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This book is based on the Web site,

David Perdue's Charles Dickens Page

<http://www.fidnet.com/~dap1955/dickens/>

Please visit the Web site for additional information.

A black and white portrait of Charles Dickens, a man with dark hair, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. He is standing in front of a blurred background that appears to be a cityscape with a large building, possibly a cathedral or government building.

David Perdue's CHARLES DICKENS PAGE

Dedicated to bringing the genius of Dickens to a new generation of readers

Charles Dickens: the name conjures up visions of plum pudding and Christmas punch, quaint coaching inns and cozy firesides, but also of orphaned and starving children, misers, murderers, and abusive schoolmasters. Dickens was 19th century London personified, he survived its mean streets as a child and, largely self-educated, possessed the genius to become the greatest writer of his age.

Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, the son of a clerk at the Navy Pay Office. His father, John Dickens, continually living beyond his means, was imprisoned for debt in the Marshalsea in 1824. 12-year-old Charles was removed from school and sent to work at a boot-blackening factory, earning six shillings a week to help support the family. This dark experience cast a shadow over the clever, sensitive boy that became a defining experience in his life, he would later write that he wondered "how I could have been so easily cast away at such an age".

This childhood poverty and feelings of abandonment, although unknown to his readers until after his death, would be a heavy influence on Dickens' later views on social reform and the world he would create through his fiction.

Dickens would go on to write 15 major novels and countless short stories and articles before his death on June 9, 1870. He wished to be buried, without fanfare, in a small cemetery in Rochester, but the Nation would not allow it. He was laid to rest in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, the flowers from thousands of mourners overflowing the open grave.

The stories, characters, and places he wrote about will live forever.