

DRAMATURGY NEWSLETTER

VOL

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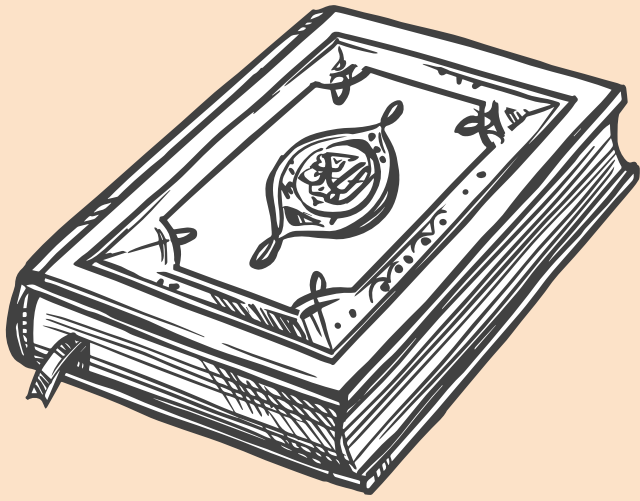
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Join us in exploring the life and times of Charles Dickens and the world and history of his classic novel.

READ ALONG WITH US

Great Expectations was originally published in weekly installments in the magazine *All the Year Round* from December 1860 - August 1861. We will likewise send portions of the novel to you in our biweekly summer newsletters.

[READ CHAPTERS 1-7 NOW](#)



CHAPTER & SCRIPT ANNOTATION

Need to find the chapter that matches your scene?

[FIND IT HERE](#)

WHAT THE DICKENS?

Charles Dickens was born February 7, 1812 in Portsmouth, Hampshire. His family moved in his younger years to Yorkshire and then London. He described himself as a “very small and not over-particularly-taken-care-of boy.”

His father became a clerk in the Naval Pay Office, but amassed so much debt that he and was arrested and sent to Marshalsea debtors’ prison along with his family, with the exception of Charles and his older sister Fanny.

Charles, who was only 12 at the time, had to go and work in a blacking factory, where he stuck labels on bottles for six shillings a week to help support his family.

His family’s experience with debtor’s prison was not widely known during the author’s lifetime, but Dickens would later use Marshalsea debtor’s prison as the setting of his novel *Little Dorrit*.

OTHER RESOURCES



“I called myself ‘Pip’”

Chapter One read by Dominic Gerrard. 12 minutes

Pip’s Christmas Dinner

Actor Dominic Gerrard reads Chapter IV, where Pip has to sit through the ordeal of a Christmas Dinner with a heavy conscience. 14 minutes



Hulks, Convicts, and Reform

This podcast episode explains the reality of the prison ships, their place in Pip’s world, and what Magwitch and Compeyson’s experience would have been like. Includes wonderful readings of excerpts about Magwitch. The entire episode is fascinating, but the first 23 minutes are most relevant.

