



BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

Great Expectations

Great Expectations

Director: David Lean

Production Companies: Cineguild,

Independent Producers

Executive Producer: Anthony Havelock-Allan

Producer: Ronald Neame

Production Manager: Norman Spencer

2nd Unit Directors: Stanley Haynes, Roy Kellino

Assistant Director: George Pollock

Continuity: Margaret Sibley

Adapted for the Screen by: David Lean,

Ronald Neame, Anthony Havelock-Allan

Based on the novel by: Charles Dickens

Director of Photography: Guy Green

Camera Operator: Nigel Huke

Editor: Jack Harris

Production Designer: John Bryan

Art Director: Wilfred Shingleton

Draughtsmen: T. Hopewell Ash, Bill Holmes

Costume Designer: Sophia Harris of Motley

Music Composed/Conducted by: Walter Goehr

With: The National Symphony Orchestra

Dances Arranged by: Suria Magito

Sound Recording: Stanley Lambourne,

Gordon K. McCallum

Sound Editor: Winston Ryder

Studio: Denham Studios

uncredited

Location Manager: John Alderson

2nd Assistant Director: Philip Shipway

3rd Assistant Director: Chick Simpson

2nd Unit 1st Assistant Director: Victor Wark

2nd Unit Continuity: Yvonne Axworthy

Adapted for the Screen With: Kay Walsh,

Cecil McGivern

Director of Photography - Started: Robert Krasker

2nd Unit Director of Photography: Ernest Steward

2nd Unit Camera Operator: Arthur Ibbetson

2nd Camera Operator: Skeets Kelly

2nd Unit 2nd Camera Operator: Alan Hume

Focus Puller: John Howard Godar

Clapper/Loaders: Henry Slagter, Tony Hermes

Stills: Cyril Stanborough

Back Projection: Sid Howell

Models: Douglas Woolsey

Assistant Editor: Marjorie Saunders

2nd Assistant Editor: John Cook

Assistant Art Director: John Elphick

Production Buyer: Frank Hobbs

Costume Designer Assisted by: Margaret Furse

Make-up: Ernie Gasser

Production Mixers: C.C. Stevens, John Dennis

Music Sound Camera: Peter T. Davies

Sound Camera Operators: Fred Goodes,

Harold Rowland

Boom Operator: George Paternoster

Boom Assistant: Mick Stolovich

Maintenance Engineers: Jack Rossiter,

Charles Knott

Dubbing Crew: J.B. Smith, Bill Daniels, John Hood

Assistant Sound Editor: Jack Slade

Sound Effects Recording: John W. Mitchell

Studio: Pinewood Studios

Cast:

John Mills (*Philip Pirrip, 'Pip'*)

Anthony Wager (*Pip as a boy*)

Valerie Hobson (*Estella*)

Jean Simmons (*Estella as a girl*)

Bernard Miles (*Joe Gargery*)

Francis L. Sullivan (*Mr Jaggers*)

Finlay Currie (*Abel Magwitch*)

Martita Hunt (*Miss Havisham*)

Great Expectations was the first of David Lean's two adaptations of Dickens classics (*Oliver Twist* followed in 1948). Lean realised the cinematic potential of the novel more skilfully than his predecessors and most of those that followed him. The result is one of the finest British literary adaptations, and one of the most acclaimed of all British films.

Lean brings Dickens' words to life in a series of memorable set-pieces: Pip's encounter with the convict Magwitch in the churchyard, beautifully foreshadowed by the grim and desolate establishing shots of the Kentish marshes; Pip's first meeting with the eccentric Miss Havisham, and the macabre atmosphere in the offices of Mr Jaggers, the lawyer whose walls are decorated with the death masks of clients he has lost to the gallows.

John Mills, at 38 surprisingly old for the role, is excellent as Pip, although Martita Hunt steals the early scenes, playing Miss Havisham as an imposing if shabby figure, bedecked in crumbling lace and linen. Francis L. Sullivan as Jaggers gives a similarly powerful performance: his voice rolls and booms, and physically he towers over his servile assistant Wemmick (Ivor Barnard).

Talking of the adaptation process, Lean said, 'choose what you want to do in the novel and do it proud. If necessary cut characters. Don't keep every character, just take a sniff of each one.' This somewhat cavalier attitude to classic literature is perhaps a wiser one than that of filmmakers who lack the courage to cut out marginal material. In Lean's case it certainly didn't detract from the audience's enjoyment of what has come to be seen as quintessential 'Dickensian' cinema.

Typical of Lean's careful choices is the retention of Wemmick's Aged Parent: the character serves no real narrative purpose, but the very visual humour of the repeated nodding to the elderly, increasingly deaf 'Aged P' provides an amusing distraction, and preserves a piece of very Dickensian characterisation.

Lean successfully distils a long and complex novel, written in the first person, into a compelling visual narrative covering no more than two hours. In this film, perhaps more than in any other, he makes us care about the characters, and casts the kind of cinematic spell very few directors are capable of, bringing into play a powerful visual narrative that hints at big themes and elemental forces. *Great Expectations* offers a near perfect balance of human sentiment and visual grandeur.

David Parker, BFI Screenonline

A contemporary review

Adapted from Dickens' most dramatic novel, this admirable film retains the main structure of the narrative about the orphan Pip, his unhappy childhood and his youth as a man about town.

The aim of David Lean, director and associate scriptwriter with Ronald Neame, has been to use the visual power of the cinema to make the many dramatic situations in the story vivid, to use the backgrounds of the Romney marshlands and the reconstruction of Dickens' London to full advantage, and to give the persons retained in the film many sensitively conceived touches of character.

Alec Guinness (*Herbert Pocket*)
Ivor Barnard (*Mr Wemmick*)
Freda Jackson (*Mrs Joe Gargery*)
Eileen Erskine (*Biddy*)
George Hayes (*Compeyson, the convict*)
Hay Petrie (*Uncle Pumblechook*)
John Forrest (*pale young gentleman*)
Torin Thatcher (*Bentley Drummle*)
O.B. Clarence (*aged parent*)
John Burch (*Mr Wopsle*)
Richard George (*The Sergeant*)
Grace Denbeigh-Russell (*Mrs Wopsle*)
Everley Gregg (*Sarah Pocket*)
Anne Holland (*relation*)
Frank Atkinson (*Mike*)
Gordon Begg (*night porter*)
Edie Martin (*Mrs Whimple*)
Walford Hyden (*the dancing master*)
Roy Arthur (*galley steersman*)
UK 1946
119 mins
Digital (restoration)

The screening on Wed 17 Apr will be introduced by Jade Evans, AHRC REACH PhD student with QMUL and BFI

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Scenes of surpassing strength are included in the first half-hour of the film, which contains some of the finest cinema yet made in Britain; this covers the story from Magwitch's first meeting with Pip in the windy churchyard to his recapture by the soldiers at night. Pip's terrifying journey back to the churchyard with food when the very cows looming up in the mist seem to accuse him of theft is remarkably effective. Other finely handled episodes include Pip's first visit to Satis House, the death by fire of Miss Havisham, the return of Magwitch and the attempt by Pip to get him out of the country. But not all the film is tense and horrific: there are many scenes of delightful humour, such as the fight with the boy Herbert Pocket, who later becomes Pip's friend and teaches him table manners, and the scenes with the cunning and masterful lawyer, Jaggers. Dickens' excesses of sentiment are avoided in the true feeling with which such moments as the death of Magwitch are handled.

Among the major characters the film owes much to the sincerity of John Mills in the difficult, hesitant part of Pip grown-up, the precision and authority of Francis L. Sullivan's performance as Jaggers, Finlay Currie's excellent and horrific Magwitch, the sentiment of Bernard Miles as Joe Gargery, the gentle nervousness of Alec Guinness, a new actor to the screen, as Herbert Pocket, and the restrained, cunning madness of Martita Hunt's portrayal of Miss Havisham. Nor should the small-scale performances be overlooked, especially those of Ivor Barnard as Wemmick, Freda Jackson as Mrs. Joe, O.B. Clarence as the Aged Parent and Hay Petrie as Uncle Pumblechook. The handling of the children, Anthony Wager and Jean Simmons, is careful, restrained and effective: in Jean Simmons there is an authority of style beyond her years. *Great Expectations* is a unique and reassuring British film.

Monthly Film Bulletin, December 1946