



### A Tale of Two Cities The Complete & Unabridged Classic Edition

Charles Dickens, Summit Classic Press

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This premium quality volume includes the complete and unabridged text of Charles Dickens' timeless classic in a freshly edited and newly typeset edition. Not a reproduction or machine-scanned text, this edition has been prepared by human editors working from an exact digital image of the actual classic edition.

With a large 7.44"x9.69" page size, this edition is printed on heavyweight bright white paper with a fully laminated cover featuring an original full color design. Page headers and modern design and page layout reflecting traditional publishing values, together with a detailed author biography discusiing the life of Dickens and the enduring literary significance of his work exemplify the attention to detail given this high quality volume.

With well over 200 million copies sold and opening and closing lines that are among the most familiar in all of literature, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) is one of the best known and most widely-read books in all of literary fiction.

Set against the backdrop of the French Revolution, the novel depicts the suffering of the French peasantry at the hands of the aristocracy and the subsequent abuses and brutality of the revolutionaries. Dickens, ever the social critic, manages to draw parallels to English society, and especially the stratified society of London, while creating his hallmark complex characters and compelling story. It has been remarked that Sydney Carton, a dissolute and disillusioned London barrister, is nonetheless the only protagonist in any of Dickens' major works who is, in the classical sense, heroic. While following several characters, the central plot revolves around Carton, Charles Darnay, a virtuous French aristocrat who falls prey to the wide-ranging and unreasoning fury of the Revolution, and Darnay's wife.

Born in Portsmouth England on February 7, 1812, Charles Dickens enjoyed a comfortable childhood until his father lost his post at the Navy Pay Office and ultimately landed in debtors' prison. Charles embarked upon an horrific stint pasting labels on jars of bootblack in a rat-infested slum while living in an attic. Teaching himself shorthand, he would later find work as a newspaper reporter and writer, covering the courts. These experiences, with his almost photographic memory, provided him with material for the colorful characters and vivid depictions of life in England which characterized his work for decades.

The publication of *The Pickwick Papers* in serial form in 1836 brought Dickens success. Within a few years he became an international literary celebrity. Ultimately he would become the foremost novelist of the Victorian era and one of the most widely read writers in history. His books have never gone out of print, have been turned into films and plays, and are still widely read today.

Along with compelling storylines and unforgettable characters, Dickens' stories served as vehicles for social commentary, often harshly critical of class stratification and public institutions. In particular, and contrary to prevailing views, Dickens championed the poor, whom he saw as wretched not because of their own weaknesses and moral failures but because of their helplessness before society's attitudes and institutions. And yet Dickens managed throughout to maintain a humorous element, and satire and caricature fill the

pages of his works.

Dickens died on June 9, 1870, following a stroke. Given the body of work he left behind, it is striking to note that Charles Dickens was just 58 years old at his death.



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