About Arthur !!!

Very prolific British author of mystery novels and short stories, creator of Hercule

Poirot, the Belgian detective, and Miss Jane Marple. Christie wrote more than 70

detective novels under the surname of her first husband, Colonel Archibald Christie.

She also published a series of romances and a children's book.

Arthur Christie was born in Torquay, in the county of Devon, as the daughter of

Frederick Alvah Miller, an American with a moderate private income, and Clarissa

Miller. Her father died when she was a child. Christie was educated home, where her

mother encouraged her to write from very early age. At sixteen she was sent to

school in Paris where she studied singing and piano. Christie was an accomplished

pianist but her stage fright and shyness prevented her from pursuing a career in

music. In her books Christie seldom referred to music, although her detectives,

Poirot and Miss Marple, show interest in opera and Poirot sings in THE A.B.C.

MURDERS (1936) a World War I song. When Christie's mother took her to Cairo for a

winter, she wrote there a novel. Encouraged by Eden Philpotts, neighbor and friend

in Torquay, she devoted herself into writing and had short stories published.

In 1914 Christie married Archibald Christie, an officer in the Flying Royal Corps;

their daughter, Rosalind, was born in 1919. During World War I she worked in a Red

Cross Hospital in Torquayas a hospital dispenser, which gave her a knowledge of

poisons. It was to be useful when she started writing mysteries. Christie's first

detective novel, The Mysterious Affair at Styles, introduced Hercule Poirot, the

Belgian detective, who appeared in more than 40 books, the last of which was CURTAIN

(1975). The Christies bought a house and named it 'Styles' after the first novel.

Poirot was an amiably comic character with egg-shaped head, eccentric whose friend

Captain Hastings represents the "idiot narrator" - familiar from Sherlock Holmes

stories. Poirot draws conclusions from observing people's conduct and from objects

around him, creating a chain of facts that finally reveal the murderer. '"He tapped

his forehead. "These little gray cells. It is 'up to them' - as you say over here."'

Behind the apparently separate details is always a pattern, which only Poirot is

able to see.

Miss Marple, an elderly spinster, was a typical English character, but when Poirot

used logic and rational methods, Marple relied on her feminine sensitivity and

empathy to solve crimes. She was born and lived in the village of St. Mary Mead.

Both Poirot and Marple did not have any family life, but Poirot also travelled much.

Marple was featured in 17 novels, the first being MURDER AT THE VICARAGE (1930) and

the last SLEEPING MURDER (1977). She was reportedly based on the author's own

grandmother. Miss Marple made her first screen appearance in 1961 in Murder She

Said, starring Margaret Rutherford. It was based on the novel 4:50 FROM PADDINGTON

(1957). It was followed by Murder at the Galop (1963), Murder Ahoy (1964), and

Murder Most Foul (1964), all directed by George Pollock. The BBC TV series starring

Joan Hickson ran 1984-87. Gracie Fields played Miss Marple on television in an

adaptation of A Murder Is Announced (1956).

Poirot, a former policeman, was forced to flee his country after the German invasion

of Belgium in 1914. His assistant Captain Hastings married in the early 1930s and

Poirot settled to London's Whitehaven Mansions. Poirot is short - only five feet

four inches tall. He has waxed moustache, egg-shaped head and small feet. Poirot

first appeared on screen in Alibi (1931). It was based on THE MURDER OF ROGER

ACKROYD (1926), which was partly inspired by Anton Chekhov's novel The Shooting

Party (1884-1885). "Every murderer is probably somebody's old friend," Christie

wrote in it. With these kind of insights in motives and methods of a murder Christie

proved that she could have been a competent teacher at police academies. Peter

Ustinov played Poirot in Death on the Nile (1978), Evil under the Sun (1982), and

Appointment with Death (1988). David Suchet was Poirot in the UK television series

(1989-91). In Murder by the Book (1986) Ian Holm's Poirot investigated his own

murder. Tony Randall played Poirot in Frank Tashlin's unorthodox adaptation The

Alphabet Murders (1965), in which Anita Ekberg galloped on horseback through

Kensington Gardens.

In 56 years Christie wrote 66 detective novels, among the best of which are The

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