

## ***Agatha Christie, the Queen of Crime***

*Agatha Christie (1890-1976), British crime writer of novels, short stories, and plays, is best remembered for her 66 detective novels and more than 15 short story collections (especially those featuring Hercule Poirot or Miss Jane Marple). According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Christie is the best-selling novelist of all time. Her novels have sold roughly four billion copies, and her estate claims that her works rank third, after those of William Shakespeare and the Bible, as the most widely published books. Her books have been translated into at least 103 languages. The world's best-selling mystery writer, and often referred to as the "Queen of Crime" set some of her novels in and around Torquay, where she was born; the house is maintained as a memorial to her, in which one may find a vast collection of photographs and images- from her childhood in Ashfield to her later years in Greenway, which provide an insight into Agatha's upbringing.*

*The photographs are complimented with objects and documents related to the many books and plays that Agatha penned as well as films and television memorabilia from her most famous character Hercule Poirot.*

*Abney Hall in Cheshire, which was owned by her brother-in-law, became Agatha's greatest inspiration for country-house life, with all the servants and grandeur which have been woven into her plots. The descriptions of the fictional Chimneys, Stoneygates, and other houses in her stories are mostly Abney in various forms."*

*Christie's 1934 novel Murder on the Orient Express was written in the Pera Palace Hotel in Istanbul, Turkey, the southern terminus of the railway. The hotel maintains Christie's room as a memorial to the author.*

*Agatha Christie became interested in archaeology on a visit to the site of Ur (in modern Iraq) in 1928. It was at Ur that she met her future husband, the archaeologist Max Mallowan, and became involved in excavation of the sites in Iraq and Syria that were to make her name.*

*3,000-year-old ivory artifacts found by Mallowan and his team between 1949 and 1963 were originally made in what is now Syria and Lebanon and brought to Assyria as looted treasures and recovered by Mallowan from the ancient city of Nimrud, in what is now Iraq, and likely cleaned by his famous wife using cotton wool buds and face cream, which is not suggested by conservators, but later John Curtis, keeper of the Middle East collections at the British Museum said "he doesn't think it's done (the pieces) any harm,"*

*Nimrud was a city in the Assyrian kingdom, which flourished between 900-612 B.C.. The ivories*

*[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online\\_tours/middle\\_east/agatha\\_christie\\_\\_archaeology/agatha\\_christie\\_\\_archaeology.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/middle_east/agatha_christie__archaeology/agatha_christie__archaeology.aspx)*

*[http://articles.cnn.com/2011-03-12/world/uk.christie.writer.archaeology\\_1\\_max-mallowan-agatha-christie-archaeologist?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-03-12/world/uk.christie.writer.archaeology_1_max-mallowan-agatha-christie-archaeologist?_s=PM:WORLD)*

*<http://www.torquaymuseum.org/default.asp?CategoryID=63>*

*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agatha\\_Christie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agatha_Christie)*