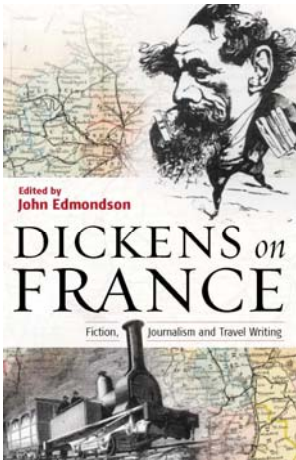


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Dickens on France: Fiction, Journalism, and Travel Writing

Edited by John Edmondson

“Charles Dickens, Français naturalisé, et Citoyen de Paris.” Dickens signed a letter from France to his friend John Forster this way in 1847, but behind the joke lay his fascination for French life and culture and a sense of affinity with France. Dickens returned to France often, and his travels and experiences there found expression in some of his finest work.

Dickens on France: Fiction, Journalism, and Travel Writing, edited and annotated by John Edmondson, brings together his letters, journals, short stories, extracts from novels, and extensive travel writing about France. Among its journalistic highlights are accounts of a train journey from London to Paris, a rough Channel crossing, the pleasures of Boulogne, and Parisian life in the 1850s and 1860s. Extracts from the travelogue *Pictures from Italy* take us by coach from Paris to Marseille. The selected short stories include “His Boots,” a section of “Mrs. Lirriper’s Legacy,” and “The Boy at Mugby,” and there are extracts from *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Little Dorrit*, *Dombey and Son*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *Our Mutual Friend*. Extensively annotated to provide historical and autobiographical contexts and to highlight literary and other allusions, *Dickens on France* digs deeply into the nature of Dickens’s enduring relationship with France.

Dickens was primarily interested in the character of places he visited, the behavior of people he observed, and the sensation and psychology of travelling. These preoccupations have kept his writing fresh and accessible. It requires no leap through time to appreciate his musings on his fellow passengers, his reflections on sitting in a Paris café, his random exploration of city streets or small country towns, or his opposition to the English’s cultural bigotry. Infused with energy, perception, and open-mindedness, this new collection of Dickens’s work vividly evokes life in France and Britain in the nineteenth century, and reminds us, however much progress we make, how little we change.

John Edmondson is a writer and publisher with a long-standing interest in both Charles Dickens and France. He is the author of *France: A Traveller’s Literary Companion* (Interlink, 1997).

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Travel Literature & Fiction • 6” x 9” • 464 pages • illustrations • maps

ISBN 1-56656-688-6 • 978-1-56656-688-9 • paperback • \$20.00 (\$24.00 in Canada)