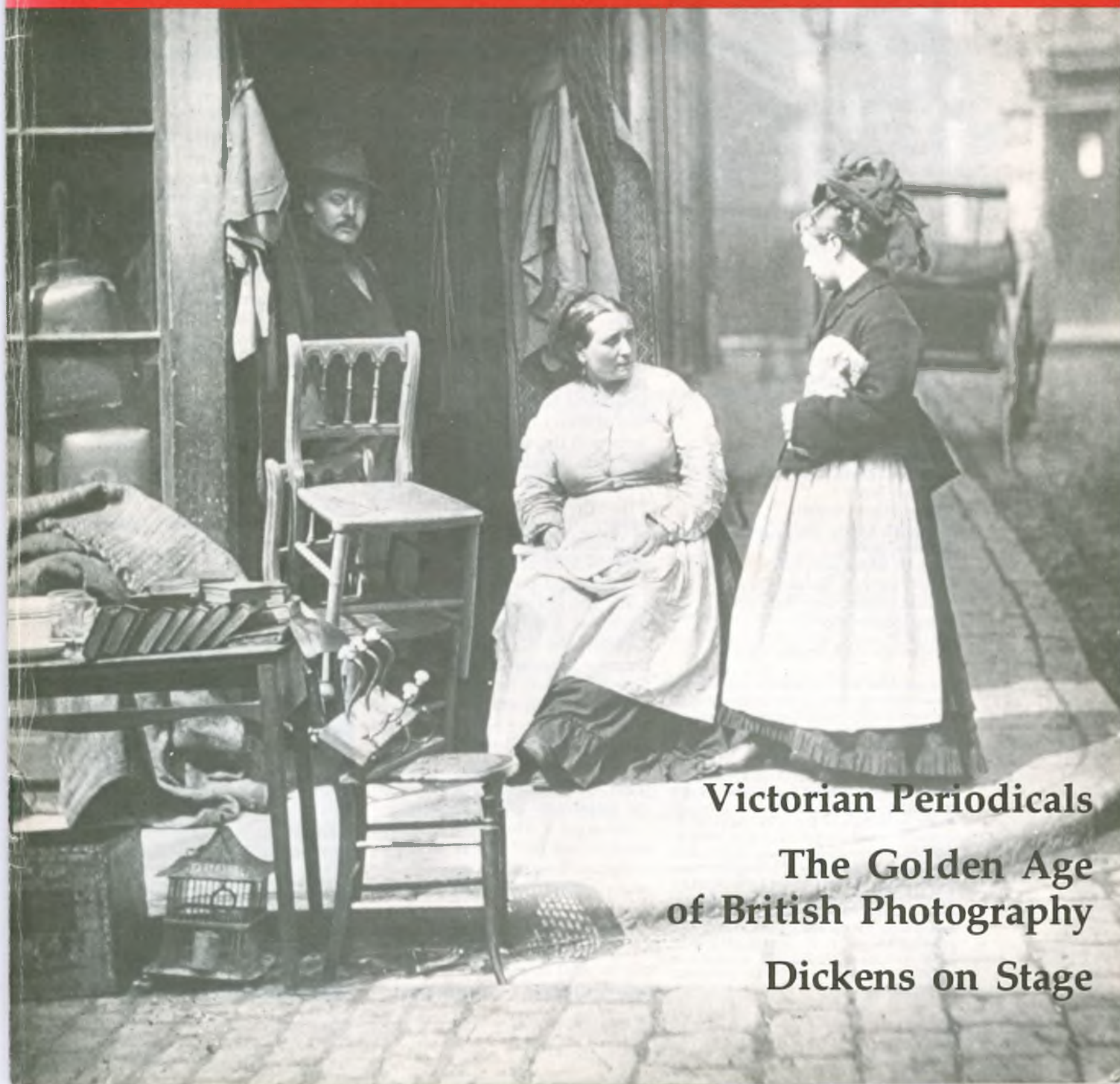
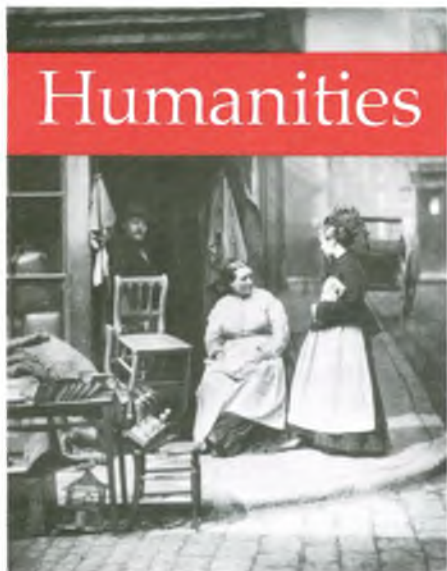


Humanities

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES • VOLUME 7 NUMBER 6 • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1986



Victorian Periodicals
The Golden Age
of British Photography
Dickens on Stage



Our cover photograph, "Old Furniture," is a Woodburytype by John Thomson, one of the few photographers to capture the daily traffic of London's working class. This photograph and others from his collection *Street Life in London* (1877-78) appear in the exhibition catalogue *The Golden Age of British Photography, 1839-1900*.

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Editor's Notes

Charles Dickens was a publishing phenomenon, as popular as he was prolific. The first of eighteen serial novels, *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1836-37), made him famous at twenty-four. Several installments of *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840-41) pushed print runs of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, the weekly in which it appeared, to 100,000 copies. When the publishers of *Household Words*, a weekly that Dickens edited from 1850 to 1859, saw magazine sales dropping, they persuaded Dickens to shore its sagging circulation by writing another serial. His response was *Hard Times* (1854), which gave the magazine a boost that kept it in print for five more years.

This issue of *Humanities* reviews the circumstances of the Dickens phenomenon: the periodicals that prescribed his form, the manners and attitudes that inspired his subjects, and the emotional nature of the mass popular response to his classic works of literature. For Dickens' novels are as suggestive to the literary critic as they are available to lay readers of all ages, and so represent the kind of bridge between the scholarly and public worlds that many NEH programs seek to foster.

Michael Lund of Longwood College, who has conducted NEH Summer Seminars for Secondary School Teachers on the great serial novels, explains that periodical publication influenced both the way that Dickens conceived his novels and the way that his audience received them. In "Reading Long Stories on the Installment Plan," Professor Lund urges a return to the original serial format for Dickens' works to recapture the gradual development important to the meaning of his long stories.

Besides entertaining readers with serialized fiction, the 12,000 periodicals in print at one time or another between 1824 and 1900 analyzed

current events and taught "the multitude of men what to say and think," reports Allyson McGill in the article describing the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals*. When it is completed in 1988, the index, which describes the contents of fifty major publications, will be an indispensable reference work for scholars of Victorian studies.

Dickens' audience quickly expanded beyond the readers who waited faithfully for each printed installment. His works were being adapted for the stage while he was writing them; many were produced without acknowledgment or permission even before the last installment had been written let alone published. In a review heralding the return of *Nicholas Nickleby* to the New York stage this fall, Robert Cushman of the *New York Times* called Charles Dickens "the greatest English playwright never to write a play." Some of the reasons for his popularity with playwrights and theater-goers are explored in "Dickens on Stage" by Matthew Kiell.

Dickens is not merely popular; he is loved. Fred Kaplan, professor of English at Queens College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, is currently at work on a new biography of Dickens that will in some ways account for the strong emotional ties between the writer and his audience. "To his readers," Professor Kaplan writes in the essay that opens this issue of *Humanities*, "he confided indirectly his deepest emotional life." He also made them laugh—a reader response too much ignored by scholars, according to University of Colorado professor James Kincaid. Literary critics must acknowledge, Professor Kincaid asserts, that Dickens created many characters and scenes for no purpose other than to delight his readers. We have collected these essays about him to delight ours. —Linda Blanken

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Charles
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Library of Congress



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Dickens and Friends

BY FRED KAPLAN



Courtesy of Dr. Harry Stone



All biography is, in a sense, the attempt to explore in a coherent and resonant way the primary relationships of the subject's life: with himself, with other people, and with his work. In the biography of Charles Dickens that I am writing, his preoccupation with friendship is a dominant motif, for Dickens had a genius for friendship. During a tumultuous life that began in relative poverty in 1812 and ended in wealth and international fame in 1870, he formed friendships with some of his most distinguished Victorian contemporaries. Those with John Forster, Thomas Carlyle, William Makepeace Thackeray, William Macready, and Wilkie Collins among other notables, helped to forge the Victorian definition of a literary community. Apart from this literary circle, he became the center of a community of fascinating notables, many of them writers, actors, artists, and even aristocrats, including Douglas Jerrold, Leigh Hunt,

George Cruikshank, W.S. Landor, Edwin Bulwer, Mark Lemon, Daniel Maclise, Clarkson Stanfield, Thomas Noon Talfourd, W.P. Firth, W.E. Layard, and Angela Burdett Coutts.

To the Victorians, friendship was a compelling concern. They carried in their cultural consciousness an ideal model of friendship based on examples as old as the Arthurian Round Table and as contemporary as the exclusive clubs of the public schools and universities. The Society of Apostles at Cambridge, with its secret rites of brotherhood, helped forge the special friendship between Tennyson and Arthur Hallam, whose death inspired Tennyson's long poem, *In Memoriam*, which describes friendship between men as the highest brotherhood. Carlyle forged a strong bond with John Sterling, a relationship they both idealized as a perfect brotherhood of kindred sensibilities.

Like a number of his self-made, nonprivileged contemporaries, Dickens needed to create societies of fellowship to fulfill the model. He defined friendship both in ideal

Platonic terms as the mating of two kindred sensibilities, the completion of the incomplete self, and in practical terms as a compact of assistance to advance mutual interests. When the brother of his closest friend died, he reminded him that "you have a Brother left. One bound to you by ties as strong as ever Nature forged. By ties never to be broken, weakened, changed in any way."

Dickens constructed a community of friends whose bonds were professional as well as personal, and he

Fred Kaplan is the author of Thomas Carlyle, A Biography which was nominated for the 1983 National Book Critics Circle Award and was a jury selected finalist for the 1984 Pulitzer Prize in biography. He is also the author of Sacred Tears, Sentimentality in Victorian Literature and Dickens and Mesmerism: The Hidden Springs of Fiction among others and the coeditor of Dickens Studies Annual. Kaplan is Professor of English at Queens College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and is currently writing a biography of Charles Dickens.

worked at it even the more anxiously because he did not have public school and university ties. At clubs like the Garrick and the Athenaeum, which the Victorians transformed into essential social institutions, the bonds of friendship as well as of mutual professional assistance were strengthened. In giving birth to the Dickens circle, he helped to create the modern literary community in which writers and artists band together to support one another emotionally against middle-class indifference or hostility. Prior to the nineteenth century, literary communities in England and America often defined themselves as integral elements of, rather than in opposition to, their societies. During the nineteenth century, writers tended more and more to define themselves as antagonistic to the dominant values of the culture. Dickens emphasized the importance of writers banding together in societies of mutual assistance and support in a culture that seemed to him indifferent to art and callous in its treatment of artists. Eighteenth-century notions of patronage had given way, by the middle of the nineteenth century, to twentieth-century notions of art as business, of literature as media. In fact, on the professional level, Dickens' closest friend, John Forster, acted as informal literary agent for him and other members of the circle, anticipating the role of the literary agent in modern society. Before the early nineteenth century, writers negotiated with publishers themselves, usually hampered by their ignorance of and inexperience in business matters.

To some extent, perhaps, Dickens' idealization of friendship originates in what appears to have been a lonely childhood. He early on developed a heightened (and, of course, factually exaggerated) sense of being neglected by his parents. He lived partly in the imaginary world of books, daydreams, and fantasies. When he discovered a rich treasure of eighteenth-century novels and plays in his father's small library, he thought of the vivid procession of characters who came alive off the page into his imagination and memory as a community of friends. "From that blessed little room," he told Forster in his autobiographical fragment, "Roderick Random, Pere-

grine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, the Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe came out, a glorious host to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy and my hope of something beyond that place and time."

Other than with the characters of his favorite books, his closest childhood friendship was with his elder sister, Fanny. But he had a strong sense that his parents, particularly his mother, were indifferent to him. Eager to please and to be loved, he developed a performance personality, creating as best he could communities of friends and co-workers in amateur theatricals and in schoolyard games. His fascination with reading, and soon with writing, heightened his sense of the solitude and loneliness of these activities in which the pleasures were inward ones; and the enjoyment of those pleasures brought the inevitable desire to counter solitude with company, to complement the self with others. In early adolescence, his sense of isolation was intensified by his father's bankruptcy, the unsettled and migratory life of the family, and a period of harsh labor in a blacking factory. By early manhood, he energetically compelled himself into creating communal structures and friendships that would keep

such loneliness and isolation dim (though always bitter) memories.

Probably the two most successful and sustaining friendships of Dickens' life were with John Forster and Wilkie Collins. He met Forster in 1835, when they were both in their early twenties and Dickens was about to become famous. Forster was bluff, imperious, and loquacious; but he was also immensely energetic, very smart, accomplished and well-connected as a reviewer and writer, and deeply loyal to Dickens. His early training in the law allowed him to act as Dickens' agent as well as his editor throughout a lifetime of intensive literary business. They had their fallings out—their periods of anger and withdrawal. Dickens even caricatured Forster as Podsnap in *Our Mutual Friend*. But, he wrote to him from America in 1842, "how I miss you. . . . How seriously I have thought, many, many times . . . of the terrible folly of ever quarreling with a true friend."

Unlike Forster, who became increasingly conservative and unavailable for fun and games, Wilkie Collins, much younger than both Dickens and Forster, was always available in the 1850s and 1860s to accompany Dickens on late night excursions and travels abroad. A bohemian bachelor with two morganatic



Traddles makes a figure in Parliament and I report him.

Huntington Library

From *David Copperfield*, an engraving by Hablot Knight Browne, known as "Phiz."

"Tommy Traddles and David in *David Copperfield* are some among the many friendship pairs whose relationships provide variations on the fraternal theme that so preoccupied Dickens in his life and in his work."

families, Collins was a sophisticated and cynical devotee of personal pleasure. But he also, like Dickens, worked hard at being a novelist and dramatist, finally having great popular success in the 1860s with *The Moonstone* and *The Woman in White*. Both Forster and Collins were Dickens' intimates, so close to his heart as friends and fellow confessors that this generally secretive man confided to them his feelings, his thoughts, and, during the collapse of his marriage in 1857-58, the complicated problems he confronted. "The mere mention of the fact . . . is a relief to my present state of spirits," he told Forster, "and I can get this only from you" and Collins, "because I can speak of it to no one else." They were part of the small circle of friends who knew about his twelve-year-long affair with Nelly Ternan. From both he got unswerving support. For Dickens, friendship meant complete loyalty. Anything less was betrayal.

A demanding, obsessive personality, Dickens ruthlessly severed a long friendship with the genial, well-intentioned Mark Lemon when, in 1858, Lemon expressed less than complete approval of Dickens' treatment of Catherine Dickens, his wife of twenty-two years. The two men had been intimate friends since the late 1840s. As editor of *Punch*, Lemon had been a central figure in

London literary life and a close friend of the Dickens family. Dickens' children lovingly referred to the rotund humorist as "the Porpoise." Angered by rumors that he was having an affair with his sister-in-law or, alternately or simultaneously, an affair with a young actress, Dickens asked Lemon to publish a statement that he had written denying the allegations. Both Lemon and Bradbury and Evans, the publishers of *Punch* and the publishers of Dickens' novels also, thought such a statement unsuitable for a magazine of humor. Dickens castigated Bradbury and Evans and shortly changed publishers. He refused to have further contact with Lemon or to allow anyone in his family to visit "Uncle Mark." Friendship, then, was an ultimate value for Dickens—not subject to mitigating circumstances, independent judgment, peripheral issues. It was a matter of romantic passion, of idealized loyalty and love. And, in a sense, it was inverted romantic passion: the passion for the female other turned into a passionately intimate, though nonsexual, love for a male friend. Throughout his life he searched, as he confessed to Forster in 1855, for "the one friend and companion I have never made."

Inveterately flirtatious, his friendships with attractive women like Frances Colden, Lavinia Watson, and Mary Boyle had an erotic ele-

ment that complicated, and probably changed, the relationships in ways that made them distinctly different from his friendships with men. Of his friendships with women, only that with the fabulously wealthy philanthropist Angela Burdett Coutts was free of gender complications. With rare exceptions, the Victorians believed that men could be friends only with men; indeed, friendship was mostly a male concept and preserve. The attempt of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor to create a friendship independent of marriage and to cross the gender boundaries was the exception that proves the rule. Although Dickens had glimpses of the possibility of friendship with women and even of a marriage that would also be a friendship, they were fitful, confused glimmers, upon which he never acted, conflicting with his model of friendship as exclusively male. He chose to involve himself with women who could never be his friends. By doing so, he reveals how centrally important friendship and its rewards were to him. Throughout his life, he felt ambivalent about women, and though he dazzled, charmed, and flirted with them, none of his relationships with women was satisfying to him. In principle, he idealized them, but not as friends and companions.

Dickens' life-long preoccupation with the theater and with amateur theatricals was partly a response to his need for a community of friends who would be bound together by shared feelings and activities. Beginning in childhood, he delighted in creating amateur theatricals. In the 1840s, now a successful novelist, he organized the Dickens Theatrical Company, in which the amateur performers were mostly personal friends. They were to perform for various charitable causes, including raising funds for an impoverished literary comrade, Leigh Hunt. Dickens delighted in his many roles as producer, director, script doctor, and star performer. But what gave him special pleasure was forging the bonds of fraternal community, the close ties created by daily interaction in a common cause with people with whom he had strong identification and sympathy. Putting on a play, he wrote to a friend in 1857, was "like writing a book in company; a satis-

From *The Golden Age of British Photography, "Sunshine and Shade"* by F.R. Pickersgill. "Throughout his life, Dickens felt ambivalent about women. . . . In principle, he idealized them, but not as friends and companions."



Victoria and Albert Museum

From *Pickwick Papers*, an engraving by Hablot Knight Browne. "The greatest friendship of Dickens' life was that with his audience."



faction of a most singular kind, which has no exact parallel in my life." The act of transforming acquaintances into friendships and friendships into shared intimacies seemed to him a creative process, like creating a work of art.

The frequent depiction in his novels of friendships between fictional characters provides additional examples and insights into Dickens' definition of and need for friendship. The strong bond between Nicholas and Smike in *Nicholas Nickleby* typifies the kind of male love and loyalty that Dickens valued. In *Pickwick Papers*, Mr. Pickwick's intimate community of traveling friends represents the power of friendship to form a self-sustaining community. Pip and Herbert Pocket in *Great Expectations*, Eugene Wrayburn and

Mortimer Lightwood in *Our Mutual Friend*, and Tommy Traddles and David in *David Copperfield* are some among the many friendship pairs whose relationships provide variations on the fraternal theme that so preoccupied Dickens in his life and in his work. If there was an erotic element in his desire for such friendships, he was not aware of it, although he does reveal his awareness of the danger of false friendship in his most directly autobiographical novel with the relationship between James Steerforth and David Copperfield.

The greatest friendship of Dickens' life was that with his audience. To his readers he confided indirectly his deepest emotional life—and he had from the beginning of his career a sense of the special bond between

himself and his readers, as if they were intimate friends. The serial form of publication contributed to this rapport, since author and reader sustained their relationship over a period of almost two years in the case of Dickens' long novels. He could not, he felt, threaten this collective friendship with some of the details of his private life. When the relationship was threatened by rumors of scandal, he fought back vigorously to protect his livelihood and his life. But it was also to protect what he genuinely felt to be a sacred and sustaining friendship, a mutual confidence and trust between himself and his readers. In May 1858, he forced his in-laws and his wife to sign a document for publication that attested to their belief that he was innocent of charges of moral corruption, reminding them that his and their welfare depended upon his audiences believing that the values he represented in his novels were the values that he embodied in his life.

When he began in April 1858 to give public readings from his novels for which the audiences paid—previously he had given occasional readings for charity—he was exhilarated by what seemed to him an intensification of the intimacy between himself and his audience-friends. At first he feared, as he told Forster, that the "sacred" bond of friendship between himself and his readers had been damaged by the publicity surrounding his separation from Catherine. On the contrary, "he was received," a contemporary witness reported, "with a roar of cheering that might have been heard at Charing Cross." "These occasions," he told an audience in London, gave him a means "of strengthening those relations . . . of personal friendship" he felt he had with his readers, even those "who will never hear my voice or see my face." He had the opportunity, he said, to blow off his "superfluous fierceness" in the actual presence of his readers "instead of in my own solitary room, and to feel its effect coming freshly back upon me from the reader." Whenever he briefly addressed his reading audiences, he asked them to imagine that they were gathered together around a fireside in the winter, a small group of friends engaged in the intimate bonding of hearts that only friendship provides.

Great Annotations

BY JOSEPH H. BROWN



In literary criticism, one critic's definitive reading may be another's misinterpretation. Who has not wanted to call on the author himself to arbitrate the debate when evidence can be found on both sides? However problematic the idea of authorial intention may be for some, for critics of Dickens the author's voice is now available in Harry Stone's edition of *Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels*, a book published by the University of Chicago Press this year with subvention from NEH.

Except for his earliest works, especially the largely improvised *Pickwick Papers*, Dickens planned his novels carefully. The earliest plans to survive are a few sheets dealing with the later installments of *The Old Cu-*

Joseph H. Brown is a manuscript editor at the University of Chicago Press.

Bleak House

CHAPTER I

IN CHANCERY

LONDON. Michaelmas Term lately over, and the Lord Chancellor sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall. Implacable November weather. As much mud in the streets, as if the waters had but newly retired from the face of the earth, and it would not be wonderful to meet a Megalosaurus, forty feet long or so, waddling like an elephantine lizard up Holborn Hill. Smoke lowering down from chimney-pots, making a soft black drizzle, with flakes of soot in it as big as full-grown snow-flakes—gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun. Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas, in a general infection of ill-temper, and losing their foot-hold at street-corners, where tens of thousands of other foot passengers have been slipping and sliding since the day broke (if this day ever broke), adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud, sticking at those points tenaciously to the pavement, and accumulating at compound interest.

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides

riosity Shop. Incomplete plans also exist for *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Great Expectations*. With the exception of *A Tale of Two Cities*, complete sets of notes have been preserved for later works: *Dombey and Son*, *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, *Little Dorrit*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *Edwin Drood*.

Once Dickens began to plan a novel, his usual practice was to keep one sheet of notes for each numbered installment. He would divide each sheet in two, on the left half listing questions about overall planning (names, conjunctions, and possibilities) and on the right recording the substance of individual chapters (titles, events, and motifs). Most often he would fill out each sheet in succession as he worked his way through the novel. Sometimes, however, he worked ahead in the plans, and he would also go back to keep a

record after the fact.

It has been known since Dickens' death that plans exist, but few scholars have used them. Part of the problem has been their inaccessibility: The notes for *Our Mutual Friend* are lodged in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, those for *Great Expectations* in the Wisbech and Fensland Museum, and the rest in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The few transcriptions that have been made are inaccurate in detail and in format. It has been easier for scholars to use other sources of evidence.

Stone's edition makes available all of the extant plans in a single reference work, presenting on facing pages photographic facsimiles and typographic transcriptions of each sheet of the notes. Most readers cannot decipher the facsimiles without reference to the transcriptions be-

cause Dickens' handwriting is often difficult to read. Yet the handwritten notes carry many nuances of emphasis, spacing, and afterthought that the transcriptions cannot convey. The side-by-side format allows the reader to make the most effective use possible of both the transcriptions and the facsimiles.

Stone believes that publication of the notes will enlarge the reader's picture of the novelist. The notes, he says, are a "lode" that "can be used to verify a meaning, document an intention, underscore a motif, trace a genesis, buttress a reading, clarify a relationship, examine the creative process, or study Dickens' imagination."

In *Dombey and Son*, for example, Paul's death is considered one of the earliest and best fictional renditions of a child's consciousness. This scene has been interpreted simply as an unconscious but natural outgrowth of the new romantic sensibility and the cult of the child. Refer-

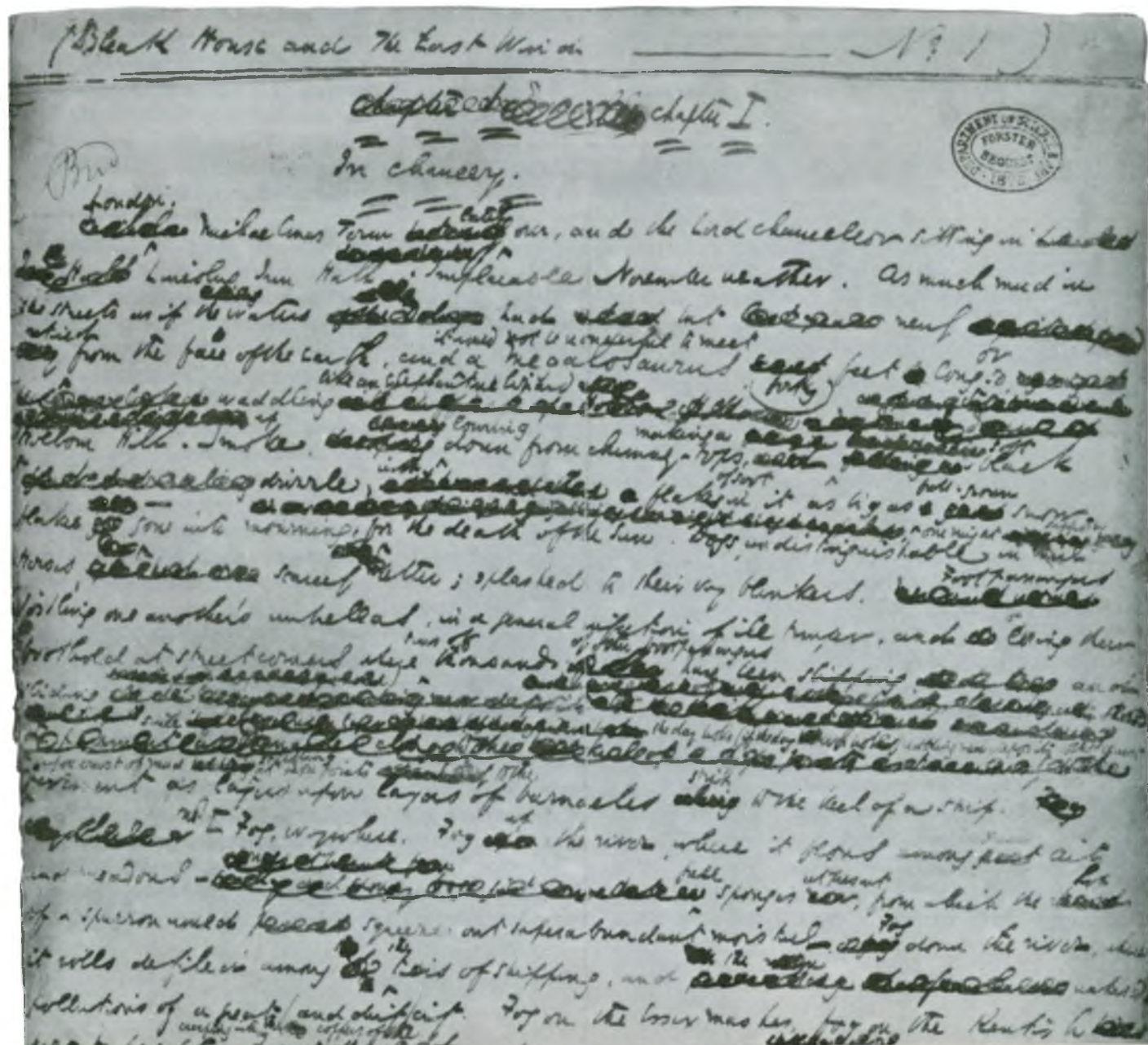
ence to the relevant section of the notes reveals, however, that Dickens consciously followed a narrative strategy that introduces a revolution in sensibility and technique: "His illness only expressed in the child's own feelings—Not otherwise described," Dickens wrote.

Another area where the notes enhance interpretation is Dickens' famous selection of names. Even the most casual reader of *David Copperfield* is struck by the force of "Murdstone"; the connotations of the name are clear. But only the notes will reveal how intentional those connotations are and how complicated was the evolution from "Mr. Harden" through "Mr. Murdle" and "Mr. Murden" to "Mr. Murdstone." The name of "Murdstone" reverberates beyond *David Copperfield*, and the connections are obvious among the Murdstone-type characters graced with the names "Murdle" (*Little Dorrit*), "Headstone" (*Our Mutual Friend*), and

"Durdles" (*Edwin Drood*). The notes will verify the connotations or the names and reveal the connections intended by Dickens.

Besides extensive critical work on Dickens, Stone previously has produced a two-volume edition of *Charles Dickens' Uncollected Writings from "Household Words"* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1968). As he worked on Dickens over the years, Stone collected photostats of a number of the plans, and of necessity he transcribed them. He found himself using these plans so much that he determined to collect and transcribe all the remaining plans for himself—and now, for other Dickens readers as well.

The University of Chicago Press was awarded \$10,000 in outright funds and \$3,033 in matching funds through the Texts-Publications Subvention Program for "Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels" in August 1984. Penelope Kaiserlian was the project director.



Courtesy of Dr. Harry Stone

The first page of the handwritten manuscript of *Bleak House*, written in November, 1851; (opposite page) the printed version of the same material.

RAISING THE DICKENS: The Analysis of Humor

BY
JAMES R. KINCAID

Freud, interestingly, said that laughter had not one but two functions: the offensive release of hostility or inhibited fear and the protection of infantile play-pleasure. Equally interesting, he spent virtually all his own analytical energies on the first function, and we critics have followed his lead. Many discussions of humor in the works of Charles Dickens have ignored play and pleasure and have drawn instead on metaphors of power to show that the apparently pointless humor has a point alright. Sam Weller in *The Pickwick Papers*, for example, plays out the forbidden Oedipal fantasy when he says to the Fat Boy, while putting the finishing touches on the boy's dress, "There; now we look compact and comfortable, as the father said when he cut his little boy's head off, to cure him o' squintin'." Sam, hating the rival

Fat Boy, you see, and wanting him dead, gains a kind of homicidal power with this joke. He also releases both fear and aggression toward his own father and his substitute father Mr. Pickwick by seizing the castrating shears into his own hands and turning deep anxiety into a joke. Perhaps. But to read Sam's simile as a desire to perform and to escape from castration catches only a part of our response as we read. Sam really does not seem to hate the Fat Boy, his own father, or Mr. Pickwick; and he certainly doesn't fear them. He is amused by them, tutors them, and, in the latter two cases, loves them. Sam engages in play for its own sake, not in power exchanges.

We don't yet know how to do much of anything with play, except to make it subservient to power, giving it a purpose of some sort. Pure play in itself, as a metaphor for understanding, escapes us. Power, on the other hand, seems tangible, fa-

miliar, easy to center. It leads compellingly to meaty analyses, whether psychoanalytic, formal, or ideological: the mind, text, culture, and history can be and often are seen as indices of power. Even humor has not escaped.

What characterizes explanations rooted in power? Like the discussion of Sam Weller's joke, they exhibit some of the ideas of contemporaries of Dickens, such as Marx, Darwin, and Freud. The current practice of some of the most sophisticated and advanced scholars in the humanities and social sciences, however, can be more narrowly rooted. In literary theory, and in many related fields, the most beguiling models have been erected through ideological and linguistic/philosophical thinkers like Derrida and Foucault. Distrusting the old essentialist language, human-centered assumptions, formalism, and the entire baggage of liberal-humanist-bourgeois ideology, many scholars have proceeded to employ a new historicism, a new anthropology, and a deconstructive method that reveal the tendencies of traditional studies of the past to assert ideological constructs as if they were natural, a priori realities. Prominent critics now attempt to reveal how giant and undisturbed constructs like "the individual," "repression," or "romantic love" are simply flattering illusions, attractive by virtue of their feint of being independent of history and culture and therefore outside the control of power. Nothing, we are now told, including the analyst writing the study, is liberated from power; nothing can stand outside, free and objective.

But surely *power* is merely a construct like all others, allowing us to see certain things in certain ways, blinding us to other things and other ways of seeing. Power suggests the

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expenditure of certain energies for some ends, purposeful or not. What if we propose a model wherein energy is used for no ends, has no goal but the delight in its own expenditure? Further, what if energy is not *used* but created, raised out of nothing? The best model we have for this mode of understanding may be that of play, anarchic motion that has no idea of causality or purpose beyond itself.

Dickens, the tormented, angry, neurotic version of him anyhow, has been before us for some time. What ingenuity can do to perceive formal coherence and ideological consistency in Dickens' great, sprawling entertainments has been done, and done well. I'm not suggesting that the results are false, simply that we might try out the possibility of another perspective, one that brings into focus the sprawl, the gaps, the wild and purposeless carnival.

Take *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens' first novel and perhaps the favorite of his contemporaries but of few modern readers. G. K. Chesterton, who knew plenty about horsing around and about Victorian perceptions, is an exception: "To the level of 'The Pickwick Papers' it is doubtful if he ever afterwards rose." At the heart of Chesterton's response is Dingley Dell, less an estate than a perpetual-motion playground. Dingley Dell is a huge party room with an enormous, groaning table of food and punch at one end, a Christmas tree at the other, and an expansive middle dripping with mistletoe. Upstairs are feather beds the size of the China Sea. Outside are ponds for sliding and fields for leapfrog. No one becomes tired, grumpy, cold. It's all eating, drinking, kissing, giving and receiving presents (not wages), playing; endless rejoicing and endless childhood; life as it ought to be: "Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days." Even in May, Dingley Dell creates a world that makes it seem "as if it were Christmas."

Significantly, this merry world is decidedly not a cloud-cuckoo land; it contains its share of sexual jealousy, resentment, and economic worries. It may, for some, even rest on "delusions." There are present at these never-ending Christmas festivities a group of "poor relations," somewhat

anxiously or overeagerly entering into the various sports. The world of Dingley Dell, that is, is *situated* psychologically and socially; it is clear that its comfy leisure stands in contrast to, perhaps builds on, fluster and want elsewhere, that its very snugness depends on the contrast with all those who are not admitted to Dingley Dell, not eligible for Christmas. But to emphasize this *situatedness* seems to me to be giving in too meekly to ideological-power forms of explanation. After all, even the poor relations are swept away by joy, controlled not by economic anxiety but by the mistletoe: "As to the poor relations, they kissed everybody, not even excepting the plainer portions of the young-lady visitors." We really can choose whether to locate ourselves in reference to the signals of power—"poor," "plain"—and the cultural readings they dictate or to think of the kissing. Perhaps it should not be a matter of stark choice, but we are in danger of ignoring the ice-sliding, the leapfrog, the squeals and giggles. Sam Weller, who is at least as shrewd about such matters as Foucault, would know better, would see less

narrowly: 'Tis better to have kissed a poor relation or a plain girl, than never to have kissed at all.'

Or laughed at all. Next to *Pickwick*, *Martin Chuzzlewit* was taken by the Victorians as Dickens' most uproarious novel. We priggish moderns regard it as a scorching analysis of cultural and personal decadence, as an exposure of the bankruptcy of capitalist individualism. To be sure, the novel does feature such attractions as the business dealings of a merry undertaker, a mildly murderous midwife, a cynically bogus insurance company, and a YOU-NIGHTED STATES OF AMERICA populated by loony, economically adrift women and a host of Clint Eastwood types who kill for fun and profit. There is nothing to prevent us from picking up on the power clues, if we choose. Here's a pathetic outcast from ruthless capitalism, Augustus Moddle, ruminating on his confounded bad luck at suicide attempts: "'There are some men,' interrupted Moddle with a hollow laugh, 'who can't get themselves run over. They live a charmed life. Coal waggons recoil from them, and even cabs refuse to run them down.



Courtesy of Dr. Harry Stone

Caricature by
Andre Gill, from
L'Eclipse (Paris),
June 14, 1868.

"Who's there?" screamed a numerous chorus of treble voices from the staircase inside, consisting of the spinster lady of the establishment, three teachers, five female servants, and thirty boarders, all half-dressed, and in a forest of curl-papers. Of course, Mr. Pickwick didn't say who was there; and then the burden of the chorus changed into—"Lor! I am so frightened."

Ah!" Moddle has been called a "manic depressive," by a modern critic apparently possessed of Moddle's own spirit. Similarly, the wonderful "transcendental ladies" in America have been seen (by me, alas) as an unblinking portrait of essential nothingness, a peek into the Nietzschean abyss. Their profligate play with words—and with Ralph Waldo Emerson—is tortured into significance, made thrall to power.

Mind and matter . . . glide swift into the vortex of immensity. Howls the sub-

lime, and softly sleeps the calm Ideal, in the whispering chambers of Imagination. To hear it, sweet it is. But then, out-laughs the stern philosopher, and saith to the Grotesque, "What ho! arrest for me that Agency. Go, bring it here!" And so the vision fadeth.

Those who appropriate this frolic exclusively for power analyses really deserve a one-way ticket to the vortex of immensity.

I can't resist one more squint at Martin Chuzzlewit, this one at the commercial aspects of death. As

Sam and Tony Weller argue in *Pickwick*, there is a Providence in death: "Wot 'ud become of the undertakers without it?" Now, in chapter of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Mrs. Gamp, among other things a versatile nurse for the terminally ill, visits the undertaker Mr. Mould at his home to engage in some free-enterprise back-scratching: if he approves of some moon-lighting on her part, she'll see what she can do to send a few corpses his way. I ought to add that this Mrs. Gamp is an economic wonder, carrying with her not only her prodigious abilities but a prodigious appetite for comfort in the form of liquor and pickled cowcumbers and, most importantly, a portable testimony to her abilities in an imaginary friend, Mrs. Harris. The force of an economic analysis, however, is surely enfeebled by Mrs. Gamp's voluptuous pleasure in lots of talk, in play, and in a wild proliferation of details that have no bearing on her earnings:

Likeways, a few rounds o' buttered toast, first cuttin' off the crust, in consequence of tender teeth, and not too many of 'em; which Gamp himself, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, at one blow, being in liquor, struck out four, two single and two double, as was took by Mrs. Harris for a keepsake, and is carried in her pocket at this present hour, along with two cramp-bones, a bit o' ginger, and a grater like a blessed infant's shoe, in tin, with a little heel to put the nutmeg in.

"Gamp is my name—and Gamp my natur," she proudly announces, in a sentence that has about as much point as a power-controlled analysis of her general conversation.

I have, however, been Gampian in this digression and have impolitely left that worthy woman waiting at the door of Mr. Mould's home. Mr. Mould himself would not do so, since he respects Mrs. Gamp greatly and also finds her highly entertaining. We first see him, surrounded by his wife and daughters, joking on the pastoral idyll they have created, what with the happy sound of coffins being made in the back room:

"Quite the buzz on insects," said Mr. Mould, closing his eyes in a perfect luxury. "It puts one in mind of the sound of animated nature in the agricultural districts. It's exactly like the woodpecker tapping."



The unexpected "breaking up" of the Seminary for Young Ladies.

From *Pickwick Papers*, an engraving by Hablot Knight Browne. Mr. Pickwick is trapped behind the door.

Mrs. Gamp enters this delirium and the whole company picks up on a kind of Dingley Dell merriment, ragging the girls about their marriage plans, Mrs. Gamp taking the lead, even though "the blessing of a daughter was denied me; which, if we had had one, Gamp would certainly have drunk its little shoes right off its feet, as with our precious boy he did, and arterwards send the child a errand to sell his wodden leg for any money it would fetch as matches in the rough."

Drinks follow all around, more jokes, and then, very briefly, business: "I will not deny . . . that I am but a poor woman, and that money is an object; but do not let that act upon you, Mr. Mould. Rich folks may ride on camels, but it ain't so easy for 'em to see out of a needle's eye. That is my comfort, and I hope I knows it." More jokes, more drinks, more stories about Mrs. Harris, and finally Mrs. Gamp must depart to abuse another patient, leaving behind her serenity and a heightened taste for fooling around: "She's the sort of woman, now," reflects Mr. Mould, "one would almost feel disposed to bury for nothing; and do it neatly, too!" Commerce is subsumed by play. Making a living for Mr. Mould and Mrs. Gamp simply provides a stage for performance, a set of cues for one-liners or for extended, disconnected monologues.

I'd like to go on, showing how, for instance, David Copperfield exchanges a paradigm of play for one of power, thereby smothering within himself a responsiveness to nonsense, to pointlessness, to his own childhood. His young wife, Dora, sees life differently:

"My love," said I, "I have work to do."

"But don't do it!" returned Dora. "Why should you?"

It was impossible to say to that sweet tempered little surprised face, otherwise than lightly and playfully, that we must work to live.

"Oh! How ridiculous!" cried Dora. "How shall we live without, Dora?" said I.

"How? Any how!" said Dora.

"We must work to live" is a dreary maxim David shares with those of us who write laborious essays on

"Ladies—dear ladies," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh, he says we're dear," cried the oldest and ugliest teacher. "Oh, the wretch!"

"Ladies," roared Mr. Pickwick, rendered desperate by the danger of his situation. "Hear me. I am no robber. I want the lady of the house."

"Oh, what a ferocious monster!" screamed another teacher. "He wants Miss Tomkins."

—The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club

what a labor it is to read Dickens. "How ridiculous!" as Dora says. Dora is not caught in simplified causality, in strict narrative plots, in power. It's not that we cannot, if we wish, examine her with the aid of those instruments, but for how long will we be satisfied with bowing to the explanatory radiance of power? Mr. Micawber should be our guide. Unbamboozled by the agencies of power (in this case, "the Minion of Power—in other words, a ribald Turncock attached to the water-

works"), he embraces his loyal wife, salutes his unending stream of children, and turns to making punch. Even David says, "I never saw a man so thoroughly enjoy himself amid the fragrance of lemon-peel and sugar; the odor of burning rum, and the steam of boiling water." That, as they say, is the ticket; and it may provide us with entrance to a different analytical paradigm, one clouded as yet—but clouded with the glories of sugar, lemon, and rum. ☺



Mrs. Gamp proposes a toast.

Huntington Library

From Martin Chuzzlewit, etching by "Phiz" for Number XVIII, Chapter XLIX (June 1844).

Fashionable Fictions

BY JENNIFER NEWTON



Mrs. Catherine Gore, an 1837 engraving from *New Monthly Magazine*.

The late Ellen Moers once described the Regency period as the time "when aristocracy and monarchy were more widely despised (and hence more nastily exclusive) than ever before or since in English history." Yet during this brief time, a genre called the "silver fork" novel, which detailed aristocratic life in often excruciating detail, was avidly read by the rising middle class. In a book in progress, "Fashionable Fictions: The Silver Fork Novel from Lister to Thackeray," NEH fellow Winifred Hughes is exploring this seeming contradiction.

The first three decades of the nineteenth century were certainly a time of extraordinary social tensions in England; as Hughes notes, this was when "class" replaced "rank" as a description of one's social place, when the middle class as we know it today began to be defined. Buoyed by new wealth and new confidence, the upper middle class began to aspire to political power. The aristocracy, on defense from this assault from below and led by the personal tastes of the Prince Regent (King George IV, 1820-30), reacted by

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defining its superiority in terms of fashion—entree to certain clubs, dandyesque attire, insouciant spending and gambling, and a style that assiduously avoided any appearance of responsibility or commitment. What moral authority the aristocracy possessed was severely eroded by this elitism. Rising economic and political pressure eventually led to the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832, which extended the franchise to men paying a certain amount of property tax annually. The Reform Bill dealt a death blow to oligarchical politics in England and, by extension, to Regency high society.

During the critical decade before the Reform Bill, an enterprising publisher named Henry Colburn found that a popular, largely middle-class audience existed for novels that described elite society from the inside. He developed a stable of writers to churn out this fiction—only some of whom were aristocrats. Others, like Thomas Henry Lister and Mrs. Catherine Gore, were not of aristocratic origin, but moved comfortably in fashionable circles. Still others—most notably the young Benjamin Disraeli—were complete social nobodies relying on imagination and aspiration.

The aristocratic credentials of his authors apparently mattered little to Colburn, who published many of

these works anonymously and puffed them shamelessly. Colburn had interests in a number of journals and magazines, where gossip pre-views of the next book by "the brilliant author of . . ." would often appear just before publication. Another favorite technique was to plant glowing reviews, sometimes penned by the author of the book in question.

But Colburn made himself a fortune by being shrewd enough to seize on the congruence of many elements—the widening of literacy and leisure, the development of circulating libraries, and new printing techniques that allowed him to print inexpensive editions. Most importantly, he saw that an increasingly large parvenu class would devour formulaic novels that could act, as Winifred Hughes suggests, as "hornbooks for social climbers." In many ways, Hughes continues, Colburn was a pioneer of modern marketing techniques and a creator of the best-seller.

Most critics not in Colburn's pay disliked these novels, and their distaste was more than purely aesthetic. William Maginn, editor of *Fraser's* magazine and a promoter of middle-class virtues, was scornful of the bourgeois interest in aristocratic doings. Another critic was certain that the lack of tight plot construction in the episodic, digressive fashionable novel mirrored the moral laxity of the upper classes. William Hazlitt, in an 1827 review, noted that the middle class showed self-contempt and servility in its fascination with aristocrats "eating off silver forks."

The term "silver fork," thus coined in opprobrium, was in fact used by Colburn's novelists to describe themselves. This is reflective, Winifred Hughes believes, of the "ambivalence of tone" built into the best of the silver fork novels. They could be read either as celebrations of the high life and its pleasures or as satires debunking aristocrats and parvenus who wanted to be aristocrats. To a class forming its identity, Hughes suggests, these novels could serve both as "fantasies of release from responsibility" and as "cautionary tales unmasking the corruption of irresponsible aristocracy."

A writer particularly deft at creating fantasy was Disraeli, who wrote his first silver fork novel, *Viv-*

Library of Congress

ian Grey, at the age of twenty-one. This book was published anonymously by Colburn in 1826 and was widely praised for its knowing cleverness about London society until its author was discovered to be a young man from a completely unfashionable background who worked by day in a firm of solicitors. Disraeli's second novel, *The Young Duke*, was just as much a product of imagination; his father, upon hearing the title, is said to have remarked, "What does Ben know of dukes?" The novel is an outsider's fantasy of a life of luxury and opulence, with countless sensual descriptions of banquets, drinking bouts, and balls. "Oh to be young and a duke," exclaims the title character. "It's too much!"

Fairly soon after *The Young Duke*, notes Hughes, Disraeli moved into the society he had been imagining. After other silver fork novels and his election to parliament in 1837, Disraeli wrote a trilogy of novels—*Sybil*, *Conyngsby*, and *Tancred*—that laid out a serious political role for the chastened aristocracy; in doing so, Disraeli transcended the genre in which he had begun. Hughes plans to include a chapter on Disraeli in her book, as well as one on the man who helped launch Disraeli into fashionable society, Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

Bulwer, whose 1828 novel *Pelham* was said to have been the how-to manual for dandies, came from a background of wealth and privilege and eventually inherited a title. In addition to writing silver fork novels, Bulwer dabbled in another contemporary genre, the Newgate novel, which featured lurid crimes and life in the underclass. Perhaps the most famous reaction to Bulwer's work was that of Thomas Carlyle, who read a review and excerpts of *Pelham* in *Fraser's* magazine and was moved to write *Sartor Resartus* (1831). This book-length essay, which uses the aristocratic preoccupation with clothes as the basis for a condemnation of false social customs, became one of the central texts of the Victorian period.

When Hughes began her study of the early nineteenth century, she intended to show how critics of the time helped to shape the emerging Victorian social consensus, and so she investigated the wealth of

largely unexamined periodical essays and reviews from the period. But, as she notes, "It's hard to read the reviews without having read the novels." In the process of reading novels that had not been checked out of the library in a century, she discovered the works of Mrs. Catherine Gore (1799–1861) and has come to view Gore as a unique transitional figure between Regency glitter and Victorian sobriety.

Biographical details on Gore are obscure. Of middle-class origin, married to an army officer, she achieved social position by virtue of her personality and her writing. Gore, a mother of ten, produced some 200 volumes of poetry, drama, and fiction. She began in the 1820s by writing historical romances in the manner of Sir Walter Scott, but she soon turned to the fashionable novel, which, as Hughes says, "she continued imperturbably to turn out" well into the 1850s, long after the vogue had died out.

One of her contemporaries, Peter George Patmore, wrote a thinly disguised caricature of Mrs. Gore as Lady Bab Brilliant, critic and yet idol of the fashionable world. In a key passage, Patmore writes:

Lady Bab Brilliant not only did not pretend to be any better than her friends and associates, but in reality was no better. She was in truth an epitome, in herself, of all the fashionable follies and not a few of the fashionable vices. . . . which she had so effectively held up to public contempt and indignation.

After reading most of Gore's novels, Hughes comments that she is inclined to give them more credit than other critics have, both as works of fiction and as social barometers. She considers several worthy of reprint. There are two "delightful" comedies of manners from 1831, *Pin Money* and *Mothers and Daughters*, the latter a wicked depiction of the marriage market of Regency society. *The Hamiltons; or, Official Life in 1830*



THE LOWER WALK OF LITERATURE.

Housemaid (to jaded Literary Man, who has just finished a hard day's work).—"OH, IF YOU'RE NOT BUSY, SIR, WOULD YOU MIND JUST LOOKING OVER MY HARTICLE FOR THE FAM'LY 'ERALD?!"

Library of Congress

The growth of a literate middle class, imitative of aristocratic manners, expanded the market for formulaic novels that could act as "horn-books for social climbers." This circumstance is satirized in an engraving in *Punch*, April 6, 1878.

(published in 1834) is a political novel that evinces Gore's Whig sympathies for reform. And *Cecil; or, The Adventures of a Coxcomb* (1841) is a bittersweet elegy for the lost Regency, as told by an aging dandy. A tour-de-force of first-person narrating in which the author never drops her mask, *Cecil* is also the last of Gore's novels to focus completely on Regency manners. Later work chronicles confrontation, adjustment and, eventually, accommodation between aristocracy and bourgeois, mostly in love and marriage.

It was a younger writer who, after serving a long journalistic apprenticeship bashing at fashionable novels, wrote the book that, in Hughes's words, "broke the mold of the silver fork genre." William Makepeace Thackeray, whose early reviews deplored the "sham art" of silver fork novels, wrote parodies of the genre, including "Lords and Liveries," published in *Punch* in the mid-1840s and recognizably based on Mrs. Gore. After the brilliant success in 1848 of *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray's satirical view of fashion seems to have mellowed considerably. He was launched into society, and he began a correspondence and friendship with Mrs. Gore. Upon reading a new edition of *The Hamiltons*, which she sent him in 1850, he wrote her a remarkable—if somewhat oblique—recantation of his earlier criticism of her:

And I think some critics who carped at some authors for talking too much about fine company ought to hold their tongues. If you live with great folks, why should you not describe their manners? . . . I . . . believe it was only a secret envy and black malignity of disposition which made me say in former times this author is talking too much about grand people, this author is of the silver-fork school.

Although it seems that Thackeray had read *The Hamiltons* only after he had written *Vanity Fair*, there are remarkable parallels in plot and characterization between the two books. Even more notable is the similarity in tone—the ambivalence toward fashion and society displayed by both authors. Twentieth-century critics who find Thackeray maddening because his true attitude toward a character like Becky Sharp seems impenetrable should note that

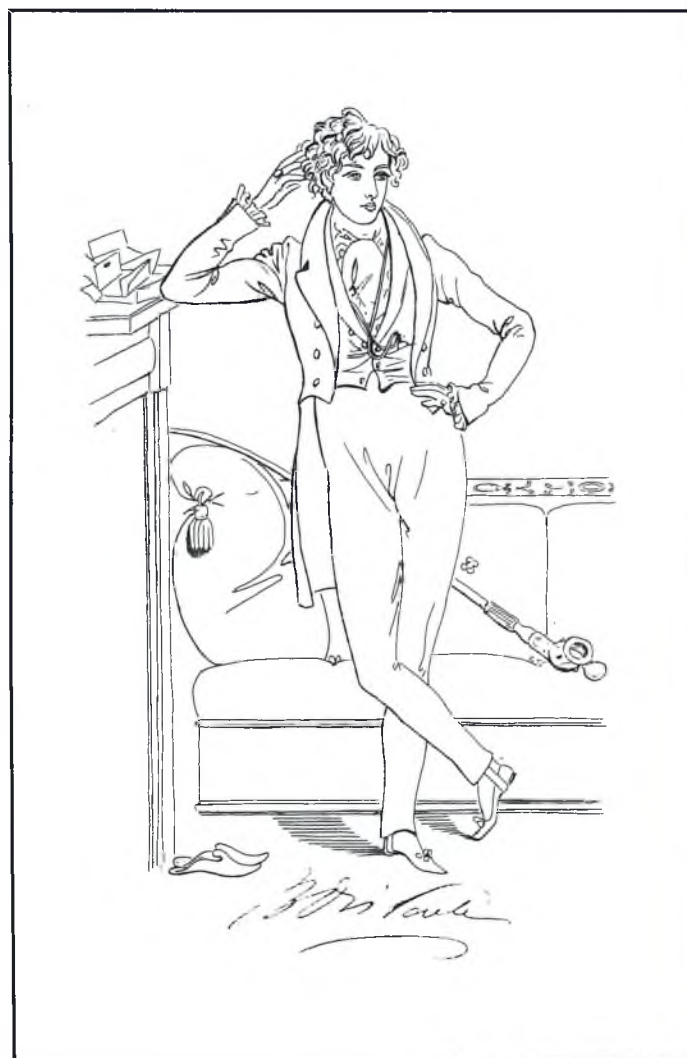
Thackeray himself was equally frustrated when contemplating the work of Mrs. Gore.

Vanity Fair could be called the last silver fork novel. In transcending the genre, it guaranteed that no one could use its conventions seriously again. But among the Victorians, who had in a sense defined themselves against the Regency, literary treatments of aristocracy had to confront silver fork traditions. Hughes points out that Dickens included a parody of a silver fork novel in *Nicholas Nickleby*, with the book, *Lady Flabella*, which Kate Nickleby reads to her pretentious parvenu employer, Mrs. Wititterly. ("There was not a line in it . . ." says Dickens, "which could, by the remotest contingency, awaken the smallest excitement in any person breathing.") In *Bleak House*, Dickens uses the loose, digressive silver fork form (and present tense) to portray the stagnation of the aristocratic Dedlock family. When the plot shifts to the story of Esther the orphan, the tense switches to past and the narrative acquires movement. The chapter

heading is "A Progress."

Can the silver fork novels, sandwiched historically between Austen and Scott on one side and Dickens and Thackeray on the other, be considered anything other than markers between masterpieces? Mrs. Gore referred flippantly to her "ormolu railroad" of novels, but the hero in her *Women As They Are; or, The Manners of the Day* makes a characteristically ambivalent claim for them: "We have perhaps had more than enough of fashionable novels, but as the amber which serves to preserve the ephemeral modes and caprices of the passing day, they have their value." Today, when the professional class is fascinated with the English country house and the wealth and the idylls of a leisured elite, we might instructively read again those rambling repositories, the silver fork novels. ♣

Winifred Hughes was awarded \$27,500 through the Fellowships for University Teachers Program for "Social Attitudes and Theories of Fiction in 19th-Century England" in November 1985.



Benjamin Disraeli as a young dandy from Fraser's Magazine, 1833.

Courtesy of The Viking Press



arly in Dickens' third full-length novel, *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–39), the hero finds he must take the job of assistant at Mr. Wackford Squeers' Academy in Yorkshire. Although young Nicholas knows nothing about the school or his duties there, and though the school is far from London, his mother, and his sister Kate, he is carried away immediately in anticipation of speedy success at his new career:

"To be sure, I see it all," said poor Nicholas, delighted with a thousand visionary ideas, that his good spirits and his inexperience were conjuring up before him. "Or suppose some young nobleman who is being educated at the Hall, were to take a fancy to me, and get his father to appoint me his travelling tutor when he left, and when we come back from the continent, procured me some handsome appointment. . . . And who knows, but when he came to see me when I was settled (as he would of course), he might fall in love with Kate, who would be keeping my house, and—and—marry her, eh! uncle? Who knows?" (Chapter III)

Nicholas's naivete is obvious even before we see how Dotheboys Hall has crippled Smike and many more; but another way to understand the limited vision of Dickens' hero here is to recognize that he sees his life in terms of the wrong literary genre for his time. Nicholas thinks this adventure will be short, a brief interval of trial and separation quickly overcome in success and reunion. He thinks, that is, in terms of the short story. For Dickens and his generation, however, the frame of reference Nicholas must come to accept is that of a long story. Characters do succeed in Victorian fiction, but only after years of struggle.

Dickens' nineteenth-century readers recognized at an early point in any novel that they were beginning a long story, with resolution difficult and distant. Indeed, it would have been some fifty-eight chapters before Dickens' hero Nicholas, still separated from the woman he loves and the fulfillment of his dreams, gains the maturity to see that few things come quickly or easily in life. He tells Kate in Chapter LXI,



Reading Long Stories on the Installment Plan



BY
MICHAEL LUND



"Sometimes I try to think that the time may come when I may honestly tell her [Madeline] this [that he loves her]; but it is so far off, in such distant perspective, so many years must elapse before it comes, and when it does come (if ever), I shall be so unlike what I am now, and shall have so outlived my days of youth and romance . . . that even I feel how visionary all such hopes must be, and try to crush them rudely myself and have the pain over, rather than suffer time to wither them, and keep the disappointment in store.'" Nicholas has come to think in terms of long stories, and his lengthy struggle for happiness is a model that Dickens' readers accepted in their own lives (even though the author himself achieved fame and fortune well before he was thirty).

This Victorian perspective, however, is often lost in modern approaches to the novels of Dickens. We do recognize the length of Victorian novels in one sense—the number of words in a typical text. Most paperback editions of *Nicholas Nickleby*, for instance, run 800 to 900 pages. And the recently revived, very successful dramatic production by the Royal Shakespeare Company has gained extra attention because of the unusual eight-hour length needed to tell most of the story. Yet both these forms for Dickens' novel are short compared to the original. In college and university classes, students read *Nicholas Nickleby* in perhaps a week; and theater audiences see the play in one or two nights. What Dickens wrote, however, took his nineteenth-century audience nineteen months to read. From the initial success of *Pickwick Papers* (1836–37), most of Dickens' major works appeared in one familiar format: twenty parts in nineteen monthly issues (the last two coming together as a double number)—more than a year and a half's worth of reading.

Serialization is one of the most of-

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ten mentioned characteristics of Dickens' work. There certainly have been fine studies of how Dickens adapted as a writer to the serial format, making sure each monthly number provided entertainment enough to be read by itself and yet also carefully crafting it to fit into the thematic structure of a larger work of art. And some general truths about the serial audience's experience frequently are acknowledged—that Dickens' readers, for instance, were always eager to find out "what happens next" in his stories. Few scholars have referred, however, to the temporal dimension of the texts: Citations are to page or chapter numbers in modern single-volume editions, rather than to installment numbers and months of publications. Critics have not focused, for example, on how watching Smike waste away over a period of months (rather than pages) affects the meaning of the novel.

Not only do critics tend to think of Dickens' long stories in shortened time frames, but the traditional university curriculum also compresses

this essential Dickens form. Modern literary criticism has dictated that works of art should be read and taught as autonomous, whole entities, which means that works are traditionally assigned to be read in their entirety before class discussion or lecture. Many long novels, in fact, are often simply excluded from syllabi in favor of shorter, more manageable, but often less important works. We read "A Christmas Carol" instead of the longer classic *David Copperfield*; we teach George Eliot's *Silas Marner* instead of her masterpiece, *Middlemarch*; students are assigned Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* instead of the incomparable *Brothers Karamozov*. And yet these famous works of long fiction could be brought back into the canon and, thus, to the common knowledge of many Americans if educators returned to the original serial format in which they appeared. Although the academic schedule does not run in nineteen-month terms, one can still copy the installment format by providing a week or ten days between parts or by dou-

bling up some installments while still taking the full semester to complete the reading of a major work.

Dickens' long stories, read in installments over an academic term, semester, or year, add depth and substance to courses from the freshman level to the graduate program. At Longwood College, for instance, the freshman English program features one major installment text read serially in the customary Introduction to Literature course. In recent years freshmen have studied such serial works as Dickens' *Bleak House* and Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo*—classics they probably would not have read in any other format and certainly would not have read as carefully as they have in the installment approach. When students are between installments (made like Dickens' original audience to "wait" for what makes them "laugh" and what makes them "cry"), they read and study the more traditional material of an introductory literature course, short stories and lyric poems that illustrate the elements of literature (point of view, symbolism, and so forth) in a conveniently packaged anthology. But with the featured long story, students continue to develop their appreciation of an enduring statement about the human condition constructed on a significantly grander scale.

Reading such classics over three or four months' time can increase a student's confidence in his or her interpretations of literature. In classes where each novel is read and taught only as a whole, students often believe that, reading on their own, they have misinterpreted the novel, and that the professor replaces their faulty reading with a better, more authoritative one. In a serial reading experience, by contrast, because the development of understanding is gradual, students do not have to think that their own conceptions are wrong; they might be accurate according to the evidence available at that point in the novel. Later, following the characters' lives further through time, students can refine their own understanding.

Serial reading also works against the notion entertained by many students that personality (in life) and character (in fiction) are absolutes, unchanging, almost one-dimensional forces that remain fixed

Huntington Library



From *Nicholas Nickleby*, an etching by Hablot Knight Browne.

Nicholas starts for Yorkshire.

through time. Moreover, traditional literary analysis—based on a view of the text as a static entity that one can fix in a single, final reading—also encourages this kind of thinking about literary characters. Reading a long novel in installments over time tends to undermine this perspective by creating an intense community of readers, a set of individuals who are following a common history for an extended period. Because long association often leads to affection, students find they care about the fate of the characters. Furthermore, they learn that they cannot comprehend the lives of these individuals in an evening or over a weekend, classifying them by types and then filing them away under fixed categories where they will give no further trouble until the exam (when they can be disposed of for good!). The serial characters of Dickens and other nineteenth-century writers keep returning with new, surprising statements and actions. If we care about them (and it's hard not to, when we, like the Victorians, invest such time in them and know them so well), we have to revise continually our notions of them.

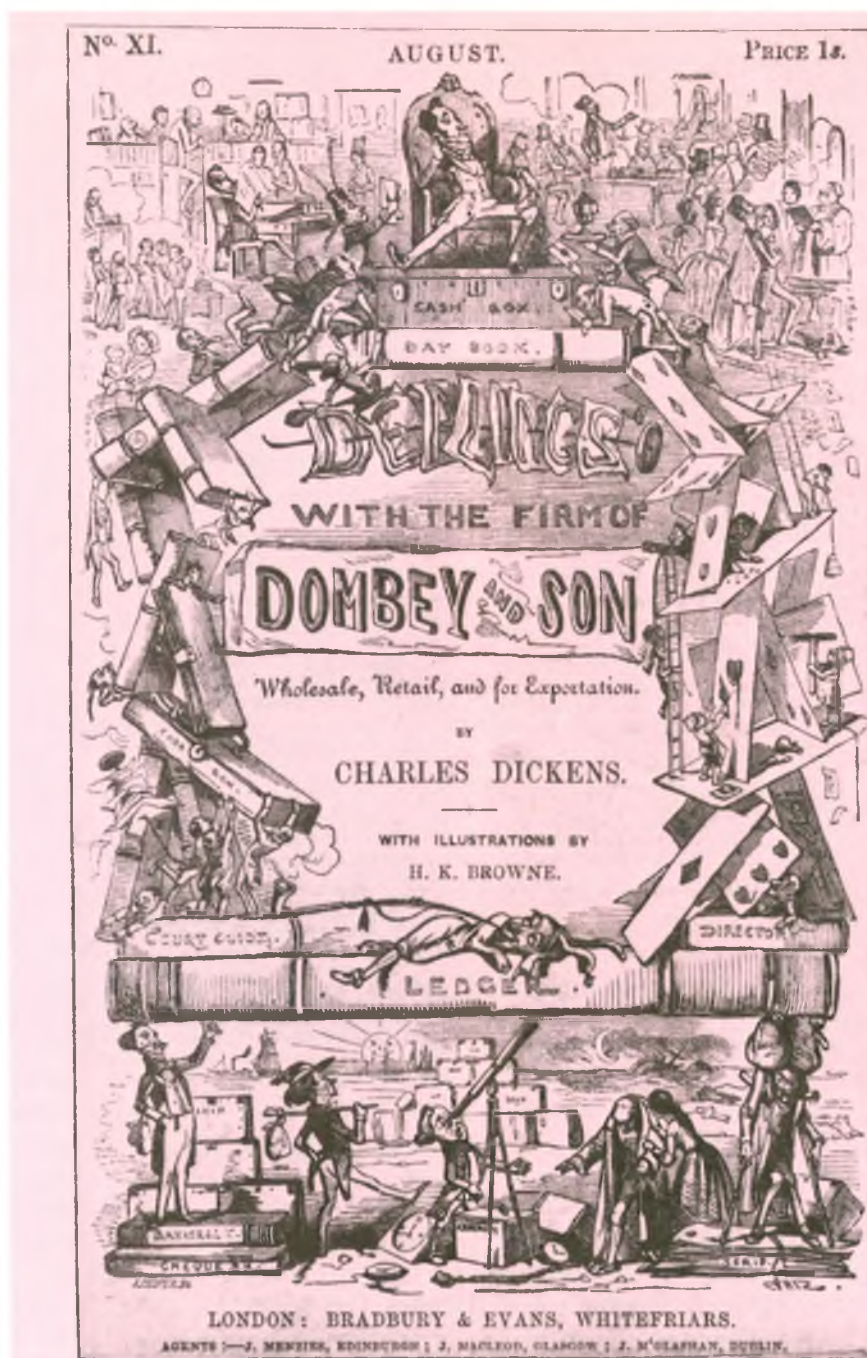
Study of Dickens' long stories in their original form encourages new understanding of a historical sensibility as well as insight into theoretical questions about the nature of literary experience. That the long time of publication in a Dickens story determined in precise measurable ways how Victorians understood his work is made clearer through study of the nineteenth-century periodical press. Contemporary reviews in the "weeklies" (popular weekly newspapers) enthusiastically and in great detail commended to their readers "Dickens' latest," quoting at length from the monthly number and commenting on key incidents and characters. The more critically sophisticated monthly and quarterly journals record the reactions of an audience that has taken the full time of serial publication (usually a year or more) to understand the major literary texts of its age. Identifying and studying the material in Victorian periodicals, particularly in the weeklies, as sources of understanding Dickens' long stories, offer a bright prospect for Victorian studies.

In *Nicholas Nickleby*, for instance, Victorian uncertainty about the na-

ture of property, visible in the debate over the Reform Bill of 1832, came into the text of Dickens' long story in June 1839, at the publication of number XV. The meaning of Dickens' text to a Victorian audience included a contemporary public battle between Dickens and literary pirates of his day. The widening of the legal definition of property would lead as early as 1838 to a public reconsideration of the ownership of literary works, though no bill passed Parliament until 1842. In between those years Dickens himself confronted the issue of copyright, as throughout the serial run of *Nickleby* (April 1838 to October 1839) imitations and unauthorized stage versions of his story were being produced without acknowledgment of

or payment for his authorship. In his June 1839 installment, Dickens had his hero Nicholas attack such literary hacks who would take "the uncompleted books of living authors, fresh from their hands, wet from the press, cut, hack, and carve them to the powers and capacities of [their] actors and the capability of [their] theatres . . . without his permission, and against his will . . ." (chapter XLVIII). For Victorians, understanding of this long story about the hero's rise to self-sufficiency and productivity included an awareness of Dickens' public battle to receive credit for his own creation.

Returning to this nineteenth-century habit of reading in parts, however, can also lead contemporary literary scholars to new insights



Wrapper for the monthly numbers of *Dombey and Son*, designed by Hablot Knight Browne and published in August 1847.

Courtesy of Dr. Harry Stone

about reading in general, not just Victorian reading. Although established critical frameworks tend to treat any literary text as an autonomous whole, even single volume editions are seldom read all at once. We insert pauses in the text (when we get up for a cup of coffee or lay a book down at the end of a day) even when the original publication format did not. Reading a Dickens novel or any long work is not an uninterrupted single event, but a process during which life and history go on and in which breaks inevitably occur. A number of contemporary literary theorists are attempting to analyze the minute by minute, page by page movement of a reader through a text, taking into account the reader's simultaneously ongoing life. Dickens' installment novels are an excellent critical model for such studies. Not only are there formal pauses in the texts at installment endings, but the historical record of Victorian readers shows how events outside the fiction influence the understanding of a novel.

The appeal of serialization captured so effectively by Dickens in his time has not been lost, of course, in our own century. The installment form has continued beyond the nineteenth century in popular entertainment—movie serials, radio drama, television soap operas (as well as weekly television series), and movie sequels like the "Star Wars" trilogy. The features of a continuing story—speculation, suspense, commitment—are even more attractive in great literature. The form's strengths account for the fact that there have been efforts by writers who have earned critical praise to revive the installment novel—Norman Mailer, whose *An American Dream* appeared in *Esquire* (January–August 1964), for instance, and, more recently, Tom Wolfe, whose *The Bonfire of the Vanities* appeared from July 1984 to August 1985 in *Rolling Stone*. Wolfe's novel, in fact, has invited a number of comparisons with the fiction of that Victorian journalist who, moving from "Sketches by Boz" to *The Pickwick Papers*, established a new publication format for the great literature of his age.

In a different mode, though still appearing in installments, is a fine new work with no hint of an ending, a "serial novel" or "novel

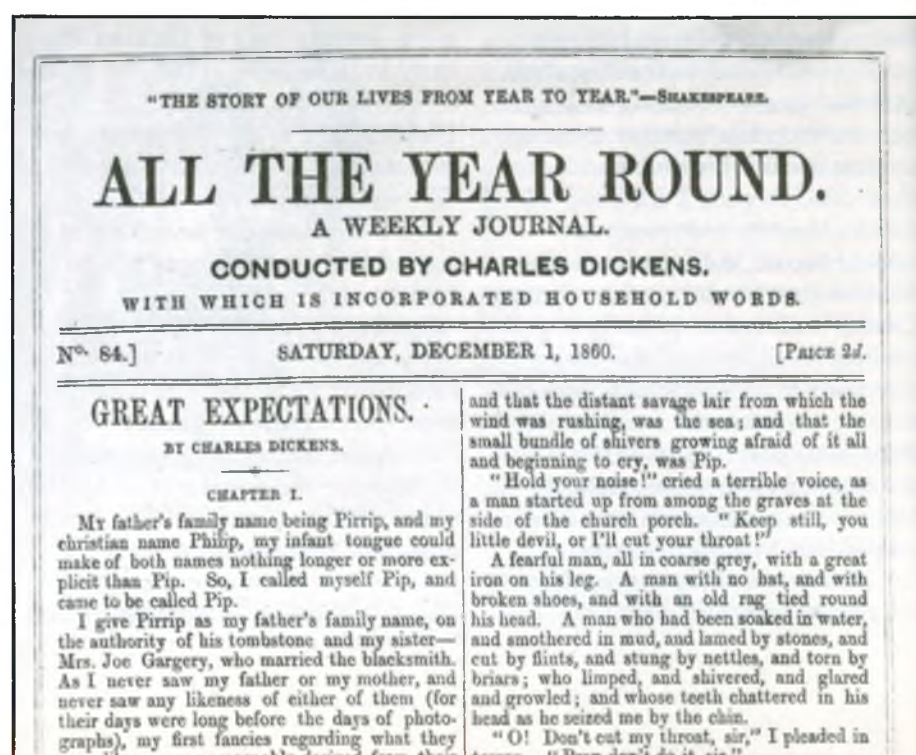
series" entitled *The Personal History, Adventures, Experiences & Observations of Peter Leroy* by Eric Kraft. Available initially from Apple-wood Books in Cambridge, Massachusetts, this ongoing novel appeared quarterly in compact 96-page volumes in 1982–85. In 1986 Apple-wood stopped publication of *Peter Leroy* at number 8 ("Call Me Larry"); and Warner Books announced plans to reissue parts 1–4 nationally beginning in September 1986, with distribution of additional installments dependent on audience response. Each part adds to the story of Peter Leroy's growing up in Babbington, New York, as narrated by the protagonist himself. Advertisements for the series feature the slogan, "BECAUSE LIFE DOESN'T HAPPEN ALL AT ONCE, neither does *The Personal History, Adventures, Experience & Observations of Peter Leroy*." Kraft's deft style, which blends his individual voice with echoes of Dickens (*David Copperfield*), Twain (*Huck Finn*), and Proust (*Remembrance of Things Past*), has inspired praise from reviewers.

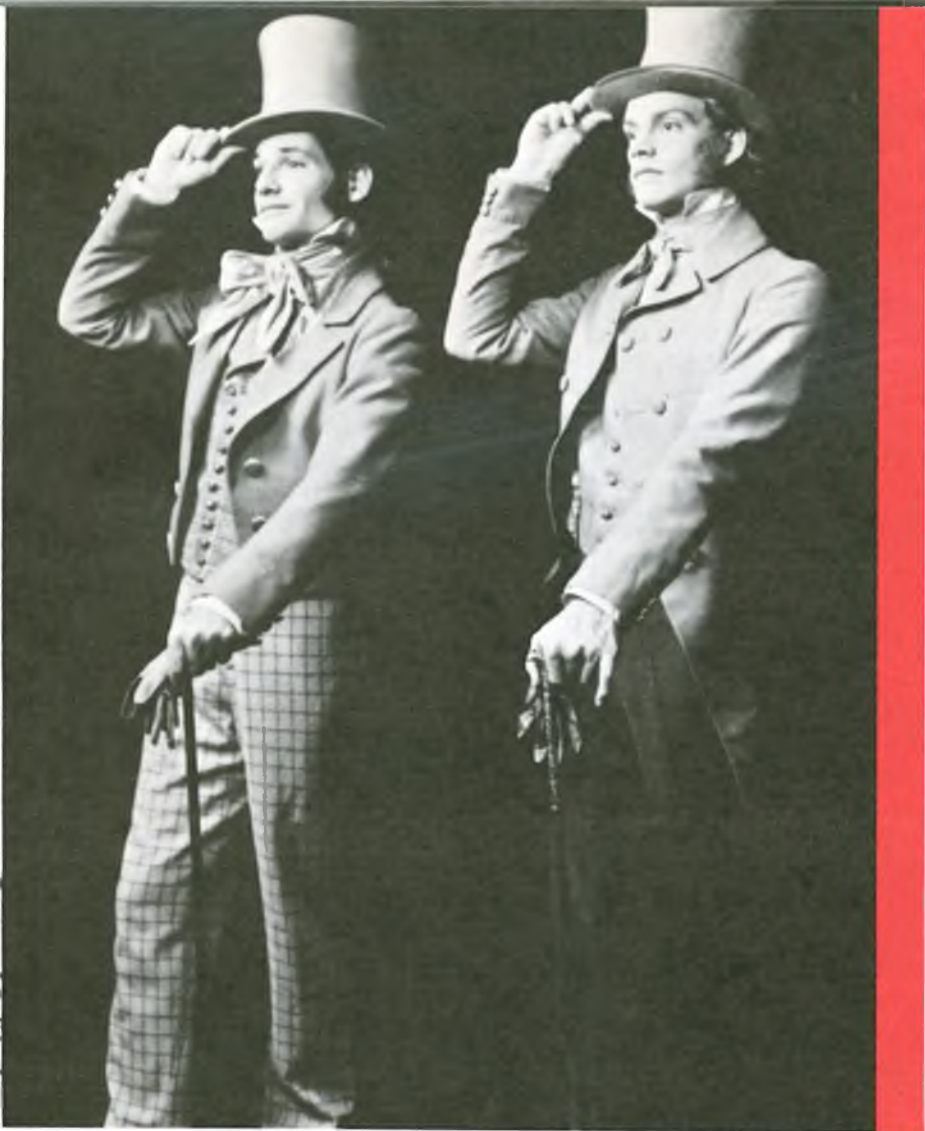
Recovery of Dickens' long stories in the classroom and in scholarship may lead to more serious consideration of such contemporary efforts by Wolfe and Kraft. At Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, students enrolled in the freshman composition course of Professor Linda K. Hughes, an expert on Victorian serial poems, subscribed to *Rolling Stone* magazine from July to December of 1984 in order to read *Bonfire of the Vanities* as it appeared in its original biweekly format. The rationale

for including this text in freshman composition was, according to professor Hughes, "the paradigm of process in current composition pedagogy; students could not only be told that writing is a process, but could witness it in a story only partially written when publication began." (Wolfe, in fact, finished the last chapters only about three months before they were to be published.) At Longwood in the spring 1987 semester, all freshmen enrolled in English 101, "Introduction to Literature and Composition," will read Kraft's *Peter Leroy* in installments from January to mid-May. The enthusiasm and excitement generated by reading such contemporary serials, as well as student familiarity with television and movie serials, encourages students to approach other literary works, like the novels of Charles Dickens.

Charles Dickens created the installment novel by drawing on one of humanity's oldest traditions, communal storytelling, in which character and event are primary and in which the audience's fears and dreams are embodied. Such stories and their appeal are unlikely to end. When Kate is seen married and happy at the conclusion of *Nicholas Nickleby*, for instance, she has "many new cares and occupations, and many new faces courting her sweet smile (and one so like her own, that to her mother she seemed a child again) . . ." (chapter LXV). In the end of every Dickens long story is the beginning of another, for inherent in his vision is the continuation of the human story. ♀

The first page of *Great Expectations* in its original appearance in *All the Year Round*, December 1, 1860.





Dickens on Stage

BY MATTHEW KIELL



very good actor plays direct to every good author, and every writer of fiction, though he may not adopt the dramatic form, writes in effect for the stage. He may write novels always, and plays never, but the truth and wisdom that are in him must permeate the art of which truth and passion are the life.
—Charles Dickens, 1858

Although Charles Dickens made only a few minor efforts at writing plays, he was never far from the theater. Throughout his life he attended plays three or four nights a week. He even had a small theater in his own home, staging private and charity productions and performing leading roles.

"Dickens was a theater person," says playwright Barbara Field, whose stage adaptation of *Great Expectations* has recently completed a long run at the Guthrie Theater in

Matthew Kiell is an editor and free-lance writer in Chicago.

Minneapolis. In a symposium and series of postperformance discussions at the Guthrie, sponsored by the Minnesota Humanities Council, Field explained why Dickens' novels transfer so easily to the stage.

"Dickens' novels have always been read aloud," she says. Because of the low literacy rate in London, one copy of a monthly would be read aloud to a whole group of people who would have been waiting impatiently for the next installment. "Something about the way he wrote made it wonderful to hear the words. Other great writers aren't so wonderful to hear; try to imagine Henry James," says Field.

"Public readings also made the novels of Dickens closer to theater. You paid; you sat in a room with other people; and you listened to a dramatization, even if it was by only one person. It's no surprise that *Great Expectations* works as well on stage as it does in the book that you're curled up with in your living room."

In the symposium, Field was joined by director Stephen Kanee and by scholars from the University

of Minnesota and Carleton College to examine how Dickens makes good theater and how theater makes good Dickens. The playwright analyzed a scene from *Great Expectations* to show the general symposium audience of theater-goers and Dickens readers what is involved in the transformation of literature into drama. Her example was the dining scene between Herbert Pocket and Pip: "The scene could be deadly because it involves a playwright's nightmare—someone having to provide exposition with no personal context for it. Herbert is telling Pip about events which are not from his own experience, or era. There isn't even the waft of a prevailing emotion the narrator can latch onto: just facts that the reader/viewer must absorb."

"Dickens' solution is good in the novel. On stage it is brilliant: he manages to give his narrator, Herbert, some comic discomfort—tension—for Herbert is trying in his gentle, well-bred way to teach Pip his first lessons in table manners, while . . . feeding Pip and us the vital information."

Timothy Wahrer (left) as Pip and Mark Benninghofen as Herbert Pocket in the Guthrie Theater's production of *Great Expectations*.

"As an adaptor, I was grateful for the ploy, but I assumed that I'd have to fiddle with the scene to put the information and the interruptions in the optimal places for a theater audience. When I sat down to work it out, however, Dickens left me nothing much that needed fixing.

"The interruptions always come at the point where your mind starts drifting, which allows the audience a little release, and the expository point is always taken up and slammed over the net at the moment the audience is ready to hear and absorb it. This requires a special skill, one not necessarily in the bag of tricks belonging to a novelist. The technique which Dickens demonstrates in this scene is nothing less than faultless stagecraft."

Seminar for teachers

Discussions of Dickens and drama followed the Guthrie production of *Great Expectations* on its thirty-week tour of more than 200 performances in 103 cities across thirty-three states and one Canadian province. At Morningside College in Sioux City, one stop in the tour, Dickens scholar Jan Hodge conducted a two-week summer seminar on Dickens for area high school teachers.

With support from the Iowa Humanities Board, area businesses, and his own institution of Morningside, Hodge led the seminar for a dozen participants from a fifty-mile radius of Sioux City—ten high school English teachers, one junior high school English teacher, and one high school history teacher.

The seminar culminated in a dialogue with playwright Barbara Field and a matinee performance of the Dickens adaptation. The teachers asked questions about several Dickens works that are typically part of the high school curriculum, as well as about the themes that made the author so popular and important in his own day and today.

Insight through comparison

The comparative study of a novel and a faithfully conceived dramatization of that work was used in the seminar as a way to gain insight into the original classic and into the subtleties of both art forms. Dickens was a consummate craftsman—so fine, in fact, his artistry and technique can pass by even an astute

reader's eye.

Jan Hodge points out, "Dickens is a master of description. But onstage often a description can be done visually for a much different effect and much more efficiently. Costuming, background tricks, and stage design can convey a lot more to an audience more immediately than reading a long description."

Professor Hodge recalls the case of a scene in the book involving Pip and Biddy, which he had the seminar participants read: "None of them recognized what is going on in the scene. They didn't realize that Biddy is very much in love with Pip when they are young. But when they saw the play, Biddy's feelings were expressed clearly and unmistakably. Many things that Dickens does very subtly and indirectly are focused and illuminated in the play."

"For me," Hodge says, "Barbara Field's visit to the class was the best part of the whole seminar program because the teachers could talk to someone who had adapted a Dickens novel—could hear her talk about how she wrote it, what she was interested in doing, what the technical problems were. How do you convey in three minutes on stage what Dickens took five chapters to develop? What characters have to be left out because of limitations in scope? Looking at these problems brings a new dimension to an understanding of the book itself. For instance, the class came to appreciate the Wopsle character, partly because Barbara Field was so sorry that she couldn't include it."

Necessary economy

The decisions made in adaptation can be seen as practical literary criticism. "To this day I regret *Magwitch*," director Kanee says. "He's much more complex and fascinating than he appeared in the play. In the book, *Magwitch* is ultimately the most sympathetic character; in the play, he's avuncular. The sense of grief the reader feels on his death was less intense in the play than it is in the novel. But it was a necessary economy; you have to sacrifice subplots, though *Magwitch* was not a total sacrifice."

In her symposium talk, Field addressed alterations required in the adaptation. "*Great Expectations* is an uncharacteristically well-structured

novel from an author who was often hurried and careless. As it is laid out, it is also well-designed for the stage, which made my work easier. I shuffled the order of a couple of events toward the end to make them more appropriate for the stage. Certain events had to be telescoped and a few omitted; of necessity I consolidated several characters and condensed actions." The play has eleven actors covering twenty-nine parts over two-and-a-half hours. "The Orlick subplot in the novel was one omission which I didn't mourn. It lacks theatrical 'pay-off.' The Wopsle episodes were rather harder to lose, but I had a certain self-consciousness about the Hamlet scene.... Since we didn't have the luxury of time and numbers, it was better laid to rest.... More seriously, I regret that I was unable to include the criminal justice scenes. Again, limitations of time and number of actors forced me to omit the scenes, but I included them in a first draft."

Barbara Field and Stephen Kanee's pragmatic analysis helps to bring into focus the differences in artistic concerns and in narrative priorities between playwright and novelist. Practical limitations of staging—both physical and economic—must always be considered; a novel has as wide a stage as the author's imagination. Theater depends on action and character, whereas a book can be internalized and carried by a narrator's voice.

Field surmounted these narrative difficulties—and in so doing managed to incorporate more of Dickens' own words into her plays—by using special narrative devices. In another of her adaptations, "*A Christmas Carol*," an actor portrays Dickens, who sits at dinner with his family; the family needs money, so he sets to writing a story. "How can you legitimately produce '*A Christmas Carol*' that doesn't start 'Marley was dead, to begin with'?" Field asks rhetorically. In *Great Expectations* the narration is shared by the entire cast—actors momentarily stepping out of character—a technique many will recognize from David Edgar's adaptation of *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Hodge insists that the primary function of dramatizing a novel is not to lead the audience back to reading books. But both he and

Field acknowledge that reading has become a lost art in America, and they welcome the positive effect that an adaptation can have. On this score, Field recalls an important moment for her before the Guthrie tour.

Because two other plays in rehearsal filled the theater's facilities, the touring company rehearsed on a high school stage in a working-class neighborhood in Minneapolis. "When the show was ready to go on tour," Field relates, "we performed a preview for the kids there, most of whom had never seen a play, most of whom certainly had never read Dickens. The teachers cautioned us that there would probably be a lot of bad behavior. But within three minutes after the curtain rose, there wasn't a sound except some perfect emotional responses to the story. The teachers were in tears by the end. And obviously they might try to teach that book. I thought it was wonderful.

"An adaptation is the quick access to the original work," she continues. "People who are afraid of reading are more likely to read something they've seen dramatized for them. When I was twelve, that happened with me. I saw the movie of *Henry V*, then went and read my first

Shakespeare. I'd never have done that if I hadn't fallen in love with Laurence Olivier."

Why Dickens in the 1980s? University of Minnesota English professor Gordon Hirsch answered that question firmly in his talk at the Guthrie symposium: "The world of Dickens' novel is, first of all, recognizably modern."

Both Dickens' book and Field's adaptation of *Great Expectations* convey a single major theme. As Stephen Kanee sees it, "A useful life is a productive life, a working life, no matter what the trade. Anyone who simply adopts social graces is removing himself from any value to society and to himself."

Barbara Field sees it in the form of a few questions: "What are your true values? Do you settle for the upwardly mobile life, or work for loftier goals? These quandaries exist today, and they existed when Dickens wrote *Great Expectations*. I can see my life in that work. Great art does show us ourselves and interpret our lives for us."

Seminar director Jan Hodge agrees. "Dickens is the master of pointing out all the foibles that are timeless—hypocrisy, greed, revenge. Yet, Dickens, for all of his eccentricities and even while realizing

that the world has real problems, nonetheless believes and demonstrates in his novels that there is a place for love in human relationships and that goodness and decency can prevail and can make a difference. Dickens is not naive; he is not sentimental. He understands the causes of problems and tries to get people to understand them so that they do something about it."

The theme "is personalized in the play," Kanee explains. "You see Pip and those people around him—not London or the society of England. The novel provides a tapestry, a sociological look at London and the society of the England of Dickens' time."

"Dickens is such a tremendously rich writer," Hodge adds "that anything short of reading Dickens will simply be that—short of Dickens. I love the theater. I very much like Barbara Field's adaptation of this play; I saw it five times. At the same time Dickens on the stage will never substitute for Dickens on the printed page." ♪

Programs of the Iowa Humanities Board and the Minnesota Humanities Commission are supported through the NEH Division of State Programs.



Courtesy of Guthrie Theater

Pip (Timothy Wahrer) is brought to the eerie decaying mansion of Miss Havisham (Darrie Lawrence) to play with her ward, Estella (Ann-Sara Matthews).



The Golden Age of



BY CAROL

TO A GENERATION raised on the instant image, it is difficult to comprehend the complete astonishment and confusion of the Victorians when first confronted with a photograph. Until the invention of photography, there always had been an obvious difference between a picture and the object it was meant to represent. But in the daguerreotype, within the limits of two-dimensional representation, the fundamental distinction between representation and reality suddenly disappeared. No clear-cut point could be found where the image could be separated from its represented object. What had been understood clearly to be an artist's interpretation of reality in a print or a painting suddenly seemed to be reality itself.

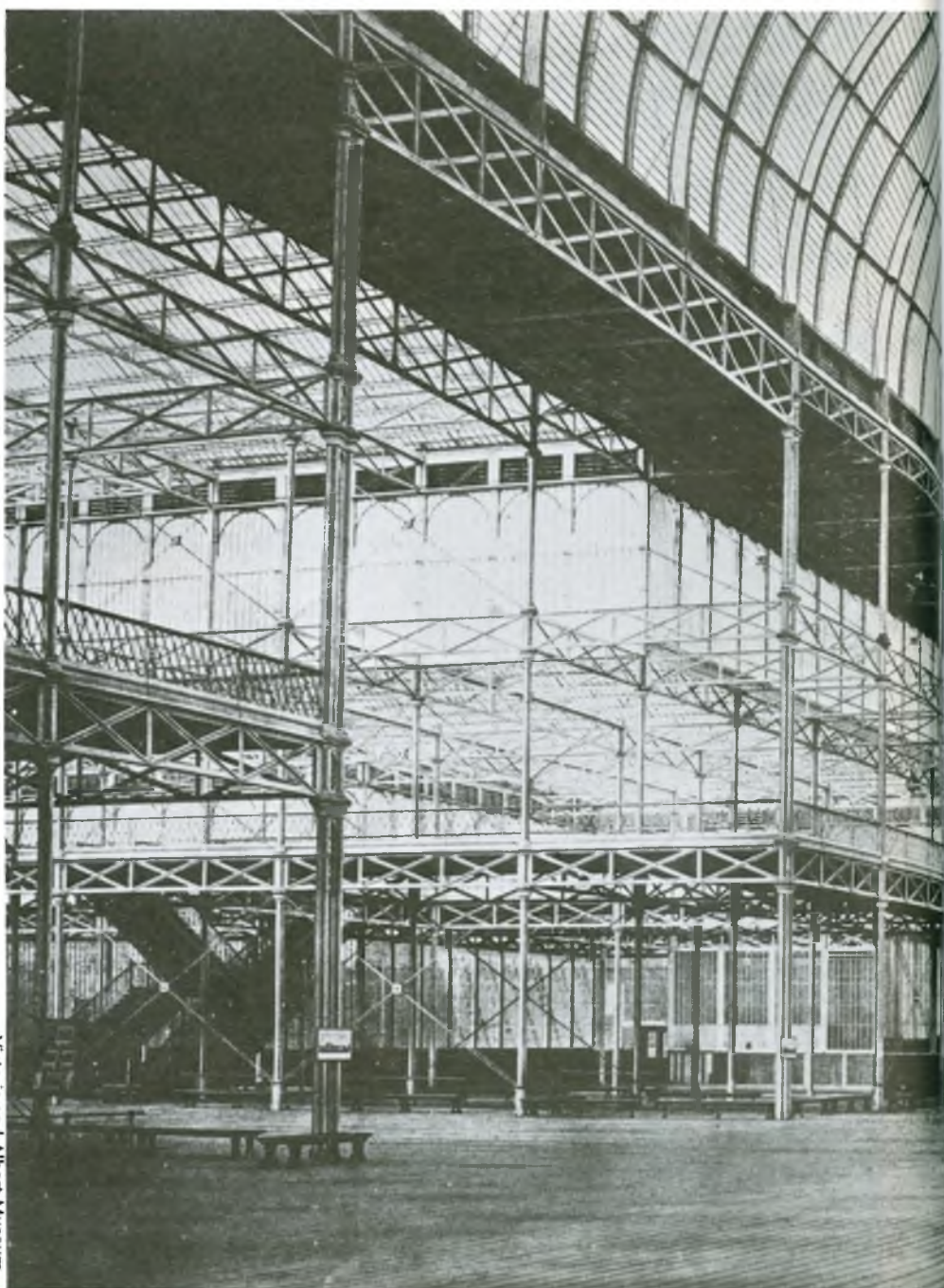
Photography was first seen by a wide public audience at the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations at the Crystal Palace in 1851. Although primarily presented as a new scientific wonder, along with the electric telegraph, telescopes, musical, horological, and surgical instruments, a few photographs were exhibited in the Fine Arts division. Those shown were praised not so much for their aesthetic beauty but for their truth to nature—a quality that was upheld as a great, even a moral good, for which science was responsible.

More than a hundred years later, the Philadelphia Museum of Art organized an exhibition, *The Golden Age of British Photography, 1839–1900*, with NEH support. The 240 photographs presented in the exhibition were drawn primarily from the Na-

tional Collection for the Art of Photography at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London with other selections from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle, the Royal Photographic Society in Bath, the Science Museum in London, and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in

Edinburgh. The exhibition and its accompanying catalogue, arranged thematically to reflect events in nineteenth-century British cultural and social history, examined not only what Victorian photographers showed but what they did not show of Victorian society.

Although the photographs in the



Victoria and Albert Museum

Caroline Taylor is Assistant Director for Publications in the NEH Public Affairs Office.



Victoria and Albert Museum

E TAYLOR



British Photography

exhibition included images of poverty and suffering, most Victorian photographers fell short of fulfilling Charles Dickens' hope that photography would be the "good spirit who would take the house tops off" to reveal to society the truth about itself. Instead, says project director Martha Chahroudi, assistant curator

of photographs at the Philadelphia Art Museum, these Victorian photographers tended to reflect a largely positive image of the time—a time of domesticity and of moral rigor sanctioned and exemplified by Victoria and Albert.

Beginning with the daguerreotype, which made portraiture more

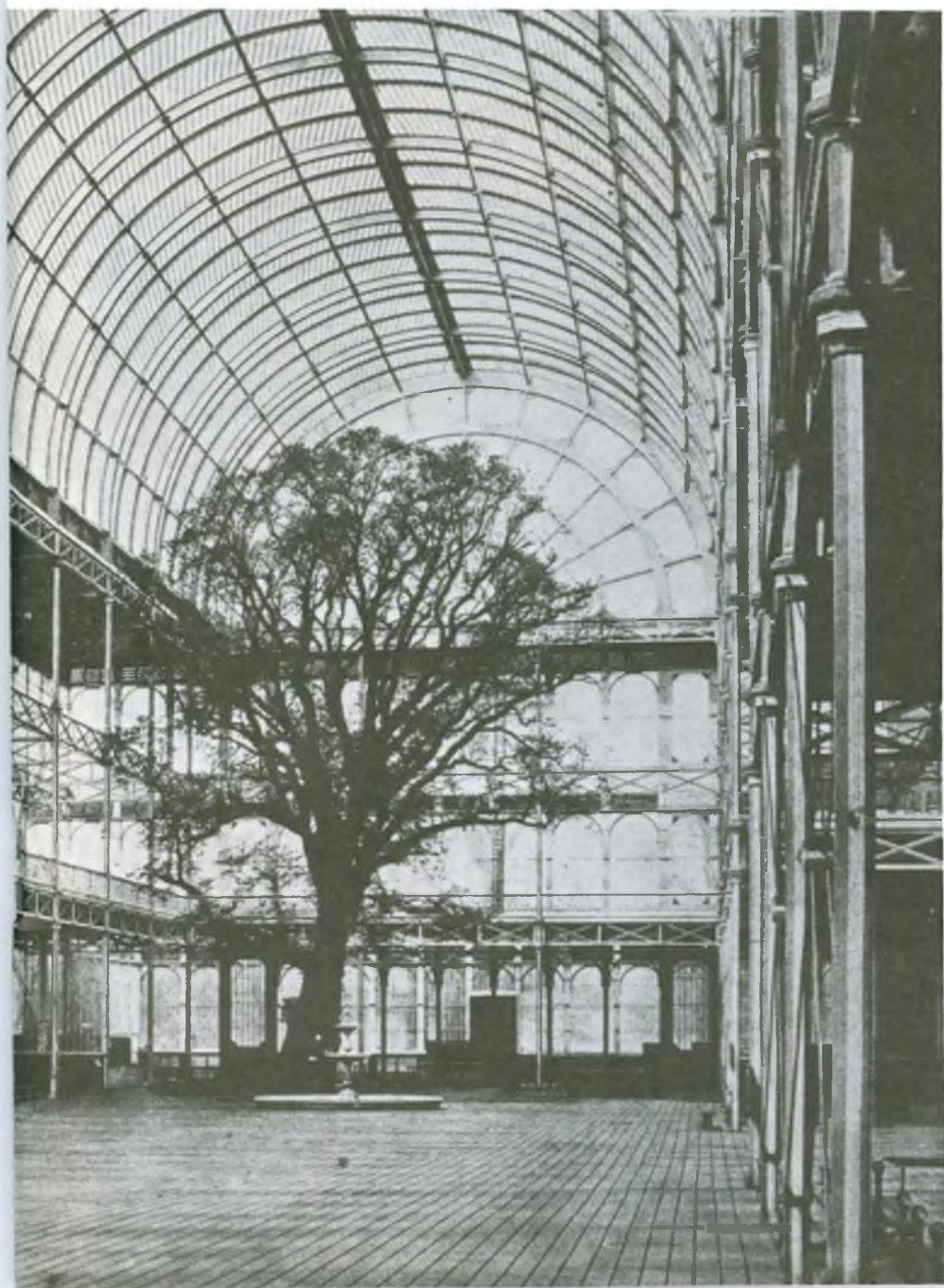
widely available to the middle classes and changed forever the way that people keep visual records of their lives, the exhibition proceeded to cover the calotype era with its salted-paper "sun pictures," exploring the Victorians' search for ideals of virtue and beauty in the styles and lands of antiquity, their investment in the romantic ideal of nature as a source of truth and goodness, their belief in scientific investigation as an essential factor in human progress, and their pride in empire.

The daguerreotype, developed by Louis Jacques Mandes Daguerre in 1839, produced a direct positive image of an object on a silver-coated copper plate. For the image to "fix" itself on the plate, the object had to remain motionless in bright light for several minutes. The daguerreotype was used almost exclusively for landscape, architecture, or still-life scenes until 1840 when the perfection of chemical "accelerators" to fix the image more quickly and the introduction of larger, faster lenses made portraits possible. In the less than two decades that the daguerreotype process remained popular, millions of daguerreotype portraits were made.

The revelations of early photography were at once marvelous and terrible. Carl Dauthendey, a professional daguerreotypist in 1843, described the reaction of his clients: "People were afraid at first to look for any length of time at the pictures produced. They were embarrassed by the clarity of these figures and believed that the little, tiny faces of the people in the pictures could see out at them..."

To the Victorians, it seemed that nature was the active force in creating that inseparable connection

(above) Lewis Carroll's portrait of Xie Kitchin; (left) an 1852 photograph of the Crystal Palace by Benjamin Brecknell Turner. The Great Exhibition held here in 1851 contained the first substantial display of photographs.



between image and object, or, as the *London Spectator* commented at the time, "nature herself reflecting her own face."

Many people suspected the daguerreotype was actually the work of an extremely able draftsman until they examined the print under a magnifying glass and found, not the disintegration of the image into a series of brush or pen strokes, but an even more detailed representation of reality. The daguerreotype's totally uncompromising representation of the human face, its essence captured in an isolated instant, troubled the Victorians. They were accustomed to sitting for portraits by an artist, who could be instructed to interpret the sitter in a more flattering, more accurate, or more "artistic" light. On close examination of a daguerreotype, however, one could see the lines and even the hairs on a hand, the tiny shadows cast by folds in cloth—even the shadow of a mustache on the upper lip of a lady who never would have permitted such accuracy of detail in her portrait.

Calotypes, which were invented at about the same time as the da-

guerreotype by William Henry Fox Talbot, showed that it was possible to make images through a process that revealed more than the eye could see and more than the hand could draw. What the eye could not help but see was a landscape slowly being altered by the railway and by industrialization.

Because these unaesthetic realities were not considered an appropriate subject for photography, photographers like Roger Fenton, Edward Fox, Robert Howlett, Benjamin Brecknell Turner, and Henry White focused their lenses on the picturesque—preserving, at least on paper, the unmarred rural landscape, the ivy-covered ruin, the peaceful village.

The technological advances made in the 1850s and 1860s produced processes that were able to render a great detail and wealth of information with infinite subtlety and softness, says Chahroudi. And, as the British increasingly identified themselves with the creative civilizations of antiquity, photographers Francis Bedford, Francis Frith, Frank Mason Good, Robert Macpherson, and

James Robertson brought back to England the images of monuments, public buildings, and classical sites encountered on the grand tour. Also documented for archaeologists and surveyors, through the works of Samuel Bourne, Philip Egerton, John Murray, and Linneaus Tripe, were the 11 million square miles of the planet that constituted the British Empire.

The portraits of Julia Margaret Cameron; author Lewis Carroll; Clementina, Lady Hawarden; Henry Arthur Herbert; and David Wilkie Wynfield, while indicative of the qualities in men and women that the Victorians most admired, also revealed how the Victorians viewed the roles of men, women, and children in upper-class society.

"The photographs of the time attest to a love of exactitude," says Chahroudi, "of minute detail, of the precise focusing of the lens to directly observe the truth of nature." Although it eventually became clear that photographs were far from perfect reflections of nature, the notion that the photographic process was essentially automatic—that the human role was minimal—made it difficult for the Victorians to accept the idea that a photograph could be a work of art. Because the camera, like most machines, was only capable of producing standardized and often imperfect results, it was believed to be incapable of artistic expression. The proper role of photography was to communicate information, not to express artistic imagination.

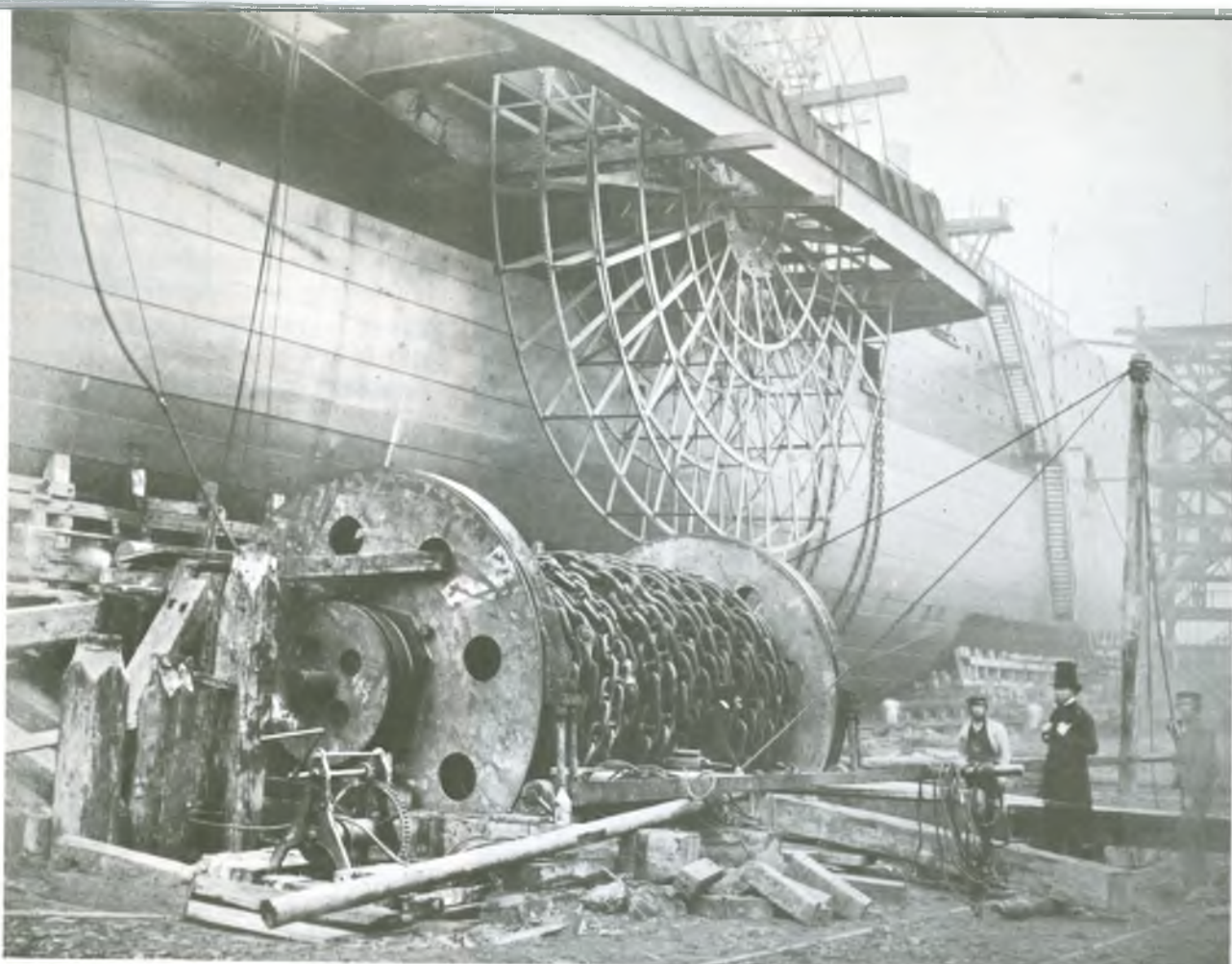
In the period 1855–60, a new controversial and theatrical mode of photography emerged that featured the *tableau vivant* through which the purposes implicit in ideal beauty—"not merely to amuse but to instruct, to purify, to ennoble," as photographer Jabex Hughes wrote in 1859—were depicted, not with paint but with the cameras of Oscar G. Rejlander, Henry Peach Robinson, and William Lake Price.

In the 1880s, a rash of technological improvements in the camera, negative, and printing papers and methods greatly increased the casual uses of photography by the public at large. This gave rise to a new self-consciousness of the place of photography in relation to the visual arts, says Chahroudi. "Photographers adopted the profound fastidious-

"Close No. 193" by Thomas Annan. Trustees of the Glasgow City Improvements Act commissioned Annan, Glasgow's leading commercial photographer, to record the closes and wynds of the city before they were swept away.

Victoria and Albert Museum





Victoria and Albert Museum

(left) *"The Great Eastern: Isambard Kingdom Brunel Inspecting Checking Drum"* by Robert Howlett, 1857. (below) *"Gathering Water Lilies"* by Peter Henry Emerson, 1886.



Philadelphia Museum of Art


(right) "Portrait of Mary Hillier" by Julia Margaret Cameron, 1865-75; (below) "Gorleston" by Paul Martin, 1892.



Victoria and Albert Museum

ness of the Aesthetic Movement and entered into close rapport with the art of printmaking as practiced in etching."

The technological advances that allowed more democratic use of photography also opened up new areas of subject matter and new kinds of artistic expression. The photograph as a scientific tool, as a documentation, as a record of places and events, persons and roles, also became a study in composition and contrast, light and shadow, focus and perspective.

"Beginning with the work of Paul Martin in the 1890s," says Chahroudi, "photographers looked forward to the beginning of a new century when society became as much a subject of art as nature, when spontaneity became as valid as contemplation, and when the immediacy of events became as interesting for artists as the eternally picturesque." 

The Philadelphia Museum of Art was awarded \$33,980 through the Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations Program for "Golden Age of British Photography" in August 1984. Martha Chahroudi was the project director.



Victoria and Albert Museum



From the time Victoria assumed the throne in 1837 until her death in 1901, English society witnessed tremendous

changes. Great Britain grew from an agrarian society to an industrial nation; the working classes rebelled and the middle class was born; Darwin voyaged on the *Beagle* and formulated the theory of evolution, and Victorian writers addressed an increasingly literate population.

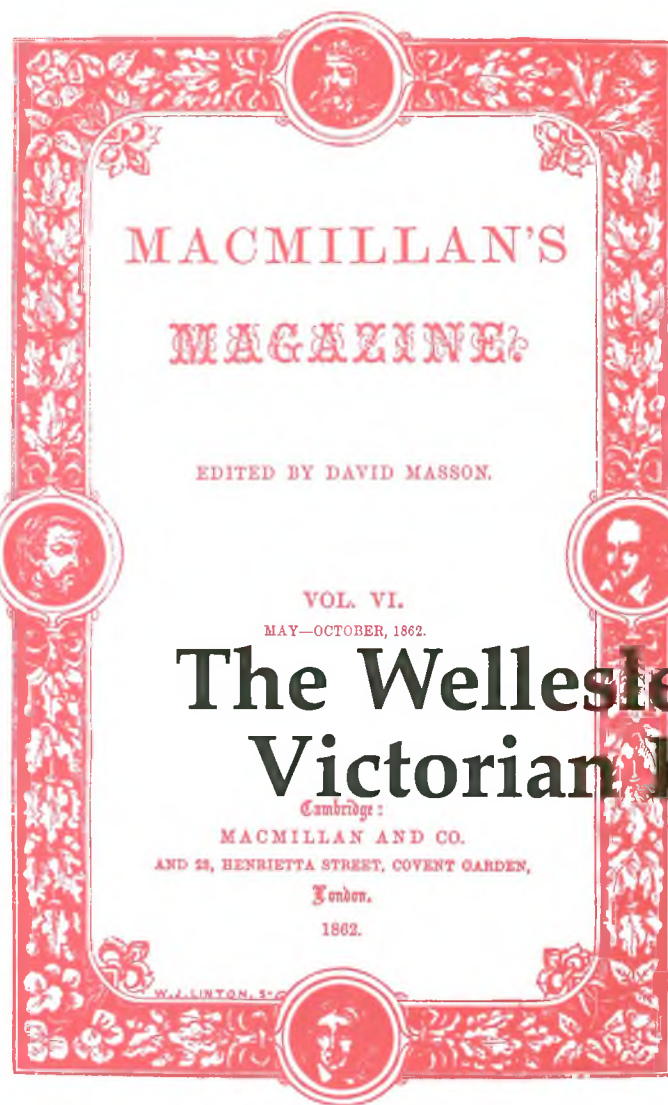
The meteoric rise of the periodical during Victoria's reign has been attributed to the growth of an educated class, particularly the middle class. Many of its members, lacking the classical education of the upper classes, sought self-education through reading. In 1850 John Henry Newman commented that it was "the extreme influence of periodical publications . . . quarterly, monthly, or daily [which] teach the multitude of men what to think and what to say." The periodicals are of the greatest importance, therefore, to scholars of the Victorian period.

When Walter E. Houghton of Wellesley College researched and wrote his ground-breaking study of Victorian culture, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (Yale University Press, 1957), he discovered problems for anyone wishing to work with Victorian periodicals, a source that had barely been tapped by scholars. The existing indexes to nineteenth-century periodicals were either difficult to use or were incomplete. The sheer numbers partly explained the difficulty.

Between 1824 and 1900, there were more than 12,000 periodicals in print at one time or another, containing millions of articles. Major and minor authors wrote on all conceivable topics, covering history, biography, sociology, literature, religion, law, medicine, the sciences, and the arts. Analyzing current events, as well as reflecting on the past, periodicals played a crucial role in determining public opinion. The essays tell the story of the Victorian age—if only one can find them.

It is important that scholars know

Allyson McGill is a graduate student in Victorian Studies at the University of Indiana—Bloomington.



The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals

BY ALLYSON F. MCGILL

the full circumstances surrounding these sources in order to evaluate clearly a writer's stance. Before 1860 few articles were signed, and of the millions of articles which appeared between 1824 and 1864, more than 96 percent appeared anonymously or under a pseudonym. The difficulty of conducting his own research prompted Houghton and his wife Esther to embark on the compilation of an index to nineteenth-century periodicals, which, with NEH support, is now near completion.

The multivolume index that the Houghtons envisioned was to detail the authorship and complete contents of approximately fifty major monthly or quarterly publications. Because of the size of the undertaking, Houghton initially had trouble convincing anyone it could be done. Wellesley College provided an initial grant, but by the spring of 1962 this money had been spent, and applications for further funding were refused by several foundations. Using his own funds, Houghton published the first volume of the index in 1966.

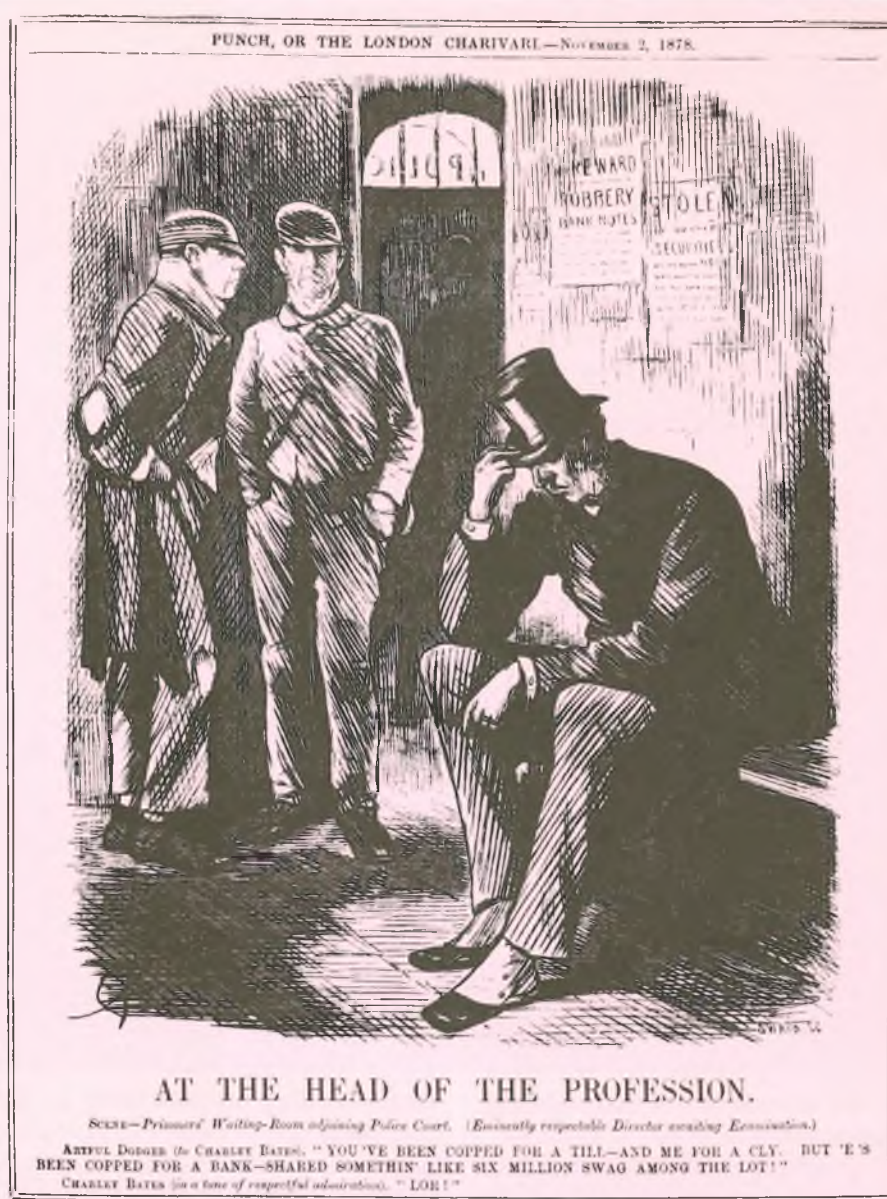
The reviews of this volume helped

secure funding for later ones. In *The New Statesman*, reviewer Christopher Ricks wrote: "The Wellesley Index . . . is simply a great work of reference, probably the most important aid to literary research since the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*. . . . Future scholars will wonder how anybody managed without [it], rather as people now wonder what it can have been like before there was the [Oxford English Dictionary]. . . . [This] book . . . will quietly change the whole nature of Victorian studies."

Scholars can now anticipate the completion of the Houghtons' vision. Volumes four and five of the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals* will be published by the University of Toronto Press in autumn 1987 and 1988, respectively.

Each volume contains indexes for eight to twelve journals, preceded by essays describing the journals. Readers learn, for example, that *Cornhill Magazine* (1860-1900) began under the editorship of William Makepeace Thackeray, whose popularity assured the magazine's early

The 12,000 periodicals in print between 1824 and 1900 played a crucial role in determining public opinion. A reference to *Oliver Twist* appears in the satiric comment on white-collar crime in *Punch*, November 2, 1878.



success. The more politically oriented, Whig-flavored *Edinburgh Review* (1802–1900) had a major impact on political thought and action. Contributors included such authorities on political economy as John Stuart Mill and Thomas Malthus. Although the journal was liberal in its viewpoint, its acknowledged audience was conservative and aristocratic; the editors, in an attempt to enlighten their readers, printed articles on such issues as the Poor Laws, taxes, and emigration, but avoided radical rhetoric.

Each volume of the index is divided into three sections. Part A lists the actual tables of contents and identifies the contributors. To ascertain the authors of these articles, researchers in North America and Europe have looked at author lists, account books, and the editorial correspondence of publishing houses (particularly in London). In addition,

they have scoured the archives of such renowned libraries as the British Library, Oxford's Bodleian, and the National Library of Scotland. Other external clues appeared in printed biographies and collections of reprinted essays bearing the author's name on the title page or in such sources as the *Dictionary of National Biography* and individual biographies.

With volume 2, Houghton had called on the resources of a large staff in his effort to identify correctly those sources that had still evaded more conclusive verification. To this end, the researchers turned to the articles themselves, reading hundreds of pages in their attempts to garner internal clues. Their labors have resulted in an 87 percent overall attribution rate for part A of volume 4 with a total of 88,244 entries.

Part B consists of an alphabetical

bibliography of each contributor's periodical writings. For the first time, the Victorian scholar can see at a glance the essays and stories of some 12,000 authors. What is more, parts A and B enable the reader to see what topics were important to these writers, when they were important, and how the ideas of these writers changed over the course of time. It also provides scholars with the chance to compare the reactions of other writers in other journals, an important feature considering the frequency of dialogues carried on between publications.

Finally, part C, "Initials and Pseudonyms," is the only work of its kind in Victorian studies. Not only does the index try to solve these conundrums, it also prints those that remain unsolved—perhaps in hope that future sleuths may provide further pieces to this literary puzzle.

At the time of Houghton's death in 1983, Jean Slingerland became executive editor of the series. Slingerland, who first worked with Houghton as a Wellesley undergraduate in the early 1940s and holds a master's degree in English literature from Harvard University, joined the staff of the index in 1980. Upon her arrival, Houghton handed her *Longman's Magazine* (1882–1900) to prepare for volume 4. "It was a wonderful one to cut my teeth on," she says, "largely signed and interesting in its own right."

Working with four drawers of note cards, Slingerland has recently completed the bibliographic research and written the introduction for the *Dublin University Magazine*.

The project will end with volume 5, an index of the preceding four volumes. It will bring together the bibliographies in one alphabetical list, a virtual Who's Who of Victorian periodical authors. In addition, volume 5 will include all the corrections and additions that have been discovered since the publication of prior volumes. Further emendations will appear in *Victorian Periodicals Review*, a publication of the Research Studies in Victorian Periodicals.

The Wellesley College Library was awarded \$116,469 through the Tools Program for "Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824–1900," beginning in June 1984. Jean Slingerland is the project director.

Philip Highfill recalls being at a party in London, years ago, when a man asked about his work.

Highfill, a professor of English at George Washington University, explained that he was writing a biographical dictionary of the known 8,500 actors, actresses, musicians, singers, dancers, managers, acrobats, contortionists, puppeteers, strong men, dwarfs, freaks, mimics, dressers, and performing animals that populated the stages of London and its immediate environs during the 140 years from the Restoration of Charles II, in 1660, to the end of the season 1799–1800.

"Are you mad?" responded the man at the party.

"Everybody was suggesting that," Highfill recalls. "Except some people who knew it was doable. And they knew it was formidable."

It is now two-thirds complete, and Southern Illinois University Press is publishing volumes 11 and 12 of what will be the eighteen-volume *Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*. Supported by the NEH, the *Dictionary of Actors* is, not surprisingly, a team effort. In addition to Highfill, the authors are Kalman Burnim, Fletcher Professor of Drama and Oratory at Tufts University, and Edward Langhans, chairman of the Department of Drama and Theater at the University of Hawaii.

The project, said to represent the equivalent of more than fifty scholar-years in research, was intended originally to yield a mere twelve volumes and 2,000 to 3,000 entries, and it was to "take three or four years of my life," says Highfill.

"That was early optimism. It grew like Topsy. You look back and you realize you've swum halfway across the lake and you may as well swim on." He prefers not to predict when the lake will be crossed. "I'm superstitious about very few things, but that's one of them."

The *Dictionary of Actors* is the successor to *The London Stage, 1660–1800*, an eleven-volume calendar of performances also published by Southern Illinois University Press. A census of players, the new work also

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offers corrections to such standard works of reference as the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, and *The London Stage* itself.

Entries range from a few lines to dozens of pages, and present not only the best-known performers but also the most humble of players and personnel—anyone who contributed (and to whom a name can be pinned) at London's patent theaters, opera houses, pleasure gardens, theatrical taverns, music rooms, fair booths, and other places of public entertainment.

A paragraph from the preface of the *Dictionary of Actors* suggests the extent to which it has liberated other researchers from years of drudgery: "The authors have combed every source that ingenuity could suggest. . . . We have scaled mountains of manuscripts: letters, memoirs, diaries, theatrical account books, parish registers, wills, and Lord Chamberlain's records. We have inspected numerous collections of London, provincial British, American, and Continental playbills and newspaper notices of performances, and numbers of annotated scrapbooks, extra-illustrated volumes, original paintings, and engravings. We have made levy also on local histories, surveys, maps, contemporary poetry, periodical essays, sales catalogues, plays, critical works, genealogies, rare books, and ships' lists."

By making research on Restoration theater personnel easier, Highfill and his colleagues hope to inspire in-depth studies of English theater history. The *Dictionary of Actors* should be useful to more than scholars of the theater. The entries give not only a record of players, but the salaries earned by theater professionals, the physical hazards they faced, the travels they made—matters of interest to historians and social scientists. The biographies, long and short, allow a reader to move back into professional lives "which are, after all, integrated into the lives of the rest of the people in London," says Highfill. "Because this enterprise [of acting] was regularly attacked by clerics," he adds, the *Dictionary of Actors* should also be of value to moral and religious historians.

The Folger Shakespeare Library in

Courtesy of Southern Illinois University Press



A Cast of Thousands

BY MICHAEL LIPSKE



Portraits from A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, etc. (top to bottom) John Henry Packer as Gulwell, Sir Joshua Reynolds, caricature of Elizabeth Billington (1802), Anne Oldfield.

Washington, D.C., and the British Museum in London are among the more than sixty libraries in Europe and the United States that the authors turned to for access to manuscripts and rare books. They combed the National Archives of England, Scotland, and Ireland and the previously unexploited records of the Royal Society of Musicians. Wills were studied in Somerset House as well as Salt Lake City, where the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has assembled its collection of filmed British manuscript records. "I dragooned my family one summer and had them all sitting in front of microfilm readers in Utah," recalls Highfill.

Theatrical biography poses special problems for researchers. With Restoration theater, it was standard to print only surnames in playbills. As the *Dictionary of Actors* notes of David Erskine Baker, grandson of Defoe, "The question of possible acting appearances by David Baker is complicated by the presence onstage somewhere in the metropolis of one Baker or another virtually at any given moment during thirty-five years in the middle of the century."



Courtesy of Southern Illinois University Press
Samuel Reddish as Posthumus and John Palmer as Iachimo.

Printed accounts of performances increase with time, but remain less than fully reliable. "The kind of thing we call newspapers and magazines didn't really get started until late in the first quarter of the century," says Highfill. "You didn't get reportage of actual performances—reviews, we would call them—until later. And then, of course, there were plenty. But a great many puffs." Where a publicity-conscious manager did not inflate his actor's performance, a jealous competitor might arrange for publication of a deflating piece of critical slander.

Although the authors have attempted restraint in use of anecdotes, they note in their preface, "It has sometimes been necessary to report a good but fictitious story of widespread currency in order to impeach it. Separating an actor from his legends is, after all, a delicate and painful operation not only because some excellent stories may be true but because most are at least illustrative of traits of character and thus possess some truthfulness."

The *Dictionary of Actors* is further enhanced by portraits, at least one for each biographical subject for whom a likeness exists. "I corresponded with many a noble lord," Highfill says of the search for pictures of actors, musicians, and other performers. A total of some 1,400 portraits will appear in the completed work. The authors have also listed, following each entry, all other known original portraits—an iconography that should well serve art historians.

General readers, with or without a specific interest in theater history, are likely to enjoy the *Dictionary of Actors* for its enormous cast of small fry. Volume 10, for example, presents the great actor Charles Macklin, and the young Mozart's fifteen-month sojourn in England. But there is also an entry for the wire dancer Anthony Maddox, of whom David Garrick, when urged to have the equilibrist appear at Drury Lane Theater, wrote, "I cannot possibly agree to such a prostitution upon any account; and nothing but downright starving would induce me to bring such defilement and abomination into the house of William Shakespeare." There are also entries for a Drury Lane watchman

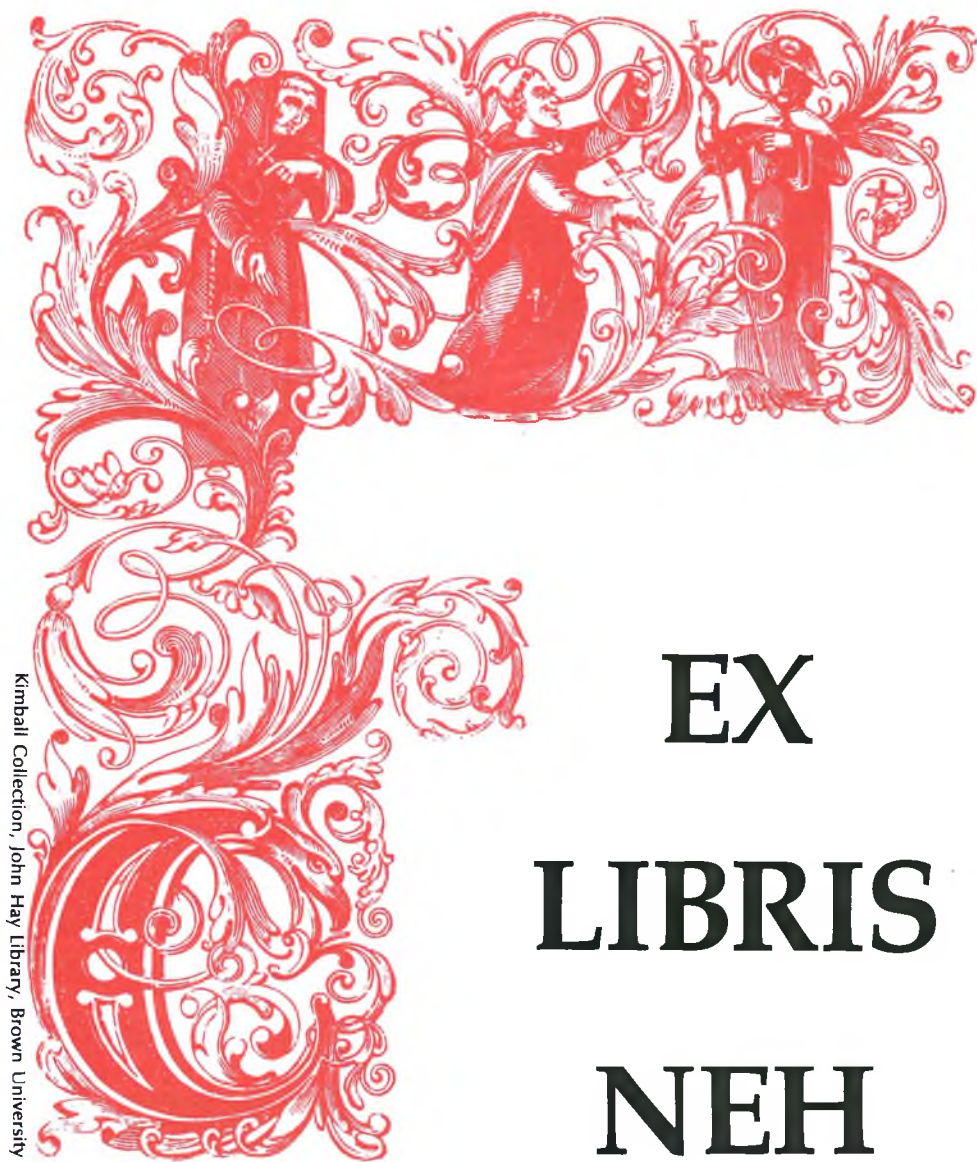
named Mr. Mahoney, a giant named Miller, and "Moustache" the performing dog, best known member of the troupe of trained canines managed by a Signor Scaglioni. "I see him now," goes a recollection of a performance by Moustache, "in his little uniform, military boots, with smart musket and helmet, cheering and inspiring his fellow soldiers, to follow him up the scaling ladders, and storm the fort."

Moustache aside, Highfill says it is his serious wish that the *Dictionary of Actors* will raise the level of theatrical biography. "It's obviously a field where there have been many abuses," he says, with actors' biographies tending toward sensationalism and prurience.

With their notecards on file at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Highfill, Burnim, and Langhans have marked the way for scholars who wish to present more fully the lives sketched out in the *Dictionary of Actors*. "I hope," says Highfill, "people can devote comparable time to one person and bring out a really long narrative on some of these people."

For better or worse, there is also grist in the *Dictionary of Actors* for less scholarly talespinners. There could be a screenplay or at the least a paperback romance in the life of John Brahan, at his height England's greatest singer, later a seller of pencils on the hard streets of London. And there is a television series to outdraw *Dallas* in the adventures of Macklin, actor, dancer, singer, manager, playwright, and Irishman. Macklin engaged in "fisticuffs," says Highfill, with the tragedian Quin, killed a fellow actor in a scene-room dispute over a stock wig, and created the theatrical sensation of 1740-41 with his revolutionary interpretation of Shylock. He acted for the last time at age ninety, capping a career that ran nearly seven decades. "God help me—my memory, I am afraid, has left me," he said, and left the stage for good. It's all there—triumph, tragedy, and a cast of thousands—in the *Dictionary of Actors*. ♪

Southern Illinois University Press was awarded \$20,000 through the Texts-Publications Subvention Program for "A Biographical Dictionary of Actors" in February 1986. Kenney Withers is the project director.



Kimball Collection, John Hay Library, Brown University

EX LIBRIS NEH

Thomas Frognall Dibdin, *Bibliomania: or Book Madness*. H.G. Bohn, 1892.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The annual list of books published with NEH support is illustrated this year with illuminations that Victorian book designers lavished on their pages. Part of an NEH-funded exhibition, *Victorian Bibliomania: The Illuminated Book in Nineteenth-Century England*, to show at the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design between January 9 and March 17, these decorations reflect the esteemed place of the book in the Victorian mind. As the exhibition will explain, the decorations also reflect the Victorians' use of books and book design to link themselves with their cultural past—with

the ideas of medieval religion, history, and literature.

In this dual symbolism of esteem and of tradition, these engravings are especially appropriate for this list of books. Whether they are the products of fellowships or of collaborative research, whether translated with Endowment support or published with Endowment subvention, these works were determined by panels of scholars to be worthy of public support because of the significant contribution they would make to scholarship in the humanities. They continue the tradition of excellence in American scholarship.

AWARD WINNERS

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION JOHN K. FAIRBANK PRIZE

Philip C.C. Huang. *The Peasant Economy and Social Change in North China*. Stanford University Press.

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION HERBERT FEIS PRIZE

Pete Daniel. *Breaking the Land: The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures Since 1880*. University of Illinois Press.

FREDERIC, W. CONNOR PRIZE IN THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

Mary Flowers Braswell. "Sin the Lady, and the Law: The English Noblewoman in the Late Middle Ages," *Medievalia et Humanistica*.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION AWARD

Jules Tygiel. *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy*. Oxford University Press.

BERTRAM L. JOSEPH AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

Errol Hill. *Shakespeare in Sable: A History of Black Shakespearean Actors*. University of Massachusetts Press.

MITCHELL FOUNDATION MITCHELL PRIZE FOR THE HISTORY OF ART

Otto Demus. *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice*. University of Chicago Press.

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL PRIZE NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE IN BRITISH STUDIES BRITISH COUNCIL PRIZE

V.A. Kolve. *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative: The First Five Canterbury Tales*. Stanford University Press.

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS AVERY O. CRAVEN AWARD

Michael Perman. *The Road to Redemption: Southern Politics, 1869-1879*. University of North Carolina Press.

P.E.N. AWARD FOR POETRY

Dennis Tedlock. *Popol Vuh*. Simon and Shuster, 1985.

PUERTO RICO NATIONAL LITERARY AWARD

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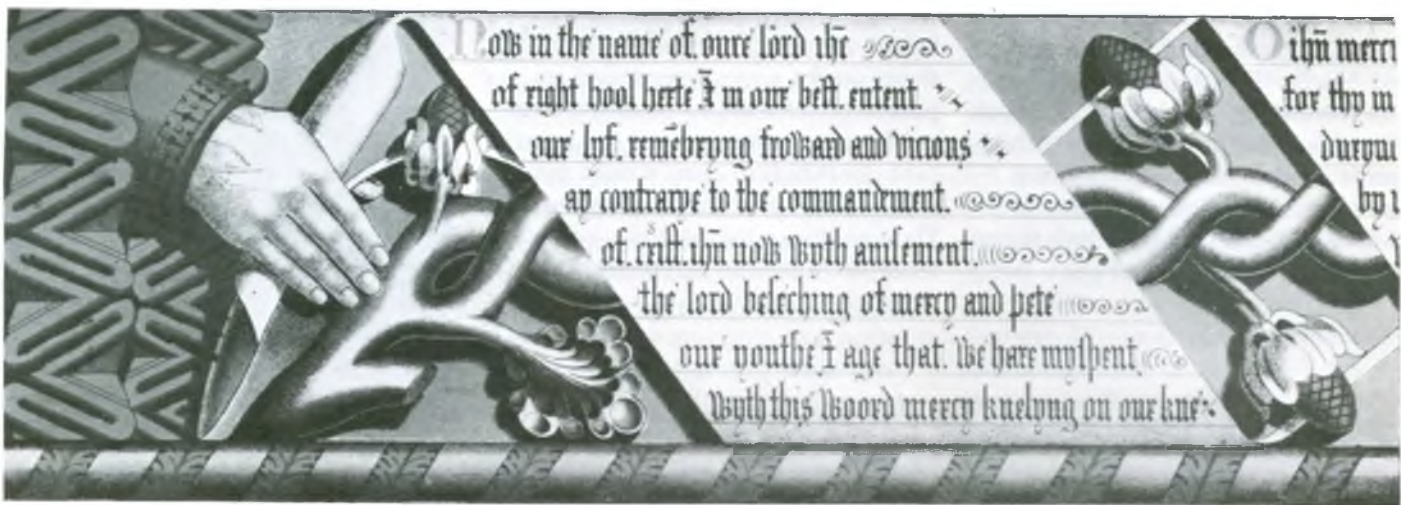
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Howe our cristen men chosen a very patriarke in
Iherusalem and assigned to hym rentes, capitulo
CCv



When to this tyme had the see of Iherusalem ben without pas-tour and patriark that duely & truly had entred. It was wel thenne v monethes that the cyte was conquerd. Thenne assembled the barons for to counseyle to haue suche a man that were worthy of honour & myght to bere the faytes. Ther were wordes ynowgh. The sommewold haue one, and other wolde haue another. Atte laste by the counseyl and good wyll of alle they chees thys Daybart, archbisshop of Pyse, whiche was but newly come. They constituted and sette hym in the siege of patriark, ffor he that had be made by this baratour Arnold, of whom I haue spoken to fore, lyke as he was made ayenst right & reson, in lyke wyse he retorned agayn to nought.



When this good, wise man was sette in his dignyte the duc Godeffroy and the prynce Buymont cam to fore hym, whiche had gyuen to hym this honour as for to be the vycayre of Ihesu Criste in that londe, and thanked and preysed alle to gydreoure lord. When this was don they assygned rentes to the newe patriark, suche as his predecessour, whiche was a Greeke, had holden, and other gretter aboue that, in suche wyse that he myght honorably mayntene

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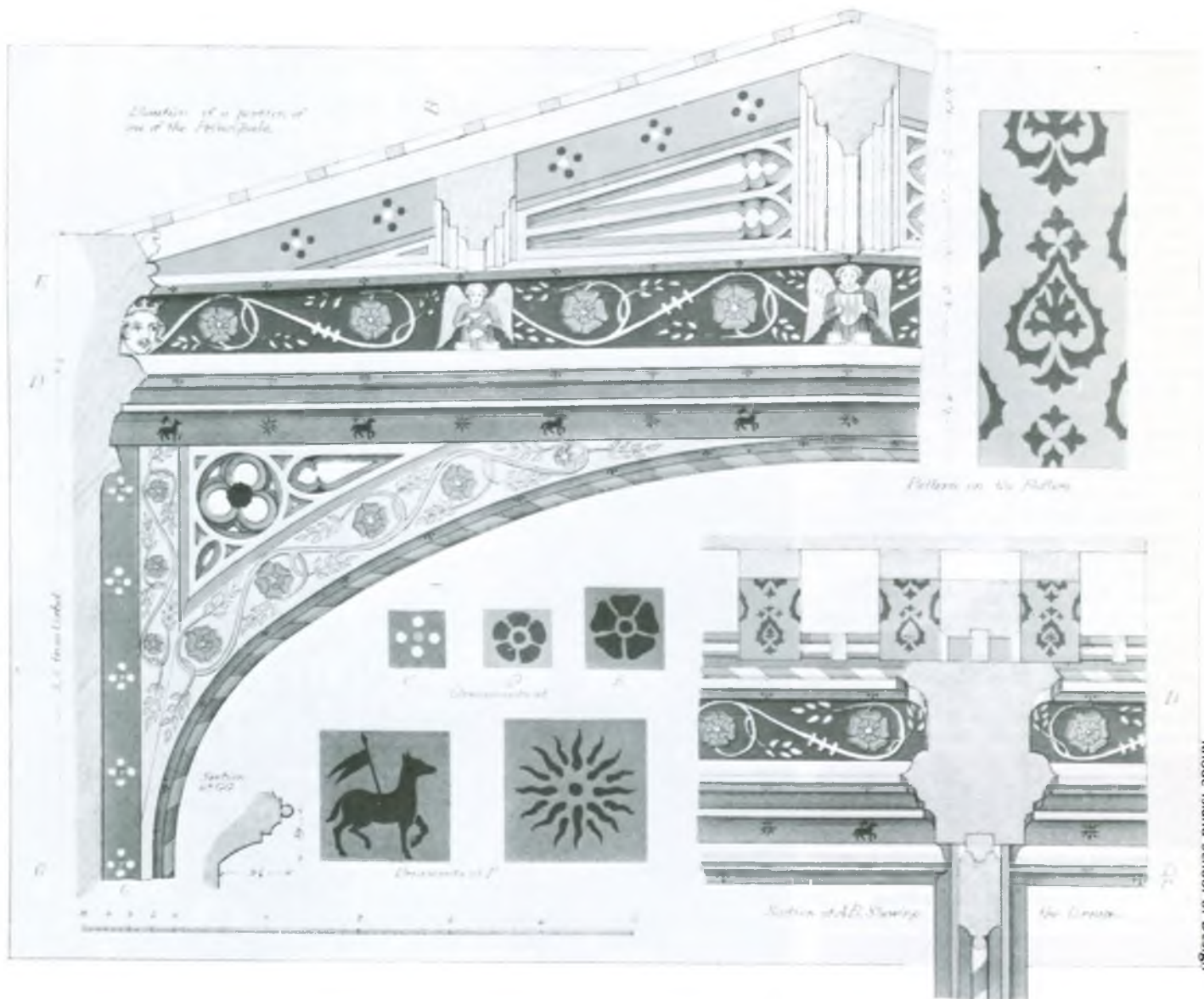
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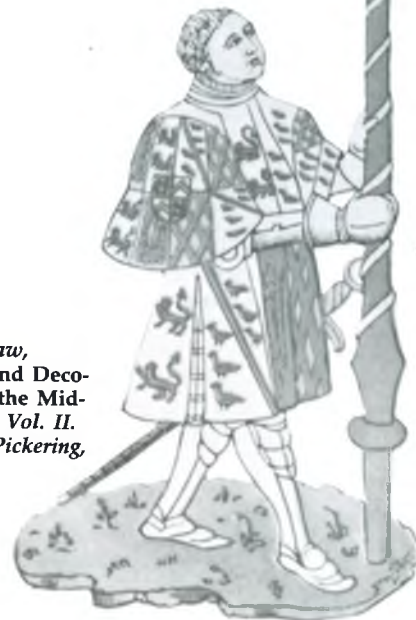
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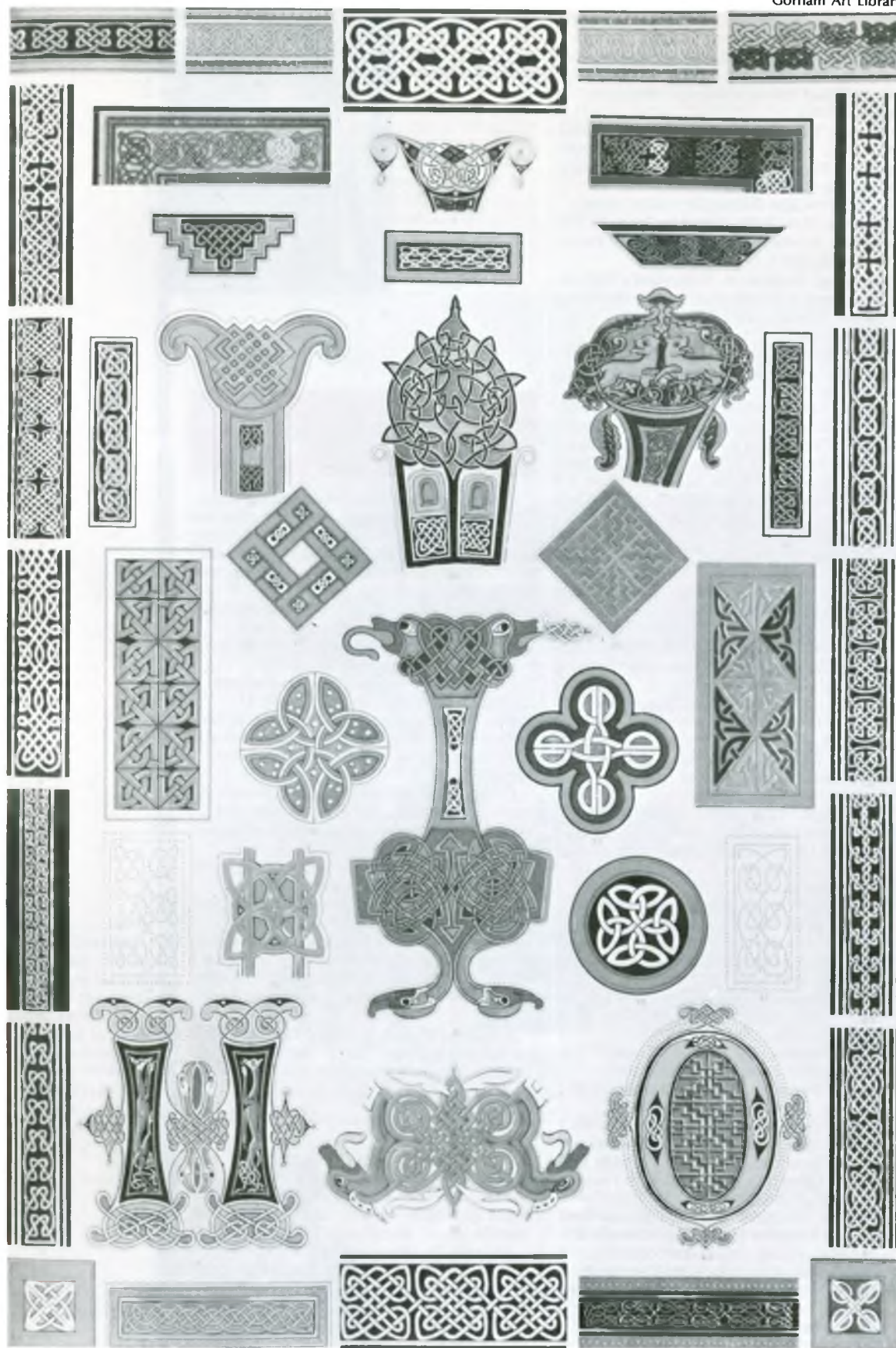
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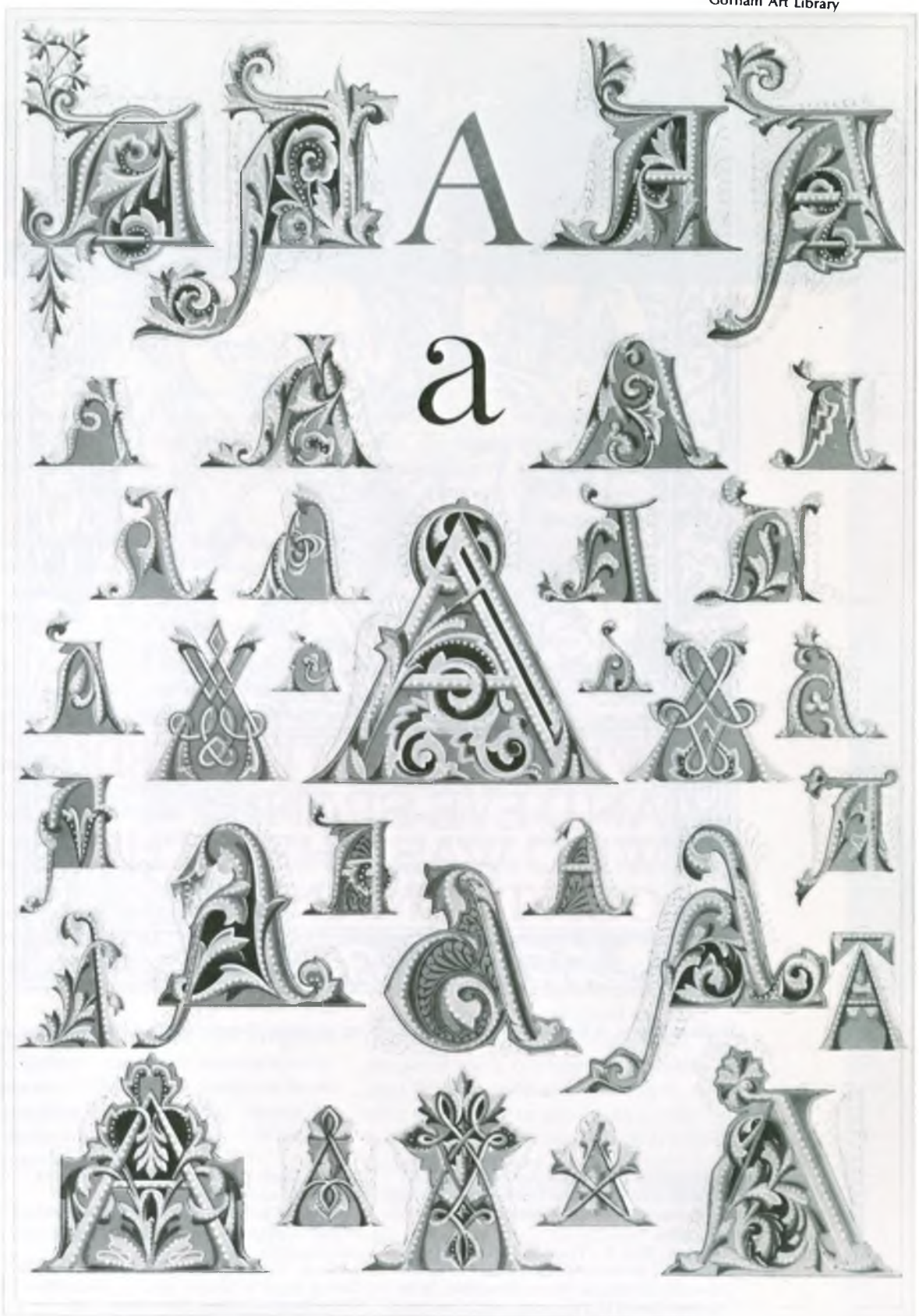
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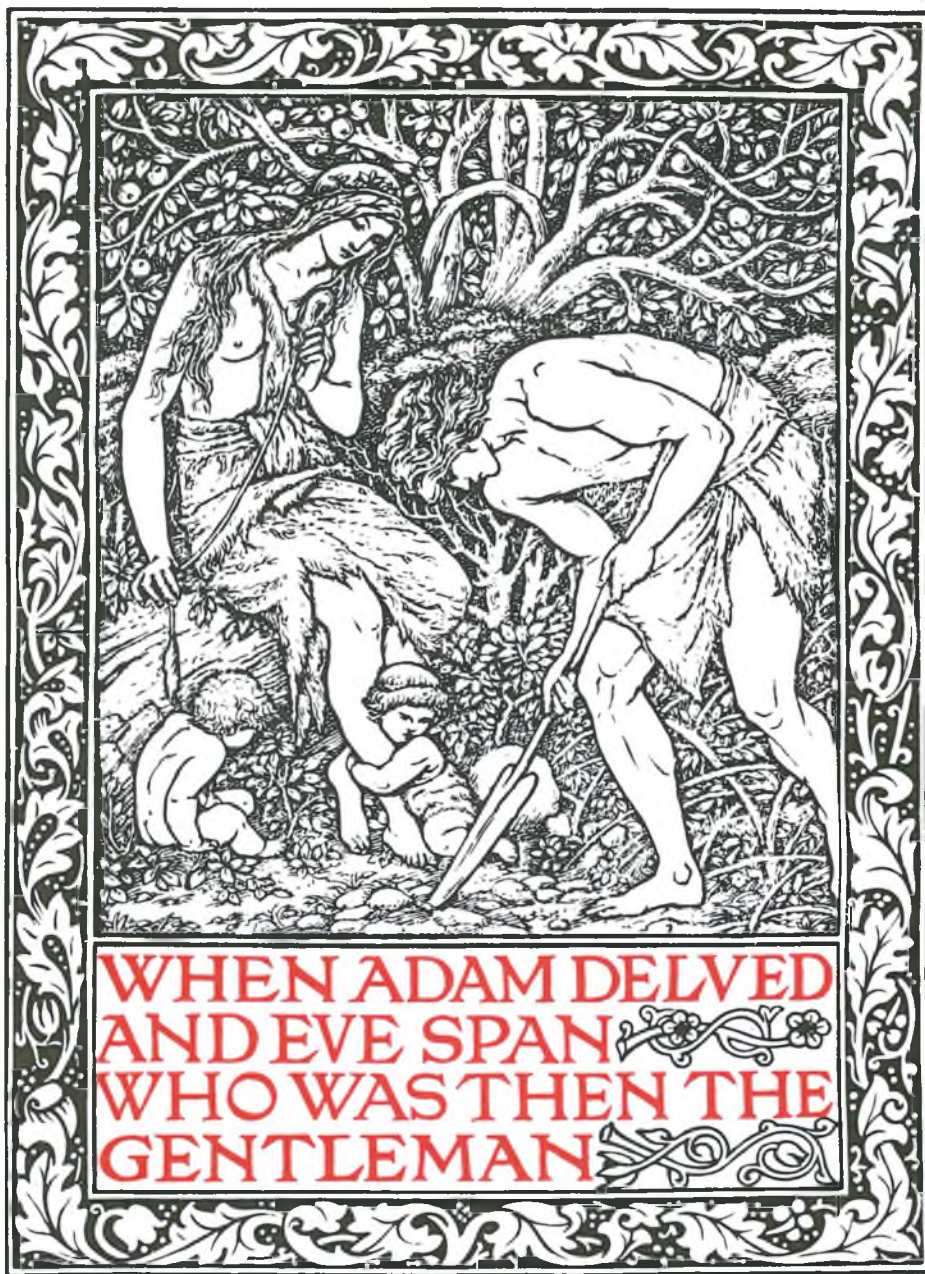
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THE Humanities GUIDE

for those who are
thinking of applying
for an NEH grant

PROGRAMS

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NEH Increases Size of Conference Grants

THE DIVISION of Research Programs has recently revised its category of funding for research conferences. The ceiling on grants for conferences has been raised to \$40,000 to accommodate the support of major, sometimes international conferences on broader research topics and involving more scholars than would have been possible under the previous \$10,000 ceiling. The Division especially anticipates proposals that seek to define or assess the state of research in an entire field or major topic and which reach a diverse group of conference participants. Guidelines for applying for conference funding are available from the NEH Public Affairs Office, Room 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20506 202/786-0438. Some of the questions that applicants may have are answered here by Conferences program officer Crale Hopkins.

Is support still available through the Conferences category for smaller research conferences on specialized topics?

Yes. NEH makes grants ranging from \$6,000 to \$40,000 for conferences to advance the current state of research on topics determined to be significant to the humanities. In addition to broad areas of study, subjects that are highly focused but are of great potential importance are also eligible. In 1985, for example, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, received a grant through the Conferences category for a meeting of specialists to coordinate a replacement of Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* and to determine further Greek lexicographi-

cal projects for the New Testament period. Although of principal interest to lexicographers, the results will affect studies in classics, religion, and languages.

Are conferences on curricula or on how teaching could be improved in a certain discipline eligible for funding?

No, not through the Conferences category, which exists primarily to advance research in the humanities. The Division of Education Programs, however, does make grants for projects to strengthen the curriculum and to improve teaching in the humanities. Applicants who are planning conferences on topics in elementary and secondary education should callCarolynn Reid-Wallace, 786-0377, and on topics in higher education, Lyn Maxwell White, 786-0380.

The Division of Research Programs guidelines state that research conferences "should be designed to accomplish objectives that cannot be attained by other means." What are some examples?

The following are examples of appropriate objectives for conferences supported through the Research division:

- to coordinate disparate efforts ongoing in a single field or to bring together scholars from different disciplines who have been studying the same issue or period. For example, the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, received support for a conference of American and British scholars to compare modernization and socioeconomic change in America and Great Britain from 1600

to 1820.

- to evaluate new methods, materials, or scholarship that affects understanding of an area of knowledge. Harvard University received support for an international symposium on new iconographic and monumental evidence for prehistoric Huari government in the central Andes.

- to assess the state of an established field of research, or to consider the significance of emerging fields or subfields. With support from the Conferences category, Columbia College, Chicago, held a conference for fifteen musicologists to assess the state of scholarship and to promote research on critical issues emerging in black music scholarship.

How are applications in the Conferences category evaluated?

Like all proposals received by the Division of Research Programs, a proposal for a conference is evaluated first by specialist reviewers, who are asked to assess its contribution to the specific field and who typically comment on plans for topics, for presenters to be invited, and on the scholarship reflected in the proposal. The reviewers' comments are considered in the more general evaluation by a panel of scholars from various fields in the humanities, who are asked to judge the significance of the conference in comparison with others considered in the same round.

What are some of the flaws that will damage the chance of funding for a proposal?

An inappropriate objective for a conference will earn it low ratings

from panelists. If a conference is proposed to assert a theory or interpretation, for example, rather than to examine a posed question, it will probably not be recommended for funding, nor will a proposal that does not demonstrate sufficient planning.

What steps should be included in planning a conference?

A scholar or group of scholars who has an idea for a conference should complete the following steps before submitting a final application to NEH:

1. read the Division of Research Programs' guidelines;
2. conduct a bibliographic survey to develop a clear idea of the context for the topic. That context should

be described in the proposal. At this stage, it is important, for instance, to review the program of the last professional meeting in the field;

3. develop a tentative format for the number and kind of presentations;
4. secure from the host institution a commitment of support. The NEH expects the institution to commit to at least 20 percent of the cost of the conference;
5. write or call Program Officer Crale Hopkins (202/786-0204) for a preliminary discussion of the proposal. The number of funded proposals submitted by applicants who take advantage of this opportunity for consultation is double the number submitted by applicants who did not consult in advance with program staff;
6. secure letters of commitment

from presenters and develop specific topics.

What information should the proposal for a conference include?

The proposal should describe the research topic and its significance, the prospective effect of the conference on scholarship in the field, the format for the conference, and representative topics. The proposal should include letters of commitment from most of the presenters, the anticipated number of participants, and the plan for publishing proceedings, including a statement of interest from a scholarly press or journal. If publication is not planned, the proposal should explain how the results of the conference will be disseminated.



BICENTENNIAL BOOKSHELF

In an effort to make reference works and other books about the U.S. Constitution available to all Americans during the bicentennial year, the NEH is offering \$500 grants to public libraries to purchase titles for a "Bicentennial Bookshelf." To be eligible, a library must match the award. Preference will be given to libraries with limited acquisitions budgets. The deadline is December 15, 1986.

Based on suggestions from constitutional scholars, the NEH recommends that libraries build their bookshelves around four recently reissued reference works:

Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. *The Constitution of the United States of America: Interpretation and Analysis*. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1986.

Farrand, Max, editor. *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*. 4 vols., rev. ed. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1967, 1987.

Kurland, Phillip B., and Ralph Lerner, editors. *The Founders' Constitution*. 5 vols. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987.

Levy, Leonard, editor. *The Encyclopedia of the American Constitution*. 4 vols. Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1986.

The Endowment recommends that these reference be complemented with selections from a list also developed in consultation with constitutional experts. Some of the titles on this list include the following primary sources:

Cooke, Jacob E., editor. *The Federalist*. Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, 1961.

Elliot, Jonathan, editor. *Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*. 5 vols. 2nd ed. B. Franklin, New York, 1888-96.

Hyneman, Charles S. and Donald Lutz, editors. *American Political Writings During the Founding Era: 1760-1805*. 2 vols. Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1983.

Jensen, Merrill, editor. *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*. 7 vols. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1976, 1986.

Storing, Herbert J., and Murray

Dry, editors. *The Complete Anti-Federalist*. 7 vols. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1982.

This list also includes the following histories:

Bowen, Catherine. *The Miracle at Philadelphia*. Little, Brown, and Co., Boston, 1986.

Kelly, Alfred H., Winfred Harbison, and Herman Belz. *American Constitution: Its Origins and Development*. 6th ed. Norton, New York, 1983.

McDonald, Forrest. *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution*. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1985.

McLaughlin, Andrew C. *A Constitutional History of the United States*. Irvington, New York, 1935.

Rutland, Robert A. *The Ordeal of the Constitution: The Anti-Federalists and the Ratification Struggle of 1787-1788*. Northeastern University Press, Boston, 1983.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*. Norton, New York, 1942.



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