

**DAVID LEAN** 25 March 1903, Croyden, Surrey, England—16 April 1991 (cancer).

*Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:*

“Distinguished British filmmaker of impeccable taste, not nearly as prolific as his contemporaries but a much better craftsman than most. He was noted for the care he lavished upon his films, particularly in evoking time and place and in extracting perfect performances from his casts. Lean entered the film industry in the late 1920s, at first working as a clapper boy for cameramen, later graduating to the cutting room (editing 1938's

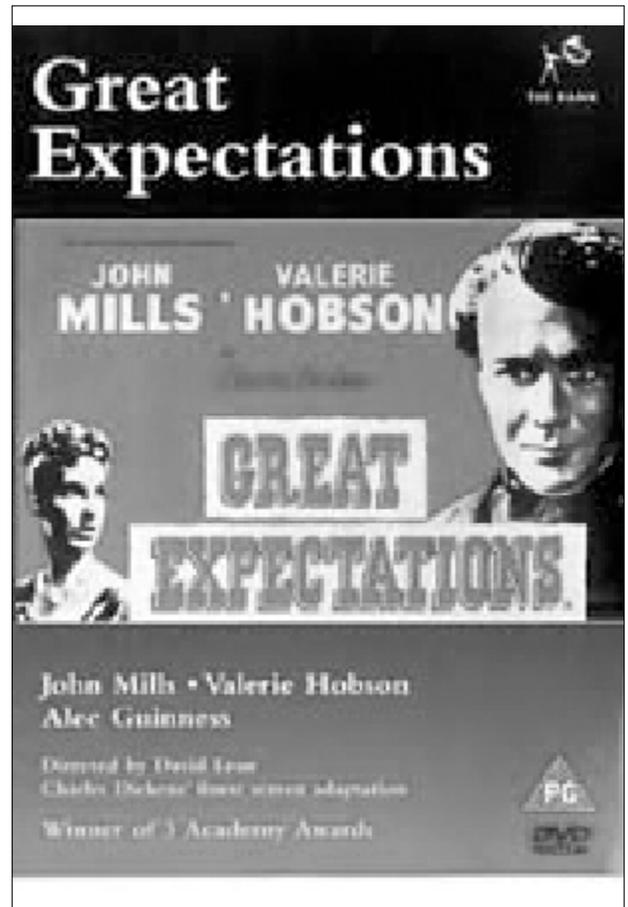
*Pygmalion* 1941's

49th Parallel and 1942's *One of Our Aircraft Is Missing* among others), finally wielding the megaphone (with Noël Coward) on *In Which We Serve*

(1942). The film that cemented his reputation—and cinched his first Oscar nomination—

was *Brief Encounter* (1945), the lyrical, romantic story of a housewife (Celia Johnson) tempted to have an affair with a doctor (Trevor Howard). Lean's two Dickens adaptations, *Great Expectations* (1946) and *Oliver Twist* (1948), are very likely the definitive screen translations of those endearing works; the former netted Lean his second Academy Award nomination for Best Director. The ever-meticulous director chose his subsequent projects—three of which starred his second wife, actress Ann Todd—carefully and bestowed upon them his customary attention to period detail, mood, and characterization. *Summertime* (1955), which starred Katharine Hepburn as an American spinster in Venice, earned Lean another Oscar nomination. *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), his magnum opus up to that time, finally won Lean the Oscar, one of seven the picture received. A commercial as well as critical success, it launched the director on a series of big-budget epics, including *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), his spectacular biopic of the enigmatic WWI hero T. E. Lawrence (played by Peter O'Toole), and *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), one of the screen's classic romances. He won another Oscar for the former and secured another nomination for the latter. He was also nominated for directing, adapting, and editing *A Passage to India* (1984), a sumptuous adaptation of E. M. Forster's novel.”

**GUY GREEN** (5 November 1913, Somerset, England) is a cinematographer (22 films) turned director (25 theatrical and made-for-TV films). Some of the films he directed are *Luther* (1973), *Walk in the Spring Rain* (1970), *The Magus* (1968), *A Patch of Blue* (1965), *Diamond Head* (1963) and *The Mark* (1961). Some of the films he shot were *I Am a Camera* (1955), *The Beggar's Opera* (1953), *Captain Horatio Hornblower* (1951), *Oliver Twist* (1948), and *Spellbound* (1940).



**JOHN MILLS** (22 February 1908, Felixstowe, Sussex, England) appeared in 122 films, beginning with *The Midshipmaid* (1932) and most recently *Bright Young Things* (2003). Some of the others are *Hamlet* (1996), *Frankenstein* (1993 TV), *Gandhi* (1982), *The Big Sleep* (1978), *Ryan's Daughter* (1970), *Swiss Family Robinson* (1960), *The End of the Affair* (1955), *In Which We Serve* (1942), *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* (1939), and *Britannia of Billingsgate* (1933). He won an Best Actor in a Supporting Role Oscar for *Ryan's Daughter* (1970).

**JEAN SIMMONS** (31 January 1929, London). *Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:* “A teenaged dance student plucked from her school to play Margaret Lockwood's precocious sister in *Give Us the Moon* (1944), the winsome,

darkhaired Simmons instantly enchanted British audiences. She remained in films and made a name for herself in such major British productions as *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1946), *Great Expectations* (also 1946, as the spoiled, selfish Estella), *Black Narcissus* (also 1946, as a sultry native beauty), *Hamlet* (1948, playing Ophelia to Laurence Olivier's great Dane and earning a Best Supporting Actress Oscar nomination), *The Blue Lagoon* (1949), and *So Long at the Fair* (1950), among others.

Simmons married screen star Stewart Granger in 1950 and went with him to Hollywood, where she signed first with Howard Hughes and then with 20th Century-Fox. In short order she was toplining such major films as *Androcles and the Lion* (1952), *Angel Face*, *Affair With a Stranger*, *The Actress* (playing a young Ruth Gordon),

*Young Bess* (as Queen Elizabeth I), *The Robe* (all 1953), *The Egyptian*, *Demetrius and the Gladiators*, *Desirée* (all 1954), *Guys and Dolls* (1955, in one of her best-remembered roles, as Sarah Brown, costarring with Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando), *Hilda Crane* (1956), *Until They Sail* (1957), *The Big Country* (1958), and *This Earth Is Mine* (1959). Simmons divorced Granger in 1960, and almost immediately married writer-director Richard Brooks, who cast her as Sister Sharon opposite Burt Lancaster in *Elmer Gantry* (1960), a memorable adaptation of the Sinclair Lewis novel. That same year she costarred with Kirk Douglas in Stanley Kubrick's *Spartacus* and played a would-be home-wrecker opposite Cary Grant in *The Grass Is Greener*. Off the screen for a few years, she captivated moviegoers with a brilliant performance as the mother in *All the Way Home* (1963), a literate, tasteful adaptation of James Agee's *A Death in the Family*. After that, however, she found quality projects somewhat harder to come by....She has remained visible on television, in such TV movies as *Valley of the Dolls* (1981) and "Perry Mason: The Case of the Lost Love" (1987), and in a miniseries of "Great Expectations" (1989) in which she played Miss Havisham! Simmons also appeared in the short-lived revival of the gothic soap opera "Dark Shadows" (1991). A feature-film "comeback" in 1988, consisting of roles in *Going Undercover* and *The Dawning* only pointed to an appalling paucity of suitable roles for this stillentrancing actress." She appeared notably in *How to Make an American Quilt* (1995).

**ALEC GUINNESS** (2 April 1914, Marleybone, London, England—5 August 2000, Midhurst, Sussex, England, liver cancer) last appeared on the screen in a 1996 made-for-tv drama, "Eskimo Day." His role as Herbert in *Great Expectations* was his first screen performance (if you don't count his 1934 extra part in an orchestra scene in *Evensong*). In recent years he came to general fame for his role as Obi-Wan Kenobi in *Star Wars*, a role and movie he loathed because of "those bloody awful, banal lines." He talked George Lucas into killing the character off in the film so he wouldn't have to do sequels. He was superb in two tv miniseries based on John LeCarré novels, "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy" (1980) and "Smiley's People" (1982). Some of his notable film roles are *Kafka* (1991), *Little Dorrit* (1988), *Murder by Death* (1976), *The Comedians* (1967), *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Our Man in Havana* (1959), *The Horse's Mouth* (1958), *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), *The Ladykillers* (1955), *The Captain's Paradise* (1953), *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951), *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949 in which he played 8 roles) and *Oliver Twist* (1948). He was nominated for a best

supporting actor for *Little Dorrit* and *Star Wars*, won an honorary Oscar in 1980, nominated for best screenplay for *The Horse's Mouth*, won an Oscar for best actor in a leading role for *Bridge on the River Kwai*, and nominated for best actor in a leading role for *Lavender Hill Mob*.

**CHARLES DICKENS** (from The Charles Dickens Page, <http://www.fidnet.com/~dap1955/dickens/>) "was born on Friday, February 7, 1812 at No. 1 Mile End Terrace, Landport, Portsmouth. His father, John Dickens, was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office. In 1814 John was transferred to Somerset House in London. In 1817 John moved his family to Chatham and worked in the naval dockyard. It was here, at Chatham in the Medway Valley, that Charles experienced his happiest childhood memories. John was transferred back to the London office and moved his family to Camden Town in 1822. John

**Director** David Lean

**Novel** Charles Dickens

**Adaptation** Anthony Havelock-Allan, David Lean, Cecil McGivern, Ronald Neame, Kay Walsh

**Producer** Ronald Neame

**Original Music** Walter Goehr, Kenneth Pakeman

**Cinematographer** Guy Green

**Film Editor** by Jack Harris

**Production Designer** John Bryan

**Art Director** by Wilfred Shingleton

**Costume Designer** Sophie Harris

Cineguild, Rank Film Organization. 118 min

John Mills....Pip as a young man

Anthony Wager....Pip as a boy

Valerie Hobson....Estella/Molly

Jean Simmons....Young Estella

Bernard Miles....Joe Gargery, Blacksmith

Francis L. Sullivan....Mr. Jiggers

Finlay Currie....Magwitch, the convict

Martita Hunt....Miss Havisham

Alec Guinness....Herbert Pocket

Ivor Barnard....Mr. Wemmick, Jiggers' Assistant

Freda Jackson....Mrs. Joe Gargery, Pip's sister

Eileen Erskine....Biddy, Joe's Housekeeper

George Hayes.... Convict

Hay Petrie....Uncle Pumblechook

John Forrest....The Pale Young Gentleman (Herbert Pocket)

Torin Thatcher....Bentley Drummle, Estella's suitor

O.B. Clarence....The Aged Parent

#### **Academy Awards**

Won: Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, Black-and-White

John Bryan, Wilfred Shingleton

Best Cinematography, Black-and-White Guy Green

Nominated Best Director David Lean, Best Picture Ronald

Neame, Best Writing, Screenplay David Lean, Ronald Neame,

Anthony Havelock-Allan

Dickens, continually living beyond his means, was imprisoned for debt at the Marshalsea debtor's prison in Southwark in 1824. 12 year old Charles was removed from school and sent to

work at a boot-blackening factory earning six shillings a week to help support the family. Charles considered this period to be the most terrible time in his life and would later write that he This childhood poverty and feelings of abandonment, although unknown to his readers until after his death, would be a heavy influence on Dickens' later views on social reform and the world he would create through his fiction. Dickens would go on to write 15 major novels and countless short stories and articles before his death on June 9, 1870. The inscription on his

### **Bosley Crowther, May 23, 1947 *The New York Times***

“Here, in a perfect motion picture, made in England (where it should have been made), the British have done for Dickens what they did for Shakespeare with *Henry V*; they have proved that his works have more life in them than almost anything now written for the screen....Somehow, the fullness of Dickens, of his stories and characters—his humor and pathos and vitality and all his brilliant command of atmosphere—has never been so illustrated as it is in this wonderful film, which can be safely recommended as screen storytelling at its best....All of them have managed to frame a Dickens portrait gallery to the life and to make real a tale of humble virtue elevated above snobbery and hate.”

### **Roger Ebert, August 22, 1999**

“One of the great things about Charles Dickens is the way his people colonize your memory. I wonder if there’s any writer except Shakespeare who has created more characters whose names we remember, and whose types seem so true to human nature.”

“David Lean’s *Great Expectations* (1946) has been called the greatest of all the Dickens films, and does what few movies based on great books can do: Creates pictures on the screen that do not clash with the images already existing in our minds.”

“The Lean version makes minor repairs on the ending to satisfy the sentimental requirements of audiences, which means that those familiar with the novel will not necessarily know how the film ends.”

“The atmosphere of the mansion and its deranged occupant no doubt inspired Billy Wilder’s *Sunset Boulevard*, made four years later, with its aging movie queen in gloomy exile inside her mansion in Beverly Hills.”

“The only misstep in casting may have been the choice of John Mills as the adult Pip. Mills was 38 when the film was made, and Pip is supposed to be 20 going on 21. It’s a jolt when the

### **The end of Dickens’s novel:**

‘I have often thought of you,’ said Estella.

‘Have you?’

‘Of late, very often. There was a long hard time when I kept far from me, the remembrance of what I had thrown away when I was quite ignorant of its worth. But, since my duty has not been incompatible with the admission of that remembrance, I have given it a place in my heart.’

‘You have always held your place in *my* heart,’ I answered.

And we were silent again, until she spoke.

‘I little thought,’ said Estella, ‘that I should take leave of you in taking leave of this spot. I am very glad to do so.’

‘Glad to part again, Estella? To me, parting is a painful thing. To me, the remembrance of our last parting has been ever mournful and painful.’

wondered ‘how I could have been so easily cast away at such an age’.

tombstone in Poet’s Corner, Westminster Abbey reads: ‘He was a sympathiser to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England’s greatest writers is lost to the world.’” Another good Dickens website is <http://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/Dickens.html>

film cuts from young Pip (Anthony Wager), who is about 16, to the grown Pip, who is supposed to be only 4 years older but frankly looks middle-aged. (Guinness, who plays Pip’s contemporary Herbert Pocket, was 32; this is his first substantial screen role.)”

“Lean was an editor for seven years before directing his first film, and his career stands as an argument for the theory that editors make better directors than cinematographers do; the cinematographer is seduced by the look of a film, while the editor is faced with the task of making sense out of it as a story.... What the earlier films have is greater economy, and thus greater energy, in their storytelling. The later Lean worked more like a former cinematographer than a former editor.”

“David Lean (1908-1991) was considered by many the greatest British filmmaker of his time, although a better case can be made for Michael Powell, for whom he worked as an editor.”

[Lean also worked for Powell as an actor in *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946). Catch this film on Monday December 1<sup>st</sup> at the Amherst theater, 7:30pm.]

‘But you said to me,’ returned Estella, very earnestly, ‘“God bless you, God forgive you!” And if you could say that to me then, you will not hesitate to say that to me now -- now, when suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but -- I hope -- into a better shape. Be as considerate and good to me as you were, and tell me we are friends.’

‘We are friends,’ said I, rising and bending over her, as she rose from the bench.

‘And will continue friends apart,’ said Estella.

I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so, the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw no shadow of another parting from her.

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Join us next week, Tuesday September 30, for Robert Mitchum, Jane Greer, Kirk Douglas and Rhonda Fleming in Jacques Tourneur's classic film noir, *Out of the Past*.

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