

A short young girl stands in a yellow spotlight in the middle of a large studio stage. She has beautiful locks of gold, complete with a shining straight smile and adorable dimples and people are clapping and giving standing ovations to her. Her name is Shirley Temple. If you don't know her name you should, because she was the sparkling star of the nineteen thirties through forties and has been called by many "the best female actress to ever live". Shirley Temple has made an amazing total of fifty-seven films in her lifetime; the majority of them made when she was under the age of twenty. That fact shows an example that she had less than a normal childhood, which could have been either a blessing or a curse. It could have been a blessing because she made a lot of money, (she was one of the highest grossing childhood stars), and she was adored by millions. Although, it was a curse because she didn't get to do half of the things that normal girls get to do, like for example, attend simple grammar school. She didn't always get to face the problems of a normal child because she had her own set to deal with. By the age of fifteen, cruel critics said she was washed up and no longer wanted her to act in their movies. It could be compared to when a member of a "Boy Band" turns eighteen he is considered to old to continue that line of work and is asked to leave the band. They then find a young pre-teen to replace them. Eventually after reading the terrible reviews about her, she tried to stay and actress but was mostly unsuccessful so she continued in the path of her fellow colleague Ronald Reagan and found a totally different line of work. Either way she has since paid her dues to the entertainment business. Some people have even gone as far as to make fan clubs (through the mail or on the Internet) and collector dolls made in her honor. Read on in this report to learn about this enchanting and talented woman.

By the year nineteen twenty-eight, Gertrude Amelia Krieger was definitely ready to have a girl. "She had had two boys, one in nineteen fifteen named John Stanley (Jack) and another in nineteen-nineteen named George Francis Jr."(Hammortree 73). She was anxiously waiting for her second arrival.

Gertrude got her wish at nine-o'clock at night, Monday, April twenty-third, nineteen twenty-eight in the Santa Monica Hospital in Santa Monica, California. She named her little girl Shirley Jane Temple-Black. Shirley had brown eyes and blonde hair. As far as her mother and father (George Francis Temple) were concerned, she was going to be a star. Shirley was a child prodigy whose first words were "Oui, mon cher" ("Yes, my dear")(Hammortree 36). Resulting from that, Shirley Temple did not have much of a normal childhood. She never really got the chance to play in the park or have friends that were her age. Although her father wished her to have one, her ambitious mother had other plans for her beloved daughter Shirley; maybe because she felt she had failed earlier in her life as a career woman. Whether it did turn out to be a blessing or a curse, by the babyish age of three, Shirley Temple was only thirty-two inches and a movie actress. Gertrude first started Shirley's career by taking her to tap-dance lessons. Then young Shirley Temple landed her first film. It was a series of one-reel films and it was titled Baby Burlesks. They were inappropriately sexual. "She played characters named "Morelegs Sweet-trick" (a pun on Marlene Dietrich) and "Mme. Cradlebait." But when Fox signed her in 1934, the studio abandoned the infant sexpot image and let her be what she really was -- an energetic, resilient, good-natured little girl"(ShirleyTempleFans.com). Also, it was small and she did not have a large part. The only thing good about it was it was a start on her acting career and it got her signed to 20th Century Fox. By the age of five she acquired a role in the flick Stand Up and Cheer in nineteen thirty-four.

Shirley Temple had a cutesy appeal. In her movies she always had a signature style, showing off her dimples and pirouetting. "My mother would

curl my hair before the taping of every movie, and she used fifty-six curls exactly" (Temple 56). She would smile and she was young and cute, and people would laugh or smile or "awe". Temple had a lisp, which added to her appeal, and she was taught very early how to sing and tap-dance. With that young teaching came a singing career almost as promising as her acting career. She made numerous albums, some with songs from her movies and some with songs that were written for her. "The year 1934 definitely lifted her into stardom, when she landed four starring-role films: Now and Forever, Little Miss Marker, Baby Take a Bow, and Bright Eyes" (Hammortree 82). Also, an even better event came at the end of the year when she was given a special Academy Award for her outstanding contribution to film. They even marketed Shirley Temple merchandise such as coloring books, dolls, clothes, and much more. At this time Shirley Temple seemed like she was having fun, but there was sadness that no one saw. She wished to do the things she saw other little girls do, instead she would get nagged by her mother to do another movie. One thing she said really summed it up "I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph" (Temple 38). Shirley Temple pretended to smile and continued.

Shirley Temple was like a medicine for people suffering during The Great Depression. Many people back then in the thirties had few things they could be happy or laugh about. She gave them a fresh dose of fiction to look at, and it's just what they needed. Temple's own family suffered slightly during this time. Her father was a banker and had it not been for Shirley's income from movies they would have been poor and struggling like much of America. Life for her was not hard, just different. She made a slew of movies the rest of the nineteen thirties. In nineteen thirty-five she made *The Little Colonel*, *Curly Top*, and *The Littlest Rebel*. In nineteen thirty-six she starred in *Poor Little Rich Girl*, *Dimples*, and *Stowaway*. In nineteen thirty-seven there was *Wee Willie Winkie* and *Heidi*. During nineteen thirty-eight and nineteen thirty-nine she made a lot of successful films like *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, *Little Miss Broadway*, *The Little Princess*, and *Susannah of the Mounties*. The movies were often named after the main character, which was usually Shirley. "At the height of her popularity, from nineteen thirty-five to nineteen thirty-eight, Temple was the biggest box-office attraction in Hollywood, and the large gross revenues from her films helped make 20th Century-Fox a major film studio" (Encarta). Although, this was not always good because it meant that she was confined to one studio and could not do other roles from other studios even if they were promising. "Shirley Temple was offered the lead role for the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, but 20th Century-Fox told her she couldn't do the film so the lead role was handed over to Judy Garland" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). At such a young age Shirley Temple did not realize she was getting robbed of her acting and financial freedom. "The studios were picking and choosing her roles and poor little Shirley often did not see a dime from her earnings, because the finances went through her parents" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). A similar occasion that happened with those circumstances was when the child actor McCauley Culkin sued his parents for emancipation and his money that he earned throughout his career. The judge awarded him his money and the emancipation. Unfortunately, they did not have those kinds of laws back then. To add to her Shirley's troubles, she found out that her popularity was fading.

Shirley tried to continue her acting career and make some films in her teenage years, but they were mostly unsuccessful. The director would give Temple small and ineffective roles. That was definitely not what she was used to. In fact Shirley had not seen a small role put on her plate since she

first started acting. Some of them were Miss Annie Rooney (1942), I'll be Seeing You (1944), Since You Went Away (1944), The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer (1947), and Fort Apache (1948). World War 2 could have been blamed for her decline. The war started in nineteen forty-one and those troubled soldiers were very much on the mind of their family members. Whether it was World War two or just her age, Shirley Temple's appeal had faded. At the young age of twenty-one, Shirley Temple retired from acting. The lost years took a toll at her adult life.

Shirley Temple had missed all those fun and boring things that girls with normal lives get. Everyone else got to go to normal schools, while private tutors taught Shirley Temple on the 20th Century-Fox set. Not just one single tutor either, many tutors. "Miss Francis Klampt taught her Regular Public School Curriculum. Paula Walling taught her French and Bessie Nyi taught her Chinese for the movie Stowaway. She finally got to go to regular high school when she attended Westlake High School for Girls" (Hammortree 172). That was her time to rebel! She brushed out her famous curls and enjoyed the simpler things in life such as sock hops, soda shops, and regular homework. "After she graduated she once again did private tutoring for her college majors, Spanish and Psychology" (Hammortree 174). She acquired little time for dating through those years but married and had an unsuccessful relationship with her husband from nineteen forty-five to nineteen forty-nine. His name was John Agar and he too was an actor. He was eight years older than she was. Finally her adult years came and her life was finally similar to a non-Hollywood lifestyle.

In nineteen fifty she married a man nine years older than her named Charles Alden Black. Shirley Temple presently married to that man. After her very early retirement from movies she did a little television work, narrating the series "Shirley Temple's Storybook" in nineteen fifty-seven. It was cancelled shortly after that in nineteen fifty-nine. In nineteen sixty she also attempted a show called "The Shirley temple Show". That too was unsuccessful. In nineteen sixty-seven politics started to catch a spark with Shirley and she ran, unsuccessfully, as a Republican candidate for the congress of the United States. "Temple was a member of the U.S. delegation to the United Nation (1969-1970), was U.S. ambassador to Ghana (1974-1976), and became the first women in U.S. history to serve as chief of protocol (1976-1977), during the administration of President Gerald R. Ford. She served as ambassador to Czechoslovakia (1989-1992), during the administration of President George Bush" (Encarta). Shirley eventually got tired of her political career.

Shirley Temple is still living and going strong today. She is seventy-three years old now and currently retired. She is (like mentioned earlier) still married to her husband Charles. She spends a lot of her leisure time traveling and fulfilling her hobbies. Shirley "Temple has many hobbies including playing golf, gardening in her yard, and cooking in her kitchen. She also is a first-rate fisher" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). In nineteen eighty-eight she spent some of that time writing an auto-biography telling her secrets titled "Child Star". In that book she wrote some fun facts about herself. Some of them were: "her favorite colors are red and white, her favorite child role was Wee Willie Winkie (she played a peace maker), and her favorite adult movie was The Hagen Girl with Ronald Reagan" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). In that book she also wrote about said things. Such as the death of her mother in seventy-seven, the death of her father in nineteen eighty, the death of her first brother in nineteen eighty-five, and the death of her second brother in nineteen ninety-six. She also suffered greatly in nineteen seventy-two, when she discovered she had a lump in her breast. The ex-actress left breast-cancer articles around the house because

"I couldn't bring myself to talk about it to my husband." The lump turned out to be malignant. She underwent a simple mastectomy and dealt with the void. Not all her life was sad though, during her earlier life she gave birth to two children. The first one was a girl named Linda Susan. She was born January thirty of the year nineteen forty-eight. The second was a boy named Charles Alden Jr., born April twenty-eighth of the year nineteen fifty-three.

"Linda became a librarian for a living and Charles is currently a Business Consultant" (Temple 267). She also has many grandchildren. One would not think that this grandma cooking and golfing with her family is a legend in all sorts.

Shirley Temple as a person and as an actress left her mark beyond on America comparison. She is easily one of the best actresses that have ever lived and will ever be in the future. Shirley Temple raised the bar for what is expected from an actor or actress and for her to do it at such a young age is remarkable. So many great things have been said about the impact she left on America. People have said that she provided warmth and humor during the two coldest and most horrifying times in the twentieth century. The first event being The Depression. After the Stock Market crashed and the financial status of the Nations banks was diminishing, millions of people lost everything they had and had nothing to look forward to. Going to the theater and watching Shirley Temple Tap dance and sing in her movies was a refreshing dose of hope. "Even Shirley's immediate family was hit with the loss of her father's job; her father was a banker" (Encarta). Just as the Depression had finally ended, the war had begun. The war was World War two. America had went to war overseas to fight Germany and many young men were drafted as soldiers. Many of them were being killed. There was also destruction happening to the Jewish community in Germany and it was affecting some of the people in the United States who had Jewish relatives back in Germany and the surrounding countries. Shirley made people happy for a short while during the war but the devastation of it captured people's conscience and their minds.

That is the period in her career when Shirley Temple's appeal would change for the worse. Even though she retired from motion pictures at the young age of twenty-one, she got the chance to make friends with and work on the movie sets with some of the greatest actors and actresses in history. "She became a friend with such names as Lionel Barrymore, Adolph Menjou, Sidney Blackmer, Alice Faye, Robert Young, Cesar Romero, Jimmy Durante, and C. Aubrey Smith" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). Just because her acting career lost its appeal (and nothing lasts forever), that does not mean that people stopped loving Shirley Temple. Temple made an even bigger impact on the young girls of her time. They associated her with success and put her on a pedestal a their role model. Today there are numerous fan clubs and websites in Shirley Temple's honor. In nineteen thirty they started producing a Shirley Temple doll. People are still collecting that doll even today. They are worth a lot of money and if you are a collector it is considered to be a sure sign of a diehard collector. Shirley Temple definitely left her mark on history and the entertainment business. Maybe now you realize why they have invented a drink called Shirley Temple. They actually invented two drinks. "The first one is called the "Shirley Temple" and the second is called "The Dirty Shirley". The drinks were not the only things that were invented for her. For her wedding they invented a new blue called the "Temple Blue" (ShirleyTempleFans.com). She had innocence while at the same time being unbelievably mature and professional. No one will ever forget Shirley Temple's welcoming curls or her.