

Victor Hugo

Writer of "**les Misérables**", politician

Besançon 26/02/1802 - Paris 22/05/1885

Son of an Empire's officer, educated according to the principles of good society, noticed by the French Academy when teenager, Victor Hugo could easily have become a kind of official writer flattered by critics. But the one who declared

"I want to be Chateaubriand nothing else" will be all his life a man of all storms, of all sufferings, of all battles.

Royalist at first, he rallies to liberalism from 1829.

Hernani (1830) makes him a leader of romanticists, but, in addition to a large literary work -, *Feuilles d'automne, les voix intérieures, les Rayons et les Ombres, Lucrèce Borgia, Notre-Dame de Paris...* - capped with an election to the French Academy and the grade of Pair de France, he more and more goes into politics : founding of the paper *l'Evènement*, admission to the legislative Assembly and to the constituent Assembly. His speech about misery creates a scandal.

In 1851, his censure on Napoleon III (Napoleon the little) compels him to exile in Brussels, then, in 1852, in Jersey. After his expulsion, he settles in Guernsey in 1855. There he writes *les Contemplations, la Légende des Siècles, les Misérables*.

In 1865, his family settles in Brussels. On the occasion of his visits, He travels through Belgium, Germany, Nederland, Luxembourg, with his lover Juliette Drouet. At this time, he discovers Vianden and he publishes *les Travailleurs de la Mer* (1866).

The 4th of September 1870, republic is declared in France, Victor Hugo triumphantly returns to Paris on 5th. In 1871, after Thiers' repression against Free Town's members, he utters "I offer refuge in Brussels". He is expelled from Belgium and settles on the first of June in Vianden where he writes, draws and falls in love his young maid Marie Mercier .

In the last years of his life, sometimes in Paris, sometimes in Guernsey, he publishes *Quatre-Vingt-Treize* and completes *la Légende des Siècles* while having a seat as a senator.

After his children and grandchildren's series of tragical death throughout his life, *L'Art d'être grand-père* attests to the boundless place he reserves for family tenderness.

Loved by the common people, he is entitled to national obsequies greeted with cheers "hurrah for Victor Hugo"

