

## Washington Irving

Washington Irving, born in 1783, was a renowned American author, essayist, historian, and biographer. He is distinguished for writing short stories, including “Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle.” Born and raised in Manhattan, Irving made his literary debut in 1802 in England, where he gained popularity with the publication of *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent* (Mambrol, 2020). This author was among the first writers in the United States to earn acclaim in Europe. He inspired other writers, including Henry Wadsworth and Herman Melville, through his writings, and also was admired by British authors. Through his entire writing career, Irving advocated writing as a legitimate profession and championed stronger laws to safeguard authors and writers throughout the United States from patent infringement.

Time did not affect the works of Irving, and he did not copy any style of writing from other authors. Despite being primarily influenced by European writing, mainly the legends from German, his style of writing was all his own (Mambrol, 2020). If Irving were alive today, he could write his books, stories, and essays in the same format he used to back in his days. In his writing, he widely employed imagery, a style that is used by contemporary authors. Another style used by Irving that is still in use is humor. For instance, in “Rip Van Winkle” story, Rip Van Winkle is a humorous character who does not work hard but instead likes gossiping and chatting with his friends (Mnassar, 2021). In addition, this character spends most of his time roaming around the countryside, playing with the village children, and looking for ways to avoid his wife.

If Irving were writing today, he could write a biography of the current President of the United States, Joe Biden. He would go to the official website of the American presidents, as well

as look through the writings of Joe Biden and a series of Biden's letters acquired through the State Department. The biography would be written in a narrative style chiefly grounded in historical facts (Verdejo, 2020). Irving's work would deal with such subjects as the presidency and the truth that he was the first American president to have a female vice president. Other subjects might include Biden's personal life and how he addressed the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent recession. Irving's creative style would render a highly readable account of the president's life, centered on exploring the great man.

### **A Short Sample**

One of the most prominent writings by Irving is "Rip Van Winkle," the main moral lesson of which is that as time goes by, things keep changing. For instance, the narrator states that as Rip "approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture, induced Rip, involuntarily, to do, the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long" (Irving, 1820, para. 29). Clearly, the author uses imagery to describe the situation in the country round, making it easy for the reader to understand the surroundings.

In conclusion, Irving is remembered for his short stories marked by a humorous look at the culture and history of America. The author's writing style included satire, imagery, and humor used to pass his message to the audience. Irving was an iconic figure and inspired many writers, being regarded as the father of literature and the first writer in America to make his

living mainly through his creative works. Lastly, he was the first American to be acclaimed by the literary establishment in England as worthy of recognition.

## References

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