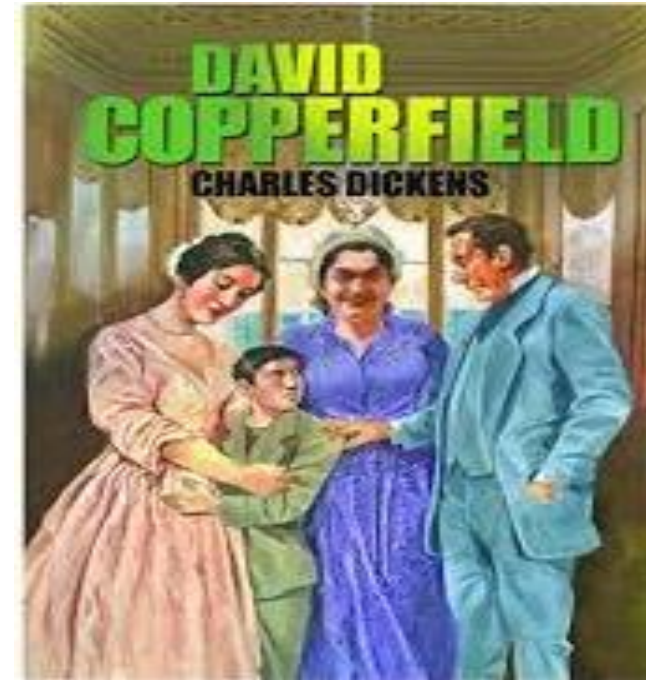


Autobiographical Elements in David Copperfield

B.A. Second Year



English Literature II



Charles Dickens' Life

- Charles Dickens, the great Victorian novelist, was born at Portsea, near Portsmouth, on February 7, 1812.
- He had meager educational opportunities.
- He was not a healthy boy and devoted more of his time to reading than sports.



Hardships in His Life

- His boyhood was full of extreme hardships.
- His father fell into severe financial difficulties and sent to prison for unable to pay his debt.
- When his father went to prison, Charles started working in a blacking factory at six shillings a week.
- At the time when he was supposed to join school he had to stay at home.

Dickens Himself says,

“No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk in to this companionship; compared these hence for every day associates with those of my happier childhood ...would pass away from me little by little, never to be brought back again ... danger of bursting.”

David Copperfield as the Most Autobiographical Novel

- Charles Dickens himself admits, *“I have in my heart of hearts a favourite child. And his name is David Copperfield,”* and *“my interest in it was so recent and strong that I was in danger of wearying the reader with personal confidence and private emotions.”*
- Deepika Srivastava says that, *“The pen that wrote David Copperfield was often dipped in his own blood.”*

David Copperfield, the Protagonist is Dickens Himself

- He begins this novel as a narration in the first person and it is not a coincidence at all.
- Many sufferings, struggles and the achievement of David matches with that of Dickens.
- There are similarities between David and Dickens concerning their childhood, parental care, education and career.



David's Misery

- The misery of Dickens' childhood is also the misery of David's childhood as well.
- David has to work at the workhouse after his step father Mr. Murdstone sends him away.
- Like David, Dickens also has to work in the workhouse after his father was sent to prison. .



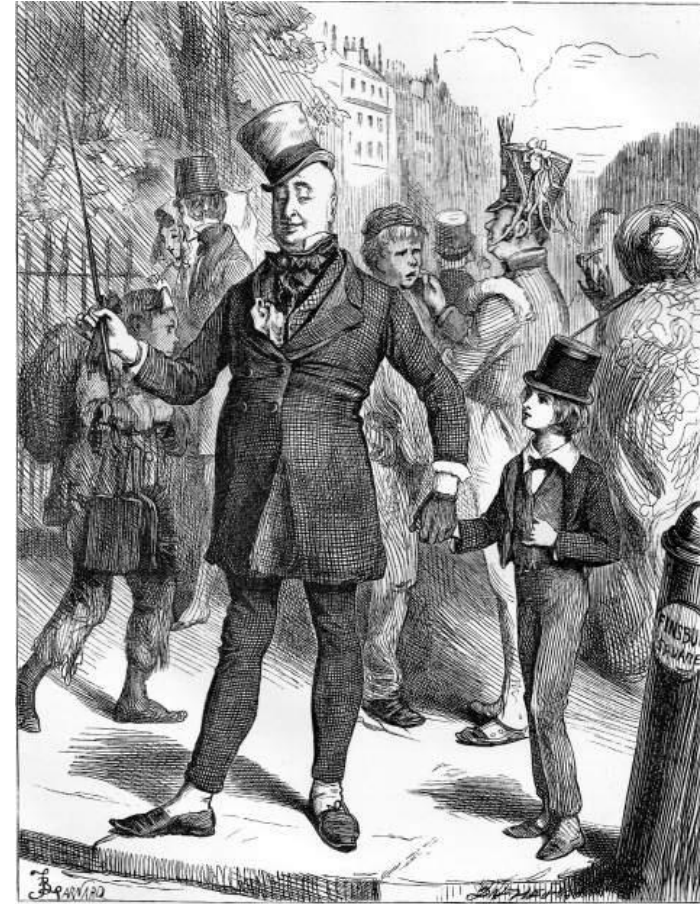
Dickens' School Life

- His boarding School life has a similarity with that of the David.
- Headmaster of Salem House, Creakle, very much resembles the cruel Headmaster of the Willington House Academy.
- Both headmasters are abusive bullies with no purpose in life than to punish the students.



The Character of Mr. Wilkins Micawber

- The comic characters of Mr. Micawber and Mrs. Micawber are drawn very much after his parents.
- The young docile mother of David is a kind of representation of Dickens' own mother as well.
- Like Mr. Micabwar, Dickens' father John Dickens has to support a large family.
- Mr. Micawber is also financially weak and irresponsible like Dickens's father.
- His father was also imprisoned in the Marshal sea like Micawber in the King's Bench Prison.



Love and Marriage Life

- The love life of David, first with Dora and then with Agnes, represent the two phases of Dickens's love.
- Dora is drawn after Dickens first love Maria Beadnell.
- The idealized memories of Mary and of his sister Gerogry together are used in creating the character of Agnes.
- Dickens and Catherine's married life was unhappy as was David's married life with Dora.



Similarity in the Character

- Like Dickens, David also discovers his own potentials and develops his individuality.
 - Like Dickens, David also struggles against injustice since childhood and able to survive against all odds and adversity.
 - Like Dickens, David's main trait is his unshakable trust in people, in goodness and justice.
- Dickens writes about himself,
“My faith in the people governed is, on the whole, illimitable...”

Thank You !

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