

COMMODITY AND IDENTITY IN *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

By Sean Grass

DURING PIP'S FIRST WEEK IN LONDON at the dawn of his expectations, Mr. Wemmick gives him advice that could serve neatly as an epigraph for *Great Expectations*: "It don't signify to you with your brilliant look-out," he tells Pip, "but as to myself, my guiding-star always is, 'Get hold of portable property'" (157; ch. 24). The remark comes as they stand in Jaggers's office and Wemmick, like the curator of a seedy menagerie, shows Pip the bizarre relics left behind by clients who have gone to the gallows: Wemmick's brooch and mourning-rings, the seals hanging from his watch-chain, and "the two odious casts with the twitchy leer upon them" that Wemmick apostrophizes throughout the scene (156; ch. 24). The items are, Wemmick says, "gifts" and "curiosities," not so much real treasures as synecdochic traces of the criminal subjects who left them behind – materializations of the self that have been made into commodities, and that grant identity a kind of involuntary afterlife, or perhaps seem even to take on furtive lives of their own (157; ch. 24). At one moment, the casts seem to Pip to make "a stupid apoplectic attempt to attend to the conversation"; at others, they appear to be "trying to get their eyelids open" or to play "a diabolical game at bo-peep" (218; ch. 36, 252; ch. 40, 290; ch. 48). Wemmick's advice to Pip may be unimpeachably practical, then, but it stands nevertheless as a symbolic revelation of the anxiety that structures the novel – as well as, I argue, much of the fiction that followed the autobiographical proliferations of the 1830s and 1840s – with the representational alchemy that takes identity, makes it into a material thing, and subjects it to dangerous rules of ownership, exchange, and power.

In his recent "*Portable Property*": *Victorian Culture on the Move* (2009), John Plotz uses Wemmick's expression to explore the Victorian obsession with "things," arguing that a big part of the reason that "Victorian novels made much of . . . objects, returned to them repeatedly, and interrogated their significance in a variety of puzzling ways, [is] because of the novel's own status as an exemplary portable property" (1). As he puts it, and as he demonstrates through several chapters of intelligent and persuasive analysis, "English novels from the 1830s onwards took on the project of making sense of resonant but potentially marketable objects" (1). Yet even this may not go quite far enough to explain a novel like *Great Expectations* (1861), the autobiographical form of which embodies textually the complex problem that Dickens uses the novel's content to explore. As *Great Expectations*

gradually reveals, by celebrating material accumulation Wemmick endorses what the rest of the novel does not. For a moment, Wemmick is another Jerry Cruncher, a precursor to Mr. Venus or Gaffer Hexam: avaricious, potentially violent, and concerned above all with anatomizing and economizing the Victorian subject. Written as Pip's autobiography but named for Magwitch's money, *Great Expectations* centers narratively, materially, and symbolically upon the porous boundary between identity and property in nineteenth-century England, and upon the consequences of making identity into a commodity for the market.

It goes almost without saying that *Great Expectations* is concerned with capitalism and the dynamics of wealth and class. As Clare Pettitt writes, the novel is largely about "the pathological effects of capitalist restlessness," a problem the novel registers in several ways. Pip's snobbery, his objectification by others, and his implicit investigation of what makes a gentleman belong to this critique; so, too, does the novel's engagement with the economic dimensions of fairy tale and romance, and its "monstrous parody" of the upward mobility plot, which reveals not only the moral decay caused by unearned wealth but also, through Magwitch, the fact that wealth is always "wrung from misery, hard labor, and injustice" (Pettitt 244; Campbell 158; Robbins 184).¹ Sue Zemka goes further, suggesting that the novel critiques the psychic structures that underlie Victorian commodity culture since these fetishize fascinating appearances and the "epiphanic moment" at the expense of the quieter necessities of human empathy and duration through time. She writes, "the novel encodes an awareness that its own narrated interests are poisoned by the frenetic involutions of time and desire in a capitalist society" (135). Indeed. To put it mildly, capitalist commerce and financial grasping come off badly in *Great Expectations*, as they had in Dickens since the early days of *A Christmas Carol* (1843) and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844). But *Great Expectations* does not exactly retell these earlier stories; rather, it strikes a new and peculiar chord, and perhaps for reasons that even Zemka does not quite express.

For what is particularly significant about *Great Expectations* is that Dickens indicts capitalism in a text that is itself an identity made into a commodity, a deeply interior and protracted self-narrative that he designed thoroughly and deliberately for the literary market. *Great Expectations* is, Peter Ackroyd writes, "a much more frankly autobiographical work than *David Copperfield*," for it is shaped more entirely by Dickens's pained remembrance and the silent rhythms of his ongoing private traumas (900). More to the point, unlike in *Copperfield* (1850), the traumas in the later novel cannot be undone: Biddy is not Agnes, and Pip cannot go home again, though apparently a new Pip can be made at the forge to replace the one that has been damaged beyond repair. Regret for a life misled is embedded deeply in *Great Expectations*, the novel's confessions welling up as if from a psychic wound and spilling out into autobiographical language. But if the novel was shaped partly by such psychological imperatives, it was shaped, too, by the economic requirements of Dickens the literary entrepreneur. When he began writing *Great Expectations* in 1860, Dickens was more beset by financial worries than he had been in years. He was maintaining separate residences for himself, his wife, and Ellen Ternan, setting up two unpromising sons in business, and shouldering the new responsibilities created by the death of his brother Alfred, who, Dickens wrote, "died worth nothing – and has left a widow and five children – you may suppose to whom" (*Letters* 9: 287). He was also watching the circulation of his weekly magazine *All the Year Round* fall. *Great Expectations* was forged in the crucible of psychological and financial need, which may explain why its linguistic and symbolic concerns with narrative self-creation overlap and elaborate the economic exigencies of its textual production. The

novel is, in other words, an expression of profound anxiety regarding both economic and literary practice, its first-person form implicated thoroughly in its thematics of commodity and subjectivity.

Unlike *Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* is not a portrait of the artist, or at least it is not a celebration of the artist's arrival to productivity, celebrity, and economic and emotional fullness. Instead, it is a deeply ambivalent account of self-production in which the dynamics of commodity and identity are tangled inextricably and, as a consequence, subject simultaneously to the novel's capitalist critique. *Great Expectations'* interest in Victorian capitalism, then, is only partly about class and privilege, and only partly about Pip's literal and psychic displacements within an emerging Victorian economy. Above all, what Pip reveals is that his story's instabilities are bound explicitly and symbolically to his story's status as a commodified text, on the one hand because his textualized identity cannot ever express all that his subjectivity is or contains, and on the other hand because making self-narration into a commodity exposes identity to power relations dictated by ownership and exchange. As the recurrences and repetitions of Pip's narrative imply, the dynamics of capital are – like Estella – part of the “innermost life of [his] life,” and inseparable from his efforts to express that life through language (182; ch. 29). However rich the novel's psychological content, *Great Expectations* must be read as both an imaginative and material text – as a text that is aware, even if Pip is not, of its status as a commodity. The novel is at once an instance of identity made into a commodity and a rendering of the psychological and even social dangers of that narrative labor. In this sense, *Great Expectations* is a seminal mid-century text: not because it is an archetypal Victorian *bildungsroman*, but rather because it is an archetypal articulation of anxiety regarding autobiography and the growing Victorian tendency to commodify the subject.

II

GREAT EXPECTATIONS' CONCERN WITH THE dynamics of identity and exchange appears most obviously in its presentation of the extravagant violence of the capitalist market. For the novel's thematic purposes, and for obvious historical ones, the center of this violence is London, which Pip sees for the first time after learning of his expectations. Pip's initial response to London is to be “scared by the immensity,” and nearly the first things he sees upon reaching Jaggers's office are the “two dreadful casts” that haunt him elsewhere in the novel (130; ch. 20). Situated in Little Britain, Jaggers's office is an appropriately diminutive version of the nation, predicated economically upon a tainting contact with the business of the lower class and a grotesque tendency (as Mike's doubtful “witness” and the casts suggest) to produce and reproduce versions of the self. Made uneasy by Little Britain, Pip strolls unknowingly to the more terrible environs of Smithfield market, of which he writes, “the shameful place, being all asmeared with filth and fat and blood and foam, seemed to stick to me. So I rubbed it off with all possible speed by turning into a street where I saw the great black dome of St. Paul's bulging at me from behind a grim stone building which a bystander said was Newgate Prison” (131; ch. 20). Out of the frying pan into the fire, from the slaughterhouse to the gallows: while Pip complains later that Newgate seems to stick to him when he visits it just before meeting Estella, he is tainted by the marketplace long before. With its neighbors Little Britain and Newgate, Smithfield serves not only as a microcosm of London's interest in property, commerce, and the law but also as a gross

compression of the violent images that haunt Pip's narrative – of broken bodies, devoured selves, criminal subjects, and particularly grisly kinds of consumption. As Edgar Rosenberg points out in his notes to the Norton edition of the novel, the casts are particularly noteworthy in this regard, since they are likely based upon the casts Dickens saw at Newgate in 1831, of the murderers and body-snatchers Bishop and Williams, who sold the corpses of their victims for anatomical study (130). Pip's first impressions of London thus link the market to the anatomization of the body, the materialization of identity, and the implicit violence of economic exchange.

Writing retrospectively, Pip suggests that his arrival to London marked his disturbing entry into the market's horrors. But many of the novel's most disturbing images of production and exchange predate Pip's expectations, hinting that the problems of capitalism and commodity are implicated much more thoroughly in his sense of his complex psychological origins. The primal scene of his childhood – his encounter with Magwitch on the marshes – makes his first efforts at self-narration roughly simultaneous with his entry into commercial relations. He names himself, as Magwitch demands, even as he emerges into illicit relations with property by agreeing to steal victuals and a file from the forge. More, the sites of exchange that the adult Pip recalls are the very places of his childhood terror and alienation. At Uncle Pumblechook's on the eve of his first visit to Satis House, Pip spies into the drawers in the shop and wonders – aptly, as a “pip” or seed himself – “whether the flower-seeds and bulbs ever wanted of a fine day to break out of those jails, and bloom” (47; ch. 8). He also wonders at the nature of the business that Pumblechook and the other shop-owners transact since their activity seems confined to staring about, and Pumblechook gets so mixed up with his seeds in Pip's mind that they become indistinguishable from his corduroys. In these displacements, Pip suggests that it is in the nature of the commodity to mystify or even collapse the boundary between self and thing. At Satis House, this collapse becomes the stuff of Gothic nightmare, the ruined brewery comprising a shadowy world of decay and madness complete with a terrifying figure of “wax-work and skeleton” – a being who exists in the liminal space between spectacular commodity and fully-fledged subjectivity (50; ch. 8).

Aaron Landau argues that Satis House functions within the mystifying language that Marx associates with the commodity, for “there is something in the very reality of the house which . . . baffles realistic description, since it somehow lies fundamentally beyond the pale of ordinary materiality” (162). Like Marx's table in *Capital*, the house appears as “a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties” and defying the possibility of stable discourse (163). Alternately, Susan Walsh suggests that Satis House's decay is parabolic, a result of Miss Havisham's refusal to operate the brewery, “sponsor her male relatives,” or otherwise permit capital to circulate “within the proper [masculine] channels of investment and trade” (91). But as Pip gradually reveals through his narrative, Satis House remains central as a site of exchange, its physical dilapidation marking the perversion, not the abdication, of its commercial role. Early in her isolation, Miss Havisham acquires Estella, and she eventually establishes some proprietorship in Pip; the brewery decays, that is, as Miss Havisham begins to traffic in children instead of beer. In other ways, too, Satis House remains a vital commercial site, for it is the source of capital for Pip's final investment in Herbert Pocket and an economic nexus for the more grasping members of the Pocket clan. On her birthday Miss Havisham characterizes the transparent fawning of her relations as a precursor to the grossest kind of consumption, rapping the table with her stick and saying,

“Now you all know where to take your stations when you come to feast upon me” (72; ch. 11). Satis House terrifies, then, not because its commercial function has ceased but because it collapses explicitly the boundary between people and things, binding both to a monstrous cycle of commodification and exchange.

The forge, too, binds Pip uncomfortably to the dictates of the market, principally because he and Joe live under the tyranny of a heartless domestic economy. Mrs. Joe butters their bread like a surgeon “making a plaster” and hands it over stuck through with needles and pins, wounding remnants of her women’s work (14; ch. 2). As the adult Pip recalls, his childish terror at stealing victuals for Magwitch stems partly from knowing “Mrs. Joe’s housekeeping to be of the strictest kind,” and he returns from the marshes on Christmas morning to find her “vigorously reaping the floors of her establishment” (15; ch. 2, 23; ch. 4). She also forces Pip into precocious commercial relations, impressing upon him the debt he owes for her having “brought [him] up by hand” and for his having “insisted on being born, in opposition to the dictates of reason, religion, and morality” (14; ch. 2, 24; ch. 4). As recompense, Mrs. Joe turns Pip into a kind of laboring factotum, making him “odd-boy about the forge” and renting him out for other jobs:

... if any neighbour happened to want an extra boy to frighten birds, or pick up stones, or do any such job, I was favoured with the employment. In order, however, that our superior position might not be compromised thereby, a money-box was kept on the kitchen mantel-shelf, into which it was publicly made known that all my earnings were dropped. I have an impression that they were to be contributed eventually to the liquidation of the National Debt, but I know I had no hope of any personal participation in the treasure. (38; ch. 7)

Pip’s relationship to home is decidedly economic, and his “impression” regarding his infant relation to the National Debt suggests that even Mrs. Joe’s home economics belong to a much broader array of bewildering financial concerns. Pip also reminds us that the forge is at once domestic and commercial space, since the Christmas dinner – already a far cry from a Pickwickian yule – is interrupted by the demand that Joe conduct his trade, leaving Christmas to unfold around the furnace rather than the hearth. As we learn later, too, Orlick once tells young Pip “that the Devil lived in a black corner of the forge, and . . . that it was necessary to make up the fire once in every seven years, with a live boy” (91; ch. 15). The tale offers another image of Gothic horror and bodily consumption and reminds us that the forge – like Satis House – is pervaded by the ugly, vaguely supernatural imperatives of the market.

Perhaps this explains why Pip, even in childhood, appears to himself in retrospect as an objectified and commodified self. Beginning in chapter three, Pip is “my boy” and “my dear boy” to Magwitch, and he comes eventually to embody Magwitch’s desire to own a gentleman (21; ch. 3). Likewise, Pumblechook calls Pip “Sixpennorth of halfpence” and “a four-footed Squeaker,” metaphors that foreshadow Pip’s eventual visit to Smithfield market (25; ch. 4, 27; ch. 4). Indeed, and especially when money is to be got by it, Pip circulates through the novel very much like a commodity: rented to the neighbors and to Miss Havisham, given back to Joe with a “premium,” bound apprentice for a fee, and sold finally to Magwitch through Jaggers, though Joe steadfastly refuses the money (82; ch. 13). As he prepares to leave London to claim his expectations, Pip reaffirms his status as property, remarking that he is “measured and calculated” for his new clothes “as if [he] were an estate

and [Trabb] the finest species of surveyor" (119; ch. 19). As if in consequence, blurring the distinction between subject and commodity becomes one of Pip's dominant narrative modes, even when he accounts for others. Pip begins calling Magwitch "my convict" almost as soon as Magwitch begins calling him "my boy," and he writes persistently as if Miss Havisham has some proprietorship in Estella (32; ch. 5). As Gail Turley Houston remarks – and as Pip implies – Miss Havisham makes Estella entirely "a thing to be bartered in the marriage market," so much so that Estella seems to exist as pure commodity, without volition, her behavior determined entirely by those who traffic in her ("Pip" 15). As Estella tells Pip when she comes to London, "We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions. We are not free to follow our own devices" (202; ch. 33). Late in the novel, in his delirious dream the adult Pip "confound[s] impossible existences with [his] own identity," at one time believing himself "a brick in the house-wall" and at another "a steel beam of a vast engine, clashing and whirling over a gulf" (343; ch. 57). Such nightmares of capitalist production and transformation suggest the extent to which Pip's childhood and young manhood have made him an object rather than a subject, his life a debilitating exercise in Pumblechook's running sums until he becomes another Bill Barley: emptied out, and "totally unequal to the consideration of any subject more psychological than . . . Purser's stores" (281; ch. 46).

At the center of these images is the alienating power of capitalism, which forces the self to become productive and transforms it, often violently, into an object of exchange. As Pettitt writes, Pip's dreams mimic a "violent effect of market capitalism" by revealing "the transgression of boundaries between people and things" and trapping his identity in the concrete and steel of the new industrial age (245). In another way, by reinscribing the subject constantly as a thing that might be absorbed or consumed by the requirements of capital, the novel makes cannibalism one of its most pervasive concerns.² The dread of being eaten is one of Pip's earliest fears, first when Magwitch threatens to eat his "fat cheeks" and again when he terrifies Pip with the story of "the young man" with the knack for "getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver" (10–11; ch. 1). Though Pip is certainly *not* eaten at the start of the novel, the early chapters do center upon meals and physical consumption: Pip bolting his food, Magwitch gobbling his victuals, and the Christmas dinner at which Pumblechook calls Pip a "Squeaker" – an analogy all the more forceful for the awful threats of the first chapter, and for its reinvigoration later in the novel when Joe first visits Pip in London. Commenting on Pip's unsavory surroundings at Barnard's Inn, Joe says, "I wouldn't keep a pig in it myself – not in the case that I wished him to fatten wholesome and . . . with a meller flavour" (171; ch. 27). The idea recurs one final time when Pip visits Walworth and finds that he has just toasted his old acquaintance, Wemmick's pig, in making breakfast for the Aged P. Likewise, at the lime kiln Orlick eyes Pip as if his mouth "watered for [him]," and Miss Havisham kisses Estella "with a ravenous intensity" and looks at her "as though she were devouring the beautiful creature she had reared" (316; ch. 53, 184; ch. 29, 228; ch. 38). Like Miss Havisham's prediction that the Pockets will come to feast upon her, these moments become an unmistakable and violent refrain linking the novel's capitalism to the blood and foam of Smithfield market.

Despite the images of bodily consumption, though, this violent refrain also hints at a more complex disintegration, both physical and psychological, and for the consumer as well as the consumed. Much has been made of Dickens's persistent imaginative concern with cannibalism during the late 1850s, a preoccupation that stemmed largely from his interest in Sir John Franklin's arctic expedition, lost in 1845 while looking for a Northwest Passage.

Separate discoveries in 1854 and 1859 raised the uncomfortable specter that, as a last resort, Franklin's starving crew had turned cannibal, a charge that Dickens refuted vigorously in his journalism and, more obliquely, in his 1857 Christmas book *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*.³ As James Marlow points out, Dickens's genuine, nearly hysterical distress over the issue owed largely to the offensive moral proposition that Franklin could have been "brought to the level of the lowest savage in a vain struggle for survival," for if this were the case, "the assumed differences between the West and the 'uncivilized world' would be false . . . identity would disintegrate, and with a sense of identity would go the very meaning of life as the West had attempted to predicate it" (652–53). In other words, *Great Expectations'* images of cannibalism are not just a requiem for the consumed and disposable bodies of the new industrial working class; rather, they are rooted deeply in the dynamics of identity and self-creation that are at the center of the novel's structural and symbolic plan, and that were at the center of Victorian imperialism and nationalist discourse. They are rooted, too, in the generic form of *Great Expectations*, cannibalism serving finally as the terrifying figure of the novel's own production and consumption of the subject, at once a cultural precondition for and potential consequence of Pip's attempt to write autobiography.

We cannot wonder, then, that so many characters in the novel respond neurotically or even pathologically to their involvement in capitalist exchange. For Miss Havisham, who was made into a commodity unwittingly in the marriage market, the response is to turn consumer, trafficking in children and eschewing the more legitimate forms her capitalist activities might take. As Pip points out, her conduct coincides with or perhaps even produces mental illness, for "her mind, brooding solitary, had grown diseased" (297; ch. 49). Meanwhile, Jaggers's response to the affairs of Little Britain is the obsessive hand-washing that belies his inescapable sense of taint. No character, though, suggests more in this regard than Wemmick, who lives divided deliberately between his compassionate moral self and the commercial self that must participate in the market. Pip characterizes this split by writing that there seem to be "twin Wemmicks," one of them "drier and harder" and the other full of Walworth sentiments – the epitome, according to Walsh, of the "*cordon sanitaire* Victorians drew around 'Walworth sentiments' to protect them from 'Little Britain'" (Dickens, *Great Expectations* 290; ch. 48, 163; ch. 25; Walsh 96). But as the end of the novel shows when Pip exposes Wemmick's home life to Jaggers, divisions like these inevitably break down, Walworth serving more as a castle in the air than a fortification secured from commercial relations. This much is clear even when Pip visits Walworth and Wemmick shows him

. . . his collection of curiosities. They were mostly of a felonious character; comprising the pen with which a celebrated forgery had been committed, a distinguished razor or two, some locks of hair, and several manuscript confessions written under condemnation . . . every one of 'em Lies, sir. (162; ch. 25)

Despite Wemmick's defenses, then, he has already brought Little Britain into Walworth – has already, in his zeal for capital accumulation, broken down the boundary between domestic and commercial space. The scene reinforces the grim reality that even the most guarded subject, however presumably sacrosanct in its privacy and inviolability, may be pervaded and undermined by the dynamics of exchange. More important, perhaps, Wemmick's collection of "Lies" underscores the novel's fundamental concern with identity, its textualization, and the consequences of its transformation into "portable property."

III

THIS CONCERN WITH THE IMPLICATIONS of making identity into a commodity is embedded deeply in *Great Expectations*, not only as part of the novel's thematic and symbolic operation but also in its imaginative origins and the conditions of its material production. However elaborately wrought as an artistic and psychological text, *Great Expectations* is the work of an author who wished to sell books and who did sell books, consistently and in unprecedented numbers through the middle decades of the nineteenth century. We cannot know whether Dickens wrote his novel specifically to capitalize on the mid-century popularity of autobiography, but we do know that, whatever artistic and psychological imperatives also drove him, Dickens planned *Great Expectations* carefully and thoroughly for the literary market. Lore has it that Dickens's ruminations on the novel began during the summer of 1860, around the time that he wrote to the Earl of Carlisle, "I am prowling about, meditating a new book" (*Letters* 9: 284). In fact, though, as Margaret Cardwell points out in her introduction to the Clarendon edition of the novel, Dickens's short fiction and journalism bear traces of *Great Expectations* as early as 1857, before he even began *A Tale of Two Cities* (xiii-xv). Still, Dickens began writing the novel later, in September 1860, and he did so with the plan of publishing it in twenty monthly parts. Not since the June 1857 finale of *Little Dorrit* had Dickens appeared in his usual monthly numbers, for he had published *A Tale of Two Cities* weekly in *All the Year Round* to give the new magazine a proper sendoff. By 1860 he was ready for a triumphant return to his old audience, but with a crucial difference: for the first time, with *Great Expectations*, he planned to follow serialization with an issue of the novel in three volumes at the standard triple-decker price of 31s. 6d.

"Planned" is the key word, for earlier works by Dickens had, at various times, been issued in three volumes after serial publication. In November 1836 he had signed an agreement with the publisher Richard Bentley to edit *Bentley's Miscellany* and also provide two novels, each in three volumes. But during the three tumultuous years that followed, Dickens wrenched repeated concessions from Bentley, including that *Oliver Twist*, which he had begun writing months earlier as a separately-remunerated serial for the *Miscellany*, might be used as the first of those three-volume novels. This kind of uncertainty about format characterized much of Dickens's early career, as he oscillated – sometimes wildly – between twenty-number novels like *The Pickwick Papers* and *Nicholas Nickleby*, the magazine serial-turned-triple-decker *Oliver Twist*, and the discontinuous weekly periodical *Master Humphrey's Clock*, the miscellaneous contents of which (including both *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*) were collected into three volumes by Chapman and Hall in 1841. But none of these was conceived from the first as a triple-decker nor structured, in theme or plot, explicitly to suit the format. *Great Expectations* was planned this way, and so thoroughly that its three volumes appear nearly as the acts in a play, the novel divided into an uncanny symmetry that corresponds simultaneously to the "stages" of Pip's expectations and to the formatting needs of Chapman and Hall. During the 1840s and 1850s, Dickens had settled generally into a pattern of writing novels in twenty monthly numbers and collecting them in two modestly priced volumes, eschewing the upscale circulating libraries' market for triple-deckers in favor of cheaper formats that depended upon wide sales. As Robert Patten points out, therefore, Dickens's decision to plan *Great Expectations* from the beginning for three volumes at 31s. 6d. was "not a format predictable from anything which had gone before in Dickens's life. No other work of his had been issued in that form at that price" (291). By publishing initially

in twenty numbers instead of in *All the Year Round*, Dickens stood to gain financially, for a publisher would certainly pay more for the right to his work than he could really pay himself as an author for his own weekly. But the decision to issue *Great Expectations* as a triple-decker was particularly calculated, a deliberate attempt to draw readers from a socioeconomic group he had rarely approached with his experiments in inexpensive formats. Publishing this way would bring his work more readily to the circulating libraries and to those readers with the greatest ability to pay.

Dickens's shrewd business decision about the format of his new novel was, he at least believed, motivated by something like genuine financial need. By 1860 he could afford to live in relative splendor and had long been beyond any danger of following in the footsteps of his insolvent father. Yet in many ways he never outgrew his wrenching childhood experiences at the Marshalsea or labeling bottles at Warren's Blacking, nor could he keep the traces of this misery from pages of his fiction. Indeed, Dickens had during the 1850s come to recognize a kind of permanence in his long sadness, and in the years after 1858, when he ended his unhappy marriage, he felt it return with greater force. As he told Forster in 1862, "The never-to-be-forgotten misery of that old time bred a certain shrinking sensitiveness in a certain ill-clad, ill-fed child, that I have found come back in the never-to-be-forgotten misery of this later time" (*Letters* 10: 98). Even in the last year of his life, during Christmas at Gad's Hill in 1869, Dickens baffled his children while playing a memory game, reciting a long chain of words when his turn came and then adding "Warren's Blacking, 30, Strand" to the end (Henry Dickens 24). His son Henry recalled that he could attach no meaning to the words then, but that their significance became crystal clear when Forster published his biography of Dickens in 1872–1874. Though Dickens had made extraordinary sums of money by the time he wrote *Great Expectations*, then, he never ceased to be the anxious and unhappy child: too aware of poverty, too fearful of his secret vulgarity, too worried about the possibility of some irremediable slide into economic and social degradation. He had the extensive economic obligations of a man with a large family and a dispiriting number of financial dependents, and he earned enough to support them all, live comfortably, entertain lavishly, and still leave a legacy of £90,000. Yet he could never rest from his lucrative work – could never retire, like Pip, quietly into the East, content to have "a good name" and to work hard and so to do "very well" (355). By 1860 Dickens did not exactly need money. But he *needed* it with a desperate longing that no amount of having it could quell.

And, in this sense, he needed it more than usual when he began planning *Great Expectations*. He and Catherine separated in June 1858, and by year's end he was supporting separate domiciles for Catherine and Ellen Ternan as well as the old family residence at Tavistock House and the new one at Gad's Hill Place.⁴ The sale of Tavistock House in August 1860 helped, but by then Dickens's financial worries had already compounded. Three weeks earlier Alfred had died, leaving his young widow and children, and Dickens was increasingly concerned about the prospects for his sons, the eldest of whom, Charley, had already required a costly setting-up with Baring Brothers. Dickens had purchased a military commission for Walter, his second son, and two other sons were nearing their majority. Rosenberg and Cardwell both contend in introducing the novel that Dickens's worries for Charley are written into the novel in Herbert, who appears in the manuscript, Cardwell writes, "not as an Insurer of Ships, but as a budding merchant, who will trade, not merely for sugar, tobacco, and rum, to the West Indies . . . but to China for teas" (xxvii). Such matters were certainly in Dickens's mind as he wrote, for in a letter to Charles Lever in January

1861 he commiserated the trouble Lever was having with his own son, writing, “It is a tremendous weight and anxiety to be in our proud and venerable condition. Let me offer you one consolation out of the fulness of my heart – and quiver. You have not seven of them; I have!” (9: 376). Beyond even these concerns, Dickens’s angry break with Bradbury and Evans in 1858 – another consequence of his ruined marriage – had caused him to abandon *Household Words* and create *All the Year Round*, which he owned three-quarters share in and had advanced the money to create. Dickens had always written for money: he was a consummate professional who rarely missed a deadline and knew to a nicety the market value of his work. When he began *Great Expectations*, though, his financial needs were specific, and in some ways more pressing than they had been since *The Pickwick Papers* a quarter-century before.

Dickens met these needs by making himself into “portable property,” and not only by writing autobiographically in *Great Expectations*. He was, on the contrary, fully and consciously engaged in the textual and economic processes through which identity might become a commodity in Victorian England, and in some senses he created many of these processes himself. The late 1850s marked the start of his remarkable second career as a public reader of his fiction, a course that eventually earned him tens of thousands of pounds. In a letter to John Forster in September 1857, Dickens suggested that he might pay for his recent purchase of Gad’s Hill “by reviving that old idea of Readings from [his] books” (8: 435). Forster tried to dissuade him, as on past occasions, by urging that a respectable author should not conduct himself like a traveling show.⁵ But a year later, as news of his marriage scandal broke, Dickens commenced his first series of readings. He performed in London and toured the provinces, Ireland, and Scotland, and everywhere he packed houses, earning an average of £200 per show, and, during summer 1858, reading 88 times “in a little more than ninety days” (Kaplan 412, 406). As his private life disintegrated, his public identity congealed in a bizarre oscillation between self-creation and self-erasure: he willfully, even eagerly *became* his texts for his audience, performing his most beloved characters before the eyes of hundreds, occasionally thousands. He was Scrooge, he was Mrs. Gamp, he was alternately and simultaneously Nicholas Nickleby and Wackford Squeers, and around the margins of these characters he was Dickens himself, or at least Dickens as he wished his audiences to know him. In short, he was at once the inventor and embodiment of his writing, the subject and object of his imaginative work. Even if only unconsciously, Dickens used his public readings to press to its logical culmination the author-as-text formulation implied by literary copyright. He also capitalized spectacularly on the arrangement.

Consequently, though he never quite asked his children to take sides in his domestic strife, after the separation he “impressed upon [them] that ‘their father’s name was their best possession’ – which they knew to be true – and [that] he expected them to act accordingly” (Storey 95). He had traded on that name in undertaking the public readings and again in creating *All the Year Round*. He also did so often to boost the magazine’s circulation, writing essays in the guise of an “Uncommercial Traveller” when not supplying the magazine with its lead serial – a maneuver that was, from first to last, anything but uncommercial in its intentions.⁶ Surely this is why Dickens was so incensed, at the height of his domestic trouble, by being made the subject of gossip and scandal. Having nearly reached a separation agreement with Catherine in May 1858, he fumed when he learned that her mother and sister “were circulating the story that Ellen Ternan was his mistress” (Johnson 920). For weeks the settlement languished while Dickens insisted on a written retraction; he got it, but only after

convincing himself of the need to publish his infamous “Personal” statement in *Household Words*.⁷ Though virtually no one beyond the London *literati* had any notion of Dickens’s marital woes, he “for the first time in [his] life” stepped (unadvisedly) into his journal in his private character to set matters right, alluding vaguely to “domestic trouble” and complaining that, “[b]y some means, arising out of wickedness, or out of folly, or out of inconceivable wild chance, or out of all three, this trouble has been made the occasion of misrepresentations, most grossly false, most monstrous, and most cruel” (“Personal” 489–90). Such an irruption indicates how unreasonable he had become, how closely his nerves had been touched. The broken friendships of these years – with Mark Lemon, William Thackeray, and Bradbury and Evans, among others – stemmed all from Dickens’s overwrought sense that old allies had connived at broadcasting the scandal, or at least failed to help him silence it.⁸ More to the point, Dickens understood that the damage done by such connivances and failures was not just emotional but also material, a blow to his legacy in more senses than one.

These details suggest that for Dickens, by 1860, the author-as-text model of literary production had become virtually reflexive, an automatic mode of literary entrepreneurship that passed seamlessly (and shamelessly) from producing texts to producing the self, and that understood both text and self as commodities pervaded by and designed for the market. In 1861, in fact, Dickens’s easy willingness to embrace this model caused a mild quarrel with another old friend, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, just as *Great Expectations* neared the end of its serial run. Bulwer’s *A Strange Story* was to follow Dickens’s novel in *All the Year Round*, but he demurred at being named in the initial advertisements. Henceforth, he wished to appear only as “the author of *My Novel* and *Rienzi*” (*Letters* 9: 423).⁹ Attempting at once to smooth matters and keep future notices on the same footing, Dickens wrote gently to Bulwer, “It is so very important to us to avoid any indirect way in such a matter, and to have a name – THE name. I never, for my part, contemplated any other form of announcement” (*Letters* 9: 423). This was, for Dickens, a basic part of his literary calculus: to sell Bulwer just as he sold himself, by name, as an identity embedded inextricably in the text he produced. But there is a sense, too, in which Dickens – even as he elided the boundary between himself and his literary works – used his fiction to reify and even broaden the gap between the subject and its textualization, as if at once to expose and critique the Victorian subject’s alienation from modes of linguistic, and explicitly textual, production. It is an alienation that Dickens’s work identifies generally as an effect of capitalism and specifically as a condition of the Victorian literary market.

As Dickens reminded his children and his wife’s relations, capitalizing on his name meant hiding his sexual misconduct and ensuring – as in his “Personal” statement and his mother-in-law’s retraction – that textual accounts of his affair attest only to its nonexistence. The details of Dickens’s sordid private life had to remain hidden: the story of identity must be the story of an absence. For the sake of its market value, identity must literally be papered over, constructed and formalized by making it into a public textual record that might serve popularly and legally to confirm a certain narratable version of Dickens the author. Such a textualization of the subject belongs, of course, to the Victorian impulse to separate public from private, and to Dickens’s impulse to affirm in public his status as a private citizen of high morals and noble sentiments. He wanted, in short, to use a public narrative act to cement his reputation as the eminently respectable champion of the hearth. But the effect of such narrative maneuvering was to impose and inscribe a kind of purposeful functional failure on the narrative of identity – to subject the subject, we might say, to a

narrative disfigurement wholly indispensable to the narrative's ability to meet commercial needs. In this sense, Dickens's profound entanglement in the author-as-text dynamic serves as an allegory of mid-century authorship: in the Victorian literary market – and perhaps the modern and post-modern ones, too – textual self-creation is also self-loss, since the tangible product of self-creation is a commodity shaped by the fetishism of capitalist demands. On the eve of writing *Great Expectations*, Dickens enacted this drama of self-creation and self-loss at an explicitly textual level, making a great bonfire and burning “in the field at Gad's Hill, the accumulated letters and papers of twenty years” (*Letters* 9: 304). The act is nicely symbolic, a fit example of the psycholiterary economy that makes self-creation and self-loss into simultaneous events. Even as Dickens embarked upon his most intensely personal act of self-narration, he demonstrated his attunement to the limitations and dangers of such textual records, and to the potential consequences of exposing the textualized subject to the rules of ownership and exchange.

This did not keep Dickens from shaping *Great Expectations* to meet financial needs even more entirely than he had initially planned. Though Dickens had wanted to publish the novel in twenty numbers, by autumn 1860 he was reconsidering. In *All the Year Round*, Charles Lever's *A Day's Ride* was failing so badly that Dickens called “a council of war at the office” on October 2 to address the magazine's falling sales.¹⁰ Two days later he wrote to Forster:

It was perfectly clear that the one thing to be done was, for me to strike in. I have therefore decided to begin the story as of the length of the *Tale of Two Cities* on the first of December – begin publishing, that is. I must make the most I can out of the book. . . . The name is GREAT EXPECTATIONS. (*Letters* 9: 319–20)

“Striking in” meant scuttling his plan for monthly numbers, but it was a sacrifice, he admitted, “really and truly made for myself. The property of *All the Year Round* is far too valuable in every way to be much endangered” (*Letters* 9: 320). Pip thus became the commodity within the commodity, designed like the novel for commercial success and sacrificed – in the contours of his textual and linguistic production – to the exigencies of the market. Though Dickens's letter implies that his decision was made by the “council,” he likely arrived having already decided his course and had summoned the magazine's staff to inform, not consult. By October 6 he had already agreed to a contract with Harper & Bros. “for early proofs of the story to America” where it would appear in *Harper's Weekly* simultaneously with its appearance in England (*Letters* 9: 320). Dickens had moved rapidly – perhaps preemptively – to arrange the contract, and he sealed it even before he wrote to Lever to break the news that *Great Expectations* would supplant *A Day's Ride* as the magazine's lead serial. In the end, there is a suggestive synchronicity to Dickens's artistic and financial work. Even as he imagined Pip's childish labor and contributions to the alleviation of “the National Debt,” he pressed Pip literally into a different kind of economic service as the means of saving *All the Year Round*.

By any measure and despite the change of plans, *Great Expectations* was a resounding commercial success. It arrested and then reversed the slide of *All the Year Round* and earned another £1,000 for the early proofs to *Harper's*; in the ten weeks after its serial run concluded, it also passed through four three-volume printings and sold nearly 3,500 copies, mostly to the circulating libraries that Dickens had wanted to reach (Patten 290–92). In letters to friends Dickens crowed about his triumph, first as the novel appeared serially and

was “universally liked” and subsequently when it sold so briskly as a triple-decker that what Dickens called “a compound of bungling on the part of the publisher and printer . . . caused it to be out of print for a fortnight!” (*Letters* 9: 354, 444). The novel’s serialization had made no difference to Dickens’s plan to make it a triple-decker, nor apparently to its popularity or profitability. Nevertheless, the economic exigencies surrounding the writing and publication of *Great Expectations* left indelible marks. At minimum, the change to weekly rather than monthly serialization produced much of the artistic compression that critics often celebrate in the novel. More important, the novel’s consistent concern with commodity and exchange seems to owe as much to its author’s subconscious impulses as to his deliberate narrative art. Within a week of deciding that *Great Expectations* would be the means of steadying *All the Year Round*, Dickens wrote to Forster that the new novel would “be written in the first person throughout” (9: 325). Unlike *Copperfield*, though, the new novel’s title suggested what it was really about – the money – an implication reinscribed at the end of each of the novel’s three parts, which all close with the remark that we have reached the end of a “Stage of Pip’s Expectations.” Like Mrs. Joe after she is attacked, Dickens elides the difference between “Pip” and “property”; he confounds the narrative of identity with the narrative of commodity. Though Elliot Gilbert claims that “[w]e can pretty well dismiss the notion that Dickens acted out of crass commercialism” in revising the end of the novel, it is not even certain, really, whether the novel’s titular expectations are Dickens’s or Pip’s (109). *Great Expectations* is pervaded thoroughly by the historical and imaginative dimensions of its status as a literary commodity. So while Dickens may have crafted the novel as his most complete account of an identity in the process of self-creation, he did so with a particular eye to making it pay.

Writing of Dickens’s 1848 Christmas book *The Haunted Man*, Rosemarie Bodenheimer suggests that the story is about the “cost” of autobiographical disclosure. It might be read, she contends, “as an allegory of autobiographical anxiety: what uncontrollable damage might result from ‘giving away’ ineradicable memories? What would happen to Dickens’s relationship with his audiences if he revealed his class-tainted past and his personal anger and shame?” (221). Her conjecture is the more persuasive because *The Haunted Man* was written roughly contemporaneously with Dickens’s autobiographical fragment, just before he began *Copperfield*. A decade later, as we know from his “Personal” statement, he was struggling anew with private shame and flirting again with potentially destructive narrative disclosures. But the value of Bodenheimer’s reading is in its principle more than its particulars, since it helps us to envision Dickens’s autobiographical impulse in commercial and psychological terms – to understand the inseparability of these imperatives, and to read *Great Expectations* as a vehicle for at once meeting intensely private and explicitly material needs. If, as Houston contends, *Great Expectations* is “far more conscious” than *Copperfield* of “how economics infiltrate the construction of the self,” it may be because an older Dickens understood much better how intractable his economic anxiety would always remain, and how fully his identity – all identities – are pervaded by class consciousness, economic longing, and the ideological demands of the market (“Pip” 16). More, perhaps because of his struggles through autobiography, he understood this problem as both psychic and discursive, both symbolic and eminently material and textual. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens records this nexus of psychological and economic need in Pip, an identity rendered into – and that renders itself as – “portable property” and working anxiously through the consequences of textualizing and commodifying the Victorian subject.

IV

THIS WORK BEGINS IN THE FIRST CHAPTER as Pip records his emergence into psychological and linguistic awareness – his “first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things” – which he structures narratively as a kind of recursive double text (9; ch. 1). Partly the adult Pip’s attempt to use language to account for his origins, the first chapter is also a rendering of the child Pip’s attempt to find his origins within language, or, to be precise, within the physical contours of texts. Standing in the churchyard studying the tombstones of his parents, Pip “unreasonably” derives what they were like from “[t]he shape of the letters” and “turn of the inscription”; consequently, he has “an odd idea that [his father] was a square, stout, dark man with curly black hair” and that his “mother was freckled and sickly” (9; ch. 1). On the one hand, the graven letters are the simplest and most irreducible articulation of identity, the final record of a self that exists now only as and through language. On the other hand, for Pip these letters are sites of profound imagining and interpretation, their representational limitations a function of their materiality. Peter Brooks writes that Pip attempts here “to motivate the arbitrary sign, to interpret signs as if they were mimetic and thus naturally tied to the object for which they stand,” and he calls this act “a metaphorical process unaware of itself, the making of a fiction unaware of its status as fiction making” (130–31). This may be true of the child Pip, but the narrator’s mature recognition that such interpretation is “unreasonable” suggests that the narrative is very aware of – and wishes to record explicitly – the representational limits of its material form, or what Martine Hennard Dutheil calls “the problematic nature of language” and “the difficulties of the interpretive act” (166). Pip’s account of his childish ruminations on the tombstones underscores that while the material record of identity may appear final or irreducible, it can never suffice, for it can never say all that it would or should about the contents of the self.

Perhaps this explains why, from the novel’s start, Pip’s narrative has always a peculiar unsaid quality. The dramatic action of the novel’s first “stage” centers, in fact, upon the information that Pip must withhold regarding his encounter with Magwitch, his theft of victuals and a file from the forge, the real state of things at Satis House, and his growing misery regarding Estella and consequent yearning to be a gentleman. But even as an adult narrator looking back on his childhood, Pip makes a crucial omission: that the name on the tombstone in the churchyard is his own, and that the stone therefore contains the potential narrative of his own identity, a declaration of death that threatens from the start to preempt or foreclose his self-narrative work. In this sense, what Brooks calls the “liminary ‘primal scene’” in the churchyard precedes even Magwitch’s appearance, for the threat of premature death that Pip faces is a linguistic, not a criminal, matter (122). But then, Pip is not exactly named for his father, or at least his father’s name – his own name – is not the one he claims. Instead, he tells us, “My father’s family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip” (9; ch. 1). The name he chooses may suggest any number of things, but it is no simple mispronunciation; rather, it is an elision, literally an erasing of nine letters in the middle of “Philip Pirrip,” nine letters that presumably appear on the tombstone, nine letters that would not only name him like his father but also permit greater space – according to his “infant” logic – for interpreting identity from its textual representation. Pip’s act of self-naming is not a mispronunciation so much as it is a charm against mis-pronunciation, a rejection of what other texts might declare him and of his death

already writ large upon the stone. Dutheil writes of the novel's beginning that "Pip celebrates the challenges and pleasures of [interpretation] while drawing attention to the autonomous creative potential language" (172). More accurately, *Great Expectations* begins "in mortal terror," not of Magwitch or the young man who may eat Pip's heart and liver, but rather of the uncontrollable potentialities of the textualized subject.

Throughout the novel, Pip's mature narrative reinscribes the lesson of the churchyard, underscoring the insufficiency and instability of written texts. Compeyson, a figure of considerable ghostly terror to Pip, destabilizes the easy correspondence between text and self because he can "write fifty hands," and with Magwitch he commits forgeries that expose the vulnerability of a capitalist system founded upon paper money (318; ch. 53). More troubling, language in *Great Expectations* often becomes so tied to material goods that it fails even to appear as language, its signifying power embedded explicitly in its relation to capital. Pip has trouble learning to cipher partly because the "large old English D" that Bidley gives him to copy appears to him "to be a design for a buckle" (62; ch. 10). Likewise, the letter T that Mrs. Joe writes over and over again after she is attacked turns out to be not a letter but rather an anvil, which in turn she means to signify Orlick. Each such instance reveals generally the unstable relation between signifier and signified, but each also suggests more precisely the interchangeability of language and property – the sense in which language, even when it means to represent identity, mysteriously becomes property the moment it takes material form. It is fitting in this regard that Mrs. Wopsle's great-aunt, "besides keeping [her] Educational Institution, kept – in the same room – a little general shop," and that Pip's lessons from Bidley come not only through the inscrutable D but also through Bidley's "imparting some information from her little catalogue of Prices" (39; ch. 7, 62; ch. 10). As Pip's scarcely decipherable letter to Joe shows, writing is a tenuous business, rife with opportunities for misinterpretation and pervaded by its relation to the market.

Not surprisingly, the novel's acts of naming and narration appear often as failed attempts to stabilize and codify a particular narrative of identity. It is not only that names in *Great Expectations* are multiple and shifting (though this is also true); rather, it is that textualizations of identity in the novel turn out so often to be false or insufficient.¹¹ As Mrs. Pocket learns, Debrett's *Peerage* records Bentley Drummle as a "gentleman," though Pip's account makes him out to be as loutish as Orlick. But Mrs. Pocket anyway reads Debrett's precisely for what it does *not* contain: notice of "the exact date at which her grandpapa would have come into the book, if he ever had come at all!" (150; ch. 23). The semi-official index to the nineteenth-century aristocracy thus functions in the novel as a doubly flawed text, incredible for what it says and suspect for what it does not. It is a register of identity that registers nothing at all. Magwitch, meanwhile, is caught between two accounts of his identity, the official record authorized and produced by the law, in which he appears as the worst of a very bad lot, and the verbal account of himself that he gives to Pip and Herbert, which Pip writes into the novel and which recasts the legal narrative in ways that make the insufficiency of both narratives perfectly clear. Even Joe, illiterate as he is, is nearly implicated in the production of these untenable textualizations of the self, as he explains to Pip in recounting his father's death. Joe says, "it were my intentions to have had put upon his tombstone that Whatsume'er the failings on his part, Remember reader he were that good in his hart" (41; ch. 7). At best, the inscription would whitewash his father's drunken brutality; at worst, it would lie grossly, cheapening Joe's suffering and his mother's and reifying the gap between identity and its textual representation. The inscription is never cut, though, for as Joe explains, "poetry costs

money, cut it how you will, small or large" (41; ch. 7). Still, this remains the novel's second tombstone scene: a seriocomic echo of the original and a palimpsest of the novel's knotty concern with language, commodity, and the real and symbolic costs of writing the self.

No character is implicated more thoroughly than Jaggers in this tendency to expose the fraudulence of written accounts of the self. This is Jaggers's aim at the Three Jolly Bargemen when he "tak[es] possession of Mr. Wopsle" as that thespian is giving out the sensational murder described in the newspaper (106; ch. 18). In Pip's memory, Jaggers had from the start "a manner expressive of knowing something secret about every one of us that would effectually do for each individual if he chose to disclose it" (107; ch. 18). He is dangerous, that is, because of the stories he might tell – because, as Pip implies, though guilt may be private and universal, its narration is a simple expression of power. As an agent of the law, Jaggers is authorized to exert that power to produce identity in tangible narrative form, and his legal function ties him so closely to such narrative production that he treats even verbal communications as textual ones. Thus Jaggers terrorizes the hapless Mike, demanding that he rephrase his remarks about witnesses and alibis, and he warns Pip after Magwitch's return, "Don't commit yourself . . . and don't commit any one. You understand – any one. Don't tell me anything: I don't want to know anything; I am not curious" (251; ch. 40). The warning suggests that everyone – Jaggers included – is susceptible to the law's power to make the self textual, for it is the law finally that fixes and records language and meaning. The warning also reminds us that the symbolic function of the law is to materialize the self: to formalize its existence through certificates, notices, and registers, and to use court transcripts, manacles, and penitentiaries to make manifest the guilt that the subject would otherwise conceal.

But in defending his clients, Jaggers demonstrates and reinforces what we have known since Pip's "unreasonable" reading of his parents' tombstones: that textualizations of identity do not produce a complete or stable account of the subject. Since prosecutorial logic demands that guilt be fixed formally and certainly upon the narrative of the criminal subject, Jaggers defends clients by diffusing and dispersing the self across many potential narratives, all of which are alternatives to the guilty story the law would tell. The episode with Mike suggests this in its intimation that the business of the defense is to create – not discover – evidence, and to do so by propounding multiple accounts of the self without regard for the relative truth of each.¹² And this is so even though Pip tries repeatedly to insist that identity has an incontrovertible physical essence that precedes and underlies narration. To his eyes, no disguise can conceal Magwitch after his return, for no matter the alias "there was Convict in the very grain of the man" (252; ch. 40). Though Pip begins later to think of Magwitch as "softened," other characters remain marked by an inescapable, even intentional permanence, from Miss Havisham to Compeyson, Joe, and even Estella, who returns at novel's end "bent and broken," perhaps, but still with her "indescribable majesty and indescribable charm" (282; ch. 46, 358; ch. 59, 357; ch. 59). Much of this permanence owes to the fact that, here as in his other fiction, Dickens inscribes psychological trauma on his characters' bodies as a legible physical text. But like inscriptions on tombstones, such materializations of the self are at once insufficient and excessive, an index to subjectivity but also a kind of surplus identity that opens the subject to interpretation and narrative invention.

Indeed, Jaggers's handling of Molly's case depends thoroughly upon the body's ambiguity as a physical text, for he uses her slimness, modest dress, and lacerated hands to suggest that she did *not* do precisely what she did – to suggest that she might either be innocent of murdering her rival or guilty of murdering her own child. In defending her, he

intends less to formalize a narrative of her innocence than to render her narrative multiple by making her injured hands signify too many things instead of just one. As Jaggers puts it to the Jury:

We say these are not marks of finger-nails, but marks of brambles, and we show you the brambles. You say they are marks of finger-nails, and you set up the hypothesis that she destroyed her child. . . . For anything we know, she may have destroyed her child, and the child in clinging to her may have scratched her hands. What then? You are not trying her for the murder of her child; why don't you? As to this case, if you *will* have scratches, we say that, for anything we know, you may have accounted for them, assuming for the sake of argument that you have not invented them? (294; ch. 48)

“Mr. Jaggers was,” Wemmick says proudly, “altogether too many for the Jury,” and he makes his reputation because of the shrewd way he works the case (294; ch. 48). That shrewdness inheres in Jaggers’s cool exploitation of the legal need to account definitely for the subject and of the body’s potential – and insufficiency – as a material record of the self. Besides Pip, Jaggers is the novel’s most prolific producer of narratives of identity, and like Pip he expresses a profound awareness of the limits and perils of textualizing the subject. As the principle financial agent in the novel, Jaggers also underscores the interrelatedness of narrative and material expectations. He handles Miss Havisham’s financial affairs, revitalizing her stagnant wealth by putting it into Herbert’s hands and restoring it to the masculine world of capitalist circulation. He also, as Magwitch’s legal man, provides for the flow of capital from the colonies to the Crown, aiding the imperial project and producing a new-model gentleman, founded upon the active generation and accumulation of wealth rather than the patrilineal interests of an earlier age. Serving these roles from his office in Little Britain, Jaggers stands literally and symbolically at the center of *Great Expectations*: emblematic of the law, he is responsible simultaneously for the narrative production of the self and the regulation of commercial relations – for calibrating, we might say, the ideological relation between identity and property.

Situated at this nexus of textual and material concerns, Jaggers exposes a perilous legal and cultural sanction for trafficking in identity, and for using narrative in particular to make the self an object of exchange. Jaggers’s collection of “portable property” includes the two hideous casts, whose squalid perch amid the other trinkets at Little Britain reveals the way that identity can be arrested, suspended, attenuated, and made grotesque through its transformation into a material thing. Indeed, Jaggers treats all such textualizations of the self as commodities – that is to say, fetishistically, for he ensures that their valence derives from external demands and desires rather than from any intrinsic value they may have to express the subject. As Wemmick tells Pip, Jaggers never locks his house, for any theft would be compensated by Jaggers “hav[ing] their lives, and the lives of scores of ‘em. He’d have all he could get. And it’s impossible to say what he couldn’t get, if he gave his mind to it” (160; ch. 25). Steeped in this language of gluttonous materialism, the remark sounds like Wemmick’s philosophy regarding “portable property.” But Jaggers trades in people, not things, and in doing so he renders the boundary between identity and property razor-thin. For his Britannia-metal spoons, Jaggers would trade accounts of criminal subjects, which the police would then convert into possession of the subjects themselves. The logic of exchange is yet more explicit in Jaggers’s dealings with Molly, whom he controls solely through the story he might tell. For Molly, as Randall Craig points out, the price of keeping her story secret is Estella, the “pound of flesh extracted from her . . . as a human fee” (120). More

to the point, if owning the narrative of the subject means owning the subject herself, as in Molly's case, Estella's fate shows that this relationship is reciprocal. By seizing Estella, Jaggers takes possession of her story, too, since he keeps her permanently from the narrative of her own origins. For Estella, there can be no churchyard scene; rather, like a commodity, she originates in a financial transaction. By conducting such business, Jaggers demystifies the nature of exchange in *Great Expectations*, revealing the novel's basis in an economics of identity that exposes the subject, through narrative, to rules of ownership and power.

As both convict and capitalist, Magwitch occupies precisely this intersection of identity and property, and he suffers from the power relations that govern both. On the face of things, Magwitch is vulnerable to the law when he returns to London because he has been transported for life, and because he will be executed if he is caught on English soil. But the longer trajectory of Magwitch's life and story suggests an older problem, a complex entanglement with property that has undergirded his identity from the first. He tells Pip and Herbert that he emerged simultaneously into self-awareness and into illicit relations with property, having "first become aware of [him]self, down in Essex, a thieving turnips" (259; ch. 42). Having stolen, Magwitch is seized bodily by the Crown, and his story is taken up, too, by prison officials who tell visitors that little Magwitch is "a terrible hardened one" who "[m]ay be said to live in jails" (259; ch. 42). What Magwitch calls the "short and handy" version of his story is a rehearsal of the extent to which that story has ever since belonged to the Crown, existing principally as a legal – and therefore material – record of criminality and guilt. "In jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail. There, you've got it. That's *my* life pretty much" (258; ch. 42). When he returns to England, in fact, Magwitch is hardly concerned that his identity will become known – it is known, it *has been* known, by the law and virtually every character in the novel. What is at stake, rather, is that his identity not enter into circulation, that his narrative not be produced or exchanged for material gain.

For most of the novel, Jaggers, Wemmick, Pip, and others are content to withhold that narrative, for they stand to gain nothing by handing it (or Magwitch) over to the law. On the contrary, turning Magwitch over would endanger his fortune. But Magwitch is in danger from the moment that Compeyson learns that his old enemy has become a man of property in New South Wales. He turns informer, "hop[ing] for a reward" out of the forfeiture of Magwitch's money to the Crown (333; ch. 55). Nominally, Magwitch is always in danger of being discovered by the police: he is a convict and transported felon who has returned secretly to England. More significant, having once been recorded by the law as desperate, hardened, and criminal, he remains subject always to the proprietary power implied by that material record. He remains vulnerable to the reciprocal relation that makes ownership of narrative simultaneous with ownership of the subject. But it is telling that Magwitch is truly undone only when his story begins to function explicitly as a commodity, taking on what Compeyson believes is a real economic value. Indeed, the novel reaches its symbolic culmination in Magwitch's recapture, which results in his body, narrative, and money all being seized by the Crown. These are, the novel suggests, necessarily simultaneous events, and they remind us of the extent to which Magwitch and his story are inseparable from property—are concerned with it, merged in it, and even conceived as it. By existing from the beginning as a material record inscribed by the law, Magwitch has always existed as property and has always been subject to the power that governs capitalist exchange.

This equation pervades Pip's account of himself, too, for his narrative centers upon a profound anxiety regarding his self-authorship and the way in which written narrative

necessarily entangles the subject in power relations rooted in production and exchange. Like Magwitch, Pip becomes “portable property” at the moment of his self-naming, for Magwitch literally takes possession of him, manhandling him and commanding him to return with victuals. Pip’s narrative underscores the originating power of this moment, which may reflect his incipient awareness that in writing his life he reduces himself to property, so that the primal scene in the churchyard functions metonymically to encode the implications of Pip’s attempt at narrative self-production. Consequently, Pip structures his story almost entirely around the idea that his life is a debt owed, as if his subjectivity is a deficit that must be made up to repay his sister for bringing him up by hand, or to make amends to Magwitch, Miss Havisham, Joe, and the others who benefit him in so many ways. Implicitly, the contrast that Pip draws between himself and his five dead brothers in the churchyard is that they died without repaying that debt, instead lying mendicant “with their hands in their trousers-pockets,” having given up “trying to get a living, exceedingly early in that universal struggle” (9; ch. 1). The language is Darwinian but also Malthusian, Adam Smithian. Having “insisted on being born,” Pip and his brothers owe a debt embedded in origins, as if biological beginnings – like textual ones – bring the subject into economic relations simply by making it a material thing.

For Pip as for Magwitch, these relations are embedded deeply, and Pip also reaches self-awareness simultaneously with entering into illicit relations with property. His first self-aware act is to agree to aid a convict by stealing from the forge. But by stealing brandy, too, Pip does more than he has promised, as if his impulse to thievery exceeds the requirements of his childish terror. In a nicely suggestive moment, just as his crimes are discovered, Pip is snatched at the doorstep by the very soldiers who are hunting a criminal on the marshes. Pip’s story thus resonates with that of his symbolic father, not only here but also in his hovering returns to Newgate, his vague but persistent associations with crime, and even his being bound apprentice to Joe, which looks so much like he has been “taken” by the authorities that a passerby hands him the tract “TO BE READ IN MY CELL” (85; ch. 13). Pip’s story, too, is “in jail and out of jail” and begins and ends amid his troubled relation to property and exchange. Through symbol and recurrence, Pip’s narrative recreates the senses of objectification and ownership that characterized his childhood, which in turn affirms an unsettling reciprocity between owning the subject and owning his story. Indeed, what Pip records especially about the experience of being owned is the way that it plays havoc with his self-account and, in turn, with his emergence as a fully realized and psychologically coherent subject. Because they “own” Pip, Mrs. Joe, Miss Havisham, Magwitch, and others typically know more than he does about his own story. They help actively to produce his identity, not only by impacting his psychological formation but also by making disclosures that fill the gaps in what Pip is able to know and tell: that he must go play at Satis House, that Estella has gone to France, that Magwitch rather than Miss Havisham is his benefactor. Such revelations change the course of Pip’s life and narrative, disrupting Pip in the very act of becoming Pip, and in the act of coming to self-narration. More to the point, perhaps, these revelations suggest that Mrs. Joe, Magwitch, Miss Havisham, and the rest are able to own Pip precisely because they own his story, or enough of it at least to determine the way he will circulate through the world of the novel.

Indeed, each time Pip changes hands, his narrative is remade, as if to underscore that his account of himself will be redirected constantly by material demands. After meeting Magwitch in the churchyard, Pip returns to the forge filled with lies about his conduct.

Subsequently, Pip's transfer to Miss Havisham at Satis House causes him to invent outrageous fictions, wrenched from him by the demand that he describe how he "g[o]t on up town" even though he knows that he "should not be understood" (56; ch. 9). Already Pip has been shaken from his childish faith in the power of language to account for the subject; already, through Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, he has been awakened to the need for narrative to respond to external demands. The unsettling lesson leaves Pip sorry – not for his sister and Pumblechook, who regard the story as evidence that Miss Havisham will "do something" for Pip – but rather for Joe, who retains a child's credulity regarding narrative:

And then I told Joe that I felt very miserable . . . and that there had been a beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's who was dreadfully proud, and that she had said I was common, and that I knew I was common, and that I wished I was not common, and that the lies had come of it somehow, though I didn't know how. (59; ch. 9)

Young Pip cannot quite articulate the connection between money and self-accounting or quite understand the psychological function of social class or its ability to shape and disfigure self-narrative. But it is telling nonetheless that the adult Pip dates from this moment his sense that the plot of his life has been a "long chain of iron or gold," the stuff alternately of imprisonment and luxury, a polyvalent symbol that binds the structure and coherence of identity into parallel images that both constrict and ornament the subject, that make it appear at once too little and a little too much. The question that remains, as Brooks points out, is what sort of chain does bind Pip's life, for Pip's narrative suspends his story among several overlapping plots: the fairy tale, the *bildungsroman*, the romance, the Newgate novel, the book of snobs. Each depends upon Pip's economic status, and none can culminate earlier in the novel because his economic fate is so unclear. Pip insists repeatedly upon his powerlessness to close the plot, whether by acknowledging Estella's power over his "boyish life" or wondering helplessly at his unaccountable but perpetual entanglement in "all this taint of prison and crime" (179; ch. 29, 202; ch. 32). Meanwhile, Pip oscillates aimlessly between London and the village, often – as when claiming his expectations or asking Miss Havisham to back Herbert – to conduct and even embody commercial exchange.

Writing of Pip's inability to control the story of his own life, Murray Baumgarten writes that "Magwitch is his author, as Miss Havisham creates Estella. Both . . . are new minted unnatural, artificial creatures" (66). This may be overstating the case, for Pip does presumably write his own story, and his story contains Magwitch's (literally) rather than the other way around. Still, the evidence of Pip's troubled storytelling suggests that it is not Magwitch's or anyone's *physical* proprietorship over Pip that is troubling, any more than it is Miss Havisham's physical proprietorship over Estella. Instead, what troubles this novel most is how deeply the narrative of property and exchange becomes embedded in Pip's self-narrative – the way that the story of expectations becomes indistinguishable from the story of Pip even in his own telling, as if the stories of property and identity rise until they converge. This is certainly true with Estella, who must write to Miss Havisham from Richmond to tell her how she and "the jewels" are getting on (206; ch. 33). In Pip's case, he learns only too late that he has been rented to Miss Havisham, that he is Magwitch's gentleman, and that Joe has paid his financial and spiritual debts – too late, though these events have shaped him, made him who he is, and even required him to continue to call himself "Pip" in a constant recreation of his very first act of self-accounting. Mrs. Joe may be more acute than anyone

imagines when, being told of Pip's expectations, she lapses deeper into an apparent idiocy in which "[s]he laugh[s] and nod[s] her head a great many times, and even repeat[s] after Biddy the words 'Pip' and 'Property'" (113; ch. 18). It is the same slip that Pip makes in calling his autobiography *Great Expectations*, hinting that property and identity become interchangeable, coincidental, the moment that Pip commits his identity to paper.

V

BY ITS CLOSE THE NOVEL HAS THUS COALESCED gradually what has always been there, latent, waiting to be revealed and affirmed. In his famous assessment of the novel, Brooks suggests that *Great Expectations* bears the signs of exhaustion, its plot used up and played out long before the novel ends. And of course this must be the case, for the novel reaches its sensational climax not with Magwitch's death but rather with his recapture, and with the loss of the expectations that have been central for so long. The crux of Pip's story is the drama of the portable property rather than the narrative self-invention he ostensibly attempts. Long before Pip's emotional and psychological resolutions, the novel takes on the characteristic exhaustion that Brooks notes, and that seems to suggest a narrative working against plot. In its final chapters the erstwhile tightly wrought autobiography dissolves into self-negation as Pip watches over the dying Magwitch and then collapses into a delirium marked by the absence of a coherent subject, regaining its forward momentum only when Joe pays Pip's impatient creditors and thus settles what seems to be a financial as well as a psychic debt. But none of these moments bears the dramatic tension of Magwitch's recapture or saves the novel's closing chapters from exhaustion. With the property gone, the real story is already over.

Sue Zemka takes a different view of the novel's "proleptic ending," arguing that "the secret expectations of Pip's life are completed" by the writing of the narrative, and that this is "the compensation the novel offers for the ravages perpetrated upon psychic life by . . . nineteenth-century capitalism" (147). It is possible to read Pip's autobiography this straightforwardly – to take it as evidence of Pip's psychological coalescence, or as a cathartic self-invention that rectifies the personal and cultural wrongs the novel has shown. In some ways, Pip's self-account even invites us to this view, for it implies that his decision to write his life at all may stem from his encounter with Orlick, who makes Pip fear suddenly that he will be "misremembered after death" (317; ch. 53). That fear belongs partly to his remembrance of his own infant interpretations in the churchyard, and to his infant elision of all but three letters of his name. But apart even from achieving this sort of therapeutic self-invention, Pip's narrative serves another crucial function: it is the only material expectation that remains to Pip after Magwitch's death, the last legacy left to a life that once seemed so full of capital possibilities. And the novel does work in many ways as payment for a debt owed. This is literally true in the case of Joe, whom Pip repays by recording his deep gratitude and painting Joe as the novel's financial and moral savior. It is also true in the sense that the novel settles old scores, paying back through textual revelation those who have used Pip cruelly: Orlick and Pumblechook, Mrs. Joe and Miss Havisham, all get their comeuppance by novel's end, either by meeting terrible ends or by being displayed to readers in all of their stupidity, violence, and emotional brutality. Estella, too, is punished, first by being portrayed as heartless and cruel, and later by being exposed as the daughter of a murderess and career criminal – this last, even though Pip has promised Jaggers that he would never reveal the meanness of her origins. Of course, Jaggers should have known better, for he has witnessed

first-hand Pip's willingness to blow Wemmick's cover, cashing in on his knowledge of his friend's secret Walworth sentiments in order to squeeze the answers he wants out of Jaggers. In the act of composing *Great Expectations*, Pip traffics as freely in identities as Jaggers ever has, to the chagrin, we might imagine, of his family and friends.

In doing so, he reminds us of what he has suggested since the churchyard: that no account of identity is definitive or complete, because none can escape the need to respond to immediate material demands. Every material expression of identity – including his own writing of *Great Expectations* – becomes subject eventually to the rules that govern other kinds of portable property. Buyers, readers, the other subjects who might tell stories of their own: these always-already turn any textualization of the self into contested and commodified ground. However much Pip hates Orlick, the story that Pip finally tells in *Great Expectations* is exactly the one that Orlick has tried to demand, for the novel is largely an account of Pip's snobbery, meanness, and hypocrisy, his implicit guilt for his sister's death, and his awful conduct toward Biddy and Joe. And no one is more aware than Pip of the tenuousness of any story he might tell. When he returns to the village for his sister's funeral, he remembers her in tones that are so "gentle" they "softened even the edge of Tickler," and he considers that "the day must come when it would be well for [his] memory that others walking in the sunshine should be softened as they thought of [him]" (212; ch. 35).¹³ In the very act of writing his story and making his identity into a material thing, Pip notes the impossibility of forcing such a text to mean only what he wants it to say. Like a commodity, the text will respond to the dictates of contexts and external demands; it will exist at once as a fixed, immutable object and a dynamic, ungovernable thing. It will belong to others. No wonder Pip writes after his quarrel with Drummle at the Finches of the Grove that he must finally "repudiate, as untenable, the idea that I was to be found anywhere" (233; ch. 38). He has disappeared into the commodity he makes of himself – has finally become merely an expectation. As Pettitt puts it, though for different reasons, "Pip is, crucially, bought rather than made" (258). Having made himself into "portable property" through his self-narrative act, Pip ensures that his subjectivity will remain always at the mercy of the market.

What *Great Expectations* shows, in other words, is that Pip's plan – or Dickens's, if we prefer – to write an identity might be lucrative, but that the very act of narrative self-making underscores the dangers of such a course by showing that subjectivity itself might be swallowed up by the demands of capitalist exchange. Gilbert argues that Pip uses his narrative as "an instrument for manipulating reality, for imposing one's own vision on others, for promoting self-consciousness and irony and isolation. To speak or write, however scrupulously, is of necessity to deceive" (108–09). The instabilities and discontinuities of Pip's story imply this much, and yet one wonders whether "deceive" is the right word: can Pip be blamed for deception in a story that warns from the start that textual meanings are multiple and shifting? Can deception exist when narrative truth is at best the unstable product of capitalist exchange? The loss of Magwitch's money means that self-narration is the only thing that Pip brings to fruition, the only great expectation that he meets. What we "expect" from any novel is completion and resolution, and if we do not necessarily get the latter in *Great Expectations*, we at least get the former: a finished commodity produced by a fictional author who has overcome his capitalist nightmares and become a clerk in the great Victorian economic and imperial machine. Even for Joe at the end of the novel, the new ability to write coincides with his buying up of Pip's debts, as if the price of his new textual abilities is his willing participation in capitalism, if not necessarily a concomitant abandonment of the

older economic mode embodied by the forge. As for Pip, he leaves us at the end of the novel with a vision of himself as a man thoroughly alienated from his own story, like the laborer in Marx's account of capitalist production. Pip returns from abroad at novel's end only to find "I again!" – yet another copy of the self he has labored to produce in his writing, and a copy produced by hands other than his own (356; ch. 59). He follows this meeting with the new model Pip by telling Bidley, "you must give Pip to me, one of these days; or lend him, at all events," a request to which Bidley wisely replies, "No, no" (356; ch. 59). It is as if Pip would initiate the monstrous trade cycle all over again, and as if he has also arrived at a mature recognition of the extent to which his name, his self-account, and perhaps even he himself have been commodified, divested of any meaning beyond the repeated iteration and reproduction required by the Victorian marketplace.

Great Expectations is finally undergirded, Dutheil contends, by "a textual strategy which capitalizes on the impossibility of identifying sign and meaning" (166). Indeed, for Pip and Dickens both, the novel is very much about capitalizing, and in several senses of the word. Dickens's desire to turn his deeply disquieting autobiography to account is analogized in Pip, and both authors ponder explicitly and symbolically the potentially devastating implications of their narrative work. There is something quite fitting in the fact that the only time we see Pip writing in *Great Expectations* is when he and Herbert determine to look into their affairs, an event always preceded by their "produc[ing] a bundle of pens, a copious supply of ink, and a goodly show of writing and blotting paper" (210; ch. 34). The scene echoes *Copperfield*, and Dora, but in Pip's case the precursors to his autobiography are not essays or novels but rather the "Memorandum of Pip's debts," a periodic tallying up that leaves him feeling, he says, "like a Bank of some sort, rather than a private individual" (210; ch. 34, 211; ch. 34). In this writing, Pip's strategy is to "leave a margin," in acknowledgement that writing leaves always something to be filled up, some deficit for which writing can never quite account (211; ch. 34). The strategy tells us all that we need to know about the difference between *Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*. The former contains no recognition that the text might not suffice; it celebrates David's career as an author and does not worry about the implications of turning his life into a saleable text. But in *Great Expectations* writing is about the problem of what can never be signified by a text that is always already a commodity because it is material, and that therefore always already *is* and *is about* the dangers of turning identity into "portable property."

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NOTES

I am indebted to Robert Patten for his patient clarifications regarding volume publication of several of Dickens's early novels, and also to Linda Lewis and Jennifer Snead for their kind, thoughtful, and generous attention to so many parts of the manuscript.

1. See also Houston 16.
2. Several studies have addressed Dickens's preoccupation with cannibalism – in and beyond *Great Expectations* – in varying degrees of detail. For fuller accounts of Dickens's interest in cannibalism, see Marlow's essay and Stone's "Part I." Briefer discussions include those in Houston (18) and Walsh (88).

3. Dickens published the essay “The Lost Arctic Voyagers” in two parts in *Household Words* on 2 December and 9 December 1854, intending to silence or at least refute the report Dr. John Rae made to the British Admiralty after searching for Franklin’s lost expedition during several months 1848–1854. Rae related to the Admiralty the findings of his interviews with several Inuits who claimed to have seen members of Franklin’s crew, and he related also his conclusions that they had likely died from scurvy and starvation, though not before resorting to cannibalism to stay alive.
4. Johnson discusses the terms of the separation and notes that Catherine was to receive £600 a year (917–20). Storey writes that “a settlement was made on Ellen Ternan, who subsequently lived in an establishment of her own at Peckham” (97). For the most complete account of Dickens’s lifelong arrangements with Ellen Ternan, see Tomalin.
5. Forster wrote later of this episode that it was “a question . . . of respect for himself as a gentleman” (706).
6. The first series of “Uncommercial Traveller” essays began running in *All the Year Round* on 28 January 1860 and continued through sixteen articles meant to keep Dickens’s writing before the public after *A Tale of Two Cities* had closed its serial run. Pleased by the effect, Dickens commenced a second series in 1863 and a third in 1868, eventually running the total number of essays to thirty-six. For a full account of this, see Slater’s “Introduction” to *The Uncommercial Traveller and Other Papers*, particularly xi–xxiii.
7. The “Personal” statement appeared in the *Times* on June 7 and in *Household Words* on June 12. Besides appearing in Slater’s *Gone Astray and Other Papers from Household Words*, from which I cite it here, “Personal” is reprinted in *Letters* 8: 744.
8. Dickens’s splits with his old friends are described in *Letters* 8: xiv–xv, Kaplan 376–417, Johnson 2: 930–36, and Ackroyd 824–28.
9. In the footnote to this letter, the editors point out that Bulwer “clearly feared a recurrence of both personal and literary attacks, if his name appeared” (9: 423).
10. For a thorough account of Lever’s failure to satisfy Dickens, see Johnson 2: 956–66.
11. Pip is called variously Philip, Handel, my boy, dear boy, silly boy, ridiculous boy, and a Squeaker, and Magwitch and Wopsle both adopt various aliases. For that matter, Pip accuses Orlick of having invented the name “Dolge” as an “affront” to the village – not noticing that he has invented his own name in the same way (90; ch. 15). Jordan points out this last, as well (104).
12. Craig makes a similar point in discussing “license of counsel” (112).
13. Kincaid talks about this, too, on 40–41.

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