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Introduction. Biography of Agatha Christie

Victorian childhood

One of the most famous writers of all time, the creator of Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. She changed the way the detective genre was conceived, and her books became the third most popular after the Bible and Shakespeare.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller, this is the full name of the writer, given to her at birth, was born in a wealthy bourgeois family that moved to Great Britain from the United States.

Although the Millers were not of noble birth, Agatha was brought up as a real lady. She grew up on the family estate of Ashfield, where, in addition to basic school subjects, she studied music, dance, needlework, and etiquette.

Education was mostly at home, and the mother of the family directed it. Only two years Agatha spent in a private Parisian boarding school, and later called this time almost the happiest in her life.

Little Lady

Agatha was the youngest of three children in the family. Compared to her siblings, her parents didn't think she was very bright. Agatha did not shine in her studies, often made spelling mistakes (the writer's literacy problems remained for life), but most importantly—she was extremely shy: she could not talk to strangers, was shy to perform in front of the public with musical numbers and generally shunned people, preferring to spend time alone.

However, external lethargy and unsociability were balanced by an unusually intense inner life, which the future writer lived. She read books from the age of 4, loved stories told by

traveling relatives, and constantly imagined something.

For hours, little Agatha could play in the garden with an old hoop, inventing a whole world for herself.

One of Agatha's cherished childhood desires was to become a real lady, which everyone talked about so much: "*Behave like a lady*" – the main slogan of the time. It implied some curious requirements: "*Always leave a little food on the plate; never drink with your mouth full; never be afraid to put an extra stamp on the envelope, unless, of course, it contains bills from the store. And most importantly: wear clean underwear before traveling by rail in case of a disaster.*"

Nurse

Agatha met the First World War as a nurse. She worked in a hospital and became seriously interested in medicine. Later, the writer recalled the medical profession as "one of the most useful professions that a person can engage in."

Agatha was particularly interested in pharmacology. For a time, she even worked in a pharmacy as a pharmacist, which was reflected in her writing: researchers estimated that 83 crimes described in the works of Agatha Christie were committed by poisoning.

The beginning of the first world war coincided with Agatha's first marriage. In the winter of 1914, she became the wife of Colonel Archibald Christie, whom she had met at a social gathering a few years earlier.

In the status of a married lady, Agatha Christie began her writing career, writing in 1916 her first detective novel -- "the mysterious incident in stiles".

Aspiring writer

The action of Agatha Christie's debut novel takes place during the First World War in one of the estates of the English county of Essex. War, of course, remains on the periphery of Christie's work, but one of the main images of the writer is connected with it – the detective Hercule Poirot – an elderly Belgian emigrant who worked as a police officer in his homeland.

It was his familiarity with the Belgian refugees who flooded into England after the occupation of Belgium by Germany that prompted Christie to make the main character a retired Belgian policeman.

According to one version, Agatha decided to write a novel on a bet with her older sister, who also tried herself as a writer and already had publications. However, Christie managed to publish "The Mysterious Incident in Stiles" only in 1920, that is, 4 years after writing and only on the seventh attempt.

Agatha's debut book was published in 2000 copies and brought the author 25 pounds.

The archaeologist's wife

In 1928, Agatha Christie divorced her husband, whose surname she made famous. After the divorce, she began to travel a lot and in 1930 went to Iraq, where she met a young archaeologist Max Mallowan at the excavations of the ancient city of Ur. He became her guide to an unknown country, and when it was time to return, volunteered to accompany her to England.

Gradually, Mallowan and Christie began to have an affair, and on his return to London, Max proposed to Agatha. The writer initially refused: she was older than the groom by almost 15 years, raised a daughter from her first marriage and did not intend to have more children. On second thought, however, Agatha agreed to Mallowan's suggestion.

Unlike her first marriage, her marriage to Mallowan was a happy one. Agatha regularly went with her husband on excavations and even began to study history, ancient languages and photography to be useful in expeditions.

As a wife and friend, she did her best to make her husband succeed in his business. She not only motivated him to achieve scientific goals, but also had a hand in some archaeological finds. At the same time, her husband's activities, which Christie often gave priority to, did not interfere with her creative activities.

The discoveries made by Mallowan allowed him to achieve recognition of the scientific community. He was made a Knight of the Order of the British Empire in 1968. And three years later, for her literary achievements, Agatha Christie became a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, catching up with her husband in status and realizing her childhood dream - to become a real lady.

Queen of the detective

During her life, Agatha Christie wrote more than 60 detective novels, 6 psychological novels under pseudonyms and 16 collections of short stories, as well as more than a dozen plays. The writer's works have been translated into more than 100 languages, and the total circulation of her books has exceeded 4 billion copies. This allowed Christie to take the third place (after the Bible and Shakespeare) in the list of the most published authors in the history of mankind.

Agatha Christie's play "The Mousetrap" holds the absolute record for the number of theatrical productions. It has been on the stage of London theaters for 64 years, during which more than 26,000 performances have been played. Today, the "Mousetrap" has become one of the most important attractions of the English capital.

Many other works of the writer were also staged on the stage, not to mention the cinema, for which the books of Agatha Christie became an extremely successful find. One of the best film adaptations is considered to be the picture of Sidney Lumet "Murder on the Orient Express", for the role in which Ingrid Bergman received her third Oscar.

Agatha Christie was able to become not only the most successful writer of the detective genre, the "queen of detectives", as she is often called, but also one of the most famous writers in principle.

Her work:

Hercule Poirot

Hercule Poirot is one of the main characters in the works of Agatha Christie, and in general in the detective genre. He appeared in the very first novel of the writer. Poirot is a professional detective who has served in the Belgian police all his life and by chance got into the English countryside.

The name "Hercule" is a transcription of the name "Hercules" in French. But unlike the hero of ancient myths, Poirot performs his feats with the power of reason. His secret is a combination of acute observation, perfect memory and a deep analytical mind. With their help, the detective manages to restore a complete picture of the events that preceded

the crime from the few clues and scattered testimonies.

And thanks to an excellent knowledge of human psychology, Poirot is on the trail of who is the killer in this picture.

"To recreate the picture of the crime-that's the goal of the detective. To do this, you need to add up the facts you know as if you are building a house of cards. If some fact does not fit in the right place — if the map does not keep its balance — you must start again, or your whole construction will collapse," says Poirot in one of the novels.

Poirot was invented by Agatha Christie already a very mature person. Although the writer herself never specified his exact age, from the text of the first novel it follows that the detective is about 50 years old. Considering that Poirot later became the hero of 33 novels, 51 short stories and one play, he lived a very long and eventful life.

After all, the action in Christie's novels, as a rule, takes place at the time when they were written. Formally, Poirot had to live more than 100 years, because he died only in 1975. In her autobiography, Agatha Christie wrote ironically: *"Why would my detective be a Belgian?" — I thought. You could meet anyone among the refugees. What about a former police officer? retired. Not too young. What a mistake I made then! As a result, my detective is now over a hundred years old."*

It is worth noting that the writer herself was tired of her hero already in the 30s. She called him "unbearable" and wanted to get rid of him as soon as possible. In 1940, Christie wrote the novel "The Curtain", where Poirot dies. However, she locked the novel in a safe, not daring to publish it: too fond of the Belgian detective readers.

"Curtain" was published only in 1975, shortly before the death of the writer herself. the popularity of Hercule Poirot is evidenced by the fact that he became the only fictional character whose obituary was published in the New York Times, and on the front page: *"August 6, 1975. Hercule Poirot, the famous Belgian detective, has died."*

Miss Marple

Miss Marple is another cross-cutting character in Agatha Christie's novels. It was invented by the writer in 1927 and first appeared in the story "Thirteen Mysterious cases". Three years later, Miss Marple became the main character of the novel "Murder at the Vicarage". In total, Marple is present in 12 novels of the writer.

Miss Marple was born an even older character than Poirot, so a similar story happened to her – too many events for a 70-year-old lady.

"Miss Marple was in her late seventies when she was born, which, as with Poirot, was inconvenient, for she had a long time to live with me. If I had the gift of foresight, I would have come up with a precocious boy detective at the very beginning, who would grow up and grow old with me," the writer complained in her autobiography.

Unlike Poirot, who was a professional in his field, Marple is an amateur detective. But just like him, Miss Marple has a quick and sharp mind that helps her get to the truth.

A wealth of experience, a good knowledge of human nature, the ability to insinuate herself into the confidence of being completely safe, and to be aware of everything that happens in the area – this is what allows Miss Marple to compete with professionals.

1940 was almost Miss Marple's last year. Then Agatha Christie wrote the novel "Forgotten Murder", in which she intended to say goodbye to the bored heroine. But she couldn't publish it, because her readers loved Miss Marple as much as Poirot. The novel was published after the death of the writer – in 1976.

Conclusion

As you know, the views of writers, whether they want it or not, are reflected to a certain extent in their works. Therefore, very often such people have an influence on their readers. They either convince them of certain thoughts, or confirm their views in some way.

In general, Agatha Christie can safely be called an author who was guided by moral principles. Her works are certainly based on murders. But she took a tolerant approach to this case. There are no descriptions of bloody events and no scenes of sexual violence. She was convinced that such things only distract from the real plot and do not contribute to the correct perception of the work.

As Agatha herself claimed, in her activities she was on the side of the victim and clearly against the criminal. In her works, she wanted to avoid, as she said, the sadistic pleasure of violent scenes. Moral issues have always been in the first place.

Her stories had a great influence on many people, her characters are bright and brave. It was under them in those days were equal to both children and adults.

List of Internet resources used

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