

## Charles Dickens Museum

### **Audio Transcript: Mamie Dickens on Dickens's tidy nature**

There never existed, I think, in all the world, a more thoroughly tidy or methodical creature than was my father. He was tidy in every way—in his mind, in his handsome and graceful person, in his work, in keeping his writing table drawers, in his large correspondence, in fact in his whole life.

I remember that my sister and I occupied a little garret room in Devonshire Terrace, at the very top of the house. He had taken the greatest pains and care to make the room as pretty and comfortable for his two little daughters as it could be made. He was often dragged up the steep staircase to this room to see some new print or some new ornament which we children had put up, and he always gave us words of praise and approval. He encouraged us in every possible way to make ourselves useful, and to adorn and beautify our rooms with our own hands, and to be ever tidy and neat. I remember that the adornment of this garret was decidedly primitive, the unframed prints

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being fastened to the wall by ordinary black or white pins, whichever we could get. But, never mind, if they were put up neatly and tidily they were always “excellent,” or “quite slap-up” as he used to say. Even in those early days, he made a point of visiting every room in the house once each morning, and if a chair was out of its place, or a blind not quite straight, or a crumb left on the floor, woe betide the offender.