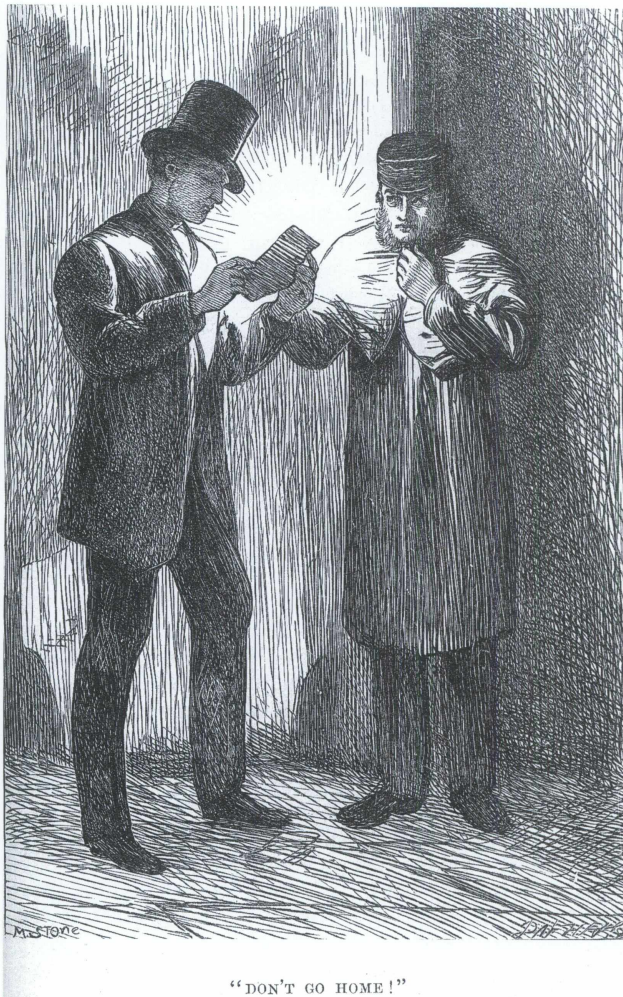
A Tale of Two Cities is similar in a couple of respects to *Great Expectations* from a collector's standpoint in that it was first serialized in Dickens' "All

the Year Round." But this title was also issued in parts as the serialization progressed with the usual blue wrappers and two plates per number by Phiz (this turned out to be their final collaboration). The serialization (like *all* serializations, I contend) is undeservedly ignored by dealers and collectors. "All the Year Round" contains the first appearance of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* and *Great Expectations*, and you can still get a set for under \$5,000, whereas the three books could run your tab up to over \$50,000 in a flash.

But, as was the case with *Great Expectations*, the contemporary readership saturation of "All the Year Round" (by now more than 80,000) left less than usual demand for the parts and, at first, for the book. So *A Tale of Two Cities* is now one of the rarer titles in parts, and a good-looking set that collates complete will easily top \$10,000. The right Morison ad in III is the tough one here and—as with the Lett's Diaries ad in *Copperfield*—even conscientious cataloguers can get tripped up unless they read their Hatton and Cleaver very carefully. (See Footnote 2.)

Now for the cloth: you want to get the red "88" pattern with the 1859 title-page, where the parts issue point of page 213 being paginated 113 is maintained. The signature "b" and the misspelling *affectionately* on page 134 (not noted by Hatton and





"DON'T GO HOME!"

Illustrations by Marcus Stone, from the "Library Edition" of *Great Expectations*.

Clever) also matter in the parts issue and the red cloth book using sheets of the parts issue. The plain green cloth issue, usually seen with 213 correct, may be close enough to satisfy the book form collector on a budget, if the title-page is still 1859, as this must have been near-simultaneous with the red cloth primary binding. The 1860 title-page is pretty much out of the running, though some could make a case for it still being worthwhile in excellent condition. Mediocre, worked-on copies of the red cloth first will still bring \$5,000, and a beauty would command \$15,000-plus as this is a much-asked-for title, and one of the few that can top a grand even in a binding.

Great Expectations

DICKENS, Charles. *Great Expectations*.—In Three Volumes. Vol. I. [II. III.] London: Chapman and Hall, [July 6] 1861 [no parts issue] [serialized in "All the Year Round" from 1 December 1860 to 3 August 1861].

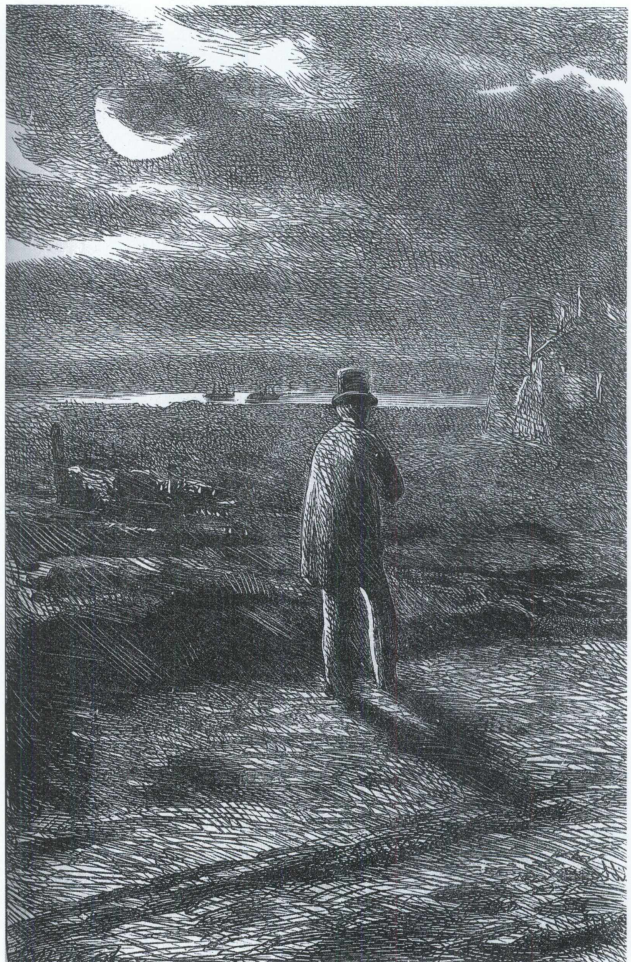
I cover the publication history of this title as a three-decker in a separate article (see "Great Complica-

tions"), but here I'll talk money.

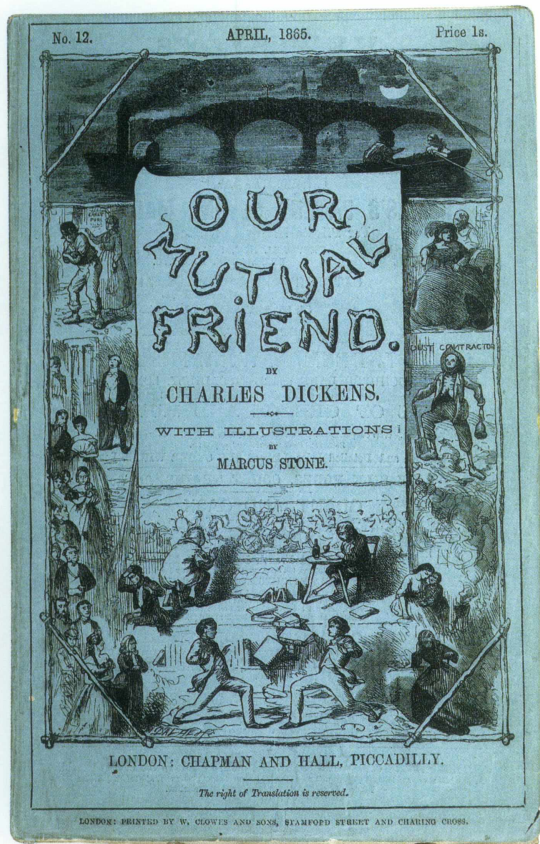
Basically, you need a lot of it. This book is the biggest roadblock for the Dickens collector: it is the most expensive Dickens first edition. I explain why elsewhere, but here let's deal with "how much?"

The three-decker first edition, first printing, first issue with genuine title-pages, not recased, in presentable condition in original cloth is \$25,000-plus, depending. It goes up very quickly with each increment of condition. Near fine: \$45,000. Fine? Who knows? Give me a chance at one and we'll find out. Copies in nice bindings usually hover about \$7,500-plus, but here one has to be very vigilant about substituted, altered or even facsimile title-pages.

This is a milestone of Nineteenth century fiction, a Dickens necessity and a "high spot" necessity by any standards. There is no other acceptable book edition for a first edition collector but the 1861 three-decker.



ON THE MARSHES, BY THE LIME-KILN.



Real world compromise? Like *A Tale of Two Cities*, I think the “All the Year Round” serialization, which except for the last couple of weeks precedes the book, is the way to go. It isn’t the first book edition, but it *is* the first appearance, so it has something important going for it in a way that the 1862 one-volume or the early Americans really don’t.

Our Mutual Friend

DICKENS, Charles. *Our Mutual Friend*.—With Illustrations by Marcus Stone. In Two Volumes. Vol. I. [II.] London: Chapman and Hall, 1865 [parts issue: May 1864–November 1865].

Dickens’ final completed novel, *Our Mutual Friend* was issued in the 20-bound-in-19 monthly parts in green wrappers like the old days. But in book form, two volumes. Illustrated with woodcuts after Marcus Stone (who illustrated the 1862 to 1864 editions of *Great Expectations*). More ads than ever before in the parts. No text points in the book. That the book turns up more often in cloth than bindings is probably attributable to changing attitudes of mass market consumers and the fact that it’s in two volumes. But nice condition with these books is surprisingly hard to come by. Parts \$1,000 to \$2,000, and cloth on this one in the same range unless exceptionally bright.

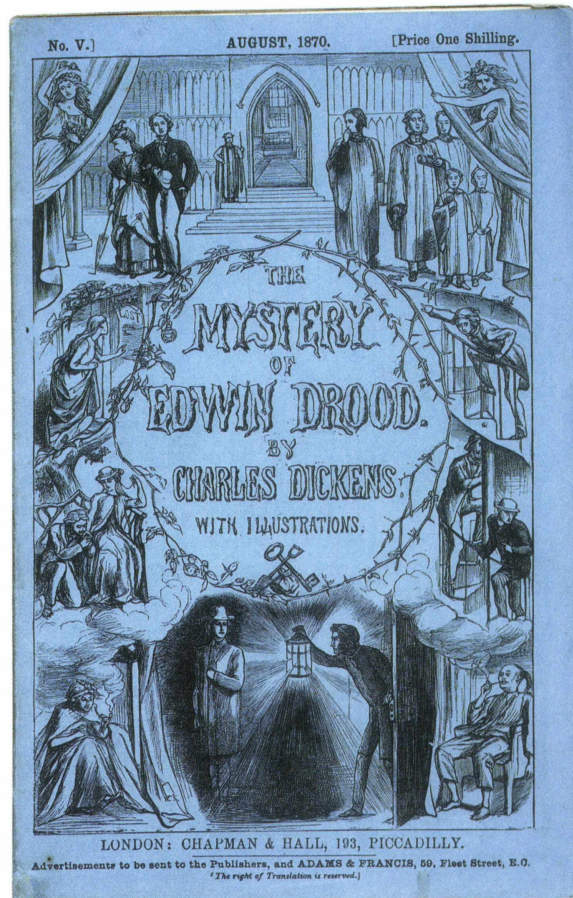
The Mystery of Edwin Drood

DICKENS, Charles. *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.—With Twelve Illustrations by S.L. Fildes, and a Portrait. London: Chapman and Hall, 1870 [parts issue: April–September].

Dickens died in June 1870, leaving the mystery forever unsolved.

Finally, at the end of the career, we have a book that, like *Pickwick*, seems to me essential to own in both the parts issue and book form in original cloth. Thankfully, this one is a lot easier to tackle. The sawtooth-bordered primary stamping is easily obtainable for \$500 or so. Parts are also relatively inexpensive, and nice sets, with the fun little “cork” ad in II, are running \$1,000 to \$1,250; without the cork ad, only \$800 to \$900.

What makes the parts issue of this unfinished mystery novel that concludes Dickens’ career more interesting than, say, *Our Mutual Friend* are the seeds





From *Our Mutual Friend*.

of the dreaded “Droodiana”—those vignettes on the front wrappers. Conveniently ignoring the fact that the wrappers of Dickens’ other novels in parts have precious little light to shed on the text itself as it unfolds—generally having been designed and executed well in advance of the writing of the book—Dickensians around the world have been extrapolating conclusions and solutions to *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* ever since Dickens set down his pen for the last time, having concluded his writing career with a hauntingly beautiful final page. The last page of *Drood* reads as if Dickens knew that was going to be it.

To my mind we should let it be as is, and consider the novel gracefully unfinished. But something in human nature won’t let a whodunit go unsolved, and theories and conclusions by lesser hands abound. “Droodiana” has become a cottage industry within the field of Dickens studies. And “Droodiana” is collectable in its own right.

If this kind of thing appeals to you, the cornerstone would have to be *John Jasper’s Secret* in parts. The latest I know of is the Italian work translated a few years ago as *The “D” Case*, thankfully not another attempted conclusion to the novel but an intermittently interesting exploration of the phenomenon of “Droodiana” which includes an interspersed reprinting of the entire extant text of the unfinished novel.

Despite my skipping the secondary works, and my many caveats concerning prices, I hope this start-to-finish quick sketch of Dickens’ major works is helpful to those starting out, or afraid to start out.

There is no getting around the phenomenon that was Charles Dickens. At some point any collector of literature has to decide what to do about him. No “high spot” collection can ignore him; in a “gentleman’s library” that lacked a Dickens set, he would be conspicuous by his absence. His popularity with the reading public and his influence on other writers were so vast that he resonates through almost all of literature from 1836 forward. This influence extends from contemporary Victorian hacks and plagiarists through the giant monolithic figures of modern literature such as Joyce and Dostoevsky, and continues today.

Dickens may nod his head to Cervantes, Defoe and Swift, the *Arabian Nights*, and of course he read Smollett and Scott, et al.—but the wellsprings of his genius were more of a personal cataclysm than of a definable lineage. He created a literary atmosphere and a densely-populated world of his own that was so powerful and popular that it *became* the atmosphere in which fellow and subsequent writers either breathed, struggled for breath, or suffocated. It seemed as if one had either to be writing with Dickens or writing against Dickens. Dickens was so comprehensive that he permeated his world like a gaseous, rather than a solid, influence. The lineage of overt Dickens imitators is vast, but the master is more easily imitated than surpassed. The tradition of



MR. WEGG PREPARES A GRINDSTONE FOR MR. BOFFIN'S NOSE.

writing against Dickens has afforded the world many great writers (e.g., George Eliot and William Makepeace Thackeray, who wrote "against" him from the very start).

Charles Dickens is so hugely important in so many ways, and to so many people, that I have noticed over many seminars and through many journals that one can write or discourse on "Dickens and (Anything)"—you fill in the blank—in a manner not seen since Shakespeare.

And not seen again since.

1. OSBORNE, E. Allen. *The Facts About A CHRISTMAS CAROL*. Privately printed [The Bradley Press], London, 1937.


GIMBEL, Richard. "The Earliest State of the First Edition of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*." *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 19. (1958), 82-86.

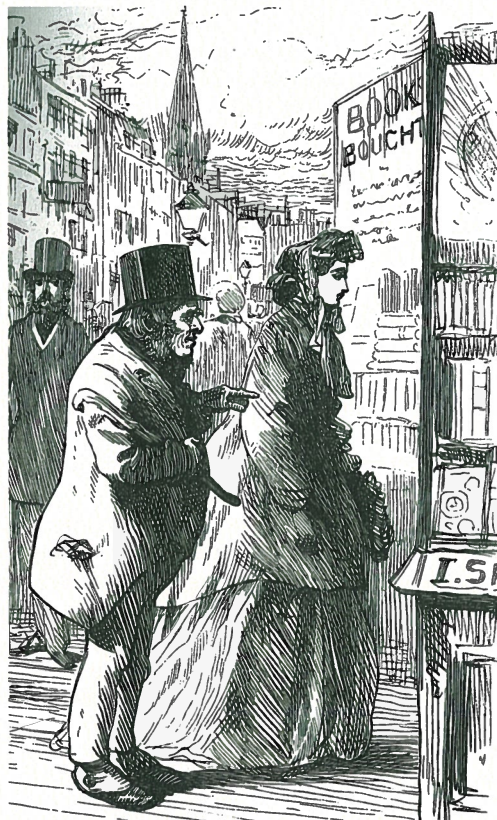
CALHOUN, Philo, and Howell J. Heaney. "Dickens' *Christmas Carol* After a Hundred Years: A Study in Bibliographical Evidence." *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 39. (1945), 271-317.

TODD, [Dr.] William B. "Note 170. Dickens's *Christmas Carol*," *The Book Collector*, X, (Winter 1961), 449-454.

SMITH, Walter E. *Charles Dickens in the Original Cloth—Part Two. The Christmas Books and Selected Secondary Works*. Los Angeles: Heritage Book Shop, 1983.

2. HATTON, Thomas, and Arthur H. Cleaver. *A*

Bibliography of the Periodical Works of Charles Dickens. Bibliographical, Analytical and Statistical. London: Chapman and Hall, 1933. 



BIBLIOMANIA OF THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN.



In the
Beginning...

Charles Dickens

Makes a
Pseudonym
for Himself

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
BACKGROUND TO DICKENS'
Sketches by Boz

"Those to whom the Sketches revealed a new writer saw in them many merits which to us are obscured: they broke entirely new ground, were written in a new style, and despite their frouzy topics, seemed to bring a refreshing breath of reality into the literary atmosphere. Nowadays, the best parts of the book seem to be those which are purely descriptive. Remembering how rare a thing is the ability to depict, really to depict, in words and especially to make interesting a description of the everyday, the commonplace, we gladly recognize in Boz's handwork the first proofs of Dickens' extraordinary power."

—George Gissing, *The Immortal Dickens*

"Unlike the generality of pilot balloons which carry no car, in this one it is very possible for a man to embark, not only himself, but all his hopes of future fame, and all his chances of future success."

—Charles Dickens, February 1836, writing as "Boz" in the Preface to *Sketches by "Boz"*

BOLD, CONFIDENT, AND PROPHEPIC WORDS from the virtually unknown "Boz" (pronounced by Dickens with a long "o"), who was only months away from being the most famous and popular writer in the world. Charles Dickens, metamorphosing from Parliamentary reporter to short-story/sketch writer, apprenticed only briefly—albeit intensely—before commanding the world stage as the consummate Victorian novelist, and these sketches provide a perfect laboratory view of his development.

A publishing history of the 59 total sketches from first appearance (1833) through the Chapman and Hall parts issue and first one-volume collection (1839) is of some complexity. This survey is in the chronological order of each sketch's first appearance, tracing from there to the 1839 edition, the final form of the coalesced work (until some minor rewrites for the 1850 Cheap Edition which is too far down the line for first edition collectors to be much concerned with, though

such authorial revisions, no matter how minor, are always of interest to readers and scholars).

The majority of the sketches were originally written for and printed in a few of the major dailies and periodicals of London; a few (as noted) were first seen in book form as published by John Macrone.

The first story from the pen of Charles Dickens to appear in print was "A Dinner at Poplar Walk," which appeared in "The Monthly Magazine" for December, 1833. It was not reprinted until three years later, substantially rewritten, in the Macrone-published *Sketches by Boz—Second Series*, retitled "Mr. Minns and His Cousin." After this quiet debut, Dickens continued his contributions to magazines and journals with speed and regularity. By the time the first number of *The Pickwick Papers* was inauspiciously launched, 46 of the sketches had appeared in print. The final sketch to be published was "The Drunkard's Death," which first appeared in the Macrone "Second Series."

The purchase of the copyrights by John Macrone led to the book collections of the separate articles, some with altered text, in two volumes (February, 1836) and a third book (December, 1836, though the "Second Series" title-page bears the date 1837, a common practice for books published so close to the New Year).

The work ran through several editions until an arrangement was made for Chapman and Hall, publishers of the now-successful *Pickwick*, to buy back the copyright from Macrone and reissue the collected sketches in the monthly numbers format which had been made popular at a whole new level by *The Pickwick Papers*.

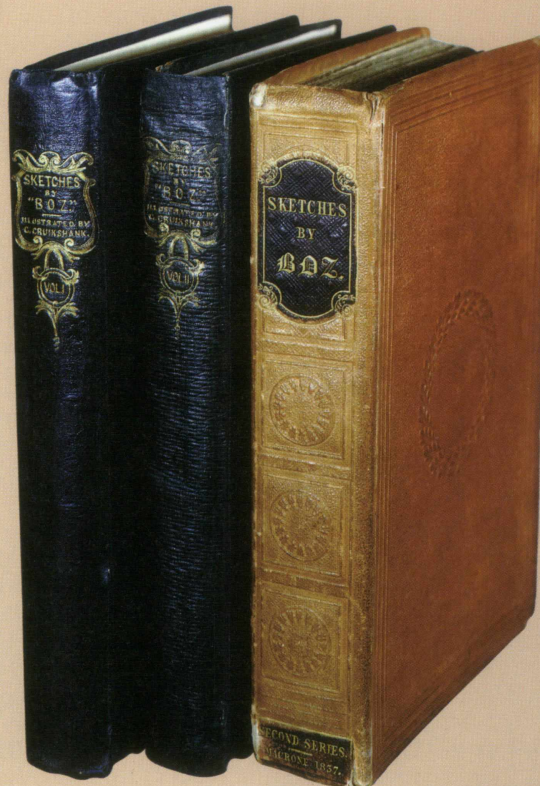
Coincident with the final monthly number of *Pickwick* (November, 1837), the first part of *Sketches* was issued bound in fragile pink wrappers (instead of the familiar green) with a front cover design by George Cruikshank, the original illustrator of the Macrone books. (Cruikshank also illustrated *Oliver Twist* for Dickens.) Part XX appeared in June 1839 (there was no double final number as with *Pickwick* and most subsequent Dickens novels issued in parts).

The make-up of *Sketches by Boz* as a serial issue



bears little relation to its predecessor in book form. Despite the tremendous popularity of *Pickwick*, the Chapman and Hall parts issue of *Sketches* was not successful, possibly because the material (though here slightly revised) had appeared before. Advertisers lost their interest and the printings were small—all leading to today's state of rarity and thus value to the collector.

On completion of the periodical run, Chapman and



Hall issued their first book form edition, labeled the "New Edition, Complete." The standing type was at this point stereotyped, and the stereotypes were used for subsequent printings.

A total of 40 plates were drawn and etched by George Cruikshank for the octavo edition (see numbered list, below), of which 27 are the original designs as they appeared in the First and Second Series (Macrone, 1836). These 27, however, were recut larger to match the format of the new designs. For the Second Series, 10 plates were originally etched, but the one titled "The Free and Easy" was not reproduced for the octavo parts issue.

The 13 new designs prepared for the Chapman and Hall issue in monthly parts are those numbered in the attached list (and the Hatton and Cleaver collocation) as 2, 3, 4, 13, 15, 17, 25, 27, 30, 33, 34, 35 and 38.

Before we get into what is a strictly factual bibliography and publishing history of the sketches as they appeared from 1833 to 1839, there are certain aspects of their literary and historical importance to consider. Unlike, say, Flaubert's calculatedly delayed debut with *Madame Bovary*, Dickens' fledgling writings were all done in public, even though his public was rather small at the time. These sketches are the wind-up to *Pickwick* (of course) but are even more interesting in the way they reveal the long gestation of the follow-up to *Pickwick*, *Oliver Twist*. Other tidbits and passages can be linked to future work throughout his career. The *Sketches* also reveal a great deal of Dickens' psychological development when contrasted against the journalism of his mature years, best exemplified by the contents of the book form publication of *The Uncommercial Traveller* (which appeared between *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Great Expectations*).

The Publishing History of *Sketches by Boz*

1. December, 1833: "A Dinner at Poplar Walk." Unsigned. "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVI. pp. 617-624. Reprinted as "Mr. Minns and his Cousin" (with many alterations) in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 257-282.
2. January, 1834: "Mrs. Joseph Porter 'over the way.'" Unsigned. "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVII. pp. 11-18. Reprinted as "Mrs. Joseph Porter" in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 253-272.
3. February, 1834: "Horatio Sparkins." Unsigned. "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVII. pp. 151-162. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 110-141.
4. April, 1834: "The Bloomsbury Christening." Unsigned. "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVII. pp. 375-386. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 242-275.
5. May, 1834. "The Boarding House." Unsigned. "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVII. pp. 481-493. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 147-180.
6. August, 1834. "The Boarding House, No. II." Signed "Boz." "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVIII. pp. 177-192. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 181-223. (*n.b.*, This was the earliest sketch signed "Boz.")
7. September 26, 1834. "Street Sketches. No. I: Omnibuses." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue No. 20,306. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 244-252.
8. October, 1834. "The Steam Excursion." Signed "Boz." "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XVIII. pp. 360-376. Reprinted (with a passage omitted) in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 273-318.
9. October 10, 1834. "Street Sketches. No. II: Shops and their Tenants." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue No. 20,318. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 88-96.
10. October 23, 1834. "Street Sketches. No. III: The Old Bailey." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue No. 20,329. Reprinted (with the last paragraph revised) as "Criminal Courts" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 51-62.
11. November 5, 1834: "Street Sketches. No. IV: Shabby-Genteel People." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue 20,340. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 101-109.
12. January, 1835: "Passage in the Life of Mr. Watkins Tottle. Chapter the First." Signed "Boz." "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XIX. pp. 15-24. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 1-29.
13. January 31, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. I: Hackney Coach Stands." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" Issue #1. Reprinted (omitting the opening nine words) in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 224-232.
14. February, 1835: "Passage in the Life of Mr. Watkins Tottle. Chapter the Second." Signed "Boz." "Monthly Magazine" Vol. XIX. pp. 121-137. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 30-76.
15. February 7, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. II: Gin Shops." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" Issue #4. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 276-287.
16. February 19, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. III: Early Coaches." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" Issue #9. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 171-181.
17. February 28, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. IV: The Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" Issue #13. Reprinted (altering the first paragraph and deleting the last) as "The Beadle—The Parish Engine—The Schoolmaster" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 1-11.
18. March 7, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. V: The House." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" Issue #16. Reprinted (deleting the last paragraph) in conjunction with "Bellamy's" as "A Parliamentary Sketch—with a few Portraits" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 227-255. This sketch ("The House") ends at the top of p. 242.
19. March 17, 1835: "Sketches of London: No. VI: London Recreations." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #20. Reprinted (footnote omitted) in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 136-146.
20. April 7, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. VII: Public Dinners." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #29. Reprinted (footnote omitted) in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 288-299.

21. April 11, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. VIII: Bellamy's." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #31. Reprinted (with a few words changed at the beginning and the last paragraph deleted) in conjunction with "The House" as "A Parliamentary Sketch—with a few Portraits" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 227-255. This sketch ("Bellamy's") begins near the top of p. 242.
22. April 16, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. IX: Greenwich Fair." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #33. Reprinted (deleting last paragraph) in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 314-330.
23. April 23, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. X: Thoughts About People." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #36. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 97-106.
24. May 9, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XI: Astley's." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #43. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 300-313.
25. May 19, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XII: Our Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #47. Reprinted (deleting first and last paragraphs) as "The Curate—The Old Lady—The Captain" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 12-23.
26. June 6, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XIII: The River." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #55. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 182-195.
27. June 18, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XIV: Our Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #60. Reprinted (deleting last paragraph) as "The Four Sisters" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 24-33.
28. June 30, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XV: The Pawnbroker's Shop." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #65. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 142-157.
29. July 14, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XVI: Our Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #71. Reprinted as "The Election for Beadle" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 34-47.
30. July 21, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XVII: The Streets—Morning." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #74. Reprinted as "The Streets by Morning" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 3-16.
31. July 28, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XVIII: Our Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #77. Reprinted as "The Broker's Man" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 48-66.
32. August 11, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XIX: Private Theatres." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #83. Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 196-208.
33. August 20, 1835: "Sketches of London. No. XX: Our Parish." Signed "Boz." "Evening Chronicle" #87. (Although this sketch ends with the words "To Be Continued" it was the last of the "parochial" papers and Dickens' last contribution to the "Evening Chronicle" until Sept. 26, 1836.) Reprinted as "The Ladies' Societies" in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 67-78.
34. September 27, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. I: Seven Dials." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 145-156.
35. October 4, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. II: Miss Evans and 'The Eagle.'" Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 1, February, 1836, pp. 79-87.
36. October 11, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. III: The Dancing Academy." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in First Series, Vol. 2, February, 1836, pp. 158-170.
37. October 18, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. IV: Making a Night of It." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 35-48.
38. October 25, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. V: Love and Oysters." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted as "Misplaced Attachment of Mr. John Dounce" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 193-208.
39. November 1, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. VI: Some Account of an Omnibus Cad." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in part in "The Carlton Chronicle" of September 17, 1836—a piracy rewritten in the first person and omitting almost half the original text. Reprinted (with additions, deletions, and



George Cruikshank

Public Dinners.

A Cruikshank plate from Sketches by Boz in which Dickens & Cruikshank appear.

variations) as "The Last Cab-Driver, and the First Omnibus Cad" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 285-308.

40. November 22, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. VII: The Vocal Dress-Maker." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted as "The Mistaken Milliner—A Tale of Ambition" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 159-174.
41. November 29, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. VIII: The Prisoners' Van." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted (deleting the first two paragraphs—almost half the sketch) in First Series, Vol. I, February, 1836, pp. 331-337.
42. December 13, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. IX: The Parlour." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in "The Observer" of Dec. 14, 1835. Reprinted (deleting 19 lines of the first paragraph) as "The Parlour Orator" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 311-323.
43. December 27, 1835: "Scenes and Characters. No. X: Christmas Festivities." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted (with a slight variation at the end) in "The Observer" of December 28, 1835. Reprinted again (with another small change at the end) in "The Observer" of January 3, 1836. Reprinted (deleting the last paragraph) as "A Christmas Dinner" in First Series, Vol. I, February, 1836, pp. 338-348.
44. January 3, 1836: "Scenes and Characters. No. XI: The New Year." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted in "The Observer" of January 4, 1836. Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 79-92.
45. January 17, 1836: "Scenes and Characters. No. XII: The Streets at Night." Signed "Tibbs." "Bell's Life" Reprinted as "The Streets by Night" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 19-32.
46. February, 1836: "A Visit to Newgate." First published in First Series, Vol. I, pp. 107-135.
47. February, 1836: "Broker's and Marine-Store Shops." First published in First Series, Vol. I, pp. 233-241.
48. February, 1836: "The Black Veil." First published in First Series, Vol. 2, pp. 77-100.
49. February, 1836: "The Great Winglebury Duel." First published in First Series, Vol. 2, pp. 209-243.
50. February, 1836: "Sentiment." First published in First Series, Vol. 2, pp. 319-342.
51. April, 1836: "The Tuggs's at Ramsgate." Signed "Boz." *Library of Fiction*, Part I. pp. 1-18.
52. June, 1836: "A Little Talk About Spring, and the Sweeps." Signed "Boz." *Library of Fiction*, part III. pp. 113-119. Reprinted as "The First of May" in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 327-346.
53. August 6, 1836: "The Hospital Patient." Signed "Boz." "Carlton Chronicle" (written in the first person) Reprinted (rewritten in the third person) in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 133-142.
54. September 24, 1836: Sketches by "Boz." New Series. No. I: "Meditations in Monmouth-Street." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue 20,875. Reprinted in the "Evening Chronicle" on September 26, 1836. Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 95-112.
55. October 4, 1836: Sketches by "Boz." No. II (New Series): "Scotland-Yard." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" #20,883. Reprinted in the "Evening Chronicle" on October 5, 1836. Reprinted in "The Carlton Chronicle" on October 8, 1836, unauthorized and omitting an early portion of the text. Reprinted in "Bell's Life" on October 9, 1836, unauthorized. Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 65-76, deleting a considerable portion of the beginning of the article.
56. October 11, 1836: Sketches by "Boz." No. III (New Series): "Doctors' Commons." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue 20,889. Reprinted in the "Evening Chronicle" on October 12, 1836. Reprinted in part in "The Carlton Chronicle" of October 15, unauthorized and cutting out about two-thirds of the text. Reprinted in "Bell's Life" of October 16, 1836, also unauthorized, despite acknowledgment to the "Morning Chronicle." Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 177-190.
57. October 26, 1836: Sketches by "Boz." No. IV (New Series): "Vauxhall-Gardens by Day." Signed "Boz." "Morning Chronicle" Issue 20,902. Reprinted in the "Evening Chronicle" the same day. Reprinted in "Bell's Life" on October 30, unauthorized. Reprinted in Second Series, December, 1836, pp. 211-224.
58. December, 1836: "Our Next-Door Neighbours." First published in Second Series, pp. 115-131.
59. December, 1836: "The Drunkard's Death." First published in Second Series, pp. 349-377.



These are the 59 sketches published as articles in periodicals. There are 57 sketches in Macrone's three books: "The House" and "Bellamy's" combine henceforward as "A Parliamentary Sketch," but there are still two separate chapters for "Watkins Tottle" and "The Boarding-House." These three books by Macrone do not contain the sketch "The Tuggs's at Ramsgate." There are 57 sketches in the Chapman and Hall parts issue: still two separate chapters for "The Boarding-House." There are 56 sketches in the Chapman and Hall "New Edition, Complete."

Contents of Sketches by "Boz" Volume I (Macrone 1836). (Chapman & Hall number)

The Parish:

- Chapter I. Beadle—Parish Engine—Schoolmaster (C&H 1)
- Chapter II. Curate—Old Lady—Captain (C&H 2)
- Chapter III. The Four Sisters (C&H 3)
- Chapter IV. Election for Beadle (C&H 4)
- Chapter V. The Broker's Man (C&H 5)
- Chapter VI. The Ladies' Societies (C&H 6)
- Miss Evans and "The Eagle" (C&H 36)
- Shops and their Tenants (C&H 10)
- Thoughts about People (C&H 33)
- A Visit to Newgate (C&H 32)
- London Recreations (C&H 16)
- The Boarding House (C&H 45, 46)
 - Chapter the First (C&H 45)
 - Chapter the Second (C&H 46)
- Hackney-Coach Stands (C&H 14)
- Brokers and Marine-Store Shops (C&H 28)
- The Bloomsbury Christening (C&H 56)
- Gin Shops (C&H 29)
- Public Dinners (C&H 26)
- Astley's (C&H 18)
- Greenwich Fair (C&H 19)
- The Prisoners' Van (C&H 44)
- A Christmas Dinner (C&H 34)

Contents of Sketches by "Boz" Volume II (Macrone, 1836)

- Passage in the Life of Mr. Watkins Tottle (C&H 55)
 - Chapter the First (Inc. 55)
 - Chapter the Second (Inc. 55)
- The Black Veil (C&H 51)
- Shabby-genteel People (C&H 42)
- Horatio Sparkins (C&H 50)
- The Pawnbroker's Shop (C&H 30)
- The Dancing Academy (C&H 41)
- Early Coaches (C&H 22)
- The River (C&H 17)
- Private Theatres (C&H 20)
- The Great Winglebury Duel (C&H 53)
- Omnibuses (C&H 23)
- Mrs. Joseph Porter (C&H 54)
- The Steam Excursion (C&H 52)
- Sentiment (C&H 48)

Contents of Sketches by Boz: ...Second Series (Macrone 1837 [17 December 1836])

- Preface
- The Streets by Morning (C&H 8)
- The Streets by Night (C&H 9)
- Making a Night of It (C&H 43)
- Criminal Courts (C&H 31)

- Scotland-Yard (C&H 11)
- The New Year (C&H 35)
- Meditations in Monmouth-Street (C&H 13)
- Our Next-Door Neighbours (C&H 7)
- The Hospital Patient (C&H 38)
- Seven Dials (C&H 12)
- The Mistaken Milliner (C&H 40)
- Doctors' Commons (C&H 15)
- Misplaced Attachment of Mr. John Dounce (C&H 39)
- Vauxhall Gardens by Day (C&H 21)
- A Parliamentary Sketch—with a few Portraits (C&H 25)
- Mr. Minns and His Cousin (earlier: Dinner at Poplar Walk) (C&H 47)
- The Last Cab-Driver, and the First Omnibus Cad (C&H 24)
- The Parlour Orator (C&H 37)
- The First of May (C&H 27)
- The Drunkard's Death (C&H 57)

Contents of Sketches by Boz. Chapman & Hall Parts Issue and "New Edition, Complete" (1839) (Reference number to periodical appearance as above.)

1. The Beadle—The Parish Engine—The Schoolmaster (Ref #17)
2. The Curate—The Old Lady—The Half-Pay Captain (Ref #25)
3. The Four Sisters (Ref #27)
4. The Election for Beadle (Ref #29)
5. The Broker's Man (Ref #31)
6. The Ladies' Societies (Ref #33)
7. Our Next-Door Neighbour[s] (Ref #58)
8. The Streets—Morning (Ref #30)
9. The Streets—Night (Ref #45)
10. Shops and their Tenants (Ref #9)
11. Scotland-Yard (Ref #55)
12. Seven Dials (Ref #34)
13. Meditations in Monmouth-Street (Ref #54)
14. Hackney-Coach Stands (Ref #13)
15. Doctors' Commons (Ref #56)
16. London Recreations (Ref #19)
17. The River (Ref #26)
18. Astley's (Ref #24)
19. Greenwich Fair (Ref #22)
20. Private Theatres (Ref #32)
21. Vauxhall Gardens by Day (Ref #57)
22. Early Coaches (Ref #16)
23. Omnibuses (Ref #7)
24. The Last Cab-Driver, and the First Omnibus Cad (Ref #39)
25. A Parliamentary Sketch (Ref #18 & 21)
26. Public Dinners (Ref #20)
27. The First of May (Ref #52)
28. Brokers' and Marine-Store Shops (Ref #47)
29. Gin Shops (Ref #15)
30. The Pawnbroker's Shop (Ref #28)
31. Criminal Courts (Ref #10)
32. A Visit to Newgate (Ref #46)
33. Thoughts about People (Ref #23)
34. A Christmas Dinner (Ref #43)
35. The New Year (Ref #44)
36. Miss Evans and "The Eagle" (Ref #35)
37. The Parlour Orator (Ref #42)
38. The Hospital Patient (Ref #53)
39. Misplaced Attachment of Mr. John Dounce (Ref #38)

40. The Mistaken Milliner. A Tale of Ambition (Ref #40)
41. The Dancing Academy (Ref #36)
42. Shabby-genteel People (Ref #11)
43. Making a Night of It (Ref #37)
44. The Prisoner's Van (Ref #41)
45. The Boarding-House (Chapter the First) (Ref #5)
46. The Boarding-House (Chapter the Second) (Ref #6)
(Nos. 45 and 46 combine in New Ed., C)
47. Mr. Minns and His Cousin (earlier: Dinner at Poplar Walk) (Ref #1)
48. Sentiment (Ref #50)
49. The Tuggs's at Ramsgate (Ref #51)
50. Horatio Sparkins (Ref #3)
51. The Black Veil (Ref #48)
52. The Steam Excursion (Ref #8)
53. The Great Winglebury Duel (Ref #49)
54. Mrs. Joseph Porter (Ref #2)
55. Passage in the Life of Mr. Watkins Tottle (Ref #112 & 14)
56. The Bloomsbury Christening (Ref #4)
57. The Drunkard's Death (Ref #59)

Correct Plate Collation for *Sketches* by "Boz" Volume I (Macrone 1836)

1. Election for Beadle p. 47 (used as frontis)
2. Jemima Evans p. 81
3. Thoughts about People p. 101
4. London Recreations p. 142
5. The Boarding House p. 173
6. Hackney-Coach Stands p. 228
7. Bloomsbury Christening p. 259
8. Greenwich Fair p. 329

Correct Plate Collation for *Sketches* by "Boz" Vol. II (Macrone 1836)

1. Mr. Gabriel Parson's Courtship p. 24 (used as frontis)
This design was retitled "Watkins Tottle" when Cruikshank re-engraved it in larger format for Chapman and Hall.
2. The Lock-up House p. 40
3. Horatio Sparkins p. 140
4. The Pawnbroker's Shop p. 146
5. The Dancing Academy p. 164
6. Private Theatres p. 206
7. The Winglebury Duel p. 235
8. Sentiment p. 334

Correct Plate Collation for *Sketches* by *Boz*, *Second Series* (Macrone 1837 [1836])

1. Vauxhall Gardens by Day p. 217 (used as frontis)
2. [the balloon] (title-page)
3. The Streets—Morning p. 6
4. The Free and Easy p. 29 (not reproduced by C&H)
5. Scotland Yard p. 67
6. Monmouth Street p. 97
7. A Pickpocket in Custody p. 136
8. Seven Dials p. 149
9. Mr. John Dounce p. 201
10. Mr. Minns and His Cousin p. 263 (not listed) (in second issue)
11. The Last Cabdriver p. 286
12. May-day in the Evening p. 343 (retitled First of May for C&H)

The Chapman and Hall "New Edition, Complete" (1839) has 40 etchings, of which 27 are the original designs as they appeared in the First and Second Series (via Macrone)—though "The Free and Easy" is Second Series only and not repeated in the C&H "New Edition, Complete."—these designs are cut larger to match the 13 new etchings in larger (octavo) format.

1. The Election for Beadle (frontis)
2. The Parish Engine p. 3
3. The Broker's Man p. 29
4. Our Next-door Neighbours p. 45
5. The Streets—Morning p. 56
6. Scotland Yard p. 72
7. Seven Dials p. 77
8. Monmouth Street p. 82
9. Hackney Coach Stands p. 89
10. London Recreations p. 100
11. Greenwich Fair p. 120
12. Vauxhall Gardens by Day p. 130
13. Early Coaches p. 142
14. The Last Cabdriver p. 153
15. Public Dinners p. 175
16. First of May p. 181
17. The Gin Shop p. 194
18. The Pawnbroker's Shop p. 200
19. Private Theatres p. 129
20. Thoughts about People p. 229
21. Jemima Evans p. 245
22. A Pickpocket in Custody p. 255
23. Mr. John Dounce p. 260
24. The Dancing Academy p. 274
25. Making a Night of It p. 286
26. The Boarding House p. 297
27. The Boarding House (chap. 2) p. 314
28. Mr. Minns & His Cousins p. 335
29. Sentiment p. 346
30. The Tuggs's at Ramsgate p. 358
31. Horatio Sparkins p. 379
32. Winglebury Duel p. 431
33. Steam Excursions (1) p. 408
34. Steam Excursions (2) p. 429
35. Mrs. Joseph Porter p. 449
36. Watkins Tottle p. 471
37. The Lock-up House p. 479
38. Mr. Watkins Tottle & Miss Lillerton p. 491
39. Bloomsbury Christening p. 498
40. Engraved title-page (Balloon)

The printing, the illustration quality and the overall physical production of the Chapman and Hall 1839 "New Edition, Complete" make for a far superior book than were the three rather poorly produced Macrone books and I think collectors and readers would be remiss to ignore it simply out of the chronological obsession that leads them to the Macrone books only. Readers would be equally remiss in ignoring this body of work. If you have never read these short pieces, I recommend rereading *Oliver Twist* beforehand to more easily notice the hints toward that work, and then *Uncommercial Traveller* afterwards, to appreciate the scope of Dickens' nonfiction and short fiction from novice to Master.



RISE TO FAME:

Pickwick Triumphant

"A man who, a hundred years hence, should sit down and write a history of our time, would do wrong to put that great contemporary history of Pickwick as a frivolous work."

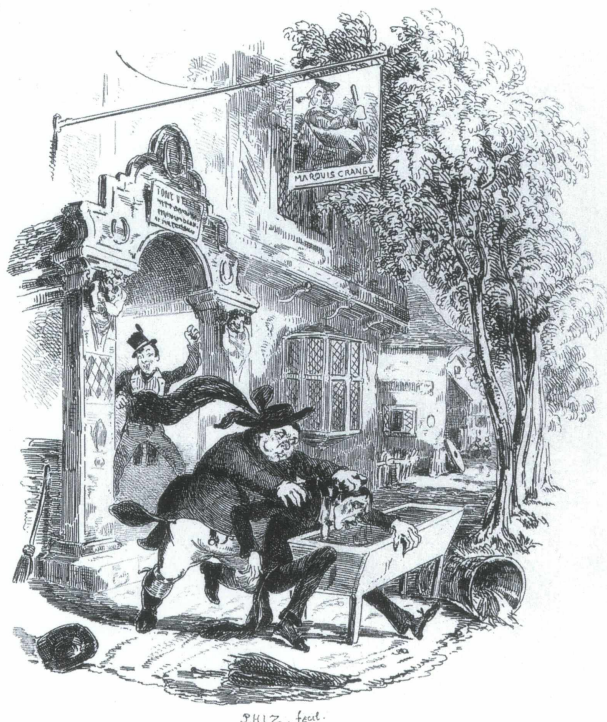
—William Makepeace Thackeray, 1840

The *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* by Charles Dickens is not my favorite novel, but it is my favorite book. *Great Expectations* is Dickens' literary masterpiece, but *Pickwick* is his most interesting book. *Don Quixote*, *Clarissa*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Ulysses*, *V.* and "The Arabian Nights" may be infinite texts, but *Pickwick* is an infinite book.

Textual critics, deconstructionists, semiologists, and serious literary academics across the board do (and should) spend more time studying the texts of *Don Quixote*, *Clarissa*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Ulysses*, and *V.* These are more significant "stand-alone" texts in the history of literature and the history of human endeavor. But for those of us who are inclined to weave various extraneous strands into a text, and let these strands pull at and bend a text to reflect different lights, *Pickwick* offers quite the incomparable lightshow.

Pickwick cannot function as, or be effectively read or understood as, a "stand-alone" text, subject only to textual analysis, no matter which schools of tex-

THE
POSTHUMOUS PAPERS
BY
CHARLES DICKENS.



LONDON
GURFMAN AND HALL 1836 STURMUS

tual analysis are applied. The text of *Pickwick* is inextricably shot through with outside influences. It cannot be approached productively or enjoyed as thoroughly as possible within the limits of the text itself, though certainly as it progresses the text is delightful. It holds pride of place among Dickensians for its tangents: the personal biography of the young and willful genius; his new young wife Catherine Hogarth; her younger sister Mary Hogarth whom Dickens loved obsessively and who died during the writing of this book; the suicide of the originating artist-illustrator, the depressive, waning Robert Seymour; the advent of the young Hablot Browne to take Seymour's place; the progress in printing technologies such as stereotyping and the ability to impress larger sheets faster; publishing strategies; distribution channels; and even papermaking.

In April 1836 Charles Dickens was an obscure London columnist writing mostly humorous, sometimes poignant, and always well-observed "sketches" for various London dailies and weeklies, usually over the pseudonym "Boz." As I discuss in detail elsewhere in this issue, some of these were first collected and published in two volumes in February 1836. Dickens was not known at all outside of his intimate circle. It was the month of April 1836 that saw the

humble and inauspicious debut of the monthly parts publication of what was intended, by the *others* involved, to be a suite of humorous sporting illustrations by the then-well-known illustrator Robert Seymour accompanied by some insignificant letter-press (the term for the almost superfluous text intended to accompany illustrations) that could be provided equally well by any number of local London hack writers. Charles Dickens got the job. He had other plans for the work. Oh, and he also got married that month and moved to a new residence. Charles was keeping busy.

Part I of *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* debuted with a less-than-regal printing of 1,000 copies, of which it seems only 400 were originally stab-stitched into their wrappers. By the time Parts XIX and XX of *Pickwick* appeared as a double final number in November of 1837 the 25-year-old Charles Dickens was the most famous writer in the world. He had, in the space of 20 months, built an unprecedented British and international readership and established a new level of authorial control and financial drawing power. He had also single-handedly revitalized the novel genre and the method of publication in monthly parts, which by 1836 had been relegated mostly to the business of very cheap reprints.

In his excellent *Dickens's Apprentice Years: The Making of a Novelist*, Duane DeVries makes a cogent argument for the efforts preceding, and coinciding with, *Pickwick* as indicative of Dickens' future talent and accomplishments, and, of course, to a certain extent, they are—reading retrospectively as we are now able to do. Yet it seems beyond argument that the white-heat level of exertion, production and brilliance that flickered in Part IV of *Pickwick* and exploded in Part V, and continued unabated through Parts XIX/XX was *unpredictable*.

Let's look at that concept for a moment. Certain things that have happened throughout history, including of course its subset of literary history, are *inevitable* and certain things, simply, are *not inevitable*. I dwell sometimes, in the pleasant musings over this book that anticipate my dotage, that the level of this work may have surprised even the super-confident Dickens himself, as his brave boastings really did

come true so quickly and so magnificently. Such writing as took place in Parts IV and V of *Pickwick* and forward, as Dickens dashed this off as fast as he thought it up, is *inexplicable*. Obviously, if one studies the *Sketches by Boz*, one finds there, in retrospect, seeds of greatness and, especially, of the long-percolating *Oliver Twist*. That the writer of these sketches

had a bright future was a fact anyone could see. But a breakthrough the likes of *Pickwick* is beyond explanation or prediction. Explanation is beside the point when one faces such an epiphany; such a literary miracle as *The Pickwick Papers* once Dickens hit his stride. A skillful, talented writer who was also a keen observer and a quick wit and capable of compassion for strangers could have "imitated" the *Sketches by Boz* and continued in that vein and expanded profitably upon it. But only Dickens himself could have made that amazing leap to *Pickwick*.

Analogously, for those of you better acquainted with modern firsts, we can mine *The Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* for hints

of the *Ulysses* to come, but only having already read *Ulysses*. Joyce, and Joyce alone, was able to take that leap into the blind actually to write *Ulysses*. Such a path would forever remain blind to mere "extrapolators." The "modern novel" was inevitable in the stream of things, but the actual text of *Ulysses* was not inevitable; it was miraculous. Likewise, "Elizabethan Drama" was inevitable; but there is no explaining the genius of the plays of Shakespeare. So, back in 1837, the dawning of the "Victorian" novel was inevitable: some post-Scott, post-Regency, post-Gothic school was destined to flourish and dominate. But the prodigious talent of Charles Dickens was *not* inevitable, nor did it develop along predetermined lines.

In 1835, Robert Seymour was a rather famous illustrator. He had an idea, already a somewhat shopworn one, of his publishing in monthly numbers a suite of humorous "sporting sketches" to be accompanied by some letter-press, explanatory and connective, but really quite secondary: certainly any qualified



First appearance of Samuel Pickwick, by Robert Seymour.

hack would do. Seymour himself had done similar sporting plates before, such as for a little book called *Maxims and Hints for an Angler and Miseries of Fishing*, and for another called *Cockney Sporting Sketches*, and for the less-than-inspired Chapman and Hall-published "Squib Annual." Seymour thought this vein not yet thoroughly mined out, and shopped the idea around until, as 1835 drew to a close, Chapman and Hall agreed to publish four of his plates monthly with appropriate commissioned accompanying letter-press, once they had hired the right man for the job. They approached several authors, and several authors turned them down, until their eyes lighted on the up-and-coming "Boz," now earning a well-deserved reputation within a little circle as the keen observer and humorous author of little sketches and short stories appearing in some London papers.

Dickens needed the money and took the job. But anyone who knows him at all feels that already he had no intention of playing second fiddle on this project. Hadn't the great illustrator George Cruikshank worked for him already, illustrating the Macrone-published 1836 edition of *Sketches by Boz*? Wasn't George Cruikshank universally recognized as better and more famous than Robert Seymour? So why should Dickens be expected to work for Seymour instead of the other way around? Dickens laid low as the project got started on somewhat wobbly legs (though Dickens' opening paragraphs and Seymour's first plate of Samuel Pickwick addressing the Club are truly inspired). Dickens complied at first, in broad outline, with Seymour's desire for stock Cockney sporting characters and situations, as given away by his design for the wrappers. But I think Dickens intended all along to take the reins on this project, and as early as Part II began to assert himself, writing pretty much what he wanted, and commenting to Seymour, in no uncertain terms, what *he* thought the plates should be. During the work on Part II, Dickens and Seymour actually met for the first and only time. Dickens had written him a most insulting note about the latest plate he had seen. Seymour was struggling over the "Dying Clown" plate that he didn't even want to do—for a story within the story that was strictly Dickens' creation—when, within two days of meeting the young author, he gave up on the

work and put a bullet through his head.

Even Dickens must have been surprised that he wrested authority so quickly and so dramatically. Now the project was in real trouble. The text of Part I had opened well, with a near-brilliant start by Dickens and a now-classic plate by Seymour, but it was clear that the text was being improvised. Now

Part II was floundering with only three plates and the suicide of the artist. Only 1,000 copies of Part I were printed, and only an estimated 400 of those original sheets had been stitched up with the Seymour plates and wrapped for distribution. For Part II, Chapman and Hall cut the print order back to a conservative 500 copies. The eventual success of *Pickwick* was far from determined at this point. It would take a base circulation of about 2,000 units to break even or begin to turn a profit month by month. In fact, it seemed to most everyone that potential disaster loomed large.

So Dickens took charge. No one else had any better ideas or plans, so Dickens' incredibly unfounded confidence, his enthusiasm and his undeniable willpower carried the project forward. Dickens now pitched the idea to the publishers of changing the format to more story and fewer illustrations: 32 pages of text per month, increased from the originally-contracted 24, but only two plates per month. The plates would now be commissioned from younger, less famous, more cooperative artists to illustrate Dickens' unfolding story, rather than the original concept of four preconceived plates per month, connected by his letter-press.

Part III was published with 31 pages of text and two plates contributed by R.W. Buss. The illustrator credit on the front wrapper for this number was also changed from Seymour to Buss. But both the drawings and their execution on the steel plates left Dickens cold. Buss was peremptorily fired. The print order was 1,000 units (a losing proposition). Again the project seemed lost at sea. Then one of the most serendipitous meetings in Victorian fiction took place: "Boz" met "Phiz." Hablot Knight Browne ideally suited Dickens' illustrator needs and he could be pretty easily bossed.

The Part IV wrapper gives Browne a vote of no confidence, dropping the illustrator credit, but Phiz and Dickens were a match made in heaven and the

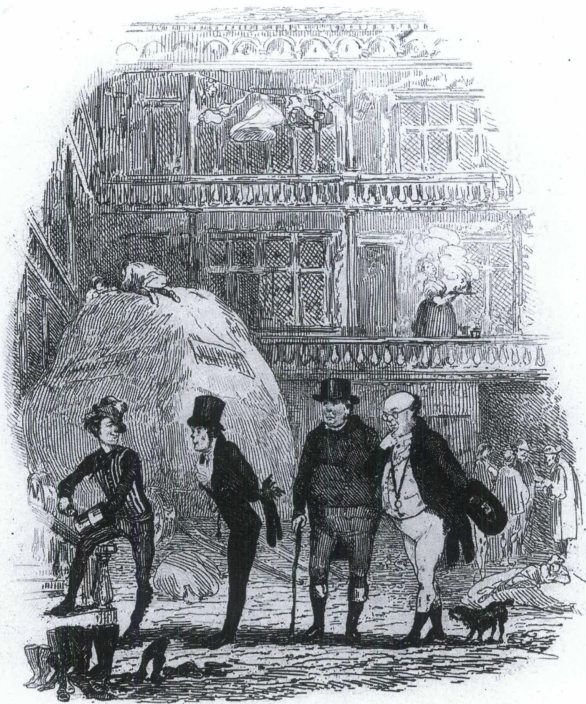


Seymour's "Dying Clown." (*Pickwick Part II*).

collaboration continued fruitfully and with few interruptions for more than 20 years, through *A Tale of Two Cities*. Phiz worked with many other Victorian writers but his work for Dickens, not surprisingly, is his best remembered.

With Part IV *Pickwick* took off. It was in Part IV Dickens gave to the lovable Samuel Pickwick his "Sancho Panza"—his valet Sam Weller, one of the most likable and genuinely engaging characters in all of world fiction—creating a duo that has rightfully become as well-known and well-loved as Cervantes'. From this introduction forward, the success of *Pickwick* was assured. Dickens had it in hand and he never let it go. The reviews for Part IV were the most favorable so far. It sold well. Part V did even better. Things were turning around. From Part IX forward the standing type was stereotyped. By then Phiz was cutting his steels in duplicate to handle the usage. Sales just grew and grew as the monthly adventures of Pickwick and Weller and the rest of the cast engaged the public attention at an unprecedented level. February 1837 saw sales of 14,000 units; May did 20,000; September was up to 26,000. By the conclusion of the book, unit sales were close to 40,000. And, of course, earlier numbers were reprinted as required to fill the growing need for readers to "catch up."

Dickens had been originally contracted for the remuneration of £14 a month and with Part III moved to £21 a month, which actually was not a bad compensation back in those days. In March 1837 Chapman and Hall awarded him a bonus of £500 and in August they instructed counsel to draw up for him £2,000. To put this in some kind of perspective, when Dickens had his first "sketch" published just a few years earlier the annual rent for his "chambers" was £35. In a letter of 1839 to his good friend Mitton, Dickens reports that, regarding the first book form publication of *Sketches by "Boz"* (February 1836), he had received for the book £100. By the conclusion of *Pickwick* Dickens had averaged more than that per part. It is estimated that Chapman and Hall cleared £14,000 off shilling parts!



First appearance of Sam Weller, by Phiz. (*Pickwick Part IV*)

From the bibliographical standpoint, we must look at the parts issue of *Pickwick* as 19 separate little books, each of these made up of various components (text, plates, ads, addresses and wrappers) coming from different sources and being stab-stitched at the bindery before distribution. With only 400-500 copies out there of the first issues of Parts I and II, it would be quixotic for anyone to expect anything but a mixed set when trying to put together all the individual elements. Of course, it may be quixotic to try to compile a "prime" *Pickwick* at all these days. The only sets that have signs of having been together all along (such as a single owner's signature on each front wrapper) always contain later printings of the earliest numbers. Any close-to-prime *Pickwick* these days would have to be constructed, as the various building blocks would have to be discovered over a period of time from the

cannibalization of different sources. Prior generations' attempts to construct prime *Pickwick*s lead to us finding nowadays that the vast majority of parts have been unstitched and reassembled with added components, and rebacked in the process, with varying degrees of accuracy and success. The arrays of points to check can be pretty daunting. The reference bible for Dickens in the parts issues, Hatton & Cleaver, covers the 13 titles issued in this format exhaustively in a little under 400 pages; very close to one-fourth of the book is devoted to describing *Pickwick*.

I hope that this brief introduction to the mysteries and pleasures of *Pickwick* will have the positive effect of encouraging people to delve into this book itself and the great field of "Pickwickiana." The intricate complications of *Pickwick*'s publication, the wonderful story and unforgettable characters of the book itself, and the outside real-life stories influencing the book during the process of its being written and published as quickly as it was being made up can make for a most rewarding and enjoyable excursion into Victorian bibliography, literature, business, psychology and society. It also takes us into the mind of a young genius improvising for his life—and succeeding in the grandest fashion.



The Charles Dickens Reference Shelf

There is a great deal, perhaps a surfeit, of reference material available on first editions of Charles Dickens. This overview will treat the subject not in chronological order, but in the order the books are most used and most helpful. (I will not deal with critical or analytical works: "Stick to Facts, sir!")

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE WORKS

Anyone who collects first editions of Dickens at any level, whether in parts, original cloth, or in bindings is pretty much obliged, for their own safety and security, to own and acquaint themselves with the two absolutely essential Dickens reference works: Hatton & Cleaver, and Smith.

Hatton & Cleaver

A Bibliography of the Periodical Works of Charles Dickens. Bibliographical, Analytical and Statistical. By Thomas Hatton and Arthur H. Cleaver. With 31 Illustrations and Facsimiles. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd. 1933.

I use this book so much that when I look at the marked faucets on a sink I think of these two guys. Their remarkable achievement is realistically the best you could hope for with an endeavor of this scope. My copy has some notes about a few mistakes and oversights and a few questionable remarks or assumptions—and I have seen copies of parts with original stab stitching intact that didn't match up exactly with Hatton & Cleaver—but the fact is that this exceptional work is now so accepted and relied upon that any little deviation from their called-for collations must be mentioned and (maybe) explained away. "Collates complete per Hatton and Cleaver" is music to our ears. No collector should buy a set of parts, and no dealer should ever price or catalogue a set, without checking it against this work. Their knowledge of Dickens in parts was vast and their sampling was sufficient. (Unlike, say, Van Duzer's now-accepted collation of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* which described a single copy as the Platonic ideal.)

The Johanssen work on the plates (see below) makes identification much easier, as each is reproduced, rather than merely described, and Johanssen debunks some of the false points attributed to plates, but, overall, the accuracy and staying power of Hatton and Cleaver assures both these gentlemen permanent seats on the podium. A first edition in nice condition is worth \$400, so for reference I recommend the recent Martino reprint, now out of print but generally obtainable at around \$125.

Smith

Charles Dickens in the Original Cloth. A Bibliographical Catalogue of the First Appearance of His Writ-

ings in Book Form in England with Facsimiles of the Bindings and Titlepages. Part One: The Novels with *Sketches by Boz*. By Walter E. Smith. Los Angeles: Heritage Book Shop, 1982.

Charles Dickens in the Original Cloth. A Bibliographical Catalogue of the First Appearance of His Writings in Book Form in England with Photographs of the Bindings, Titlepages, and Other Relevant Data. Part Two: The Christmas Books and Selected Secondary Works. By Walter E. Smith. Los Angeles: Heritage Book Shop, 1983.

These books are as essential for first editions in the original publisher's cloth casings as Hatton & Cleaver is for the parts issues. Smith's fresh research and summations of past research are excellent. The decision to photograph each primary casing makes identification much easier than written descriptions alone ever could. Smith has chosen to deal with the novels and *Sketches by Boz* in Volume I. Volume II deals with the Christmas Books and other selected works; he does not cover every secondary title, but does a very thorough job on the most important ones.

Both Hatton & Cleaver and Smith are important also to collectors of Dickens first editions in bindings, providing help in identifying the editions. Smith is still in print at \$125 for both volumes, available from the publisher.

HELPFUL REFERENCE WORKS

Eckel

The First Editions of the Writings of Charles Dickens. Their Points and Values. A Bibliography by John C. Eckel. Revised and Enlarged. With Illustrations and Facsimiles. New York: Maurice Inman, Inc. London: Maggs Bros., 1932.

Is it heresy to relegate Eckel to the second tier? John Eckel remains the godfather, or at least the grandfather, of Dickens bibliographical studies. His was a pioneering work, and though it has been superseded by the work of Hatton & Cleaver and Smith on the books they discuss, it is still very helpful on the lesser titles that they do not discuss. Eckel is generally not cited on the big titles anymore, but will continue to be referred to and cited on the lesser books, until their Smith comes along. The 1932 revised edition cited above is preferred as reference; this edition has been reprinted by both Haskell House and Martino, all now out of print.

Another book by Eckel, *Prime Pickwicks in Parts* (1928), would have to be considered as essential to a Pickwick specialist (see below).

Gimbel (aka Podeschi)

Dickens and Dickensiana. A Catalogue of the Richard

Gimbel Collection in the Yale University Library. By John B. Podeschi. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

Colonel Richard Gimbel: the completist extraordinaire! The Gimbel Collection in the Beinecke Library at Yale University is staggering in its volume. Condition within the collection varies radically, but Colonel Gimbel was a good, old-fashioned completist and did his job with a robust appetite. Podeschi's work is not particularly enlightening with first British editions, and it doesn't have to be, given Hutton & Cleaver and Smith. But it does shed some much-needed light on the confusion stirred up by American editions (see below). And it is an absolute godsend when trying to identify later editions, ephemeral items, related art, illustrated editions and, especially, sets of the complete works. This catalogue is probably more helpful to dealers than collectors, but no advanced Dickens collector would be without it. Gimbel's vast collection and Podeschi's exhaustive work on it are both extremely admirable.

Johannsen

Phiz: Illustrations from the Novels of Charles Dickens. By Albert Johannsen. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press [1956].

Way back in 1956 Albert Johannsen finally cleared the air about (most of) the plates—the multiple steels problem—by publishing a work that reproduced every steel used in the printing of the novels illustrated by Hablot Knight Browne and finally putting to rest a lot of points that weren't really points at all; demonstrating that the multiple steels were mostly used simultaneously after Phiz hit his stride during the early numbers of *Pickwick*. Unfortunately, a lot of dealers haven't yet noticed, and still trot out the "Veller"/"Weller" business when touting their latest *Pickwick*, or the "£100"/"100£" to flog their *Chuzzlewit*. Everyone trading in Dickens should use this book when discussing the plates, and put everything else behind them.

ALSO OF INTEREST

Newlin

Everyone in Dickens. Volume I. Plots, People and Publishing Particulars in the Complete Works, 1833-1849. Compiled and Edited by George Newlin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, [1995].

Everyone in Dickens. Volume II. Plots, People and Publishing Particulars in the Complete Works, 1850-1870. Compiled and Edited by George Newlin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, [1995].

Everyone in Dickens. Volume III. Characteristics and Commentaries, Tables and Tabulations. A Taxonomy. Compiled and Edited by George Newlin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, [1995].

Every Thing in Dickens. Ideas and Subjects Discussed

by Charles Dickens in His Complete Works. A Topic. Compiled and Edited by George Newlin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press [1996].

In late 1995, the field of Dickens Studies was greatly enhanced by the appearance of a monumental new reference project by George Newlin: a massive three-volume work entitled *Everyone in Dickens* and a stout one-volume follow-up called *Every Thing in Dickens*. These works eclipse all their forerunners, all the old "dictionaries" and "encyclopedias" of Dickens' characters. I would not call these works essential for dealers other than Dickens specialists, but they are a wonderful treasure trove for Dickens scholars and readers. The undertaking itself is admirable, and for such an undertaking to be so thoroughly realized and so enjoyably presented is truly astonishing. These works are in print, available from Greenwood Press.

Suzannet

The Catalogue of the Suzannet Charles Dickens Collection. Edited and with an introduction by Michael Slater. London and New York: Sotheby Parke Bernet Publications in association with The Trustees of the Dickens House, [1975].

Another excellent collection of first-rate Dickens and Dickensiana. Unlike the Gimbel collection, the Suzannet collection has been dispersed at auction. Good provenance if your copy can be established as "the Suzannet copy" by bookplate or inclusion in this catalogue.

Patten

Charles Dickens and His Publishers. By Robert L. Patten. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press [1978].

No critical or theoretical excursions here, just a delightfully clarifying look at the dollars and cents (pounds and shillings) of Dickens as a publishing machine. A close and accurate look at contracts, sales, costs and profits of Charles Dickens. A fascinating look at the physical and economical world of book manufacture and distribution from 1836 (with a few cogent looks back) through Dickens' death in 1870, and a little beyond, as Dickens continued as a dominating sales figure.

TITLE SPECIFIC WORKS:

A PERSONAL "BEST OF" SELECTION

Sketches by "Boz"

DICKENS: Positively the First Appearance. A Centenary Review, with a Bibliography of *Sketches by Boz*. By F. J. Harvey Darton. London: The Argonaut Press, 1933.

I recently had the pleasure of reading "A Dinner at Poplar Walk" in the Gimbel copy of "The Monthly Magazine" for December, 1833 (rebound and falling apart). But an easier way is to find a used

copy of this little book by Darton, a detailed history of Charles Dickens' very first appearance in print, in a little story that was later rewritten (slightly) and retitled "Mr. Minns and His Cousin." There is an historical lead-up to the story; then a reprinting of the full text as it originally appeared; then a few follow-up remarks.

Dickens's Apprentice Years: the Making of a Novelist. By Duane DeVries. Hassocks, Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd, 1976.

Excellent as both a publishing survey and a critical analysis, finding, at times with more or less effort as the case may be, clues to the author's future and greater works.

Charles Dickens' SKETCHES BY BOZ. The End in the Beginning. By Virgil Grillo. Boulder, Colorado: The Colorado Associated University Press, 1974.

Highly informed, highly analytical in covering authorial revisions of the texts.

The Dent Uniform Edition of Dickens' Journalism. Sketches by Boz and Other Early Papers 1833-39. Edited by Michael Slater. With Illustrations by George Cruikshank. London: J.M. Dent, [1994].

The best in-print edition of the *Sketches by Boz* (along with *Sunday Under Three Heads*, and some other early journalism). Excellent overall Introduction and with little additional introductions for the individual sketches. Good notes, but not overwhelming or distracting. An excellent reading copy, nicely printed and bound, and reproducing some of the Cruikshank plates (in all respects a superior production to the current Oxford Illustrated).

The Pickwick Papers

Prime Pickwicks in Parts. Census with Complete Collation and Comment—With a Foreword by A. Edward Newton. By John Eckel. New York: Edgar H. Wells & Co. London: Charles J. Sawyer, Ltd., 1928.

A Centenary Bibliography of the Pickwick Papers. By W. Miller and E.H. Strange. London: The Argonaut Press, [1936].

The Origin of Pickwick. New Facts now First Published in the Year of the Centenary. By Walter Dexter and J.W.T. Ley. London: Chapman and Hall Ltd., [1936].

Personally, I can never get enough *Pickwick*—somehow never tiring of the same anecdotes. But for pure reference, your shelf is adequately provided for with Hatton & Cleaver, Smith and Johannsen, as detailed above, and these three works are for the specialist and the collector.

THE AMERICAN PROBLEM

We still have more to learn about British editions of Dickens. Certainly there is more to be published

regarding *A Christmas Carol* and *Great Expectations*, though I suspect that more information will not necessarily clarify things with these two titles to the point of universal accord and finality; I suspect further data may just continue to muddy the waters. The business exigencies of getting out as many units of *A Christmas Carol* as fast as possible may forever preclude establishing an exact chronology of the various components of the book, and further research into the impressions and issues (revisions or degradations) of *Great Expectations* may or may not prove fruitful in establishing an exact chronology, though as I state elsewhere in this issue, establishing a chronology between the "Second" through "Fifth" stated editions of this book doesn't, or, I contend, shouldn't, make much of a difference from the viewpoints of dealers and collectors.

And anomalies of all the books still show up: so far this year I've seen a *Bleak House* in primary stamping cloth with all edges gilt (probably a custom order), a *Drood* in a *Copperfield-to-Dorrit* stamping pattern (remainder? trial?), and a *Nickleby* in parts cased (later) in a blue cloth with *Chuzzlewit* blind-stamping, etc. etc.

But, with Hatton & Cleaver and Smith, Charles Dickens now stands as well served as any author of the period. The place where there is still a significant lacuna in the bibliography, is America. There is no definitive, or even borderline respectable, bibliography of first and early American editions of Dickens. No one has done for American Dickens what the *Bibliography of American Literature* (Yale) has done for British editions of Mark Twain, Edgar Allan Poe and Herman Melville. And, though usually not as valuable as their British counterparts, American editions of Dickens are important to American collectors. Some appearances precede the British and all are interesting historically as documents of the spread of public enjoyment of Dickens' texts and because of the influence the texts had on American writers.

Dealers and collectors must coalesce information from several sources, and for those of you interested in this fertile area of collecting I recommend using all of the following:

William Glyde Wilkins' *First and Early American Editions of the Works of Charles Dickens*; Podeschi's catalogue of the Gimbel Collection at Yale (see above); the Sumner & Stillman catalogue (June 1991, Catalogue 36) of the Allan McGuire collection of American editions of Dickens; and any relevant catalogues from Jarndyce, Maggs, Kevin MacDonnell, Vandoros, Heritage and other specialists in Dickens.

If you choose to collect American Dickens I advise working with a specialist in the field who has access to the available information coming from these various sources. I also advise you to be prepared for future research to modify the current best opinions, as the spotlight becomes more and more focused on this area.



Great Complications

FROM A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STANDPOINT AND as a collector's item, Dickens' literary masterpiece *Great Expectations* breaks a few general and Dickens-specific rules, and presents a particularly daunting dilemma to dealers and collectors.

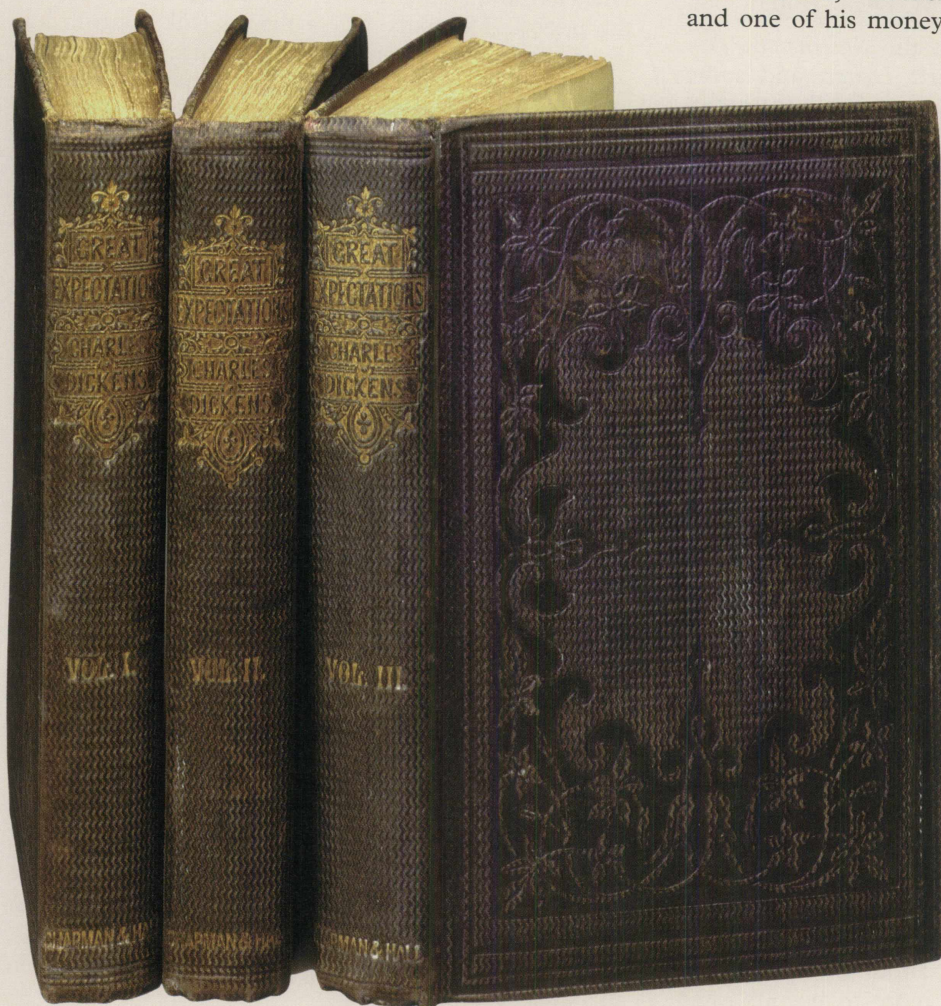
With the publication of *Great Expectations*, Dickens was at the height of his creative genius. He was one of the most famous and most successful writers

of his time, in fact of *all* time. Why would a famous and successful author's most expensive first edition in book form come well into his third decade of international fame and after over a dozen major, famous, popular works? Why was this one of only two of his novels never issued in parts (Dickens' usual method since *Pickwick*)? Why was this novel one of only two not illustrated in their first editions?

The distilled answer to these questions is "All the Year Round," Dickens' personal weekly magazine and one of his money machines. Both for its subject

matter and as a publishing project, *Great Expectations* was highly important to Dickens, but the circulation numbers of "All the Year Round" were important to him, too. When a flagging serialization by another novelist began to threaten the sales figures of "All the Year Round," Dickens took charge of page one with his own eagerly-awaited next novel, *Great Expectations*. *A Tale of Two Cities* had been his prior work of fiction; *Uncommercial Traveller*, his now unfortunately overlooked tour-de-force of mature nonfiction (his adult *Sketches*, if you will) separates—or links—these two novels.

After *A Tale of Two Cities* ran its course in "All the Year Round," Dickens followed with Wilkie Collins' brilliant



The Woman in White. Dickens planned to follow this with the new George Eliot novel, *Adam Bede*, but Eliot decided against serialization and opted for book publication. Dickens asked Charles Lever to jump into the breach and Lever was ready to accommodate by contributing *A Day's Ride: A Life's Romance*. *The Woman in White* concluded in late August 1860. The follow-up Lever novel was pretty dull in comparison and resulted in a significant drop in sales of "All the Year Round." Dickens rightly felt he had better take charge of events by serializing *Great Expectations*, rather than issuing the novel in the usual monthly parts as he had originally hoped. *Great Expectations* was announced in the issue of October 27th, 1860 to whet his readers' appetites.

In order to save his money machine, Dickens debuted Pip and the as-yet-unnamed Magwitch in the December 1st, 1860 issue of "All the Year Round." (Though the honor of their first debut on the world stage was the American "All the Year Round" issue of October 30, 1860, and even "Harper's Weekly" beat the British debut by a week, both technically jeopardizing his British copyright.)

This groundbreaking, haunting, inspired *bildungsroman* unfolded week by week with a circulation of perhaps up to 100,000. The three-decker book edition was published on July 6th, 1861 (about a month before the conclusion of the weekly serialization) in an edition of only 1,000 copies because of the saturation-level of the serialization. It is generally estimated that about 700 of the first printing three-deckers went immediately into the circulating library system. Only 3,750 copies of the three-decker were ever printed.

This fact, along with, of course, the lasting desirability of the title, accounts for the first edition three-decker novel being so expensive. Most genuine first issues of the first edition have been rebound, and often doctored in the process; copies in original cloth can also be doctored with substituted or facsimile title-pages inserted. Completely genuine copies that survive in cloth often have unattractive evidence of library sticker removal from the top boards and related library usage wear and tear, with subsequent recasing and recoloring problems. Even unread and unsophisticated copies have suffered over the years from the susceptibility to quick fading of the purple

dye used on the binding cloth. Thus, a fine copy of the first issue three-decker in original cloth is as much of a grail to the Dickens collector as the legendary "prime" *Pickwick* in parts, and at a similar price level: \$50,000 plus.

Books at this level need close scrutiny, and *Great Expectations* has certainly received its share in the last few years with Robert Patten's *Charles Dickens and His Publishers* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978), Edgar Rosenberg's 1972 article in *Dickens Studies Annual*, Walter Smith's *Charles Dickens in the Original Cloth* (Heritage Book Shop, 1982) and the Clarendon Press at Oxford critical edition of *Great Expectations* published in 1993 (edited by Margaret Cardwell).

I will here attempt a manageable, entry-level summary of this research, filtered through my own experience with the book.

The serialization of the title in "All the Year Round" is virtually ignored by dealers and collectors, though I'm betting this view will change. Scholars have never ignored the serialization because interesting authorial revisions creep into the book form of 1861, except from the final few numbers which were published after the book appeared. I highly endorse the serial appearance in "All the Year Round" to collectors, as it is the first appearance of the bulk of the text and therefore needs no apologies. A run of "All the Year Round" with this title and *A Tale of Two Cities*—and with Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* in between—is usually under \$4,000, sometimes well under, especially if it is not a complete run but only contains the numbers with *Great Expectations*. Clearly this is substantially less expensive than the first issue three-decker. But even these numbers may not be within your budget.

The 1862 one-volume genuine "Second Edition" is beside the point to serious collectors with deep pockets, but it should not be ignored as a real-world compromise to collectors in the average budget range. Budget-minded collectors can also consider filling the slot with the 1863 "Cheap" edition (the word "cheap" did not in those days have such a negative connotation as nowadays) or the 1864 "Library" edition, which is the first to have all eight of the excellent illustrations by Marcus Stone, who was the original illustrator for the first edition of Dickens'

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.
CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

No. 64.] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1860. [PRICE 2d.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS.
BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER I.

Mr father's family name being Pirrip, and my christen name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's, gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "*Also Georgiana Wife of the Above*," I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine—who gave up trying to get a living, exceedingly early in that universal struggle—I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond, was the river;

and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing, was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"O! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man.

"Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me.

"Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man.

"Pit out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat meadow among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside-down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself—for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeples under my legs—when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you've got!"

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time under-sized for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I had'n't had a mind to 't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now then, looker here!" said the man.

"Where's your mother?"

next novel, and the last he finished, *Our Mutual Friend* (1865). The 1862 through 1864 Chapman and Hall editions are usually only in the hundreds of dollars as they are, of course, reprints. In my opinion the 1864 Chapman and Hall first fully illustrated edition is preferable among these for the sake of the illustrations, and to the first Americans (Peterson or Gregory), unless you are focusing on that area of collecting.

In the 1862 one-volume second edition—and all subsequent—there is a small but significant rewording of the final sentence. (The “epilogue” ending that was originally suppressed at the advice of Bulwer Lytton doesn’t appear until the Bernard Shaw edition of *Great Expectations* published by the Limited Editions Club in 1937.) Even the critical controversy over the “two endings” of *Great Expectations* becomes complicated because there are actually three published endings (and a further manuscript and proof variant). The first-written “epilogue” ending, set years after the final scene with Bidley and Joe and the new little Pip, was rewritten at the advice of Dickens’ friend and successful fellow novelist Bulwer Lytton. Dickens famously moved the closing scene to the ruins of the Havisham estate immediately after the Bidley and Joe scene, and here Estella and Pip are brought together again (in a plot coincidence that would probably not work in the hands of a lesser writer). The first edition three-decker ends with the following paragraph:

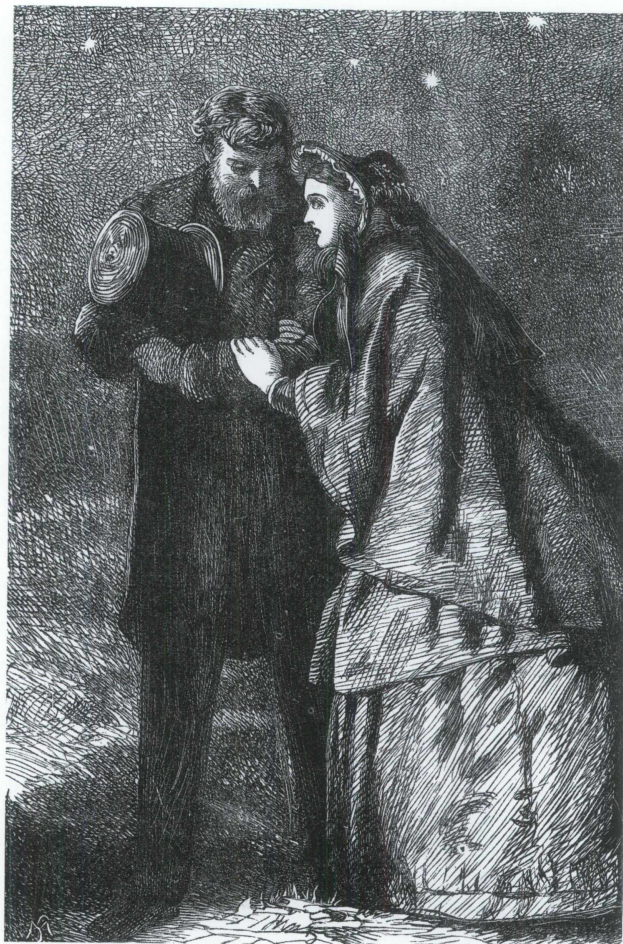
“I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so, the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw the shadow of no parting from her.”

The final words here are an authorial revision of the manuscript: “I saw the shadow of no parting from her but one.” (Manuscript at the Wisbech and Fenland Museum Library, and in an extant proof at the Pierpont Morgan Library).

After the three-decker, all authorized lifetime editions close with the reading: “I saw no shadow of another parting from her.”

Subtle differences, yes—“I saw the shadow”—“I saw no shadow”—but only the first edition ending gives me shudders every time I read it. For this sentence alone the first edition is the one to read.

Key to the dilemma of the publication of *Great Expectations* are the five sets of title-pages for the 1861 three-decker: the first issue of the book had no statement of edition on the title-pages; then there are title-pages bearing statements of “Second Edition” through “Fifth Edition.” These second through fifth “editions” are actually issues of the first edition as no editorial matter is changed—but, of course, collectors seek first printings. There has been some valiant effort to distinguish these second through fifth “editions,” but even the usually reliable Clarendon edition publishes data concerning these five issues from a sampling of only about a dozen copies. There



WITH ESTELLA AFTER ALL.

is scant evidence indeed of two states in the first impression (i.e., a stop-press change) though obviously something happened at some point to the line break on page 192. Perhaps this Clarendon research is a step in the right direction but the reports have to be admitted by all to be statistically unsound. Also, different issues (i.e., publications) may have mixed sheets of different impressions (i.e., press runs) as quires are sent to case binding and then to book stalls. Rosenberg and Patten put forward Whiting’s invoices to Chapman and Hall as indicating a casting of stereotypes from the standing type of the first three-decker edition, but it is possible that there may be traceable degradations between reuses of these stereotypes, or even deliberate revisions. The Clarendon edition does not assume a stereotyping and forwards the supposition that the reductions in later printing costs would also be in keeping with a reuse of standing type kept at the ready. Standing type, of course, lends itself more easily than a stereo casting to textual revisions. Text block measurements may even come into play someday, as they do in Hatton and Cleaver’s survey of text measurements of reprinted parts of *Pickwick*. Peter Shillingsburg’s work following changes made after the stereotyping of Thackeray’s *Pendennis* and *Vanity Fair* show that such stereotyping definitely does not finalize the text or leave it immune to further authorial or editorial tin-


kering. The nightmarish reprintings of these works show how complicated the problem can get.

For sanity's sake, and for pricing purposes, I would suggest these distinctions: the first printing of the first edition, printed from standing type, with genuine title-pages can be called the "First Edition, first issue;" and the stated "Second" through "Fifth" "editions" can be called "First Edition, later issue" and treated as a group. I forward this distinction because among these later issues—whether printed from standing type or stereotypes—of the three-decker I see no intrinsic, real-world difference in either value or desirability. In other words, nice copies in cloth with title-pages stating "Second Edition" have no claim to be priced any higher than those with any other later title-pages. All are substantially less valuable than first issue title-pages. But, since the true first can be prohibitively expensive for most mortals, these copies should not be overlooked as they are, in technical terms, still "first edition," though not first issue, and are in the same three-decker format and with the same final line of text (which, as mentioned above, never appears again after the 1862 one-volume revision).

For the record, these later-issue copies were issued from August through November, 1861. Rosenberg's article in *Dickens Studies Annual* (1972) and contemporary Chapman and Hall advertisements, especially in "All the Year Round" and the parts issue of Trollope's *Orley Farm*, have established a fairly reliable timeline. Patten is also helpful (pp. 288-293). I am not completely comfortable with any attempt to pinpoint exact dates of printing, issue or publication, because we should all know by now that the "Pub Date" is not necessarily the exact date the book is actually available for purchase by the public. Further, nailing down exact dates of what are known to be later issues seems more trouble than it's worth, as such information will not affect value.

Copies of the three-decker *Great Expectations*, either in original cloth or rebound, with title-pages stating "Second Edition" through "Fifth Edition" are pretty straightforward and easy to deal with. They are what they are, and get priced on condition. The situation gets much more complicated and difficult with the title-pages that say nothing, thus purporting to be announcing text blocks of "First Editions,"—unmixed first impressions. One must be cautious about the insertion of later issue genuine title-pages that have their edition statement erased. These can be detected by surface abrasions if amateurishly done, or by holding the leaf to the light as if looking for a watermark if the devious deed has been professionally accomplished. There are also excellent facsimile title-pages out there, some of which are so good that I keep records of their line measurements and micrometer readings. One has to be extremely wary of copies with evidence of recasing or later endpapers, or even with a little unnatural tightness at the gutters of the title-pages. Remember, also, that only in Volume I are the first two leaves ever conju-

gate. Evidence of their separation can help verify authenticity. But in Volumes II and III, the title-page is a single leaf insert. Even with rebound copies these title-page tests can still be useful. The catalogue inserted with the first issue was that of May, 1861, but by its very nature as an insert, it cannot speak for the text block it accompanies, nor should its lack vilify what can otherwise be identified as a first.

Caveat emptor: when buying books at this level, it's a good idea to know the material yourself, or at least be sure you're dealing with a bookseller who knows the material and can walk you intelligently through the current research and the copy or copies under consideration to your satisfaction. Not everyone who wants a fine first printing of *Great Expectations* in original cloth can get one, but if you get any early copy of this book for your collection, you should know precisely what you're getting and you should be comfortable that you are paying an appropriate price for it. 



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