

GRAPHIC
BIOGRAPHY

Walt Disney



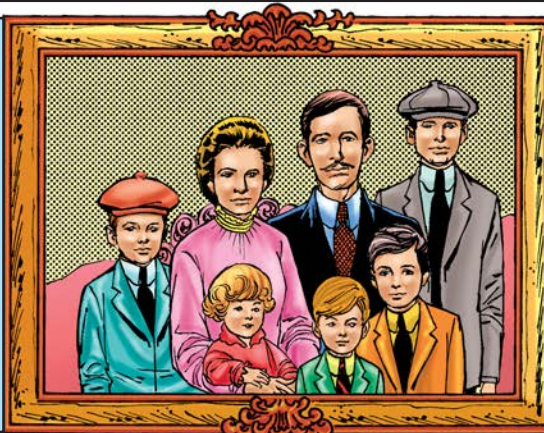


The name Walt Disney is known all over the world. He was the creator of Mickey Mouse and a pioneer* in the making of animated cartoons.



For millions of people who watched his weekly television program, he was an important part of something the family did together. He was a self-made man, and this is the story of how he did it.

He was born in Chicago in 1901, the fourth of five children. His father, Elias Disney, was working as a building contractor at the time.



His mother, Flora, was a school teacher before her marriage, but gave it up to raise her children.

* to originate or take part in the development of

When Walt was four years old, the family moved to a farm near Marceline, Missouri.



There was a lot of hard work to be done, and Elias made sure that his children did their share.

The two oldest boys didn't take to this new life. They ran away from home and went back to Chicago.

C'mon, Skinny!



Walt's best friend was his brother Roy. Roy was eight years older than Walt.

Look, Roy! I made this picture of Skinny!



That's great, kid!

Walt's father tried to make a living selling the apples from his two large orchards. After five years he knew he couldn't do it. He sold the farm and they moved to Kansas City.

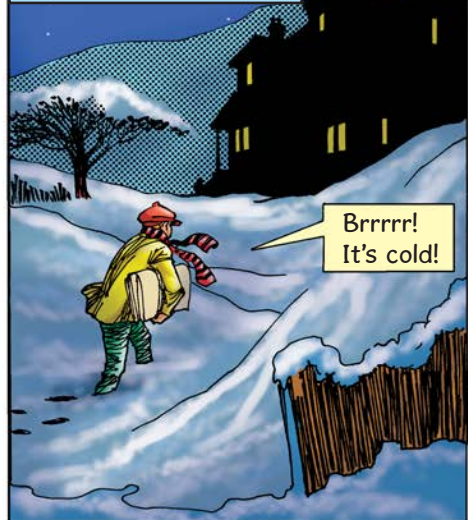


In Kansas City, Disney bought a newspaper route of 2,000 people. Roy and Walt had to work for their father without pay. The other paperboys made three dollars a week.

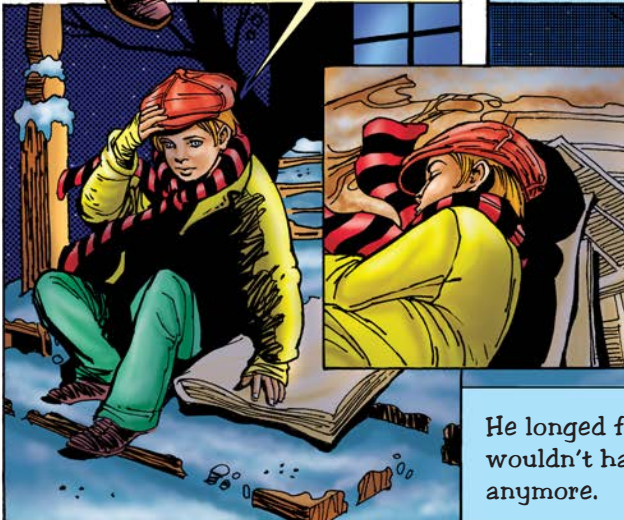
Roy and Walt got up at 3:30 a.m. to deliver the morning paper.



In winter, the snow was up to Walt's nose.



When Walt woke up, he finished his deliveries and ran all the way to school.



He longed for the day when he wouldn't have to work for his father anymore.

A year went by. Roy finished high school and left home as his older brothers had done.

I wish I could go with you, Roy.

Me too, kid, but you've got to finish school.



Walt continued going to school and delivering papers. And on Saturdays he went to art classes at the Kansas City Art Institute.

Very good, Walt!



Sometimes in the evening, Elias Disney let his son go to the movies with a friend whose father owned a theater.



The movies they saw were silent. The actors would move their lips to speak, and the audience could read what they were saying at the bottom of the screen.

Walt used some of the jokes he saw in the movies to put together an act for the local amateur shows.



In 1917, the year the United States entered World War I, Elias Disney sold the paper route and invested his money in a jelly factory in Chicago. When the family moved, Walt stayed behind to finish the school year.

That summer he worked as a "news butcher" on the Santa Fe Railroad.



In the fall he went to Chicago. He also worked in the jelly factory and took art classes at night.



One day, after school was out, Walt got a message from Roy. He was passing through Chicago on his way to a navy training camp and asked Walt to meet him at the train station.

Gee, kid! It's great to see you! You've gotten so tall!



They talked until the order was given for Roy and the other recruits* to board the train.

You there! On board! Train leaves in half a minute!



The officer had taken sixteen-year-old Walt for one of the recruits. It made him feel proud ... and it gave him an idea.

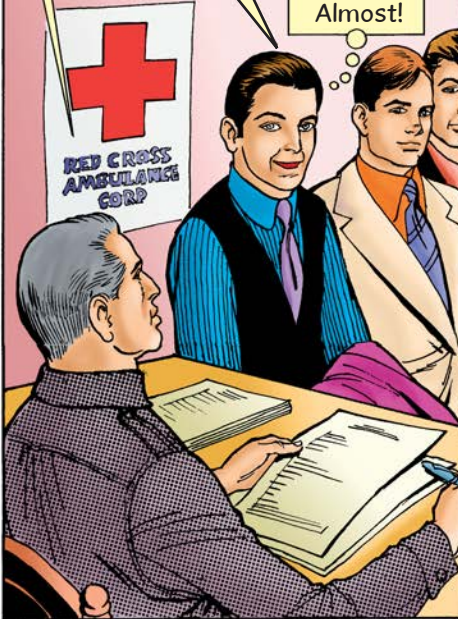
* a newly enlisted or drafted member of the armed forces

Walt knew you had to be eighteen to join the navy. He found out that the Red Cross Ambulance Corps took volunteers* at age seventeen.

Your name and age?

Walter Elias Disney, sir. Age seventeen.

Almost!

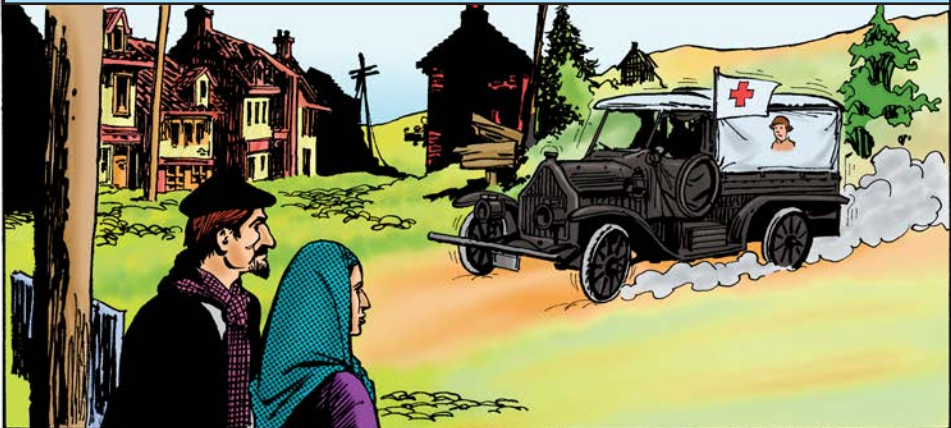


There was one other problem. He needed one of his parents to sign the papers. His father wouldn't, but his mother gave in.

I'd rather know where you are than have you run off like the other boys.

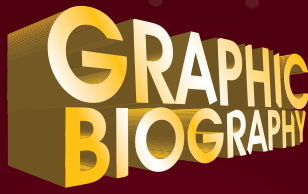


The war ended while Walt was in Connecticut for training. Even so he was lucky enough to be sent to France for a year to deliver relief* supplies.



* a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to enter a service

* money, food, or other help given to those in need



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LEXILE HL760L

ISBN: 978-1-59905-230-4

