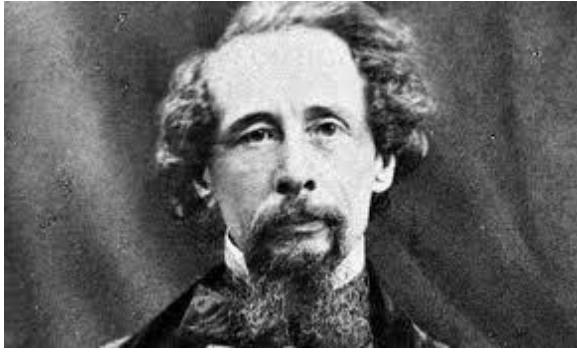


# ***SOCAL DF GREETINGS***



**Spring 2025 Volume 16, Issue 2**

## **NEXT MEETING**

Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025  
Time: 11:00 am PST

Place: ZOOM  
Meeting ID: 913 3171 9695  
Passcode: 819043

Discussion: *Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy*, *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodging*, and *Dr. Marigold*

Presenter: **Tom Savignano**



A Proud Branch Member since 1984

## **CHAIRMAN'S NOTES**

Welcome to our first newsletter issue of 2025. Please note the designation of "Spring." From this publishing onward, the intent is to provide your *SoCal DF Greetings* once a quarter: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

We are very pleased to bring you our very own **Tom Savignano** this coming Saturday, July 12th, on Zoom, 11 am PST (7 pm BST, 2 pm EST).

We spent the spring reading three Christmas stories from All the Year Round:

- *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodging* in the Extra Christmas Number (12 December 1863)
- *Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy* in the Extra Christmas Number (1 December 1864)
- *Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions* in the Extra Christmas Number (12 December 1865).

Please look for Tom's Talking Points on pg. 4.

Please enjoy our (pgs. 3, 4) GRAD GRIND that features fun information on all three stories. Enjoy the Phillip V. Allingham's detailed excerpts from the Victorian Web, with illustrations from said VW included.

Last month our local SoCal DF enjoyed a return trip to the Huntington Library and Gardens. Peruse (pg. 2) photographs shared by our members.

Please see our Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/groups/1405191869718211/> and become a Friend. Your Zoom join info is in the box on pg. 1, or you may contact Tim directly for the link. You will receive an email blast this week that reminds you of the presentation by Tom on Saturday.



## A DAY AT THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY AND GARDENS

This past June 12<sup>th</sup> our Southern California Dickens Fellowship enjoyed a second trip to the Huntington Library and Gardens. As was the case with our initial visit last October, we were arranged a private viewing for archived Dickens items and materials not on public display. Curator Sarah Francis displayed *Old Curiosity Shop* themed treats. Please enjoy selected photos shared by our members:



Huntington's main dining room. The two students are Artem Serdiuk and Carissa Coane, who will be attending the Dickens Universe with their wonderful instructor, Jessica Groper.



Curator Sarah introduces OCS archives to us.



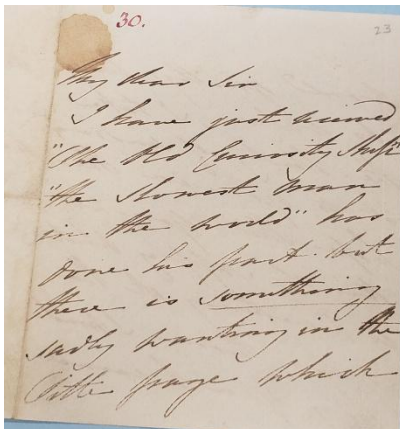
Members get to peruse.. "No Touch!"



Complete set of Master Humphrey's Clock in the original parts



The last survivors at the end of an incredible spring day: (L-R) Linda, Janet, Tim, Moira, George, Elizabeth, Emily, Alison.



handwritten note by Dickens expressing concern over a Cruikshank illustration.

Many thanks to Steve Pepe, who initiated talks with the Huntington for both of our visits this past year. We had 22 attendees in all, including five of Jessica's College literature students. Our only regret is that we did not get a group picture at the beginning of our day. Next time, this fall season!

# GRAD GRIND

By Tim Clark, Chairman



## Did You Know?

(Our selected Christmas story tid-bits to whet the Dickensian Whistle)

### Spring and Summer Christmas Story reads:

- **The Signal-Man**

"**The Signal-Man**" is a horror mystery story first published as part of the *Mugby Junction* collection in the 1866 Christmas edition of *All the Year Round*. The story is told from a fictional first-person perspective.

The signalman's work is at a signal-box in a deep cutting near a tunnel entrance on a lonely stretch of the railway line. Three times, the signal-man receives phantom warnings of danger when his bell rings in a fashion that only he can hear. Each warning is followed by the appearance of the spectre, and then by a terrible accident.

Elements of "The Signal-Man" are used in Andrew Lloyd Webber's 2004 musical *The Woman in White* (which is also based on the Wilkie Collins novel of the same name).



*An 1861 train crash at the Clayton Tunnel entrance allegedly inspired Dickens' concept of the story. . Readers in 1866 would have been familiar with this major disaster.*

- **George Silverman's Explanation**

One of Dickens's very last writings, '**George Silverman's Explanation**' is a dark and psychologically insightful investigation of failure and guilt. First published in the Christmas edition of *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1868, the story is a first-person narrative told by George Silverman, who reflects on his life.

After a traumatic early childhood spent living in poverty in a Preston cellar, the suddenly orphaned George Silverman grows up convinced that he is at fault for all the misfortunes in his life. Hoodwinked by hypocritical clergymen and exploited by his employer, he finds himself forsaking love and facing professional ruin.



*Clergyman George approves of the betrothal of his apprentice and his secret love of his life.*

This coming Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, our **Tom** will present three chosen short Christmas stories from *All the Year Round*. Exhibited here are only the most brief of respective synopsis', just enough to whet your whistle to join us live on Zoom. We also include illustrations by Edward G. Daziel, E.A. Abbey and Harry Furness (courtesy of Phillip V. Allingham's' Victorian Web).

- **Mrs. Lirriper's Lodging**

Christmas story for *All the Year Round* 1863. Emma Lirriper is the owner of a boarding house at number 81 Norfolk Street, Strand. One of her lodgers, the pathetic Peggy Edson, abandoned by her husband, attempts suicide and later dies under the kindly landlady's care, leaving an infant son to be adopted as "Jemmy."

Dickens supplemented the opening and closing (the only portions that he actually wrote) with five by "other hands" most pre-eminent being his prodigy Elizabeth Gaskell.

(Cont. pg. 4)

(Cont. Grad Grind, pg. 3)



*She prayed a good good prayer and I joined in it, poor me (Abbey)*

- **Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy**

Christmas story for *All the Year Round* 1864. Mrs. Lirriper and her lodger, Major Jackman, have adopted and are raising the child Jemmy. Mrs. Lirriper receives a mysterious legacy and travels to Sens, France to investigate.

*Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy* is a sequel to the highly popular 1863 framed tale *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodging*.



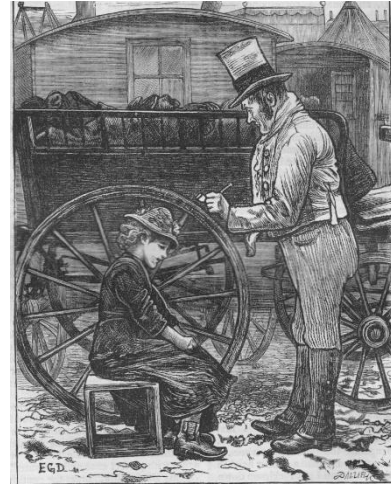
*Jemmy and the Major (Furness)*

- **Doctor Marigold**

Dickens' Christmas number for *All the Year Round* for 1865. Dickens wrote the frame chapters (first and last) and contributed one of the stories (prescriptions) contained in *Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions*, the book Marigold writes for his adopted daughter

*Doctor Marigold*, so named after the doctor that was present at his birth, is a cheap jack, a travelling auctioneer of inexpensive goods. He marries an ill-tempered woman and has a daughter whom the mother abuses. Both daughter and wife die leaving Marigold sad and alone. He hears of a deaf-and-dumb girl who

is unwanted by her stepfather and bargains for and adopts the girl whom he names Sophy after his dead daughter. When Sophy reaches young womanhood Marigold sends her away to be educated. While Sophy is away Marigold buys a bigger cart and has it stocked with books for Sophy to read. He includes a books he has written himself for her called *Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions*. After two years Marigold and Sophy are reunited but Sophy is torn between her adopted father and a young deaf-and-dumb man she met at school. Marigold consents for them to be married and the couple relocate to China where the young man has a position as a clerk in a merchant house. They return five years later and Doctor Marigold is introduced to his granddaughter.



*And at last, sitting dozing against a muddy cart-wheel, I come upon the poor girl who was deaf and dumb (Daziel)*

**Tom's TALKING POINTS** for Saturday's Zoom meeting:

**LIRRIPER:**

- 1) This character became popular with Dickens's readers, so he dedicated two Xmas annuals to her. How would you characterize her?
- 2) Stylistically what is unusual about her monologue?
- 3) What later writers are noted for using this style?
- 4) Dickens like to write about families. What kind of family do we find at the center of this story?
- 5) How does Dickens express his feelings about Paris?

**MARIGOLD:**

- 1) One major theme in this story is the treatment of children by adults. How does Dickens handle this?
- 2) How is Marigold a stand-in for Dickens himself?
- 3) What is Dickens's attitude toward people with disabilities?

## SoCal Dickens Fellowship Officers

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### **Future SoCal DF Meetings**

- July 12 (*Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy, Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings and Dr. Marigold*) led by Tom Savignano
- September 13 (*Sketches by Boz*, first 32 chapters, *Our Parish & Scenes*) Kendall presenting
- November 15 (*Sketches by Boz*, final 24 chapters, *Characters & Scenes*) Karen presenting
- December 10 (Victorian Christmas) Lucinda Dickens Hawksley (co-hosted with Aberdeen)

All meetings are scheduled for Zoom.

This is our quarterly 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).

## Upcoming Dickens Fellowship July Zoom Events

- **Saturday, July 12th, 9:00 am PST: Santa Cruz Pickwick**  
<https://dickens.ucsc.edu/resources/pickwick-club/index.html>  
**Malcolm Andrews** presents *Text and Image Woodcuts for Old Curiosity Shop* (registration required)
  - **Saturday, July 12th, 11:00 am PST: Southern California Dickens Fellowship**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/dfgrad>  
**Tom Savignano** presents *Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy, Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings AND Doctor Marigold*
  - **Saturday, July 19th, 1:00 pm EST: Dickens Fellowship of New York (DFNY)**  
[www.dickensnewyork.com](http://www.dickensnewyork.com)  
**Jordan Cerbone** moderates *The Old Curiosity Shop, Ch. 37-43*
- Summer Conferences** (Registration is closed for Canterbury; still open for Santa Cruz):
- **118<sup>th</sup> International Dickens Fellowship:** July 14-16, Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, Kent, England. "*Dickens, Faith and Antiquity*"  
[www.dickensfellowship.org](http://www.dickensfellowship.org)
  - **45<sup>th</sup> Annual Dickens Universe:** July 20-26, U.C. Santa Cruz, "*The Old Curiosity Shop*" [Dickens Universe](http://DickensUniverse) (most talks and events will be streamed virtually)
  - **The Dickens House Museum**  
[www.dickensmuseum.com](http://www.dickensmuseum.com) has just revamped and upgraded its website. There is a terrific link where you may view their collections online.



