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عنوان المحاضرة : Charles Dickens: life and career

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Charles Dickens: life and career

Life of Charles Dickens (1812–1870)

Birth & Childhood:

Born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, England.

His father, John Dickens, worked in the Navy Pay Office but often struggled with debt.

In 1824, his father was sent to debtor's prison, and young Dickens (aged 12) was forced to work in a blacking factory (shoe polish warehouse). This harsh childhood left a lasting mark on him and influenced much of his writing.

Education & Early Struggles:

Dickens had limited formal education but read widely and developed a strong love for storytelling.

After leaving the factory, he studied shorthand and worked as a court reporter and later as a journalist.

Family Life:

Married Catherine Hogarth in 1836. They had 10 children but separated later.

Dickens was known for his active social life, lectures, and travels across Europe and America.

Death:

He died on June 9, 1870, at age 58, leaving his last novel *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* unfinished.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey (Poets' Corner).

Career of Charles Dickens

Early Success:

His first major success came with *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–1837), a humorous serial that made him instantly famous.

Famous Novels:

Oliver Twist (1837–1839) – exposed the cruelty of workhouses and child poverty.

Nicholas Nickleby (1838–1839) – criticized abusive schools.

A Christmas Carol (1843) – one of his most famous works, spreading a spirit of generosity and Christmas cheer.

David Copperfield (1849–1850) – partly autobiographical, reflecting his own struggles.

Bleak House (1852–1853) – attacked the inefficiency of the legal system.

Hard Times (1854) – a critique of industrial society and utilitarianism.

Great Expectations (1860–1861) – about social class, ambition, and personal growth.

Our Mutual Friend (1864–1865) – centered on wealth, greed, and love.

Style & Themes:

Known for social criticism, humor, vivid characters, and serialized storytelling.

His works highlighted issues like poverty, child labour, injustice, and class divisions.

He combined entertainment with moral lessons, making literature accessible to ordinary people.

Public Readings:

Dickens was also famous for giving dramatic public readings of his works in Britain and America, which made him a kind of 19th-century celebrity.

In short:

Charles Dickens rose from poverty to become the most celebrated novelist of Victorian England. His life experiences deeply shaped his works, which combined storytelling with strong social messages. He remains one of the greatest novelists in English literature.