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Biography of Charles Dickens

Regarded as the greatest English novelist of the Victorian era, Charles John Huffam Dickens, or better known as Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812 in Portsea (now known as Portsmouth), a city located in Hampshire, England and is about 70 miles away from Southwest London. Charles was the second of eight children of John Dickens (1786–1851), a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, and his wife Elizabeth Dickens (1789–1863). The Dickens family moved to London in 1814 and two years later to Chatham, Kent, where Charles spent his early childhood years. However, due to financial problems, the Dickens family returned to London in 1822, where they settled in Camden Town, a poor neighborhood in London.

When Dickens was 12 years old, his father was in debt and eventually imprisoned in Marshalsea debtor's prison in 1824. At the age of 15, in May 1827, Dickens actually ended his formal education, which was when he left Wellington House Academy and entered the world of work as a legal clerk at the firm of Ellis and Blackmore. Then in 1833, Dickens began contributing short stories and essays to magazines. *A Dinner at Popular Walk* was Dickens' first published story; appeared in *Monthly Magazine* in December 1833. In 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of the editor of the *Evening Chronicle*. Together they had 10 children before they separated in 1858.

The Pickwick Papers, Dickens' first novel, were then published in monthly installments from March 1836 to November 1837. Then, following the success of *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens began a full-time career as a novelist, producing

works of increasing complexity at an astonishing rate, such as *Oliver Twist* (1837-39), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-39), *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge* as part of the *Master Humphrey's Clock* series (1840-41). Five Dickens' Christmas book series are as followed, namely *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *The Chimes* (1844), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845), *The Battle of Life* (1846), and *The Haunted Man* (1848). After brief stays in Italy (1844) and Switzerland (1846), Dickens continued his success with *Dombey and Son* (1848). In 1851, Dickens moved to Tavistock House. It was there that he wrote *Bleak House* (1852-53), *Hard Times* (1854), and *Little Dorrit* (1857).

In the last years of his life, Dickens' health declined due to the large amount of reading he did. He then settled in Gad's Hill and started working on *Edwin Drood*, which he was never able to finish. Charles Dickens died at his home on June 9, 1870 after suffering a stroke. Against his wish to be buried in Rochester Cathedral, he was buried in Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey, and the inscription on his grave 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.*"

Source:

A short biography of Charles Dickens. (n.d.). Retrieved on 25th May 2022, from <https://www.myenglishpages.com/english/reading-charles-dickens-biography.php>

Synopsis of the Novel “*A Christmas Carol*”

Ebenezer Scrooge was a stingy and cold-hearted businessman. On Christmas Eve, which supposedly spent with the family, he kept his business going, sitting in his cold office, insulting charity workers, refusing dinner invitations from his nephew Fred, and over-employing his employee, Bob Cratchit. Then, at night, something miraculous happened. His former co-worker, Jacob Marley, who had been dead for seven years, suddenly came to visit him in the form of a ghost. He came to warn Scrooge of his nature and possibly saved him from the same fate (become a wandering ghost forever). He told him that the Three Spirits would come to him that night.

Scrooge fell asleep, but when he woke up, he thought everything was just a dream, until found that The Ghost of Christmas Past had arrived. It took the form of an old but young little figure. The Ghost of Christmas Past then took Scrooge back in time and showed his development from a lonely but still happy boy, to a young man with traces of greed that began to deny the affections of his life. On this journey, Scrooge also cried because he remembered himself being neglected in the past, and with this, Scrooge’s journey with the Ghost of Past Christmas was ended.

Scrooge then went back to his house. However, not long after, he was visited by The Ghost of Christmas Present, who took the form of a giant with a life span of one day. He showed Scrooge life then filled with Christmas joy, and brought him to the Cratchit family’s house. The Ghost of Christmas Present told Scrooge that unless the future was changed, Cratchit’s crippled and kind-hearted

son, Tiny Tim, will die. The Ghost also shows him Christmas dinner at Fred's house. After that, Scrooge then saw two children, a boy and a girl, dressed in rags, crawling out of the Ghost's robes. The Ghost of Christmas Present also introduced them as 'Ignorance' and 'Want'. It warned Scrooge to beware of the Ignorance, and with this, Scrooge's journey with The Ghost of Christmas Present was ended.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come also came in a quiet form and dressed in black. It took Scrooge to the future, where people discussed someone's death; however, no one seemed saddened by the death, and most were happy about it. Scrooge did not know who the dead man was at first. He knew that Tiny Tim should have died by then, but the Cratchit family kept their union and love alive. Scrooge finally discovered that he was the man who died, and his death made many people happy. Scrooge did not want that and hoped that the future he witnessed then could be changed. He also promises to use lessons from the past, present, and future in applying the spirit of Christmas, and with this, Scrooge's journey with The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come was ended.

In the morning, Scrooge woke up in his bedroom and realized that it was Christmas Day. Scrooge also showed his new self to people. He smiled and was friendly to everyone he met, sent a large turkey to Cratchits, made a sizeable donation to a charity he had previously despised, and had a great time at Fred's. It did not stop there, the next day, Scrooge gave Cratchit a raise. Scrooge also continued his good manners after Christmas, befriending everyone and becoming a second father to Tiny Tim, who did not die in the end. He never saw a ghost again, but kept the spirit of Christmas alive in his heart.