

Charles Dickens *The Pickwick Papers*

Read by **David Timson**

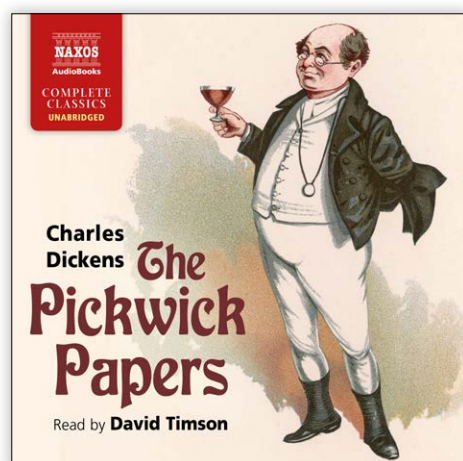


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In *The Pickwick Papers*, his first novel, Dickens displays the talents and skills that became his trademark; observational humour, pathos and social comment abound as we follow Mr Pickwick and Sam Weller, his sharp-tongued cockney servant, travelling around England with his friends in search of adventure and knowledge. Brilliantly comic scenes at the Eatanswill election, and the trial of Mrs Bardell vs Pickwick contrast with the horrors of the debtors prison. It was Thackeray who described the novel as 'that great contemporary history', and it presents a nostalgic view of England just before the coming of the railway.



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he has written *The History of Theatre*, an award-winning production read by Derek Jacobi, and directed four Shakespeare plays including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh). He has also read the entire *Sherlock Holmes* canon and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.



Total running time: 32:13:15 • 25 CDs

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1	1-1	The Pickwick Papers
2	1-2	Mr Pickwick's oration upon this occasion...
3	1-3	Chapter 2: The First Day's Journey...
4	1-4	The mob hitherto had been passive spectators...
5	1-5	Now it so happened that Mr Pickwick...
6	1-6	In this strain, with an occasional glass of ale...
7	1-7	'Devil of a mess on the staircase, waiter,'...
8	1-8	The temptation to be present at the ball...
9	1-9	While the aristocracy of the place...
10	1-10	That gentleman was fast asleep...
11	1-11	To this determination Mr Winkle was urged...
12	1-12	The state of the case having been formally...
13	1-13	Now Mr Winkle had opened his eyes...
14	2-1	Chapter 3: A New Acquaintance...
15	2-2	The Stroller's Tale
16	2-3	It was late, for I had been playing in the last piece...
17	2-4	I sat there for upwards of two hours...
18	2-5	It would afford us the highest gratification...
19	2-6	Mr Tupman, thus solemnly adjured...
20	2-7	Chapter 4: A Field Day and Bivouac...
21	2-8	Mr Pickwick had been so fully occupied...
22	2-9	There are very few moments in a man's existence...
23	2-10	Astounding evolutions they were...
24	2-11	'How dear Emily is flirting with the strange...'
25	2-12	Chapter 5: A Short One...
26	2-13	Now Mr Winkle did entertain considerable...
27	2-14	Now whether the tall horse...






28	3-1	A red-headed man was working in the garden...	7:22
29	3-2	Chapter 6: An Old-Fashioned Card Party...	6:02
30	3-3	The rubber was conducted with all that gravity...	7:32
31	3-4	The Ivy Green	3:56
32	3-5	The Convict's Return	6:51
33	3-6	In the first transports of her mental anguish...	4:59
34	3-7	On a fine Sunday evening...	3:47
35	3-8	The last soft light of the setting sun...	5:37
36	3-9	Chapter 7: How Mr Winkle, Instead of Shooting...	7:08
37	3-10	The slight omission was rectified.	6:37
38	3-11	It was therefore settled that Mr Tupman...	6:27
39	3-12	Mr Pickwick was sufficiently versed...	7:19
40	3-13	There being no further preliminaries to arrange...	5:06
41	4-1	Enthusiastic as we are in the noble cause...	1:54
42	4-2	Chapter 8: Strongly Illustrative of the Position...	5:48
43	4-3	Mr Tupman no sooner heard this avowal...	7:37
44	4-4	Mr Tupman thought of the widow at Rochester...	5:55
45	4-5	If Mr Jingle, from his place of concealment...	7:17
46	4-6	Now, if there was one individual in the whole...	6:10
47	4-7	Chapter 9: A Discovery and a Chase	6:41
48	4-8	For the first three or four miles...	6:56
49	4-9	'Jump in - jump in!'	6:35
50	4-10	Chapter 10: Clearing Up All Doubts...	6:21
51	4-11	'Come in,' said a man's voice...	6:34
52	4-12	He was yet on his way to the White Hart...	5:06
53	4-13	'We want to know -' said Mr. Wardle...	6:29
54	5-1	'My dear Sir,' said the little man...	4:00



55	5-2	'Well, my dear Sir, well,'...
56	5-3	Chapter 11: Involving Another Journey
57	5-4	It was a more difficult task to take leave...
58	5-5	He tapped at the cottage door...
59	5-6	A Madman's Manuscript
60	5-7	In one thing I was deceived with all my cunning...
61	5-8	She died next day...
62	5-9	I saw the sudden change...
63	5-10	At the end of the manuscript was written...
64	5-11	Chapter 12: Descriptive of a Very Important...
65	5-12	Mr Pickwick was struck motionless and speechless...
66	5-13	Chapter 13: Some Account of Eatanswill
67	6-1	It was late in the evening...
68	6-2	Here the little man indulged in a convulsion...
69	6-3	Mrs Pott received Mr Pickwick's paternal grasp...
70	6-4	The noise and bustle which ushered...
71	6-5	The stable-yard exhibited unequivocal symptoms...
72	6-6	'There's Winkle,' said Mr. Tupman...
73	6-7	Then Horatio Fizkin, Esquire, of Fizkin Lodge...
74	6-8	Chapter 14: Comprising a Brief Description
75	6-9	Here it was that Mr Tupman and Mr Snodgrass...
76	6-10	It's a queer name; but he used to call it...
77	6-11	In less than five minutes' time...
78	6-12	It was a good large room with big closets...
79	6-13	I have been a great favourite among the women...
80	6-14	Morning aroused Tom from the lethargic slumber...
81	7-1	Gentlemen, I have heard my uncle say...
82	7-2	Chapter 15: In Which Is Given a Faithful...
83	7-3	Mr Pickwick took up his hat, and repaired to...
84	7-4	The morning came...
85	7-5	Very few people but those who have tried it...
86	7-6	As the enthusiasm in Count Smortork's favou...
87	7-7	Mr Pickwick's knife and fork fell from his hand...
88	7-8	Chapter 16: Too Full of Adventure to be Briefly...
89	7-9	The coach rattled through the well-paved streets...
90	7-10	'And what sort of a place have you got?'...
91	7-11	'What had better be done, then?'...
92	7-12	Having settled these preliminaries...
93	7-13	Like all Mr Pickwick's determinations...
94	8-1	An hour and a half elapsed...
95	8-2	Chapter 17: Showing That an Attack...
96	8-3	The Parish Clerk: A Tale of True Love
97	8-4	A prettier foot, a gayer heart...
98	8-5	The circumstance which directed his thoughts...
99	8-6	Chapter 18: Briefly Illustrative of Two Points...
100	8-7	There appears nothing very tremendous...
101	8-8	So, as the hysterics were still hovering about...
102	8-9	Mr Pickwick would in all probability...
103	8-10	Chapter 19: A Pleasant Day With an Unpleasant...
104	8-11	'Stop, Sam,' said Mr Pickwick...
105	8-12	Mr Tupman's process...
106	8-13	'This is delightful – thoroughly delightful!'...
107	9-1	'Who are you, you rascal?'...
108	9-2	Chapter 20: Showing How Dodson and Fogg...
109	9-3	'Nice men these here, Sir,'...
110	9-4	'Here is the entry,'...
111	9-5	At first the evolutions of the stout man...
112	9-6	'Well, what do you think of what your father...'...
113	9-7	The puffy-faced young man rose...
114	9-8	Chapter 21: In Which the Old Man...
115	9-9	I knew another man...
116	9-10	The Old Man's Tale About the Queer Client
117	9-11	Winter came, and with it weeks of cold...
118	9-12	Although for many weeks after this...
119	10-1	The tale told itself at once...



4:32	120	10-2	The implacable animosity of Heyling...	6:50
6:12	121	10-3	Chapter 22: Mr Pickwick Journeys to Ipswich...	6:33
7:03	122	10-4	'I am happy in the prospect of your company, Sir,'...	6:52
6:27	123	10-5	With such conversation...	6:38
7:13	124	10-6	Mr Pickwick congratulated the fortunate owner...	6:35
7:23	125	10-7	The bedsteads stood one on each side of the door...	6:18
4:50	126	10-8	Now, although Mr Pickwick was not actuated...	6:09
4:46	127	10-9	Chapter 23: In Which Mr Samuel Weller...	7:29
7:25	128	10-10	In the contemplative mood which these words...	6:33
7:23	129	10-11	Sam eyed his companion for a few seconds...	6:27
	130	10-12	Chapter 24: Wherein Mr Peter Magnus...	5:31
5:08	131	11-1	Mr Pickwick had taken a few strides...	6:25
6:08	132	11-2	We do not mean to assert...	5:39
5:49	133	11-3	'Muzzle!' said the magistrate.	7:03
4:50	134	11-4	While these resolute and determined preparations...	7:17
6:39	135	11-5	The shopkeepers of the town...	5:45
6:12	136	11-6	Chapter 25: Showing, Among a Variety...	6:56
4:22	137	11-7	'Grummer,' said Mr Nupkins...	6:26
5:13	138	11-8	Mr Pickwick had a great deal more to say...	5:56
3:39	139	11-9	As the narrative proceeded...	7:29
4:28	140	11-10	When Mrs Nupkins dried up her tears...	6:31
6:22	141	11-11	'Well, here's a game!' cried Sam.	7:08
6:04	142	11-12	When Mr Pickwick arrived at this point...	5:18
6:12	143	12-1	Chapter 26: Which Contains a Brief Account...	5:46
5:52	144	12-2	'Hold your noise – do – you naughty creetur!'...	5:09
7:10	145	12-3	Sam understood all this, of course...	4:08
3:06	146	12-4	Chapter 27: Samuel Weller Makes a Pilgrimage...	7:03
7:26	147	12-5	The appearance of the red-nosed man...	7:44
7:44	148	12-6	'They're always a-doin' some gammon...'...	7:54
5:55	149	12-7	Chapter 28: A Good-Humoured Christmas...	7:20
6:22	150	12-8	And now the bugle plays a lively air...	7:39
4:23	151	12-9	Meanwhile, Mr Pickwick and his friends...	6:40
3:44	152	12-10	A happy party they were...	7:33
6:46	153	12-11	'Mr Miller,' said Mr Pickwick to his old...	5:43
6:34	154	12-12	If anything could have added to the interest...	5:15
7:05	155	13-1	'I'm a-going to tell you,' replied Mr Weller...	4:55
6:35	156	13-2	Now, the screaming had subsided...	3:05
6:13	157	13-3	A Christmas Carol	5:19
6:50	158	13-4	Chapter 29: The Story of the Goblins...	6:37
4:44	159	13-5	'It was the echoes,' said Gabriel Grub...	7:19
1:54	160	13-6	At last the game reached to a most exciting pitch...	6:49
5:58	161	13-7	At these words, the cloud was dispelled...	7:16
6:25	162	13-8	Chapter 30: How the Pickwickians Made...	7:42
6:50	163	13-9	The arrival of the two new visitors...	8:02
6:43	164	13-10	While Mr Pickwick was delivering himself...	5:30
6:13	165	13-11	The clay upon so much of Mr Pickwick's coat...	5:30
6:17	166	13-12	Chapter 31: Which Is All About the Law...	5:13
6:13	167	13-13	Here Mr Jackson cast his eye on the parchment...	4:54
6:29	168	14-1	Mr Pickwick slept little that night...	5:16
7:12	169	14-2	The relation of this affecting incident...	7:38
6:41	170	14-3	It was an uncarpeted room...	6:42
6:50	171	14-4	These tokens of the Serjeant's presentiments...	6:55
5:35	172	14-5	Chapter 32: Describes, Far More Fully...	5:54
7:16	173	14-6	'Oh, it isn't any inconvenience,' replied the little...	6:17
6:05	174	14-7	Mr Snodgrass, who entered last...	7:43
6:35	175	14-8	After supper, another jug of punch...	6:35
7:40	176	14-9	At this point the remainder of the guests...	6:27
6:05	177	14-10	Chapter 33: Mr Weller the Elder...	7:05
5:06	178	14-11	The brandy-and-water luke...	5:53
6:52	179	14-12	Mr Weller resumed his pipe with critical solemnity...	6:47
7:11	180	15-1	As the elder Mr Weller entertained...	5:59
5:28	181	15-2	There is little doubt that Mr Weller...	7:54
7:08	182	15-3	Any further observations...	5:39
7:06	183	15-4	Chapter 34: Is Wholly Devoted To a Full...	6:09
7:19	184	15-5	Mr Justice Stareleigh...	7:11

					
185	15-6	The ushers again called silence....	7:02	249	20-7
186	15-7	Serjeant Buzfuz, who had proceeded...	5:19	250	20-8
187	15-8	A visible impression was produced...	6:46	251	20-9
188	15-9	Meanwhile Mrs Cluppins...	6:40	252	20-10
189	15-10	'Now, Mr Winkle,' said Mr Skimpin...	7:26	253	20-11
190	15-11	Now, if the unfortunate Mr. Phunky...	7:11	254	20-12
191	15-12	Hereupon there was a general laugh...	5:05	255	21-1
192	16-1	'I have no objection to admit, my Lord,'...	4:47	256	21-2
193	16-2	Chapter 35: In Which Mr Pickwick Thinks...	5:43	257	21-3
194	16-3	The gentleman with the whiskers hummed a tune...	7:05	258	21-4
195	16-4	Nothing worthy of special mention occurred...	7:33	259	21-5
196	16-5	At the appointed hour, Mr Pickwick...	6:12	260	21-6
197	16-6	Bath being full...	6:28	261	21-7
198	16-7	At this anecdote his Lordship laughed very heartily...	5:15	262	21-8
199	16-8	Chapter 36: The Chief Features of Which Will...	4:58	263	21-9
200	16-9	The True Legend of Prince Bladud	7:21	264	21-10
201	16-10	It is an old prerogative of kings...	7:56	265	21-11
202	16-11	Just as the clock struck three...	7:26	266	21-12
203	16-12	Chapter 37: Honourably Accounts...	7:58	267	21-13
204	17-1	Crossing the greengrocer's shop....	7:14	268	22-1
205	17-2	The man in blue being a light-haired...	7:35	269	22-2
206	17-3	Mr Whiffers's address was responded to...	7:29	270	22-3
207	17-4	Chapter 38: How Mr Winkle...	6:19	271	22-4
208	17-5	'Well!' said Mr Winkle...	6:22	272	22-5
209	17-6	'My dear friend,' said Mr Ben Allen...	6:22	273	22-6
210	17-7	The mirth of Mr Bob Sawyer was rapidly ripening...	5:59	274	22-7
211	17-8	About half-past twelve o'clock...	6:56	275	22-8
212	17-9	Chapter 39: Mr Samuel Weller, Being Intrusted...	7:25	276	22-9
213	17-10	Sam continued to sit on the large stone...	6:18	277	22-10
214	17-11	Sam ruminated for a few moments...	5:57	278	22-11
215	17-12	Flattering as these professions of good feeling...	4:22	279	22-12
216	18-1	After an absence of five or ten minutes...	4:53	280	22-13
217	18-2	While these things were going on...	6:43	281	23-1
218	18-3	Chapter 40: Introduces Mr Pickwick...	6:49	282	23-2
219	18-4	But this Sam flatly and positively...	6:53	283	23-3
220	18-5	'Aha, my dear sir,' said the little man...	6:13	284	23-4
221	18-6	This was a room of specially dirty appearance...	5:07	285	23-5
222	18-7	The hackney-coach jolted along Fleet Street...	4:31	286	23-6
223	18-8	Chapter 41: What Befell Mr Pickwick...	7:37	287	23-7
224	18-9	In the galleries themselves...	7:21	288	23-8
225	18-10	As Sam concluded...	6:48	289	23-9
226	18-11	This figure was the first to perceive...	6:18	290	23-10
227	18-12	Unwilling to hazard another quarrel...	4:07	291	23-11
228	18-13	Chapter 42: Illustrative, Like the Preceding One...	5:50	292	23-12
229	19-1	After breakfasting in a small closet...	6:40	293	24-1
230	19-2	Subsequent occurrences confirmed...	5:53	294	24-2
231	19-3	The matter was soon arranged, as the turnkey...	6:14	295	24-3
232	19-4	Turning these things in his mind...	6:22	296	24-4
233	19-5	Jingle delivered this singular summary...	5:48	297	24-5
234	19-6	Chapter 43: Showing How Mr Samuel Weller...	5:13	298	24-6
235	19-7	Now, the place where this discourse occurred...	5:21	299	24-7
236	19-8	'I remember, gentlemen,' said Mr Pell...	6:33	300	24-8
237	19-9	'Well, now,' said Sam...	6:37	301	24-9
238	19-10	Meanwhile, Sam, having been formally...	5:19	302	24-10
239	19-11	By the time the officer arrived...	3:55	303	24-11
240	19-12	Chapter 44: Treats of Divers Little Matters...	4:55	304	24-12
241	19-13	'One night he was took very ill...'...	3:59	305	24-13
242	19-14	The above short dialogue took place as Mr Weller...	6:33	306	25-1
243	20-1	'After that, we went into Chancery...'...	6:43	307	25-2
244	20-2	There was something so very abrupt...	5:51	308	25-3
245	20-3	He had sat ruminating about the matter...	6:22	309	25-4
246	20-4	Chapter 45: Descriptive of an Affecting Interview...	7:16	310	25-5
247	20-5	Here the old gentleman shook his head...	6:27	311	25-6
248	20-6	After Mrs Weller and the red-nosed gentleman...	6:30	312	25-7
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Charles Dickens

(1812–1870)

The Pickwick Papers

'The work will be no joke, but the emolument is too tempting to resist'
– Dickens to his fiancée on the *Pickwick* proposal.

The Pickwick Papers actually began life as a project to promote the humorous illustrations of Robert Seymour, who was enjoying success in the 1830s as a depicter of the cockney sportsman ineptly indulging in the country pursuits of hunting, shooting, and fishing. However, the publishers Chapman and Hall felt that a text was needed to link the illustrations, and turned their attention to a rising 24-year-old in the field of journalism who wrote under the name of 'Boz' and who had been making his name as a humorous observer of the habits and quirks of London life in a series of articles for *The Morning Chronicle* and other papers. These were eventually collected together and published as *Sketches by Boz*. 'Boz' was the pen-name of Charles Dickens.

1836 was an important year in young Dickens's already busy life. He accepted the commission from Chapman and Hall to provide a text for Seymour's illustrations, using it as an opportunity to write his first novel; then, with the security of an income, he married his fiancée, Catherine Hogarth, on 2 April, between writing the first and second instalments of *The Pickwick Papers*.

From the first it seems Dickens intended to make the project his own:

I objected on consideration that although born and partly bred in the country I was no great sportsman... that the idea was not novel, and had already been much used and that it would be infinitely better for the plates to arise naturally out of the text; and that I would like to take my own way with a freer range of English scenes and people, and was afraid I should ultimately do so in any case, whatever course I might prescribe to myself at starting.

Dickens produced the first two chapters and then submitted them to Seymour, in an attempt to mould the established artist to his own scheme of things, thereby cheekily reversing the agreed artistic process. Meeting with Seymour to discuss some minor alterations to the first two plates, and leaving him apparently satisfied with his suggestions, Dickens was horrified to learn that the artist had committed suicide two days later. This tragic circumstance meant that the project, planned to appear in 19 monthly parts and which was well on the way towards the publication of its first instalment, would have to be completely re-thought. Dickens's text would now dominate, and though the first instalment would contain Seymour's two completed plates, a new illustrator would have to be found for the remainder of the series. After a failed commission with a Mr Buss, a young comic artist called Hablot Knight Browne was contracted, a man whom Dickens found to be in perfect sympathy with his own comic spirit. Browne signed his works as 'Phiz', and thereafter 'Boz' and 'Phiz' became inseparably linked in the public's mind. Phiz went on to illustrate 10 of Dickens's subsequent novels.

Dickens knew he could not confine himself exclusively to writing about the exploits of Cockney sportsmen, or even a 'club', and apart from the character of Winkle, the naïve city dweller who pretends he has a facility for all things sporting, Dickens does not explore the theme further.

Likewise the restrictive formula set out in Chapter One, that all the adventures should be relayed back to the Pickwick Club in London by

written report and then re-told by an editor, is soon dropped after the early chapters. This freed Dickens to write without any restrictions. What he in fact created is a rambling, picaresque novel: a tribute to the literary heroes of his childhood, Fielding and Smollett, who first evolved this kind of novel, based upon a journey or series of excursions allowing them to introduce random characters and situations as their genius suggested. These excursions link Dickens's loosely constructed narrative, assisted by the copious amounts of drinking and eating regularly indulged in at every journey's end. A lot of the book's charm is to be found in the nostalgic descriptions of travelling by coach or gig, soon to fall victim, by 1836, to the advance of the railway.

In place of the 'club', the book focuses on the benign Mr Pickwick alone, founder of the club and hailed by its members as a man of significant intellect and genius. But the joke is that Mr Pickwick is just an ordinary man with nothing exceptional about him but his old-fashioned tights and gaiters, and who is elevated to a higher plane by his friends, Snodgrass, Tupman and Winkle, who call him 'Immortal', and who don't themselves even reach his modest intellectual heights. However, Dickens develops Mr Pickwick from an unworldly and naïve figure into a true philanthropist who shows understanding and sympathy, even magnanimity, towards the likes of Jingle who took advantage of his good nature, and Mrs Bardell, whose legal action for breach of promise against him led to Pickwick's humiliation in the debtors prison.

The Pickwick Papers became an advertisement for Mr Charles Dickens, a young author displaying his wares to the public and showing promise of greater things to come. In fact, we can feel the young author's style maturing as the book proceeds, to the extent that by the time he puts Mr Pickwick in the Fleet prison for debt, he is making a social and political comment, drawn from his own bitter remembrances as a child of his father's imprisonment for debt in the Marshalsea prison. His descriptions of life inside are as moving and finely written as passages in his later novels. This episode anticipates Dickens's inclination for reform, so much a part of his later writings. He also criticises the law, exposing the incompetence of country magistrates and the corruption of lawyers such as Dodson and Fogg. He would expand his concerns about the law in *Bleak House*, and the prison system in *Little Dorrit*.

Dickens also incorporates into *The Pickwick Papers* the traditional element of travellers tales, which are randomly interspersed into the narrative, giving him the opportunity once again to show his skills and versatility of style. The pathos of *The Stroller's Tale* anticipates the death-bed scenes in *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Dombey and Son*; whilst *The Story of the Goblins who Stole the Sexton* has more than a hint of *A Christmas Carol* about it. Other interpolations reflect Dickens's taste for sentiment and morbidity.

But it is the comedy we relish the most, and Dickens lays down in this, his first novel, the comic trends we now associate him with. *The Pickwick Papers* abounds in portraits of lower middle-class and working-class characters: lawyers and their clerks, county magistrates, medical students, inn-keepers, waiters, chambermaids, coachmen, cabmen and more, their foibles and follies exposed with rich humour and understanding. Rising in their midst is one of Dickens's greatest comic creations: Mr Samuel Weller, a boot-black who becomes Mr Pickwick's manservant and whose personality comes to dominate the book, and change its nature. His cockney verve and wit give comic energy to the

narrative and his exchanges with his father Tony are classic. Not one to suffer fools, Sam speaks his mind openly with honest perception. His devoted care and attention for his unworldly master is truly touching, and the heart of the book is the developing mutual dependency of master and man, revealed in the comic interplay of their contrasting natures.

Soon after publication, Sam's sayings were extracted from the book and circulated as 'Wellerisms' throughout the English-speaking world, just a part of the craze that grew up around *The Pickwick Papers*, leading to pirated editions and theatrical adaptations. The introduction of Sam Weller sealed the success of *The Pickwick Papers*; the initial print run had been only 400, but by the last instalment it had increased to 40,000. So great was the 'Pickwick' craze, that a contemporary remarked it had 'secured far more attention than was given to the ordinary politics of the day.' There were 'Pickwick' cigars, hats and coats, and 'Pickwick' was the buzz-word of 1836.

Early reviewers were amazed by the rapid success of young Boz's first novel. The *Quarterly Review* suggested that he could not keep up this energetic comic style, and though he had 'risen like a rocket', he would 'come down like the stick.' While *The London and Westminster Review* boldly stated:

We purpose... to investigate the foundation of a popularity extraordinary on account of its sudden growth, its vast extent and the recognition which it has received from persons of the most refined taste, as well as for the great mass of the reading public.

But investigation or explanation was unnecessary, for Dickens was no passing phenomenon. With the publication of *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens had arrived to stay.

Notes by David Timson

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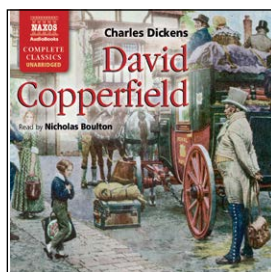
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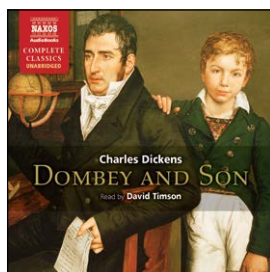
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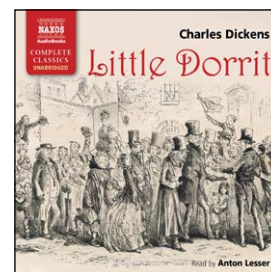
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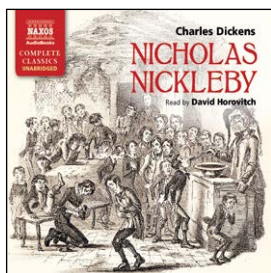
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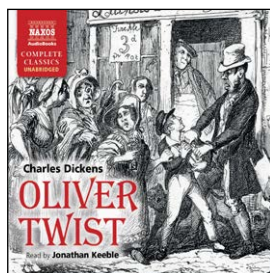
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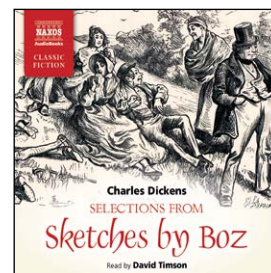
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