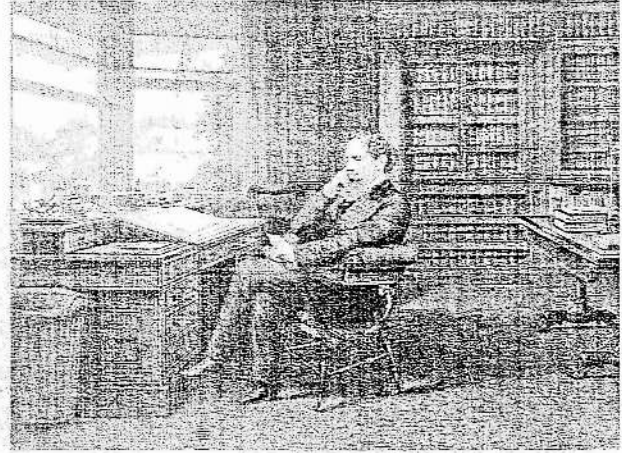


Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was one of the greatest English novelists. He was an intelligent boy at school, but when he was only twelve, his father was sent to prison for his debts and he had to start working in a factory to help his family. The factory work was hard and far from home and after work he had to walk home through London. He wrote about these experiences in many of his novels. When his family's financial situation improved, he finished his education and became a clerk. He started working for a newspaper at the age of 16, became a parliamentary reporter and was soon a journalist for various papers. He also started writing creative short stories that were published in magazines.



His stories are a lively picture of life in Victorian England in the middle of the 1800s. Some are about children, especially unfortunate children and orphans. His books were not only a form of entertainment, but also a way to educate the readers. In his first novels, he was very worried about the social problems of his time, above all poverty and injustice. At the end of the books he expressed hope for the improvement of the conditions of the poor, thanks to less meanness, egoism and hypocrisy. However, in his last books there is more social criticism and less optimism. Among his most famous books there are *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* and *A Christmas Carol*. Some of his novels have been made into films, such as *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol*.

