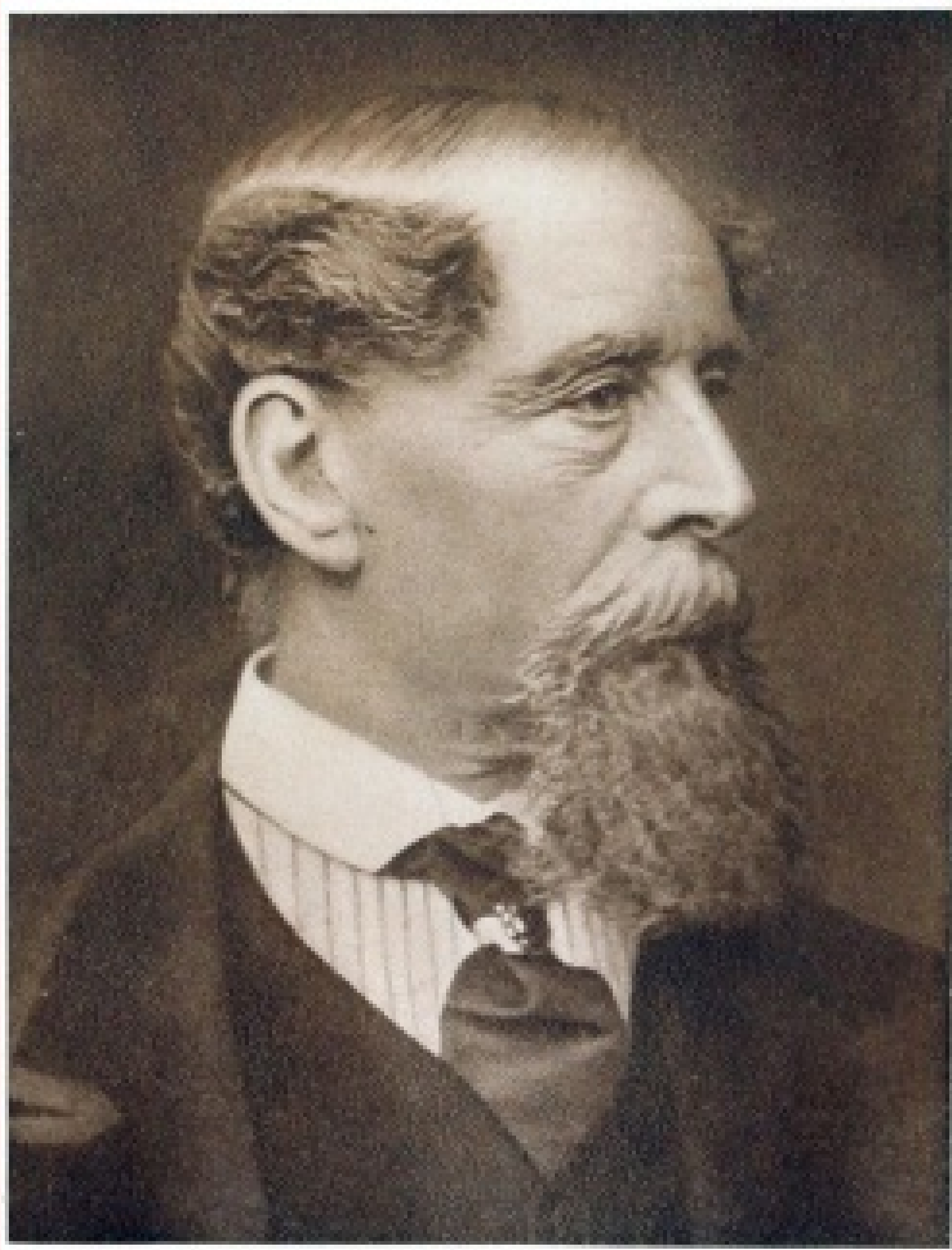
CHARLES DICKENS



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G. K. Chesterton and Frederick George Kitton

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Charles Dickens
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List of Illustrations
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Some Portraits of Charles Dickens
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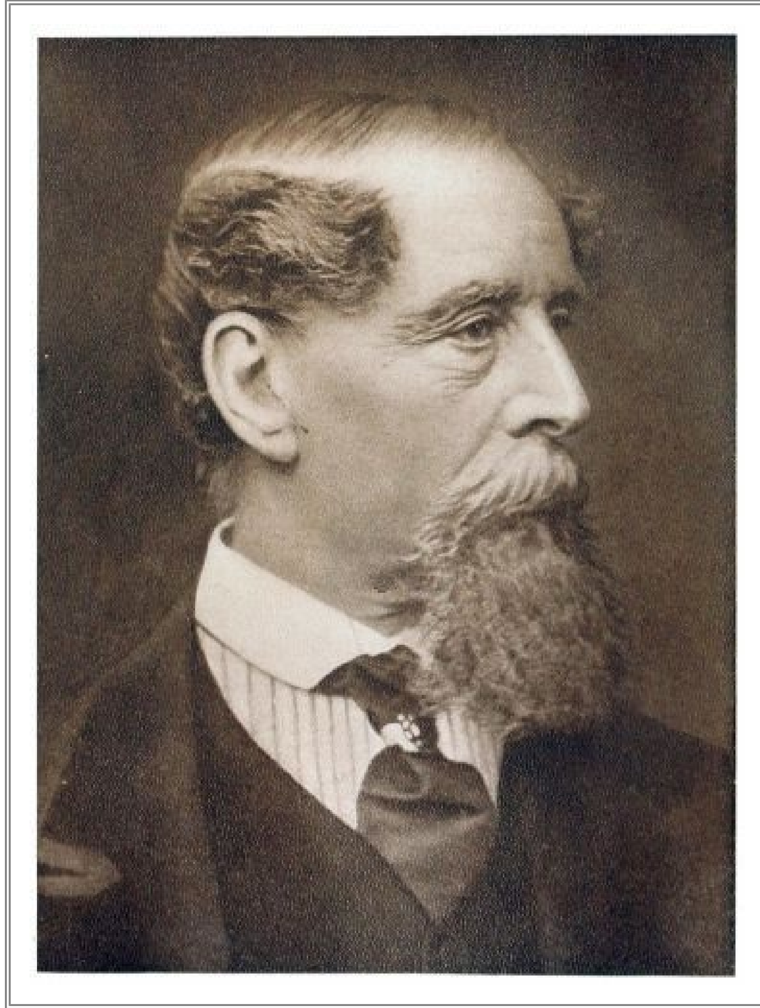

CHARLES DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS

BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

AND

F. G. KITTON

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
HODDER AND STOUGHTON
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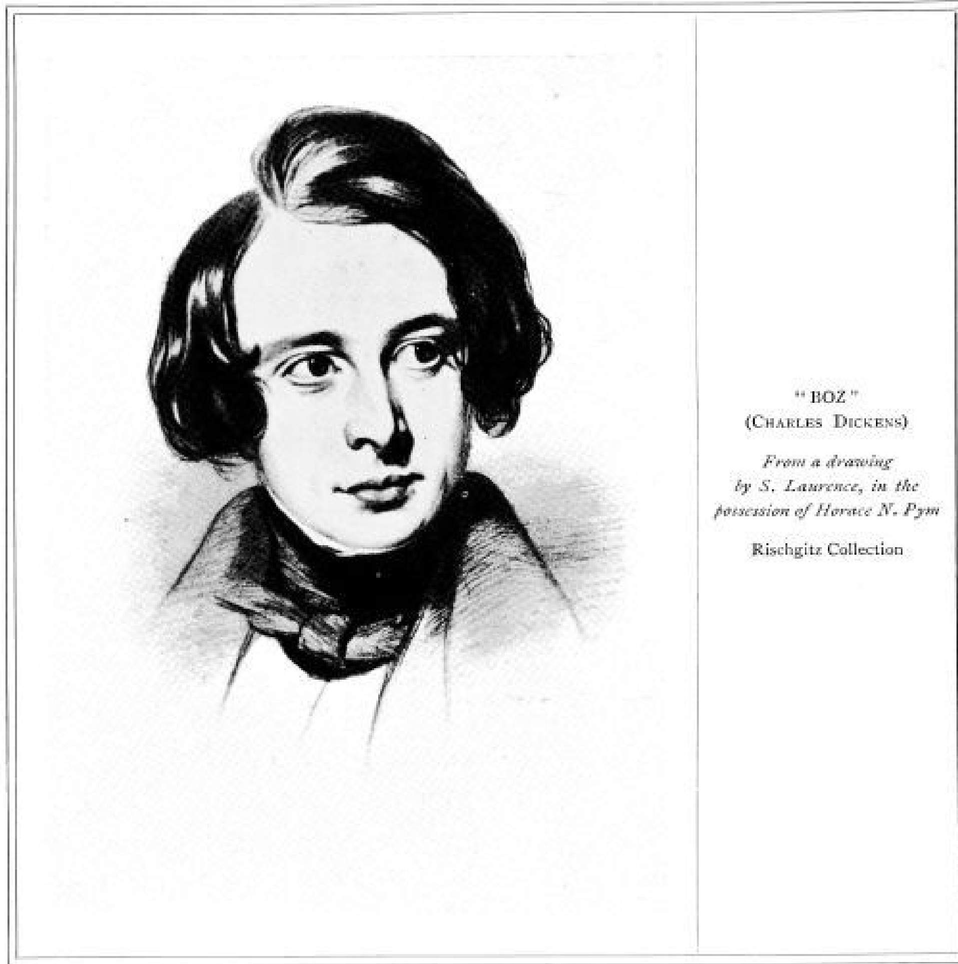
CHARLES DICKENS

From a photo by Walter Dexter

THE CORN EXCHANGE, ROCHESTER HIGH STREET
Showing the "Moon-faced" Clock

CONSIDERED merely as literary fashions, romanticism and realism are both tricks, and tricks alone. The only advantage lies with romanticism, which is a little less artificial and technical than realism. For the great majority of people here and now do naturally write romanticism, as we see it in a love-letter, or a diary, or a quarrel, and nobody on earth naturally writes realism as we see it in a description by Flaubert. But both are technical dodges and realism only the more eccentric. It is a trick to make things happen harmoniously always, and it is a trick to make them always happen discordantly. It is a trick to make a heroine, in the act of accepting a lover, suddenly aureoled by a chance burst of sunshine, and then to call it romance. But it is quite as much of a trick to make her, in the act of accepting a lover, drop her umbrella, or trip over a hassock, and then call it the bold plain realism of life. If any one wishes to satisfy himself as to how excessively little this technical realism has to do, I do not say with profound reality, but even with casual truth to life, let him make a simple experiment offered to him by the history of literature. Let him ask what is of all English books the book most full of this masterly technical realism, most full of all these arresting details, all these convincing irrelevancies, all these impedimenta of prosaic life; and then as far as truth to life is concerned he will find that it is a

story about men as big as houses and men as small as dandelions, about horses with human souls and an island that flew like a balloon.



“BOZ”
(CHARLES DICKENS)

From a drawing
by S. Laurence, in the
possession of Horace N. Pym

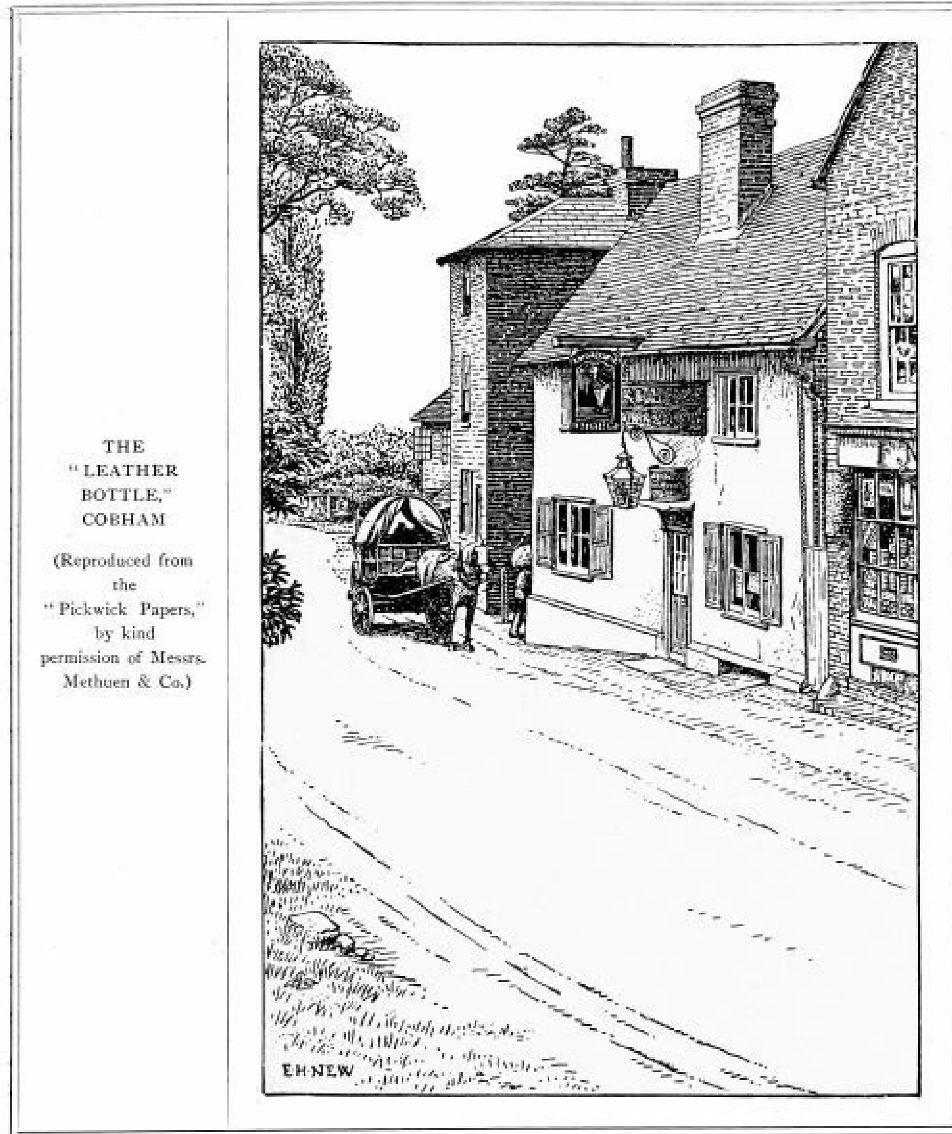
Rischgitz Collection

THE BIRTHPLACE OF DICKENS: No. 387, COMMERCIAL ROAD, LANDPORT, PORTSEA
(From “Rambles in Dickens-Land,” by R. Allbut. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. S. T. Freemantle & Co.)

We can never understand a writer of the old romantic school, even if he is as great and splendid as Dickens is great and splendid, until we realise this preliminary fact to which I have drawn attention. The fact that these merely technical changes are merely technical, and have nothing whatever to do with the force and truth behind. We are bound to find a considerable amount of Dickens’s work, especially the pathetic and heroic passages, artificial and pompous. But that is only because we are far enough off his trick or device to see that it is such. Our own trick and device we believe to be as natural as the eternal hills. It is no more natural, even when compared with the Dickens devices, than a rockery is natural, even when compared with a Dutch flower bed. The time will come when the wildest upheaval of Zolaism, when the most abrupt and colloquial dialogue of Norwegian drama, will appear a fine old piece of

No. 15, FURNIVAL'S INN, HOLBORN
Charles Dickens lived in 1836
(Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. Methuen & Co.)

charming affectation, a stilted minuet of literature, like little Nell in the churchyard, or the repentance of the white-haired Dombey. All their catchwords will have become catchwords; the professor's



THE “LEATHER BOTTLE,” COBHAM

(Reproduced from the “Pickwick Papers,” by kind permission of Messrs. Methuen & Co.)

explanations of heredity will have the mellow, foolish sound of the villain’s curses against destiny. And in that time men will for the first time become aware of the real truth and magnificence of Zola and Ibsen, just as we, if we are wise, are now becoming aware of the real truth and magnificence of Dickens.

This is even more true if we look first at that fundamental optimistic feeling about life, which as it has been often and truly said is the main essence of Dickens. If Dickens’s optimism had merely been a matter of happy endings, reconciliations, and orange flowers, it would be a mere superficial art or craft. But it would not, as in the case discussed above, be in any way more superficial than the pessimism of the modern episode, or short story, which is an affair of

bad endings, disillusionments, and arsenic. The truth about life is that joy and sorrow are mingled in an almost rhythmical alternation like day and night. The whole of optimistic technique consists in the dodge of breaking off the story at dawn, and the whole of pessimistic technique in the art of breaking off the story at dusk. But wherever and whenever mere artists choose to consider the matter ended, the matter is never ended, and trouble and exultation go on in a design larger than any of ours, neither vanishing at all. Beyond our greatest happiness there lie dangers, and after our greatest dangers there remaineth a rest.

But the element in Dickens which we are forced to call by the foolish and unmanageable word optimism is a very much deeper and more real matter than any question of plot and conclusion. If Mr. Pickwick had been drowned when he fell through the ice; if Mr. Dick Swiveller had never recovered from the fever, these catastrophes might have been artistically inappropriate, but they would not have sufficed to make the stories sad. If Sam Weller had committed suicide from religious difficulties, if Florence Dombey had been murdered (most justly murdered) by Captain Cuttle, the stories would still be the happiest stories in the world. For their happiness is a state of the soul; a state in which our natures are full of the wine of an ancient youth, in which banquets last for ever, and roads lead everywhere, where all things are under the exuberant leadership of faith, hope, and charity, the three gayest of the virtues.

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1839

From the picture by Daniel Maclise, R.A. Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840, and now in the National Portrait Gallery

Rischgitz Collection

From a drawing by G. Cattermole in the South Kensington Museum
THE GRAVE OF LITTLE NELL
Rischgitz Collection

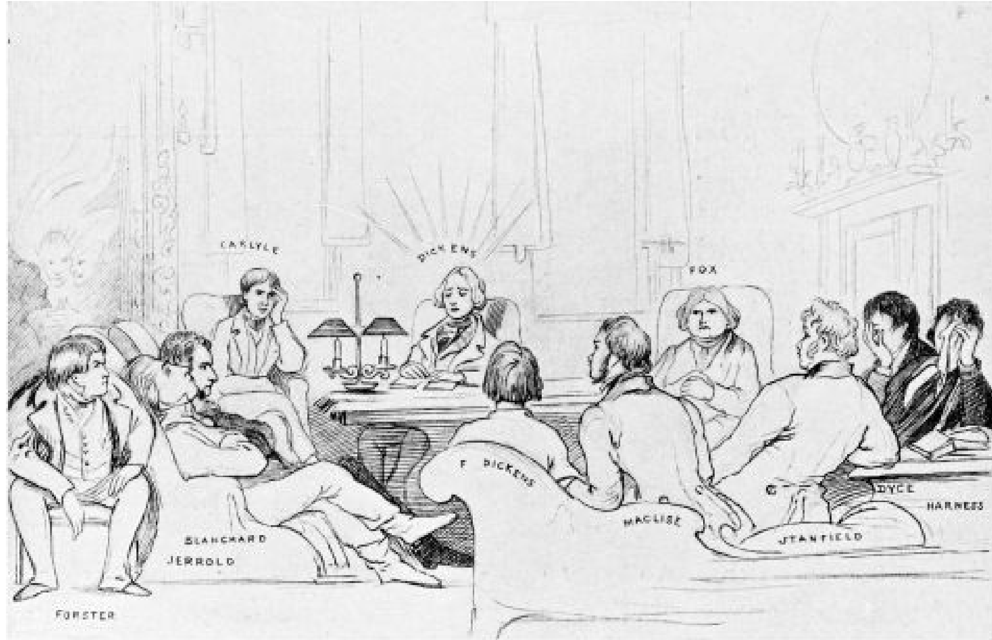
There is, of course, an optimism which is evil and debasing, and to this it must be confessed that Dickens sometimes descends. The worst optimism is that which, in making things comfortable, prevents them from becoming joyful; it bears the same relation to an essential and true optimism that the pleasure of sitting in an arm-chair bears to the pleasure of sitting on a galloping horse. It is the optimism which denies that burning hurts a martyr. More profoundly considered, it may be called the optimism which, in order to give a being more life, denies him his individual life; in order to give him more pleasure, denies him his especial pleasure. It offers the hunter repose, and the student pleasure, and the poet an explanation. Dickens, as I have said, sometimes fell into this. Nothing could be more atrocious, for instance, than his course of action in concluding "David Copperfield" with an account of the great Micawber at last finding wealth and success as a mayor in Australia. Micawber would never succeed; never ought to succeed; his kingdom was not of this world. His mind to him a kingdom was; he was one of those splendid and triumphant poor, who have the faculty of capturing, without a coin of money or a stroke of work, that ultimate sense of possessing wealth and luxury, which is the only reward of the toils and crimes of the rich. It is but a sentiment after all, this idea of money, and a poor man who is also a poet, like Micawber, may find a short end to it. To make such a man, after a million mental triumphs over material circumstances, become the mere pauper and dependent of material success, is something more than an artistic blunder: it is a moral lapse; it is a wicked and blasphemous thing to have done. The end of "David Copperfield" is not a happy ending; it is a very

miserable ending. To make Micawber a mayor is about as satisfying a termination as it would be to make Sir Lancelot after Arthur's death become a pork butcher or a millionaire, or to make Enoch Arden grow fat and marry an heiress. There is a satisfaction that is far more depressing than any tragedy. And the essence of it, as I have said, lies in the fact that it violates the real and profound philosophical optimism of the universe, which has given to each thing its incommunicable air and its strange reason for living. It offers instead, another joy or peace which is alien and nauseous; it offers grass to the dog and fire to the fishes. It is, indeed, in the same tradition as that cruel and detestable kindness to animals, which has been one of the disgraces of humanity: from the modern lady who pulls a fat dog on a chain through a crowded highway, back to the Roman Cæsar who fed his horse on wine, and made it a political magistrate.

From a photo by Walter Dexter

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP

The same error in an even more irreverent form occurs, of course, in the same book. The essence of the Dickens genius was

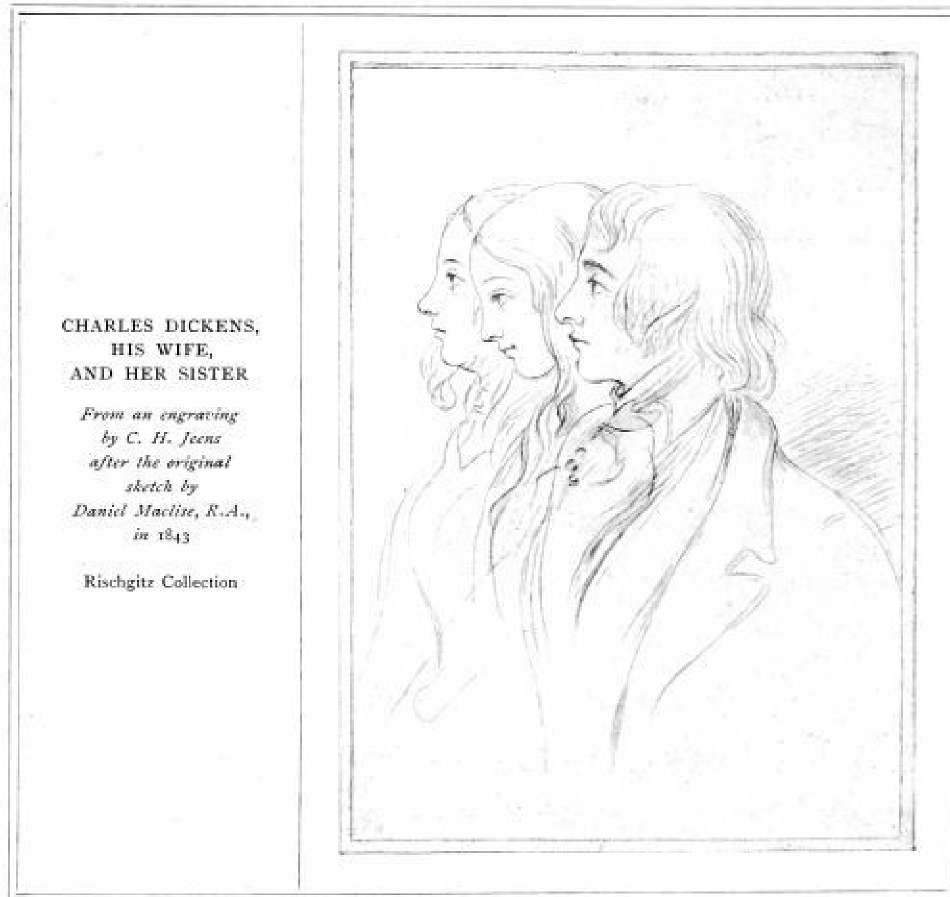


From an engraving by C. H. Jeens, after the original sketch by Daniel Maclise, R.A.

CHARLES DICKENS READING “THE CHIMES” TO HIS FRIENDS AT 58, LINCOLN’S INN FIELDS, MONDAY, THE 2nd OF DECEMBER, 1844

Rischgitz Collection

exaggeration, and in that general sense Dora, in “David Copperfield,” may be called an exaggerated character; but she is an extremely real and an extremely agreeable character for all that. She is supposed to be very weak and ineffectual, but she has about a hundred times more personal character than all Dickens’s waxwork heroines put together, the unendurable Agnes by no means excluded. It almost passes comprehension how a man who could conceive such a character should so insult it, as Dickens does, in making Dora recommend her husband’s second marriage with Agnes. Dora, who stands for the profound and exquisite irrationality of simple affection, is made the author of a piece of priggish and dehumanised rationalism which is worthy of Miss Agnes herself. One could easily respect such a husband when he married again,



CHARLES DICKENS, HIS WIFE, AND HER SISTER

From an engraving by C. H. Jeens after the original sketch by Daniel Maclise, R.A., in 1843

Rischgitz Collection

but surely not such a wife when she desired it. The truth is, of course, that here again Dickens is following his evil genius which bade him make those he loved comfortable instead of happy. It may seem at first sight a paradox to say that the special fault of optimism is a lack of faith in God: but so it is. There are some whom we should not seek to make comfortable: their appeasement is in more awful hands. There are conflicts, the reconciliation of which lies beyond the powers not only of human effort but of human rational conception. One of them is the reconciliation between good and evil themselves in the scheme of nature; another is the reconciliation of Dora and Agnes. To say that we know they will be reconciled is faith; to say that we see that they will be reconciled is blasphemy.

From a drawing by Miss Ryland, in the South Kensington Museum

DOTHEBOYS HALL, 1841

Rischgitz Collection

From the painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A. Exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1846
CHARLES DICKENS AS CAPTAIN BOBADIL IN “EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR”
(Reproduced from *The Sketch*, by kind permission of the London Electrotype Agency)

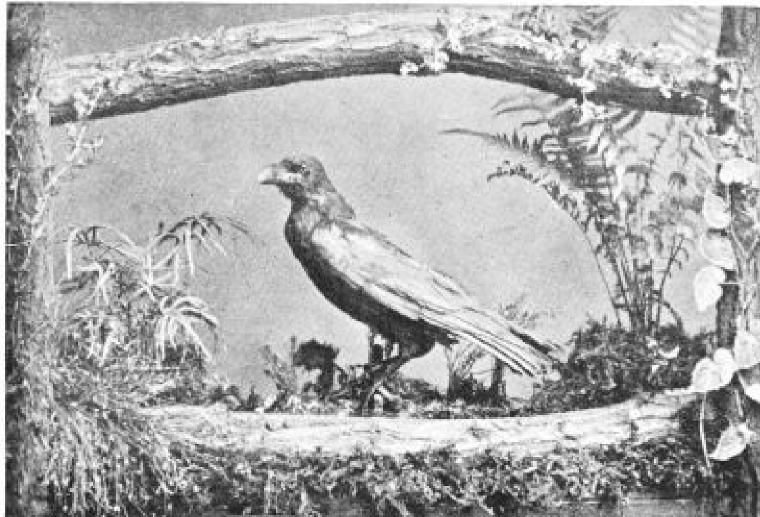
Dickens was, of course, as is repeated *ad nauseam*, a caricaturist, and when we have understood this word we have understood the whole matter; but in truth the word, caricaturist, is commonly misunderstood; it is even, in the case of men like Dickens, used as implying a reproach. Whereas it has no more reproach in it than the word organist. Caricature is not merely an important form of art; it is a form of art which is often most useful for purposes of profound philosophy and powerful symbolism. The age of scepticism put caricature into ephemeral feuilletons; but the ages of faith built

From a lithograph, after the drawing by Alfred Count D'Orsay
A PORTRAIT OF CHARLES DICKENS IN 1842
Reproduced from *The Magazine of Art*, by kind permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., Ltd.

caricatures into their churches of everlasting stone. One extraordinary idea has been constantly repeated, the idea that it is very easy to make a mere caricature of anything. As a matter of fact it is

From an etching after a daguerreotype by Mayall

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1851

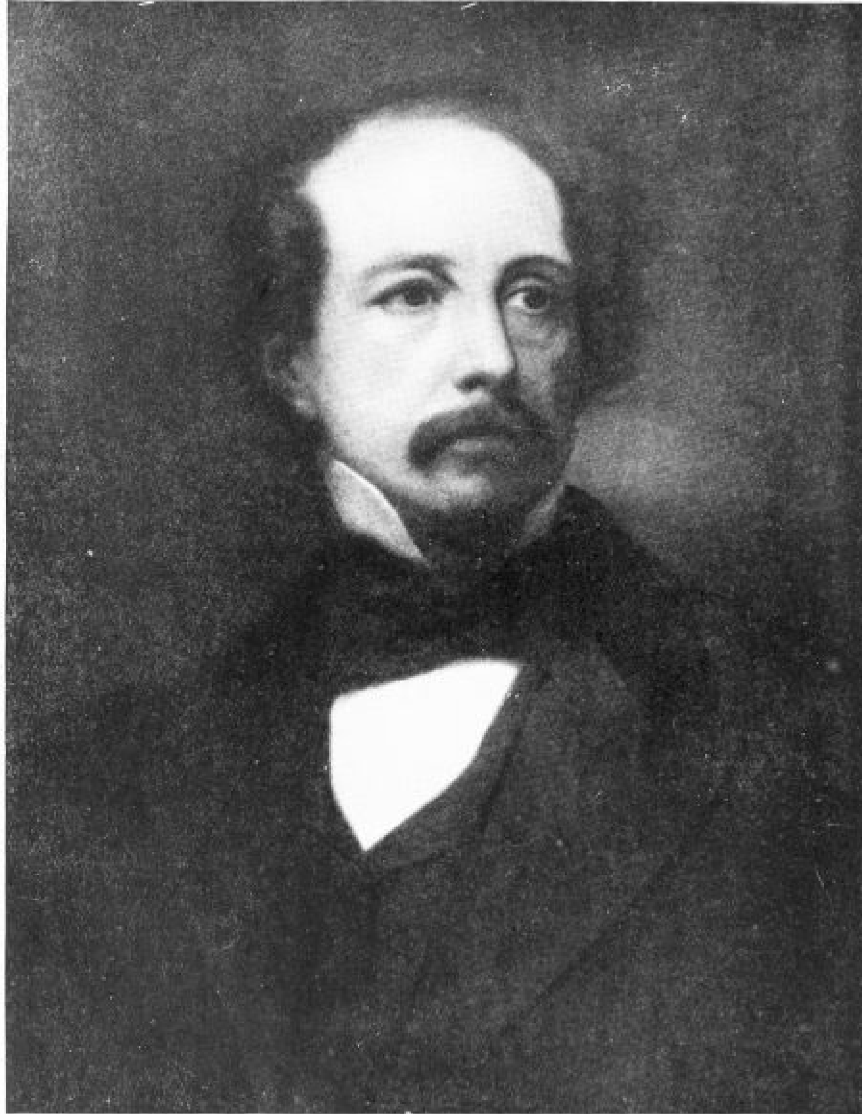


DICKENS'S FAVOURITE RAVEN

The original of “Grip” in “Barnaby Rudge.” After death the famous bird was stuffed, and when sold at the Dickens Sale it realised £126

(Reproduced by kind permission of the London Stereoscopic Co.)

extraordinarily difficult, for it implies a knowledge of what part of a thing to caricature. To reproduce the proportions of a face, exactly as they are, is a comparatively safe adventure; to arrange those features in an entirely new proportion, and yet retain a resemblance, argues a very delicate instinct for what features are really the characteristic and essential ones. Caricature is only easy when it so happens that the people depicted, like Cyrano de Bergerac, are more or less caricatures themselves. In other words caricature is only easy when it does not caricature very much. But to see an ordinary intelligent face in the street, and to know that, with the nose three times as long and the head twice as broad, it will still be a startling likeness, argues a profound insight into truth. “Caricature,” said Sir Willoughby Patterne, in his fatuous way, “is rough truth.” It is not; it is subtle truth. This is what gives Dickens his unquestionable place among artists. He realised thoroughly a certain phase or atmosphere of existence, and he knew the precise strokes and touches that would bring it home to the reader. That Dickens phase or atmosphere may be roughly defined as the phase of a vivid sociability in which every



From the painting by Ary Scheller, in the National Portrait Gallery

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1855

Rischgitz Collection

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE

Where Dickens resided for nearly nine years, dating from November, 1851.
(From “Rambles in Dickens-Land,” by R. Allbut. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. S. T. Freemantle & Co.)

man becomes unusually and startlingly himself. A good caricature will sometimes seem more like the original than the original: so it is in the greatest moments of social life. He is an unfortunate man; a man unfitted to value life and certainly unfitted to value Dickens, who has not sat at some table or talked in some company in which every one was in character, each a beautiful caricature of himself.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

EASTGATE HOUSE, ROCHESTER (THE ORIGINAL OF THE NUNS' HOUSE IN "THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD")

(From "Rambles in Dickens-Land," by R. Allbut. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. S. T. Freemantle & Co.)

CHARLES DICKENS

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

THE asseveration that “Dickens” is “a name to conjure with” seems almost a truism. The innumerable editions of his works so constantly pouring from the press abundantly testify to the continued and unabated popularity of the most famous writer of fiction of the Victorian epoch. As regards the circumstances appertaining to his career the start in life under harassing conditions, the brilliant success attending his initial efforts in authorship, the manner in which he took the world by storm and retained his grip of the public by the sheer force of genius—there is, I venture to believe, no parallel in the history of literature. Born in a humble station of life, his early years spent in the midst of an uncongenial (not to say demoralising) environment, his natural gifts, combined with almost superhuman powers of perseverance, enabled him to overcome obstacles which would have deterred ordinary men, with the result that he rapidly attained the topmost rung of the ladder of fame, and remained there.

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1844

From a Miniature by Miss Margaret Gillies exhibited in the Royal Academy, 1844. Engraved on wood by R. Taylor for "The Magazine of Art"

(Reproduced from *The Magazine of Art*, by kind permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., Ltd.)

Although the leading incidents in the life of Charles Dickens are generally familiar, thanks to the various biographies of him published from time to time, a few facts, briefly stated, will not, I hope, be devoid of interest. The novelist first saw the light at No. 387, Commercial Road, Mile End, Landport, in the Island of Portsea. Like David Copperfield, he was born on a Friday, the natal day being February 7th, 1812. The baptismal register of Portsea Parish Church (St. Mary's, Kingston), where he was christened, records that three names were bestowed upon him, Charles John Huffam, the second being that of his father, and the third the cognomen of his godfather, Christopher Huffam, a "Rigger to his Majesty's Navy," who lived at Limehouse Hole, on the north bank of the Thames. The birthplace in Landport—still existing is an unpretentious tenement of two storeys, surmounted by a dormer window, and fronted by a small railed-in garden. John Dickens, the father of Charles, had filled a clerical

From a photo by Fradelle & Young

CHARLES DICKENS AT WORK

position in the Navy Pay Office, Somerset House, whence he was transferred to a similar post at Portsea. About four years after the birth of Charles (the second child), the Dickens family removed to Chatham, residing there until the boy was eleven years old. It was at Chatham where he first went to school, and where he, being endowed with exceptional powers of observation, imbibed his earliest impressions of humanity, to be subsequently made available as material for his inimitable sketches.

London, however, was again to be the home of John Dickens—the mighty metropolis which, with its phantasmagoria of life in its every aspect, its human comedies and tragedies, ever attracted the great writer, whose magic pen revelled in the delineation of them. It was in 1823 that the Dickens family took up their residence in Bayham Street, Camden Town—then the poorest part of the London suburbs. There had come a crisis in the affairs of the elder Dickens which necessitated the strictest economy, and the house in Bayham Street (which may still be seen at No. 141) was nothing but “a mean tenement, with a wretched little back garden abutting on a squalid court.” This was the beginning of a sad and bitter experience in the life of Charles Dickens. Here he seemed to fall into a solitary condition, apart from all other boys of his own age, and, recalling the circumstances in after years, he observed to Forster: “As I thought, in the little back-garret in Bayham Street, of all I had lost in losing Chatham, what would I have given, if I had had anything to give, to have been sent back to any other school, to have been taught something anywhere?” Not only did the exceptionally intelligent lad miss the pleasures of association with his schoolfellows and playmates at Chatham, but he no longer had recourse to the famous books whose acquaintance he had made there.—“Don Quixote,” “Robinson Crusoe,” “The Arabian Nights,” *et hoc genus omne*—which, as admirers of his works will remember, he was so fond of quoting. The account given by Forster of the Bayham Street days is painful reading, and we are told that, thus living under circumstances of a hopeless and struggling poverty, the extreme sensitiveness of the boy caused him to experience acute mental suffering.

From a photo by Ellis & Wallery

No. 1. DEVONSHIRE TERRACE
Dickens’s residence from 1839 to 1850, where much of his best work was done
(Reproduced from *The Windsor Magazine* by kind permission of the Editor)

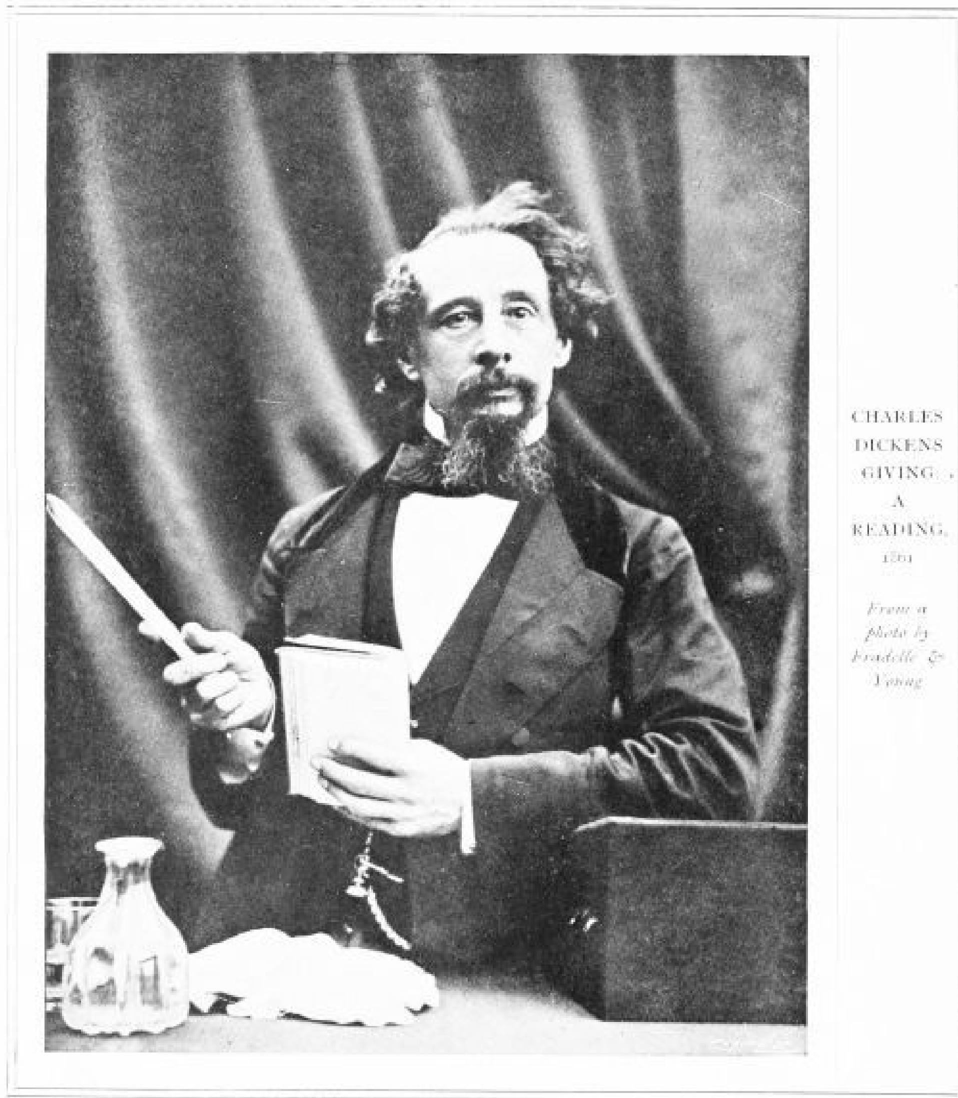
After a short residence in Bayham Street, the family removed their belongings to Gower Street North (the identical house was demolished a few years ago), and an effort was made to bring grist to the mill by an attempt on the part of Mrs. Dickens to start a school for young ladies; but the venture proved abortive, notwithstanding the fact that Charles did his utmost to aid the project by leaving “at a great many doors, a great many circulars,” calling attention to the advantages of the establishment. John Dickens’s financial difficulties increased, tradesmen became pertinacious in their claims for a settlement of long-standing debts, which could not be met, until at last the father was arrested, and lodged in a debtors prison—events

After the painting by W. P. Frith, A.R.A., in the Forster Collection at the South Kensington Museum

CHARLES DICKENS IN 1859

Rischgitz Collection

which the novelist afterwards vividly recalled, and which will be found duly set forth in “David Copperfield.”



CHARLES DICKENS GIVING A READING, 1861
From a photo by Fradelle & Young

It was at this awkward juncture that some relatives of the family, named Lamert, realising that an opportunity should be given to the poor neglected lad of earning a livelihood, found him an occupation in their blacking-manufactory (started in opposition to the famous Warren), and here he earned a few shillings a week by covering and labelling pots of paste blacking! While infinitely preferable to a state of enforced idleness under demoralising conditions, the boy's experience during what is usually referred to as "the blacking-bottle period" for ever remained a terrible nightmare, and the novelist pointedly referred to that unhappy time when in "David Copperfield" he observed that no one could express "the secret agony" of his soul as he sank into the companionship of those by whom he was then surrounded, and felt his "early

hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man" crushed in his breast. In respect of a miserable and neglected boyhood, Alphonse Daudet suffered as did Charles Dickens, and, phœnix-like, both emerged triumphantly from the ashes of what to them appeared to be a cruel conflagration of their desires and aspirations.

CHARLES DICKENS DRIVING WITH MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY

Reproduced from *The Favourite Magazine*, by kind permission of Messrs. Paul Naumann, Ltd.

There is no doubt that the ordeal of poverty, with its unhappy accompaniments, had counteracting advantages in the case of Charles Dickens: his natural abilities were sharpened, as well as his powers of observation, his excellent memory enabling him in after years to record those actualities of life which render his books a perpetual joy and delight. Fortunately, brighter days were in store. The elder Dickens (in whom it is easy to detect glimpses of Mr. Micawber) was in a position to send Charles to a reputable school in the Hampstead Road, known as Wellington House Academy (still standing), where he remained two years, and on leaving it he entered another scholastic establishment near Brunswick Square, there completing his studies, rudimentary at the best.

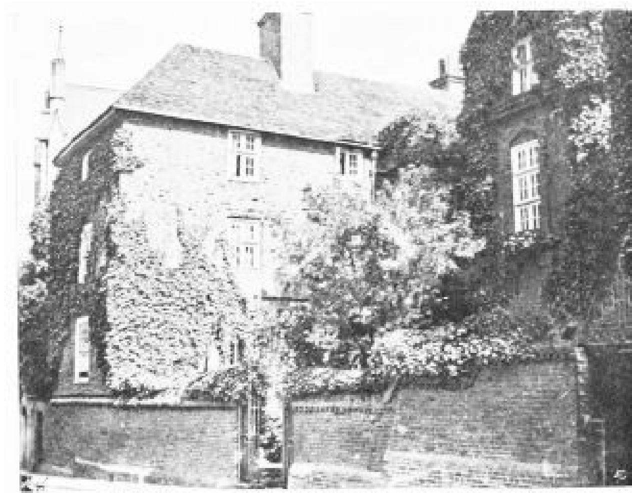
GAD’S HILL PLACE, NEAR ROCHESTER, KENT.
The last residence of Charles Dickens
(From “Rambles in Dickens-Land,” by R. Allbut. Reproduced by kind permission of Messrs. S. T. Freemantle & Co.)

The year 1827 proved a memorable one for the subject of this sketch, for then it was that he, in his fifteenth year, “began life,” first as a clerk in a lawyer’s office in Lincoln’s Inn, and then acting in a similar capacity for a firm of attorneys in Gray’s Inn, where his weekly salary amounted to something under a sovereign. As was his wont, he made mental memoranda of his environment, noting the manners, customs, and peculiarities of lawyers, their clerks and clients, for the result of which one needs only to turn to the pages of the immortal “Pickwick.” His father, who had left the Navy Pay Office, turned his attention to journalism, and at this time had become a newspaper parliamentary reporter. Charles, craving for a similar occupation, in which he believed there might be an opening for greater things, resolutely determined to study shorthand, and became an assiduous attendant at the British Museum. His persevering struggle with the mysteries of stenography was recalled when recording David Copperfield’s experience—a struggle resulting in ultimate victory. Following in his father’s footsteps, he, at the age of nineteen, succeeded in obtaining an appointment as a reporter in the Press Gallery at the House of Commons, where he was presently acknowledged to be the most skilful shorthand writer among the many so engaged there.

From a photo by C. Watkins

MRS. CHARLES DICKENS
The Novelist's widow died in 1879

Dickens had just attained his majority when, in 1833, he essayed to venture into the realm of fiction. He has himself related how, one evening at twilight, he stealthily entered "a dark court" in Fleet Street (it was Johnson's Court), and with fear and trembling dropped into "a dark letter-box" the manuscript of his first paper—a humorous sketch entitled "A Dinner at Poplar Walk" (afterwards called "Mr. Minns and his Cousin"); and how, when it "appeared in all the glory of print," he walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half an hour, because (he explains) his eyes "were so dimmed with joy and pride, that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there." To this initial effort (which was published in the old *Monthly Magazine*, December, 1833) there is a slight reference in the forty-second chapter of "David Copperfield," where the youthful hero intimates that he "wrote a little something, in secret, and sent it to a magazine, and it was published in the magazine." His journeys across country by coach or postchaise, when reporting for his newspaper (the *Morning Chronicle*), proved invaluable from a literary standpoint, inasmuch as those expeditions by day and night and in all seasons afforded him special opportunities of studying human idiosyncrasies, as he necessarily came into contact with "all sorts and conditions of men."



From a photo by Walter Dexter

RESTORATION HOUSE (THE “SATIS HOUSE” OF “GREAT EXPECTATIONS”)

From a photo by Walter Dexter

THE BULL HOTEL, ROCHESTER
“Good house—nice beds....” *Vide* “Pickwick”

The success of his little paper in the *Monthly Magazine* induced him to try his hand at others, for gratuitous publication in the same journal. They bore no signature until the sixth sketch appeared, when he adopted the curious pseudonym of “Boz”: this had for some time previously been to him

From a photo by Mason & Co.

A PORTRAIT OF CHARLES DICKENS AT ABOUT THE AGE OF 50
Rischgitz Collection

a familiar household word, as it was the nickname of his youngest brother, Augustus, whom (in honour of “The Vicar of Wakefield,” one of his favourite books) he had dubbed Moses, which, being facetiously pronounced through the nose, became Boses, and being shortened became Boz.

CHARLES DICKENS, *circa* 1864
(Reproduced from *The Favourite Magazine*, by kind permission of Messrs. Paul Naumann, Ltd.)

The time had now arrived when he considered himself justified in endeavouring to increase his stipend as a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* by offering to contribute to its pages a similar series of sketches, for which he should be remunerated, and the proposal was acceded to. Accordingly we find several papers signed “Boz” in the *Evening Chronicle*, an offshoot of the *Morning Chronicle*. Some of his sketches of “Scenes and Characters” (signed “Tibbs”) appeared simultaneously in *Bell’s Life in London*, and a couple also in “The Library of Fiction,” edited by Charles Whitehead. Early in 1836 Dickens collected together a number of these bright little articles and stories, and sold the copyright for £100 to Macrone, who published them in two volumes under the title of “Sketches by Boz.”

Although remarkable for their humour and originality, the “Boz” sketches were presently to be eclipsed by a work which immediately took the world by storm, and upon which the reputation of Dickens securely rests. I allude to the ever fascinating “Pickwick Papers,” and perhaps the most extraordinary circumstance in connection therewith is the fact that the author was then only three-and-twenty.

CHARLES DICKENS, *circa* 1864
(Reproduced from *The Favourite Magazine*, by kind permission of Messrs. Paul Naumann, Ltd.)

his book rapidly achieving a degree of popularity which we cannot but regard as astounding even in these days of large editions. The “Pickwick Papers” originated in this way. The junior partner of what was then a young publishing house, Messrs. Chapman & Hall (now a leading London firm), called upon the rising author at his rooms in Furnival’s Inn with a proposition that he should furnish the letterpress for a “monthly something” that should be a vehicle for certain sporting-plates by a humorous draughtsman named Seymour. The first idea of a sort of Nimrod Club did not appeal to Dickens, for the excellent reason that he was no sportsman, and it was therefore eventually decided that, having agreed to supply the text, he should exercise a free hand, allowing the illustrations to arise naturally from the text. To give a complete history of the “Pickwick Papers” would occupy considerable space. Suffice it to say that the book was issued in shilling monthly parts (1836-37), then a favourite method of publishing novels, and consistently adopted by Dickens; that it was illustrated by means of etchings; that the sale of the first few numbers was so small that both publishers and author were in despair; and that the success of the work was assured as soon as Sam Weller made his first bow to the public—a character which, by reason of its freshness and originality, called forth such admiration that the sale of ensuing numbers increased until a circulation of forty thousand

copies was attained! The creation of Sam Weller, therefore, was the turning-point in Dickens's fortune, and so great became the popularity of the book that the name of "Pickwick" was bestowed by enterprising tradesmen upon their newest goods, while portraits of Dickens himself were in the ascendant. People of every degree, young and old, revelled in the pages of the "Pickwick Papers"—judges on the bench as well as boys in the street; and we are reminded of Carlyle's anecdote of a solemn clergyman who, as he left the room of a sick person to whom he had been administering ghostly consolation, heard the invalid ejaculate, "Well, thank God, 'Pickwick' [the monthly number] will be out in ten days, anyway!"

A PORTION OF DICKENS'S MS. TAKEN FROM "THE CHRISTMAS CAROL"

The identity of the author of "Pickwick," by-the-bye, was not disclosed until that work was nearly completed. It had given rise to much conjecture until the name of the young writer was at length revealed, when the following "Impromptu" appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*:

Who the *dickens* "Boz" could be
   Puzzled many a learned elf,
Till time revealed the mystery,
   And "Boz" appeared as *Dickens*' self.

From a photo by Fradelle & Young

CHARLES DICKENS

From a photo by Walter Dexter

THE GATEHOUSE, ROCHESTER
Where Jasper lived with the Verger Tope ("Edwin Drood")

As soon as the first number of the "Pickwick Papers" was launched (that is, in April, 1836), its author took unto himself a wife, the bride being Miss Catherine Thomson Hogarth, eldest daughter of Mr. George Hogarth, his fellow-worker on the *Morning Chronicle*. By her he had several children, and among those surviving are Mrs. Kate Perugini, a clever painter, and Mr. Henry Fielding Dickens, the eminent K.C. Mrs. Dickens survived her husband nine years and five months.

Before the last of the twenty numbers of "Pickwick " was launched, the author became a public favourite. Certain sage prophets foretold that as "Boz" had risen like a rocket, he would of a surety fall like the stick. But, as events proved, they were wrong, for Dickens not only became the most popular novelist of the 'thirties and 'forties, but, by the sheer strength of his genius, maintained that supremacy. Story after story flowed from his pen, each characterised by originality of conception, each instinct with a love of humanity in its humblest form, each noteworthy for its humour and its pathos, and nearly every one "a novel with a purpose," having in view the exposure of some great social evil and its ultimate suppression.

Following "Pickwick" came "Oliver Twist," attacking the Poor Laws and "Bumbledom"; "Nicholas Nickleby," marking down the cheap boarding-schools of Yorkshire; "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Barnaby Rudge"; "Martin

Chuzzlewit”; “Dombey & Son”; “David Copperfield”; “Bleak House,” holding up to ridicule and contempt the abuse of Chancery practice; “Little Dorrit”; “A Tale of Two Cities”; “Great Expectations”; “Our Mutual Friend”; and, finally, the unfinished fragment of “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” to which Longfellow referred as “certainly one of his most beautiful works, if not the most beautiful of all.”

From a photo by Walter Dexter

THE HOUSE OF THE SIX POOR TRAVELLERS AT ROCHESTER

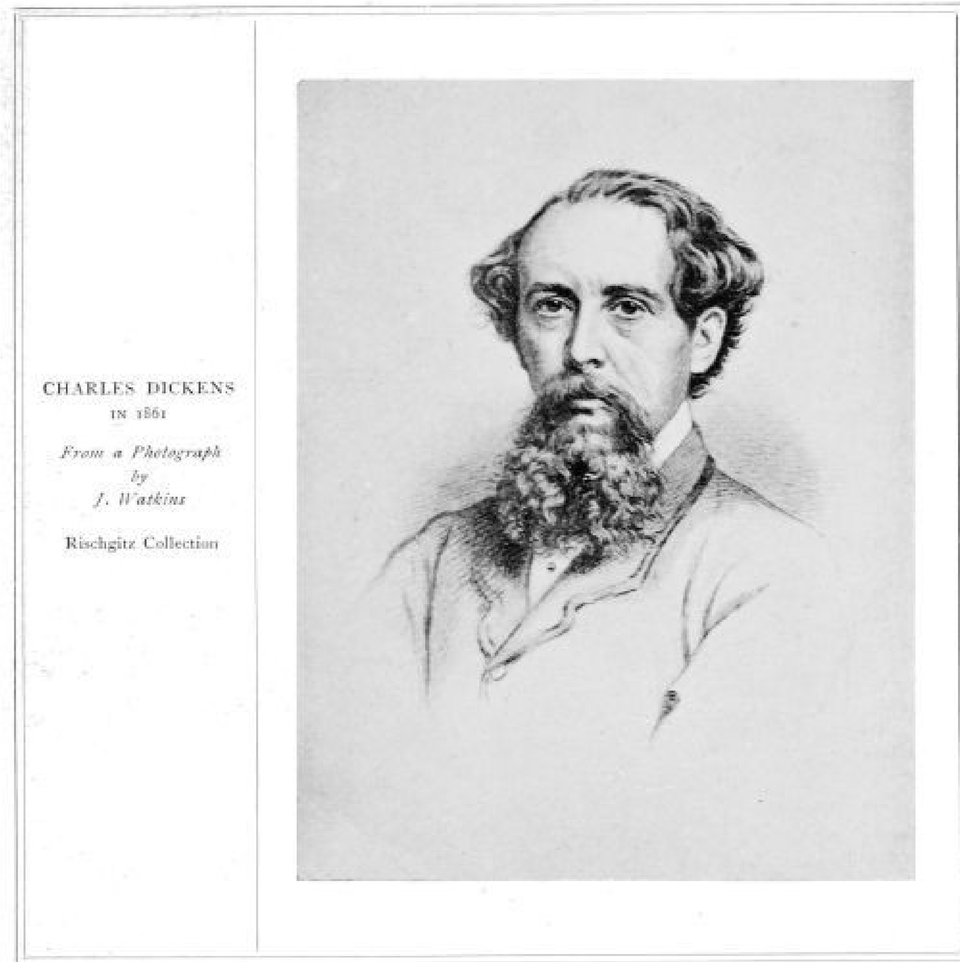
Of his many minor writings, special mention should be made of the attractive series of Christmas Books, the first of which, “A Christmas Carol,” has become almost a text-book; and we know that, by the reading aloud of this touching little allegory to enthusiastic audiences, Sir Squire Bancroft has afforded substantial aid to many deserving charities. Dickens is appropriately termed “the Apostle of Christmas,” and it is undoubtedly true that his Yuletide stories were the pioneers of Christmas literature.

Having thus briefly reviewed the literary career of Charles Dickens, it becomes almost essential to consider him from a personal and social point of view, in order to thoroughly realise what manner of man he was. Referring to his personal characteristics, Forster says that to his friends (and their name was legion) Dickens was “the pleasantest of companions, with whom they forgot that he had ever written anything, and felt only the charm which a nature of such capacity for supreme enjoyment causes every one around it to enjoy. His talk was unaffected and natural, never bookish in the smallest degree. He was quite up to the average of well-read men; but as there was no ostentation of it in his writing, so neither was there in his conversation. This was so attractive because so keenly observant, and lighted up with so many touches of humorous fancy; but with every possible thing to give relish to it, there were not many things to bring away.” He thoroughly endorsed the axiom that “what is worth doing at all

is worth doing well." He was most methodical in his habits, and energetic to a degree. "In quick and varied sympathy, in ready adaptation to every whim and humour, in help to any mirth or game, he stood for a dozen men.... His versatility made him unique."

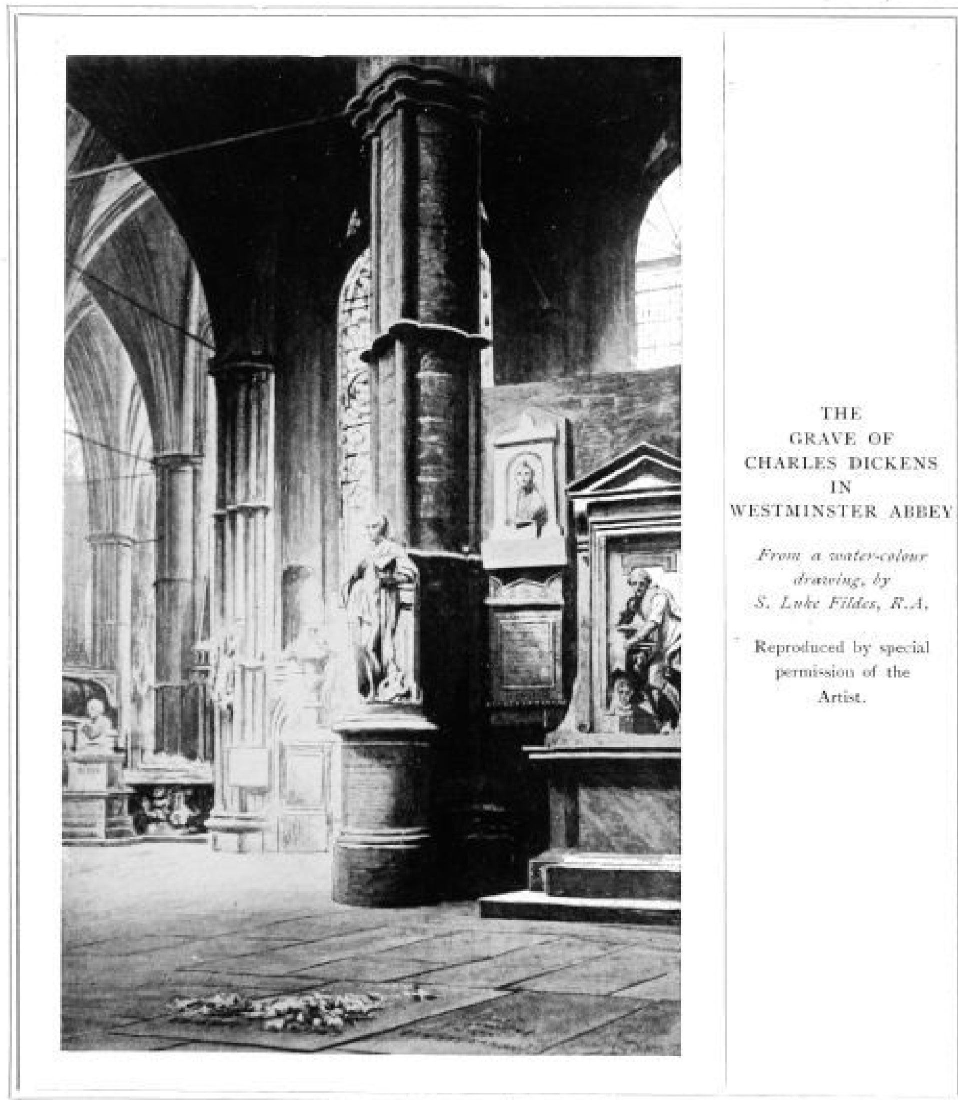
Concerning the novelist's personality, the following testimony has recently been placed on record by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, a surviving member of the "Dickens Brigade" of young men who revered him as "the Master": "I say advisedly, there was, and never could be, so genial, amiable, unaffected, and untiring a person in his treatment of friends and guests. He was always eager to listen rather than to speak—to take a second or third place; more anxious to hear, rather than to tell, an amusing story. His very presence was enough, with the bright, radiant face, the glowing, searching eyes, which had a language of their own, and the expressive mouth. You could see the gleam of a humorous thought, first twinkling there, and had a certain foretaste and even understanding of what was coming; then it spread downwards the mobile muscles of his cheek began to quiver; then it came lower, to the expressive mouth, working under shelter of the grizzled moustache; then, finally, thus prepared for, came the humorous utterance itself!"

Dickens was intensely fond of the Drama, as evidenced not only by the frequent reference in his writings to theatres and actors, but by the fact that he himself was an actor of an exceptionally



CHARLES DICKENS IN 1861
From a Photograph by J. Watkins
Rischgitz Collection

high order, and it is conceded that had he adopted the stage as a profession he would have attained first rank. Indeed, it was by the merest accident that he did not enter the profession, for when he was about twenty he applied for an engagement to the stage-manager at Covent Garden Theatre, and an appointment was made, which Dickens failed to keep on account of a terribly bad cold. After that he never resumed the idea. In later years he became the leading spirit of a wonderful company of amateur actors, who, on one occasion, performed before her late Majesty Queen Victoria, by special request. Sir John Tenniel is now the sole survivor of that merry confraternity.



THE GRAVE OF CHARLES DICKENS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY
From a water-colour drawing, by S. Luke Fildes, R.A.
Reproduced by special permission of the Artist.

As a reader, too, Dickens stood pre-eminent. It has lately transpired that his very first public reading took place, early in the fifties, at Chatham, in aid of the Rochester and Chatham Mechanics' Institution, and the subject of the reading was the "Christmas Carol." He gave public readings from his own works both in Great Britain and America, and an entertaining account of these tours may be found in Mr. George Dolby's volume, "Charles Dickens as I Knew Him." There can be no doubt that the mental tension caused by these readings (which covered a period of some fifteen years), supplemented by the strain of literary and editorial labours, curtailed the brilliant career of England's greatest novelist. It was at his charming rural retreat, Gad's Hill Place, near Rochester (his home

from 1856), that Charles Dickens breathed his last, on June 9th, 1870, in his fifty-ninth year. “Before the news of his death even reached the remoter parts of England,” says Forster, “it had been flashed across Europe; was known in the distant continents of India, Australia, and America; and not in English-speaking communities only, but in every country of the civilised earth, had awakened grief and sympathy. In his own land it was as if a personal bereavement had befallen everyone.” Although he himself would have preferred to lie in the small graveyard under the ancient wall of Rochester Castle, or in the pretty Kentish churchyard of Cobham or Shorne, public sentiment favoured the suggestion that the mortal remains of Charles Dickens should be interred in Westminster Abbey; and there, in Poets’ Corner, they were laid to rest, quietly and unostentatiously. What Carlyle said of him, a few days later, will meet with universal acceptance:—

“The good, the gentle, high gifted, ever friendly, noble Dickens,—every inch of him an Honest Man.”

F. G. KITTON.

NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Birthplace of Charles Dickens, No. 387, Commercial Road, Landport, Portsea
see page 3

Rochester High Street, showing the "moon-faced" clock
see page 1

Charles Dickens was born at No. 387, Commercial Road, Landport, Portsea, on Friday, February 7th, 1812. He was the second son of John Dickens, a clerk in the Navy Pay office, who married Miss Elizabeth Barrow, and had a family of eight children, two of whom died in childhood. Of his very earliest days Charles Dickens retained many distinct and durable impressions. He even recollected the small front garden of the house at Portsea, from which he was taken away at the age of two years, and where he played with his elder sister whilst watched by a nurse through the kitchen window on a level with the gravel walk. Referring to these early memories, he described "how he thought the Rochester High Street must be at least as wide as Regent Street, which he afterwards discovered to be little better than a lane, how the public clock in it, supposed to be the finest clock in the world, turned out to be as moon-faced and weak a clock as a man's eyes ever saw; and how, in its town hall, which had appeared to him once so glorious a structure that he had set it up in his mind as the model on which the genie of the lamp built the palace for Aladdin, he had painfully to recognise a mere mean little heap of bricks, like a chapel gone demented." In "The Seven Poor Travellers" Dickens gave another picture of the same spot. "The silent High Street of Rochester is full of gables, with old beams and timbers carved into strange faces. It is oddly garnished with a queer old clock that projects over the pavement out of a grave red brick building as if Time carried on business there and hung out his sign."

No. 15, Furnival's Inn, Holborn
see page 4

In 1836 Charles Dickens lived at 15, Furnival's Inn, and it was here that he "thought of Mr. Pickwick, and wrote the first number," which was published March 31st, 1837. Two days later the author married Miss Catherine Hogarth, and after spending their honeymoon in the village of Chalk, near Gad's Hill, the young couple continued to reside for some time in apartments on the top floor of

this house.

“The Leather Bottle,” Cobham
see page 5

“The Leather Bottle,” immortalised in “The Pickwick Papers,” is situated at Cobham, opposite the church. “ ‘And really,’ added Mr. Pickwick, after half an hour’s walking had brought them to the village, ‘really, for a misanthrope’s choice, this is one of the prettiest and most desirable places of residence I ever met with.’

“In this opinion also both Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass expressed their concurrence; and, having been directed to the ‘Leather Bottle,’ a clean and commodious village ale-house, the three travellers entered, and at once inquired for a gentleman of the name of Tupman.”

The Old Curiosity Shop
see page 9

The Old Curiosity Shop in Portugal Street, said to be the house assigned by the novelist for the residence of Little Nell and her grandfather, was “one of those receptacles for old and curious things, which seem to crouch in odd corners of this town, and to hide their musty treasure from the public eye in jealousy and distrust.” It is possibly the best known among the landmarks of places made famous by Dickens.

The Grave of Little Nell
see page 8

“They saw the vault covered and the stone fixed down. Then, when the dusk of evening had come on, and not a sound disturbed the sacred stillness of the place when the bright moon poured in her light on tomb and monument, on pillar, wall, and arch, and most of all (it seemed to them) upon her quiet grave in that calm time, when all outward things and inward thoughts teem with assurances of immortality, and worldly hopes and fears are humbled in the dust before them—then, with tranquil and submissive hearts, they turned away, and left the child with God.”

Dotheboys Hall, in “Nicholas Nickleby,” is said to have borne a close resemblance to Shaw’s Academy at Bowes, Yorkshire; but Dickens in his

Dotheboys Hall at Bowes, Yorkshire
see page 12

preface to the book disclaimed his intention of identifying the infamous Mr. Squeers with the master of any particular school by his words, “Mr. Squeers is the representative of a class and not of an individual.” “ ‘The fact is it ain’t a Hall,’ observed Squeers, drily.... ‘We call it a hall up in London because it sounds better, but they don’t know it by that name in these parts. A man may call his house an island if he likes; there’s no Act of Parliament against that, I believe.’ ... The school was a long cold-looking house, one storey high, with a few straggling outbuildings behind and a barn and stable adjoining.”

Dickens’s Favourite Raven
see page 15

This raven was the original of “Grip” in “Barnaby Budge.” To the great grief of Dickens the bird died, after it had been ailing only a few days, on March 12th, 1841. After death the famous raven was stuffed, and when sold at the Dickens sale realised £126.

“ ‘I make *him* come?’ cried Barnaby, pointing to the bird. ‘Him, who never goes to sleep, or so much as winks! Why, any time of night, you may see his eyes in my dark room, shining like two sparks. And every night, and all night too, he’s broad awake, talking to himself, thinking what he shall do to-morrow, where we shall go, and what he shall steal, and hide, and bury. *I* make *him* come! Ha, ha, ha!’ ”

No. 1, Devonshire Terrace
see page 22

In 1839 Dickens removed from Doughty Street to No. 1, Devonshire Terrace, a handsome house with a garden of considerable size, shut out from the New Road by a high brick wall facing the York Gate into Regent’s Park. The house is entered at the side, and the front looks into Marylebone Road. The windows of the lower and first-floor rooms are largely bowed, and Dickens described it as “a house of great promise (and great premium), undeniable situation, and excessive splendour.” He lived here until 1850, and in these years much of his best work was done, including “Master Humphrey’s Clock,” “The Old Curiosity Shop.” “Barnaby Budge,” “American Notes,” “Martin Chuzzlewit,” “A Christmas Carol,” “The Cricket on the Hearth,” “Dombey and Son,” “The Haunted Man,” and “David Copperfield.”

Tavistock House, Tavistock Square
see page 17

After leaving Devonshire Terrace, Dickens resided for nearly nine years, dating from November 1851, at Tavistock House, which has of late been demolished. During this period he wrote “Bleak House,” “Hard Times,” a part of “Little Dorrit,” and “A Tale of Two Cities.”

Hans Christian Andersen, after visiting Dickens in Tavistock House, gave the following description of his home:—

“In Tavistock Square stands Tavistock House. This and the strip of garden in front of it are shut out from the thoroughfare by an iron railing. A large garden, with a grass plat and high trees, stretches behind the house, and gives it a countrified look in the midst of this coal and gas steaming London. In the passage from street to garden hung pictures and engravings. On the first floor was a rich library, with a fireplace and a writing-table, looking out on the garden; and here it was that in winter Dickens and his friends acted plays to the satisfaction of all parties.”

Eastgate House, Rochester
see page 18

Eastgate House, the original of the Nuns’ House in “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” forms one of the most picturesque bits of the Rochester High Street, one side of the old building being half hidden from the roadway by overhanging trees. “Cloisterham” in “Edwin Drood,” of course, represents Rochester.

“In the midst of Cloisterham stands the Nuns’ House: a veritable brick edifice, whose present appellation is doubtless derived from the legends of its conventual uses. On the trim gate enclosing its courtyard is a resplendent brass plate flashing forth the legend: ‘Seminary for Young Ladies. Miss Twinkleton.’ The house front is so old and worn, and the brass plate is so shining and staring, that the general result has reminded imaginative strangers of a battered old beau with a large modern eyeglass stuck in his blind eye.”

Gad’s Hill Place, near Rochester
see page 26

Gad’s Hill Place was the novelist’s last residence, where he wrote “The Uncommercial Traveller,” “Great Expectations,” “Our Mutual Friend,” and “The Mystery of Edwin Drood.”

On this house Dickens had fixed his choice in his boyish days. It had always held a prominent place amid the recollections connected with his childhood. Forster wrote of Dickens that “upon first seeing it as he came from Chatham with his father, and looking up at it with admiration, he had been promised that

he might live in it himself, or some such house, when he came to be a man, if he would only work hard enough." It is pleasant to record that this ambition was gratified in after life, when the dream of his boyhood was realised.

Restoration House, Rochester
see page 28

Restoration House, Rochester, is of interest as being the "Satis House" of "Great Expectations," in which Miss Havisham lived. Restoration House must not, however, be confused with Satis House, Rochester, from which Dickens took the name.

" 'Enough House!' said I. 'That's a curious name, miss.'

" 'Yes,' she replied; 'but it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house could want nothing else. They must have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think.'

"To be sure, it was a deserted place, down to the pigeon-house in the brewery-yard, which had been blown crooked on its pole by some high wind, and would have made the pigeons think themselves at sea, if there had been any pigeons there to be rocked by it. But there were no pigeons in the dovecot, no horses in the stables, no pigs in the sty...."

The Bull Hotel, Rochester
see page 28

The Bull Hotel is a commodious establishment of ancient and respectable repute, and the principal posting-house of Rochester. It is the celebrated inn where the Pickwickians stayed on the occasion of their first visit to Rochester, and which Mr. Jingle so laconically summed up in the phrase, "good house—nice beds."

The house itself has changed very little. A fine oak staircase leads up to the ball-room, where Mr. Jingle masqueraded in Mr. Winkle's dress-suit with extraordinary results.

The Gatehouse, Rochester
see page 34

In "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" Dickens described the Old Gatehouse at Rochester, facing Pump Lane, with its archway, which stands angle-wise in the street. There is a small postern at the back of the gate. This building was the residence of Mr. Tope, "chief verger and showman" of the Cathedral, with

whom lodged Mr. John Jaspar, the uncle of Edwin Drood. The house is a gabled wooden structure, two storeys high, built over the stone gateway. Dickens pictured it as "an old stone gatehouse crossing the Close, with an arched thoroughfare passing beneath it."

Watts's Charity, The House of the Six Poor Travellers, Rochester
see page 35

This house formed the basis for a short story called, "The Seven Poor Travellers," which appeared in the Christmas number of *Household Words* for 1854. The inscription over the doorway of this striking-looking building runs as follows:—

RICHARD WATTS, Esq.,

by his will dated 22 August, 1579,
founded this charity
for six poor travellers.
Who not being Rogues, or Proctors,
may receive gratis for one night,
Lodging, Entertainment,
and four-pence each.

Dickens called it "a clean white house of a staid and venerable air, with a quaint old door (an arched door), choice, little, long, low lattice windows, and a roof of three gables."

The Grave of Dickens in Westminster Abbey. From a painting by S. Luke Fildes, R.A.
see page 38

Charles Dickens died on the 9th of June, 1870. Five days later he was buried in Westminster Abbey, with, according to Forster, only such ceremonial as would strictly obey all injunctions of privacy. The solemnity lost nothing by its simplicity. "All day long," wrote Dean Stanley, two days after the funeral, "there was a constant pressure to the spot, and many flowers were strewn upon it by unknown hands, many tears shed by unknown eyes." On the stone are inscribed the words:

CHARLES DICKENS,

Born February the Seventh, 1812. Died June the Ninth, 1870.

SOME PORTRAITS OF CHARLES DICKENS

“Boz” (Charles Dickens). From a drawing by S. Laurence; in the possession of Mr. Horace N. Pym

see page 2

In 1837 Dickens sat for his portrait to his friend Samuel Laurence, an artist distinguished for remarkable skill in the art of portrait-sketching. Shortly after the death of Mr. Laurence in 1884, his drawings were disposed of by auction at the sale of his effects on June 12th, and the “Boz” portrait which is here reproduced then became the property of Mr. Horace N. Pym, the editor of “Caroline Fox’s Journal.” Of this portrait Mr. F. G, Kitton writes in “Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil”: “The artist has admirably succeeded in rendering with marvellous skill the fire and beauty of the eyes—the sensitiveness and mobility of the mouth.”

Charles Dickens in 1839. From the picture by Daniel Maclise, R.A.

see page 7

This painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery. Thackeray referred to it in terms of the highest praise. “Look at the portrait of Mr. Dickens,” he wrote, “well arranged as a picture, good in colour and light and shadow, and as a likeness perfectly amazing; a looking-glass could not render a better *fac-simile*. Here we have the real identical man Dickens; the artist must have understood the inward ‘Boz’ as well as the outward before he made this admirable representation of him. What cheerful intellectuality is about the man’s eyes, and a large forehead! The mouth is too large and full, too eager and active, perhaps; the smile is very sweet and generous.”

Charles Dickens reading “The Chimes” to his friends at 58, Lincoln’s Inn Fields, Monday, the 2nd of Dec., 1844

see page 10

A portrait, reproduced from an engraving by C. H. Jeens after the original sketch by Daniel Maclise, R. A., which is now in the South Kensington Museum. Forster called it “An occasion rather memorable in which was the germ of those readings to larger audiences, by which, as much as by his books, the world knew him in his later life.” With reference to Maclise’s pencil-drawing

he continued, “It will tell the reader all he can wish to know. He will see of whom the party consisted; and may be assured (with allowance for a touch of caricature to which I may claim to be considered myself as the chief and very marked victim) that in the grave attention of Carlyle, the eager interest of Stanfield and Maclise, the keen look of poor Laman Blanchard, Fox’s rapt solemnity, Jerrold’s skyward gaze, and the tears of Harness and Dyce, the characteristic points of the scene are sufficiently rendered.”

Charles Dickens, his wife, and her sister
see page 11

The original of this pencil drawing by Daniel Maclise, R.A., which was executed in 1843, a few years after the marriage of Dickens, is now in the South Kensington Museum. It was engraved by C. H. Jeens and dated by error 1842. “Never did a touch so light carry with it more truth of observation,” wrote Forster. “The likenesses of all are excellent.... Nothing ever done of Dickens himself has conveyed more vividly his look and hearing at this yet youthful time. He is in his most pleasing aspect; flattered if you will; but nothing that is known to me gives a general impression so lifelike and true of the then frank, eager, handsome face.”

Charles Dickens as Captain Bobadil, in “Every Man in his Humour.” From a painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A.

see page 12

Dickens had the title to be called a born comedian, declared Forster, but his strength was rather in the vividness and variety of his assumptions, than in the completeness, finish, or ideality he could give to any part of them. The rendering of the novelist as Bobadil by C. R. Leslie, R.A., was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1846. The artist has represented Dickens seated upon a sofa, dressed as a bearded swashbuckler and braggadocio, just at the moment when Tib enters to announce the arrival of a visitor and Captain Bobadil declares: “A gentleman! Odds so, I am not within.”

Charles Dickens in 1842. From a drawing by Alfred Count D’Orsay

see page 13

Of this drawing, which is reproduced from a lithograph after a sketch by Alfred Count D’Orsay, Mr. F. G. Kitton writes in “Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil”: “As compared with other portraits belonging to this period, the features look pinched and small, although due justice has been done to the luxuriant hair and the fashionable style of coat and stock peculiar to that day.”

Charles Dickens in 1851. From an etching after a daguerreotype by Mayall

see page 14

The first practitioner of daguerreotype portraiture in England was Mr. John Mayall, sen., who left America in 1845 and established himself in Regent Street, London. He soon numbered among his *clientèle* many celebrities of the day, including Charles Dickens, who paid his first visit shortly after returning from the Continent. During a period of several years Dickens sat to Mr. Mayall, the first of these portraits being taken while he was writing “David Copperfield.”

Charles Dickens in 1855. From the painting by Ary Scheffer

see page 16

This famous portrait was exhibited in 1856 in the Royal Academy, and in July 1870 was purchased by the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, where it now hangs. Dickens himself considered it “a fine spirited head, painted at his [Scheffer’s] very best, and with a very easy and natural appearance in it. But it does not look to me at all like, nor does it strike me that if I saw it in a gallery, I should suppose myself to be the original.... As a work of art, I see in it spirit

combined with perfect ease, and yet I don’t see myself. So I come to the conclusion that I never *do* see myself.”

Charles Dickens in 1844. From a miniature by Miss Margaret Gillies
see page 19

The interesting miniature by Miss Margaret Gillies has mysteriously disappeared, and is not improbably buried in some private collection. It was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1844.

Charles Dickens in 1859. After the painting by W. P. Frith, A.R.A.
see page 23

Mr. Frith’s painting was exhibited in the Royal Academy in the spring of 1860, and afterwards included in the Forster Collection at South Kensington, where it now finds a worthy resting-place. Dickens wrote of this picture in a letter from Tavistock House, dated May 31st, 1859: “It has received every conceivable pains at Frith’s hands, and ought, on his account, to be good. It is a little too much (to my thinking) as if my next-door neighbour were my deadly foe, uninsured, and had just received tidings of his house being afire; otherwise very good.”

Charles Dickens giving a Reading, 1861
see page 24

Dickens gave his paid public Readings successively, with brief intervals, at four several periods—viz., in 1858-9, in 1861-3, in 1866-7, and in 1868-70.

“I must say [he wrote] that the intelligence and warmth of the audience are an immense sustainment, and one that always sets me up. Sometimes, before I go down to read (especially when it is in the day) I am so oppressed by having to do it that I feel perfectly unequal to the task. But the people lift me out of this directly, and I find that I have quite forgotten everything but them and the book, in a quarter of an hour.”

Charles Dickens in 1861. From a photograph by J. Watkins
see page 37

A full-face likeness of the novelist by Watkins has attained deservedly a large degree of popularity. The best remembered copy is a beautiful lithographic drawing by R. J. Lane which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1864. It is said to have been an especial favourite with Charles Lever.

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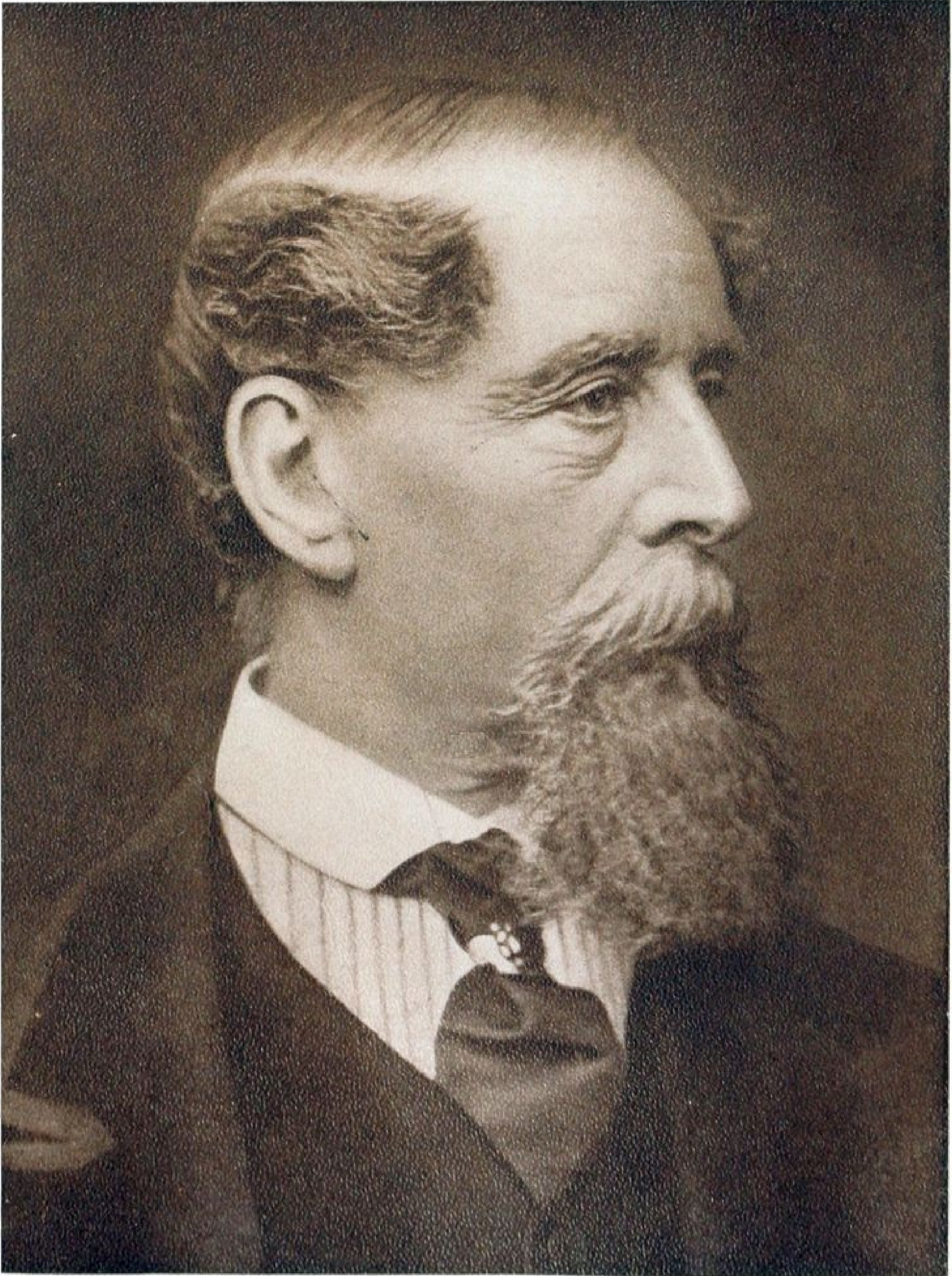

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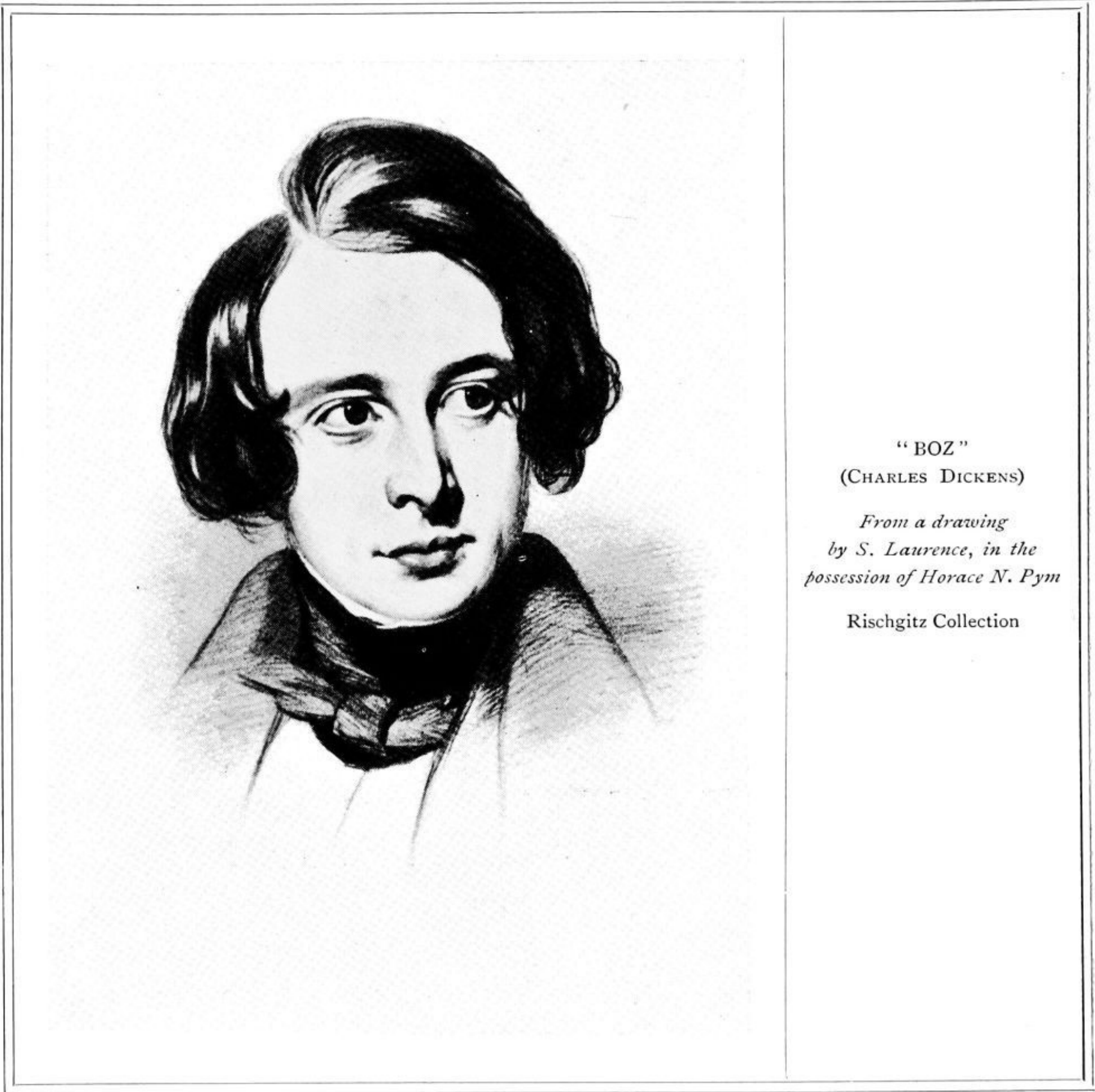

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From a drawing by S. Laurence, in the possession of Horace N. Pym

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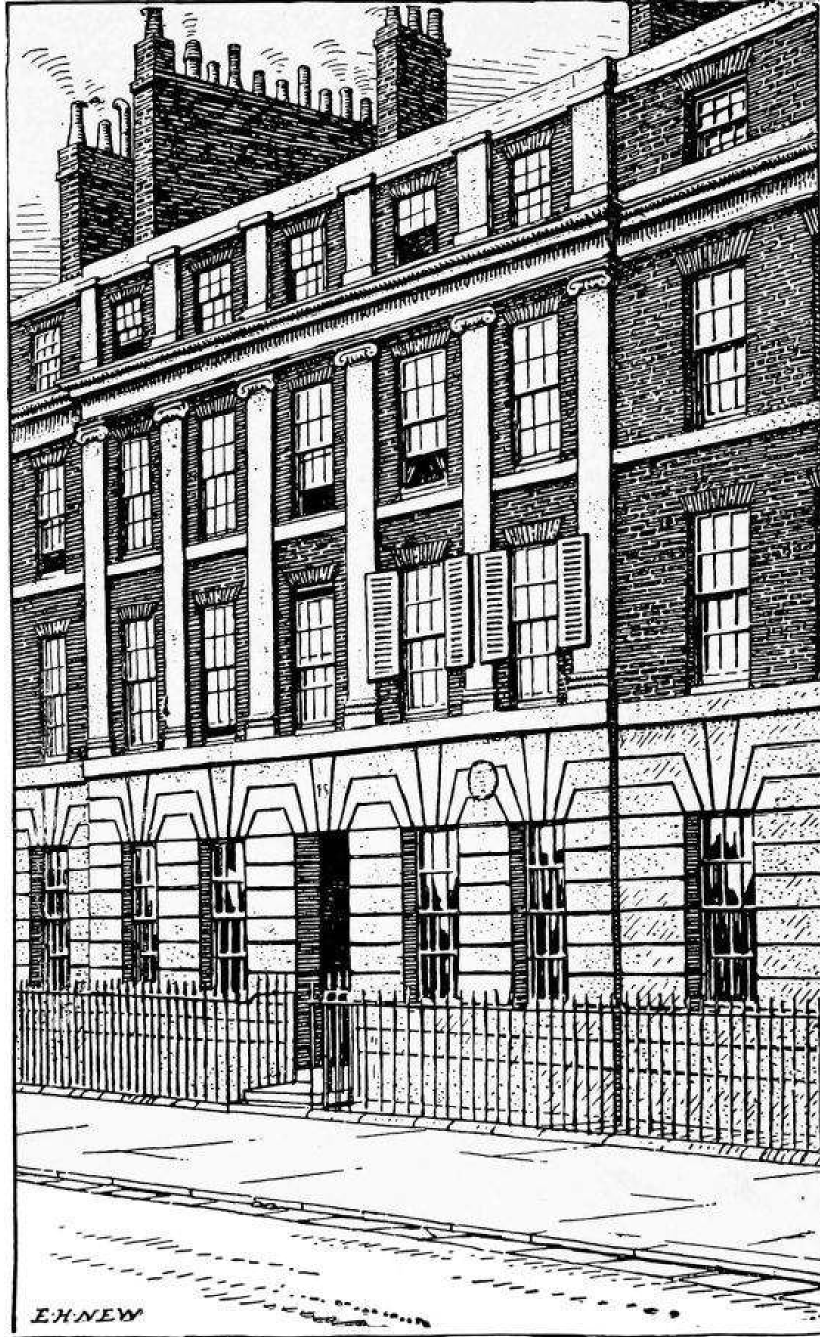

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Charles Dickens
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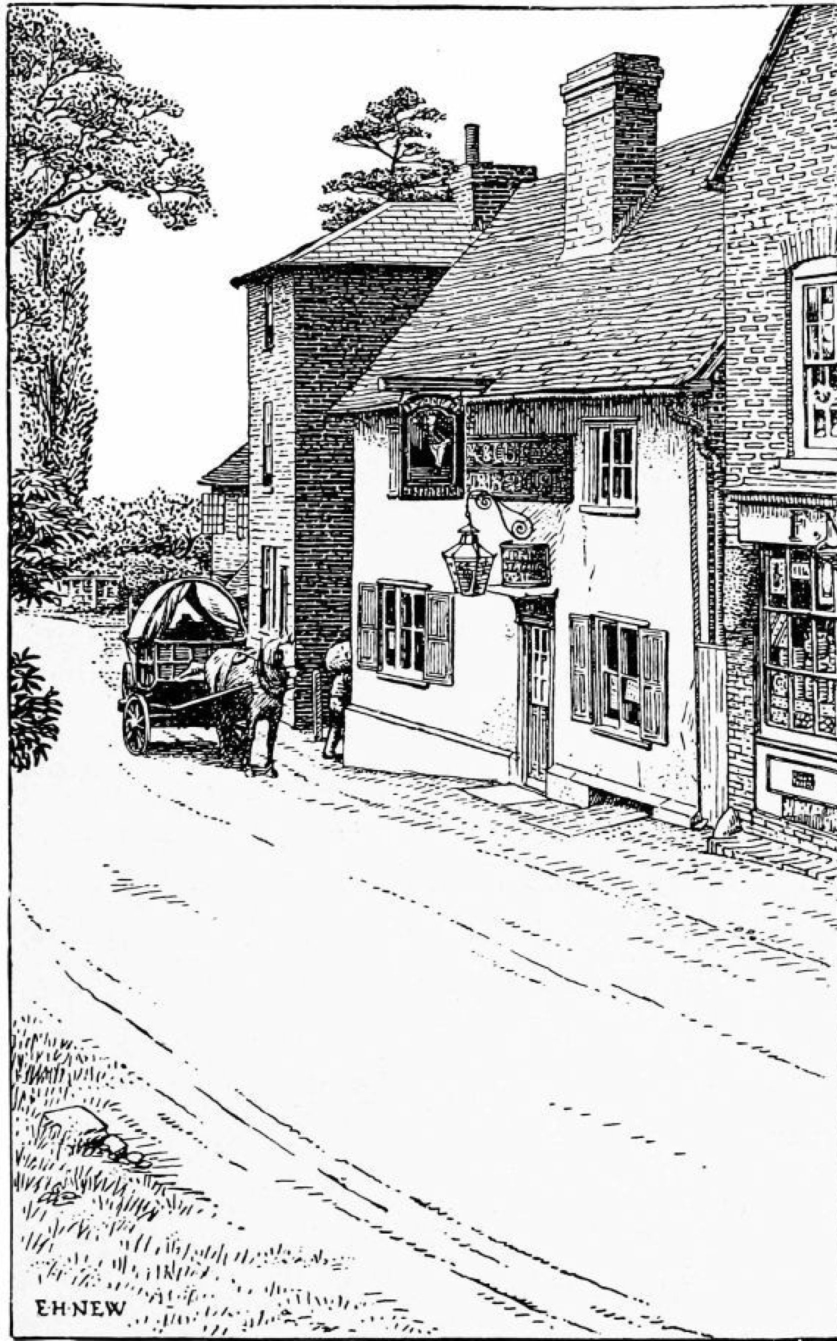

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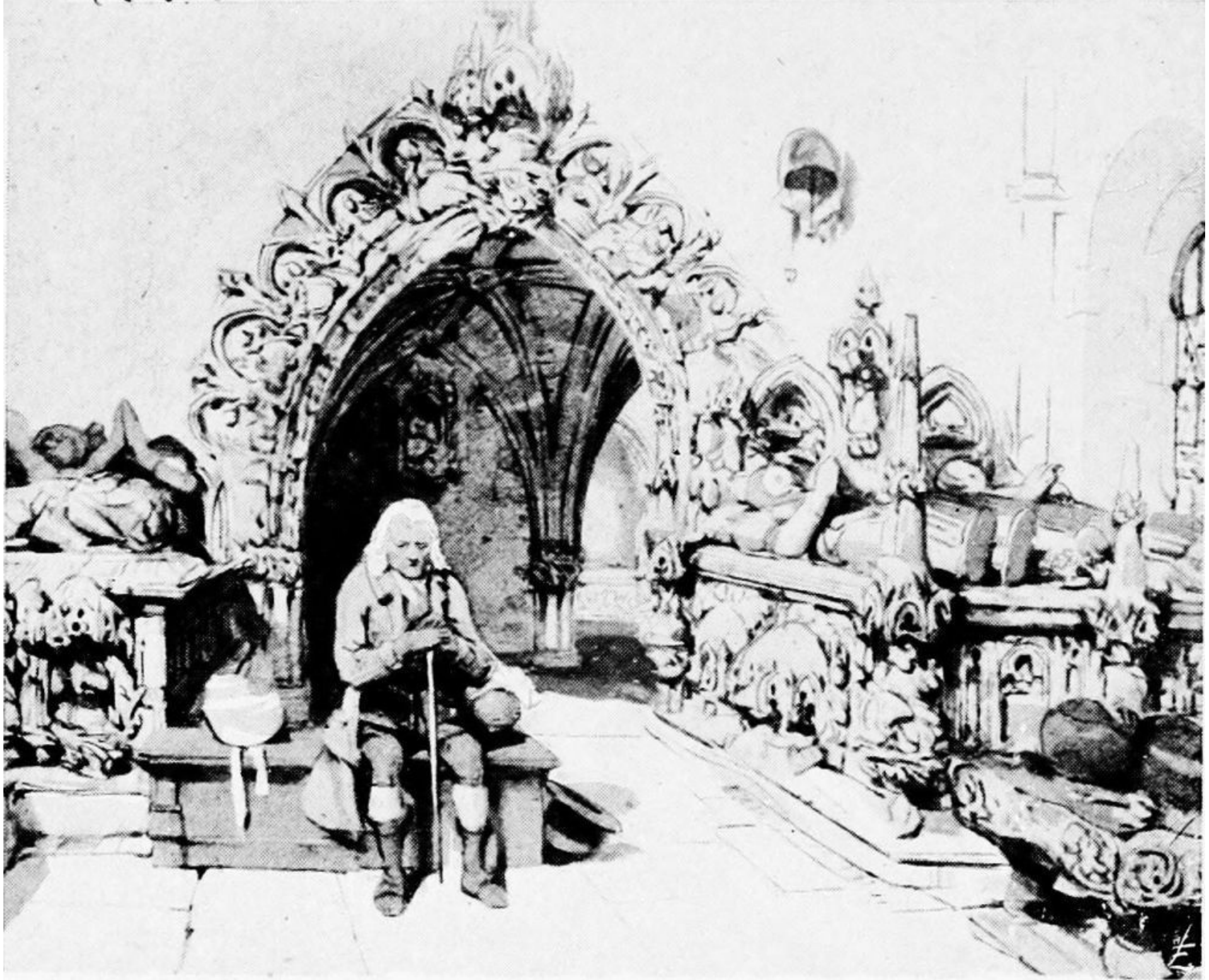

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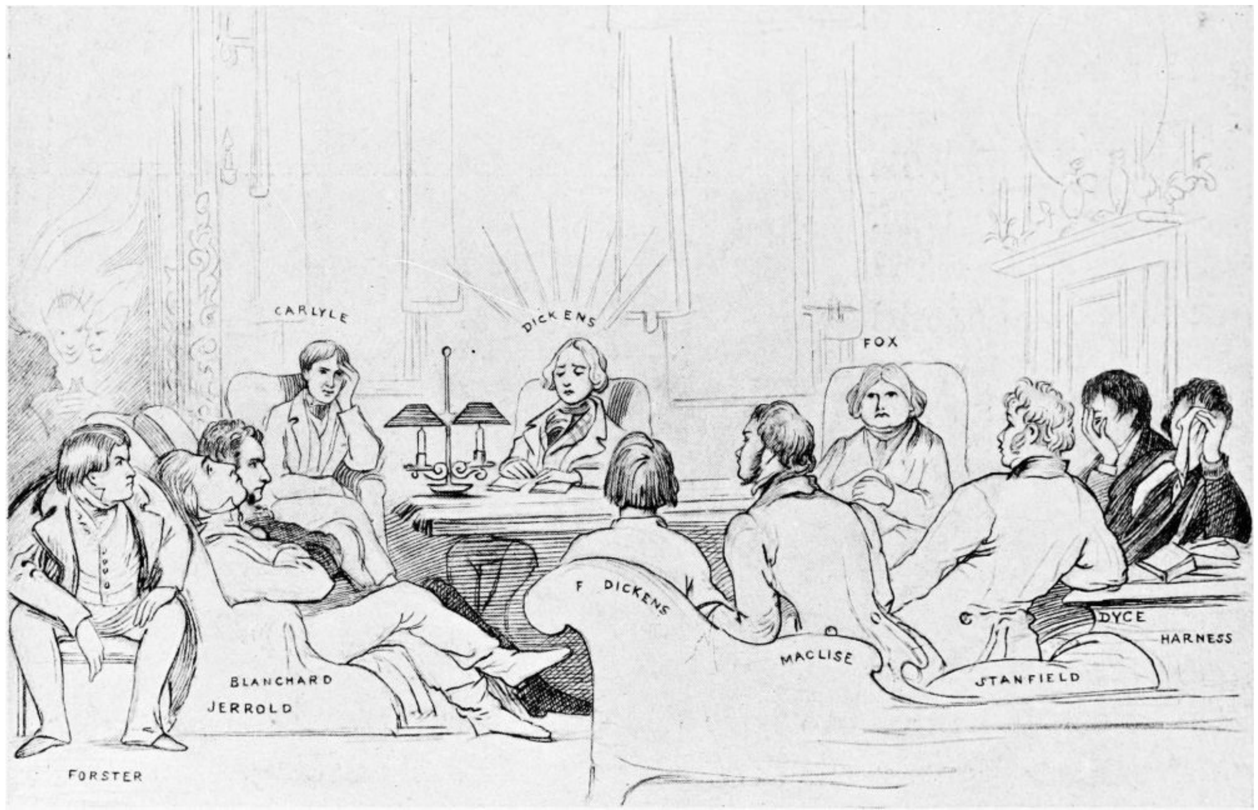

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CHARLES DICKENS,
HIS WIFE,
AND HER SISTER

*From an engraving
by C. H. Jeens
after the original
sketch by
Daniel Maclise, R.A.,
in 1843*

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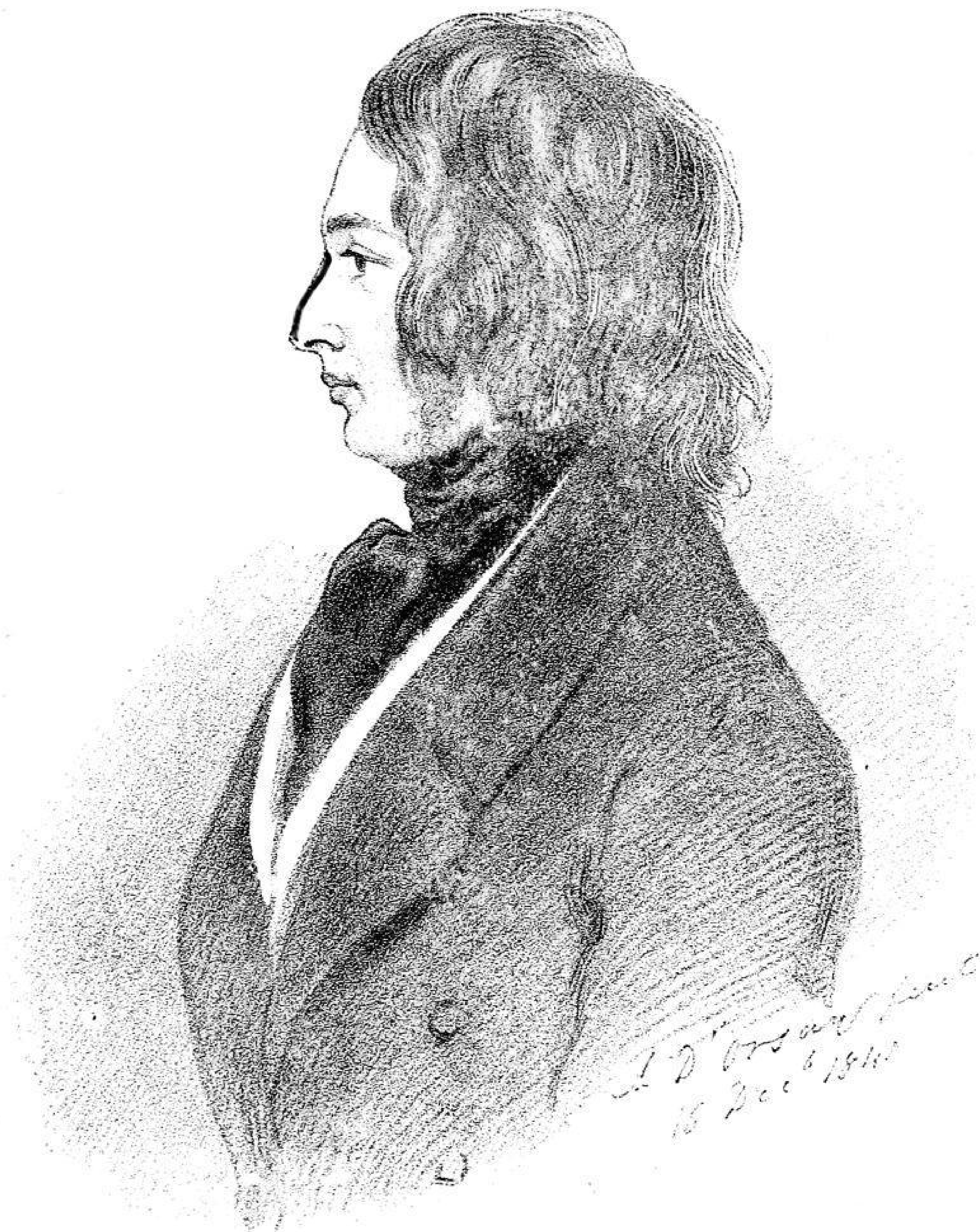

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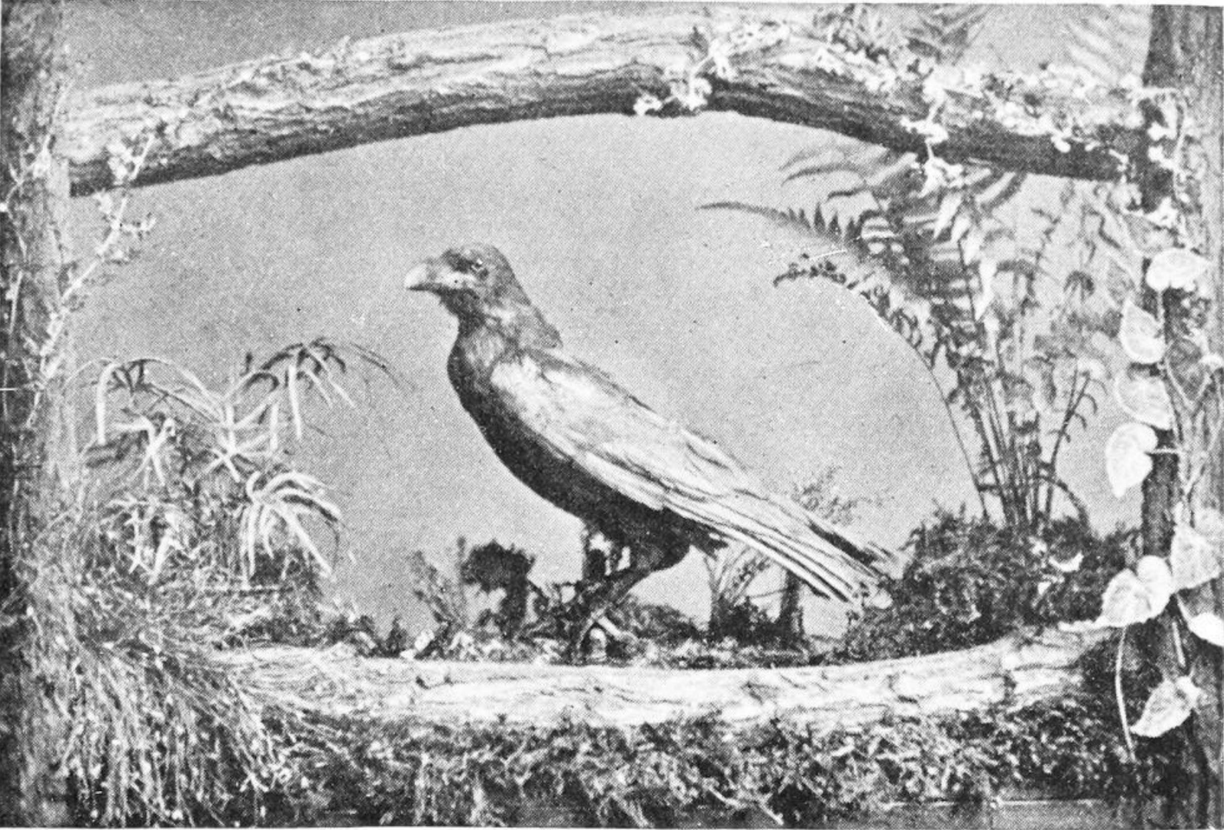

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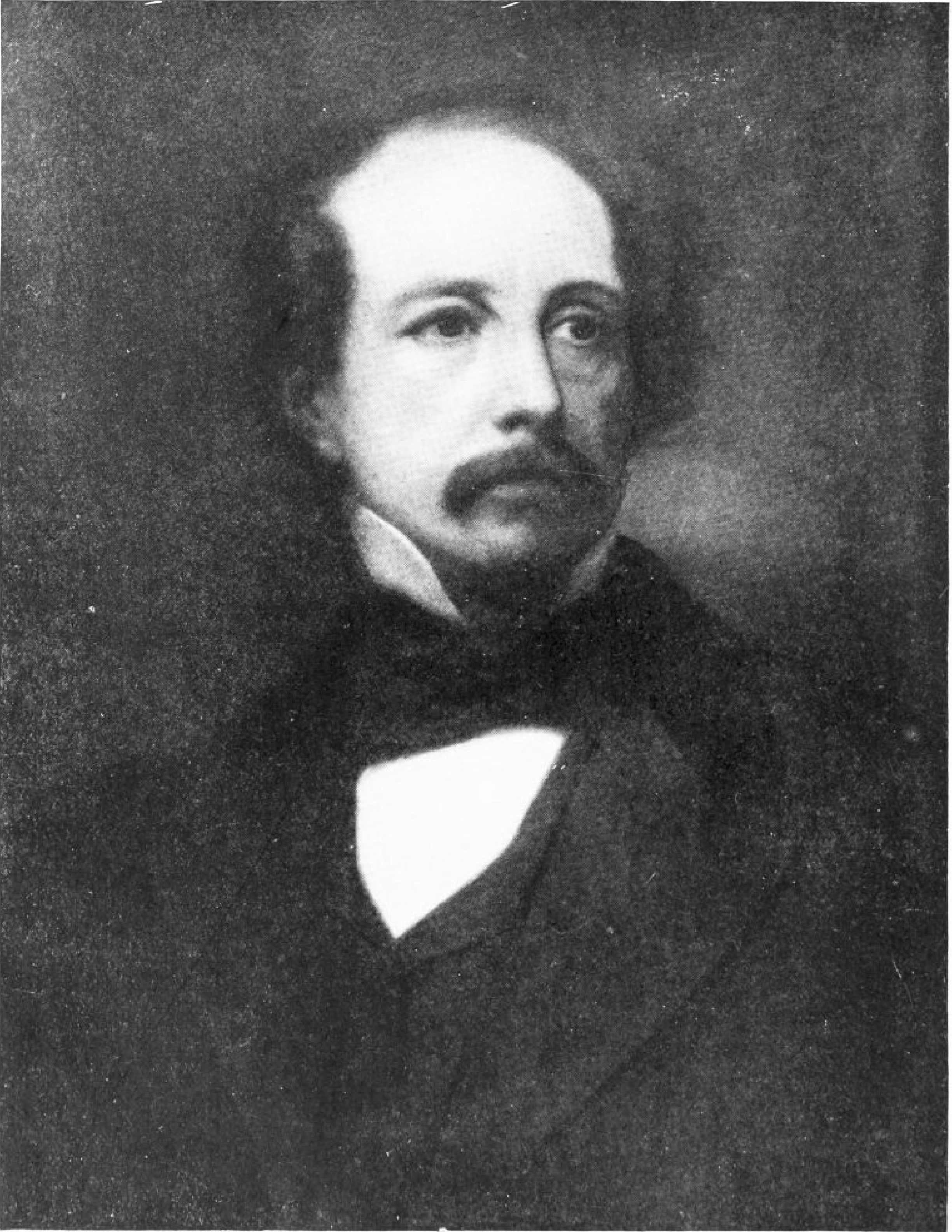

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TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE

Where Dickens resided for nearly nine years, dating from November, 1851.

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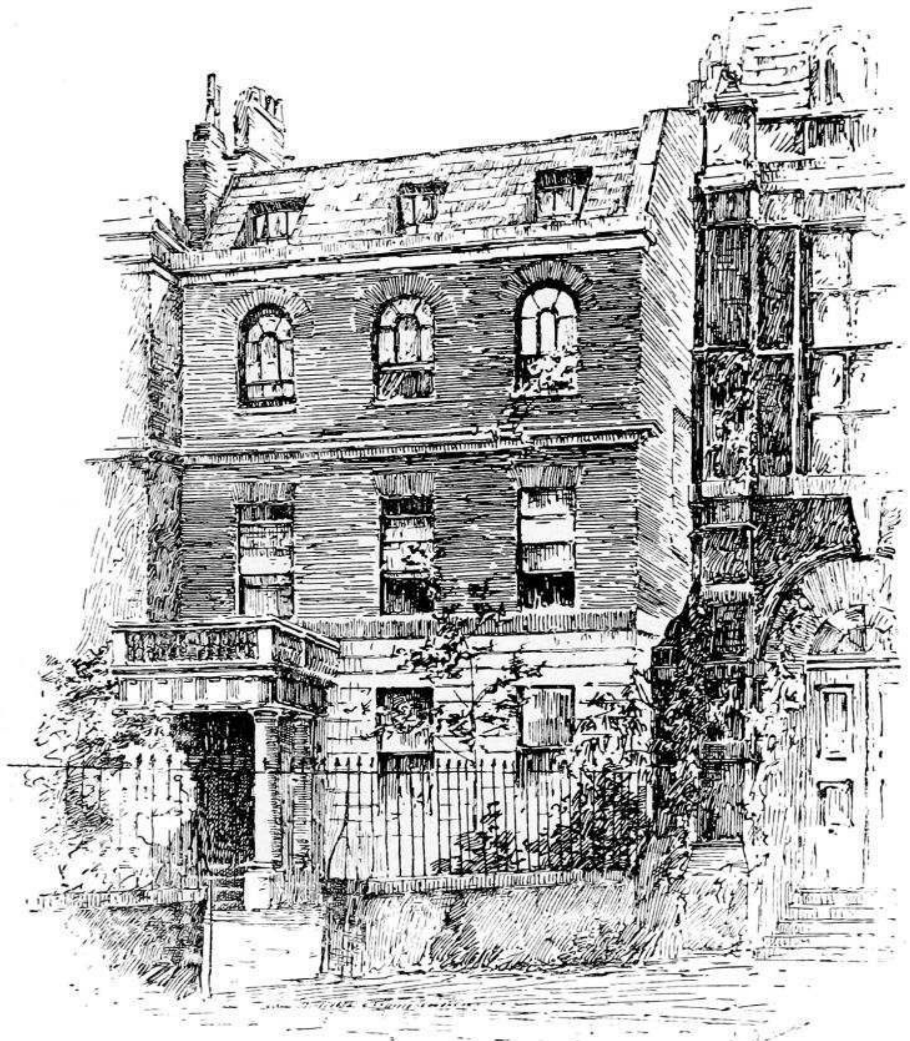

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CHARLES DICKENS GIVING A READING, 1861

From a photo by Fradelle & Young

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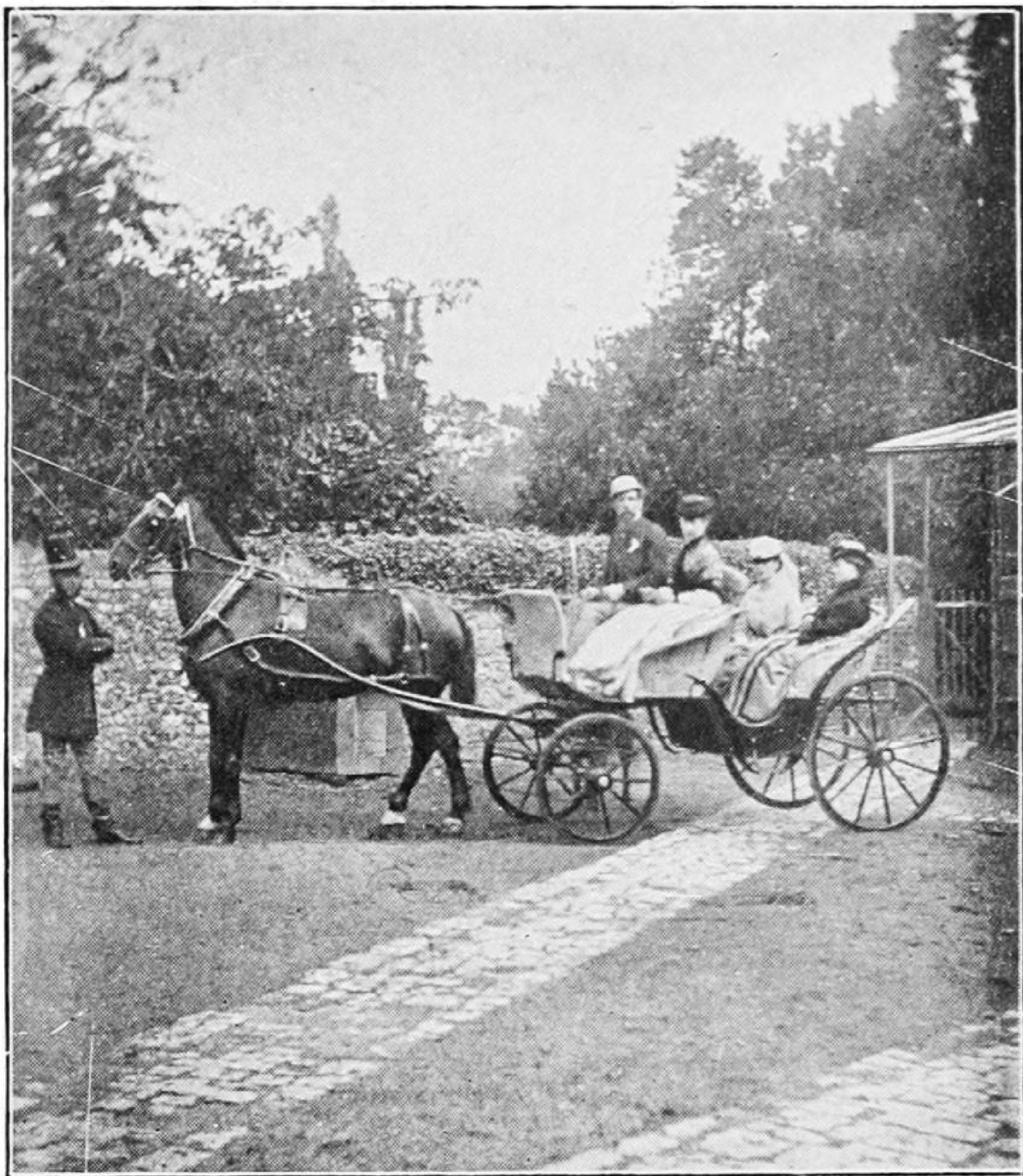

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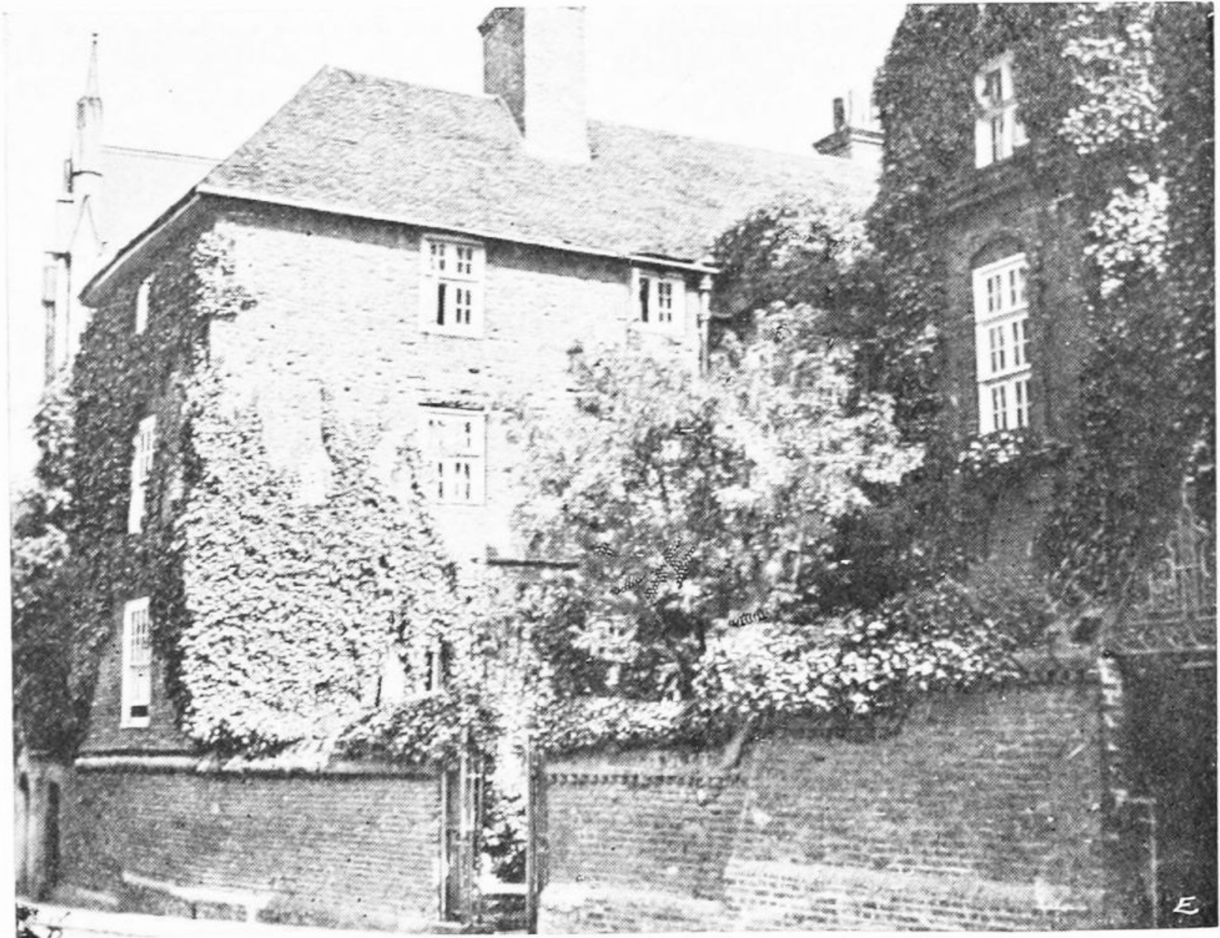

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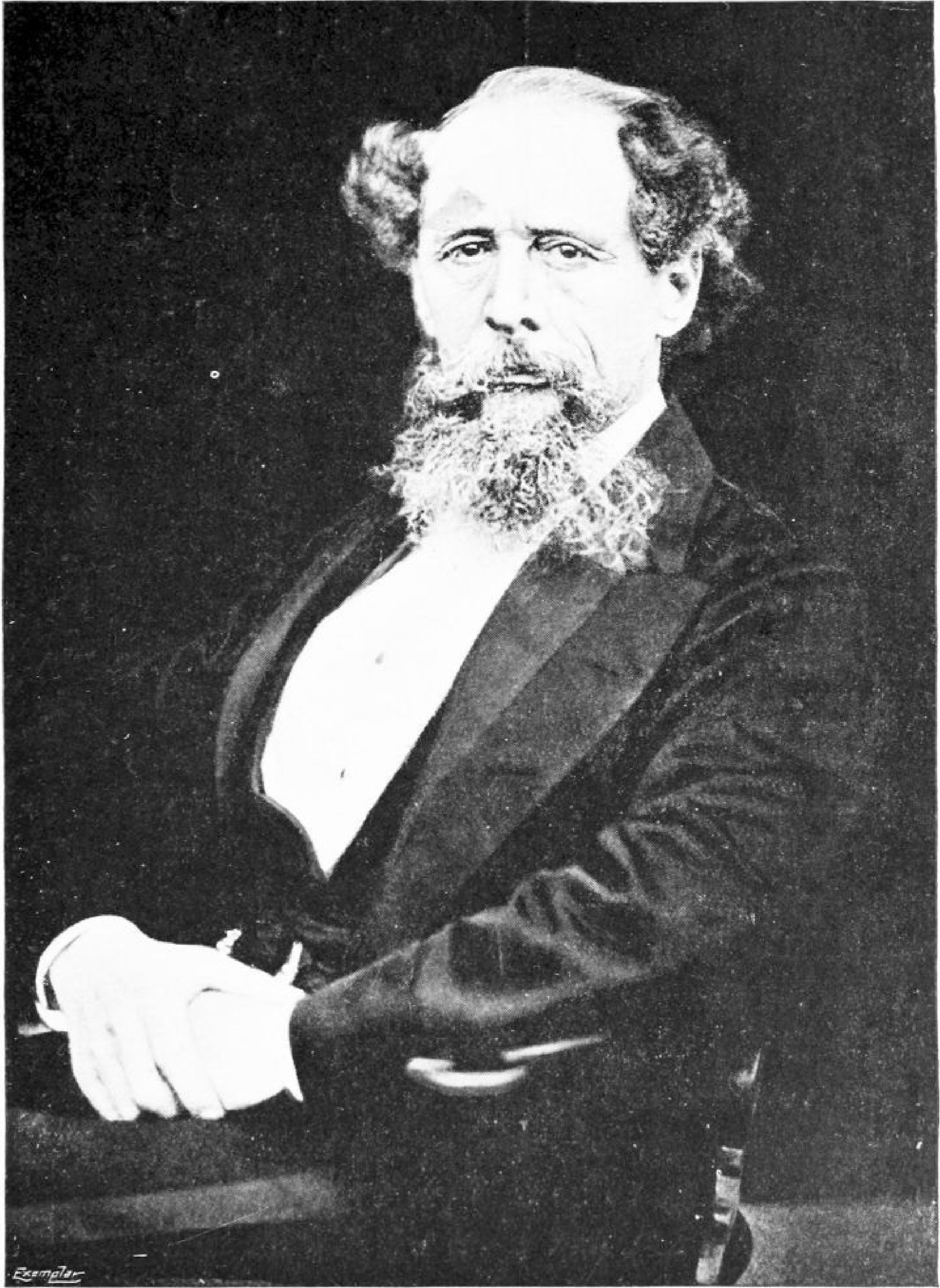
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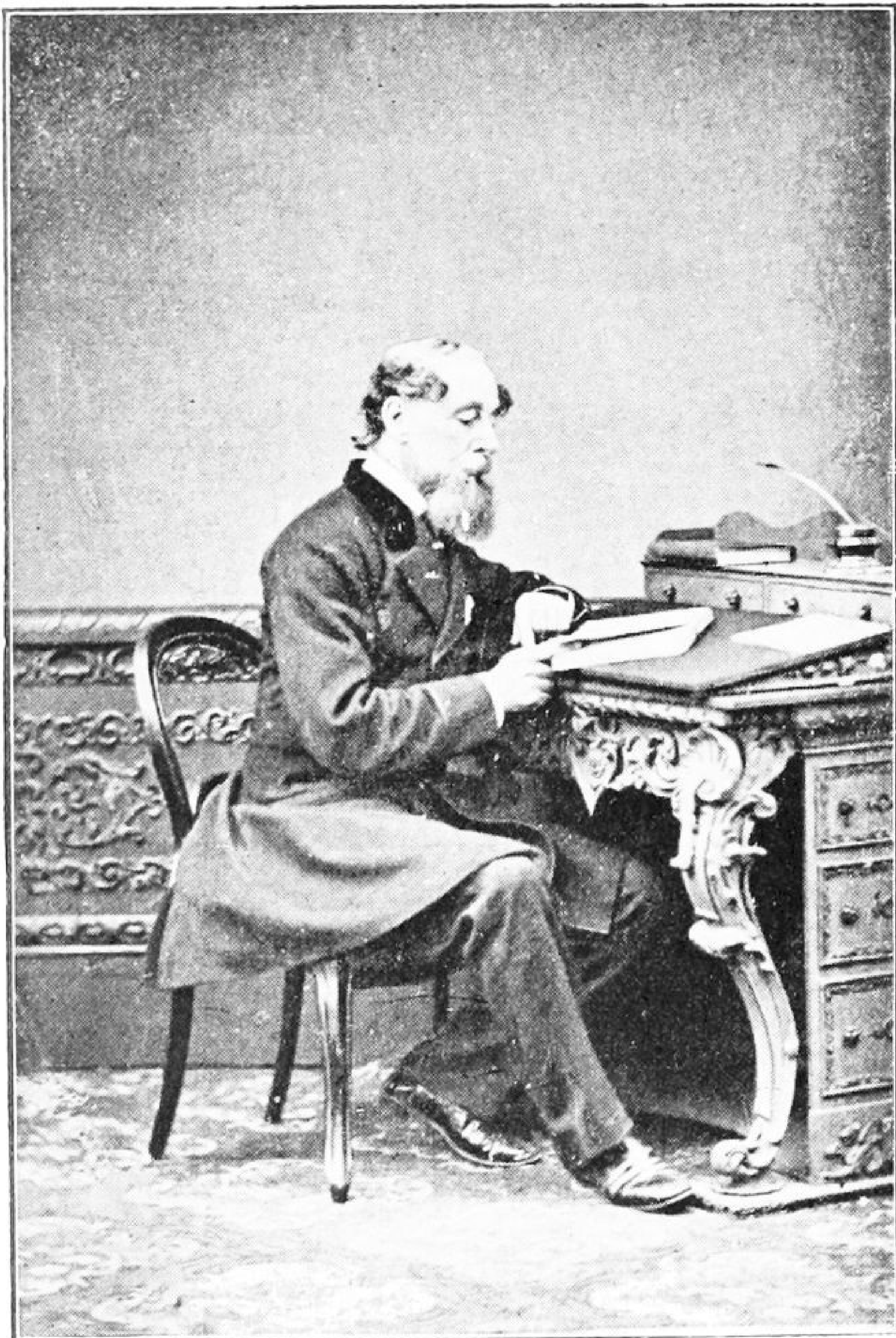

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Stave I

Marley's Ghost.

Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say, that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

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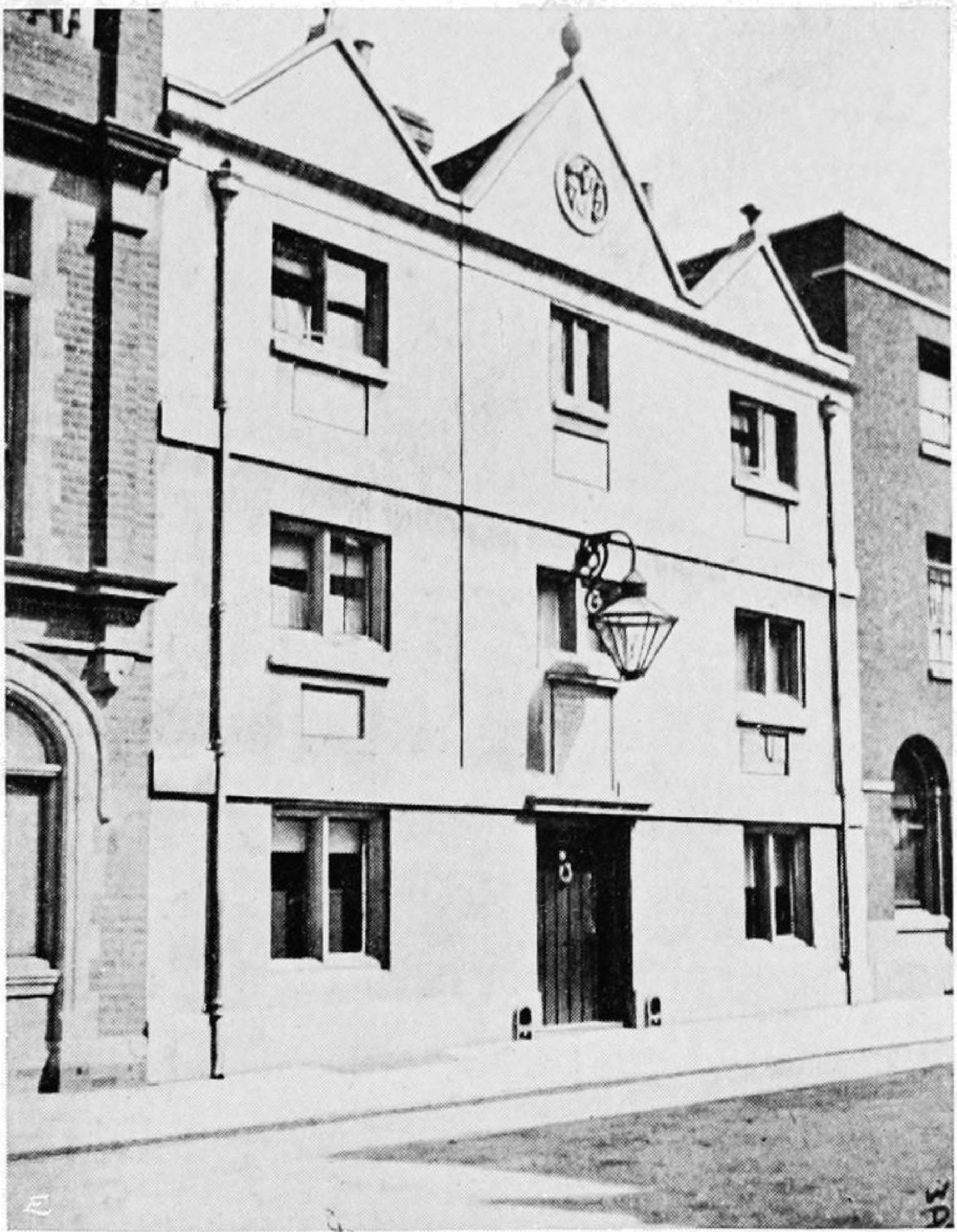

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CHARLES DICKENS
IN 1861

From a Photograph
by
J. Watkins

Rischgitz Collection

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THE
GRAVE OF
CHARLES DICKENS
IN
WESTMINSTER ABBEY

From a water-colour drawing, by S. Luke Fildes, R.A.

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