

Charlie Chaplin

The person I am going to write about is Charlie Chaplin. He has always been one of my favourite actors and I really admire his films.

Charlie was born in London in 1889. Both his parents were music hall performers. His father was a drunkard and his mother later went mad. Life was hard and Charlie and his half-brother, Sidney, were sent to an orphanage for a time.

He first appeared on the stage when he was seven and by the time he was ten was a regular performer. When he was 17, he went on a tour of the USA where he was spotted and given a part in a Hollywood film.

His early films were not particularly successful but in 1915 he made his masterpiece, The tramp, in which he first appeared in the baggy trousers and with the hat and cane. Soon he had had his own studio built and was making his own films which included The Gold Rush, Modern Times and The Great Dictator.

In the 1940s his reputation in the USA started to decline. Silent films were no longer so popular. Chaplin went to Europe but was not allowed to return to the USA because he was suspected of being a communist. The authorities finally let him back in 1972 and he was awarded an Óscar, but by this time he had made Switzerland his home.

Chaplin did not have a very personal life and was married four times. He only found happiness with his fourth marriage in 1943. When he died on Christmas Day 1977, the world has lost one of the greatest ever comedians.

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