Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was one of the greatest authors of his time because his writing was unlike anything anyone had ever seen. He used his own life experiences and incorporated them into his books.

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born on February 7th in 1812. He was born to John and Elizabeth Dickens. Charles’ early childhood was a rather rough one because his dad was sent to jail because of his debt. After his dad went to jail his mother did not have enough money to keep him in school so at the age of twelve he started working in a factory (Warren’s Blacking Factory). Most people believe that this is where his dark side of his writing comes from. Being alone and abandoned influenced him to become one of the best authors of all time.

After Charles had worked in the factory for three years he was finally able to go back to school because of a family inheritance his father received. He went back to school at the Wellington House Academy. In May shortly after he had been back in school he got a job at the law firm of Ellis and Blackmore as being a law clerk. He didd tasks every day such as keeping the cash fund, running errands, and delivering documents. After working as a clerk for less than a year he took another job at the law firm of Charles Molley.

After working with law for two to three years he found out that this really was not for him and he wanted to find another thing to do to make a living. The next job he took was as a court stenographer. To become a stenographer you have to learn a system called shorthand writing. A normal person would usually take around three years to master the system, but for Charles it only took him three months. With his excellent
memory he began his new job as a stenographer in 1829. In 1830 he met his first love Maria Beadnell. After he had worked for the court for a little less than two years he became a shorthand reporter in 1831. He became well known for his rapid and accurate courtroom reporting. During all of his reports and work in the court room, he felt that he would be very successful as an actor. He was so focused on becoming one that he had set up and audition. During the day of his audition at the Lyceum Theater he was very sick and was not able to go. If it weren’t for his sickness on that day I think his career could have been a lot different and he may have turned out to be an actor not an author.

In 1833 his relationship ended with Maria and this is where his writing career really began. He started writing sketches or in today’s world these would be known as essays. Almost a year after the end of his relationship with Maria he met his future wife Catherine. Nearly a year after they met they were already engaged and were ready for marriage. In 1836 the first chapters of The Pickwick Papers are published and he marries Catherine Hogarth. Nine months after their marriage the first of their ten kids (Charles Culliford Boz Dickens) is born.

After the birth of his first child he travels to Yorkshire with Hablot Browne to see the boarding schools. Soon after he has his first daughter (Mary). In 1838 the publication of Nicholas Nickleby begins. Over the next three years from 1839 to 1842 he publishes two books and has two more kids. Late in 1842 Charles and Catherine travel to America and then he begins work on Martin Chuzzlewit. The next year one of the most important stories of his career as an author is published (A Christmas Carol). A Christmas Carol was eventually made into a movie which just tells you about how successful it was as a book.
The story is about an old man named Mr. Scrooge who is very mean and self-centered. The story takes place around Christmas time or right in the middle of the holiday season. One night Mr. Scrooge goes to bed; he is visited by three ghosts. The ghost of the past, present, and future. Each ghost that visits him teaches him a different lesson and how he can change himself. The ghost of the past shows him all of the terrible things he has done and also all of the good things that could have happened to him had he not been so selfish. The ghost of the present shows him how he is only focused on money and doesn’t truly care about other people. The ghost of the future shows him what is going to happen to him if he does not change his ways and start being a better person. The movie is very good and it also has a very good meaning. I would highly recommend it to anyone that likes to learn about life and the many lessons.

Over the next two years in his life he has two more children and he also travels to Italy. In 1846 Charles and his family take a trip to Switzerland and the publication of Dombey and Son begins. In 1847 he has another child (Sydney). Over the next year his sister (Fanny) dies and his last Christmas book is published (The Haunted Man).

During the next two years he has two more children and the publication of the book David Copperfield begins. In 1850 he has his ninth child (Dora). In 1851 only eight months after Dora is born she dies. In the same year Catherine Dickens also suffers a nervous collapse. With all of this going on in Charles life he doesn’t know what to make of it. Soon after all of these events had occurred his father (John) dies.
During 1851 it had to be one of the hardest times in his life considering his father and his most recently born daughter die. I can’t imagine what he had to go through and how he was able to overcome it and continue creating such beautiful stories. Two years after the death of his father and his daughter he has his tenth and final child (Edward).

The next story that was published in 1854 was appropriately titled Hard Times. He was going through one of the hardest times in his life loosing some of the people that he was very close to and who he loved very much. A year after in 1855 he has a reunion with his ex-girlfriend. In his words he thought that the reunion was “disappointing”.

In 1856 he purchases Gad’s Hill Place. The reason that Charles had purchased this home was because when he was little him and his father took a walk through Kent and they both saw the house together. Charles was astonished by the house and his father told him if you work hard and you preserver you can get anything you want.

A year after the purchase of his new home he separated from his wife Catherine. In 1859 another well known story was published (A Tale of Two Cities). In 1860 his daughter Katie gets married and ten days later his brother Alfred dies.

Another interesting detail that most people don’t know about Charles is that he burned all of his personal papers. Now I can bet you are thinking what did he have to hide? There was one main factor that caused him to burn all of his personal papers. The divorce of his wife in 1858 was a very public matter, so public that it made him develop a fear. Another thing that a lot of people did not know was that he had a mistress (Ellen). If the press had found out about this relationship I can assure you that it would have
created a scandal. Another reason for the burning of the papers would have been because he did not want the details of his personal life going public.

When he was twelve years old he worked in a shoe factory and he was deeply scarred by some of the incidents that happened there and would almost never talk about them. I believe that he did this to cover up some of the unclear details that we did not yet have information about. Had he not done this I am sure that to this day we would have a lot more information about Charles and the way he thought.

1863 to 1865 death seems to be the common theme. Over this time period Charles looses his mother (Elizabeth) and also his son (Walter). In 1865 Charles was involved with the Staplehurst railway accident.

In 1867 Charles tours America for the second time and in 1868 he gives his first reading of the story (Murder of Nancy). In 1869 Charles is ordered by the doctors to discontinue his readings which leads him to start writing The Mystery of Edwin Drood. One year later in 1870 he gives his final public reading and publication of The Mystery of Edwin Drood begins. On June 9th in 1870 Charles John Huffam Dickens dies at his home.

Charles is one of the best author’s of all time in my eyes. He accomplished so much in such a short life. If you think about it he was only fifty-eight when he died, which really isn’t that old considering some people live to be one hundred. He had ten children that alone is a huge accomplishment. Talk about leaving a legacy. It really is amazing to finally understand and know what happened in his life from start to finish. He was not only a great man but also one of the best authors known to man.
Citations


