

Baudelaire

(1821-1867)

1821 (9 April): Birth of Charles-Pierre Baudelaire at 13 rue Hautefeuille, Paris, to Joseph-François Baudelaire (aged 62) and his wife Caroline, née Archenbaut Defayis (aged 27).

1827 (10 February): Death of CB's father.

1828 (8 November): CB's mother marries Major Jacques Aupick, a career military officer.

1829 (October): CB (aged 8) is sent by his parents to boarding-school.

1831 (November): Aupick is stationed in Lyon to help put down workers' riots. CB enters the Royal College of Lyon as a boarder.

1836: Aupick joins the General Staff in Paris as a colonel. CB enters the well-known Lycée Louis-le-Grand.

1839: Baudelaire is expelled from Louis-le-Grand for insubordination. Sometime in the Autumn, Baudelaire contracts gonorrhoea, probably during an encounter with a prostitute. Sometime during this period he also contracts syphilis. He will suffer from health complications related to venereal disease for the rest of his life.

1841 (9 June): After a family council, CB is shipped off to India from the port city of Bordeaux, in the hopes of breaking him of his dissolute ways.

1842: Back in Paris, CB begins an affair with Jeanne Duval, "The Black Venus," a mulatto actress.

1843: CB moves into the Hôtel Pimodan on the Île Saint-Louis. He collects many debts furnishing his apartment with artwork and extravagant furnishings.

1844: CB has spent half of his inheritance in two years. A family council meets and procures a court order subjecting his remaining assets to the control of a court-appointed legal guardian.

1845: CB publishes his first art criticism, the *Salon of 1845*.

1847: CB publishes his short novel, *La Fanfarlo*.

1848: CB begins his translations of Edgar Allan Poe. CB participates in the February Revolution.

1852: CB publishes his first essay on Edgar Allan Poe.

1855 (1 June): CB publishes 18 poems in the influential *Revue des deux mondes*.

1857: Publication of volume two of the Poe translations, as *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires*. (22 June): Publication of *Les Fleurs du mal*. (5 July): An extremely critical review of *Les Fleurs du mal* by Gustave Bourdin appears in the *Figaro*"~

[...] Never have such brilliant qualities been so madly wasted. There are times when one has doubts about Monsieur Baudelaire's mental state; there are other times when one doesn't have any doubts: most of the time, it is the monotonous and premeditated repetition of the same words, the same thoughts. The odious jostles against the ignoble; the repulsive joins with the foul. Never have so many breasts been bitten and even chewed in so few pages; never has there been such a parade of demons, foetuses, devils, chloroses, cats, and vermin.... This book is a hospital open to all the dementia of the spirit, all of the putridity of the heart; it would be one thing if it was meant to cure them, but they are incurable. [...] one might understand if the imagination of a twenty-year-old poet had let itself be dragged down to such subjects, but nothing can justify a man of more than thirty for having published a book that gives publicity to similar monstrosities."

1861: Publication of the second edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, minus the six poems banned in 1857 and with the addition of 35 new poems.

1867 (31 August): Death of CB.