



CHILDHOOD

Born in Llandaff, Wales, on 13th September 1916 to Norwegian parents, Harald Dahl and Sofie Magdalene Hesselberg, Dahl was named after Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian who had been the first man to reach the South Pole just four years earlier. A heroic start in life. But his early years were blighted by the tragic deaths of his older sister, Astri, and his father.

Wanting the best for her only son, his mother sent him to boarding school - first to St Peter's, Weston-super-Mare; then, in 1929, to Repton - where many bizarre and memorable events would later be recounted in *Boy*. Pupils at Repton were invited to trial chocolate bars, a memory that stayed with Dahl throughout his life, inspiring Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.



CAREER

At the outbreak of World War Two, Dahl joined the Royal Air Force. On the eve of his first day as an active pilot officer, he crashed his biplane in the Libyan Desert, having attempted a forced landing when he ran short on fuel.

In a telegram sent to his mother from the Anglo-Swiss Hospital in Alexandria, dated 14 October 1940, Dahl wrote, “Caught fire but only concussion broken nose. Absolutely okay soon.” In reality the crash had almost killed him. He was badly burned, blinded for weeks and had to have his nose surgically reconstructed. The effects of a fractured skull and spinal injuries would cause Dahl chronic pain for the rest of his life. But he also believed that his near-death experience was the thing that made him a writer. In a 1954 letter to his close friend Charles Marsh, an American newspaper owner, Dahl confessed, “I doubt I would have written a line, or would have had the ability to write a line, unless some minor tragedy had sort of twisted my mind out of the normal rut ... I emerged a tiny-philosopher.”

Remarkably, Dahl was returned to active service as a fighter pilot – this time in Greece. But repeated black-outs caused his invalided return to Britain. Then came a mysterious period during which Dahl ended up in Washington, DC, working as an intelligence officer at the British Embassy. In 1942, the *Saturday Evening Post* accepted Dahl’s short story, ‘A Piece of Cake’, about his plane crash. It was published anonymously under the title ‘Shot Down over Libya’, apparently at the suggestion of a sensationalising editor.



LEGACY

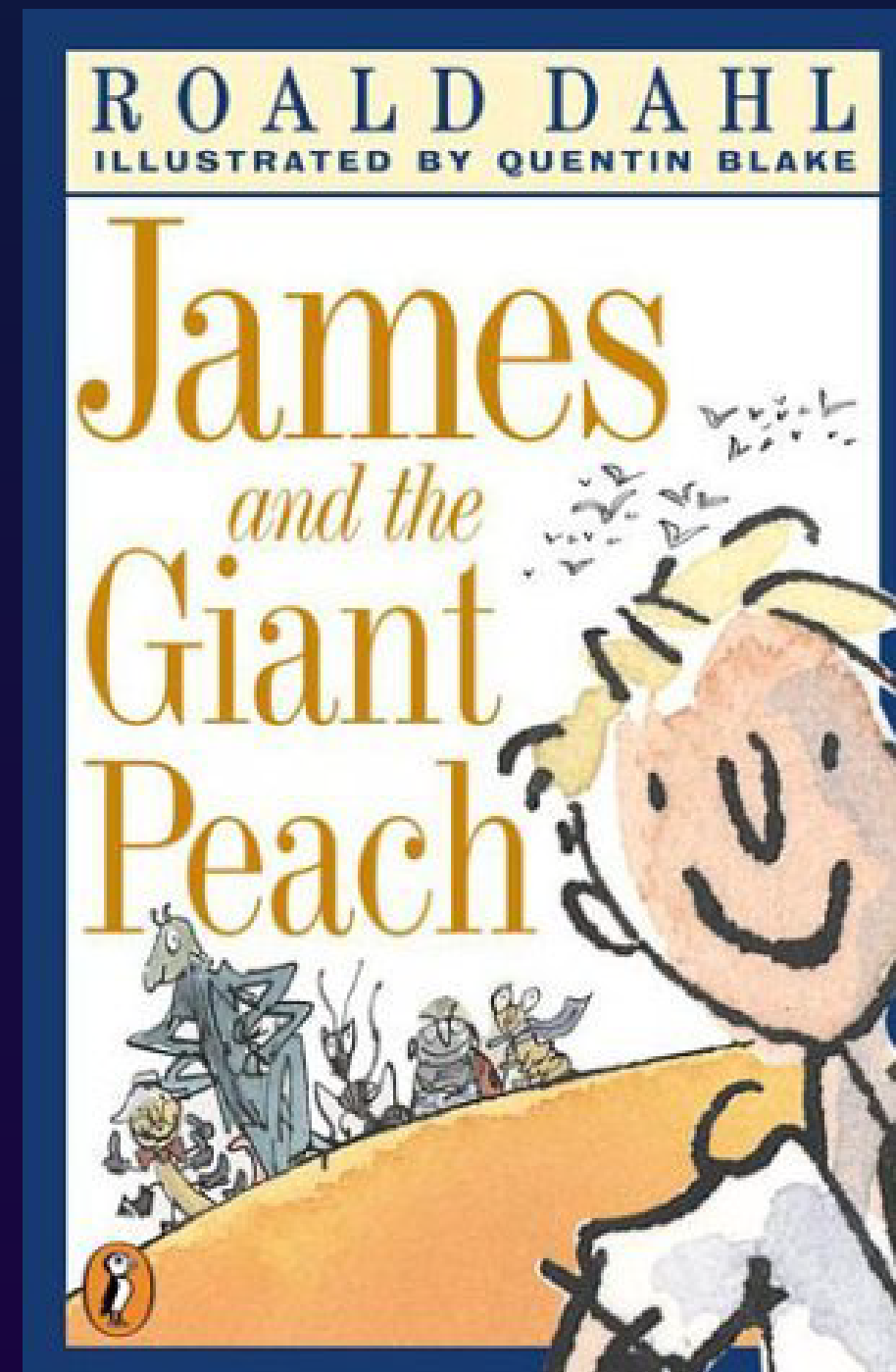
In 1960 Roald helped invent the Wade-Dahl-Till valve, prompted by the need to alleviate the head injuries tendured by his son after an accident in New York.

There followed a burst of literary energy: in 1961 James and the Giant Peach was published in the US, followed by Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Roald then wrote screenplays for the James Bond hit You Only Live Twice and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, as well as adult novels such as Kiss Kiss. Fantastic Mr. Fox was published in 1970, the year before the film Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory was released. The rest of the decade saw the publication of many other classics, including Danny the Champion of the World, The Enormous Crocodile, and My Uncle Oswald.

Roald also enjoyed enormous success on television. Having already had his stories told in six episodes of the award winning US series Alfred Hitchcock Presents, his Tales of the Unexpected ran for several series between 1979 and 1988 in the UK.

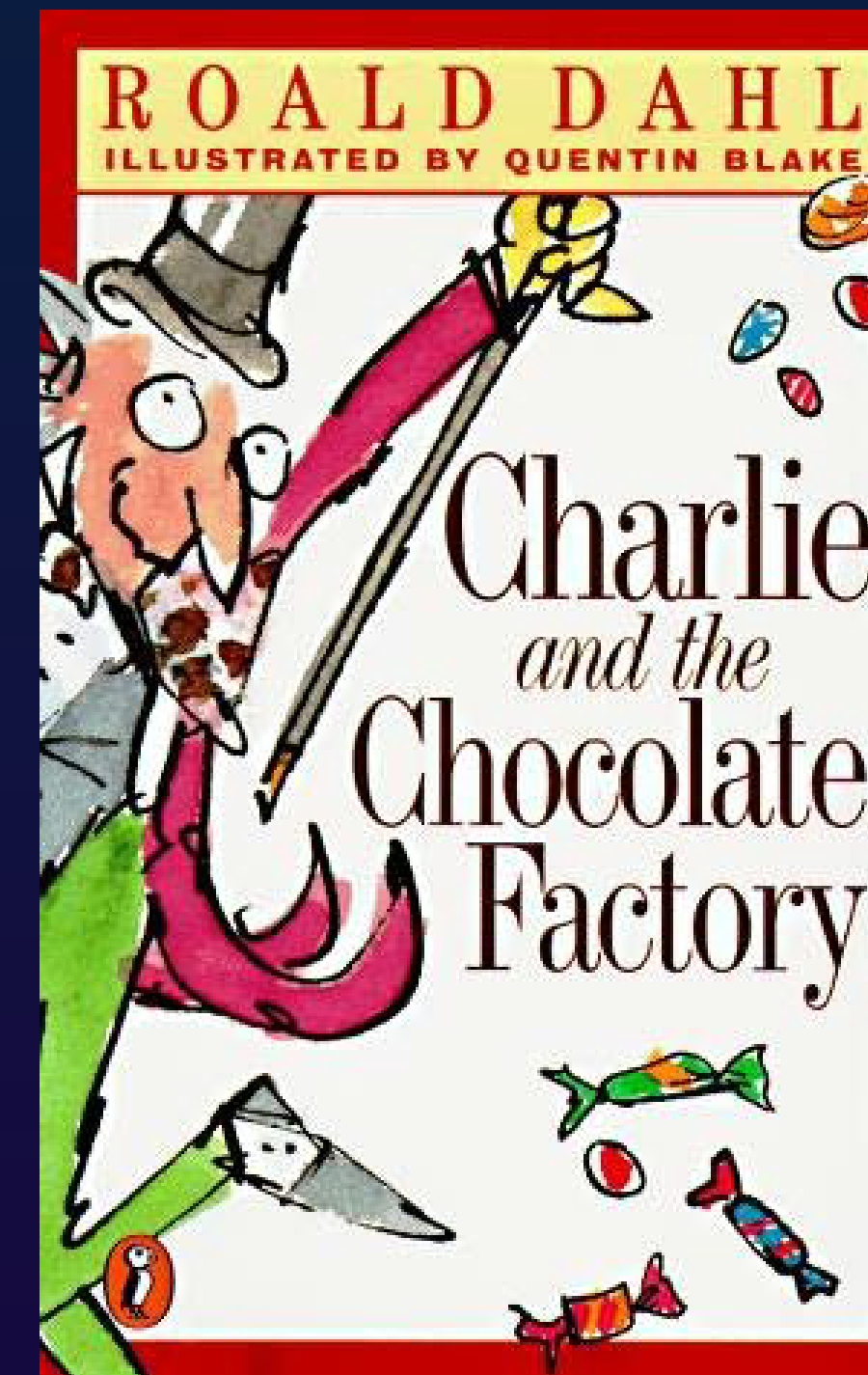
In the early 1980s he published The Twits, Revolting Rhymes, The BFG and The Witches. There followed two autobiographical books: Boy, in 1984 and Going Solo, in 1986. Matilda was published in 1988, Esio Trot in 1990, and finally, in 1991, came the posthumous delight of The Minpins.

ROALD DAHL'S BEST SELLERS



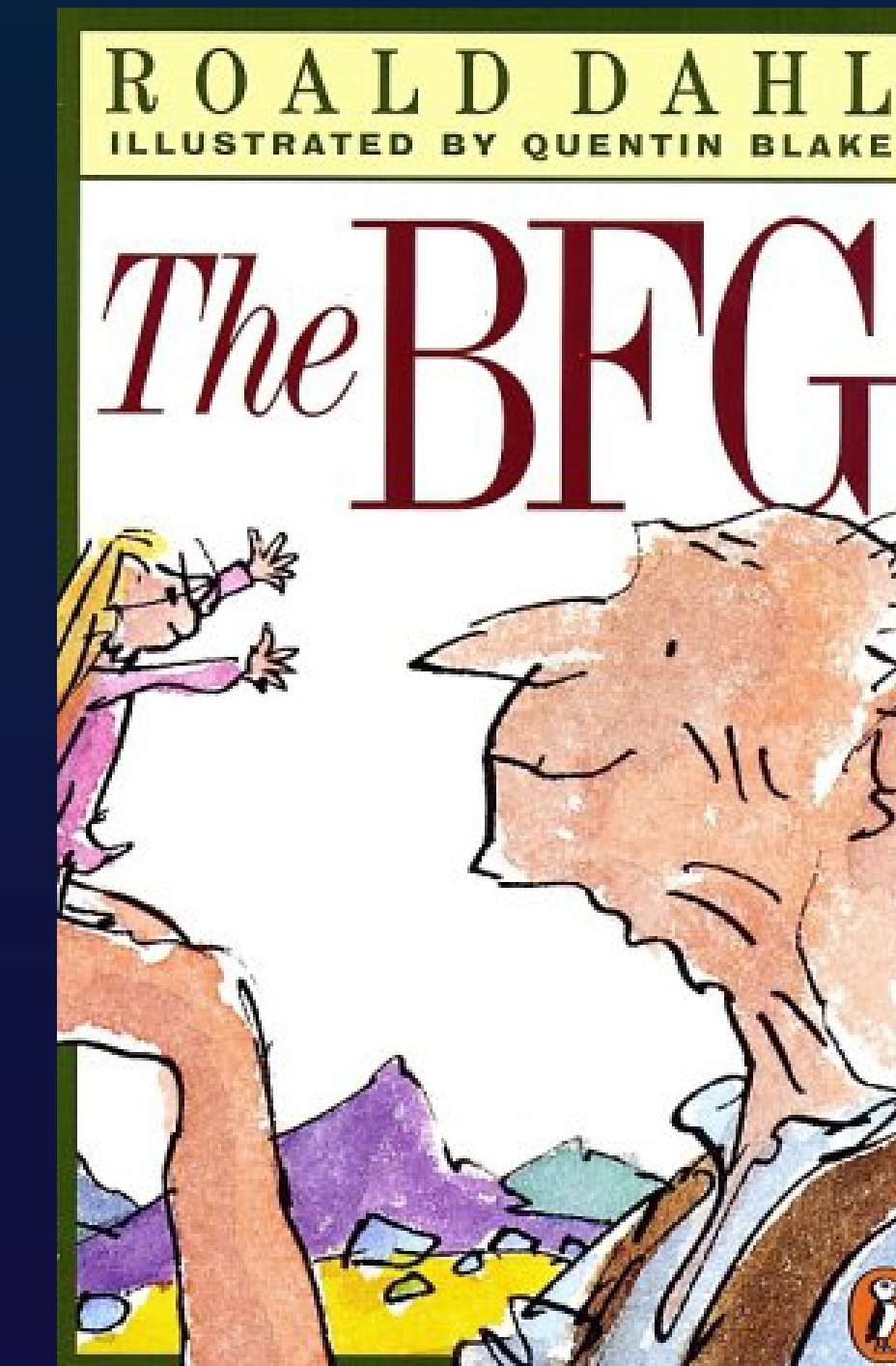
1961

James and the Giant Peach was Roald Dahl's first classic novel for children. Although *The Gremlins* is sometimes referred to as an earlier example of his writing for children, James was Roald's first conscious attempt to write for a younger audience after several years of writing primarily adult short stories. Roald started writing it in 1959 after encouragement from his agent, Sheila St Lawrence.



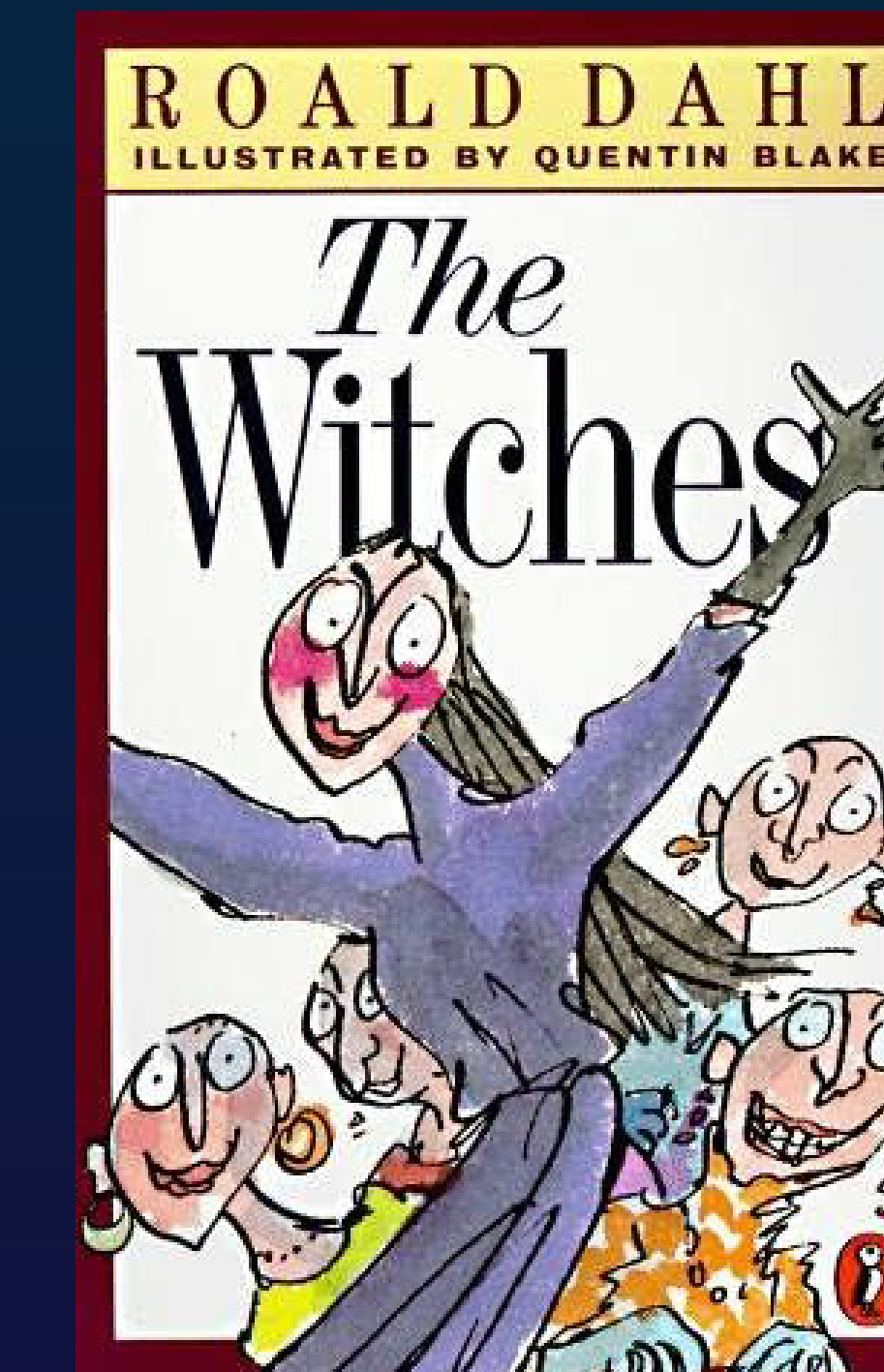
1964

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is perhaps Roald Dahl's best-known story. The story of Charlie Bucket, the five Golden Tickets, the Oompa-Loompas and the amazing Mr Willy Wonka has become firmly embedded in our culture since it was first published in 1964. Conservative estimates suggest the original book has sold over 20 million copies worldwide; it is now available in 55 languages.



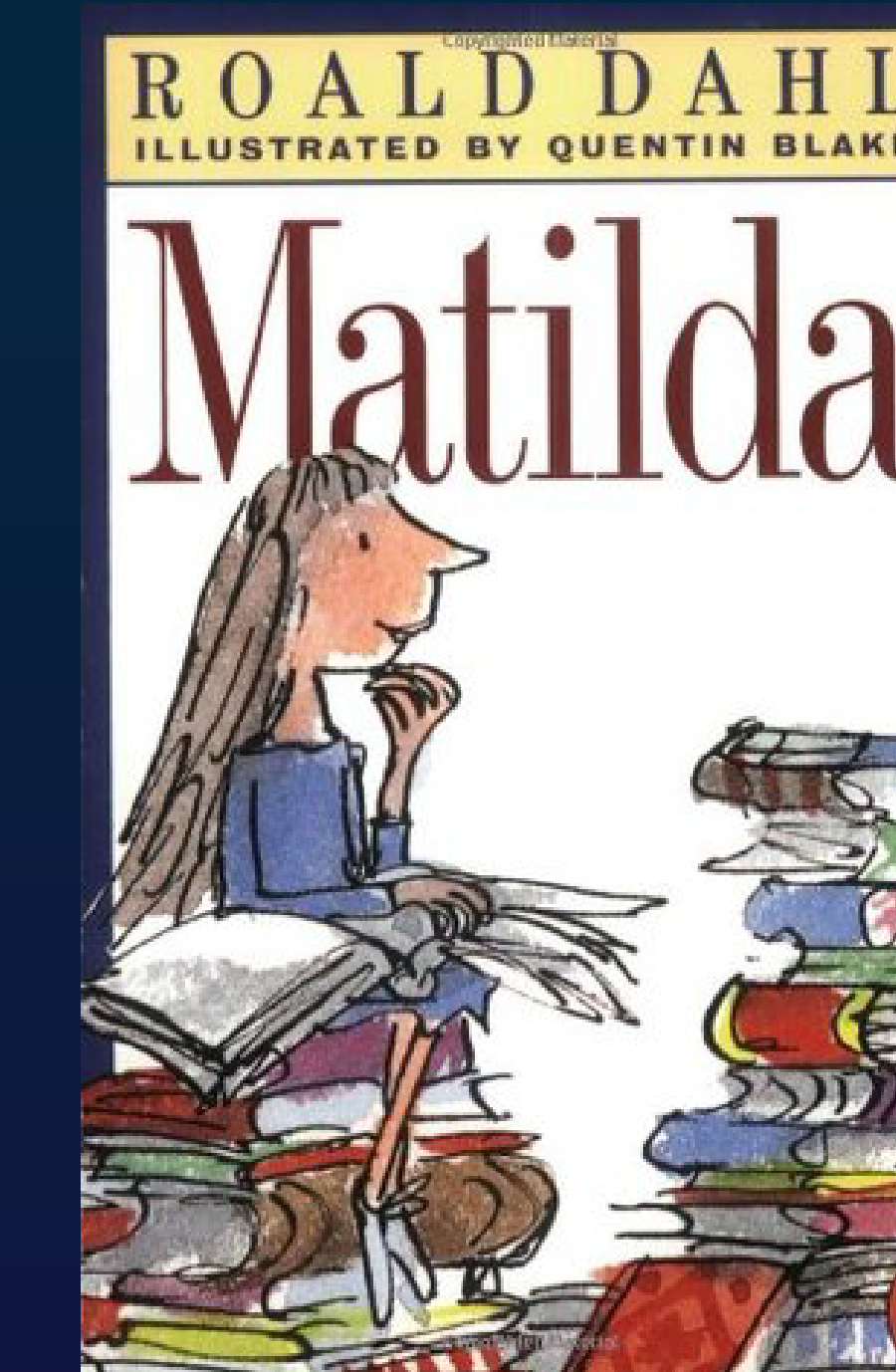
1982

The BFG was written in 1982. The idea for the story had begun several years before, with a sentence scribbled in one of Roald Dahl's Ideas Books - exercise books he used to write down some of the thoughts that came to him and were sometimes later turned into stories. Just like *The BFG*.



1983

The Witches tells the story of a brave young boy and his Norwegian grandmother as they battle against England's child-hating witches. It continues to feature in lists dedicated to the scariest children's books more than 30 years after it was first published. Especially around Halloween.



1988

Matilda won the Children's Book Award shortly after it was published in 1988, and it has continued to delight audiences ever since. Early drafts of the story were very different to the one we now know. At first, Matilda was a wicked girl who eventually used her powers to help her teacher solve her financial problems - by fixing a horse race. In the end, though, it became the magical story now known to children the world over.

“ IF YOU HAVE GOOD THOUGHTS
THEY WILL SHINE OUT OF YOUR
FACE LIKE SUNBEAMS AND YOU
WILL ALWAYS LOOK LOVELY ”



Source: Roald D. 1952.
Roald Dahl and his adventures. 1952.
The illustration is a watercolor painting of an elderly man with a cane, wearing a red jacket, walking through a whimsical landscape. In the background, there are various fantastical creatures and a small house. The style is characteristic of Roald Dahl's illustrations.

CHILDHOOD

Born in Llandaff, Wales, on 13th September 1916 to Norwegian parents, Harald Dahl and Sofie Magdalene Hasselberg, Dahl was named after Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian hero who had been the first man to reach the South Pole just four years earlier. A heroic start in life. But his early years were blighted by the tragic deaths of his older sister, Asta, and his father.

Wanting the best for her only son, his mother sent him to boarding school - first to St Peter's, Weston-super-Mare, then, in 1928, to Repton - where many life-changing and memorable events would later be recounted in Boy. Pupils at Repton were invited to trial chocolate bars, a memory that stayed with Dahl throughout his life, inspiring Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

CAREER

At the outbreak of World War Two, Dahl joined the Royal Air Force. On the eve of his first day as an active pilot officer, he crashed his biplane in the Libyan Desert, having attempted a forced landing when he ran short on fuel.

In a telegram sent to his mother from the Anglo-Swiss Hospital in Alexandria, dated 15 October 1940, Dahl wrote, "Caught fire but only concussion broken nose. Absolutely okay now." In reality the crash had almost killed him. He was badly burned, blinded for weeks and had to have his nose surgically reconstructed. The effects of a fractured skull and spinal injuries would cause Dahl chronic pain for the rest of his life. But he also believed that his near-death experience was the thing that made him a writer. In a 1954 letter to his close friend Charles Marsh, an American newspaper owner, Dahl confessed, "I doubt I would have written a line, or would have had the ability to write a line, unless some minor tragedy had sort of twisted my mind out of the normal rut - I emerged a tiny philosopher."

Remarkably, Dahl was returned to active service as a fighter pilot - this time in Greece. But repeated black-outs caused his invalided return to Britain. Then came a mysterious period during which Dahl ended up in Washington, DC, working as an intelligence officer at the British Embassy. In 1945, the Saturday Evening Post accepted Dahl's short story, 'A Piece of Cake', about his plane crash. It was published anonymously under the title 'Shot Down over Libya', apparently at the suggestion of a sensationalizing editor.

LEGACY

In 1949 Roald helped invent the Wade-Dahl-Till valve, prompted by the need to alleviate the head injuries sustained by his son after an accident in New York.

There followed a burst of literary energy: in 1961 James and the Giant Peach was published in the US, followed by Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Roald then wrote screenplays for the James Bond hit You Only Live Twice and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, as well as adult novels such as Kiss Kiss, Fantastic Mr. Fox was published in 1970, the year before the film Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory was released. The rest of the decade saw the publication of many other classics, including Danny the Champion of the World, The Enormous Crocodile, and My Uncle Oswald.

Roald also enjoyed enormous success on television. Having already had his stories told in six episodes of the award-winning US series Alfred Hitchcock Presents, his Tales of the Unexpected ran for several series between 1979 and 1988 in the UK.

In the early 1980s he published The Twits, Revolting Rhymes, The BFG and The Witches. There followed two autobiographical books: Boy, in 1984, and Going Solo, in 1986. Mollie was published in 1988, Esio Trot in 1990, and finally, in 1991, came the posthumous delight of The Mingus.

ROALD DAHL: THE WIT

Presenting the celebration of Roald Dahl's legacy as it continues to live long. Recognized as an ingenious storyteller, his children's books evokes bouts of nostalgia to many.

Dahl believed that children deserved stories to unleash the power of their imagination, and he answered that by bringing to life captivating tales rich with humor, vibrant (and occasionally zany) language, and compelling characters who have stood the test of time. More than 200 million Dahl books — in 58 languages — have been sold worldwide, with more than 40 million in print in the U.S. alone.