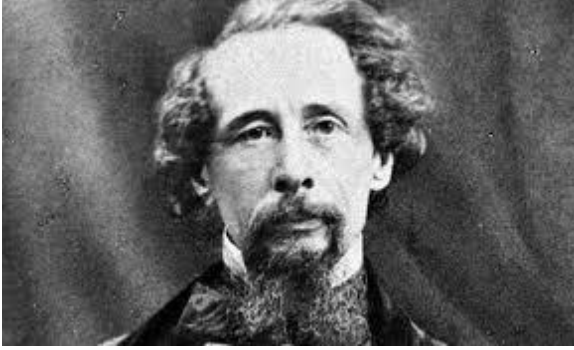


SOCAL DF GREETINGS



July 2024 Volume 15, Issue 4

NEXT MEETING

Date: Saturday, July 13, 2024
Time: 11:00 am PST

Place: ZOOM
Meeting ID: 991 0647 1404
Passcode: 187315

Discussion: *Great Expectations*, Ch. 45-59
(pt. III, Ch. 6-20)

Presenter: **Tom Savignano**



Vikky Pickett. A life of Joy. God Bless her.



A Proud Branch Member since 1984

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Welcome to the fourth of our four ***Great Expectations*** issues; the chosen novel for the theme of this year's 44th annual Dickens Universe at U.C. Santa Cruz July 21-27.

Great Expectations is the most rare and scarce of any of Dickens' major works. It first ran in the author's own periodical, All the Year Round, for 18 months (1860-1861).

Aside from being published in three volumes in book form; nearly the entire first edition, first issue volumes were bought up by the British libraries. Today, the Chapman and Hall triple-decker goes for \$50,000 and upwards.

Please check out our back page 7 for upcoming July-August Zoom Dickensian-related events. We look forward to seeing you Zoom friends this coming Saturday the 13th as our **Tom Savignano** leads us and moderates our concluding study of ***Great Expectations***. Look for Tommy's Talking Point Questions on page 5.

Please enjoy our (pg. 3) informative and educational GRAD GRIND (did you notice the age-gap between Biddie and Joe?)

We celebrated the Life our dear friend **Vikky Pickett** last week; Vikky was an original member of GRAD, and served as our Corresponding secretary for the past 15 years. Vikky was a very active and integral member of both GRAD and our SoCal DF; along with establishing herself amongst our international Zoom friends with her very British acumen. We have lost another beloved friend. We remember Vikky on page 4.

Please see our Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/groups/1405191869718211/> and become a Friend. Your Zoom join info is in the box opposite, or you may contact Tim directly for the link. There will be an email blast later in the week that will remind you of the meeting on Saturday.

The Original Ending of Great Expectations:

The original ending is as follows:

It was four years more, before I saw herself. I had heard of her as leading a most unhappy life, and as being separated from her husband who had used her with great cruelty, and who had become quite renowned as a compound of pride, brutality, and meanness.

I had heard of the death of her husband (from an accident consequent on ill-treating a horse), and of her being married again to a Shropshire doctor, who, against his interest, had once very manfully interposed, on an occasion when he was in professional attendance on Mr. Drummle, and had witnessed some outrageous treatment of her. I had heard that the Shropshire doctor was not rich, and that they lived on her own personal fortune.

I was in England again -- in London, and walking along Piccadilly with little Pip -- when a servant came running after me to ask would I step back to a lady in a carriage who wished to speak to me. It was a little pony carriage, which the lady was driving; and the lady and I looked sadly enough on one another. "I am greatly changed, I know; but I thought you would like to shake hands with Estella, too, Pip. Lift up that pretty child and let me kiss it!" (She supposed the child, I think, to be my child.)

I was very glad afterwards to have had the interview; for, in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance, that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teaching, and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be.

Why did Dickens change this sad ending to the published happy ending?

Two of Dickens' closest friends, Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton and Wilkie Collins, convinced Dickens that a happy ending would be more acceptable and popular with the public. After agreeing to make the change, Dickens wrote to another close friend, John Forster:

"I have put in as pretty a little piece of writing as I could, and I have no doubt that the story will be more acceptable through the alteration...Upon the whole I think it is for the better."

Despite Forster's protest ("The original ending is more consistent with the draft, as well as the natural working out of the tale."), Dickens had already been persuaded by Lytton and Collins. The story turned out to be indeed "acceptable" with the public. When the novel was published as a whole in July 1861, it went through five impressions before the end of the year.

GRAD GRIND

By Tim Clark, Chairman



Did You Know?

(Cool *Great Expectations* tid-bits to whet the Dickensian Whistle)

I was Three and Twenty

In the memoranda in Dickens' hand-writing attached to the original manuscript of the novel is a page of "Dates." Here is an extract:

"The ages in the last stages of Pip's expectations stand thus:

Pip (<i>about</i>)	23
Biddy	24 or 25
Estella	23
Joe	45
Herbert	23
Jaggers	55
Magwitch	60
Wemmick	50
Compeyson	52 or 53
<i>(near and so forth)</i>	
Miss Havisham	56

"I judge her to have Been the elder in the love time."



The Original Miss Havisham

An Australian 1906 paper remarks that "when Dickens wrote *Great Expectations*, and drew his pathetic pen-picture of Miss Havisham, the disappointed bride-that-was-to-be, sitting in her wedding garments for the space of many long weary years, and until death called her hence, there were few readers who failed to pooh-pooh the bare idea of such a incident occurring in real life. Yet there was full warrant for it all, and, strange to say, the idea came from Australia to the popular author.

The original of Miss Havisham resided in a big old-fashioned house on the Kettle estate at Newtown, a Sydney suburb. Disappointed on the day on which she was to have been married, just at the hour when she was dressed for the bridal ceremony, she remained a voluntary prisoner in her own room, with all the wedding finery scattered about her, until death claimed her as his own. An Australian in England, meeting Dickens, told the story – hence the creation of his strange character, Miss Havisham."

English Monetary Value Pip's Time:

- **Ha'p'orth:** a contraction of "halfpennyworth" – a very small amount. When used in conversation the reference is an expression of meaning an insignificant quantity.
- **Shilling:** worth 12d (12 pence), or 1/20th of an English pound. Uncle Pumblechook claims that Pip "would have been disposed of for so many shillings according to the market price of the article."
- **English pound:** originally referred to the measure of one pound weight in silver, was equal to 20 shillings (20s) or 240 pence (240d).
- **Guineas:** a gold coin, initially worth 20 shillings (one pound); later amended to 21 shillings. The guinea was out of circulation (but still considered legal tender) by the time Miss Havisham gives Pip a premium of 25 guineas (ca 1819). Being reclusive for so many years, she was unaware of the coin's status.

(Cont. pg. 6)

Remembering our dear friend Vikky Pickett



Vikky, our own Mother Goose

Vikky left us on June 10th at the age of 76. Her devoted husband David (our Treasurer) managed to get Vikky back to England this spring so she could have one last visit with her mother June, son Dom and other close family members. Upon arriving back home, Vikky passed within a matter of days. God rest her soul.

Everyone knew Vikky from her many years of participating in the Irwindale Renaissance Faire, the Greater Riverside Dickens Fellowship, and the Riverside Dickens Festival. Vikky was an amazingly creative primary elementary school teacher from the time she graduated from the prestigious Bretton Hall College in Yorkshire. Vikky was also an established presence at Disneyland, as she was a longtime member of the Main Street porch gang.

Kind words from some of Vikky's friends:

"So sorry to hear of her passing. Sincere condolences to David and family" Yvonne

"So sad to hear this news and prayers to her family. We will miss her!" Alison

"I am heartbroken - I didn't know Vikky was ill but I hadn't seen her in a while." Linda

"Please share our sincere condolences with David." Faye

"Oh what sad news. My deepest condolences to David and family." Jenny

"So sad to hear this. I remember Vikky as having some of the best insights in various Fellowship discussions. She was so spot on. I had no idea she was even sick. My condolences to all." 🙏, Karen

"I am so sorry to hear about Vikky. I hope fond memories of her ease the heartache." Courtney

"I want to wish the family well at this difficult time, and give regards to all who knew her also. With love." Joan

"It is so upsetting to hear of the passing of Vicky. She was such a delightful person and always had interesting observations to share. Many branches of the Dickens Fellowship will miss her." Lorraine

"Such sad news." Glenna

"I only recently joined the California Dickens group, and so I didn't know Vikky well. However, I appreciated very much her comments at our Zoom meetings about all things British. In particular, I remember during a discussion of *Barnaby Rudge*, I believe, she spoke about the tolling of bells and the various sounds of bells. I never forgot that, and now whenever I teach a work that mentions the ringing or tolling of bells, I try to provide audio examples for my students. Most recently it was John Donne's "No Man Is an Island." So thank you, Vikky. Your good spirit lives on." Sylvia



Vikky with her dear daughters, Catie and Auriol

Emily and I enjoyed so many fun times with Vikky and David. Wonderful Dickensian and Disneyland and restaurant outings that were always enhanced by Vikky's very definitive personality. We love you Vikky, and will miss you. Bask in the eternal embrace of God.

Tommy's Talking Points for our final discussion of Great Expectations (Saturday the 13th):

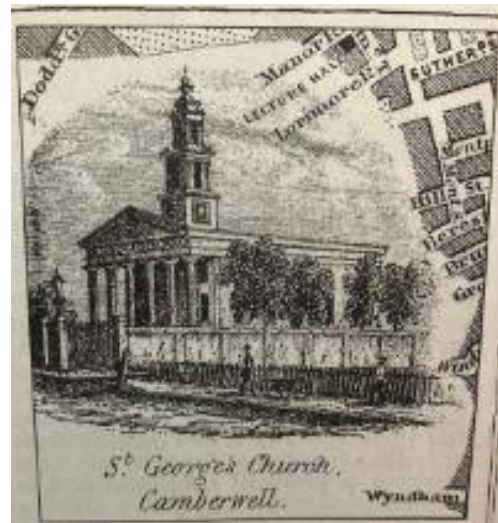
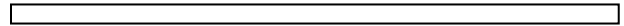
- 1) How would you rate this novel among the 15?
- 2) Some commentators have suggested that Dickens intended to make Pip the complete opposite of David Copperfield. Would you agree?
- 3) A major theme of this novel is obsession. Give examples.
- 4) How many father figures does Pip have?
- 5) Everyone defers to Jaggers. What is the source of his power?
- 6) What one secret escapes him?
- 7) What do Miss Havisham and Mrs. Joe have in common?
- 8) Pip is passive throughout much of the story, Under what circumstances is he forced to take action?
- 9) There is a saying about "going through fire and water" to achieve something or arrive somewhere. How does this apply to Pip?
- 10) What does Orlick mean when he refers to the murder of Mrs. Joe and says to Pip: "You did it"?



11) When we read Dickens's first ending we see that the reunion of Pip and Estella was not intended to be the goal of the novel. What was?

12) Compare the two endings in terms of :

- * length
- * tone
- * characters present
- * how Estella's words are presented
- * parallels with previous Book endings



St. George's Church

Back in London after the failure of Magwitch's escape attempt, Wemmick asks Pip to take a walk with him one Monday morning. They walk, as it turns out, to Wemmick's wedding. "We went towards Camberwell Green, and when we were thereabouts, Wemmick said suddenly, 'Halloa! Here's a church!'" (Ch. 55). Camberwell Green is in Camberwell (a suburb south of the Thames River, near Walworth), and the church that is near it is probably St. George's Church of Camberwell.

Land of Arabian Nights

When Herbert dreams of “conducting Clara Barley to the land of the Arabian Nights” (Ch. 52), he means Egypt, for we find out later that Clarriker’s has offices in Cairo. *The Arabian Nights, or The One Thousand and One Nights*, is a collection of stories of diverse origin – Indian, Persian and Arabic – connected by a frame narrative in which Scheherazade tells the king a story every night. (The king normally kills each of his wives the morning after the wedding night; Scheherazade tells him stories to sustain his interest, and thus keeps herself alive.)

Lime-Kiln

A lime-kiln is a furnace in which limestone is burned to create lime, which was used for various horticultural and medical purposes. According to the *Dictionary of Daily Wants* (1858-59), if furnished, in one capacity, an excellent manure, and acted as a medical “corrosive, antacid, and depilatory” in another.

Sluice-house

A sluice-house is a building named for, because near or associated with, a sluice. A sluice is a mechanism for regulating the flow of water – “A structure of wood or masonry, a dam or embankment, for impounding the water of a river, canal, etc., provided with an adjustable gate or gates by which the volume of water is regulated or controlled” (Oxford English Dictionary). Appropriately, the sluice house to which Pip is summoned is located on the marshes.

Weazen

Orlick remembers having known Pip “when you was so small a wolf that I could have took your Weazen betwixt this finger and thumb and chucked you away dead” (Ch. 53. “Weazen” is a corruption of “weasand,” meaning, generally, the throat, and - more specifically – the gullet, esophagus, etc.. Orlick thus refers to his ability to choke Pip to death as a child.

Mill-weirs

When Pip goes overboard, he says that he seemed, for an instant, “to struggle with a thousand mill-weirs and a thousand flashes of light” (Ch. 54). A Mill-weir is a “dam-constructed across from a stream to interrupt its flow and raise its level so as to render it available for turning a mill-wheel. Also the entire area covered by the water held in check by the dam” (OED). Pip’s sensation, then, is of approaching the turbulence of a mill.

‘Hundred and twenty-three pound, fifteen, six’

Pip’s debt to the jewelers, which he is unable to attend to because of his illness – and unable (given the confiscation of Magwitch’s property and his unwillingness to benefit further from that source of income) to pay – is in the amount of almost £124 (123 pounds, 15 shillings and 6 pence). Joe pays this bill, which – considering his income – is particularly generous.

Even were he earning the highest average wage earned by blacksmiths during this period (Joe pays Pip’s debt in about 1829), Joe would probably not have made more than £62-63 per year. He thus pays Pip’s jewelry bill at the cost of almost two year’s wages.



Old Orlick means murder

SoCal Dickens Fellowship Officers

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Future SoCal DF Meetings

When we resume in September, we will begin our selected two-part reading and discussion of *Pictures from Italy* (1846)

Here are our agreed upon scheduled dates for reading and discussing *Pictures from Italy*:

- Sept. 14: *Pictures from Italy* (Martha) Preface-Ch. 5
- Nov. 9: *Pictures from Italy* (Tom) Ch. 6-12

Until further notice and resumed interest, all meetings are Zoom only. We are hoping to attempt a social gathering in October and December.

This is our monthly request for you to consider our Annual Fellowship dues. Nothing has changed, \$20 for a single, \$30 for a duo. Memberships are rolling, so once you pay, your renewal is not due until a year has elapsed. And of course, we do not discourage any donation that exceeds the renewal! Aside from our annual International Fellowship dues, we donate the balance to local charities and sponsorships.

If you submit a check, please make it payable to GRAD (it's a Provident bank stipulation).

We hope to see many of you the week of July 21-27 for the 44th annual **Dickens Universe** at U.C. Santa Cruz. For more information:
<https://dickens.ucsc.edu>

And don't forget, the week of August 5-8, the Annual Dickens Fellowship Conference at Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. For more information: www.dickensfellowship.org

Upcoming Dickens Fellowship July-August Zoom Events

- **Tuesday, July 9th**, 3:00 pm BMT: **Canterbury**
canterburydf@gmail.com
Dr. Pete Orford presents '*Dickens on the Stage*'
(registration required)
- **Saturday, July 13th**, 2:00 pm BMT: **Charles Dickens Museum** <https://dickensmuseum.com>
Lucinda Dickens Hawksley presents '*A Tale of Two Cities*.' (registration required)
- **Saturday, July 13th**, 11:00 am PST: **SoCalIDF**
www.facebook.com/groups/1405191869718211/
Tom Savignano presents *Great Expectations*, Ch. 45-59 (conclusion)
- **Saturday, July 20th**, 1:00 pm EST: **Dickens Fellowship of New York (DFNY)** www.dickensnewyork.com
Mark Halperin moderates '*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*'
- **Saturday, Aug. 17th**, 1:00 pm EST: **Dickens Fellowship of New York (DFNY)**
www.dickensnewyork.com
Mark Halperin moderates '*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*'

The majority of our Fellowships are on a summer hiatus and will resume in September.



David and Vikky this past Christmas season at the Mission Inn

