

Literary London:  
Imagining the City

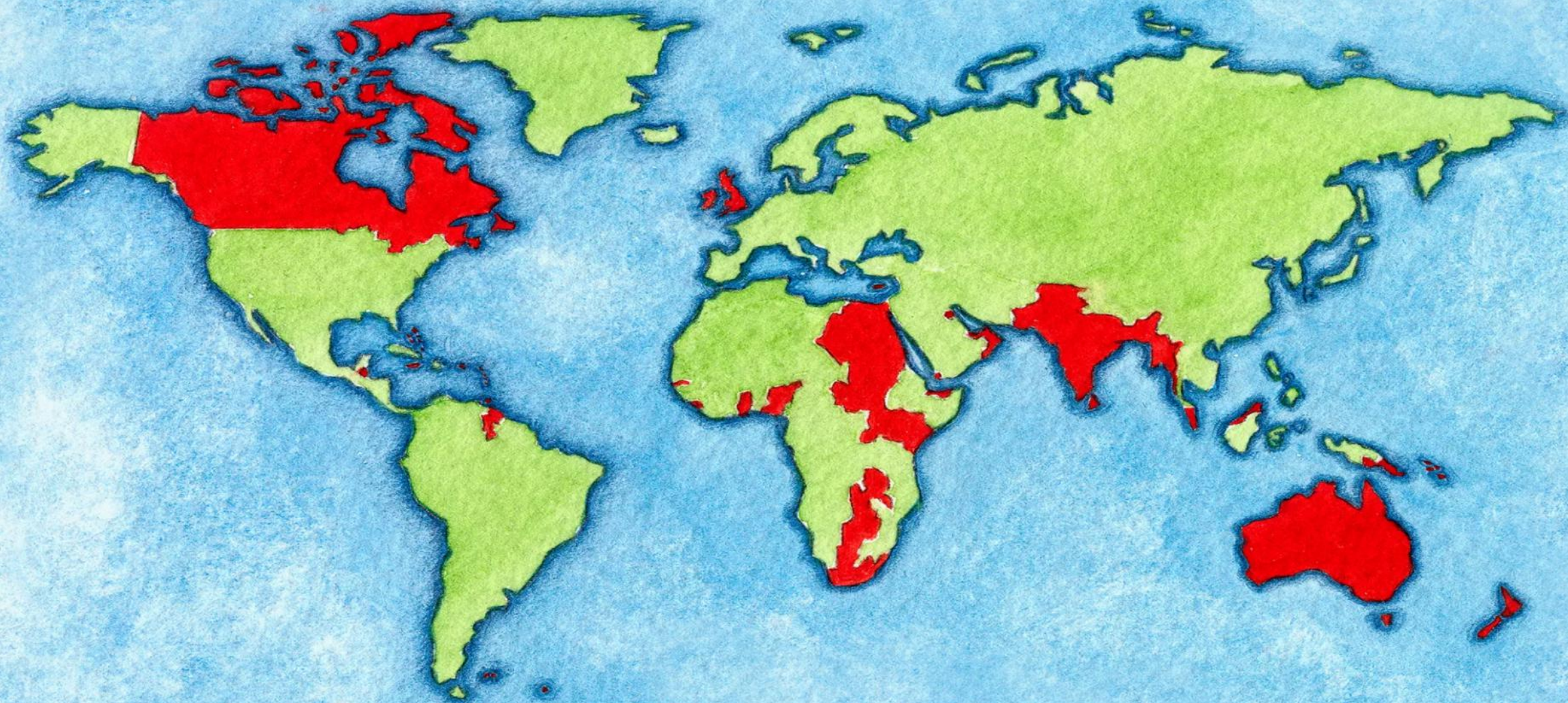
Drs. Christopher and Hope Hodgkins

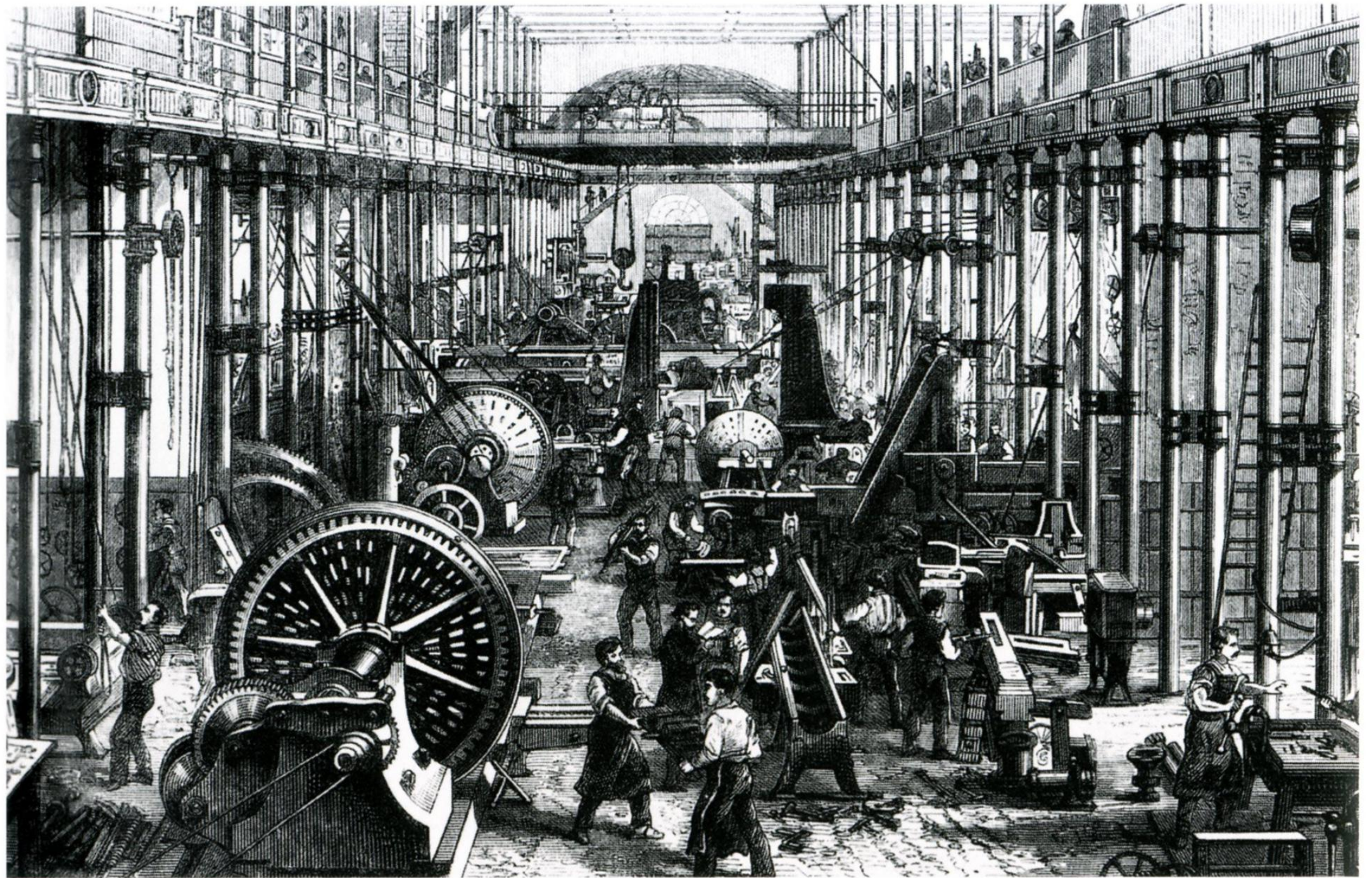
Wednesday, April 19

**Victorian London**

# Victoria's London, 1837-1902







## “The Angel in the House”

“It was certainly an odd monster that one made up by reading the historians first and the poets afterwards—a worm winged like an eagle; the spirit of life and beauty in a kitchen chopping up suet.”

Virginia Woolf (*A Room of One's Own*)

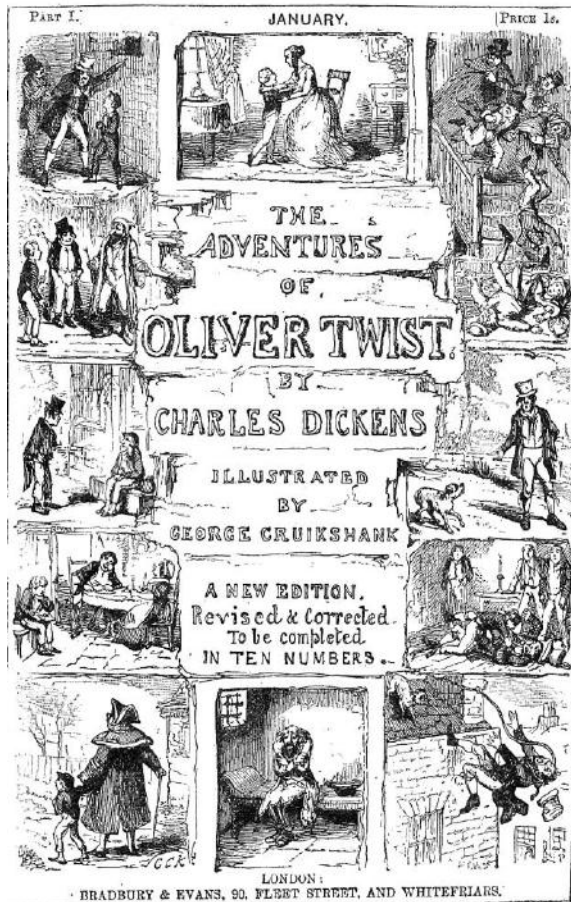


**Charles Dickens, age 27,**  
by Daniel Maclise



"But for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little vagabond."

## *The Adventures of Oliver Twist* (1837-1839)



. . . in this workhouse was born the item of mortality whose name is prefixed to the head of this chapter. For a long time after he was ushered into this world of sorrow and trouble, by the parish surgeon, it remained a matter of considerable doubt whether the child would survive to bear any name at all. . . .

. . . the patchwork coverlet which was carelessly flung over the iron bedstead, rustled; the pale face of a young female was raised feebly from the pillow; and a faint voice imperfectly articulated the words, 'Let me see the child, and die'.

\*

\*

The surgeon leant over the body, and raised the left hand. 'The old story,' he said, shaking his head: 'no wedding-ring, I see'.

What an excellent example of the power of dress young Oliver Twist was! Wrapped in the blanket which had hitherto formed his only covering, he might have been the child of a nobleman or a beggar. . . . But now that he was enveloped in the old calico robes, which had grown yellow in the same service, he was badged and ticketed, and fell into his place at once—a parish child—the orphan of a workhouse—the humble half-starved drudge—to be cuffed and buffeted through the world,—despised by all, and pitied by none.

Oliver cried lustily. If he could have known that he was an orphan, left to the tender mercies of churchwardens and overseers, perhaps he would have cried the louder.





The  
Foundling  
Museum—  
Brunswick  
Square

# Foundling Hospital (Captain Thomas Coram, 1739)

## Foundling dormitory



## Foundling tokens, left by mothers



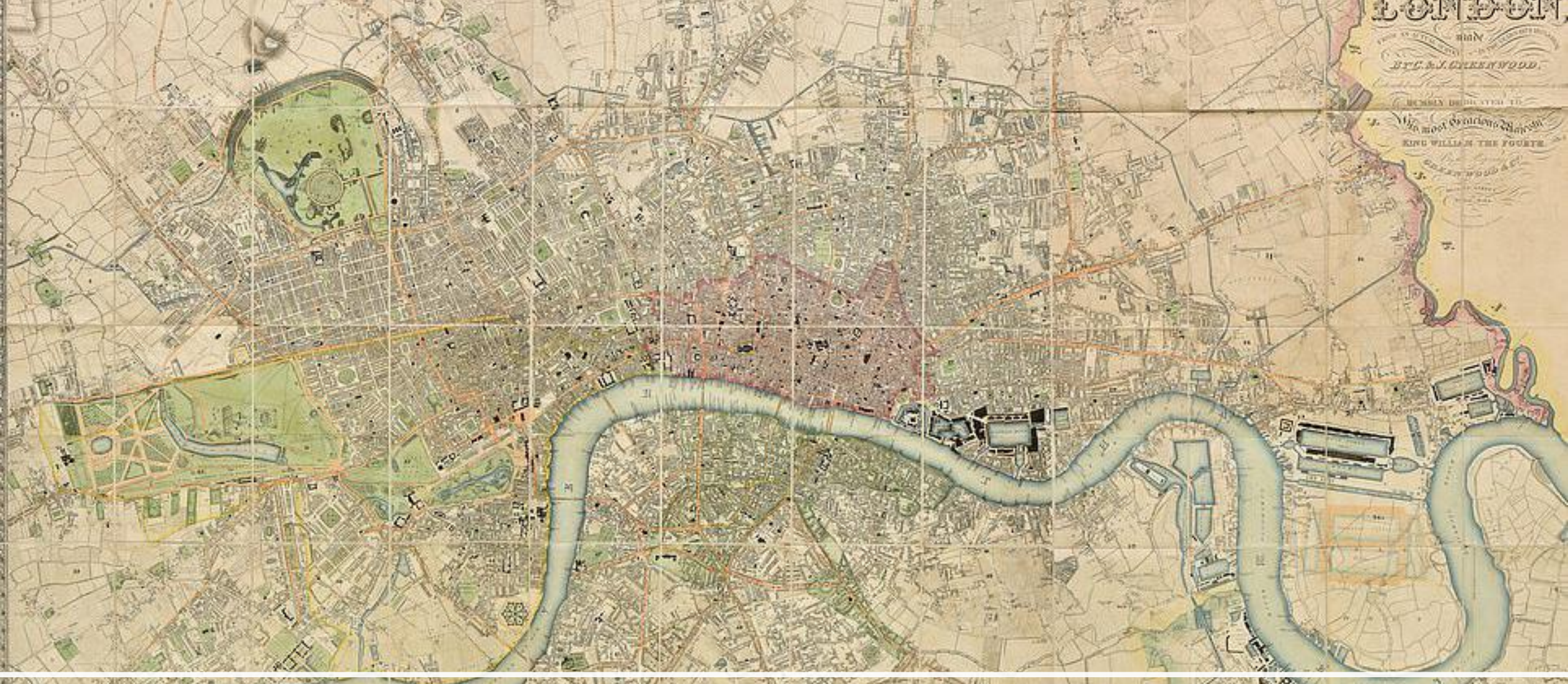
# Supporters: George Frideric Handel and William Hogarth

**Handel gallery and listening library**



**Hogarth, *March of the Guard to Finchley* (1750)**





London in 1830s (map)





# Smithfield: place of execution and meat market

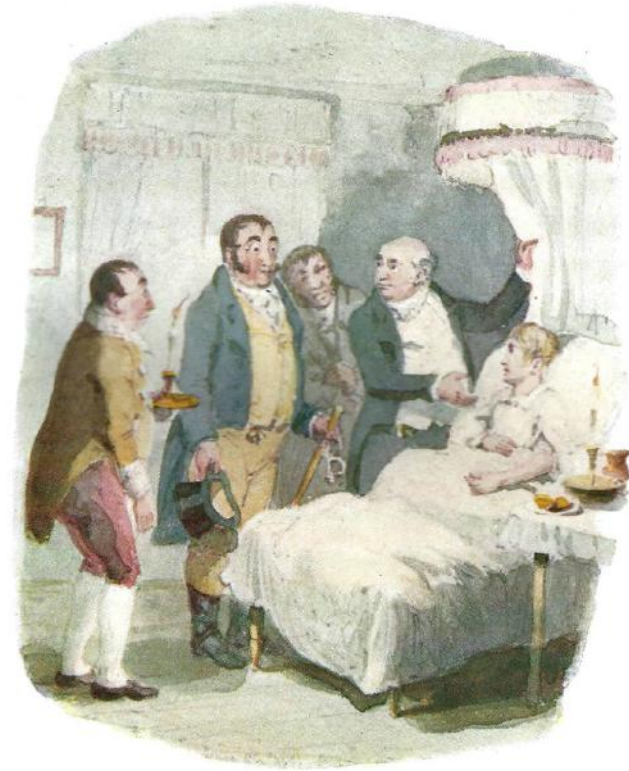


# Oliver in mortal and moral danger

**“Oliver’s window” in Dickens museum**



**Bow St Runners Blathers and Duff interview Oliver (George Cruikshank)**

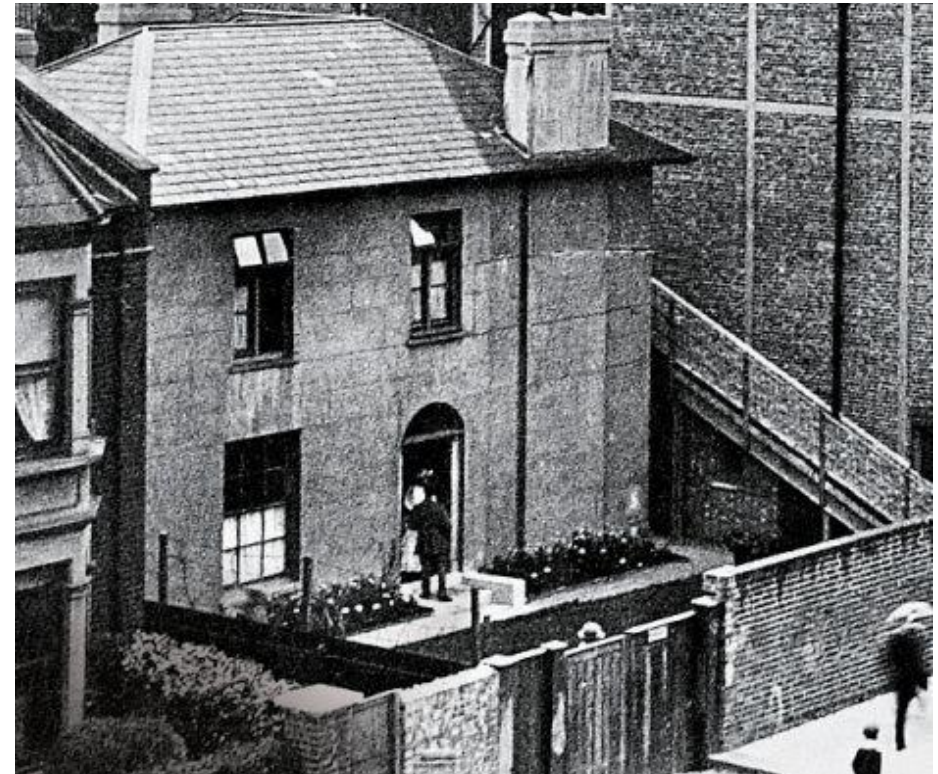


# Fallen women

**Richard Redgrave, “The Outcast”  
(1851), Foundling Museum**



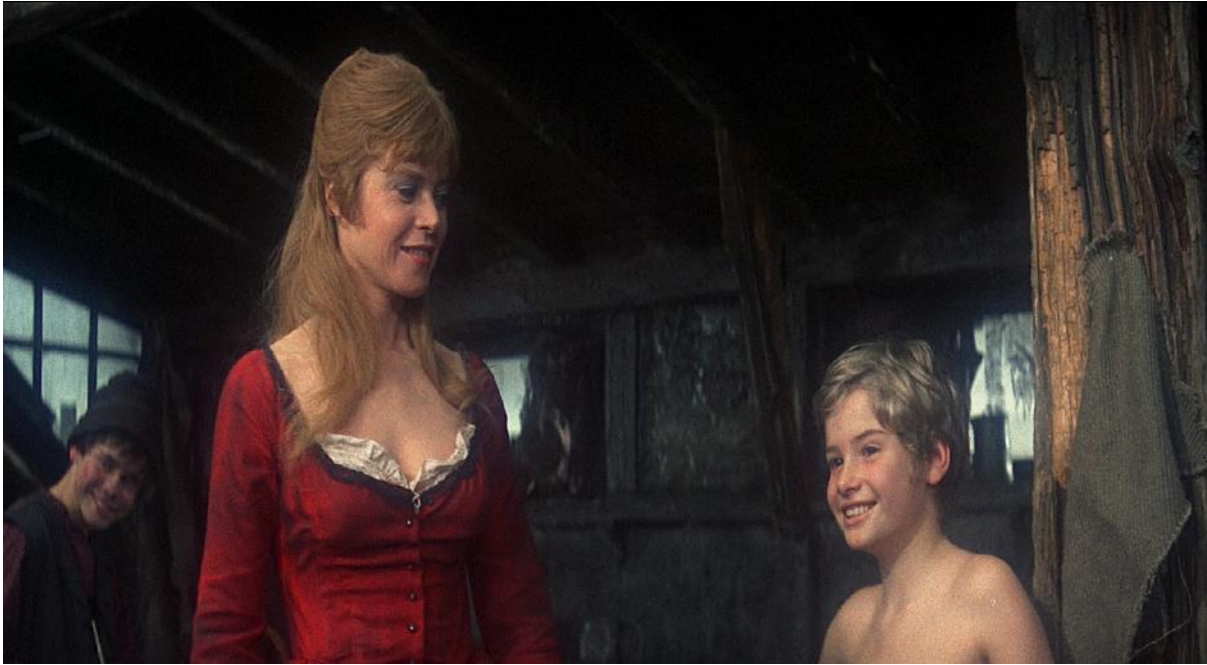
**Urania Cottage**





# Nancy's legend

**Shani Wallace & Mark Lester in  
*Oliver!* (1968)**



**“Nancy’s Steps”**



# One Tun pub (original Three Cripples), Farringdon Road on Saffron Hill



# Murder of Eliza Grimwood, 1838







London, 1840

# Bill Sikes's end: Folly Ditch on Jacob's Island



FOLLY DITCH, JACOB'S ISLAND (see next Chapter).



Elizabeth  
Siddal  
(1829-1862)  
by Dante  
Gabriel  
Rossetti,  
1855



# Elizabeth (Lizzie) Siddal: the poem, the self-portrait

## In an Artist's Studio

One face looks out from all his canvases,  
One selfsame figure sits or walks or leans:  
We found her hidden just behind those screens,  
That mirror gave back all her loveliness.  
A queen in opal or in ruby dress,  
A nameless girl in freshest summer-greens,  
A saint, an angel — every canvas means  
The same one meaning, neither more or less.  
He feeds upon her face by day and night,  
And she with true kind eyes looks back on him,  
Fair as the moon and joyful as the light:  
Not wan with waiting, not with sorrow dim;  
Not as she is, but was when hope shone bright;  
Not as she is, but as she fills his dream.



Christina Rossetti (1856)





*Regina Cordium*  
by Dante Gabriel  
Rossetti (1860)



*Beata Beatrix* by  
Dante Gabriel Rossetti  
(1864-1870)

*Ophelia* by John Everett Millais (1851-52)



But what about  
fallen MEN?

The 1878 Death of  
Enoch Drebber of  
Cleveland, Ohio...





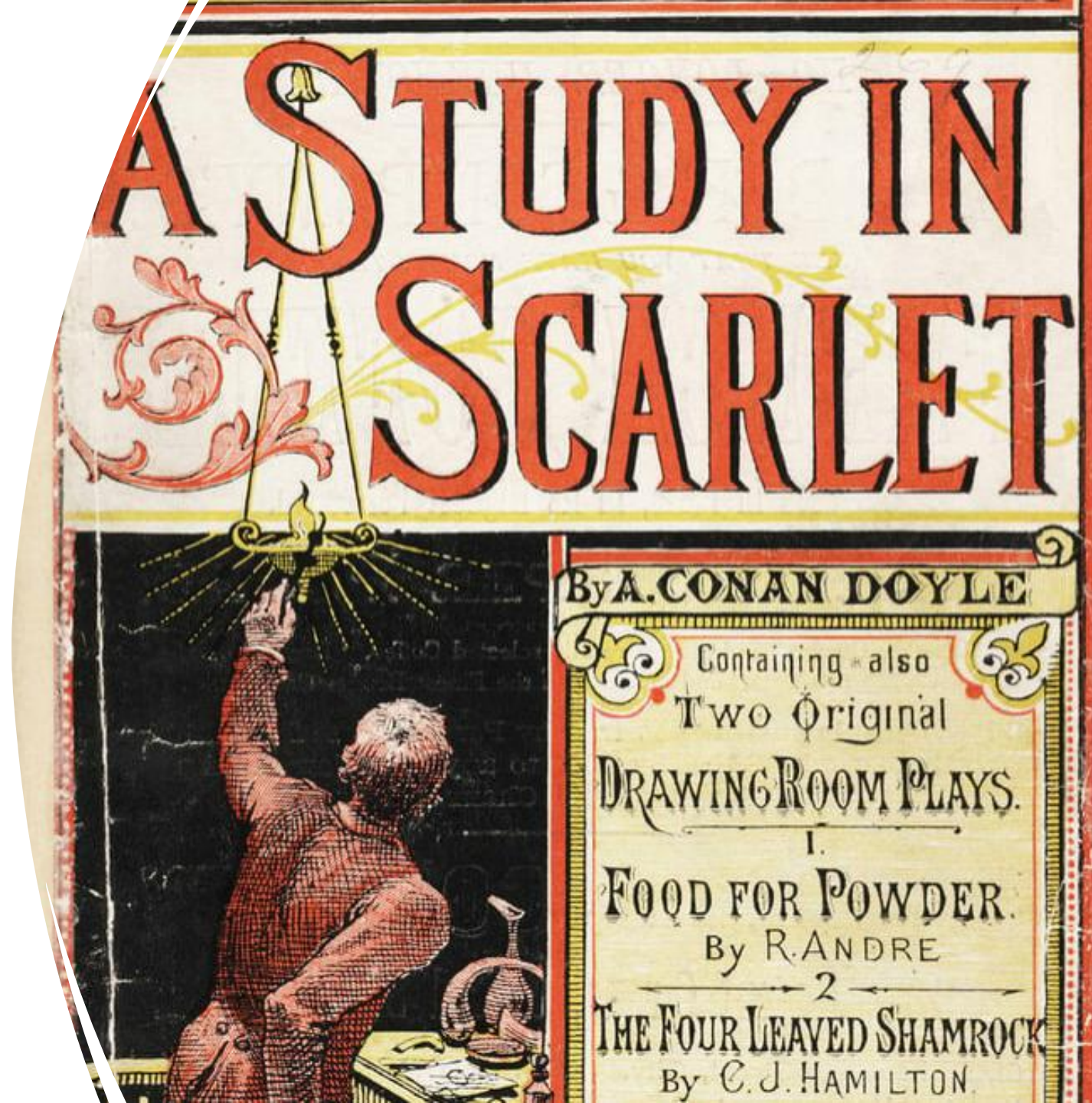
...at No. 3 Lauriston Gardens...

...off the Brixton Road in Lambeth...



...was narrated in  
*A Study in Scarlet*  
(1887)...

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# A STUDY IN SCARLET

By A. CONAN DOYLE

Containing also  
Two Original

DRAWING ROOM PLAYS.

1.

FOOD FOR POWDER.

By R. ANDRE

2

THE FOUR LEAVED SHAMROCK

By C. J. HAMILTON.

...by Arthur  
Conan  
Doyle...








—

...later Sir  
Arthur Ignatius  
Conan Doyle  
KStJ DL  
(1859 –1930)

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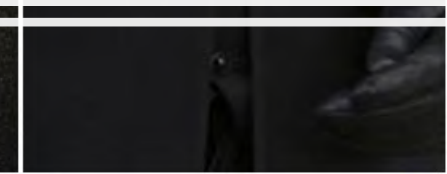
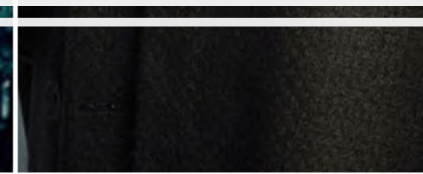
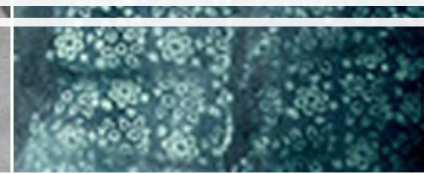
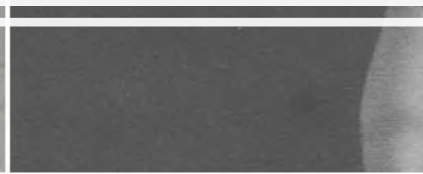
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- ...who was the Jesuit-educated Scottish physician, whaler, optometrist, political reformer, agnostic, forensic chemist, Christian spiritualist, Mason, pro-vaccinationist, cricket bowler, football goalkeeper, parliamentary candidate, Knight of St. John, bodybuilder, boxer, British NRA member, golfer, and skier
  - who introduced us all to...
- 



...the world's most  
famous scientific  
consulting  
detective...




# Mr. Sherlock Holmes





Of Holmes,  
Doyle later said:

- “I tried to build up a scientific detective who solved cases on his own merits and not through the folly of the criminal.”
- 



Doyle also tried to kill Holmes off multiple times, most famously at Reichenbach Falls...

**SHERLOCK HOLMES KEYFRAME : REICHENBACH FALL**



...but Doyle  
kept bringing  
him back by  
popular  
demand.



*A Study in Scarlet*  
introduces us to Holmes  
and to his friend Dr. John  
Watson, who come to  
share a house at 221B  
Baker Street...which  
tourist demand also has  
created!

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Watson, always the narrator of the Holmes stories, describes how, shattered by service in the Second Afghan War of 1878, he returned home to an uncertain future in England:

- **I naturally gravitated to London, that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained. There I stayed for some time at a private hotel in the Strand, leading a comfortless, meaningless existence, and spending such money as I had, considerably more freely than I ought. So alarming did the state of my finances become, that I soon realized that I must either leave the metropolis and rusticate somewhere in the country, or that I must make a complete alteration in my style of living. Choosing the latter alternative, I began by making up my mind to leave the hotel, and to take up my quarters in some less pretentious and less expensive domicile.**



Holmes answers a call from  
Inspectors Lastrade and  
Gregson to the crime  
scene...  
where the German word  
*Rache* (“Revenge”) is  
written in blood.

Although by 1878  
London is home to  
the world's first  
Underground  
Railway (opened  
1863) ...

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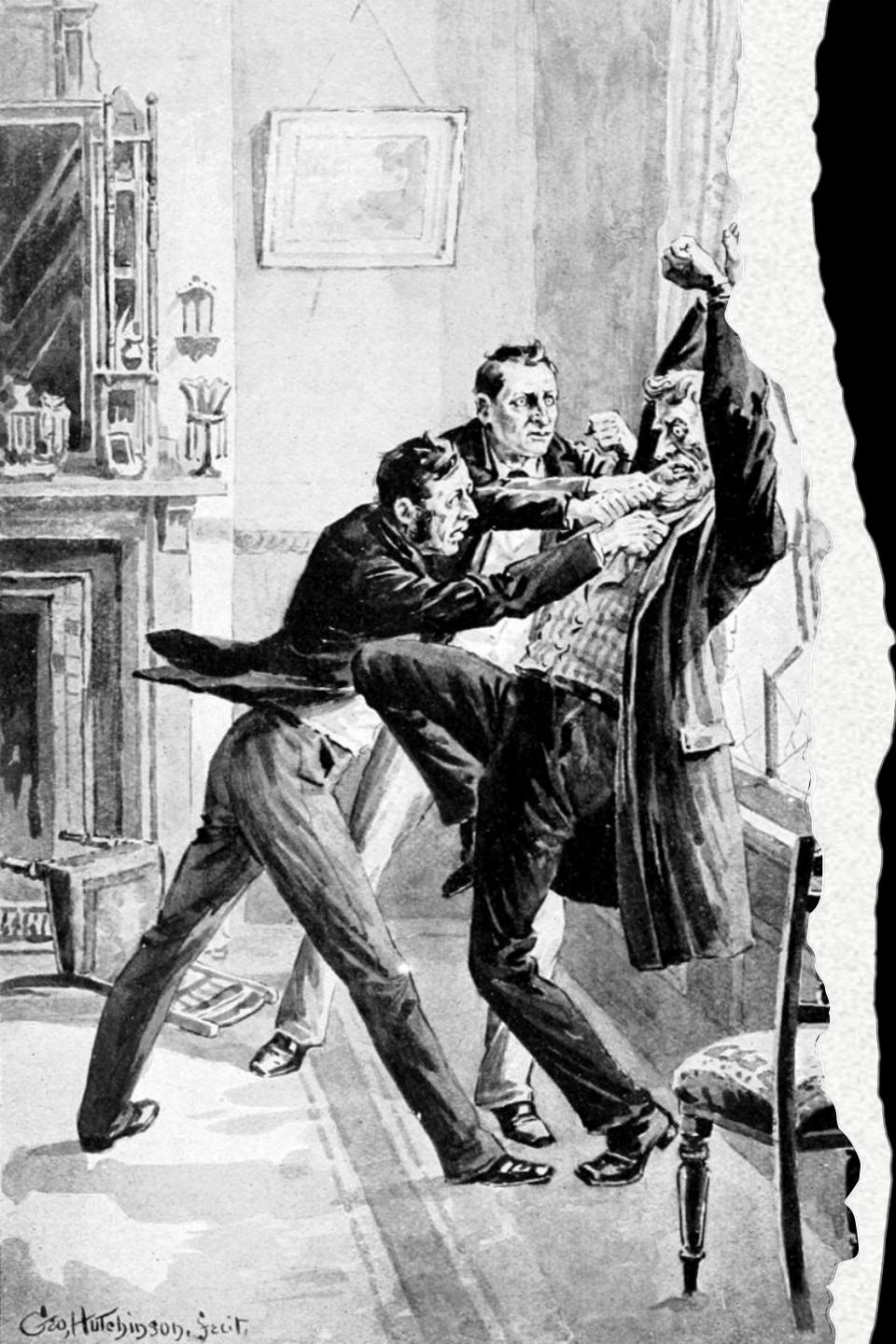




...the plot turns  
on the arrival of  
a hansom cab...

...announced  
by Holmes’  
Dickensian  
street urchin  
assistants, “the  
Baker Street  
Irregulars” led  
by Wiggins...

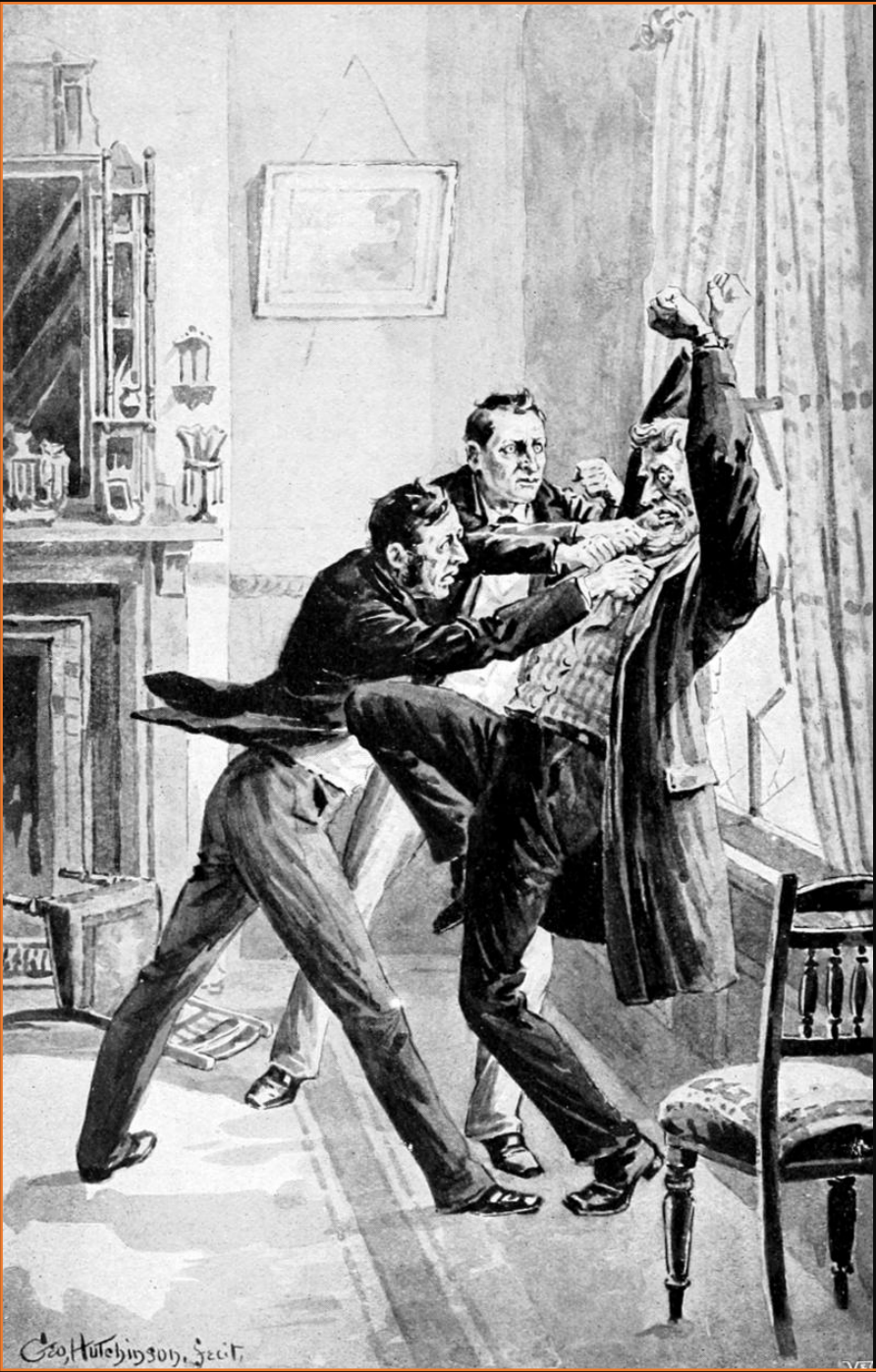




...leading to the arrest of the murderous cabbie, another American (see a pattern?) named Jefferson Hope...

The novella's second half flashes us back to the Very Wild West of 1847-1860, to Utah, a land of murderous Mormons who force young virgins into marriage with the Saints—like the deceased Enoch Drebber of Cleveland, Ohio and of (gasp!) Salt Lake City...breaking the heart and mind of ...





# Jefferson Hope!



Says Holmes to Watson:

- **a study in scarlet, eh? Why shouldn't we use a little art jargon. There's the scarlet thread of murder running through the colourless skein of life, and our duty is to unravel it, and isolate it, and expose every inch of it...**

A photograph of the Tower Bridge in London, England, taken at dusk or dawn. The bridge's two towers are illuminated with warm lights, and the suspension cables are visible against the sky. The bridge spans the River Thames. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, and the water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the lights from the bridge and the sky. The overall mood is serene and slightly somber.

The streets of London are now  
cleared of killer colonials, the City is  
again safe...

...and Queen  
Victoria (c.  
1892) is  
happy!

