



Newsletter of the Cleveland Branch,
International Dickens Fellowship

www.clevelanddickensfellowship.org

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Meeting Schedule

2019-2020 Book of the Year:

The Old Curiosity Shop

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a few open-ended questions to ponder.

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Conference, Goodenough College, London.
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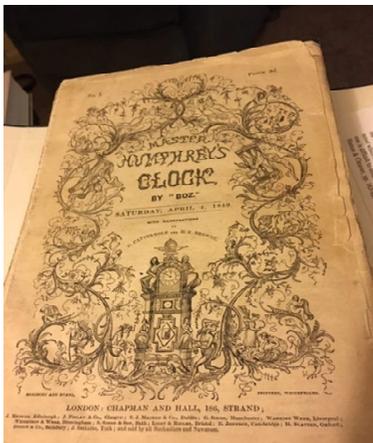
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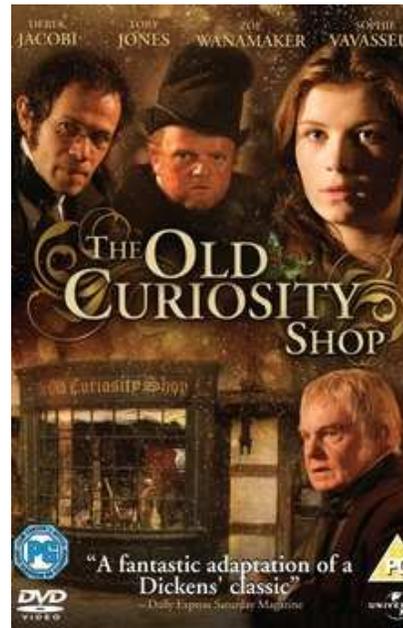
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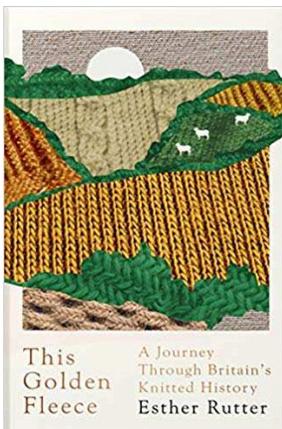
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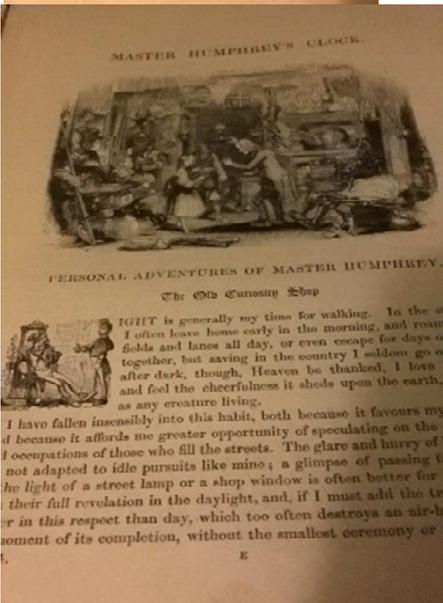
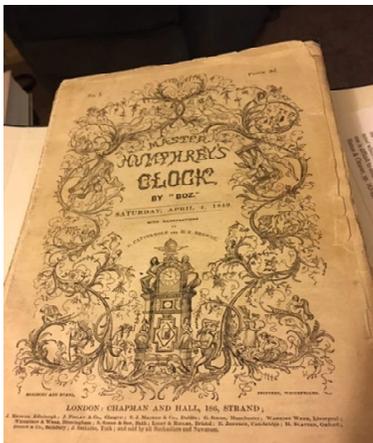
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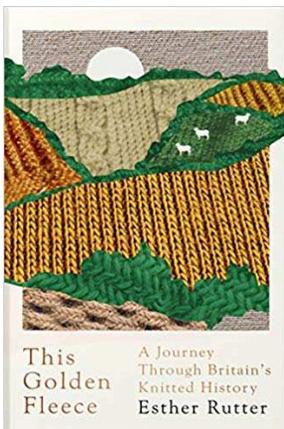
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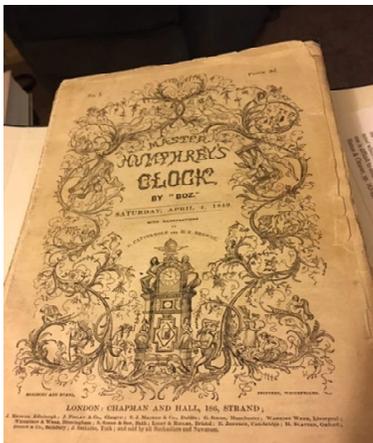
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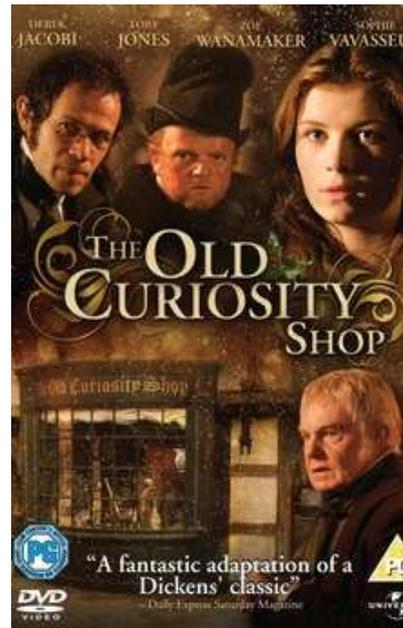
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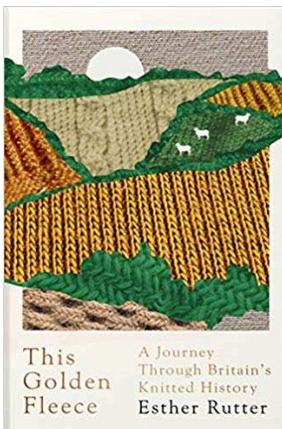
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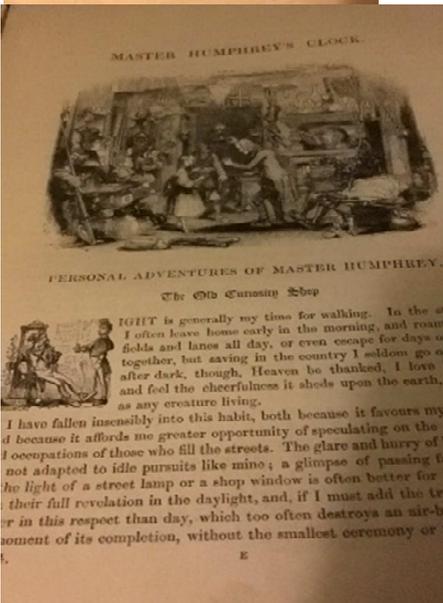
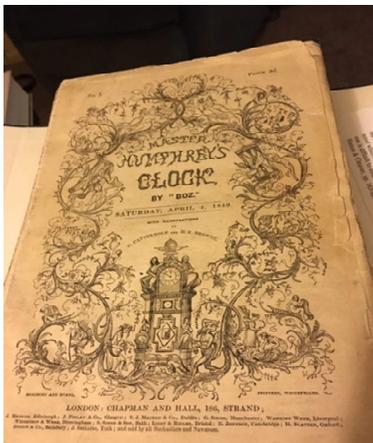
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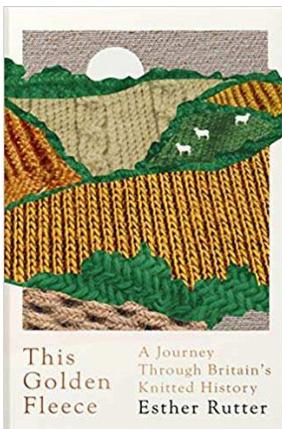
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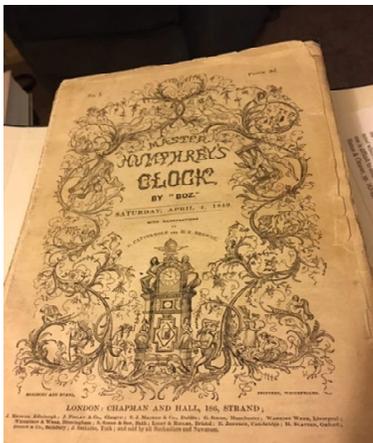
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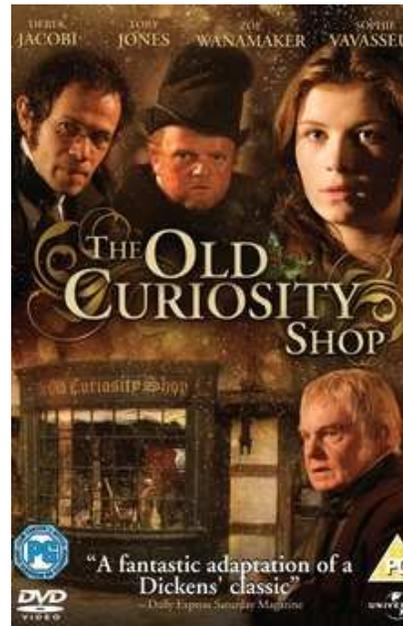
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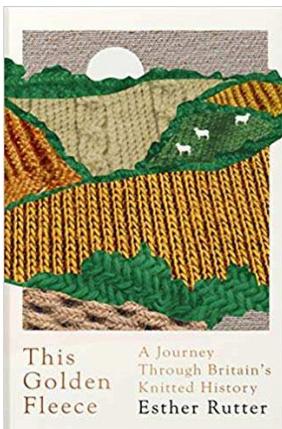
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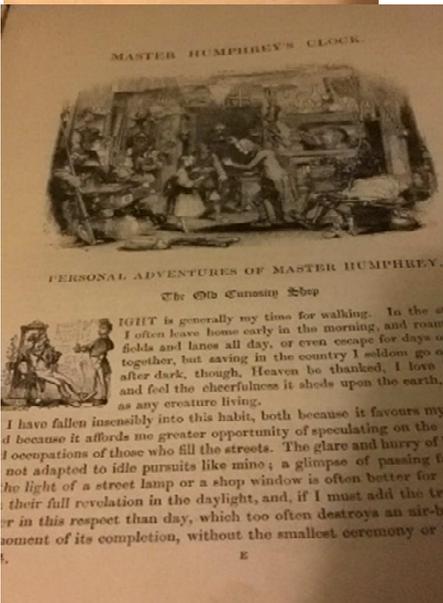
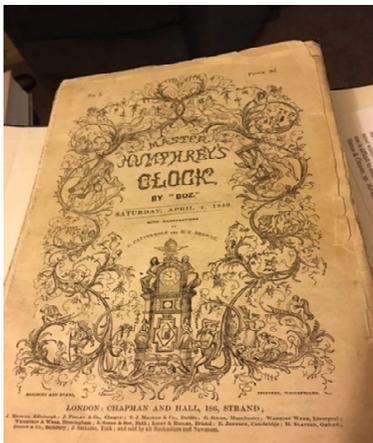
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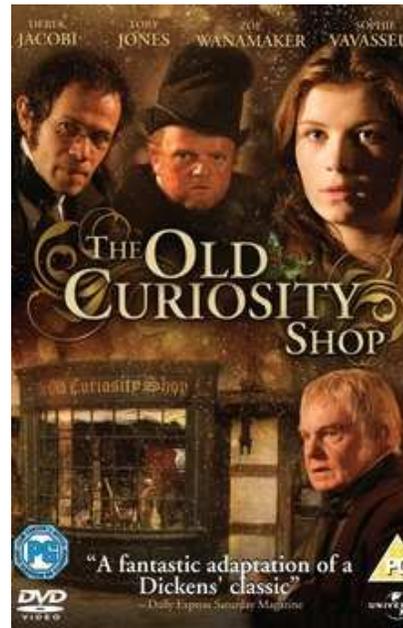
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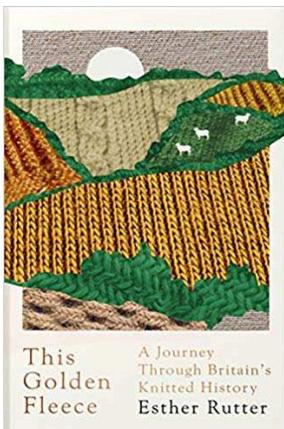
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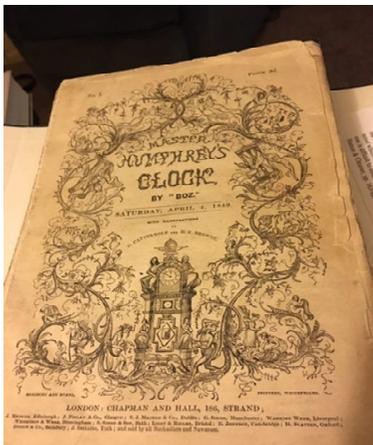
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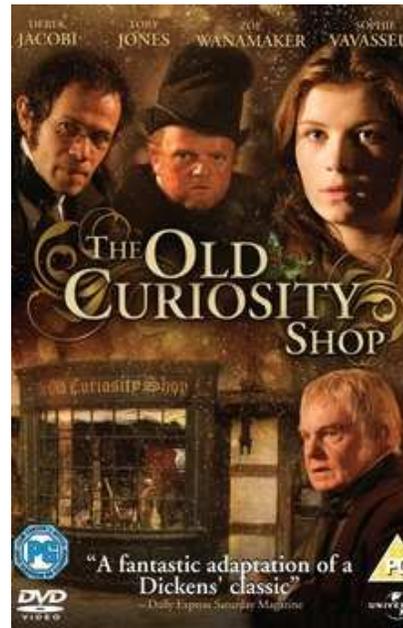
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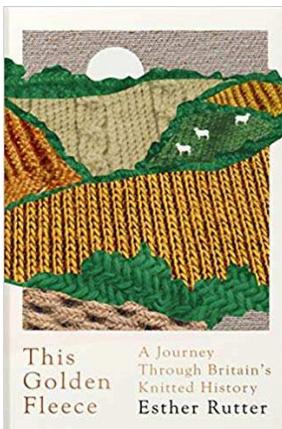
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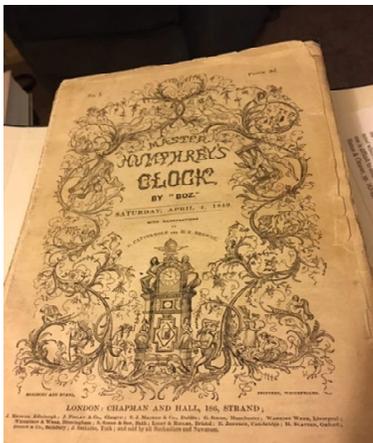
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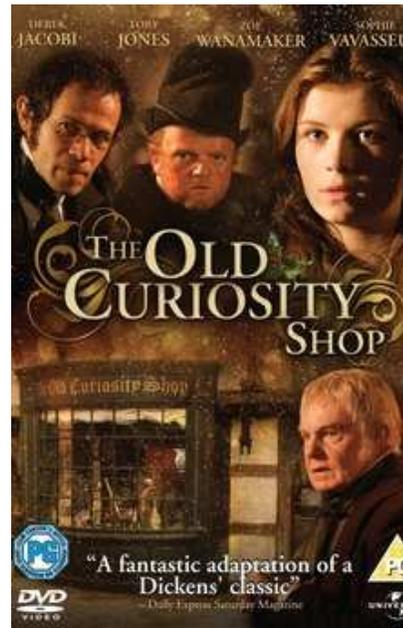
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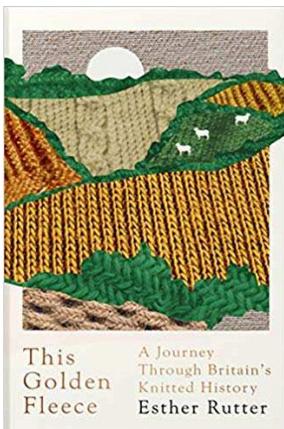
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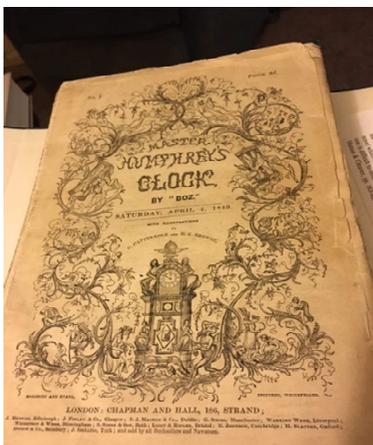
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Right, l to r: **Linda Ehrbar, Charla Coatoam, Paul Siedel, Cheryl Kleps** admire Cheryl’s g. grandmother’s crocheting, (bottom corner), Charla’s mementoes from Broadstairs.



Above, l to r: **Peggy Rooney, Barbara Davis, Bill Owen** (in his Christmas hat), **Gretta Ryan** look over early photos, a CD action figure, OCS cookie tin.



My e-reader and me

I bought a red cover for my Kindle so I can spot it easily in my house or in my purse. I carry it everywhere, at home and out, along with my cell phone and glasses. (If I forget my glasses, the Kindle can enlarge the print.) I keep it charged and loaded with a few books I’m ready to read. My constant companion.

I used to frequent my local library. These days I hang around CLEVNET, the library website—in my pajamas. I limit my searches to ebooks. My computer fetches up my account, books borrowed and those on hold. No fines; if I forget to return, the library sneaks into my Kindle and takes back what’s due. My Amazon account “Your Contents and Devices” lists everything I’ve borrowed or bought, titles, authors, dates, since I started using the Kindle. No more forgetting if I read it or not. If I want to revisit a title, Kindle finds it and obligingly remembers the passages I marked and where I stopped reading.

Wherever I go, if I have wifi, Amazon finds me. BookBub sends me daily emails with suggestions: titles on sale for a dollar or two, authors and books like those I’ve enjoyed in the past. They know me well. Bruce Catton’s *Stillness at Appomattox*, \$1.99; a Sara Paretsky for \$2.99. Most Victorian novels are free.

I take many BookBub suggestions to CLEVNET where I borrow instead of buy. CLEVNET has a deal with Amazon—so far. There’s talk of limiting the ebooks libraries can offer. Publishers and Amazon want to tighten up. If I get a chance, I’ll vote for the libraries.

Kindle isn’t perfect. Maps and illustrations are a dead loss. Some authors never published in digital format. Most new hot titles aren’t available yet. Hilary Mantel’s Trilogy, Book 3, on Thomas Cromwell, *The Mirror and the Light*, expected in March, will force a trudge to the library when my name comes up on the long waiting list. Then I’ll be lugging around a heavy dead-tree book for a while. In the meantime, I’ve got my red Kindle. **–K. S.**

A Twist of Dickens is published three times yearly by the Cleveland Dickens Fellowship. Coeditors: Beth Bliss, Kathleen Schuerger.

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It's not Dickens, but...Kate Atkinson

She's won prize after prize for literature. *Life After Life* was a best seller in the U.S. She's very British. Quotes Shakespeare, the Bible, Dickens, Austen, Emily Dickinson and countless others so glibly that you may miss out as you struggle to untangle the plot. Her sly humor pervades every novel. Don't trip over it. Enjoy. She gets inside diverse characters' heads, writing stream of consciousness, switching from present to past from current to historical events seamlessly. In *Life After Life* she follows one life's road all the way to death, and then—what if?—a different road, a

different death. She's not a linear storyteller. I work at keeping up. I recommend the Jackson Brodie novels. So far there are five, best read in order: *Case Histories*; *One Good Turn*; *When Will There Be Good News*; *I started Early, Took My Dog*; *Big Sky*, this last just published in 2019. Brodie, Yorkshire born and product of a tragic past, has been called a soft-boiled detective. He's a knight errant, a magnet for characters who endure evil and need help. He's often shot or beaten up. He's been a soldier, a policeman, a private investigator, and once he tried to retire after someone left him money. Twice he married; he has two children who move in and out of the stories. Characters frequently collide in coincidences



that remind me of Dickens's plots. Everyone somehow bumps into someone else until the many story lines in each novel are resolved. You could take the easy way and watch the TV series *Case Histories* starring Jason Isaacs (*Harry Potter*, *The Patriot*). But you know what happens to Dickens's writings when they're adapted; they're still fun, but much of the good stuff is filtered out. —K. S.



“Lord, keep my memory green” **International Dickens Fellowship** **Conference of 2020 commemorating the** **sesquicentenary of death of Charles Dickens**

This is the big one, folks! Put together by “The Management Committee” of Fellowship Headquarters. As befits the London location at Goodenough College, Mecklenburgh Square in Bloomsbury, near the Dickens Museum on Doughty Street, this conference boasts an unprecedented number of important speakers: Michael Slater, Malcolm Andrews, Lucinda Hawksley (all of whom have visited us in Cleveland), Jeremy Parrott, Tony Williams, Leon Litvack, Cindy Sughrue (Director of the Charles Dickens Museum), and on and on. The Banquet is slated for the legendary Garrick Club, a Gentlemen's Club whose membership over the years included, in addition to Charles Dickens, H. G. Wells, John Gielgud, Kingsley Amis, etc., etc. In addition to a walking tour, side trips are on offer to Gads Hill and Rochester, the Church of St. George the Martyr (Little Dorrit's church, where the churchyard

*“Make ‘em laugh, make ‘em cry, make ‘em wait.”
Whoever said it, Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins or Charles Dickens, it's a credo Dickens wrote by.
How else to keep a serial novel moving?*

adjoins the remaining wall of the Marshalsea Prison). This is CD's London. July 15-20.



Dickens's tombstone in Westminster Abbey

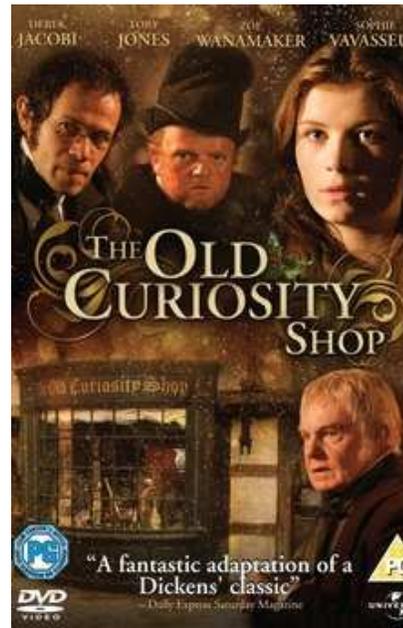
The New Curiosity Shop

Take a look at Dickens's dysfunctional characters through the lens of today's social services.

Match the character to the fix.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Grandfather Trent | Women's shelter |
| 2. Fred Trent | Children's services |
| 3. Dick Swiveller | Children's hospital, Medicaid |
| 4. Mrs. Quilp | Gamblers Anonymous |
| 5. Quilp | Public Defender Services |
| 6. The Marchioness | Anger management |
| 7. Little Nell | Alcoholics Anonymous |
| 8. Kitt | Outplacement counselor |

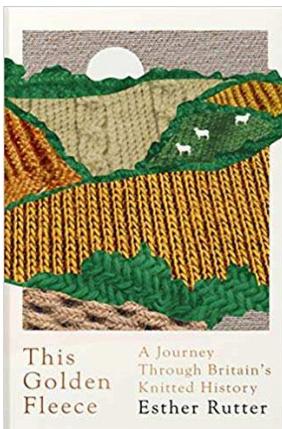
Now, assuming at least partial rehabilitation, what have we got?
Pfft! There goes the novel. —K. S.



BBC's
2007
DVD
stars
Derek
Jacobi
as
Grand
father,
Toby
Jones as
Quilp.
Best so
far?



Dickens Fellowship
Beth Bliss, Newsletter Editor
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Beth Bliss, our resident knitter extraordinaire (She discussed Mme. DeFarge's condemnatory knitting at the 2019 International Conference), strongly recommends this history of knitting.

This Golden Fleece: A Journey Through Britain's Knitted History

Knitting has had a long history in the British Isles. How interesting it is to have Esther Rutter, a person who grew up on a sheep farm and learned to spin, weave and knit as a child, guide us through this history.

She explores historically and practically techniques such as ganseys, fair isle, and Aran which are mainly associated with Great Britain.

This history is well done and will appeal to knitters. Maybe even to those who don't knit. Try it out! Find it on Amazon.