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AudioBooks

COMPLETE
CLASSICS
UNABRIDGED

Charles Dickens

Barnaby Rudge

Read by Sean Barrett



CD 1

1	Preface	8:09
2	Chapter 1	8:16
3	There was another guest...	6:47
4	The heir apparent to the Maypole...	6:54
5	The landlord pausing here...	6:15
6	The man glanced at the parish...	5:07
7	At this point of the narrative...	6:34
8	Chapter 2	5:52
9	Whether the traveller was possessed...	6:51
10	Thus they regarded each other...	6:01
11	Chapter 3	6:11

Total time on CD 1: 73:04

CD 2

1	So saying, he raised his face...	6:11
2	With these words, he applied himself...	4:31
3	Chapter 4	5:59
4	After a long and patient contemplation...	5:43
5	Sim Tappertit, among the other fancies...	7:13
6	Although Sim Tappertit had taken no share...	5:23
7	Chapter 5	5:12
8	The widow shook her head.	4:54
9	Chapter 6	5:55
10	He took his wig off outright...	5:58
11	The young man smiled...	7:01
12	The raven gave a short, comfortable...	5:13

Total time on CD 2: 69:21

CD 3

1	Chapter 7	6:59
2	Poor Gabriel twisted his wig about...	6:14
3	Chapter 8	8:21
4	With these words, he folded his arms again.	8:06
5	To this the novice made rejoinder...	7:13
6	Chapter 9	5:37
7	Miss Miggs deliberated within herself...	7:44
8	Chapter 10	7:19
9	It was spacious enough in all conscience...	7:11
10	John was so very much astonished...	6:13
11	But Barnaby delayed beyond all precedent.	5:12

Total time on CD 3: 76:17

CD 4

1	Chapter 11	7:32
2	Everybody looked at Mr Willet...	4:53
3	Chapter 12	6:05
4	'I love my niece...'	7:05
5	'In short, justifying the means by the end...'	6:19
6	Chapter 13	7:41
7	To this, Joe made no answer...	7:53
8	Now, Mrs Varden, regarding the Maypole...	5:52
9	And she hardly looked at him...	5:02
10	Chapter 14	4:40
11	He regarded the young man sternly...	5:38

Total time on CD 4: 68:47

CD 5

1	Chapter 15	7:54
2	Edward rose, and paced the room.	5:08
3	'My dear Ned,' returned his father...	6:22
4	The young man leant his head...	5:00
5	Chapter 16	6:07
6	Among all the dangerous characters...	7:47
7	Chapter 17	7:59
8	She had sunk upon her knees...	8:15
9	When he had concluded these arrangements...	8:19
10	Chapter 18	5:10
11	The light came to the level of the pavement...	6:14

Total time on CD 5: 74:23

CD 6

1	Chapter 19	7:30
2	This little incident...	5:37
3	With this advice he kissed...	5:30
4	But on they went...	6:27
5	Chapter 20	6:42
6	Dolly bade her good bye...	7:03
7	Chapter 21	7:07
8	Joe had not the smallest objection...	7:42
9	Mrs Varden opined that if he did...	5:38
10	Chapter 22	7:25
11	But even then, their very kindness shaped...	7:35

Total time on CD 6: 74:24

CD 7

1	Chapter 23	7:41
2	Having said this in the politest...	5:11
3	He obeyed. His patron followed him...	6:25
4	As he spoke, he twisted it up...	5:39
5	Chapter 24	6:06
6	During the whole of this dialogue...	5:52
7	Chapter 25	5:39
8	She took his arm...	5:27
9	Miss Haredale stood beside her chair...	6:56
10	With that, she would have left them...	5:44
11	Chapter 26	6:33
12	If the dark little parlour had been filled...	5:38

Total time on CD 7: 72:57

CD 8

1	Chapter 27	7:15
2	Dolly showed some reluctance to perform...	5:41
3	Aware of the impression he had made...	7:38
4	Mrs Varden was perfectly aghast...	6:30
5	Chapter 28	5:30
6	Hugh obeyed again even more zealously...	6:33
7	Chapter 29	6:49
8	Hugh made no answer...	6:42
9	He raised his hat from his head...	7:50
10	'My dear girl,' said Mr Chester...	8:14
11	Chapter 30	5:04

Total time on CD 8: 73:52

CD 9

1	Joe made no effort to reply.	4:36
2	Chapter 31	6:10
3	'What noisy fellow is that in the next room?	7:36
4	He went out by Islington...	5:10
5	Dolly in the meanwhile, turned to the corner	6:20
6	Chapter 32	5:45
7	'You make me blush...'	6:38
8	Chapter 33	6:45
9	Mr Parkes, who was possibly...	5:56
10	A more complete picture of terror...	5:16
11	Here old John precipitately interrupted...	6:51
12	Chapter 34	5:57

Total time on CD 9: 73:06

CD 10

1	Mr Willet fixed his dull eyes...	7:23
2	Chapter 35	5:45
3	'You surprise me, Grueby...'	5:28
4	As he bustled in and out of the room...	7:17
5	'It's a great power. You're right...'	6:40
6	Chapter 36	6:14
7	'Miggs,' said Lord George...	5:17
8	Chapter 37	6:19
9	It was the slightest action possible...	6:55
10	So along the Strand...	6:12
11	'I don't exactly know how many...'	6:47

Total time on CD 10: 70:24

CD 11

1	Chapter 38	6:13
2	The enrolment being completed...	5:36
3	Chapter 39	7:46
4	Mr Tappertit did not stop here...	7:21
5	He heaved a deep sigh as he indulged...	7:01
6	Chapter 40	5:15
7	'I thought when you left me this evening...'	4:52
8	The knight looked at him with a smile...	6:25
9	Chapter 41	6:16
10	The locksmith did for a moment seem disposed...	5:30
11	If there had been anybody...	7:14
12	Lest the reader should be at any loss...	7:41

Total time on CD 11: 77:18

CD 12

1	Chapter 42	5:44
2	With that, as if to change the theme...	5:20
3	Chapter 43	6:28
4	In the abstract there was nothing...	5:41
5	'You have so much of my favour, sir...'	5:41
6	'This man,' said Mr Haredale...	7:49
7	Chapter 44	5:19
8	Mr Dennis coughed and shook his head...	6:44
9	Chapter 45	6:29
10	Grip was by no means an idle or unprofitable...	6:04
11	Barnaby looked curiously at his eyes...	6:19
12	She moved towards him, and stooped down.	6:55

Total time on CD 12: 74:40

CD 13

1	Chapter 46	7:29
2	He paused a moment...	6:38
3	Chapter 47	5:24
4	Barnaby and his mother walked on...	6:20
5	He was evidently about to make...	7:03
6	Chapter 48	5:30
7	With hands that trembled with his eagerness...	6:19
8	Scouts had been posted in advance...	6:22
9	Chapter 49	7:20
10	It was between two and three o'clock...	7:47
11	The boldness of this action quite took them...	8:06

Total time on CD 13: 74:27

CD 14

1	Chapter 50	7:25
2	'Fire and fury, master!' cried Hugh...	7:37
3	Chapter 51	8:01
4	'Martha,' said the locksmith...	7:19
5	Of a rather turbulent description...	8:14
6	Chapter 52	7:17
7	Dennis looked to where Simon Tappertit lay...	8:16
8	Chapter 53	7:40
9	'You know the news, then...?'	7:11

Total time on CD 14: 69:04

CD 15

1	The two looked at him, and at each other...	5:52
2	Chapter 54	6:38
3	How long he slept, matters not...	6:23
4	Nearly all the time while John looked on...	5:52
5	Chapter 55	7:31
6	What hunt of spectres could surpass...	7:12
7	The burning pile, revealing rooms...	5:22
8	Chapter 56	7:30
9	While Solomon was speaking, old John sat...	6:33
10	After a short pause, Mr Haredale shouted...	5:01
11	Chapter 57	7:29

Total time on CD 15: 71:28

CD 16

1	Lord George, biting his nails...	6:11
2	At these words, Barnaby furled his flag...	6:58
3	Chapter 58	8:14
4	It was probably this circumstance...	7:10
5	Chapter 59	7:30
6	The little hand seconded this admonition...	7:14
7	Thrusting his face away with all her force...	6:03
8	Poor little Dolly!	6:06
9	Chapter 60	5:01
10	Hugh and his two friends...	4:33
11	Chapter 61	6:50

Total time on CD 16: 71:56

CD 17

1	'Now, you hear this, my lord?'	7:49
2	Chapter 62	6:55
3	The blind man listened in silence.	6:21
4	'That's better said...'	5:52
5	'There is a gleam of hope in this!'	5:23
6	Chapter 63	7:35
7	The young fellow who held the light...	7:29
8	This incautious speech...	4:59
9	Chapter 64	5:59
10	They struggled together.	5:23
11	Although the heat was so intense...	6:34

Total time on CD 17: 70:27

CD 18

1	Chapter 65	8:03
2	It seemed not a minute's work...	8:29
3	While the hangman addressed them...	7:16
4	Chapter 66	7:13
5	They laid him on a sofa...	7:35
6	Chapter 67	5:40
7	Besides the notices on the gates...	6:27
8	The streets were now a dreadful spectacle.	6:00
9	As he spoke, and drew Mr Haredale back...	6:47
10	Chapter 68	6:17

Total time on CD 18: 69:53

CD 19

1	Sickened by the sights surrounding...	6:26
2	Chapter 69	7:37
3	He was speedily dressed...	6:52
4	With such vociferations...	6:32
5	But this operation was postponed...	4:57
6	Chapter 70	6:07
7	Suiting the action to the word...	5:40
8	'Lookee here, my sugar...'	5:04
9	Chapter 71	5:55
10	Miss Miggs was at some trouble...	5:53
11	It was some check upon their transport...	7:09
12	But Dolly could say nothing...	5:41

Total time on CD 19: 74:00

CD 20

1	Chapter 72	7:12
2	'By George!' said the Black Lion...	7:25
3	Chapter 73	5:41
4	All remaining quiet...	6:46
5	Barnaby recoiled in horror...	6:06
6	To make me easy in this jail.	5:46
7	Chapter 74	7:41
8	He looked lazily at him...	7:32
9	Chapter 75	6:17
10	Gabriel thanked him...	6:21
11	Sir John fanned himself...	5:27

Total time on CD 20: 72:23

CD 21

1	Sir John took a pinch of snuff...	8:30
2	Chapter 76	5:40
3	The mother and son remained...	7:20
4	Chapter 77	7:21
5	Two rioters were to die before the prison...	7:31
6	But all these things increased his guilt.	6:56
7	Barnaby had moved towards the door...	5:44
8	Chapter 78	6:58
9	He could say nothing to her.	6:58
10	Chapter 79	7:02
11	He pressed her...	6:12

Total time on CD 21: 76:18

CD 22

1	But in all the bandyings from hand to hand.	7:00
2	Chapter 80	5:52
3	It would have been odd enough...	6:13
4	Having brought this admonition to an end...	6:11
5	Chapter 81	7:20
6	The ashes of the commonest fire...	6:34
7	He had his hand upon his sword...	7:26
8	Chapter The Last	6:00
9	Many months after...	6:31
10	Mr Willet the elder...	6:20

Total time on CD 22: 65:34

Total time on CDs 1–22: 26:34:03

Charles Dickens

(1812–1870)

Barnaby Rudge

Barnaby Rudge is something of a mystery story; therefore it might be advisable to read these notes after having listened to the novel. In considering its background etc., disclosures about the plot are made that may spoil your enjoyment.

I have gone to work this morning in good twig, strong hope, and cheerful spirits. Last night I was unutterably and impossible-to-form-an-idea-of-ably miserable...

Dickens in a letter to his friend Forster, 1841

Barnaby Rudge was the second novel to appear in Dickens's experimental magazine *Master Humphrey's Clock*, which he launched in 1840. He was a young man with the proven successes of *The Pickwick*

Papers, *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* behind him, and this encouraged him to be innovative. *Master Humphrey's Clock* was a literary magazine of random articles and short stories, linked by the fictional 'Master Humphrey': he kept this assortment in his clock to be produced as material for discussion by a literary group (which included, ill-advisedly, Mr Pickwick). This original presentation by Dickens, however, did not appeal to his public, who wanted another novel rather than a collection of stories. As the magazine's circulation began to decline seriously, Dickens was forced to work hard to save it from failure. Adapting an existing short story, Dickens wrote, as a weekly serial, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, which was then followed, in the same format, by *Barnaby Rudge*. Although Dickens always had an obsessive desire to write, this was even for

him a punishing schedule; sometimes he was writing episodes for both novels at the same time.

The spectre of his magazine's failure, so soon after it was launched, led Dickens to reconsider the very first novel he had attempted to write in 1836 – *Gabriel Varden, the Locksmith of London*. It had proved to be a problematic story for him to tell, and after the success of *Sketches by Boz* it became submerged in the rush of publishers to capitalise on this brilliant young writer. Dickens, always a shrewd businessman, played one off against another. By the time he had settled with the publishers Chapman and Hall in 1839, the novel, now retitled *Barnaby Rudge*, had been abandoned in favour of the development of *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

Barnaby Rudge, which had proved so difficult for Dickens to write in 1836, now became, in itself, an innovation for him. He knew that, since the great success of Sir Walter Scott in the genre of the historical novel, any subsequent aspiring novelist must have a success in this field to be taken seriously. Dickens only attempted

to write outside his own age twice, with *Barnaby Rudge* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. It was his reading of the historian Thomas Carlyle's dramatic retelling of the French Revolution that inspired Dickens to try his own hand at recreating the vivid scenes of violent revolt that took place in the notorious Gordon Riots in London in 1780. As a socially aware novelist, Dickens wanted to show his nineteenth-century readers how particular confrontational moments in history had helped to create the free-thinking era in which they now lived. It is no accident, therefore, that both his historical novels are based around revolutions. In *A Tale of Two Cities* it is an enlightened revolution, whereas in *Barnaby Rudge* the uprising is based on prejudice and bigotry.

The Gordon riots were induced by the MP Lord George Gordon in response to changes in the laws against Roman Catholics. Since the Reformation, Catholics had been restricted from holding public office, being MPs, voting, possessing land or worshipping openly. They were taxed heavily and denied education at the universities. In 1778 the

Catholic Relief Act was passed to alleviate some of their difficulties. It was only a small concession, but enough to fuel Protestant indignation amongst the public, exacerbated by Gordon's blatantly anti-Catholic speeches. Gordon is presented by Dickens as a weak man in the hands of an unscrupulous secretary, Gashford, who is fictitious. The rejection by Parliament of a petition containing 100,000 signatures was the flashpoint for the mob violence that followed. Dickens's fascination with the destructive mob let loose during the Gordon riots unbalances his novel, however, and the characters and narrative he develops in the first part of the book are swamped by the violence in its second half.

Dickens's method of recreating history is to offer a sequence of picturesque eighteenth-century scenes that would have graced the wall of any nineteenth-century parlour. It is not surprising that it is one of the most profusely illustrated of all Dickens's novels, the original serialisation containing no fewer than seventy-six images, mainly by Dickens's ingenious collaborator Phiz (Hablot K. Browne).

Dickens creates the image of the smoothly effete eighteenth-century gentleman, for instance, with his snuff-box and finely cut wine-glass in hand, his air of condescension thinly disguising his cruel nature (Sir John Chester); and by contrast the rustic picture of a country inn and its eccentric collection of bucolic locals who gather, tankards in hand, round the ever-present roaring fire, for a gossip or a gripe. Yet far from romanticising the past, Dickens wishes to show it as it appeared to his nineteenth-century eyes: a society secure, snug and smug on the surface, yet full of cruelty and injustice; an uncivilised time.

Dickens was writing a didactic novel in which he was intent on warning the public against the dangers of free speech when irresponsibly expressed, on stating the necessity for everyone to be on his guard against complacency. This applied particularly to the authorities who could allow religious bigotry to be expressed and, as it fed on ignorance, to grow into a movement resulting in senseless mob violence and a real threat to the security of the nation. Dickens always felt that

mankind was holding onto civilisation by its fingertips whilst the dark abyss of ignorance yawned beneath. The seemingly cosy and complacent scenes in the Maypole Inn are shown to breed petty tyranny in the landlord John Willet towards his son Joe; whilst the secure domestic environment of Gabriel Varden's house shelters Sim Tappertit the 'prentice, whose vanity leads him to create a secret society called the United Bull-dogs (a name with ominous pre-echoes of twentieth-century political organisations) that promotes anti-Catholic prejudice and plays an active part in the riots. Both the Maypole and Varden's house fall victim to the mob. Safety and security are delusions to Dickens.

Although the characterisations and humour in *Barnaby Rudge* (with the exception of the admirable Miss Miggs) are not as fully developed as in later novels, it is in his vivid descriptions of the mob violence that Dickens's imagination really takes flight. Here is to be found some of the most powerful writing he ever produced, describing how the mindless violence, once initiated, rapidly grows out of control. It sucks in the vicious criminal

element, the poor and the ignorant, whilst the authorities are shown to be lame and inadequate, responding finally with an equal degree of indiscriminate violence. Dickens takes the opportunity to attack the inhumanity of public executions still very much prevalent in the London of the 1840s.

Amongst the innocent victims of the mob is the novel's eponymous hero Barnaby, a simpleton, the 'holy fool' of romantic literature, who is the innocent butt of the unfeeling world about him. His pet raven, Grip, seems to have more of a 'grip' on worldly matters than his master, the bird's random quotations and demeanour making him seem at times grotesquely human. Dickens himself had a pet raven and was fascinated by its mimicry. Edgar Allan Poe had the same fascination; he reviewed the first publication of *Barnaby Rudge* in America, and was inspired by Grip to write, in 1845, one of his greatest poems: *The Raven*.

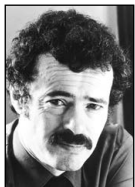
Dickens was a man rooted in the nineteenth century, and although his fascination for history took over in this novel to the detriment of the narrative, it

still had relevance to his own times. It was conceived in the 1830s, a time of political upheaval in England. In 1832, there had been a drastic reform of the political system, giving thousands more the right to vote and be active in politics. A political movement pushing for further and more radical reform, Chartism, was formed, and in some quarters the Chartists were seen as a threat to peace and security in much the same way as the Gordon mob of 1780. There had been minor skirmishes involving Chartists in Birmingham and Newport at the time Dickens was writing this novel, and these radical changes to the political structure of England gave a sharp immediacy to his work.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that *Barnaby Rudge* was a great success. The magazine's circulation fell, and with the publication of the final chapters Dickens announced the closure of *Master Humphrey's Clock*. The novel has never been one of Dickens's most popular, perhaps the uneasy balance of plot and historical fact accounting for this. It was a balance that Dickens later got right in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

Dickens remained undaunted by the novel's poor reception. He wrote with inimitable confidence: 'I was always sure I could make a good thing of *Barnaby*, and I think you'll find that it comes out strong to the last word'.

Notes by David Timson



Sean Barrett started acting as a boy on BBC children's television in the days before colour, when it went out live. He grew up through *Z Cars*, *Armchair Theatre*, *Minder* and *Father Ted*. His theatre credits include *Peter Pan* at the old Scala Theatre and Noël Coward's *Suite in 3 Keys* in the West End. Films include *War & Peace*, *Dunkirk* and *A Cry from the Streets*. He was a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company. He also features in *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, *The Voice of the Buddha* and *Canterbury Tales III* and read the part of Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot* for Naxos AudioBooks and the part of Nakata in *Kafka on the Shore*.

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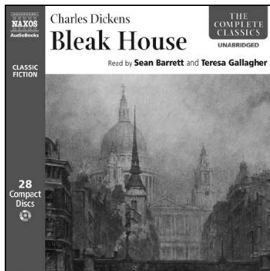
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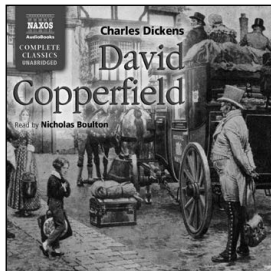
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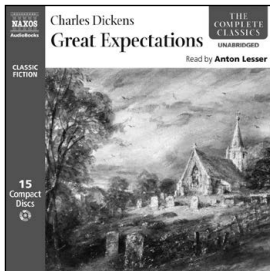
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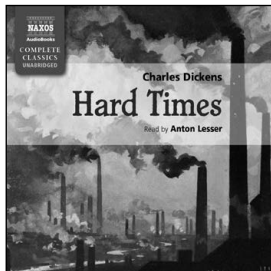
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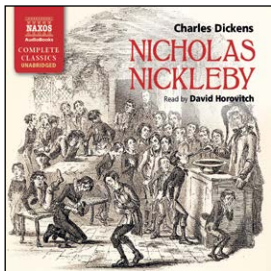
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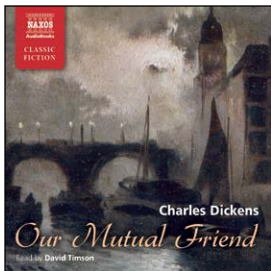
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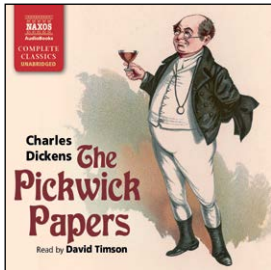
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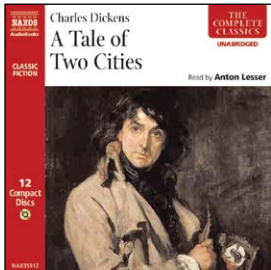
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